

# The History of Honley

AND ITS HAMLETS FROM  
THE EARLIEST TIME TO  
— THE PRESENT. —



By Mrs. MARY A. JAGGER.

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## PREFACE.

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No greater calamity can happen to nations or persons than to lose all knowledge of their past. Indigenous to Honley soil, love for my native place has prompted me to write its history before old scenes fade into the background, and the old is changed to the new. I shall not treat of wonderful developments, great movements, or striking events which have taken place in the outside world, and at one time or another agitated mankind, only in their relation to Honley or its neighbourhood. The tragic elements of life can be found in our midst without going further afield. A country would have no history to record if it was not for the type of men and women brought under review in this publication, who held to the place of their birth, dwelling side by side, and bound together by ties of common birth and speech. In the past, man went forth to "his work and to his labour until the evening"—clearing the forest for his dwelling, cultivating the land for food, spinning and weaving to clothe himself. Birth and death, joy and sorrow, romance and tragedy, failure and achievement, made up the sum of human life as at present.

When collecting the raw material for this history, I am indebted to many sources for help. If it had not been for the learned researches of such men as the late Sir Thomas Brooke, and other members of the Yorkshire Archæological Society, much valuable knowledge regarding the earlier history of Honley would not have come to light. I have also copied extracts from works, diaries, etc. written by other persons; and friends have kindly supplied me with information of a more modern character. These aids will be duly acknowledged in the pages of the history. In addition, I can write from personal knowledge of a past generation of men and women as varied

in character as in position whose lives overlapped my own at an early age, and whose oral traditions, customs, superstitions, recreations, principles, etc. will be fully described. Many interesting events which have occurred in Honley during the last fifty years might have been overlooked, if it had not been that I have kept diaries since the age of twelve years. These daily records have now proved useful. As far as possible, I have endeavoured to avoid mistakes or quote from mythical authorities. For instance, those oral traditions not found in any book when handed down by word of mouth, generation after generation, are not always trustworthy; so that with precautions errors may occur.

I hope, however, that this history will prove interesting even to those people who are accustomed to making fine distinctions. When persons and scenes, long since faded in the background of years, are brought to mind, echoes from a past may find an echo in their hearts; for often a face or familiar object, is canonised for ever by remembered joys and sorrows of existence. To my older readers who may perhaps prove less critical, a name, homestead, garden, field-path, stile, or tree, may carry memories of the time when life spread out before youthful eyes like a beautiful sunrise. On the other hand, their mention may only be too suggestive of a day when the hopes of a lifetime rung out their last knell.

To my younger readers, whose hands are stretched out to the future (and rightly so), I wish them to realise that in the past (as at present), there were good and true men and women who worked and struggled to bring sunshine, light, and better ways of living to those around them.

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Local illustrations have been supplied to me by Mrs. Dearnley, Mr. N. T. Avison, and Mr. C. E. Exley. Photographs of Honley worthies have been kindly lent by their descendants.



“The world does not require to be informed as to be reminded.”—(*Hannah More*).

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“Build not good squire, worthy parishioners a new Church high or low, repair the old with loving care and reverent anxiety, there is a charm, there is a value inexpressibly precious in ancientness and continuity of remembrance. The world is poorer and smaller by the loss of any old thing visibly connecting us poor fleeting mortals with the sacred by-gone years, leaving a door open unto the land of the past. It is deeper than a question of taste, this of blotting out traces of the great past from our visible world, blotting them out for ever with all their softened beauty and mystery, and tender sadness. The worst thing is to erase the venerable relic from the earth. The next worse thing is to restore it. Keep old England, thy old Churches, and old Manor-houses too, and town-halls, and ivied walls, and shady winding roads; these things, believe it, tend to nourish all that is wholesome and beautiful in conservatism, and to foster a love of the country of our ancestors, which is also our own, and will, we hope, be our childrens.”—(*Patricius Walker*).

