

LOOKING BACKWARD

Concluding our series of extracts from BERTORDOFF's "The Warley Story."

The captain and his castle

AT THE upper end of Luddenden Dean stood one of the architectural anachronisms of the district, a pseudo-Scottish baronial hall called Castle Carr, said to be the "Freder's Folly" of Halliwell Sutcliffe's "Man of the Moors."

The house was built by a Captain Edwards, who obtained the land at the time of the Warley Enclosure Act 1852, when he acquired 693 acres of Saltonstall Moor and 77 acres of common land. There was an older building of the same name here as early as 1649 and possibly for some time before that.

Edwards also acquired 350 acres of farmland, together with the farms, to complete his estate. With the property went the sporting rights of "hawking, hunting, coursing, fishing and fowling" over some 1,500 acres of moorland.

Castle Carr took seven and a half years to build and at one time nearly 100 men were employed on the site, many of whom had to be lodged there because of the remoteness of the situation. Captain Edwards died before it was completed but his son L. P. Edwards carried on with the project and lived in the house from 1873 to 1876, when it was sold to Joseph Laycock.

In 1895 it came into the possession of the Murgatroyds of Broad Fold in Midgley, who used it chiefly as a shooting lodge in the grouse season.

A full description of Castle Carr is given by T. Sutcliffe in the Halifax Antiquarian Papers for 1921. Sutcliffe, who knew it in the time of the Edwards and the Laycocks, considered it to be a splendid illustration of a 14th century baronial hall. But others, with possibly more architectural knowledge, have called it a monstrosity.

It certainly embodied almost all the known styles of architecture from Norman door-heads and arches, through mid-English Gothic to 17th century domestic.

During the war (1939-45) the Castle was used as a store place by a Government department and in 1962 was demolished.

Mystery of the moorland stone

ACROSS the moor between the Oxenhope Road and Castle Carr is the Warley Moor Rocking Stone, which is said to resemble the Cornish Tolman Stones.

Watson, in his history of the Parish of Halifax, says: "On a common called Saltonstall Moor is what is called a rocking stone which is 3½ yards high. It is a piece of rock, one end of which rests on another and between the two is a pebble of different grit, seemingly put there for support but so placed that it could not be taken out and in all probability these stones have been laid together by art."

"Borlase gives an account of similar stones, found in Cornwall, called Tolman or hallowed stones, conjecturing that whoever passed through these acquired a kind of holiness and that such were Druidical in origin and were intended and used for introducing proselytes. The Tolmans have rock basins cut into them which helps to prove that the Druids used them."

As to how much of Watson's conjectures we can accept, there is some doubt but there is no doubt of man's existence if not actual settlement in this area in pre-historic times.

In 1874, James Binns and James Spencer found both flint and stone implements along the edge of Warley Moor where the peat had been eroded.

A stone hammer-head, now in Bankfield Museum, was found near Lumb Mill in Wainstalls in 1872. Other flints and flint knappings have been found in various places on Warley Moor and are usually found where some erosion reveals a stratum of grey sand lying below peat and stones.

The decline of Luddenden

THE final chapter of "The Warley Story," so far as it concerns Luddenden industry, could be headed "Decline and Fall" but this would suggest a dramatic change, whereas the situation which exists has been brought about almost imperceptibly over 200 years.

First the cottage-based industry of spinning and handloom weaving was superseded by machinery driven by water power in the valley bottom. Then, in the last century, when the new means of communication came to the Calder Valley, the trunk road, the canal and the railway made it more difficult for the mills in the tributary valleys, such as Luddenden, to compete. One by one, they either went out of business or moved to premises where the means of transport were more readily accessible.

Of 11 mills which once operated on the stream from Cold Edge to Luddenden, only one is now working.

The same sad story can be told of the quarries at Fly, on the hillside between Wainstalls and Mixenden and those at Scotland Quarries in Midgley. Not one is working.

The only industry left was agriculture. The farms as they existed would not yield a living for a family because they had been deliberately restricted in size to enable the farmer to combine his weaving and his agricultural activity. With no other sources of income, these smallholdings could not maintain a family.

As a result, we find many instances of two or three farms being combined into one holding or alternatively, farms being completely abandoned.