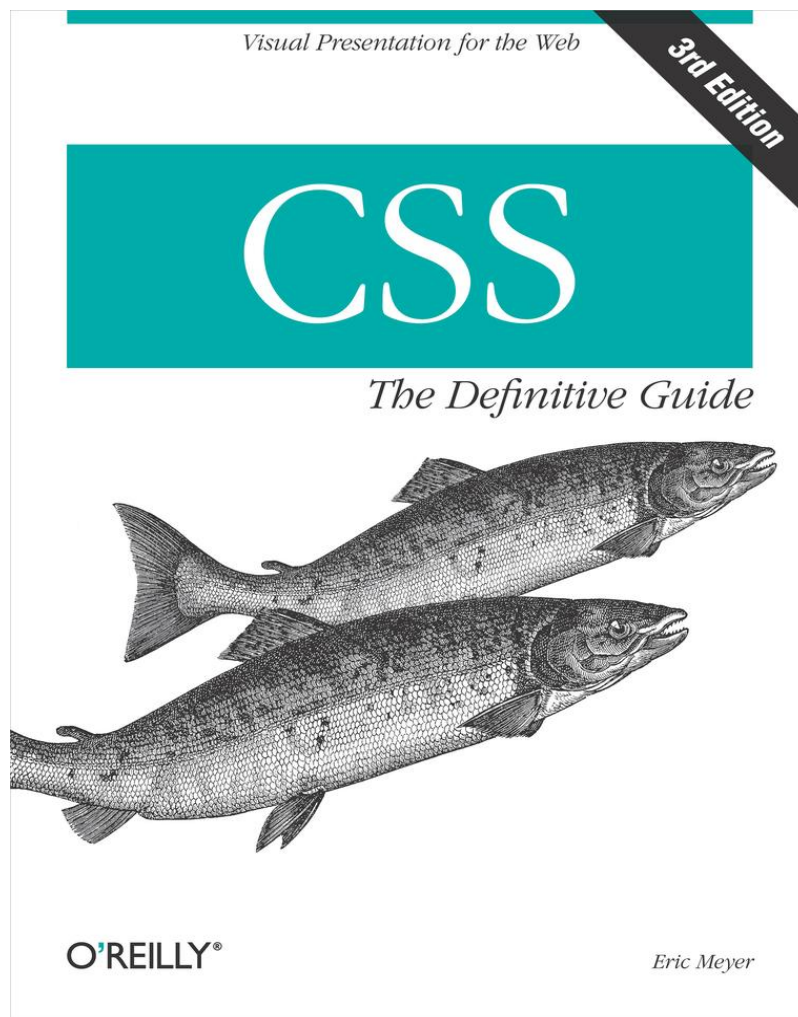


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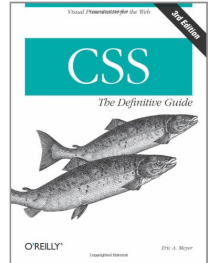


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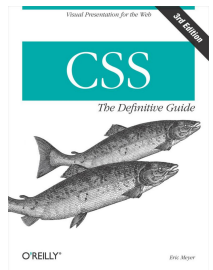
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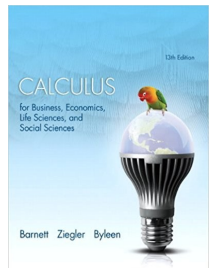
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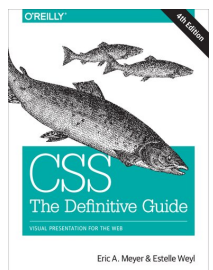
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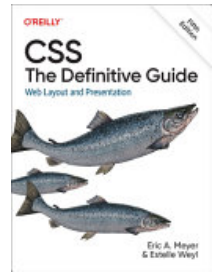
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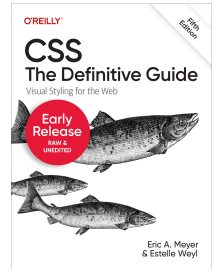
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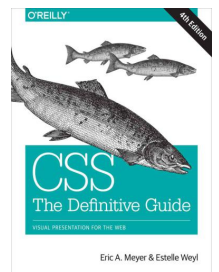
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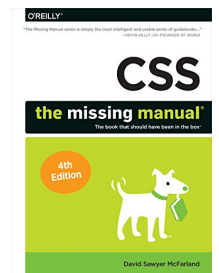
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# Discovering Diverse Content Through Random Scribd Documents

A pleasant rural lane leads up from the station at Kent's Bank to Allithwaite, a little straggling village, the inhabitants of which contrive to earn a scanty livelihood by fishing and "cockling" upon the sands. Steep banks rise on each side, festooned with plummy ferns and wild flowers, crested with spiked thorn-bushes, scrubby hazels, and spreading ash-trees, that wave their shadowy branches overhead. The honeysuckle spreads its delicious perfume around, and as we saunter leisurely along the sunlight glints through the leafy openings, shooting down long arrowy rays, that here brighten with golden touches the gnarled and knotted stem of a sturdy oak, and there light up a churlish bramble, like a woman's radiant smile reflecting its cheeriness upon some worthless Caliban. On the left is Kirkhead, a lofty knoll, crowned with a prospect tower—Barrow's summer-house, as it is called—from the summit of which there is a view that well repays the labour of ascent. Wraysholme's ruined tower, whither we are wending our way, is but a short mile distant, and as we have a long summer afternoon before us, we may wander at our will. Having mounted the breezy hill, we lie down on a cushion of soft grass at the foot of the building to gaze upon the scene, listening the while to the wild bird's song and the hoarse melody of the fitful sea.

The wide expanse of Morecambe Bay lies before us like an out-stretched panorama, in which every jutting headland, every indentation, and every crease in the green hills can be distinctly traced. Far below us a long stretch of shore runs out; an old boat lies upon its side, chained to a miniature anchor; children are disporting themselves round it, and a few bare-legged fishermen are busy arranging their long nets, for the tide is not yet in, though we can see where the crafty silent sea comes stealing up from the south, each delicate wavelet, as it breaks upon the yellow sand in a white line of surge, creeping nearer and nearer to the beach. The softest of summer breezes plays upon the water, breaking it into innumerable ripples that dance and glitter in the mellow light. Here and there a few cloud shadows fleck the surface. A soft summer haze, like an ocean of white mist, hangs in mid distance, and where

it lifts, shows little patches of the blue of heaven beyond. A broad streak of light marks the line of the horizon where sea and sky blend together. A solitary white sail glints in the blaze of sunlight, one or two fishing boats with red-brown sails spot the sea with colour, and far away a long line of black smoke shows where a steamer is rapidly ploughing its way towards the Irish coast. Sheltering in quiet beauty in the little cove below is Kent's Bank, its buildings, dwarfed by the intervening space, looking like a group of children's toys. Grange is hidden behind the projecting ridge of rock; but Holme Island, with its pretty little marine temple, stands well out from the shore, like an emerald gem in the flashing waters. Sheltering it from the northern blasts, a range of rugged limestone rocks, all channelled and weather-worn, and fringed with over-lapping trees, is seen; and there, where a few puffs of white smoke gleam brightly against the deep blue of space, a train is bearing its living freight across the broad Milnthorpe Sands. Arnside Knott, with its shady background of wood, thrusts up its huge form as a foil to quiet Silverdale, reposing by its side; then, sweeping round in an irregular circle towards the east, we have an ever-varying shore and an amphitheatre of intersecting hills, now dark with shadow and now gay with the tints of the many-hued vegetation, with Ingleborough and the great Dent Fells far, far beyond, yet, in the pure atmosphere, seeming so near and so clear that we may almost fancy we can see the purple heather blooming upon their sides. Further south, bathed in a flood of sunshine, the battlemented keep of Lancaster Castle comes full in sight, with its frowning gate-tower, through which many an ill-starred wretch has doubtless trembled as he passed, and where, upon its threshold, may be said yet to linger the solemn footprints of mingled innocence and guilt—a stony relic that calls to remembrance "Old John o' Gaunt, time-honoured Lancaster," and turns back the pages of the Book of Time to the turbulent days which witnessed the fierce forays of the Northern hordes and the still fiercer struggles of the rival Roses; and beyond the Castle, the green knolls rising above the water-line in the direction of Heysham and Sunderland—Cape Famine, as the people call it—looking like so many islands in a sea of silver.

Carrying the eye round to the west, a picture scarcely less beautiful meets the gaze. The low-lying plain on the right—the Wyke,<sup>[16]</sup> as it is called—has, within living memory, been reclaimed from the hungry sea; and where was once old ocean's bed there are now lush pastures, and fields of waving grain that give promise of an abundant harvest. Below us, peeping up from a clump of trees, are seen the ruined walls of Wraysholme Tower, where the lordly Harringtons held sway, and with which we shall make more intimate acquaintance by-and-by; and near thereto Humphrey Head, looking like a monster couchant, thrusts its huge form far out from the shore. The little village beyond is Flookborough, and within half a mile is Cark, contiguous to which, half hidden among the umbraged woods, is Holker, the favourite seat of the Duke of Devonshire. Across the Leven sands we get a glimpse of Chapel Island, a little sea-girt solitude, with the crumbling ruins of its ancient sanctuary peeping through the gloom of the overshadowing trees, where, in days of yore, the monks of Furness "their orisons and vespers sung," and offered prayers "for the safety of the souls of such as crossed the sands with the morning tide." Almost within bow-shot are the rich woods and glades of Conishead; and further on, the old town of Ulverston can be discerned, with the great rounded hill—the Hoad—in the rear, on which the monument to the memory of its distinguished son, the late Sir John Barrow, stands—

On the gusty down,  
Far seen across the sea-paths which he loved,  
A beacon to the steersman.

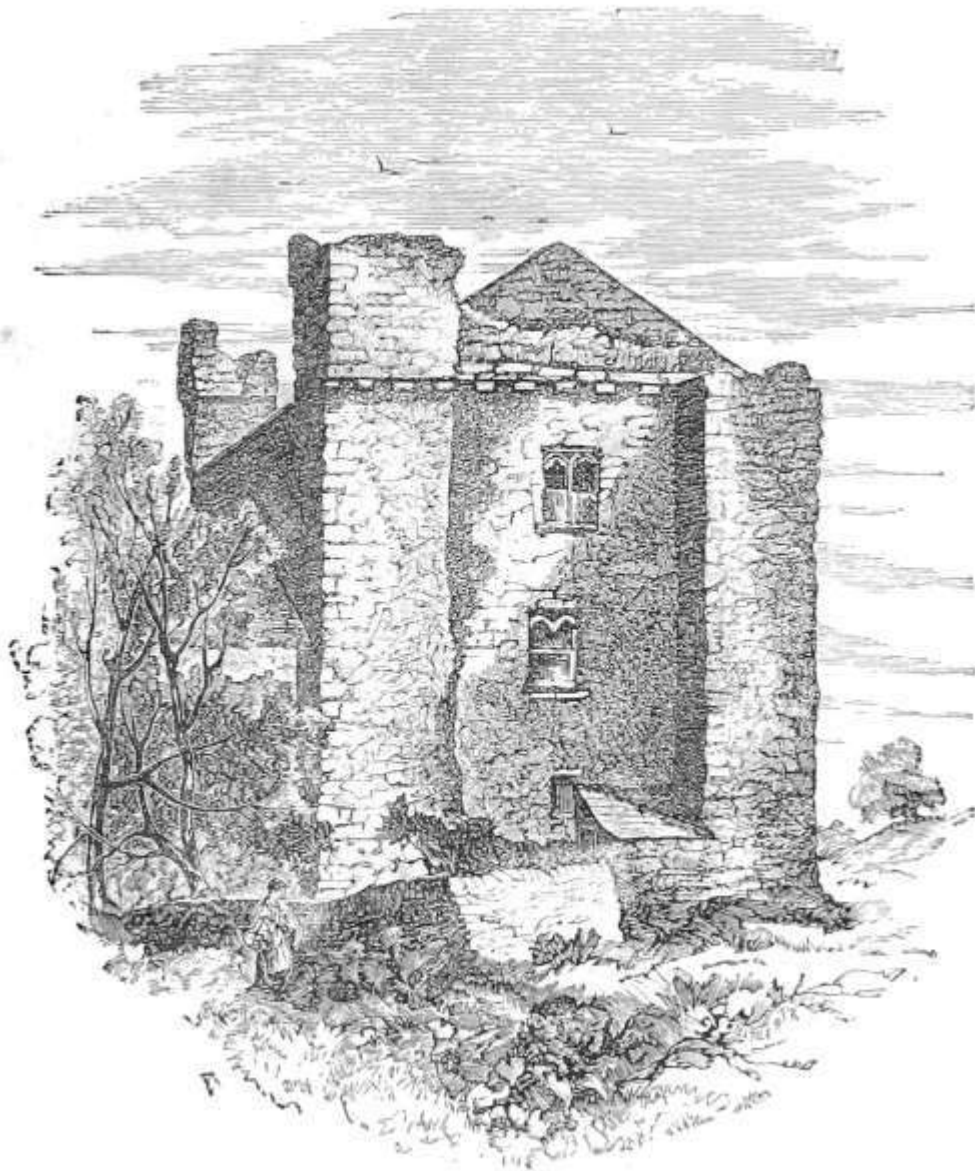
At the extreme corner of the Furness shore, where the tall chimneys shoot up and the thick smoke hangs like a pall, is Barrow, which by the magic power of iron has been suddenly transformed from an obscure fishing village into a busy and populous town, and the seat of industrial and commercial activity. Reaching far out into the sea is lonely wave-girt Walney, with its ruined castle—the pile of Fouldrey—

built on the foundation of the Vikings' stronghold by the monks of Furness as a defence against the marauding Scots—looming darkly against the flashing waters. Black Comb, stern, bleak, and wild, its gleaming summit breaking through the clouds, lifts its huge form with frowning majesty above the dreary moors and storm-worn hills; and, rearward, the eye wanders over the Coniston range to the Old Man, and thence to Bowfell, the twin pikes of Langdale, and round towards Skiddaw, where a succession of mighty headlands—the silent companions of the mist and cloud—crowd one upon another until the dim outlines of their giant peaks are lost in the blue infinity of space.

Apart from its natural beauty and the pleasant prospect it commands, Kirkhead is not without attractions for those who delight in investigating the memorials of prehistoric times. On the steep acclivities on the south side of the hill, mantled with ferns and coarse weeds, and well-nigh hidden with trees and brushwood, is the entrance to a natural opening or cavern in the limestone rock, 40 or 50 feet in length and about 20 feet high, which in the dim and shadowy past has evidently been the abode of some primeval Briton. You can get down to it by an inconvenient track from the top, but the better way is by a path that winds round the base of the hill, through the scrub, and along the edge of the meadow until you reach a heap of soil and *débris* left from previous explorations, when the entrance is seen just above. In the excavations that have been made a skull and other human remains have been discovered, with fragments of rude pottery, implements of stone, and the bones of the red deer, wild boar, fox, and other animals. Near the surface was also found a coin of the reign of the Emperor Domitian (A.D. 84)—strong presumptive evidence that there have been a succession of tenants, and some of them during the period of Roman occupation. Repeated examinations have been made of this primitive abode, and an account of its hidden mysteries will be found in Dr. Barber's "Prehistoric Remains."

Descending from our lofty eyrie, we pass through the little village of Allithwaite, and then strike into a pleasant leafy lane on the left,

bordered with tall trees—oak, and ash, and beech—that look as green and luxurious as if they were buried in some inland combe instead of having had the sea breezes sweeping over them for many a long winter past. A little rindle keeps us in pleasant companionship, sparkling here and there in the deep shadow, and now and then we get glimpses of the level waste of silver sand and the sea beyond, shining through the summer haze. A few minutes' walking and we come in sight of the crumbling remains of Wraysholme Tower, the object of our present pilgrimage, standing a little way back on the left of the road. A bright-eyed youngster holds the gate open for us, with expectant glances, as we pass through into the farmyard, in which the old weather-worn relic stands, and the gladsome looks with which our modest *largesse* is received assure us that it is not unworthily bestowed.



### **WRAYSHOLME TOWER.**

The embattled tower or peel is all that now remains, and whatever of other buildings there may have been have long since disappeared. Built for defence, and as a place of refuge for men and cattle against the incursions of Scottish marauders and enemies approaching from the Irish Sea, it formed the strongest and most important feature of the original structure; and even now, though dismantled and forlorn, and applied to "base uses" its founders little dreamt of, with its thick walls, its small jealous windows, and its gloomy apartments, it gives evidence of purposed resistance to sudden intrusion, and shows that

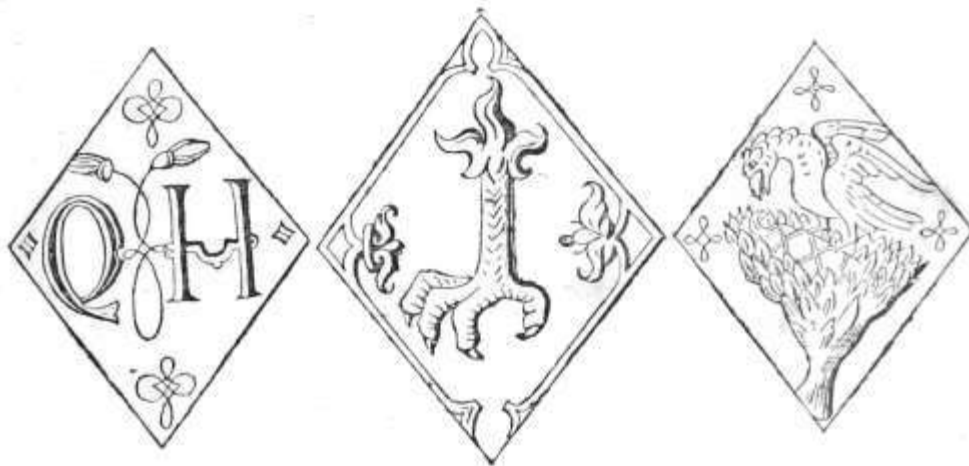
security rather than convenience was the object of its builders—a lingering memorial of those grim and stern old times ere order had spread and law had superseded might, when even power could only feel secure when protected by strongly-fortified walls, a

Monument of rudest times,  
When science slept entombed, and o'er the waste,  
The heath-grown crag, and quivering moss of old  
Stalk'd unremitted war.

The tower in general form is a parallelogram, measuring about forty-five feet by thirty; the strongly-grouted walls are surmounted by an overhanging parapet, with a watch-turret projecting from each angle, giving it the character of a fortalice—as, indeed, it was in the troublous times when watch and ward and beacon lights were necessary safeguards against sudden assaults. In an angle of the thick walls is a spiral stone staircase, communicating with the upper chambers and the roof—the latter, in its original state, having been flat and covered with lead. The masonry, though of great strength, is plain and of the simplest character, the only carved work being the small square-headed windows in the upper stories, which have foliated lights, divided by a mullion, and are apparently of later date than the main structure, having probably been inserted about the close of the long reign of Edward III. In one of these windows the arms and crests of the Harringtons and Stanleys were formerly to be seen, but they were some years ago removed for safety, and are now placed in a window of the adjacent farmhouse. One of the small diamond panes has the well-known Stanley crest—an eagle, with wings endorsed, preying upon an infant in its cradle, with the addition of the fret or Harrington knot—*nodo firmo*—at each angle. On another pane are the letters Q (the equivalent of W) H, with the fret above and below—the initials being probably those of Sir William Harrington, who, according to Dr. Whitaker, fell mortally wounded on the plains of Agincourt, on that memorable St. Crispin's Day in

1415<sup>[17]</sup>. A third pane has depicted upon it an eagle's claw, a cognizance of the Stanleys, with a fleur de lis on each side.

It is not known with certainty when Wraysholme was erected; but probably it was not long after William Mareschal, Earl of Pembroke, founded the Priory of Cartmel (1188); and it may have been intended as a protection for the fraternity of that house, in the same way that Piel Castle was for the security of the monks of Furness; but, if so, the brotherhood did not enjoy a very lengthened tenure, for a little more than a century after, it is found in the possession of the great feudal family of the Harringtons of Aldingham, descended from the Haveringtons or Harringtons of Haverington, near Whitehaven. Sir Robert Harrington, the first of the name settled at Aldingham, which he had acquired in right of his wife, had two sons, the younger of whom, Michael Harrington had—8 Edward II. (1314–15)—a grant of free-warren in Alinthwaite (Allithwaite), in which township Wraysholme is situated, but the property eventually passed to the descendants of the elder brother, Sir John, a great-grandson of whom, Sir William Harrington, Knight of the Garter, was standard-bearer at the battle of Agincourt, where he is erroneously said to have lost his life. This Sir William married Margaret, daughter and heir of Sir Robert Neville, of Hornby Castle, and by her had a son, Sir Thomas Harrington.



In the fierce struggles of the Red and White Roses the Harringtons ranged themselves on the side of the Yorkists, and suffered severely in that internecine conflict Sir Thomas Harrington, who married a daughter of the house of Dacre, and succeeded to the Hornby estates in right of his mother, fell fighting under the standard of the White Rose at Wakefield Green, and his only son, Sir John Harrington, received his death-blow while fighting by his side on that memorable day (December 31, 1460), a day fatal to the House of York, and scarcely less fatal to the victorious Lancastrians; for the cruelties there perpetrated by the Black-faced Clifford were repaid with ten-fold vengeance at Towton a few months later. Drayton, in his "Queen Margaret," recounts the butcher-work that Clifford did at Wakefield when the brave Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, and his son, the Earl of Rutland, fell together—when

York himself before his castle gate,  
Mangled with wounds, on his own earth lay dead;  
Upon whose body Clifford down him sate,  
Stabbing the corpse, and cutting off the head,  
Crowned it with paper, and to wreak his teene,  
Presents it so to his victorious queene,

and the "victorious queene," the haughty Margaret of Anjou, in the insolence of her short-lived triumph, gave the order,—

Off with his head, and set it on York gates,  
So York may overlook the town of York,

Dr. Whitaker tells us that when the news reached Hornby that Sir Thomas and Sir John Harrington, father and son, with their kinsman, Sir William Harrington, Lord Bonville of Aldingham, were slain, the widow of Sir Thomas withdrew to her daughter for consolation, but her son's widow, Matilda, a sister of the Black-faced Clifford,

partaking, as it would seem, of her brother's hard nature, remained, and "was at leisure to attend to business."

With Sir John's death the male line of this branch of the Harringtons terminated. He left two daughters, Anne and Elizabeth, his co-heirs, then aged respectively nine and eight years. Their paternal uncle, Sir James Harrington, took forcible possession of the estates and claimed them as his own, but on an appeal to the Court of Chancery, he was dispossessed and committed to the Fleet, when the wardship of the two young heiresses and the custody of their inheritance were granted to Thomas Lord Stanley, who considerately married the eldest, Anne, to his third son, Sir Edward Stanley, the hero of Flodden Field, and the youngest to his nephew, John Stanley, of Melling, the son of his brother, the first Sir John Stanley<sup>[18]</sup> of Alderley, in Cheshire.

Sir Edward Stanley, who eventually became the possessor of both Wraysholme and Hornby, the former, as it would seem, having been forfeited to the Crown by the attainder of his wife's uncle, Sir James Harrington, who, with his brother, Sir Robert, fought on the side of Richard III. at Bosworth Field, had been a soldier from his youth up. "The camp," it is said, "was his school, and his learning the pike and sword." The lords of Wraysholme, with their retainers, had many a time and oft set out to repel the Scots in their plundering raids across the Border, but now they were called upon to meet the Scottish King himself, who had entered England with a powerful army, and laid waste some of the Border strongholds. Summoning his followers, the valiant Stanley prepared himself for the field, when, as the old ballad tells us,—

Sir Edward Stanley, stiff in stour,<sup>[19]</sup>  
He is the man on whom I mean,  
With him did pass a mighty pow'r,  
Of soldiers seemly to be seen.

Most lively lads in Lonsdale bred,  
With weapons of unwieldy weight,  
All such as Tatham Fells had fed,  
Went under Stanley's streamer bright.

\* \* \* \* \*

From Silverdale to Kent sand side,  
Whose soil is sown with cockle shells,  
From Cartmel eke and Connyside,  
With fellows fierce from Furness Fells.

He and his brave men marched forward until they came to "Flodden's fatal field," when Stanley was entrusted with the command of the rear of the English army, which he led so valiantly, and made such a sudden and unexpected onslaught with his bowmen, that the Scots were put to flight, leaving their King dead upon the field. Scott has enshrined Stanley's deeds at Flodden in imperishable verse, and few couplets are more frequently quoted than that which tells us—

"Victory!—  
Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"  
Were the last words of Marmion.

Doubtless it was a gay day at Wraysholme when the stout Lancashire lads, with their brave leader, returned to tell the tale of victory. Henry VIII., keeping his Christmas at Eltham, the following

year (1514), commanded that Sir Edward Stanley, as a reward for his services in having won the hill and vanquished those opposed to him, as also that his ancestors bore the eagle as their crest, should there be proclaimed Lord Monteagle, which was accordingly done, and by that title he had summons to Parliament, and was made a Knight of the Garter.

Sir Edward Stanley, Lord Monteagle, died in 1584, and about this time the old peel of Wraysholme passed to the Dicconsons, a branch of the family of that name seated at Wrightington, in Eccleston parish, for in the following year "Richd. Dicconson, of Raisholme," appears among the *liberi tenentes* in Cartmel parish, and the place continued in the possession of this family for a century or more. In 1756 it was purchased by John Carter, of Cart Lane, and given by him, in 1790, to his daughter Dorothy, the wife of John Harrison, from whom it has descended through the female line to the present possessor—Thomas Newby Wilson, of Landing, Newby Bridge.

The gloomy-looking old tower, in which the chivalrous and intrepid Harringtons so long held sway, now only exhibits the melancholy aspects of desertion and decay. It is used as an outbuilding to the neighbouring farmhouse, and, though much dilapidated, tells more of time, and time's slow wasting hand, than of the ruinous havoc of ruthless war.

The glory has long passed away, for two centuries and more have rolled by since it was in the heyday of its prosperity. It is now tenantless and forlorn, its battlements are broken, its rooms are desolated, and the wind whistles through the narrow casements that once were storied with the heraldic achievements of its knightly owners. Old time has pressed heavily upon it—may no ruder hand hasten its destruction!

A little more than half a mile from Wraysholme Tower is Humphrey Head, a huge mass of carboniferous limestone that thrusts its gaunt form far out into the bay, dividing the Milnthorpe from the Ulverston Sands. To the north it rises abruptly from the plain, here grim and grey and lifeless-looking, and there decked with a rich embroidery of

lichens, moss, and trailing ivy, while the ledges of the rock are covered with a thick vegetation of ash and hazel, the bright greenery of which is in places relieved by the darker foliage of the yew that here thrives luxuriously. Round towards the sea the steep acclivities are all broken, channelled, and weather-worn, with scarcely a sign of vegetation to relieve their general sterility; and huge heaps that have been brought down by successive storms lie strewn about the shore in picturesque confusion. The rocky cliff which rears its naked front almost perpendicularly to a considerable elevation is not without its tale of sorrow, as we gather from the following warning, inscribed upon a block of limestone:—

Beware how you these rocks ascend,  
Here William Pedder met his end,  
August 22nd, 1857. Aged 10 years.

Near the top of the cliff is the Fairies' Cave—a large cavernous opening or recess formed by the shrinkage of the limestone; and at the base is the Holy Well, a mineral spring famed for its curative properties in Camden's time, and which even within memory was resorted to by the Cumberland miners, who came in large numbers to drink its health-inspiring waters. The spring issues through a fissure in the rock within a few feet of the ground, the flow being at the rate of about a gallon a minute, continuing without variation through the different seasons of the year. The water is perfectly clear and colourless, and effervesces slightly on agitation—an indication of the presence of free carbonic acid. Dr. Barber, who has written an account of the spa, tells us the principal ingredients are the chlorides of sodium and magnesium, and the sulphates of lime and soda; and that in its chief characteristics it most resembles the waters at Wiesbaden and the Ragoczy spring at Kissingen. Its celebrity would seem to have arisen as much from its diluent powers as from its medicinal virtues; and probably recent analyses, which have disclosed the fact that it contains but a small proportion of solid

ingredients, have broken the charm with which traditional piety had surrounded it, and caused the health-seeking pilgrims who formerly believed in its virtues to seek elsewhere the refreshing and restorative draughts which nature provides. The spring is now virtually abandoned; the cottage close by, in which the high-priestess formerly resided, is tenantless and falling to decay; but the key of the spring can be had from the neighbouring farmhouse.

Tradition gathers round this little corner of Lancashire, and the shaping power of imagination has clothed it with the weird drapery of romance—that

Dubious light  
That hovers 'twixt the day and night,  
Dazzling alternately and dim.

When the Harringtons established themselves here the wolf and the wild boar roamed at large through the thick forests of Cartmel, and among the legends and scraps of family history that have floated down through successive generations is the story that on the eminence to the north of Wraysholme the last wild boar was hunted down; from which circumstance the hill has ever since borne the name of Boar Bank. It is said, too, that, far back in the mist of ages, it was from Wraysholme Tower a gallant company rode forth to hunt the last wolf "in England's spacious realm;" and that, after a long and weary chase, the savage beast was tracked to its lair on the wooded heights of Humphrey Head, and there transfixed by the spear of a Harrington. Tradition has been well described as the nursing-mother of the Muses, and these bits of legendary lore, which have been deeply rooted in the memories, and for many a generation have delighted the firesides, of the Cartmel cottagers, have inspired the pen of a local poet, who has told the story of "The Last Wolf" in spirit-stirring verse. This interesting ballad, though varying considerably from the current tradition, is yet a valuable contribution to our Palatine anthology. Its great length—seventy-five

verses—prevents our giving it entire, but the following passages will give an idea of the salient features of the story:—

The sun hath set on Wraysholme's Tower,  
And o'er broad Morecambe Bay;  
The moon from out her eastern bower  
Pursues the track of day.

On Wraysholme's grey and massive walls,  
On rocky Humphrey Head,  
On wood and field her silver falls,  
Her silent charms are shed.

No sound through all yon sleeping plain  
Now breaks upon the ear,  
Save murmurs from the distant main,  
Or evening breezes near.

\* \* \* \* \*

Within those walls may now be seen  
The festive board displayed,  
And round it many a knight, I ween,  
And many a comely maid.

For know that on the morrow's dawn,  
With all who list to ride,  
Sir Edgar Harrington hath sworn  
To hunt the country-side.

A wolf, the last, as rumour saith,  
In England's spacious realm,  
Is doomed that day to meet its death,  
And grace the conqueror's helm.

And he hath sworn an oath beside,  
Whoe'er that wolf shall quell  
Shall have his fair niece for a bride,  
And half his land as well.

The "fair niece" is the orphan Lady Adela—

For beauty famous far and wide,

whose heart has previously been given to Sir Edgar's son; but the course of true love has been characterised by the proverbial absence of smoothness, and the young knight, to escape his father's wrath, has betaken himself to the wars in Eastern lands.

The night's carousal draws to a close, and at break of day the huntsman's horn wakes the sleepers to a glorious chase, when

Full threescore riders mount with speed,

chief among whom, and the competitors for the fair Adela's hand, are the two knights, Laybourne and Delisle—the latter the long-lost son of Sir Edgar, who has returned from the Crusades, and appears in disguise and under an assumed name, though the old retainers, as they view the stranger knight, know that

The long-lost wanderer meets their sight,  
Whate'er his name be now.

The wolf, scared from his covert on Humphrey Head, leads the hunters a long and exciting chase over Kirkhead, past Holker and Newby, and across "the Leven's brawling flood," to the Old Man of Coniston. The dogs are again upon the track, and the grisly beast is away through "Eastwaite's lonely deep," through woodland, brake, and forest hoar, "through Sawrey's pass," and on to the shores of Windermere, where,

With one bold plunge, the mere he takes,  
And, favoured by the wind,  
The flabbing scent abruptly breaks,  
And leaves his foes behind.

But the "tireless bloodhounds" are once more upon the scent, the rival knights follow in hot pursuit, and

Away along the wooded shore  
The chase betakes him now,  
Beneath the friendly shade of Tower  
And craggy Gummerhow.

Then turn aside to Witherslack,  
Where Winster's waters range,  
And thence to shingly Eggerslack,  
And sand-surveying Grange.

Then, with the instinct of despair, the brute makes for his old haunt on Humphrey Head, as "evening shades appear." Reaching a deep chasm in the rock, wolf and hounds rush headlong to their destruction. Laybourne's horse rears at the "giddy brink," but the "bold Delisle" rushes madly on, crying—

Adela! I'll win thee now!  
Or ne'er wend forth again.

Delisle and his "Arab white" pursue their headlong course down the rocky gulf—

Awhile from side to side it leapt,  
That steed of mettle true,  
Then swiftly to destruction swept,  
Like flashing lightning flew.

The shingle in its headlong course,  
With rattling din gave way;  
The hazels snap beneath its force,  
The mountain savins sway.

By chance the Lady Adela happens to be riding by at the moment,  
upon her "palfrey white"—

When, lo! the wild wolf bursts in sight,  
And bares his glistening teeth!

Her eyes are closed in mortal dread,  
And ere a look they steal,  
The wolf and Arab both lie dead,  
And scatheless stands Delisle!

The Red Cross knight now reveals himself as the lost son of Sir Edgar. The father welcomes the wanderer, and in fulfilment of his promise, bestows "his fair niece for a bride." The result may be anticipated. The Prior of Cartmel, happening opportunely to be passing, "to drink the Holy Well"—

Sir Edgar straight the priest besought  
To tarry for awhile;  
Who, when the lady's eye he caught,  
Assented with a smile.

The "Fairies' Cave," on Humphrey Head, served for the nonce as a chapel, for

The monk he had a mellow heart,  
And, scrambling to the spot,  
Full blithely there he played his part,  
And tied the nuptial knot.

And hence that cave on Humphrey Hill,  
Where these fair deeds befel,  
Is called Sir Edgar's chapel still,  
As hunters wot full well.

And still the holy fount is there  
To which the prior came;  
And still it boasts its virtues rare,  
And bears its ancient name.

And long on Wraysholme's lattice light,  
A wolf's head might be traced,  
In record of the Red Cross Knight,  
Who bore it for his crest.

In Cartmel church his grave is shown,  
And o'er it, side by side,  
All graved in stone, lies brave Sir John  
And Adela his bride.

Such is "The Legend of the Last Wolf." The supposed monument, "all graved in stone," still adorns the choir of Cartmel church. Beneath the ponderous canopy the recumbent figures of the knight and his lady, lying side by side, may still be seen, looking the very types of chivalrous honour and conjugal felicity; and there for certainty is the sculptured figure of the veritable wolf, reposing quietly at their feet—confirmations strong as proofs of holy writ, although prosaic

antiquaries, disdaining the faint glimmerings of truth that only steal through the haze of tradition, tell us, with irreverent disregard for the poetry of romance, that the story is apocryphal; and further try to shake our faith by affirming that the figures are those of the valiant Harrington, who fell fighting for the White Rose at Wakefield, and his wife, a daughter of the lordly house of Dacre. But we will not discuss the identity of the departed knights, or the merits of their respective claims to the battered effigies that have failed to perpetuate their names—monuments that

Themselves memorials need.

High up on Humphrey Head the cave in which the nuptial knot was tied still remains; and there, at the foot, is the Holy Well, the waters of which flow as freely as they did in days of yore, though now only imbibed when a chance wayfarer finds his way to this lonely seaside nook, and quaffs a goblet to the memories of the

Brave Sir John,  
And Adela his bride,

and the holy friar who made them one.



# CHAPTER IV.

## AN AFTERNOON AT GAWSWORTH—THE FIGHTING FITTONS—THE CHESHIRE WILL CASE AND ITS TRAGIC SEQUEL—HENRY NEWCOME—"LORD FLAME."



IF any reader wishes to obtain a brief respite from the busy life of the "unclean city," to get away from the noise of looms and spindles, the smoke of factories and the smell of dyes, and to find within easy distance of the great manufacturing metropolis a place of perfect quiet and repose where he may feel that for all practical purposes he is "at the world's end," let him by all means spend a summer afternoon in that quaint little out-of-the-way nook, Gawsorth, and he will return to the crowded mart with little inclination to cry out with the Roman Emperor, "*Perdidi diem.*" Yet how few there are who have made acquaintance with this *beau-ideal* of a quiet rural retreat. The places which it is the proper thing to visit, or "do," as the phrase is, are all carefully mapped out for our convenience; but the literary finger-posts afford but little guidance to the true rambler, who knows that the fairest spots are those which are oftenest overlooked. Gawsorth may be easily reached from Alderley or Chelford; but perhaps the most convenient starting point is Macclesfield, from which it is distant a short four miles.

Macclesfield does not present a particularly prepossessing appearance, though it possesses much that is historically interesting, and you may here and there see relics of mediæval times; but the long centuries have wrought many changes in its condition, and those changes can hardly be said to be from grave to gay. Its forest

was once the hunting-ground of kings. A royal palace occupied a site very near to the present Park Lane, and in the Fourth Edward's reign Humphrey, Duke of Buckingham, had a princely residence there. The town itself was walled, and though there is not now a single stone remaining, the recollection of its fortifications is preserved in the streets—Chestergate, Church Wallgate, and Jordangate—which form the principal outlets from it. Notwithstanding that it once boasted a royal owner, it now presents but a dingy and uninviting aspect, so that we are little loth to leave its steep and tortuous streets, and what Nathaniel Hawthorne would call its ugliness of brick, and betake ourselves to the open country.

On getting clear of the town, we enter upon a pleasant rural highway that rises and falls in gentle undulations. Tall trees border the wayside, which, as we advance, grow thicker, until we reach a double line of spreading beeches that meet in an entanglement overhead, and form a long shady avenue, through which a pleasant vista is obtained. Now and then we meet a chance wayfarer and occasionally a sleepy-looking carter with his team, but the road is comparatively little frequented, and we almost wonder that with the limited traffic it does not become grass-grown. Though it is quiet now-a-days, it was lively enough in the old coaching times, when the "Red Rover" and the "Defiance" were in the zenith of their popularity, and the tootling of the guard's bugle daily awoke the echoes to the inspiring notes of the "British Grenadiers," for it was then the great highway between Manchester and the metropolis. But those days are changed, and our dream of the past is rudely dispelled by the shrill whistle of the "express" as it shoots along the edge of the Moss, leaving a long white pennon of steam in its wake.

As we journey on we get agreeable glimpses of the country, and the varied character of the scenery adds to the charm. Below us on the left stretches a broad expanse of bog—Danes Moss, as it is called—commemorating some long-forgotten incursion of the wild Scandinavian hordes—

When Denmark's raven soared on high.

On the outskirts of the town is an old farmstead, called Cophurst, on the site of which, as tradition sayeth, Raphael Hollinshead, the chronicler, resided three hundred years ago. Close by is Sutton, once the home of another Cheshire worthy—Sir Richard Sutton—“that ever famous knight and great patron of learning,” as King, in his “Vale Royal,” calls him, “one of the founders of Brazenose, in Oxford, where by his bounty many of Cheshire youth receive most worthy education.” The foreground is broken into picturesque inequalities, and in the rear rises a succession of swelling hills, part of the great Kerridge range—the stony barriers of the Peak country. Where the steep crags cut sharply against the eastern sky is Teg’s Nose, famed for its gritstone quarries. Further on, Shutling’s Low rears its cone-shaped peak to a height of 1,660 feet, and behind we catch sight of the breezy moor, on the summit of which stands that lonely hostelry, the Cat and Fiddle, the highest public-house, it is said, to be found in the kingdom. The great hill-slopes, though now almost bare of wood, once formed part of the great forest of Macclesfield, in which for generations the Davenports, as chief foresters, held the power of life and death over the robber bands who in the old times infested it, as well as the punishment of those who made free with the Earl’s venison; and they not only held but exercised their rights, as the long “Robber Roll” at Capesthorne still testifies. Though it has long been completely disafforested, the memory of it still lingers. Forest Chapel, away up in the very heart of this mountain wilderness, perpetuates the name, and Wildboar Clough—Wilbor Clough, as the Macclesfieldians persist in calling it—Hoglegh, and Wolfscote remind us of the former denizens of these moorland wastes. Beyond Teg’s Nose a great gap opens in the hills, and then Cloud End rears its rugged form—dark, wild, and forbidding. From the summit, had we time to climb it, a charming view might be obtained of the picturesquely varied country—

Of farms remote and far apart, with intervening space  
Of black'ning rock and barren down, and pasture's pleasant face;  
And white and winding roads that creep through village, vale, and  
glen,  
And o'er the dreary moorlands, far beyond the homes of men.



**GAWSWORTH OLD HALL.**

On the right the scenery is of a more pastoral character. Lawns and meadows stretch away, and the eye ranges over the broad fertile plain of Cheshire—over quaint sequestered nooks and quiet homesteads, and old-fashioned villages, with here and there a grey church tower rising in their midst; over well-tilled fields and daisied pastures, and league upon league of cultivated greenness, where the thick hedgerows cross and recross each other in a network of verdant beauty. The crumbling ruins of Beeston Castle crowning the edge of a bold outlier of rock, may be dimly discerned, with Peckforton rising close by its side, and beyond, where a shadowy form reaches like a cloud across the horizon, we can trace the broken outline of the Welsh hills, with Moel Fammau towering above them all.

Presently the battlemented towers of Gawsworth Church are seen peering above the umbrage; then we come to a cross road, and, turning sharply to the left, continue along a green old bosky lane, and past the village school, close to which is a weather-worn memorial of bygone days—the old wayside cross standing beneath a clump of trees, erected, as old writers tell us, to “guide and guard the way to church,” and the sight of which, with the surroundings, calls to remembrance Hood’s lines on the symbol of the Christian’s faith:—

Say, was it to my spirit's gain or loss,  
 One bright and balmy morning, as I went  
 From Liège's lonely environs to Ghent,  
 If hard by the way-side I found a cross,  
 That made me breathe a pray'r upon the spot—  
 While Nature of herself, as if to trace  
 The emblem's use, had trail'd around its base  
 The blue significant Forget-me-not?  
 Methought, the claims of Charity to urge  
 More forcibly, along with Faith and Hope,  
 The pious choice had pitched upon the verge  
 Of a delicious slope,  
 Giving the eye much variegated scope;—  
 "Look round," it whisper'd, "on that prospect rare,  
 Those vales so verdant, and those hills so blue;  
 Enjoy the sunny world, so fresh and fair,  
 But (how the simple legend pierced me thro'!)"—  
 "Priez pour les Malheureux."

For a short distance the road now descends, and near the bottom a bank rises abruptly on the right, crowned with a plantation of oak and larch—the "sylvan shade"—beneath which reposes the "breathless clay" of the eccentric poet, wit, and player—Samuel Johnson—known by his generation as "Lord Flame," of whom we may have something to say anon. A few yards further on is the new hall, or "New Buildings," as it is sometimes called, a plain brick house, the south wing only of which has been completed, built in Queen Anne's reign by that Lord Mohun who brought the noted Cheshire will case to a sanguinary end, when he and his adversary, the Duke of Hamilton, fell together in a duel in Hyde Park, Nov. 15, 1712. At this point the view of Gawsorth opens upon us, presenting one of the fairest pictures of quiet rural beauty that Cheshire possesses. There is a dreamy old-world character about the place, a sweet fragrance of the olden time, and a peaceful

tranquillity of the present; and the ancient church, the picturesque half-timbered rectory, and the stately old hall, with the broad grass-bordered road, the wide-spreading sycamores, and the old-fashioned fish ponds, in the weed-grown depths of which every object, with the overarching sky and the white clouds sailing therein are given back with distinct vividness, impart an air of venerable and undisturbed respectability. The place belongs so entirely to the past, and there seems such a remoteness between the hoar antiquity of a scene so thoroughly old English and the busy world from which we have just emerged, that we almost hesitate to advance.



### **GAWSWORTH CROSS.**

There is no village, so to speak, the church, the parsonage, and the two halls, with a cottage or two adjoining the church steps, being all the buildings we can see; there is not even that usual and supposed to be indispensable adjunct of an old English country village, the village inn, the nearest hostelry being the Harrington Arms, an old coaching house on the London road, a quarter of a mile or more away. The church, a grey and venerable pile, with a remarkably well proportioned tower, which exhibits some good architectural details of the perpendicular period, stands in its graveyard, a little to the south

of a broad grass-grown road, upon a gentle eminence encompassed by a grey stone fence that looks as ancient as the building itself. Tall trees overshadow it—larch and fir—that rear their lofty spines from near the water's edge, and, yielding to the northern blasts, bend in graceful curves towards the ancient fane. You can mount the steps and pass through the little wicket into the quiet "God's-acre," and surely a spot more suggestive of calm and serious thought is rarely witnessed. Move slowly through the tall grass and round the green graves where

The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep,

Tread lightly upon the weather-stained and moss-grown stones that loving hands have set up to keep alive the memories of those who sleep beneath. Near the porch is the chamfered shaft of an ancient cross, and close by two or three venerable yews cast their funereal shade. One of them, an aged torso, is garlanded with ivy, and buttressed on one side by a short flight of steps that have been built against it. Its gigantic roots grasp the earth with a tenacity that time cannot relax. It has lived through long centuries, and seen generation after generation christened, married, and buried, and, though now hollowed and decayed, the trunk still preserves some of that vitality that was in its fulness when the valorous Fittons were in the heyday of their power.

Separating the churchyard from the road is an artificial lake or fish-pond, one of a series of three or four, through each of which the water flows in succession, and where, in the chivalrous days of the knightly owners of Gawsworth, the water jousts and other aquatic games took place. But those times of pomp and pageantry have passed away, and the surface is now seldom ruffled save when occasionally a fish rises, or a stately swan glides gracefully through the warm sunshine. In its smooth mirror you can see the old grey tower, the projecting buttresses, the traceried windows, and the embattled parapets of the church, with their pleasant environment of

green all clearly reflected, presenting the appearance of an inverted picture; while the old patrician trees that border the wayside bend over the glassy surface, creating in places a vernal shade that Undine might delight in.

On the opposite side is the Rectory, a picturesque old structure of black and white timber work, "magpie" as the people call it hereabouts, with quaint overhanging gables, grotesque carvings, and mullioned windows, with small diamond panes—one of them, that lighting the hall, a spacious apartment with an open timber roof, containing fragments of heraldic glass that would seem to have formerly belonged to the church. There is a wide entrance porch in the centre of the building, and over the door, between two shields of arms, this inscription—"Syr Edward Fytton, Knight, with my lady Mare ffyton, hys wyffe"—from which it has been commonly assumed that the house was built by Sir Edward Fitton, who married Mary, the daughter and co-heir of Guicciard Harbottle, of Northumberland, and so would fix the time of erection in the reign of Henry VIII. But this inscription originally belonged to another building of later date than the Rectory, which, as we learn from some verses preserved in Ashmole's "Church Notes," taken *circa* 1654, was erected by George Baguley, who was rector of Gawsorth from 1470 to 1497.

The "old" Hall, the ancestral home of the Fittons, now occupied by Lord Petersham, stands a short distance east of the church. Like the Rectory, it is half-timbered and of the Elizabethan period, but the building is now incomplete, a part having been taken down some seventy years ago, though the original quadrangular form may still be traced. In the rear, in what has been originally the courtyard, is a curious octagonal oriel of three stories, each story overhanging the one immediately below in a sort of telescope fashion. The windows are filled with leaded panes arranged in a variety of shapes and patterns. The principal front, which faces the road, has been rebuilt and painted in imitation of timber-work. Over the principal entrance is a shield of sixteen quarterings, representing the arms of the Fittons and their several alliances, surrounded by a garter, on which

is inscribed the motto, "*Fit onus leve*"—a play upon the family name. There is also the following inscription beneath—

Hec scvltvra finita fvit apvd  
Villam Galviæ in Hibernia per  
Richardvm Rany, Edwardo Fyton  
Milite primo dno presidente totius  
Provinciæ Conatiæ et Thomoniæ.  
Anno Domini 1570.

In front of the hall is a grove of walnut trees, very patriarchs of their kind; and adjoining is a large grassy amphitheatre, which Ormerod, the Cheshire historian, has described as "a deserted pleasure ground;" but, after careful examination, and with some show of probability, pronounced by Mr. Mayer to be an ancient tilting ground, where in times past the warlike Fittons amused themselves and their Cheshire neighbours with displays of martial skill and bravery.

Before we enter the church or view the hall, it may be well to glance briefly at the earlier history of the place. Gawsworth, though now an independent parish, was formerly included within the limits of the great parish of Prestbury; and even at the present day the whole of the townships which surround it—Macclesfield, Sutton, Bosley, North Rode, Marton, Siddington, and Henbury—all owe ecclesiastical allegiance to the mother church of that widespread parish. The original name, as we learn from the Domesday survey, was *Gouersurde*. After the Conquest it formed part of the possessions of the Norman Earls of Chester; one of whom, Randle de Meschines, in the twelfth century, gave it to his trusty follower, Hugh, son of Bigod, with the right of holding his own courts, without pleading before the prefects at Macclesfield, in consideration of his rendering to the earl annually a caparisoned horse; and this Hugh, in accordance with the fashion of the age, adopted the name of Gawsworth. Subsequently the manor seems to have passed to Richard Aldford, whose daughter, Lucy, brought it in marriage to the Orrebies, who held it

free from all service save furnishing one man in time of war to assist in the defence of Aldford Castle. They retained possession until the reign of Edward I., when Richard, son of Thomas de Orreby, dying without male issue, his only sister, Isabel, who succeeded to the inheritance, and who had previously married in succession Roger de Macclesfeld and Sir John de Grindon, Knight, both of whom she survived, conveyed it on her marriage in 1316–17 to her third husband, Thomas Fytton, a younger son of Edmund Fytton, of Bolyn (Wilmslow); and thus Gawsworth became closely associated with a family noted for their chivalrous exploits, and famous in the annals of the county.

Of the early history of this distinguished family—"Knights of a long-continued Race and of great worth," as Webb styles them—who for so many generations held sway and practised a splendid hospitality in Gawsworth, but few memorials have been preserved beyond the dry details embodied in their *Inquisitiones post mortem* in the Public Record Office, and the inscriptions which still remain upon the sumptuous monuments erected to their memory in the church which their pious munificence reared.

Thomas Fitton, who acquired the manor of Gawsworth by his marriage with the heiress of Orreby, had a son also named Thomas, who married Margaret, a daughter and co-heir of Peter Legh, of Bechton, and added to the patrimonial estate half of the manor of Bechton and lands in Lostock-Gralam, which he obtained in right of his wife. It was during the lifetime of this Thomas that we find the first attempt made to erect the chapelry of Gawsworth, which was then dependent upon Prestbury, into a separate parish. At that time the Abbot of St. Werburg's, Chester, held the rectory of Prestbury, and in the chartulary of his house it is recorded that in April, 1382, he conceded to John Caxton, rector of Gawsworth, the privilege of burying his parishioners on paying a moiety of the dues within ten days after each burial, and with a proviso that any parishioner of Gawsworth might be interred at Prestbury without any claim on the part of the rector of Gawsworth.

In explanation of the granting of this privilege it may be mentioned that in those times, on the formation of a parish, the inhabitants were required to perform their parochial rites at the mother church, the "ealdan mynstre" of the parish. But as many parishes were of considerable territorial extent, those resident in the remote hamlets found it inconvenient to resort on all occasions to the mother church. To provide for the spiritual requirements of the people in such districts, private chapels or oratories, founded by the lords of the soil, were allowed to be licensed in convenient situations. They were frequently attached or immediately adjacent to the lord's mansion, and were designed more especially for his own accommodation and that of his dependents; and Gawsworth, which is distant nearly six miles from Prestbury, was of this class. To prevent such foundations trenching upon the rights of the mother church, they were merely licensed for preaching and praying, the ministration of the sacrament of baptism and the performance of the right of burial being strictly prohibited. These latter were the true parochial rites, and the grant of them to a chapel or oratory severed its connection with the parish church, and converted it into a parochial chapel, or, more strictly speaking, into an independent church.

But who was John Caxton, the parson of Gawsworth? The name is not very frequently met with, and the thought suggests itself that he may have been, and probably was, a kinsman of that William Caxton who, a century later, set up his press in the precincts of Westminster Abbey, and revolutionised the world by practising the art which Gutenberg had invented.

In 1391 Thomas Fitton was appointed one of a number of influential persons in Cheshire who were constituted a commission to levy a subsidy of 3,000 marks (£2,000) in the city of Chester, on account of the King's confirmation of the old charters belonging to that city. He died in 1397, and was succeeded by his son, Sir Lawrence Fitton, then aged 22, who married Agnes Hesketh, a daughter of the house of Rufford, in Lancashire. This Sir Lawrence, who held the lordship for the long period of 60 years, fills no inconsiderable space in the annals of the county. He was frequently one of the forest justices in

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