

**RUGBY: THE SCHOOL AND  
NEIGHBOURHOOD. COLLECTED  
AND ARRANGED FROM THE  
WRITINGS OF THE LATE MATTHEW  
HOLBECHE BLOXAM, O.R., F.S.A.**

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**W. H. PAYNE SMITH**

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*Matthew Holbecke Bloxam*

*Oct. 7.5. May 12 - 1880.*

*Engraved by R. S. S. from a photograph by J. S. S.*

RUGBY  
*The School and Neighbourhood.*

COLLECTED AND ARRANGED FROM THE WRITINGS  
OF THE LATE

MATTHEW HOLBECHE BLOXAM, O.R., F.S.A.,

BY THE

REV. W. H. PAYNE SMITH, M.A.

*WITH PORTRAIT, ILLUSTRATIONS, AND MEMOIR.*

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## PREFACE.

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ON more than one occasion, in the two or three last years of his life, I suggested to Mr. Bloxam the desirability of collecting together into one volume his various writings on Rugby School and its Neighbourhood. The suggestion was received with kindness and approval, but various causes rendered its realization impossible.

Some time after Mr. Bloxam's death, I communicated with his surviving brother, the Rev. J. R. Bloxam, D.D., and having received his cordial approval and good wishes, set to work, in conjunction with Mr. A. J. Lawrence, to carry out the idea.

Mr. M. H. Bloxam had written, in the course of a long life, a very large number of papers dealing with the School, the Town and the Neighbourhood, and many obituary notices of Old Rugbeians. These, to the number of something like one hundred, were scattered about in *Rugby Magazines*, *Meteors*, *Leaflets*, *Rugby Almanacks*, &c. They stretched over a long period of time, the earliest having appeared in the *Rugby Magazine*, in 1836; the latest in the *Meteors* of 1886. The majority of them were independent of one another, being written from time to time at the request of various persons, editors, or



societies. There were, however, two sets of Articles of a more serial character, one on the Early History and Masters of Rugby School, the other on Roads and Runs round Rugby. It seemed best to adopt these two series as the basis of arrangement, working in other Papers at the most fitting places, and putting several miscellaneous Papers on subjects connected with the School at the end of Part I.

It was only to be expected that in the course of Papers written for so many publications, and at so many different dates, there should be repetitions of the same points, recurrences of the same topics. It was scarcely advisable to reprint these. I have endeavoured to select in each instance the best account, and if there were anything in other accounts of material value, to add it in a note. I have also in a very few instances omitted short passages of merely temporary interest. On the other hand, I have not regarded it as my province to alter or criticise in any way what Mr. Bloxam wrote. With the exceptions just given, and with corrections of obvious slips or misprints, the Papers are as he wrote or uttered them. The note given at the beginning of each, stating its original occasion, will explain many differences of treatment and style. A Paper to be delivered before some grave Society of Archæologists was naturally handled somewhat differently to one to be read to the School Natural History Society; when his words were written for, or spoken to, Rugby boys, Mr. Bloxam never laid aside, even in discussing the most enthralling details of the past, his enthusiastic interest in present friends.

This collection, then, does not profess to be a complete re-issue of all that Mr. Bloxam ever wrote about Rugby. The object kept in view in arranging it has been, to throw into as connected a form as possible the vast mass of information

on the history and traditions of the School and Neighbourhood, which he had published, at various times and in various ways, over a period of fifty years. Scattered about in many publications, they would have remained out of the reach of most people. And it is unlikely that there should arise among us a second man, with such vast stores of antiquarian learning and such devotion to his old School and its neighbourhood.

In an Article on Rugby School, in the *New Quarterly Magazine*, October, 1879, after some three pages of introductory matter, the writer says, "In the history of the School itself, apart from its external growth, there is nothing known that is worth recording till the year 1828, when Dr. Wooll was succeeded by Dr. Arnold." This statement shows a somewhat limited range of vision. Mr. Bloxam, himself one of the most distinguished Rugbeians of that earlier era, spent great part of his life in investigating and recording the history of the School previous to 1828. This book might indeed be called "Præ-Arnoldian Rugby." It will show that there were some things worth recording in that dim and distant past, and will, it is to be hoped, keep alive the memory, not only of the distinguished writer and antiquary, but of other good men and true, who adorned Rugby in her comparatively early days.

The illustrations are mostly reproductions of old prints, &c., dealing with the Rugby of those early days. The books containing them are rare and hard to procure, and they are of such a character as to deserve a new lease of life. Many of the woodcuts are selected from those which appeared in the "Book of Rugby School," 1856.

The pleasant task remains of thanking those whose interest and help have been great. The REV. J. R. BLOXAM, D.D., has

given the greatest encouragement, and much valuable assistance ; R. H. WOOD, Esq., of Rugby, has lent the excellent steel-plate of Mr. Bloxam's portrait ; T. M. LINDSAY, Esq., has given much kind care to the production of the view of Mr. Bloxam's grave ; MR. R. T. SIMPSON, of Rugby, MR. W. G. FRUTTON, F.S.A., of Coventry, and others, have given valuable advice and assistance. To all these the Editor and Publisher offer their hearty thanks. They are well aware that with all of them it was a labour of love to assist in a work which may be, in its sphere, some memorial of Mr. Bloxam and of his life-long connection with Rugby.

W. H. PAYNE SMITH.

RUGBY,

*Nov. 18, 1889.*