

THE NORTH RIDING OF YORKSHIRE.



THE North Riding, the second in size of the Ridings of Yorkshire, is bounded on the north by the river Tees, which separates it from the county of Durham; on the west by the county of Westmorland; on the south-west by the West Riding, from which it is partly separated by the river Ouse; on the south-east by the river Derwent and the East Riding, the North Sea being its eastern boundary. The greatest length from north to south is about 50 miles, which diminishes in one part to about 20; and from west to east it is 85 miles long: it comprises an area of 1,361,664 acres, the West Riding and the counties of Lincoln, Norfolk and Devon only exceeding it in extent; in 1861 its population was 245,154; in 1871, 291,589; in 1881, 346,260, viz. males, 174,897, females, 171,363 and in 1891, 368,237. The number of inhabited houses in 1891 was 73,366. The Riding is very thinly peopled in proportion to its area, many counties of England of much less acreage having a greater amount of population; this may be attributed to the hilly nature of the country, a great portion of which is bleak moorland. On the sea coast the cliffs range in height from 60 to 150 feet, and near Whitby they reach the height of 800 feet. Stretching inland for a distance of about 30 miles is a succession of barren moorlands, about 15 miles in breadth, which attain the height in some parts of 1,400 feet, Roseberry Topping being 1,488 feet above the sea; these moorlands, which have the name of the Eastern Moorlands, are intersected from north to south by fertile dales, such as Bilsdale, Ryedale, Bransdale, Kirkdale, Farn-dale, and Newtondale; north of this moorland district, and bordering on the Tees, is the vale of Cleveland. The western portion of the county is occupied by a mountainous district, extending over the whole area and into Westmorland and known as the Western Moorlands; the moors in this district, like those in the Eastern Moorlands, are cut into parts by dales; they, however, are of a greater altitude, several reaching the height of 2,000 feet. Between the Eastern and Western Moorlands is an extensive valley, broken, however, in parts by hills of varying height, stretching from the Tees southward through the Riding to the city of York, near which it is very flat. To the south of the Eastern Moorlands is a level tract of country, extending to the Derwent, and known as "Marishes."

Of the occupation of this Riding by the Romans there are many indications: traces of their military roads are visible between York and Whitby, and also through the vale of York to the county of Durham; on this road was the Roman station Cataractonium (Catterick). Other evidences are at Bainbridge, Newburgh near Coxwold (an encampment), Easingwold, Guisborough, Hovingham, Malton, Whitby and Cawthorn; at this last place are four encampments in very good preservation.

An ancient encampment, called Studfold Ring, is to be seen at Ampleforth, and at Danby are British earthworks; on the wolds are tumuli and many barrows.

Many of the castles erected during turbulent times still remain in a more or less ruinous condition, viz.:—Bowes, Middleham, Richmond, Snape, Scarborough, Crayke, Harlsey, Pickering and Castle Bolton: in this last the unfortunate Mary Queen of Scots was confined several months.

Of ruins of monastic establishments there are—Rievaulx Abbey, Jerveaux Abbey, Coverham Abbey, St. Agatha's Abbey, near Richmond; Mount Grace Priory, near Ingleby Arncliffe, Whitby Abbey and Byland Abbey; of these Rievaulx Abbey is the most perfect specimen.

At Stamford Bridge was fought the battle between Harold and Tostig, in the year 1066; and the celebrated Battle of the Standard, between the English under Thurstan, Archbishop of York, and the Scotch with King David at their head, was fought in 1138, near Northallerton: a hill near that town is still called Standard Hill.

The Riding is extensively watered by numerous rivers and brooks, the principal of which are—the Tees, which rises in the mountains on the borders of Westmorland and Durham, and forms the boundary between the latter county and the North Riding, and, after flowing past Yarm and South Stockton (now Thornaby-on-Tees) in this Riding, empties itself into the North Sea; it has been much improved for navigation by the river Commissioners. The Derwent rises in the Eastern Moorlands and flows in a southerly direction to the confines of the Riding, where it takes a south-westerly course through Malton to Stamford Bridge, where it enters the East Riding and joins the Ouse near Barmby, about 5 miles south-east of Selby. The river Rye, which rises in the Eastern Moorlands, flows through Ryedale and Helmsley, and after receiving the waters of the Riccal, Dove and Seven, empties itself into the Derwent above Malton. The Swale rises in the north-western portion of the Riding and flows east through Richmond, thence taking a south-easterly direction till it joins the Ouse below Brafferton. The Fosse is in the south of the county, and rises in the hills north of Easingwold and flows in a southerly direction to the city of York, where it joins the Ouse; it is navigable for a short distance. The river Esk rises in the Eastern Moorlands, and flows in an easterly direction past Egton to the sea at Whitby. The Ure rises in the Western Moorlands and flows easterly through Hawes, Askrigg and Leyburn, thence southerly through Masham to the Ouse, which latter river forms the south-western boundary of the Riding to York, whence it flows into the Humber. Besides these there are numerous streams, locally called "becks," and also many waterfalls, some of great height and beauty.

The Riding is traversed by the lines of the North Eastern Railway Company, whose head office is at York. The Company's main line passes through Thirsk and Northallerton to Darlington and the north: at Pillmoor, south of Thirsk, is the junction of the line from Leeds via Boroughbridge on the west, and that from Malton on the east. From Gilling, on the Malton and Thirsk line, is a branch to Helmsley and thence to Pickering. From Thirsk is the line to Melmerby, where it joins the Harrogate and Stockton railway, which connects those two towns, passing on its route Ripon, Northallerton and Yarm; from Melmerby there is a short line to Masham. From Northallerton is a branch to Bedale, Leyburn and Hawes, there joining the Midland branch from Hawes Junction: from Dalton junction, in the north of the Riding, is a branch to Richmond and Reeth, and in the extreme north-west is the South Durham line through Bowes, which connects Barnard Castle and Darlington with the North-Western system. At Pickton, south of Yarm, on the