

LEGENDARY YORKSHIRE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649111626

Legendary Yorkshire by Frederick Ross

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

FREDERICK ROSS

**LEGENDARY
YORKSHIRE**

LEGENDARY YORKSHIRE.

LEGENDARY YORKSHIRE.



The Enchanted Cave.

WHO is there that has not heard of the famous and redoubtable hero of history and romance, Arthur, King of the British, who so valiantly defended his country against the pagan Anglo-Saxon invaders of the island? Who has not heard of the lovely but frail Guenevera, his Queen, and the galaxy of female beauty that constituted her Court at Caerleon? Who has not heard of his companions-in-arms—the brave and chivalrous Knights of the Round Table, who went forth as knights-errant to succour the weaker sex, deliver the oppressed, liberate those who had fallen into the clutches of enchanters, giants, or malicious dwarfs, and especially in quest of the Holy Graal, that mystic chalice, in which were caught the last drops of blood of the expiring Saviour,

and which, in consequence, became possessed of wondrous properties and marvellous virtue of a miraculous character?

If such there be, let him lose no time in perusing Sir John Mallory's "La Morte d' Arthur," the "Chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth," the "Mabinogian of the Welsh," or the more recent "Idylls of the King," of Tennyson. According to Nemius, after vanquishing the Saxons in many battles, he crossed the sea, and carried his victorious arms into Scotland, Ireland, and Gaul, in which latter country he obtained a decisive victory over a Roman army. Moreover, that during his absence Mordred, his nephew, had seduced his queen and usurped his government, and that in a battle with the usurper, in 542, at Camlan, in Cornwall, he was mortally wounded; was conveyed to Avalon (Glastonbury), where he died of his wound, and was buried there. It is also stated that in the reign of Henry II. his reputed tomb was opened, when his bones and his magical sword "Excaliber" were found. This is given on the authority of Giraldus Cambrensis, who informs us that he was present on the occasion. But the popular belief in the West of England was that he

did not die as represented, his soul having entered the body of a raven, which it will inhabit until he reappears to deliver England in some great extremity of peril.

This is what is told us by old chroniclers of Western England, the Welsh bards, and some romance writers; but in Yorkshire we have a different version of the story. It is true, say our legends, that Arthur was a mighty warrior, the greatest and most valiant that the island of Britain has produced either before or since; a man, moreover, of the most devout chivalry and gentle courtesy, and withal so pure in his life and sincere in his piety as a Christian, that he alone is worthy to find the Holy Grail, if not in his former life, in that which is forthcoming— for he is not dead, but reposes in a spell-bound sleep, along with his knights, Sir Launcelot, Sir Gawaine, Sir Perceval, etc., and that the time is coming when the needs of England will be such as only his victorious arm, wielding his magically wrought Excaliber, can rescue from irretrievable ruin. He sleeps—it is asserted—along with his knights, in a now undiscoverable cavern beneath the Castle of Richmond, whence he will issue in the fulness of time, scatter the enemies of

England like chaff before the wind, as he so frequently dispersed the hordes of Teuton pagans, and place England on a higher eminence among the nations of the earth than it has ever previously attained. This enchanted cave has been seen but once, and by one man only. It happened in this wise :—

Once on a time there dwelt in Richmond one Peter Thompson. At what period he flourished is not recorded, but it matters not, although a little trouble in searching the parish registers and lists of burgesses of the town might reveal the fact. He gained a living by the fabrication of earthenware, and hence was popularly known amongst his comrades and townspeople as Potter Thompson. He was a simple and meek-minded man, small in stature and slender in limb, never troubling himself with either general or local politics. His voice was never heard at the noisy meetings of the vestry, nor did he join in the squabbles attendant on the meetings of the electors for the choice of their municipal governors or representatives in Parliament; he merely recorded his vote for the candidate who came forward as the representative of the colour he supported, leaving the shouting and quarrel-

ling and cudgel-playing to those of his fellow-townsmen who had a liking for such rough work. As for himself, he was only too glad when he had discharged his duty as a citizen to get back to his clay and his wheel, for he was an industrious little fellow, had plenty of work, and was thus enabled, by living a frugal life, to lay by a little money, and would have lived a comfortable and happy life but for one circumstance.

Unfortunately, Peter Thompson was a married man; not that matrimony, in the abstract, is a misfortune, but he was unfortunate inasmuch as his wife was a termagant, and made his life miserable. Her tongue went clack, clack, clacking all day long; nothing that he did was right. She declared herself to be the greatest fool in Richmond to have united herself to an insignificant little wretch like him; and even when the bed curtains were drawn around them at night, the poor fellow was kept awake for an hour or more while she dinned into his ears a lecture on his manifold faults and his failures of duty as a husband. Peter seldom replied, but bore it all with meekness, and allowed her to go on with her monologue until she was tired, or

ceased for want of breath. At times, when she was more exasperating than usual, he would start up from his wheel, clap his hat on his head, and rush out of the house to escape her pertinacious scolding. At such times he would go wandering about the hills and picturesque scenery by which Richmond is environed, and especially about the hill on which stands the Castle, and amongst the castle ruins, remaining away for three or four hours, moodily meditating on the mischance or infatuation which had led him to ally himself with so untoward a helpmate.

It chanced one day that Peter, unable to endure the persecution of his wife's tongue, rushed out of his house with the full intention of throwing himself into the Swale, so as to end his misery there and then. It was a brilliant summer's day, and there was a glorious sheen cast over hill and vale, rock and ravine, the silvery river winding between its emerald-hued banks and the clumps of foliaged woodland—over the Castle keep standing pre-eminently above all other buildings, church tower, ruined friary, antique bridge, and the quaint houses of the burghers, with the tower of Easby gleaming in the distance, imparting to the whole scene,