

FISHWICK HENRY

A HISTORY OF
LANCASHIRE

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PREFACE

The enormous amount of material, printed and in manuscript, which is available for a History of Lancashire, makes the writing of a popular work on that subject by no means an easy task; indeed, when first mentioned to me, I thought it was almost impossible, by any process of selection, to produce within the compass of an ordinary octavo volume such a book as would be a popular history, and yet not fail to present a faithful picture of the county.

However, I have made the attempt, and in accomplishing the task I must have necessarily left out much which many readers would prefer should have been inserted; but I trust that I have not inserted what some would wish I had omitted. I have endeavoured to confine myself as far as possible to the history of the county as a whole, and have not allowed myself to go into personal or local details except when such were required to illustrate the subject in hand. Of the large army of Lancashire authors and celebrities I have said nothing, as strictly speaking personal notices belong rather to biography than history; and if it were not so, I may, I think, stand excused, as to have merely given their names would have well-nigh filled the volume.

In making my selection of materials from the almost inexhaustible stores at my disposal, I have rejected everything which in my opinion is not capable of being well authenticated. In a work of this character it is not desirable to encumber the text with the very large number of references to authorities which otherwise might be required. The reader, however, may rest assured that I have in no case drawn on my imagination for my facts, neither have I accepted the statements of others without first satisfying myself that those statements are trustworthy and reliable.

Henry Fishwick.

The Heights,
Rochdale.

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTORY

Lancashire, on its south and south-east, is bounded by the county of Chester, the division for about 50 miles, *i. e.*, from Stockport to Liverpool, being the river Mersey; on the west is the Irish Sea; on the east, up to Graygarth Fell, in the parish of Tunstall, lies Yorkshire; from thence to the waters of Morecambe Bay the boundary is formed by Yorkshire and Westmorland; across the bay is a portion of Lonsdale hundred (north of the Sands), which is almost surrounded by the counties of Westmorland and Cumberland, the extreme eastern boundary being formed by a portion of Windermere Lake. Lancashire from north-west to south-east measures 86 miles, and it is 45 miles across at its widest part; it contains 1,219,221 acres. It has within it 69 parishes (exclusive of 9 extra-parochial districts), 446 townships, and 16 Parliamentary cities and boroughs, which return 35 members, the county divisions adding 23 to this number.

The great divisions of the county are the six hundreds of Lonsdale (north and south of the Sands), Amounderness, Leyland, Blackburn, Salford, and West Derby.

Lonsdale north of the Sands is situate in the extreme north of Lancashire, and is the most picturesque portion of the county, as it embraces a portion of the well-known Lake District; its highest mountain is the Old Man, near Coniston Water, which is 2,577 feet above the sea-level.

The two subdivisions of Lonsdale north of the Sands are Furness and Cartmel. The former is the larger district: its chief towns are Barrow, Ulverston, and Dalton; in the latter there is not a single town of any considerable size or importance. Barrow-in-Furness is one of those towns which the enterprise of the latter half of the present century has suddenly created. A few years ago it was scarcely a village; it is now an incorporated borough, and not only does a large business in iron, but is a port of some importance. With this exception, and a few iron mines, almost the whole district is agricultural in its character.

Furness Abbey, Coniston Priory, and Cartmel Priory were all located in the southern end of this part of the county.

Lonsdale south of the Sands is also chiefly an agricultural district, and is, compared with some other parts of the county, but thinly populated; here and there tall factory chimneys may be seen, but, except in the neighbourhood of Lancaster, they are few and far between.

Time-honoured Lancaster, with its castle and priory, form the central historic point of interest in this part of the hundred; here also were five of the largest forests in Lancashire – Wyersdale, Quernmoor, Bleasdale, Myerscough, and Fulwood. Coming south of Lonsdale, the county is much wider, and is divided longitudinally; the western portion, as far as the river Ribble, forming the hundred of Amounderness, which, like the more northern parts, is inhabited by people engaged in the cultivation of the soil, except in and immediately around the town of Preston, which is now one of the great centres of the cotton trade. The parishes of Kirkham, Garstang, St. Michael's-on-Wyre, Lytham, Bispham and Poulton are all in a district long known as the Fylde, and their respective churches are all of antiquarian interest. Preston is now by far the largest town in the division; the manufacture of cotton was introduced here in 1777, and the trade has since developed to very large proportions. Here were two religious houses, one a convent of Grey Friars, and the other a hospital for lepers. The Ribble, in its course from Mitton to Preston, intersects the county. To the east of Amounderness is the hundred of Blackburn, which, although it is twenty-four miles in length, only contains five parishes; its north-western extremity is more or less agricultural, but the rest of it is densely populated, and has become a great manufacturing district.

Blackburn, Burnley, Accrington, and several other towns in the district, are all engaged in the staple trade of the county. Clitheroe Castle, Whalley Abbey, and Ribchester are in this hundred.

The south bank of the Ribble forms the western boundary of the hundred of Leyland. The only market-town in the division is Chorley, which until 1793 formed a part of the parish of Croston; like so many other towns of Lancashire, it rose out of obscurity through the introduction of spinning mills towards the end of the last century, and it is now a town of considerable size and importance; in addition to its cotton-mills, coal, stone, and iron are found and worked in the neighbourhood. At Penwortham, on the bank of the Ribble, was a priory dedicated to St. Mary.

The ancient parish churches of Croston, Leyland, Eccleston, and Standish are all of historic interest.

The hundred of Salford has now an enormous population, and the very names of its principal towns call up a vision of tall factory chimneys, dense smoke, and the noise of machinery; manufactories of every kind abound, and it is not saying too much to add that few industries are unrepresented, coal, stone, iron, cotton and woollens, however, constituting the chief trade.

The city of Manchester and the boroughs of Salford, Oldham, Bolton, Rochdale, and Bury are all well-known names in the textile or mechanical world.

West Derby hundred completes the county. This was in Saxon times called Derbei, and was a recognised division; the river Mersey on the one side, and the Irish Sea on the other, have not a little contributed to render this one of the most important districts in England. Liverpool, with its miles of docks and its connection with every part of the world, has become the recognised second port in the country. In the north-east corner of West Derby are the extensive coalfields of Wigan.

A considerable portion of the hundred is as yet untainted with the smoke of the manufactory. Many of the parish churches are of great antiquity; amongst them may be named Ormskirk, Leigh, Wigan, Winwick, Warrington, Childwall, Walton-on-the-Hill, Prescott, Sephton and Huyton. Burscough Priory was in the parish of Ormskirk, and Liverpool had its ancient castle.

Having thus briefly (but at as great a length and in as much detail as the nature and scope of the series of County Histories will allow) described the County Palatine, we may at once proceed to deal with its history as a not unimportant section of the United Kingdom.

CHAPTER II

PRE-ROMAN LANCASHIRE

Notwithstanding what has been written upon the so-called “glacial nightmare,” it still remains an undisputed fact that at some far-distant period the whole of Lancashire was sunk beneath a sea, the waters of which carried along with them huge masses of ice, which, in their passage southward, deposited boulders which they had borne in their chill embrace for hundreds of miles. The hills which rose above the sea were covered with perpetual snow, and the valleys between them were filled with glaciers, which in many instances left a terminal moraine.

The direction which these icebergs took was invariably from north-west to south-east, or north-north-west to south-south-east, that being sufficiently indicated by the polished and striated rocks frequently discovered in all parts of the county. A careful investigation of the erratic blocks which have been discovered in one small district alone¹ shows nearly 400 of these rocks, some of which have travelled from Scotland, but by far the larger number have come from the Lake District; these are occasionally found in the valleys, but are generally located on the sides and tops of hills at an elevation of from 600 to 1,200 feet above the sea-level. Geology furnishes abundant proofs that at this period the level of the land in what is now known as Lancashire was fifty or sixty feet higher than it is at the present day; this is very apparent along the coast-line, where the remains of submarine forests are frequently met with. It is more than probable that, from the mouth of the Mersey to the estuary of the Dudden, what are now sand banks were in prehistoric times dry land on which grew forests of the oak, the birch, the ash, the yew, and Scotch firs.

All along the coast-line from Liverpool to Preston have been found at low water the roots and trunks of trees.

Near Fleetwood and Blackpool frequent traces of these forests have been met with below the high-tide level, the trunks of the trees all pointing eastward, with their torn-up roots to the west; stumps of Scotch firs were found near Rossall, and near to them the cones which had fallen from their branches; trunks of oak and yew trees were also discovered at Martin Mere (in Poulton).

In these forests the brown bear, the wild boar, roes and stags, the wolf and the reindeer, and a host of other wild animals, would all be discovered by the neolithic man when he first made his appearance in the district.

Whence came this earlier settler? and at what exact period did he come? are questions which modern scientific research has failed to satisfactorily answer.

It has been suggested – and with some show of reason – that the early neolithic man in Lancashire had been driven from the Yorkshire coast by the victorious invader, who came armed with a war-spear and polished stone axe.² Be this as it may, the evidence of such a race of men having for some time lived in parts of the county is of the most conclusive character. Although odd specimens of flint instruments have been unearthed, in various districts, it is only in the eastern portion of the county that distinct traces of a neolithic floor have been discovered – that is to say that, on removing the top soil, beneath it has been found a surface so profusely sprinkled with flint chippings and implements as to leave no room for doubt but that at some very early period there was settled upon it a race of men whose weapons of offence and defence, as well as the few instruments required for their simple personal wants, were made out of the flints collected from this drift.

This neolithic floor is found on both sides of Blackstone edge, and is generally at least 1,300 feet above the sea-level, but on the Lancashire side its area is not very large, as it does not reach Burnley

¹ “Recent Results of the Investigation into Local [Rochdale] Erratic Blocks,” by S. S. Platt.

² H. Colley March, F.S.A., “The Early Neolithic Floor of East Lancashire,” p. 7.

on the north, nor Bolton on the west. The depth of the soil or peat above this floor varies from one to ten feet. The flints consist of knives, scrapers, arrow-heads, spear-tips, and minute instruments, probably used to bore holes in bone needles; they are none of them polished or ornamented.

In the parish of Rochdale alone there are twenty-five places where these implements have been found; in fact, there is scarcely a hill-top in the district where traces of them have not been unearthed. The great number of chippings met with in small areas of these high lands indicate that these are the sites of the primitive man's workshop – here he sat and laboriously fashioned the weapon or the instrument which he required. Barbed arrow-heads are extremely rare, but a beautiful specimen was lately found on Trough Edge, a hill near Rochdale.³

These men have left no traces of their dwelling-place, and they do not appear to have made pottery; probably they lived in earth dwellings or caves in the hillsides. The single fact of their inhabiting only the high ground indicates that the fear of an enemy was ever before them, and it may well be that the foe which drove them from Yorkshire may have ultimately expelled them from their hillside settlements.

At some later period the district became inhabited, though probably only sparsely, by Celtic races and people of Celtic extraction; of the latter were the numerous tribes of the Brigantes, one of which was the Setanii or Segantii (the dwellers in the water country), which is said to have been chiefly located between Morecambe Bay and the ridge of hills which divide Lancashire from Yorkshire. Another tribe also located here was the Voluntii.

At this date Lancashire contained many extensive forests, and in every direction were trackless morasses. As these almost savage tribes lived in tents or huts, and spent their time in hunting or fighting, it is not surprising that the traces of their existence are faint and unsatisfactory, and that it is often impossible to decide whether particular remains belong to the early Celtic or the late British. The geographical nomenclature of the county furnishes some examples of Celtic origin, but for the most part it clearly points to a later period. That these Celtic settlers were well spread over the entire district is certain, as traces of them have been discovered in almost every parish.

Stone hammers, stone axes, spear-heads, socketed celts, cinerary urns, and remains of that class, have been unearthed in many places, amongst which are Aldringham, Cartmel, Tatham, Penwortham, Garstang, Preston, Pilling Moss, Silverdale, Kirkham, Bolton, Cuerden, Flixton, Liverpool, Winwick, Lancaster, Manchester, Royton, Rochdale, and Burnley; this list is alone sufficient to demonstrate that the early settlers had penetrated into all parts of the county.⁴

In the Furness district remains of entrenchments, ramparts, stone rings, and other evidences of these early settlers are abundant; they have been unearthed at Hawkshead, Hall Park, Bleaberry Haws Torver, Holme Bank, Urswick, Heathwaite Fell, Coniston, and other places in the neighbourhood, proving beyond a doubt that here was an extensive British settlement. Beside these there are several cairns, and portions of stone wall attributable to the same period.

One of the most extensive of the latter group is the one at Heathwaite Fell, where on the top of an elevated piece of moorland is a site near half a mile long by 700 yards wide, which has been encompassed by a stone wall originally 2 feet thick. This enclosed space has been subdivided into five or more smaller enclosures by cross walls, and each of these divisions had its own water-supply. The apex of the ground has been cut by a wall, and this encloses the north elevation of the site. About midway along the west side another wall leaves the outer one and crosses the summit, and cuts off the west angle. On the centre of this wall are situated the "homesteads" or headquarters of the settlement. The homesteads are situated upon the south-east slope of the hill, and upon the cross wall dividing off the western ward. They consist of seven walled courts or yards, three smaller chambers, and two

³ Engraved, with other flints, in "History of Rochdale," p. 4.

⁴ A complete list, up to date, will be found in Rev. William Harrison's "Archæological Survey of Lancashire," which will appear in the next volume of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society.

very small mural huts and chambers. The walls of these are usually of dry-built masonry, and are in some places 3 feet thick and in others from 6 to 7 feet.

The main entrance to these enclosures is on the south. The mural huts are placed at the north-west angle of the west court and the south-west angle of the south court. The first is the most interesting; it is contained in a small rectangular block of masonry filling up the angle, and the plan of the chamber itself is that of a joiner's square. There is no trace left of any covering to these huts, but they were probably covered with stone flags or branches of trees. Within and without the enclosures are cairns of all sizes, one of which is known as The Giant's Grave. It is remarkable that all the settlements in the Furness district are found on the fells, and never in the dales, some of them being 300 feet above the sea-level. Of any actual defensive structure there is no trace. The settlers here evidently buried their dead close to their homes, and from the calcined bones found it is clear that the bodies were burnt.

These earthen burial-mounds are, however, very scarce in the district; rude-stone cists have been unearthed, but no trace of metals or ornamental workmanship except a few pieces of rude pottery.

At Holme Bank, Urswick, the rampart of earthed stones encloses a five-sided figure, within which are traces of cross walls, the general plan of which points to the site of an early settlement. The rampart or entrenchment discovered at Hawkeshead Park is of a similar character. At Scrow Moss, near the foot of Coniston Old Man, is another of these enclosures, a drawing of which is given in *Archæologia* (vol. liii., part 2). At Dunnerdale Fell is an enclosure very similar to that found at Heathwaite, though much smaller, the central homestead being formed by a single wall, near to which are several cairns and remains of walls. On Birkrigg Common, at a place called Appleby Slack, is another of these small enclosures, consisting of a single rampart or vallum of earth, enclosing a pear-shaped area, not far from which is a tumulus, and about half a mile to the south-east is a double concentric stone circle. Concerning these various remains in the Furness district, the writer of the exhaustive article in *Archæologia*⁵ just referred to is of opinion that their elevated position is due to the fact that the lower ground was at that period such a dense mass of scrub and jungle that it was utterly untenable for residential purposes. These various enclosures do not appear to have been forts, as the homesteads themselves were all on the sloping sides of the hills, but were rather the dwelling-places of a very early tribe of settlers, who were living at peace with their neighbours, and had, therefore, no need of a system of defence, such as we find traces of in other parts of the county. The plan of these settlements was simple – the smaller courts were the living apartments, and were no doubt covered with some kind of roof; the larger enclosures were for the cattle, or possibly for the lower orders of the tribes who held the place.

Many tumuli belonging to the early British settlers have been opened, as at Briercliffe, near Burnley, where the covering of earth had been partly wasted away, leaving a rudely-marked circle of stone, near to which in 1885 was found a sun-baked hand-made urn of pre-Roman origin, containing the remains of an adult and a child. At Wavertree, near Liverpool, in 1867, a large tumulus, since called Urn Mound, was opened, and six urns containing partly-calcined human bones were discovered, all of which were early British. Near to these were found a flint arrow-point and several “scrapers.”⁶

Canoes assigned to this period have not infrequently been dug out of peat which once formed the bottom of lakes, such as Marton Mere, in Poulton-le-Fylde, and at the estuary of the Ribble, near Penwortham. A very remarkable bronze beaded torque of the late Celtic period was found by some workmen in 1832 at Mowroad, in the parish of Rochdale. This ornament had probably been worn round the neck of some person of rank; it weighed one pound five ounces, was made of bronze,

⁵ H. Swainson Cowper, Esq., F.S.A.

⁶ *Hist. Soc. of Lanc. and Ches.*, xx. 131.

and was of superior workmanship and ornamentation.⁷ The British tribes did not congregate in such numbers as to establish anything like a town, or even a large village, in these Northern parts; but no doubt when the Romans took possession they found here and there clusters of hut dwellings, which the geographer Ptolemy afterwards described as British settlements. One of these was Regodunum, which was somewhere near the mouth of the Ribble, perhaps at Walton-le-Dale. The author just referred to (who lived about A.D. 140) mentions the estuaries on the west coast, three of which, from the latitude and longitude given, clearly refer to Lancashire rivers; they are named as the Estuary Moricambe, the Haven of the Setantii, and the Estuary Belisama. Belisama was the old name for the Mersey; the Haven of the Setantii was at or near the mouth of the Ribble; and the other estuary was at the conflux of the Kent with the waters of Morecambe Bay.⁸

At Walton-le-Dale and at Lancaster the Romans are believed to have founded their stations on the sites of British settlements, as in both these places have been found celts, arrow-heads, cinerary urns, and other signs of the earlier race.

⁷ Engraved in "History of Rochdale," p. 5. See also *Archaeologia*, xxv. 595.

⁸ See *Transactions of Hist. Soc. of Lanc. and Ches.*, xxx. 81.

CHAPTER III

THE ROMANS AS CONQUERORS AND RULERS

The coming of Julius Cæsar in August, B.C. 55, with his legions of Roman soldiers to punish the men of Kent for having sent assistance to one of the Gallic tribes, the *Veneti*, then at war with Rome, was what led on to the subsequent subjugation of the whole of Britain. This did not, however, take place for nearly a century afterwards, as, on the Britons undertaking to pay tribute, the invaders withdrew. In A.D. 43 the Emperor Claudius appears to have looked at this country with an envious eye, and finally decided to annex it to Rome; and with this view he sent his General, Aulus Plautius, with an army of some 48,000 men, to subdue the natives, who were, however, found to be a race not easily conquered. After severe fighting, he entrenched himself on the bank of the Thames, where he was joined by the Emperor himself in the following year. Step by step, slowly but steadily, the invaders made their way northwards.

The building of a line of forts by the Imperial Legate from the Severn to the Nene, thus dividing the country, led to a rebellion of the tribe of Cenimagni (or Iceni), the dwellers in what is now Norfolk or Cambridgeshire. In this case the natives were again unsuccessful; and in recording their defeat Tacitus⁹ first mentions the Brigantes in terms which clearly indicate that even before this time they had given the Romans some trouble. The passage runs: "He (Ostorius Scapula) now approached the sea which washes the coast of Ireland, when commotions, begun amongst the Brigantes, obliged the General to return thither, as he had formed a settled determination not to prosecute any new enterprise till his former were completed and secure. The Brigantes, indeed, soon returned to their homes, a few who raised the revolt having been slain and the rest pardoned."

The *Silures*, inhabiting the western part of Wales, under their King Caractacus, maintained a fierce resistance to Ostorius, but were ultimately compelled to bear the Roman yoke. At this period the Queen of the Brigantes was Cartismandua, whose betrayal of Caractacus has preserved her name from oblivion. She afterwards married a leader of the Silures named Venusius, who, according to Tacitus, was for some time under the protection of the Romans; but having been divorced from Cartismandua, she again took up arms against the invaders.

In A.D. 58 in the eastern district of Britain reigned Queen Boadicea, who, taking advantage of the Roman Governor, with many of his soldiers, being engaged in the country of the Brigantes, attacked the towns of St. Albans, Colchester and London, with victorious results, the legion being destroyed and many thousand settlers slain. This probably led to a withdrawal of the Romans for a time from the north-west, and thus left Lancashire in peace. The whole of South Britain in A.D. 62 was finally conquered by the Romans; but it was left to the Roman Governor, Petilius Cerealis, to fight out the battle with the Brigantes, who were reputed to be the most populous state in the whole province. Many engagements took place, attended with much bloodshed, and the greater part of the tribe were either subjugated or slain.¹⁰

Although there is no positive evidence that any of the men of Lancashire were engaged in these struggles, it seems scarcely possible that it could have been otherwise. Cerealis was Governor from A.D. 71 to 75, and during that time he was constantly fighting battles with these hardy North-country men; but neither he nor his successor, Julius Frontinus, could effectually subdue them, and it was not until A.D. 79 that the final conquest was made by Julius Agricola, the father-in-law of Tacitus, who relates that in the spring of that year Agricola reassembled his army, and having personally carefully examined "the estuaries and woods," he allowed the enemy no respite, but harassed them with sudden

⁹ "Annals," xii. 31.

¹⁰ Tacitus, "Hist.," book iii., ch. lix.

incursions and ravages, the result being that several communities, which had not before yielded their independence, submitted to the foe, gave hostages, and allowed fortresses to be erected.¹¹ There are many reasons which make it almost a certainty that these estuaries include those of the Dee, the Mersey, the Ribble, the Wyre, the Lune and Morecambe (the Kent). Very difficult indeed must have been the task of overcoming the fierce and determined resistance offered by the natives. Much of the country was covered with timber, particularly to the west, and on every side were large tracts of moss and fen, the pathways through which were treacherous, and known only to those who used them; and Agricola was acting like a wise and experienced general when he directed his first attention to the mouths of the rivers and to the almost pathless forests.

Agricola is allowed by all historians to have been a judicious governor, and to have made efforts to accustom the conquered race to the comforts and luxuries of Roman citizens. He also taught them to build temples, houses and baths; to many of them the Roman language was taught, and they were encouraged to live together in towns and villages. Probably in his time arose the forts at Mancunium (Manchester), Bremetonacæ (Ribchester), and Galacum (Overborough).

After the middle of the second century, the Brigantes as a tribe disappear from the page of history; henceforth they are Britons.

The Hadrian Wall, which stretches for seventy miles from the Solway Firth to the Tyne, nowhere touches Lancashire, but the frequent battles which raged in its vicinity were near enough to have an effect upon the district, and no doubt occasionally the invading forces from the North penetrated into the county. The Caledonians, in A.D. 180, broke through the wall, and for some time remained masters of a considerable portion of the North of England.¹² In A.D. 208 the Emperor Severus, with his sons Caracalla and Geta, visited Britain, and sent some of his soldiers to the North, as he found that the inhabitants of what is now Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cumberland had not yet become reconciled to the Roman government, and, to add to the difficulty, the people on the other side of the Hadrian Wall – the Picts and Scots – required repression.

Severus died at York in 211, and for the next fifty years little is known of the Roman rule in Britain beyond the fact that the names of several legates, who acted as its governors, are on record. Between A.D. 258 and 282 the historians are also silent about this district, yet coins of Posthumus, Victorinus and Tetricus (three of the usurpers known as the “Thirty Tyrants”) have been found in various parts of Northumbria which are now known as Lancashire. In A.D. 282 the Emperor Carus gave the island of Britain to his son Carinus, who was murdered in the year following. Passing over the next two Emperors, we find Carausius has the government of Britain ceded to him, and whilst on a visit to the Brigantes’ district he was assassinated at York, A.D. 293, by his minister, Allectus, who at once usurped the purple in Britain; but not being acknowledged, a powerful force was sent against him from Rome, which met him not far from London, and in the engagement which followed he was slain and his army defeated. In the beginning of the next century, the Emperor Constantius Chlorus undertook an expedition against the Scots, and for that purpose appears to have made York his headquarters; he died in that city on July 25, A.D. 306, and his son Constantine was at once proclaimed Emperor by the garrison there stationed. The exact date of the introduction of the Christian religion into Lancashire is unknown, but we know that in 303 the Emperor Diocletian persecuted the followers of the new religion in Britain, and that the first recorded British martyr, St. Alban, died in 304 near the city which bears his name. Great must have been the change in the aspect of religious thought which, in 311, led to the conversion of Constantine the Great. This illustrious Emperor had no doubt a powerful influence over spiritual affairs in Lancashire, although the latter part of his life was not spent in Britain; he died in A.D. 337. The latter half of the century witnessed

¹¹ Tacitus, “Vita Agricolaë,” cap. xx.

¹² Xiphiline’s abridgment of Dion Cassius. It may be well here to state my general indebtedness to the late W. Thompson Watkin’s “Roman Lancashire”; Liverpool, 1883.

the beginning of the decline of the Roman power; the supposed unpassable Hadrian Wall was not enough to keep back the Northern warlike tribes, who, making their way through it, soon became masters of the district near its southern side, and by A.D. 368 the invaders had even reached the metropolis.

At this time was sent to Britain a great general, Theodosius, who, with a large army, drove back the Picts and Scots to the north of the Clyde; he also restored and rebuilt many of the towns and fortresses, and to him is attributed the naming of the province of Valentia, which is comprised between Solway Firth and the Tyne, and the Clyde and the Firth of Forth. All this, however, did not prevent the Picts, Scots, and Saxon pirates from re-entering the country as soon as the Roman legions were withdrawn, their services being required elsewhere. Rome, in fact, at this time was fast declining in power, and by the year 410 she had been obliged to call all her troops away from Britain, and Honorius had proclaimed Britain to be an independent state – in other words, the Romans left the country either because they could not any longer retain it, or they did not consider it worth the great drain upon their resources which it must have been.

The so-called independence which followed was so disastrous that the Britons found the last state worse than the first, and entreated their former rulers to assist them in repelling the foes they themselves were unable to overcome. They wrote: “The barbarians chase us into the sea, the sea flings us back on the barbarians; the only choice left us is to die by the sword or by the waves.”

The appeal was in vain, and the wretched Britons were left to their own resources. That they were disorganized and without leaders will easily be understood, and to this must be added that for years the best of the youths had been trained as recruits and drafted off to the Continent, from whence very few returned; and then, again, the inhabitants, especially in the North (including Lancashire), must have been dreadfully reduced by the ravages continually made by the Picts and Scots. Thus it was that Lancashire, with the rest of the country, became an easy prey, first to the marauding foes from the North, and afterwards to those races which ultimately became the makers of England.

It is curious to notice the Roman influence on traditions still common in modern Lancashire – the beating of parish bounds recalls the Roman *Terminalia* in honour of the god of limits and boundaries; May Day is the festival of Flora; the marriage-ring, the veil, the wedding gifts, and even the cake, are all Roman. Our funeral customs are also Roman – the cypress and the yew, the sprinkling of dust on the coffin, the flowers on the grave, and the black clothes.¹³

¹³ E. Sanderson, “Hist. of England,” p. 19.

CHAPTER IV

ROMAN REMAINS

The history of Roman Lancashire has so recently been published¹⁴ that, even if our space would allow (which it will not), it would be unnecessary, in a work of this description, either to furnish too much detail, or to dwell too long on the vexed questions of the subject which have not even yet been settled.

When the Romans invaded Lancashire, one of their chief difficulties was the want of roads, which rendered many parts of the district almost untenable, and to remedy this state of things, one of their first acts after conquest must have been to construct a way by which access could easily be gained to the newly-acquired territory. As everyone knows, the Romans were skilful in all kinds of engineering work, and as road-makers they have never been excelled; so durable were their pavements that we find remains of them still in all parts of the country. Up hill and down dale they went, from point to point, nearly always in a straight line – if a bog was in the way it was filled up; if a mountain, it was crossed. Taking these roads as they are now acknowledged by antiquaries to have run, and following along their route, we shall come across the chief remains which time has left of our conquerors and rulers.

The main Roman roads in Lancashire are all believed to have been constructed during the Higher Empire; that is, at or before the time of Hadrian (A.D. 117–128). The minor roads are of later and uncertain date.

Of the nine towns which became Roman *coloniae*, the nearest to Lancashire were Eboracum (*York*), and Deva (*Chester*), but Mancunium (*Manchester*) was also a great military centre, and from it there were five Roman roads.¹⁵ Two of these came from the Cheshire side of the Mersey, one passing through Stretford, and the other through Stockport to Buxton.

All trace of the road from Manchester to Stretford has disappeared, but its course ran through Cornbrook (near which it was cut through by the Bridgewater Canal) and by the botanical gardens to Crossford Bridge, on the Mersey. A few small remains have from time to time been found at Stretford, but scarcely sufficient to justify the idea that here was a Roman camp.¹⁶ On the Stockport side of the Mersey we have traces of the road to Buxton, but on the Lancashire side its site is covered by the modern highway, part of which is still known as High Street.

Another of the approaches to Manchester was from the east. This also only for a short distance was on Lancashire soil. It came from Yorkshire, and, passing through Glodwick and Hollinwood, in the parish of Oldham, skirts the township of Failsworth, where at the end of the last century it was visible for upwards of a mile, and was commonly known as the “Street,” or “Street Lane.”¹⁷ At Newton Heath traces of it were seen in 1857, and Whitaker saw remains of it in Ancoats and Ardwick.

In making the Oldham Park, a number of copper coins from the period of Antoninus Pius (A.D. 135) to Victorinus (A.D. 218) were found, and in 1887, during the excavations made for Chamber Mill, near the site of the road, a box was unearthed which contained 300 bronze and brass coins. The following were verified: Antoninus Pius (A.D. 135–161), Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 161–180), Commodus (A.D. 180–193), Septimius Severus (A.D. 193–211), Caracalla (A.D. 211–217), Julia Mamica (A.D. 222–235).¹⁸

¹⁴ “Roman Lancashire,” W. Thompson Watkin; Liverpool, 1883.

¹⁵ There are also traces of two other supposed Roman roads.

¹⁶ *Lanc. and Ches. Ant. Soc.*, iii. 262.

¹⁷ Whitaker’s “History of Manchester,” 1771.

¹⁸ *Lanc. and Ches. Ant. Soc.*, viii. 156.

Before referring to the other roads from Manchester to the North and to the West, it will be well to glance at the Mancunium of the Romans, and it is needless, perhaps, here to remark that the building of the modern Manchester and Salford must of necessity have almost obliterated every material trace of this ancient stronghold.

Somewhere about the time of Agricola (A.D. 78–85), or possibly a little earlier, the Romans erected a *castrum* on a tongue of land made by a bend of the river Medlock. Whitaker, the Manchester historian,¹⁹ thus describes what remained of this in 1773:

The eastern side, like the western, is an hundred and forty [yards] in length, and for eighty yards from the northern termination the nearly perpendicular rampart carries a crest of more than two [yards] in height. It is then lowered to form the great entrance, the *porta praetoria*, of the camp: the earth there running in a ridge, and mounting up to the top of the bank, about ten in breadth. Then, rising gradually as the wall falls away, it carries an height of more than three for as many at the south–eastern angle. And the whole of this wall bears a broken line of thorns above, shews the mortar peeping here and there under the coat of turf, and near the south–eastern corner has a large buttress of earth continued for several yards along it. The southern side, like the northern, is an hundred and seventy–five [yards] in length; and the rampart, sinking immediately from its elevation at the eastern end, successively declines, till, about fifty yards off, it is reduced to the inconsiderable height of less than one [yard]. And about seventeen [yards] further there appears to have been a second gateway, the ground rising up to the crest of the bank for four or five at the point...

One on the south side was particularly requisite ... in order to afford a passage to the river; but about fifty–three yards beyond the gate, the ground betwixt both falling away briskly to the west, the rampart, which continues in a right line along the ridge, necessarily rises till it has a sharp slope of twenty [yards] in length at the south–western angle. And all this side of the wall, which was from the beginning probably not much higher than it is at present, as it was sufficiently secured by the river and its banks before it, appears crested at first with an hedge of thorns, a young oak rising from the ridge and rearing its head considerably over the rest, and runs afterwards in a smooth line nearly level for several yards with the ground about it, and just perceptible to the eye, in a rounded eminence of turf.

As to the south–western point of the camp, the ground slopes away on the west towards the south, as well as on the south towards the west. On the third side still runs from it nearly as at first, having an even crest about seven feet in height, an even slope of turf for its whole extent, and the wall in all its original condition below. About an hundred yards beyond the angle was the *Porta Decumana* of the station, the ground visibly rising up the ascent of the bank in a large shelf of gravel, and running in a slight but perceivable ridge from it. And beyond a level of forty–five yards, that still stretches on for the whole length of the side, it was bounded by the western boundary of the British city, the sharp slope of fifty to the morass below it. On the northern and the remaining side are several chasms in the original course of the ramparts. And in one of them, about an hundred and twenty–seven yards from its commencement, was another gateway, opening into the station directly from the road to Ribchester. The rest of the wall still rises about five and four feet in height, planted all the way with thorns above, and exhibiting a curious view of the rampart below. Various parts of it have been fleeced of their facing of turf and stone, and now show the inner structure of the whole, presenting to the eye the undressed stone of the quarry, the angular pieces of rock, and the round boulders of the river, all bedded in the mortar, and compacted by it into one. And the white and brown patches of mortar and stone on a general view of the wall stand strikingly contrasted with the green turf that entirely conceals the level line, and with the green moss that half reveals the projecting points of the rampart. The great foss of the British city, the Romans preserved along their northern side for more than thirty yards beyond the eastern end of it, and for the whole beyond the western. And as

¹⁹ Whitaker as an authority is good where he is describing things which he saw himself, but otherwise many of his theories border upon romance. (Vol. i., p. 49, 1773 edition.)

the present appearances of the ground intimate, they closed the eastern point of it with a high bank, which was raised upon one part of the ditch, and sloped away into the other.

Many inscribed stones have been found on the site of this *castrum*, which originally were built into the wall; one is noticed by Camden, which read:

#. CANDIDI

PEDES XX

III

i. e., Centuria Candidi, Pedes xxiii.

Another bore the inscription:

COHO. I. FRISIN.²⁰

#. MASAVONIS

P.XXIII

– which may be translated into, “The century of Masavo of the first cohort of the Frisians [built] 23 feet.”

The Frisii were inhabitants of Gaul, who were frequently at war with the Romans, but towards the end of the first century, though they were not actually under Roman rule, they had agreed to contribute men for the imperial army; hence their presence in Lancashire.

There have been other centurial stones found near the Manchester settlement which are of considerable interest. One was discovered in 1760 on the south side of the Medlock, near Knott Mill; all that remains of the inscription is:

... ** QPOB

XVAR ** CHOR. I

RIS. P. *****

The other centurial stone was found in 1796. It measures 15 inches by 11. It had inscribed upon it:

²⁰ The late Mr. Thompson Watkin maintains that the N at end of the first line should be AV.

COHR. I

FRISIAVO

> QVINTIANI

€ P. XXIII

The translation would be, “The century of Quintianus, of the first cohort of the Frisians, [built] 24 feet.” This stone was found near to one of the gateways to the *castrum*. A tile inscribed to “The twentieth legion, valiant and victorious,” was found in 1829, and two others, bearing the words (when extended) *Cohortis III. Bracarum*. A small portion of the wall of a building within the *castrum* is still preserved; a great portion of it consists of fragments of unhewn red sandstone.

In 1612, under the roots of an oak-tree, near to the Roman side, was found part of an inscribed altar. It was much mutilated, and had probably been built into a wall after the departure of the Romans. It is 27½ inches in height, 15½ inches in breadth, and nearly 11 inches thick. This altar passed through many hands, and its whereabouts is now unknown, but a copy of the inscription on its face has been preserved. It was dedicated to “Fortune the preserver, Lucius Senecianus Martius, a centurion of the Sixth Legion, (surnamed) the Victorious.” This legion was stationed at Eboracum (York), A.D. 120.

Another altar (or, rather, a part of one) was found in Castlefield. It was of red sandstone, and was 2 feet 5 inches high. It is now preserved at Worsley New Hall. Its inscription may be rendered as, “To the god ... Præpositus of the Vexillation of Rhætii and Norici performs his vow cheerfully and willingly to a deserving object.” This inscription therefore informs us that part of the garrison of Mancunium consisted of a body of soldiers belonging to the Rhætii and Norici; the former came from Switzerland, and the latter were Tyrolese. This is remarkable as the only description yet discovered in Britain which thus refers to these troops. The amount of pottery discovered has not been large, but amongst it were some fragments of Samian ware, on one of which is a representation of a hunting scene. Samples from the Roman potteries of Upchurch have also been dug up, but none of them bear the maker’s name.

About two miles from the *castrum*, in the bed of the river Irwell, was found in 1772 a golden ornament for the neck (a bulla), which was richly ornamented; along its upper border was a hollow tube through which to pass the cord by which it was suspended round the neck of the wearer. Only one other specimen of this kind of ornament in gold has been found in England, and that also was in Lancashire (in Overborough). Within the area of the *castrum* various minor remains have from time to time been discovered, including a massive gold ring, coins, urns, tiles, spear-heads, household gods, and Roman pottery.²¹

Amongst the coins were many of the reigns of Trajanus (A.D. 53–117), Hadrianus, Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius;²² they were all found in or near what is still known as Castlefield.

Around this Roman stronghold something approaching a town was no doubt built, if, indeed, the conquering forces did not find some such settlement existing on their arrival. From the evidence

²¹ “Palatine Note–Book,” iii. 67.

²² For full details of these see Watkin’s “Roman Lancashire.”

of the remains found, this suburban quarter was mostly on the north of the *castrum*. In Tonman Street, in 1839, was discovered a bronze statuette of Jupiter Stator. Remains of domestic building have frequently been met with, and the site of the cemetery lying on the south–east side of the station is indicated by the numerous sepulchral urns discovered there, as well as human bones and lachrymatory vessels of black glass. Judging solely from the remains which are known to have been found here, the conclusion we must arrive at is that, important as Mancunium was as a military centre, the village or town around its *castrum* was not as important as that of Ribchester.

The dates of the various coins recorded (many more have been found but not recorded) clearly show that the Romans were settled at Mancunium from about A.D. 80 to the time when they left the country.

Traces of a road have been found between Manchester and Wigan, and the latter place was certainly a Roman station, though it has not been satisfactorily proved to be identical with the *Coccium* named in the tenth Iter of Antoninus. In 1836 the ditch and agger by which the station was fortified were still visible near the crown of the hill on which part of Wigan now stands.²³ Many Roman coins and urns have been found near the station, and a stone built into the present parish church is considered to have been a portion of a Roman altar. From Wigan the road went north and south.

Returning to Manchester: from this centre issued another road going in a straight line to Ribchester; it passed across Campfield and the site of what is now the Victoria railway–station; it went on to Prestwick, Lower Darwen, Blackburn, and finally to the bank of the Ribble near Ribchester; the remains of the road have been seen nearly over the whole of its length. It is not thought to be quite so ancient as the other roads out of Mancunium;²⁴ however this may be, at Bremetonacum (Ribchester) was erected the largest *castrum* in the whole county.

Roman Ribchester was probably founded by the Emperor Agricola or by Hadrian.

Like nearly all the large stations, it was placed near to a river, and in this case the Ribble served as the fosse on the south–eastern side; its other boundaries have been clearly defined, the outline of fosse and vallum being still quite apparent, and within its limits are included the parish yard and Vicarage garden: its total area covers about ten statute acres. Its dimensions are: from the vallum on the north–west to the bed of the river 615 feet, and from the vallum on the south–east to that on the opposite side 611 feet. The corners on the north and north–east are rounded off, the southern ones being lost in the bed of the river, which has considerably altered its course.

At the angle pointing north, in 1888, a gateway was discovered.²⁵ It was 14 feet wide, the end of the wall at each side being carefully rounded.

The construction of the vallum was at the same time exposed, and showed that it was formed of boulder stones put together with cement. It lies 6 feet below the present surface, and is about 5 feet wide.

Upon this base was raised the rampart of earth well beaten down. Outside the vallum on the south–western side is a fosse (or dyke), of which the outer limit is about 43 feet from the vallum.

In 1888–89 this rampart was cut through in seven places. At one of these cuttings on the south–western side the vallum was found to be 4 feet 6 inches wide at the base, and inside it, at a distance of 4 feet, and level with the base, was found a layer of oak shingles – that is, pieces of split oak – each about 4 to 5 feet long, 2 or 3 inches thick, and 3 to 4 inches wide; these were placed at right angles to the vallum, and at about 7 inches apart, with their widest sides lying horizontally.

These shingles are pointed at the end next the vallum, and broader and squarer at the other end. In the second cutting near the western angle the vallum was found to be 6 feet wide, and below the base there was a layer of imported clay; below this was a layer of red sand 2 feet thick, and under that

²³ *Archaeological Journal*, xxviii., p. 114, and xxx., p. 153.

²⁴ Watkin's "Roman Lancashire," p. 55.

²⁵ Through the influence of the Rev. J. Shortt, Vicar of Hoghton, whose description of the find is here followed.

a quantity of gravel. Here again were found the shingles, of which there were three rows, all lying at right angles to the vallum.

The longest of these shingles were from 9 to 14 feet, and were those at the greatest distance from the vallum. Two other cuttings exposed two jambs of a gateway, and the layer of shingles was found to extend from the inside through the gateway to the length of 7 or 8 feet outside; they were larger and longer than any of the others. Under them was a layer of gravel 9 inches thick, and below this, again, a floor of oak planks, smooth and tightly jointed, and stretching across the gateway. Beneath this was another layer of gravel, under which were four large shingles about 14 feet long, 1 foot wide, and 6 inches thick, which were laid at right angles to the shingles above them. On the north-eastern side of the vallum was a strong oak post found standing upright, which appeared to have been a gate-post. In 1725 Dr. Stukeley, the antiquary, visited Ribchester at a time when a portion of the south-eastern boundary was exposed through the action of the river, and he mentions having seen “the floor along the whole bank,” which was no doubt made up of similar shingles. The use to which these oak shingles were put has not yet been satisfactorily settled, but the most probable theory is that they were intended to make sure the foundation of the path behind the rampart. They have not been discovered at any other Roman station in Britain. Another peculiarity of the Ribchester camp is the gates being placed in an angle of the quadrilateral instead of in the centre of one of the sides.

Outside the camp at Ribchester there was a settlement of considerable size and importance. There were at least two temples, the largest of which was probably over 100 feet long; it had sixteen pillars in front, and others around it, forming a peristyle. The inscription over the entrance (which was found some years ago) shows that it was dedicated “To the Deity: for the safety of the Emperor ... and of Julia ... the mother of our Lord [the Emperor], and the camps under the care of Valerius Crescens Fulvianus, his Legate [and] Pro-Prætor. Titus Floridius Natalis, Legate, our Præpositus and Governor, from the reply [of the oracle] restored the temple from the ground, and inaugurated it at his own expense.” The mention of the Empress Julia fixes the date to between A.D. 211 and A.D. 235. The four pillars forming the entrance to the Bull Inn at Ribchester were from the ruins of one of the two temples. The bases of some of the columns of the larger building are preserved at the Rectory; they are of rude workmanship, but appear to be in the Doric style.

This temple is believed to have been destroyed by fire. From the inscription just quoted it would appear that it was then rebuilt, and it is at least possible that the original building may have been destroyed by the Scots, who at this time waged fierce war with the Romans.

The evidence as to the existence of the smaller temple is not so conclusive, although several stone cylindrical columns, each with a foliated capital, said to have belonged to it, are still preserved.

Beside the “finds” of coins, rings, querns, amphoræ, etc., there have been from time to time sculptured stones brought to light which tell their own history. A few only of these can here be mentioned: a walling stone inscribed Leg[io] Vicesima V[alaria] V[ictrix] Fecit (The Twentieth Legion, Valiant and Victorious, made [it]); a large sculptured altar which bore an inscription “To the holy god Apollo Maponus for the welfare of our lord [the Emperor], and of the Numerus of Sarmatian horse Bremetennacum [styled] the Gordian, Antoninus of the Sixth Legion, [styled the] Victorious. [His] birthplace [was] Melitene.” The date of this is believed to be between A.D. 238 and A.D. 244.²⁶ In 1603 Camden saw at Ribchester an altar which he describes as the largest and fairest that he had ever seen; this is now at Stonyhurst College. It was dedicated “To the goddess mothers, Marcus Ingenuius Asiaticus, a decurion of the cavalry regiment of the Astures, performs his vow willingly [and] dutifully to a deserving object.”

Altars dedicated to these Deæ Matres are not uncommon in Britain; they are often represented by female figures each bearing a basket of fruit. Another altar was dug up in the churchyard; its inscription refers to Caracalla and his mother Julia Domna (the widow of Septimius).

²⁶ Watkin's “Roman Lancashire,” p. 133.

In 1796 a boy playing near the road leading to the church accidentally discovered a helmet, which its subsequent owner²⁷ thus described: “The superior style of workmanship of the mask to that of the headpiece is also remarkable. It measures ten inches and a half from its junction to the skull-piece at the top of the forehead to its bottom under the chin. A row of small detached locks of hair surrounds the forehead a little above the eyes, reaching to the ears, which are well delineated. Upon these locks of hair rests the bottom of a diadem, or *tutulus*, which at the centre in front is two inches and a quarter in height, diminishing at the extremities to one inch and an eighth of an inch, and it is divided horizontally into two parts, bearing the proportionate height just mentioned. The lower part projects before the higher, and represents a bastion wall, separated into seven divisions by projecting turrets, with pyramidal tops, exceeding a little the height of the wall. These apertures for missile weapons of defence are marked in each of the turrets. Two arched doors appear in the middle division of this wall, and one arched door in each of the extreme divisions. The upper part of the diadem, which recedes a little so as to clear the top of the wall and of the turrets, was ornamented with seven embossed figures placed under the seven arches, the abutments of which are heads of genii. The central arch and the figure that was within it are destroyed, but the other six arches are filled with a repetition of the following three groups: a Venus sitting upon a marine monster; before her a draped figure with wings, bearing a wreath and palm-branch, and behind her a triton, whose lower parts terminate in tails of fish. Two serpents are represented on each side of the face near the ears, from whence the bodies of these reptiles surround each cheek and are joined under the chin. From the general form of the diadem being usually appropriated to female deities, and the circumstance of the lower division being composed of a wall and turrets in the same manner as the heads of Isis, Cybele, and the Ephesian Diana are decorated, added to the effeminacy and delicacy of the features of the mask, one may conclude that it alludes to these goddesses; but the manner in which the face is accompanied with serpents strongly indicates that it also comprises the character of Medusa...” The head portion of the helmet is ornamented with soldiers on horse and on foot. This is considered one of the finest specimens of a Roman helmet yet discovered. In 1875, in the bed of the Ribble, was found a sepulchral slab representing a horse-soldier spearing a fallen foe. The stone is 5 feet long and 2½ feet in breadth.²⁸ Several other tombstones have been discovered here, the inscription on one of which, being translated, records that “In this earth is held that which was at one time Ælia Matrona; she lived twenty-eight years, two months, and eight days: and Marcus Julius Maximus her son; he lived six years, three months and twenty days: and Campania Dubitata her mother; she lived fifty years. Julius Maximus, a sigularis consularis of the Polish cavalry, the husband of an incomparable wife, and to a son most dutiful to his father and to a mother-in-law of very dear memory, has placed this.”

The number of miscellaneous Roman articles which have been found at Ribchester is considerable. In 1884, just outside one of the gateways leading to the camp, a massive gold brooch was found; its weight is 373 grains, and it is in the shape of a harp, measuring 2 inches in length. Roman brooches of gold are very rarely met with.

In making graves in the churchyard from time to time small articles have been found; and in the Vicarage garden, almost every time the soil is turned, fragments of Samian pottery, etc., are brought to light.

These various *finds* have, perhaps, given rise to the local tradition that:

It is written upon a wall in Rome:
Ribchester is as rich as any town in Christendom.

²⁷ Mr. Townley. See “*Vetusta Monumenta*,” iv. 5.

²⁸ Abram’s “*History of Blackburn*,” p. 159.

But much of old Ribchester is lost through the shifting of the bed of the river, which formed one side of the *castrum*.

From Ribchester issued five roads: (i.) To Yorkshire through Chadburn; (ii.) to Manchester; (iii.) to Morecambe Bay through the Fylde; (iv.) to Lancaster, joining the main road at Galgate; (v.) to Westmorland *viâ* Overborough.

The road to Yorkshire passed through Langho, crossed the Calder near a place called “Potter’s Ford,” and leaving Clitheroe on the east, went over the rising ground to Chadburn and over the Yorkshire border to Skipton. Roman coins have been found at Langho,²⁹ and also the remains of a rectangular building 70 feet square, which is believed to have been a small camp; its site is still known as “Castle Holme.”³⁰ Between Chadburn and Worsthorne, in 1788, nearly 1,000 silver *denarii* of the Higher Empire were found in an urn dug up by some workmen.³¹ The road through the Fylde district was no doubt made to connect Ribchester with the Portus Sestantiorum (the Haven of the Sestantii), the exact site of which has never been satisfactorily proved, but it was probably near the mouth of the Wyre. The agger is only traceable along bits of the route from Ribchester, but it appears at “Stubbin Nook,” and, after passing Pedder House, becomes identical with what is still called Watling Street; it then crosses Fulwood Moor near Preston, and goes on to Kirkham, Marton Mere, and Poulton-le-Fylde. The late John Just, in 1850, made a careful survey of that portion of the road; he thus describes it: “Within a mile of the town of Poulton are seen the first indications of a Roman road... But having got on to the high ground and to a part of the flats of the Fylde district we meet with striking remains of a road on the turfy ground where it has been piled up in an immense agger... Across this the line is very distinct... On the higher ground the whole of the line has been obliterated ... until we again detect it in a low hollow towards Weeton Moss... Here is an immense embankment of several yards in height, its base standing in the water... The line hence directs itself up the rising ground to Plumpton; ... from hence it directs its course to the windmill on the high ground between Weeton Moss and Kirkham, which there opens to the view. Near the windmill the road forms an angle, and thence joins the public road in a long—continuous straight line forwards towards Kirkham... About midway, within the long town of Kirkham, the line of the Roman roads falls in with Main Street, and continues up to the windmill at the top of the town. Nearly the whole length of the long street of Kirkham is upon the Roman road.”³²

At Kirkham the Romans left many traces: amulets, axes, ivory needles, urns filled with calcined bones, lachrymatory urns, and coins, have all at various times been discovered, but the finest relic was the umbo of a shield found at Mill Hill; it is now in the British Museum. It is about 8 inches in diameter, and in its centre is a figure of a man seated, his limbs naked, but wearing on his head a crested helmet.³³

In what was once the bed of Marton Mere, in 1850, the old road was clearly defined; its gravel was 12 yards wide and 2 yards thick; and at Fleetwood, in 1835, at some depth below the sand, a portion of the pavement was found intact. Between Fenny and Rossall Point, on the Wyre Estuary, upwards of four hundred Roman coins were found; their dates varied from A.D. 353 to A.D. 408. Many parts of the Roman road in this district were known as Danes’ Pad.³⁴ The road from Ribchester to Galgate passed through places called Preston Wives, Writton Stone, Stoney Lane, Windy Arbour, Street Farm, and a little to the north—east of Shireshead joined the road from Walton to Lancaster. Westmorland was approached by a road which, after leaving Ribchester, has not been very clearly

²⁹ *Lanc. and Ches. Hist. Soc.*, xxv. 161.

³⁰ Whitaker’s “History of Whalley,” ii. 19.

³¹ Baines’ “History of Lancashire” (second edition), ii. 24.

³² *Lanc. and Ches. Hist. Soc.*, iii. 3.

³³ *Hist. Soc. of Lanc. and Ches.*, iii. 60; also Fishwick’s “History of Kirkham,” *Chetham Soc.*, xcii. 5.

³⁴ Fishwick’s “History of Poulton-le-Fylde,” *Chetham Soc.*, new series, viii. 4; also civ. 2.

traced, but for a great portion of its route it ran through Yorkshire, passing through Slaidburn; it came into Lancashire a few miles south of Ivah, but soon again crossed the border line and re-entered Lancashire, and passed through Tatham to Overborough, the Roman *Galacum*. Of this place Camden (writing about 1580) says, "that it was formerly a great city upon a large plot of ground, between the Lac and the Lone, and being besieged, was forced to surrender by famine is what the inhabitants told me, who have it by tradition from their ancestors; and certain it is that the place makes proof of its own antiquity by many ancient monuments, inscriptions, chequered pavements, and Roman coins, as also by this modern name, which signifies a burrow." Although nearly every trace of the Roman occupation has been cleared away, discoveries made since Camden's time abundantly prove that here was a Roman stronghold. Overborough is in the parish of Tunstall.

There now remains to describe the other Roman road, passing right through Lancashire, in almost a straight line for Warrington, passing Wigan, Preston, and Lancaster on its route to Natland in Westmorland.

This road began at Wilderspool, on the Cheshire side of the Mersey. The exact spot where it crossed the river is unknown, but traces of it are found near Warrington, at Winwick, Haydock, Ashton in Makerfield, and Wigan; from the latter place it continued to Standish, Whittle and Bamber Green, crossed the Ribble at Walton, then passed through some fields formerly known as Great Pathway Fields, Causeway Meadow and Pathway Meadow. From Walton the road went on to Lancaster, through Broughton, Barton Lodge, Brook, Claughton (where was formerly a road called Fleet Street) and Galgate; between Lancaster and Natland all trace of the road has disappeared, and its route is undefined. The remains found on the line of road from Warrington to Wigan are neither numerous nor of special interest.

At Standish many coins have been found, as well as gold rings, of undoubted Roman origin.

At Walton-le-Dale we find clear evidence of the existence of a minor station, between the bends of the Ribble and the Darwen. Here, in 1855, in excavating in a large mound called the Plump, were found the remains of a probably British foundation, upon which was a layer of large boulders, mixed with gravel a foot thick, near to which were lying coins of Antoninus Pius, Domitian, and Vespasian, together with querns, fragments of Samian ware, bricks, tiles, fragments of amphoræ, etc.³⁵ In the immediate neighbourhood subsequent excavations brought to light other remains in large quantities, as well as portions of Roman masonry. All the coins found were of the Higher Empire.

At Lancaster was another station, and probably a very early one, as it is certain that in the time of Trajan (A.D. 98–117) there were Roman buildings of some kind here; the proof of this is the discovery, about twenty years ago, beneath the floor of the parish church, of a triangular-shaped stone upon which was inscribed in letters 2 inches high, Imp. Ner. Traian, avg. C.; this being completed would read, "Imperatori Nervæ Trajano Augusto cohors."³⁶

On the site of, or within the area of the *castrum* have been erected the castle, the priory, and the church, so that it is not to be wondered at that its original boundaries are indefinable. Without placing too much reliance upon the statements of such writers as Leland and Camden, sufficient fragments of the Roman walls have from time to time been exhumed to afford ample proof that such a station existed; and from inscriptions found, together with the discovery of large quantities of horses' teeth, it may be assumed to have been occupied by cavalry troops only.

The remains found within the walls and in the immediate neighbourhood have been very numerous and varied. Amongst the altars was one dedicated "to the holy god Mars Cocidius," the latter word referring to a British god, which shows the accommodating spirit of "Vibinius Lucius," the pensioner of the Consul who thus "performed his vows." From the fact that over many parts of the station uncovered there was found to be a thick layer of ashes, it is conjectured that Roman Lancaster

³⁵ Watkin's "Roman Lancashire," p. 203.

³⁶ "The Palatine Note-book," iv. 201.

was destroyed by fire. Many milestones have also been found, and two burial-places. There was also a road from Lancaster to Overborough; its route was over Quernmore and through Caton, where a milestone of the time of Hadrian was discovered. In Lonsdale north of the Sands we have no distinct trace of Roman occupation.

There were, of course, several other Roman roads of later date and of minor importance; one only of these is it necessary to refer to, that is, the road which is supposed to have run from Manchester, through Chadderton, Royton, Rochdale, Littleborough, and over Blackstone Edge to Aldborough in Yorkshire. John Ogilby, the King's cosmographer in 1675, states that this road was 8 yards wide and paved with stone all the way. Warburton, the Somerset Herald, shows it as a Roman road in his map drawn in 1753; later writers, however, do not agree as to its exact course, and nearly all trace of it has long ago disappeared, except for a short distance on the steep side of Blackstone Edge, where its course can be fairly traced from Windy Bank, near Littleborough, to the division line between Lancashire and Yorkshire. The portion best preserved is that which ascends the hill in a perfectly straight line, commencing about 1,600 yards from the summit. The parts which have been recently cleared from the overgrowth of heath show a road 15 feet wide, exclusive of curbstone, paved with square blocks of stone, and slightly arched to throw the water into a trench which runs on either side. In the centre of this road, where it ascends the hill at a steep gradient (in some parts one in four and a third), is a course of hard millstone grit stones, which have been carefully tooled and set together so as to form a continuous line from the top to the bottom. These blocks are of stone, are 3 feet 8 inches wide, and in them has been cut (or as some think worn) a trough about 17 inches wide at the top, and a little over a foot at the bottom, and of a depth of some 4 inches. The bottom of this trough is found to be slightly curved. The question as to the use and age of these central stones has been the subject of much discussion. The author of Roman Lancashire gives them a Roman origin, and thinks the groove was to steady the central wheel of a three-wheeled vehicle. An easy explanation would be that the stones were worn hollow by the feet of packhorses, but the reply to this is, that on a well-paved road up a steep hill, a footway of smooth stones would not only be useless, but dangerous. Another theory is that the Romans placed them there to help the drivers of chariots to "skid" the wheels of their vehicles, whilst some have urged that the central trough is of much more recent date, and was used in working the quarries at the top of the hill.³⁷

Roman coins and tiles have been found near Littleborough and at Underwood, near Rochdale; and at Tunshill in Butterworth, in the same parish, in 1793, was discovered the right arm of a silver statue of Victory, to which was attached an amulet with an inscription to the Sixth Legion.³⁸

From this rapid survey of the Roman roads, stations, and settlements, with the evidence of the vestiges which time has preserved for our inspection, it must at once be seen that through the length and breadth of Lancashire (except, perhaps, Lonsdale north of the Sands) the all-conquering Roman was found, and that for nearly four centuries he held possession. That he did much to educate and civilize the conquered tribes cannot be doubted, and the Lancashire people at the close of the Roman occupation must have been a very different race to those half-naked barbarians who fought so desperately to defend their soil against the invading legions. Although the ancient Briton was not quite an untutored savage, still, the influence of the higher cultured Romans had a very material effect upon his character and surroundings, and led to the acquirement of many arts and industries, which produced corresponding results of prosperity and comfort. The culture of the land was improved, the people were shown how to make roads and build houses of stone, mines were opened, iron was smelted, and ships were built.

³⁷ Fishwick's "History of Rochdale," p. 7; also *Lanc. and Ches. Arch. Soc.*, p. 73 *et seq.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 12.

CHAPTER V

THE SAXON AND THE DANE

If it is true – as generally supposed – that the Britons, after being grievously oppressed by the Picts and Scots, called in the German tribes to assist them, then it naturally followed that, after driving back the Northern invaders, they themselves took possession of the land they had been fighting for.

In Lancashire, the desertion of the Romans probably led to a considerable part of the county being again laid waste, and the inhabitants scattered.

All authorities agree that for some forty years after the departure of the Romans the Britons were in continual strife, and that their independence brought to them only war and misery. The three Teutonic tribes known to the Romans as the Jutes, the Saxons and the Angles, in A.D. 449 appear to have called themselves Englishmen, and in that year they won their first battle against the Britons at Aylesford, in Kent. After this it took nearly 150 years to acquire the land from the South to the Forth. The Northern parts were for the most part taken possession of by the Angles, and divided into kingdoms, the boundaries of which are not known; some authorities place part of Lancashire in the kingdom of Deira, which had York for its centre, whilst others maintain that the kingdom of Strathclyde extended southward to the banks of the Dee; be this as it may, towards the close of the sixth century Lancashire formed part of the kingdom of Northumbria, which was held by the Angles. The inhabitants of these Northern parts, in their contests with the invaders, had the great advantage of having possession of the Roman strongholds, and no doubt offered a stubborn resistance. With the new rulers came new names, new language, and new customs, and many things that had been established by the former invaders were swept away.

We now come to the introduction of Christianity into Northumbria, which arose through the marriage of Æthelbert, King of Kent, at the close of the sixth century, with Bertha, daughter of King Charibert of Paris, who, being a convert to the Christian religion, made it a condition of her marriage that she should be allowed to worship in a small Roman-built church near Canterbury. Early in the next century Edwin, King of Northumbria, married Æthelburga, the daughter of Æthelbert, who, also being a Christian, took with her Paulinus, a follower of St. Augustine (see [Chapter IX.](#)).

It was not so easy, however, to make a convert of her husband, but after some delay he called together his Council, who declared themselves in favour of the new religion, and many of them were baptized at York, A.D. 627. This conversion led to a war between Edwin and the King of Mercia, who still held to his faith in Woden and Thor, when the King of Northumbria was killed at the battle of Hatfield in 633.

Shortly after this, Cædwallon, King of the Welsh, became ruler over Northumbria, but only for a short time, as he was defeated and slain in battle by Oswald, who, afterwards succeeding to the thrones of Bernicia and Deira, again united Northumbria, and re-established the Christian creed. But Penda was determined to maintain the pagan religion, and, defeating Oswald at the battle of Maserfeld in 642, again held Northumbria. Subsequently another division appears to have taken place, and Lancashire became part of the kingdom of Deira, its ruler being Oswine, and continued so for some six years, when Oswi, who reigned in Bernicia (the other portion of Northumbria), caused Oswine to be slain, and again united the two kingdoms. Alcfrid, the son of Oswi, having married Cyneburga, daughter of Penda, was about this time appointed Regent over Deira, and afterwards a further fusion of the two families was brought about by the marriage of Alcfrid's sister to Peada, son of Penda.

Oswi in 655 had a pitched battle with Penda at Winwæd in Yorkshire,³⁹ where the latter was defeated and slain. To celebrate this victory Oswi established twelve religious houses, six of which

³⁹ Authorities differ as to this locality: one writer places it on the Firth of Forth, another in Worcestershire.

were in Deira (see [Chapter IX.](#)). Oswi died in 670, and his son Egfrid (or Ecgfrith) succeeded to the throne of Northumbria, which was now become a Christian and powerful kingdom. His short reign was marked by several military victories, the chief being his defeat of the King of Mercia, by which he gained the province of Lindiswards, or Lincolnshire; but in A.D. 685 Egfrid went across the Forth to repress a rising of the Picts, and in a great battle at Nectansmere in Yorkshire he and many of his nobles were slain, and with them fell the supremacy of ancient Northumbria. From this date to the establishment of the Heptarchy, Northumbria, though allowed to elect tributary rulers, was, except for a very short period, under the overlords of first Mercia and then Wessex. Green, in his "History of the English People,"⁴⁰ says that Northumbria was "the literary centre of the Christian world in Western Europe. The whole learning of the age seemed to be summed up in a Northumbrian scholar, Bæda – the Venerable Bede, later times styled him." The same writer adds: "From the death of Bæda the history of Northumbria is in fact only a wild story of lawlessness and bloodshed. King after king [tributary kings] was swept away by treason and revolt, the country fell into the hands of its turbulent nobles, the very fields lay waste, and the land was swept by famine and plague." In A.D. 827 Egbert found no difficulty, after subduing the rest of England, in coming to peaceful terms with the Northumbrian nobles, and reducing the whole country from the British Channel to the Forth into one kingdom. For some time before the close of the eighth century Northumbria had been subject to frequent attacks from the Northmen, or Danes, who mostly came from Denmark and Norway, who have been frequently described as sea-pirates, distinguished for courage and ferocity and a strong hatred to the Christian religion, they themselves being worshippers of Woden and the other pagan gods. Soon after the middle of the tenth century the Danes were no longer content to make marauding expeditions, but aspired to become owners of the soil, and in 867, after a great victory near the city of York, they practically took possession of Northumbria, and a few years later the whole of England north of the Thames was in their hands. The subsequent wars between Alfred the Great and the Danes belong more to the general history of England; it will suffice here to state that in 878 was concluded the treaty of peace known as "Alfred and Guthrum's Peace," whereby the Danish settlers were recognised and the land on the east and north of Watling Street given up to them, that is, nearly all the east side of England from the Thames to the Tweed, where they were to be independent dwellers, with their own laws and institutions.⁴¹ Thus, almost the whole of Lancashire was left to the Danish invaders; but not, however, for a long period, as Edward the Elder, the son and successor of Alfred, having wrested Mercia from the Danes, marched against Northumbria, where a contest was avoided by the submission of the inhabitants, and, according to the Saxon Chronicle,⁴² having taken possession of Manchester, which he found almost in ruins, he refortified and garrisoned it in the year 923. Athelstan, the son of Edward the Elder, had frequent disturbances from the Northern Danes, who in 937, having united the Scots and the Welsh, met the King's forces at Bruanburgh (supposed to be in Northumberland), where they were defeated; only, however, for a time, as they were not finally suppressed until the year 954, when Northumbria was placed under a governor with the title of Earl.

The beginning of the next century found the country in a very unsettled state in consequence of fresh invasions by the King of Denmark and Norway, and on the death of Ethelred, in April, 1016, London proclaimed Edmund King, whilst a council at Southampton accepted Canute the Dane; ultimately the English nobles compelled a division, and Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia fell to Canute, who a month later, on the death of Edmund, became King of England. Canute (or Cnut) during his reign did much to remove the hatred felt towards the Danes, but the tyranny and oppression exercised by his two sons, who succeeded him,⁴³ revived the old feelings, and on the death

⁴⁰ Pp. 36, 39.

⁴¹ Sanderson's "History of England," p. 44.

⁴² A.D. 923.

⁴³ After the death of Cnut, in 1035, the kingdom was again divided, and Mercia and Northumbria fell to Harold. Harthacnut was (in 1039), however, King of all England.

of Harthacnut in 1043, after five-and-twenty years of Danish rule, the people elected one of the old English stock as the King, and Edward the Confessor ascended the throne.

During these six centuries Lancashire had many rulers, and must have been the scene of many a pitched battle. Its people were never long at peace, but rebellions, invasions, and wars of every kind fast followed each other. At one time they were governed by kings of Northumbria, at another by kings of England; at one time they were ruled by only tributary kings, or even only by tributary earls; sometimes the Christian religion was upheld, and sometimes they were referred back to Woden and Thor and Oden. Nevertheless, churches were built (see [Chapter IX.](#)), religious houses endowed, and castles erected. Many of its parishes were now formed, and its hundreds and tithings were meted out. Many of the parish and township names in Lancashire are suggestive of Saxon or Danish origin. Thus, Winwick, Elswick, Fishwick, Chadwick, Poulton, Walton, Sephton, Middleton, Eccleston, Broughton, Preston, Kirkham, Penwortham, Bispham, Cockerham, Oldham, Sowerby, Westby, Ribby, Formby, and a host of others, all point to their having once been held by the early settlers, as do also the terminative “rods” and “shaws” so common in the south of the county. In the old maps of the county a tract of land on the west side of the Wyre, between Shard and Fleetwood, is called Bergerode, which is a combination of the Anglo-Saxon words “Beor grade” – a shallow harbour. No doubt many of these places were held by Saxon Thanes, of which there were three classes; the highest of these held their lands and manors of the King, and probably had some kind of a castle or fortification erected on the manors, as well as in many cases a church, though probably only built of wood. To many places in the county have been assigned Saxon castles; Baines, in his “History of Lancashire,”⁴⁴ has enumerated no less than twelve of these south of the Ribble, but for only two of them is there any absolute authority for the assumption, viz., Penwortham and Rochdale. At Penwortham William the Conqueror found a castle, and around it were six burgesses, three radmen (a class of freemen who served on horseback), only eight villeins (who were literally servants of the lords of the soil), and four neat-herds, or cattle-keepers; and amongst other possessions its owner had a moiety of the river-fishing, a wood, and aeries of hawks. The castle was occupied in the time of Henry III., when Randle de Blundeville, the Earl of Chester and Baron of Lancaster, held his court within its walls.⁴⁵ All trace of it has now disappeared, but Castle Hill is its traditional site.

In the time of Edward the Confessor (A.D. 1041–1066) most of the land in Rochdale was held of the King by Gamel the Thane; part of this land was free from all duties except danegeld.⁴⁶ There can be little doubt but that a Saxon Thane of this order had both his castle and its accompanying church. As to the existence of the former, it is placed beyond dispute by the name Castleton, which occurs in many very early deeds, and by the fact that in a charter, without date (but early in the thirteenth century), reference is made to “the land lying between” a field “and the ditch of the castle” (*fossatum castelli*), and the right of way is reserved for “ingoing and exit to the place of the castle” (*locus castelli*), and the right of footway to lands “in Castleton in the north part of Smythecumbesrode and an *assartum* called Sethe.” The boundaries detailed in the charter show that this castle, probably then in ruins, stood on the elevated ground still known as Castle Hill.⁴⁷

There is a local tradition that at Bury, on the site called Castle Croft, once stood a Saxon castle; but there is no evidence to support this, and from the character of a portion of the foundations discovered in 1865, it seems more probable that the building which gave its name to the place was of much more recent date.

Winwick, near Warrington, has also its traditional Saxon castle, and also lays claim to having within its parish the site of the battle-field where Oswald, King of Northumbria, fell on August 5,

⁴⁴ Vol. i., p. 12, 2nd edit.

⁴⁵ Coucher Book, Duchy Office, No. 78.

⁴⁶ Originally a tax paid to the Danes, but afterwards appropriated to the King. It was always a very unpopular tax.

⁴⁷ Plan of this in Fishwick’s “History of Rochdale,” p. 66.

A.D. 642. Bede⁴⁸ records that the Christian King was slain in a great battle against the pagan ruler over the Mercians at a place called Maserfield, and adds that such was his faith in God that ever since his death infirm men and cattle are healed by visiting the spot where he was killed; some, taking the dust from the soil and putting it in water, were able to heal their sick friends; by this means the earth had been by degrees carried away, so that a hole remained as deep as the height of a man.

This Maserfield, or Maserfeld, was by Camden and others supposed to be near Oswestry, in Shropshire, but there are many good reasons for assuming that the engagement took place in Makerfield, near Winwick; the very ancient parish church is dedicated to St. Oswald, and half a mile to the north of it is St. Oswald's Well, which is at the present day in a deep ditch, and until within quite recent times was in the charge of a paid custodian, whose duty it was to keep the water from contamination;⁴⁹ an ancient inscription on the wall of the south side of the church also appears to confirm the opinion.

In Aldingham Moat Hill (in Furness) we have an example of the moated mound or "burh" of a Saxon lord, which probably dates from the tenth century.⁵⁰ The earthwork consists of three divisions. The rectangular camp, is surrounded by a ditch nearly 40 feet wide, and 4 or 5 feet deep, the space thus enclosed being about 100 feet square. About 100 yards south of this there is a straight piece of ditch which runs almost at right angles to the sea-cliff for some 250 feet. South again of this ditch, but separated from it by about 40 yards, stands the moated "burh" itself, on the very edge of the cliff; the ditch and part of the mound have been washed away by the sea. The "burh" is about 30 feet high, and 96 feet above the sea-level. The ditch is about 10 feet deep, and between 15 and 20 feet broad at the bottom. This was the fortified home of the Anglo-Saxon clan settled in this place. The rectangular enclosure may have been the meeting-place of the folk-moot of the settlement. Pennington Castle Hill is a somewhat similar mound, but some of the characteristics of a "burh" are wanting; nevertheless, it was doubtless the fortified *ton* of the Pennings. Near to it is a place called Ellabarrow, which takes its name from a large tumulus 400 feet in circumference, known as Coninger or Coninsher.

The remains which from time to time have been discovered, and which can with certainty be classed as Danish or Anglo-Saxon, are not nearly so numerous as one would have expected. Saxon stone crosses (or portions of them) have been found at Bolton, Whalley, Burnley, Halton, Heysham, Lancaster, and Winwick, and the ornamentation of several of them is beautiful and interesting. The so called "hog-backed" stone in Heysham churchyard has given rise to much controversy, and is undoubtedly of very great antiquity.⁵¹ Saxon tumuli have been opened at Langho, Winwick, and some few other places, and coins belonging to this period have occasionally been exhumed; notably at Cuerdale, where nearly 2,000 coins were found which were believed to have been struck by one of the Danish rulers of Northumbria, and large numbers of very similar coins have been dug up at Harkirke, in the parish of Sefton. Some of these coins were of King Alfred's time, others were of Guthred, or Gulfrith (son of Ivan), who was King of Northumbria A.D. 883 to 894, who was supposed to have on embracing Christianity taken the name of *Cnvt*, which is engraved on the coins.⁵²

It is believed that at Billington, near Whalley, in A.D. 798, King Ethelred met the conspirator Wada, and defeated him in a battle in which on both sides great numbers were slain.⁵³ Near to this place is a large tumulus known as the "Lowe," which has never been properly explored; but at

⁴⁸ "Eccles. Hist.," lib. iii., cap. 8.

⁴⁹ Baines' "Hist. of Lanc.," ii. 205, 2nd edit.

⁵⁰ The following account of it is compiled from an article in *Archæologia*, vol. liii., part iii., by H. Swainson Cowper, Esq., F.S.A.

⁵¹ See *Lanc. and Ches. Arch. Soc.*, v. 1 *et seq.*

⁵² See *Lanc. and Ches. Arch. Soc.*, v. 227.

⁵³ Saxon Chronicle and the Chronicle of Simon of Durham.

Brockhole Eses (which is quite near to Billington) a tumulus was found to contain human bones and iron spear-heads.

At Claughton, in the parish of Garstang, a tumulus of this period was opened in 1822, and found to contain, in addition to charred human bones, large convex brooches of white metal, beads of coloured paste, iron and stone axes, spear-heads and a sword;⁵⁴ remains very similar in character to these were also dug up at Crossmoor, in Inskip, in 1889.⁵⁵

In the time which immediately preceded the coming of the Norman Conqueror, Lancashire must have been very sparsely populated; in every part of it there were vast forests, and great stretches of moss and fern; agriculture was everywhere neglected; towns, in the modern sense, there were none; but here and there, clustering as if for protection round some Saxon Thane's castle or fortified dwelling-place, were groups of wooden houses and rude huts, and scattered sparsely over the county were the clearings (*assarts* or *rods*) and the *tons* of the primitive settlers, with, in some districts, a wooden building doing duty as a church. Except where the old Roman roads were still in use, the means of passage from one place to another was difficult and dangerous; the people were of many tribes and nations – remnants of ancient British families, Angles, Saxons, Danes, Scandinavians, and even Normans contributed to the general stock – and as there were many tribes, so were there various religions, although Christianity had now become the general accepted faith. But for all this, much had been accomplished by time and experience to prepare the mind of the people to accept the tenet that union is strength, and that only by an undivided kingdom could come peace, wealth, and prosperity.

⁵⁴ *Arch. Journal*, vi. 74; and "History of Garstang," *Chetham Soc.*, civ. 5.

⁵⁵ Fishwick's "History of St. Michael's-on-Wyre," *Chetham Soc.*, xxv. (new series), p. 2.

CHAPTER VI

THE NORMANS AND THE PLANTAGENETS (A.D. 1066–1485)

The stirring events which led up to the battle of Hastings, which took place on October 14, 1066, and the subsequent complete conquest of England by William of Normandy, did not perhaps immediately affect the Northern part of the kingdom so much as they did those counties lying nearer the scene of action.

We have now arrived at a period when we have more definite and reliable evidence as to the actual position of Lancashire.

At the end of the year 1084 the King summoned his Great Council to meet at Gloucester, with the object of devising means whereby a full account could be obtained as to the state of the country, especially as to the land – how much was cultivated, and by whom and on what authority it was held. This is not the place more fully to describe the *modus operandi* of preparing the Domesday Book, but it may be mentioned that by some singular arrangement Lancashire as a county is not named, the southern portion being included in Cheshire, the hundred of Amounderness in Yorkshire, and the two northern hundreds in Westmorland, Cumberland, and Yorkshire. The value of the information contained in the return is threefold, as it records the state of the country in Edward the Confessor's time, the way each manor, etc., was dealt with by William on his taking possession, and the rateable value on the taking of the Survey.

Unfortunately, we do not get from it anything like a census of the whole country, but it will be useful for comparison to note that Yorkshire had about 10,000 inhabitants, London some 30,000, and that of the other counties Lincoln and Norfolk had the largest population. The Survey was taken in A.D. 1085.

In West Derby Hundred the following places are named⁵⁶ as places where there was land under such cultivation or occupation as to render it rateable: Roby, Knowsley, Kirkby, Maghull, Aughton, Huyton, Torbock, Toxteth, Sefton, Kirkdale, Walton-on-the-Hill, Litherland, Ince Blundell, Thornton, Meols, Little Woolton, Smithdown (now Liverpool), Allerton, Speke, Childwall,⁵⁷ Windle, Much Woolton, Wavertree, Bootle, Formby, Ainsley, Down Hollard, Dalton, Skelmersdale, Raven's Meols, Orrell, Lathom, Hurleston (in Scarisbrick), Melling, Lydiate, Altcar,⁵⁸ Barton, Halsall. At this time Lancashire between the Ribble and the Mersey was divided into six hundreds, viz., West Derby, Newton, Walintone (*i. e.*, Warrington), Blackburn, Salford, and Leyland. The places just named, with the addition of Newton and Warrington, are all that were recognised in the Great Survey, and many of these were manors held in the time of Edward by Thanes whose names are not given; others were doubtless in the hands of Saxons, Danes or Anglo-Saxons, who had stuck to their holdings through all changes. Some of the surnames at once suggest this; for example, we find Godiva, the widow of Leofric, Earl of Mercia, returned as having three carucates of land in Melling. Amongst the other tenants *in capite* are Dot, Uetred, Chetel, Wibert, etc. Edward the Confessor had in West Derby one manor and six berewicks (sub-manors), a forest 3 miles long and 1½ miles wide,⁵⁹ and an aerie of hawks. The whole of the land between the Ribble and the Mersey had been given to Roger de Poitou as a reward for his services to the Conqueror, but was forfeited

⁵⁶ In the original document the names are often very different to the ones now in use, but they have all been identified as referring to the localities above given.

⁵⁷ "There is a priest there having half a carucate of land in frank amoign."

⁵⁸ Said to be waste.

⁵⁹ Other forests are named at Latham, Aughton, Milling, Lydiate, and other places.

to the Crown shortly before this date. All the manors were rateable to the danegeld, but fifteen of them paid nothing to the royal exchequer except that geld. The customary tribute for the manors was two *hora* or *ores* of pennies for each carucate of land;⁶⁰ the owners of the manors had also to assist in making and keeping up the King's houses, fisheries, hays, and stations in the forest; they were also to find mowers to reap the King's corn, to attend the hundred court, and do other small services, under certain fixed penalties for omission.

Roger de Poictou had granted land here to eight men, whose holding was twenty-four carucates, and they had forty-six villeins, one radman, and sixty-two *bordarii*, two serfs, and three maids. Their wood was 4½ miles long. The *bordarii* at this time formed about thirty per cent. of the entire population; their exact status has never been very clearly defined. They were probably identical with the *cotarii*, and were a class somewhat above the *villeins* and *servi*, and were allowed a *bord* or cottage, and rendered occasional service to the demesne lord.

In Newton fifteen berewicks were held by as many men, who were described as *drenchs* or *drings*, who were a kind of military vassals, holding allotments as minor or sub-manors. The service they gave was known as *drengage*. The manor had a church (Wigan), and St. Oswald's (Winwick) had two carucates of land. Some of the manors had curious exemptions from penalties; for example, Orrel, Halsall, and Tarleton were not liable to forfeiture through their owners committing murder or rape. The Warrington manor had been held by King Edward, who had allotted land to thirty-four *drenchs*. St. Elfin (Warrington) was free from custom except geld. In the whole of this division of the county we have no towns, cities, or castles, and five churches are mentioned in Childwall, Walton-on-the-Hill, Winwick (Newton), Wigan, and St. Elfin (Warrington).

Concerning the hundred of Blackburn, the information given in the Domesday Book is comparatively meagre. This portion of Roger de Poictou's vast possession had, before he fell into royal disfavour, been given by him to Roger de Busli and Albert Greslet. Edward the Confessor held Blackburn, where there were two hides and two carucates⁶¹ of land; there was a wood 1½ miles long, and the usual aerie of hawks. To this "hundred or manor" were attached twenty-eight freemen, who held land for twenty-eight manors, and there was a forest 9 miles long. In the same hundred King Edward held Huncote and Walton-le-Dale. The church of Blackburn and St. Mary's, Whalley, also held land. The whole manor with the hundred yielded the King a farm rent of £32 2s. Leyland Hundred Edward the Confessor found to consist of Leyland Manor, which contained a hide and two carucates of land, and a wood 3 miles long, 1½ miles broad, with the customary aerie of hawks; to it belonged twelve other manors, with woods 9 miles long and over 4 miles wide. The men of this manor were not bound to work at the King's manor-house, or to mow for him in August. They only made hay in the wood.⁶² The whole manor paid to the King a farm rent of £19 18s. 2d. The tenants named are Hirard, Robert, Radulph, Roger, and Walter, and there were four radmen, a priest, fourteen villeins, six *bordarii*, and two neat-herds. Part of the hundred was waste. Edward also had in this hundred Penwortham (*Peneverdant*), where for two carucates of land 10d. was paid, and it is briefly recorded that there was a castle there ([see p. 47](#)).

In Salford Hundred the manor of Salford belonged to Edward, and in his time it consisted of three hides and twelve carucates of waste land, a forest over 4 miles long and the same breadth; the Confessor also owned at Radcliffe a manor containing one hide of land. To Salford Hundred belonged twenty-one berewicks, which were held as manors by as many Thanes, whose land was put down as eleven and a half hides and ten and a half carucates; the woods were said to be over 12 miles in length. The only thane named is Gamel, who held Rochdale ([see p. 47](#)). Two churches are mentioned, St.

⁶⁰ The *hora* was not a coin, but an equivalent for about 1s. 6d. or 1s. 8d.

⁶¹ In South Lancashire it is believed that six carucates made a hide. A carucate was about 100 acres, but was a variable term.

⁶² This will serve as a proof that *foresta* (= a wood or forest) was not necessarily a dense mass of trees, but rather a place where game of every kind abounded.

Mary's and St. Michael's, both as holding land in Mamecestre, this being the only mention of this great city of the North. The whole of the hundred paid £37 4s.

Certain land of this hundred had been given by Roger de Poitou to the following knights: Nigel, Warin, another Warin, Goisfrid and Gamel.⁶³ Living on these lands were three thanes, thirty villeins, nine *bordarii*, one priest, and ten serfs.

In the six hundreds of Derby, Newton, Warrington, Blackburn, Salford, and Leyland there were 180 manors, in which were 79 hides rateable to the danegeld. In King Edward's time the whole was worth £145 2s. 2d. At the taking of the Survey it was held by William the Conqueror, and he appears to have granted certain lands in fee to nine knights.

Amounderness had also been part of the estate of Roger de Poitou, and had been held by Earl Tosti, who at Preston had six carucates of land rateable to the geld, along with which he had the following villas in the hundred: Ashton, Lea, Salwick, Clifton, Newton-with-Seales, Freckleton, Ribby-with-Wray, Kirkham, Treales, Westby, Little Plumpton, Weeton, Preise, Warton, Lytham, Marton (in Poulton), Layton-with-Warbrick, Staining, Carleton, Bispham, Rossall, Brining, Thornton, Poulton in the Fylde, Singleton, Greenhalgh, Eccleston, Eccleston (Great and Little), Elswick, Inskip, Sowerby, Nateby, St. Michael's-le-Wyre (*Michelscherche*), Catterall, Claughton, Newsham, Great Plumpton, Broughton, Whittingham, Barton (in Preston), Goosnargh, Haighton, Wheatley, Chipping, Alston, Fishwick, Grimsargh, Ribchester, Billsborough, Swainsett, Forton, Chrimbles, Garstang, Rawcliffe (Upper, Middle, and Out), Hambleton, Stalmine, Preesall, Mythorp or Mythop.

There were, then, in this hundred sixty-two villas or manors, in sixteen of which the Survey reports there were "but few inhabitants, but how many there are is unknown," and the rest were waste. There were three churches then in existence; the names of these are not given, but they undoubtedly were Preston, St. Michael's, and Kirkham. Other churches there probably had been, but they had shared in the general ruin (see [Chapter V.](#)).

The names of places thus supplied give some clue to the early history of the district. Out of sixty-two villas, over one-third are "tons"; there are also found the Anglo-Saxon and the Danish equivalent in the "bys" and "hams." But the most significant fact recorded by the Survey is that out of sixty-two settlements all except sixteen were deserted and the land lying waste; this must be accounted for by the ravages of constant intestine wars and revolutions, which were accentuated by the downfall of Roger de Poitou.

The Lancashire part of Lonsdale is not in the Survey found alone, but is mixed up with portions of Westmorland, Cumberland, and Yorkshire; the same proprietors appear as in Amounderness, Roger de Poitou and the Earl Tosti. The places named are Halton, Aldcliff, Thornham, Millham, Lancaster, Church Lancaster (*Chercaloncastre*), Hutton, Newton, Overton, Middleton, Heaton, Heysham, Oxcliffe, Poulton-le-Sands, Torrisholme, Skerton, Bare, Slyne, Bolton, Kellet, Stapleton-Terne, Newsome, Carnforth – all these villas belonged to Halton; Whittington, Newton, Arkholme, Gressingham, Cantsfield, Ireby, Barrow Leek – these and several others not in Lancashire belonged to Whittington; Warton, Claughton, Wennington, Tatham, Farleton, and Tunstall,⁶⁴ Killerwick, Huncoat, Sowerby, Heaton, Dalton, Swarth, Newton, Walton, Leece, Santon, Roose, Hert, Glaston, Stainton, Cliverton, Orgreave,⁶⁵ Marton (or Martin), Pennington, Kirkby-Ireleth, Burrow, Bardsey, Willingham, Walney, Aldingham (in Furness), Ulverston, Ashton, and Urswick; Melling, Hornby, and Wennington, Cockerham, Ellet, Scotforth, Yealand-Conyers, and Berwick.

⁶³ Their individual holdings are 3 hides and half a carucate, 2 carucates, 1½ carucates, 1 carucate and 2 carucates = 3 hides and 7 carucates. Their united holding is put down as 22 carucates, so that a hide in this case equals 5 carucates.

⁶⁴ Bentham (in Yorkshire), Wennington, Tatham, and Tunstall are described as four manors, where there were three churches.

⁶⁵ Now Titeup.

It would be interesting to know how much land in the entire county was at this time under some kind of cultivation, but owing to uncertainty as to the exact area included by several of the measurements given in the Survey, and the absence of details, any calculation based upon them would at best be uncertain, and might be misleading. With some of the parishes, however, it is possible to come at something more reliable; in the parish of St. Michael's-on-Wyre, Domesday gives twenty carucates of land as rateable, the rest being waste; estimating a carucate⁶⁶ at 100 acres, we have 2,000 acres accounted for out of an area of 18,888 acres; upon the same basis, Kirkham, with 31,000 acres, had a little over 5,000 acres under culture; whilst Garstang, out of 28,881, has only 1,400 acres.⁶⁷

The amount of land usually held with these villis varied from two or three hides to half a carucate, the general figure being one or two carucates, so that it is quite clear that all over the county the great bulk of the land was waste.

One of the immediate effects of the completion of the Conquest was the introduction into England of Norman feudalism. By this system the whole country (except what was given to the Church) was handed over to tenants in chief or great vassals, who held their lands in fee and in perpetuity direct from the Crown, in return rendering what was known as knight's service, every estate of £20 a year being considered a knight's fee, and liable to furnish for the King one mounted soldier; the vassals or under-tenants of these barons, or *tenants in capite*, were bound by an oath of allegiance not only to the King, but also to the owner of the fee. These sub-tenants would in many cases consist of such of the Saxon settlers as had not been expelled by the Norman ruler; doubtless many of the great Saxon Thanes on losing their land were expelled from or of their own will left the country. A detailed account of the various changes in the ownership of the soil would here be out of place, but it should be noticed that all the land in private holdings shortly after the Conquest passed into fresh hands – that is, as far as regards the tenure in fee direct from the Crown. After the final defection and consequent banishment of Roger de Poitou in 2 Henry I. (1101–2), West Derby Hundred went to the King, and remained in royal hands until Stephen granted it to Henry, Duke of Normandy; Leyland passed to King John (1199–1200); Blackburn had been bestowed by the Conqueror on Ilbert de Lacy, who came over with him from Normandy; Salford passed through several hands to the Earl of Chester; Amounderness went to the Crown, and was by Henry I. or Stephen presented to Theobald Walter, son of Herveus, another Norman chief, but in 17 John (1215–16) it again fell to the Crown, and was granted to Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster; and in Lonsdale we find that in 1126 Stephen, Earl of Bologne (before he became King), made over a large portion of the northern part to the monks of Furness, but the history of the early grantees of this district is not very clear. From these few chief lords were granted out various manors subject to rent, suit, and service, some portions in each district being retained in the King's possession.

In the case of the transfer of the honour of Lancaster to Edmund Crouchback, it appears that the King had previously granted the custody of the county of Lancaster to Roger de Lancaster, to whom, therefore, letters patent were addressed, promising to indemnify him.⁶⁸

The close of the twelfth and the beginning of the thirteenth century witnessed a considerable increase in the population of the county, and the consequent advance in the importance of its now growing towns. Lancaster in 1199 had become a borough, having granted to it the same liberties as the burgesses of Northampton. Preston, a little before this, had been by royal charter created a free borough, in which the burgesses were empowered to have a free guild merchant, and exemption from tolls, together with many other privileges that King John confirmed in 1199, and granting the additional right to hold a fair of eight days' duration. Cartmel is reputed to have had its market before

⁶⁶ Authorities differ on the exact area, but probably the above is not far from the figure.

⁶⁷ Fishwick's "History of St. Michael's-on-Wyre," *Chetham Soc.*, xxv. 3 (new series).

⁶⁸ Honour of Lancaster granted to him June 30, 1267, and letters patent issued to the tenants of the honour to do their homage and be obedient to him as their lord, February 16, 1268. In 1269 a similar letter was sent to William le Boteler, and in 1270 to Henry de Lacy, Robert de Stockfort, and the Abbot of Furness.

the time of Richard I. (A.D. 1189–1199). King John in 1205 granted to Roger de Lacy the right to hold a fair at Clitheroe,⁶⁹ and also, in 1207, gave to the burgesses in the town of Liverpool all the liberties and customs usually enjoyed by free boroughs on the sea-coast. Henry III. granted further charters to both Preston and Liverpool in 1227.

In or about the year 1230, Randle de Blundeville, Earl of Chester and Lincoln, granted that the town of Salford should be a free borough, and that the burgesses, amongst other privileges, should each have an acre of land to his burgage, the rent for which was to be 3d. at Christmas, and a like sum at Mid-Lent, the Feast of St. John Baptist and the Feast of St. Michael. The barony of Manchester was at this time in the hands of the Greslet family, one of whom, in 1301, gave a somewhat similar grant to Manchester, save that the clause providing the acre of land was omitted. From these two charters several items may be extracted, as showing the position of burgesses in those days, and their relation to the lord of the barony or manor. At Salford, no burgess was to bake bread for sale except at the oven provided by the lord, and a certain proportion of his corn was to be ground at the manorial mill. The burgesses were to have common free pasture in wood or plain, in all pasture belonging to the town of Salford, and not be liable to pay pannage;⁷⁰ they were also allowed to cut and use timber for building and burning.

A burgess dying was at liberty to leave his burgage and chattels to whomsoever he pleased, reserving to the lord the customary fee of 4d. On the death of a burgess, his heir was to find the lord a sword, or a bow, or a spear.

The burgesses of Manchester were to pay 12d. a year in lieu of all service. In both charters power is given to the burgesses to elect a reeve from amongst themselves. The social difference between the free burgess and the *villein* is pointedly referred to in a clause which provides that “if any villein shall make claim of anything belonging to a burgess, he ought not to make answer to him unless he shall have the suit from burgesses or other lawful [or law worthy?] men.”

In Lonsdale, the monks of Furness obtained a charter dated July 20, 1246, authorizing the holding of an annual fair at Dalton, where a market had previously been established. Edmund de Lacy, in 25 Henry III. (A.D. 1240–41), obtained a royal charter for a market and fair at Rochdale, and a little later (in 1246) Wigan became a free borough, with right to hold a guild. Warrington,⁷¹ Ormskirk, Bolton-le-Moors, and Burnley, had each its established market before the close of the century; whilst on the north of the Ribble we find that Kirkham, which had as early as 54 Henry III. (1269–70) obtained a royal charter for both a fair and a market, was in 1296 made into a free borough with a free guild, the burgesses having the right to elect bailiffs, who were to be presented and sworn: this right subsequently fell into disuse. At Garstang, very early in the next century, the abbots of Cockersand were authorized to hold both a market and fair. Possibly some few other towns may have received similar privileges, and the record thereof been lost; but we have clear evidence that before the end of the reign of Edward I. (A.D. 1307) there were not far short of a score of Lancashire market towns, each of which doubtless formed the centre of a not inconsiderable number of inhabitants, some of whom were free men, whilst others were little better than villeins or serfs, their condition varying somewhat in the different manorial holdings into which the district was divided.

Churches and monasteries had sprung up (see [Chap. IX.](#)), and a few castles probably kept watch over the insecure places. The houses, such as they were, timber being plentiful, were built of wood; the occupation of the people was chiefly agricultural, and in the forests were fed large herds of swine, the flesh of which formed a large portion of the food of the inhabitants; but in each of the towns there were small traders and artisans, among whom, in many cases, were formed trade or craft guilds. The power of the great barons appears now to have become somewhat less, and the land through various

⁶⁹ Charters of duchy. See 31st Report of the Deputy-Keeper of the Public Records, p. 6.

⁷⁰ Toll for swine feeding in the woods.

⁷¹ A fair in 1255.

processes began to be more divided, and we find in the owners of the newly acquired tenures the ancestors of the gentry and yeomen of a later date.

The forests of Lancashire at this date were of immense extent; they may be enumerated as these: Lonsdale, Wyresdale, Quernmore, Amounderness, Bleasdale, Fullwood, Blackburnshire, Pendle, Trawden, Accrington, and Rossendale. The law respecting forests dates back to Saxon times; Canute, whilst he was King, issued a Charter and Constitution of Forests. By this charter verderers were to be appointed in every province in the kingdom, and under these were other officers known as regarders and foresters.

If any freeman offered violence to one of the verderers he lost his freedom and all that he was possessed of, whilst for the same offence a villein had his right hand cut off, and for a second offence either a freeman or a villein was put to death. For chasing or killing any beast of the forest the penalties were at best very severe: the freeman for a first offence got off with a fine, but a bondsman was to lose his skin. Freeman were allowed to keep greyhounds, but unless they were kept at least ten miles from a royal forest their knees were to be cut.

King John, whilst Earl of Morton, held the prerogatives of the Lancashire forests, and he granted a charter (which, when he became King, he confirmed) to the knights and freeholders, whereby they were permitted to hunt and take foxes, hares and rabbits, and all kind of wild beasts except the stag, hind and roebuck, and wild hogs in all parts of his forests, beyond the demesne boundaries.

In the succeeding reign, however, the freemen were again troubled by the arbitrary and harsh treatment of the royal foresters, and in vain appealed to the King for relief. Edward I. to some extent relaxed the rigour of the laws, but still assizes of forests were regularly held at Lancaster, and presentments made for killing and taking deer, and the like offences, but the penalties were not nearly so severe as formerly.

Many cases might be quoted. At the forest assize at Lancaster on the Monday after Easter in 1286, Adam de Carlton, Roger the son of Roger of Midde Routhelyne, and Richard his brother, were charged with having killed three stags in the moss of Pelyn (Pilling in Garstang), which was part of the royal forest of Wyresdale.⁷² About the same date, Nicholas de Werdhyll having slain a fat buck in the forest of Rochdale,⁷³ the keepers of the Earl of Lincoln's forest came by night, seized him, and dragged him to Clitheroe Castle, where he was imprisoned until he paid a fine of four marks.⁷⁴

Sometimes it was not the individual who was the offender, but the whole of the inhabitants. Thus, in 34 Edward III. (1360–61) a sum of 520 marks was levied upon the men and freeholders within the forest of Quernmore and the natives of Lonsdale, being their portion of a fine of £1,000 incurred for their trespass against the assize of the forest.⁷⁵ No doubt this was a convenient way of raising money.

The number of writs of pardon for trespasses against the forest laws, which are still preserved amongst the duchy records belonging to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, suggest that the offender had to purchase his pardon. The religious men, as they were called, and the clergy often had granted to them the right to hunt in the forests, as well as other privileges. As an example of the latter may be named the grant made in 1271 by Edmund Crouchback to the Prior and monks of St. Mary's of Lancaster, to the effect that they might for ever take from the forests in Lancaster,⁷⁶ except in Wyresdale, two cartloads of dead wood for their fuel every day in the year, and have free ingress and egress into the forest with one cart for two horses, or with two carts for four horses,

⁷² Carta de Foresta: Record Office.

⁷³ Rossendale Forest adjoins this parish.

⁷⁴ Plac. de Quo War., Edw. I.: Record Office.

⁷⁵ Duchy Chancery Rolls, chap. xxv., A 2^b.

⁷⁶ The honour of Lancaster.

to seek for and carry such wood away. Gradually, as the population increased, and as the personal interest of the Dukes of Lancaster in the forests themselves became less, many of these old forest laws fell gradually into disuse; but as late as 1697 a royal warrant was issued to the foresters and other officers of the forests, parks, and chases of Lancashire, calling upon them to give annually an account of all the King's deer within the same, and also to report how many were slain, by whom, and by whose authority.

The regulations as to fishing in the rivers of the county were not so comprehensive as the forest laws; but the value of various fisheries was fully recognised, and they became a source of revenue. In 1359 Adam de Skyllicorne had a six years' lease of the fishing in the Ribble at Penwortham, with the demesne lands, for which he paid six marks a year, and in the succeeding year justices were assigned to inquire into the stoppages of the passages in the same river, by which the Duke's fishery of Penwortham was destroyed and ships impeded on their way to the port of Preston. Fishing in the sea as a trade also met with encouragement, for in A.D. 1382 a precept was issued to the Sheriff to publish the King's mandate, prohibiting any person in the duchy who held lands on the coast from preventing fishermen from setting their nets in the sea and catching fish for their livelihood; and in 13 Richard II. (1389–90) an Act was passed appointing a close time for salmon in the Lune, Wyre, Mersey and Ribble.

Notwithstanding that the fishing rights on both sides the Ribble had been leased or sold with the demesne lands, nearly 200 years later the King still claimed all manner of wrecks and fish royal which were cast upon the shore. On this point a suit in the duchy court appeared in 1536, in which the King's bailiff charged one Christopher Bone with having taken away sturgeon and porpoises which had been washed ashore at Warton, in the parish of Kirkham, whereas they of right belonged to his Majesty.⁷⁷ It may be noted that at this time the porpoise was considered "a dainty dish to set before the King."

The Normans did not, as has been frequently stated, introduce that dreadful disease, leprosy, into England, as there were hospitals set apart for leprosy at Ripon, Exeter, and Colchester some time before their advent. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries leprosy was very prevalent in the northern parts of Lancashire; and to meet the requirements a hospital was founded at Preston in the time of Henry III. How the lepers who were not in the hospitals were dealt with we have no evidence to show, but that they were harshly, not to say cruelly, treated, and were in a measure outcasts, may be safely assumed.

Shortly before April 10, A.D. 1220, Henry III. addressed a letter to Hubert de Burgh, instructing him to order the Sheriff and forester of Lancaster to desist from annoying the lepers there;⁷⁸ and this not proving efficient, a royal writ was issued to the Sheriff (dated April 10) directing that officer to see that they were no longer molested by Roger Garnet and others, and that henceforth they were to have their beasts and herds in the forest without exaction of ox or cow, and also to be allowed to take wood for fuel and timber for building.

From this it appears clear that these lepers lived apart from the rest of the community, in houses or huts erected by themselves, and were not allowed to enter even a church; hence the use of what are known as leper windows, one of which still remains in the north chancel wall of Garstang Church. Leprosy continued with great severity for upwards of a couple of centuries, but towards the time of Henry VIII. it appears to have gradually decreased, and in the days of his immediate successor had almost died out.

The various Crusades of the twelfth century found many followers from Lancashire, and even when the Christians were fast losing their Asiatic possession it was thought worth while to appeal to this county for help, as we find, in June, 1291, the Archbishop of York instructing the Friars there to send three Friars to preach on behalf of the Crusades; one was to address the people at or near

⁷⁷ See Fishwick's "History of Kirkham," *Chetham Soc.*, xcii.

⁷⁸ Royal Letters, Henry III., No. 185.

Lancaster, another at some place convenient for the Lonsdale inhabitants, and a third at Preston, in such a locality as it was believed the greatest congregation could be got together.⁷⁹

The history of the wars between England and Scotland is a page of the general history, but it will be necessary here to state that in 1290 there were thirteen claimants to the Scottish crown, and this led to the beginning of the “Border warfare” between the people on the two sides of the Solway Firth, the Cheviots and the Tweed. Edward I., taking advantage of the position, put in a claim to the Scottish throne, and afterwards took possession as suzerain of the disputed feudal holding.

In 1292 Baliol was appointed King of Scotland with the consent of Edward I., to whom, however, homage had to be done, and out of this right of appeal, thus claimed by the King of England, arose that long series of wars between the two kingdoms which began in the early part of the year 1296, when Edward crossed the Tweed with an army of 12,000 men.

These wars were a great tax upon Lancashire, as, besides being subject to constant invasions, and bearing its share of the subsidies, from it were drawn from time to time large numbers of its bravest and best men. In 1297 Lancashire raised 3,000 men, and at the battle of Falkirk, in the vanguard, led by Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, there were 1,000 soldiers from this county. Another 1,000 foot soldiers were raised in 1306, and this constant drain continued for many years. After the battle of Bannockburn in 1314, the victorious Bruce besieged Carlisle, but after a long struggle he was obliged to retire, the commander of the castle, Sir Andrew de Harcla, as a recognition of his gallant services, receiving from the King the custody of Cumberland, Westmorland and Lancashire.⁸⁰ Within a very few years, on a charge of treason, he was hung, drawn and quartered at Carlisle, one of the pleas raised against him being that he had allowed Bruce to pass into Cumberland and Lancashire, where his army had plundered and marauded in every direction; this was in July, 1322.

In the second half of this century we find several levies made upon Lancashire for soldiers to march against the Scots, but after this the county was not subjected to the frequent invasions with which its inhabitants had been too long familiar. The most serious of these invasions was the one in July, 1322, and of the effects of this and other raids we have an authentic record in the *Nonarum Inquisitiones*, taken (for North Lancashire) in 15 Edward III. (A.D. 1341). The commission appointed to levy this tax on the corn, wool, lambs, and other tithable commodities and glebe lands, were specially instructed to ascertain the value in 1292 (Pope Nicholas’ Taxation), and the then value, and where there was a material difference between the two, they were to ascertain the reason of such increase or decrease. They reported that at Lancaster much of the land was now sterile and uncultivated through the invasions of the Scots, that Ribchester and Preston had almost been destroyed by them, and that at the following places the value of the tithes was very seriously reduced through the same agency, viz., Cockerham, Halton, Tunstall, Melling, Tatham, Cloughton, Walton, Whytington, Dalton, Ulverston, Aldingham, Urswick, Pennington, Cartmel, Kirkham, St. Michael’s-on-Wyre, Lytham, Garstang, Poulton, Ribchester and Chipping; except the two latter, all these are in Amounderness, and north of the Ribble; into none of the other parts of the county do the Scots appear to have penetrated. In some cases the reduction amounted to something like fifty per cent.; in fact, the invaders must have set fire to buildings and laid waste the land all along their line of march.

Clitheroe Castle, though perhaps never a very extensive fortification, is one of the oldest foundations in the county, probably dating back to Saxon times. It stands in a commanding situation on the summit of a rock rising out of the plain, about a mile from Pendle Hill; in Domesday Book it is described as the Castle of Roger (Roger de Lacy). Of the original building nothing is now left but the keep, a square tower of small dimensions. The honour dependent upon this castle extended over a very large area, part only of which is in Lancashire; it included Whalley, Blackburn, Chipping, Ribchester, Tottington (in Salford Hundred), and Rochdale, and consequently the manors of all these

⁷⁹ “Letters from *Northern Register*,” p. 97.

⁸⁰ See “Popular History of Cumberland,” p. 231.

places were at one time held of the castle of Clitheroe. Henry de Lacy, second Earl of Lincoln and great-grandson of Roger de Lacy, was born in 1250, and, like his ancestor, he made this castle his Lancashire stronghold and residence, and here each year his tenants and the stewards of the various manors attended his courts to render in their accounts and offer the suit and service required. The town of Clitheroe must, on the occasions when the Earl was at the castle, have put on a festive appearance, as the lord of the honour is said to have assumed an almost regal state. Several of the accounts of the stewards, parkers, and other servants of the Earl have fortunately been preserved, and we are by them enabled to get a glimpse at the social life of the Lancashire people between the years 1295 and 1305.⁸¹ We find that, besides the forests of Pendle, Accrington, Rossendale and Trawden, there were parks at Ightenhill and Musbury, well stocked with deer. There were over twenty vaccaries, or breeding farms, all of which added to the Earl's income. On the estates were iron forges, and iron smelting was practised, and of course coal was dug up from the seams lying near the surface.

The following extracts from these rolls will serve to illustrate the historical value of the details furnished.⁸² Full allowance must be made by the reader for the difference in value of money between the thirteenth and the nineteenth centuries;⁸³ and it must be remembered that labourers in addition to their wages generally received rations, and were sometimes housed.

⁸¹ The original rolls are in the Record Office. They have been printed by the Chetham Society, vol. cxii.

⁸² All the extracts refer to the Lancashire part of the honour, and to the years between 1295 and 1305.

⁸³ Authorities differ on this point, but all agree that money in the thirteenth century was worth many times its present equivalent coin. At the very least, it requires to be multiplied by ten.

	£	s.	d.
82½ stone of cheese and 27½ stone of butter	3	10	2
2 wagons, etc., and 2 axes	0	2	004
Food and wages for a man leading the wagons and cart during one year, and carrying hay and fencing	1	6	008
Mowing 11½ acres of meadow	0	4	0
Threshing and winnowing 53 quarters	0	2	1004
Rebuilding and roofing a house	0	10	000
Rent of Colne and Walfred Mill, less tithe	12	16	0
.. .. fulling Mill	1	12	400
80 cattle of the Abbot of Whalley agisted ⁶⁴ in Rossendale Forest	0	12	4
A forge for iron, framed out in Rossendale ⁶⁵	2	0	0
Tolls of fairs, markets, and stallage at Rochdale (1 year)	2	12	8
Old brushwood for a forge (for 13 weeks)	0	12	0
Winter herbage on Pendle Hill	2	12	0
Summer herbage there	2	4	0
17 ash-trees	0	10	0
A stray mare	0	2	0
80 wild boars	2	0	1
Rent of Burnley Mill (deducting tithe)	10	0	0
Fishery of Northmeols	1	0	8
Rent (in lieu of ½ lb. of pepper)	0	0	4
.. (.. .. one pair of gloves)	0	0	104
.. 52 acres 1 rood of land at Accrington	1	12	0
Accrington Hall, Kitchen and Grange (rent)	0	4	0
3 vaccaries at Accrington (rent)	4	2	104
Brushwood and ore sold to a forge at Accrington for 27 weeks	1	14	4
Herbage of Clitherow Castle ditches	0	1	4
.. .. the garden and loft adjoining	0	2	0
Toll of the Fair and Market of Clitherow	8	0	4
Produce of 27 vaccaries let out	81	0	0
Goods of Elias Thayne, a felon beheaded	4	10	0
Haymaking a three-acre meadow	0	2	400
Wages of the parker of Ightenhill Forest	2	4	4
The Abbot of Salley for finding a lamp for the soul of Earl John [de Lacy]	0	4	8
Fulling Mill at Burnley, built anew	2	12	004
For merchat ⁶⁶ of 2 women	0	12	4
3 oxen	1	14	0
Hides of 9 mares, 2 foals of the 3rd year, and 7 foals of the 2nd year	0	2	0
4 quarters of oates	0	0	0
Mowing 60½ acres of meadow	0	17	204
Making and stacking the hay	0	12	7
Reaping, gathering and binding 16 acres of oats	0	4	1004
Making anew 2 waggons	0	2	8
Food and wages of one harrower in seedtime	0	2	4
Wages of 109 men reaping corn as if on one day	0	17	204
Wheat sold, 1 qr. 5 bus.	0	12	0
213 oxen sold	104	12	2
168 cows, 5 bulls and 2 calves sold	47	8	4
Wages for the porter of Clitherow Castle ½ a year	1	2	0
2 pairs of gloves and 1 pair of spurs (for rent)	0	0	4
Iron ore (in Clivacher) for 10 weeks (sold)	0	4	8
Expenses of 16 hawks at Clitherow, and of grooms carrying them to London, with cocks bought for them	1	0	004
Carrying the Earl's bed to Denbigh	0	1	8
Making and planting nine hundred five score and six perches of paling round Musbury Park, with the carriage of the said palings in part from Tollington Wood	60	10	504
18 oxen bought for the carriage of the paling	8	12	0
91 loads 6½ dishes of ore bought of the miners: 9 dishes make a load; price per load, 22d.	8	8	104
9½ fother 7 pieces 1 stone of lead brought from the same (of which 6 stone make a piece, and 25 pieces make a fother)	12	12	2
Cutting down and cutting up wood for burning the said ore	0	2	4
Making a pair of bellows anew for burning the said ore	0	2	8
Making and binding with iron a pair of scales for weighing the lead, and making other necessary utensils	0	2	4
Making a shed for the lead and an enclosure for the ore	0	0	8

84 *Agisted* = allowed to graze in the forest.

85 In 1338 the Abbot of Whalley charged certain persons armed “with swords and bows and arrows” with having taken away his goods, and, *inter alia*, 300 pieces of iron, and from the evidence adduced it appears that near Whitworth (in Rochdale parish), which is adjoining Rossendale, the Abbot and others were accustomed to dig up the ironstone and smelt it. (See Fishwick’s “History of Rochdale,” p. 84.)

86 *Merchats* = fines paid to the lord for marriage of a daughter. The above sum was the sum returned to the tenant because it was found that the women were not daughters of villeins.

From these references to smelting of lead it is quite clear that the operation was being performed here for the first time – probably as an experiment; but where did the ore come from? A reference is made to carrying ore from Baxenden (near Accrington) to Bradford (in Salford), but there is no evidence that lead was ever worked or discovered there, so probably the ore was imported from some lead-mining district.

Sea-coal (*carbones maris*) is thrice mentioned as being paid for in the Cliviger and Colne district, where it had no doubt been dug up.

The Compotus of the Earl of Lincoln contains many details referring to the various vaccaries in his holding; each of these was looked after by an *instaurator*, or bailiff, who lived generally at the Grange, whilst his various assistants occupied the humbler “booths.” Accrington vaccary may be accepted as a sample; there were there when the stock was taken on January 26, 1297, 106 cows, 3 bulls, 24 steers, 24 heifers, 31 yearlings, and 46 calves.

In this, as in all the other vaccaries, many cattle died from murrain, and some fell victims to the wolves which infested all the forests.

Toward the end of the year 1349 Lancashire was visited with the pestilence known as the Black Death, which about this time broke out again and again in almost every part of the civilized world. By a fortunate accident a record of the dreadful ravages made by this disease in the Hundred of Amounderness has been preserved.

It appears that the Archdeacon of Richmond (in whose jurisdiction was the whole of Lancashire north of the Ribble) and Adam de Kirkham, Dean of Amounderness, his Proctor, had a dispute relative to the fees for the probate of wills and the administration of the effects of persons dying intestate; the matter was referred to a jury of laymen, whose report furnishes a return of the number of deaths from the plague, and other details which may be accepted as at all events fairly correct, although the district must have been at the time in such a state of panic as to render the collection of statistical facts extremely difficult.

In ten parishes in Amounderness, 13,180 died between September 8, 1349, and January 11, 1349–50, and nine benefices were vacant in consequence. The chapel of the hospital of St. Mary Magdalen at Preston was without a priest for eight weeks, and in that town 3,000 men and women perished; of these, 300 had goods worth £5, and left wills, but 200 others with the like property made no wills. At Poulton-le-Fylde the deaths amounted to 800; at Lancaster 3,000 died, at Garstang 2,000, and at Kirkham 3,000, whilst the other less thickly populated places each lost more or less of its inhabitants.⁸⁷ How the rest of Lancashire fared under this dreadful visitation is uncertain, but Manchester and a few other places in the south of the county are said to have suffered very heavily.

We have already seen that Edmund Crouchback, the favourite son of the King, had given to him the honour of Lancaster, which was confirmed by Henry III., who granted (in 1267) to him the castle of Kenilworth, the castle and manor of Monmouth, and other territories in various parts of the kingdom. The founder of the house of Lancaster died at Bayonne in May, 1296, and Thomas, his eldest son, succeeded to his vast possessions in Lancashire and elsewhere; and in 1297–98 he passed

⁸⁷ Treasury Receipts, 21a/3 Record Office; also *English Hist. Review*, 1890.

through the county in company with his royal master on his way to Scotland; in 1310 he married Alice, the sole daughter of Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, and then got possession of the great estates in the county which had for several generations belonged to the De Lacy family.

In 1316–17 one of the followers of the Earl of Lancaster, in order, it is said, to ingratiate himself with the King, invaded some of the possessions of the Earl, and the result was a pitched battle, which took place near Preston, in which Banastre and his army were completely defeated.

The subsequent quarrel between this celebrated Earl of Lancaster and the King is well known, and need not be repeated here; finding himself unable to meet the royal forces, he retired to his castle at Pontefract, where he was ultimately retained as a prisoner, and near to which town, after suffering great indignities and insults, he was executed as a traitor, March 22, 1321–22. Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, was succeeded by Henry his brother, who, on the reversion of the attainder of the latter, had granted to him, in A.D. 1327, the issues and arrearages of the lands, etc., which had belonged to the earldom of Lancaster and Leicester. On the death of Henry, Earl of Lancaster, the title went to his son Henry (called Grismond), who became Earl of Lancaster, Derby, and Lincoln, and was, as a crowning honour, for his distinguished military services, created in 1353 the first Duke of Lancaster, for his life, having his title confirmed by the prelates and peers assembled in Parliament at Westminster. He was empowered to hold a chancery court for Lancaster, and to issue writs there under his own seal, and to enjoy the same liberties and regalities as belonged to a county palatine,⁸⁸ in as ample manner as the Earl of Chester had within that county. Henry, who for his deeds of piety was styled “the Good Duke of Lancaster,” obtained a license to go to Syracuse to fight against the infidels there; but being taken prisoner in Germany, he only regained his liberty by the payment of a heavy fine. Towards the close of his life he lived in great state in his palace of Savoy, and became a great patron to several religious houses, one of which was Whalley Abbey (see [Chapter IX.](#)). He died March 24, 1360–61, leaving two daughters, one of whom (Blanch) was married to John of Gaunt, Earl of Richmond, fourth son of Edward III.; and to her he bequeathed his Lancashire possessions, and on the death of her sister Maud, the widow of the Duke of Bavaria, in A.D. 1362, without issue, she became entitled to the remainder of the vast estates of her late father.

⁸⁸ Lancashire is said to have enjoyed the privilege of a palatinate in the time of Roger de Poitou, but the evidence is not convincing.

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