1. Lancashire: Origin of the Word.

As Englishmen we are proud of our country, and we all know some of the reasons which led to the growth of the English nation and caused its people to occupy that particular tract of country which they to-day inhabit. Each of us, further, is proud of his native county. Many people of all ranks for example, young and old, take an interest in the annual struggle of the counties for supremacy in cricket. Yet comparatively few know the events which have caused our country to be separated into those divisions which we term counties. The irregular boundaries of these counties, which are so great a stumbling-block to the young student of geography, suggest that the causes which led to the making of a county are by no means simple. At the present day, when divisions of a tract of land are made, they are often very simple. Look at the line which divides Canada from the United States. For a long stretch it is straight. Many of the smaller American divisions are bounded by straight lines. So, in our country, new towns like Barrow-in-Furness and Middlesbrough are built with most of the streets in straight lines running at right angles to each other. In these cases the whole scheme of the parcelling

out is planned before the division is made. But in the case of many of our counties there was no such principle of arrangement. They gradually grew up under varying conditions, and the boundaries were shifted more than once. These boundaries have usually been determined by some physical feature of the country which could be readily utilised, and often formed an actual barrier

Barrow-in-Furness

between adjacent divisions. As we shall see later, Lancashire, and also the northern part of it with which we are specially concerned, is separated from the adjoining counties along part of its borders by hill-ridges or by streams. Many divisions of this portion of country which we call Lancashire were made before its present boundaries were fixed.

All of us must have observed that the names of many counties end in "shire," as Lancashire and Yorkshire, while others, as Cumberland and Westmorland, Kent and Essex, have not this ending. Shires are tracts of land which were created by the Anglo-Saxons, the word itself being Anglo-Saxon, and meaning that it is a part *shorn* or cut off from a larger tract. The term county is from the French word *comte*, a province governed by a count (*comes*), and it did not come into use until after the Norman conquest. Such counties as Essex, Kent, and Sussex have kept their names, and roughly their boundaries as well, from the earliest times, and are survivals of former kingdoms, while Cumberland and Westmorland were not completely separated from Scotland to become entirely English until after the Norman invasion.

The name Lancashire was derived from its old capital town Lancaster, the Roman *castrum* or camp on the Lune, from whence the names Loncastre and Lancastra, afterwards changed into Lancaster. Lancastreshire was afterwards shortened into Lancashire. Professor Skeat informs me that no one knows anything about the meaning of the word Lune. The statement that it is a British word is only a guess, and there is nothing to show that it is British.

Lancashire is not a shire in the sense that it was divided from adjoining shires in Saxon times. In Domesday Book we find the lands of the southern half of the county treated with those of Cheshire, and those of the northern half with those of Yorkshire.

The boundaries of the county were practically fixed

in the reign of William Rufus, but in that of Stephen the King of Scotland obtained possession of the territory north of the Ribble, and it was not until the reign of Henry II that Lancashire became definitely what it still is, "the County of Lancaster." Lancashire then is, strictly speaking, a county and not a shire, and it is one of the youngest of the counties.

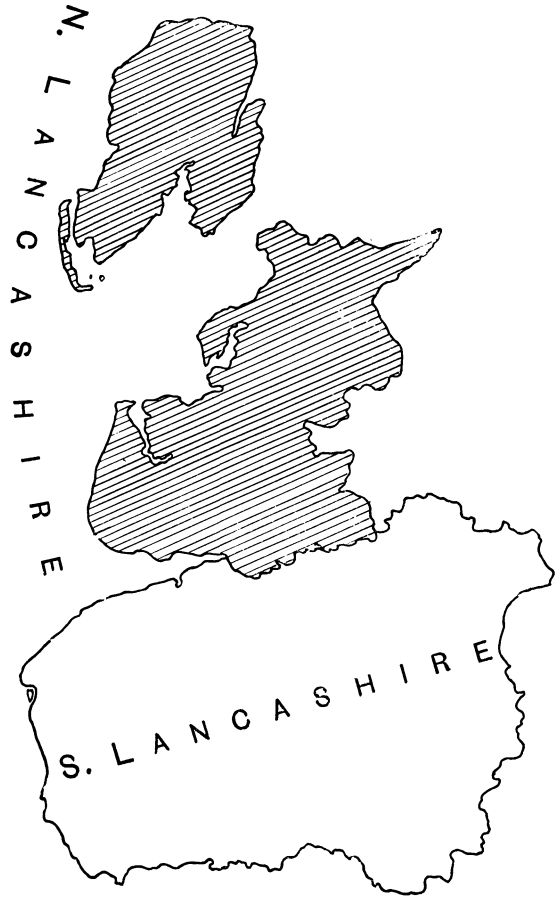
2. Lancashire as a whole.

In this volume we confine our attention to the northern half of the county only, but before beginning our task it will be well to say a few words about the county as a whole, and the relationship of the northern portion to the entire county.

The accompanying map shows the boundaries of the whole county, and the relationship of that part situated north of the Ribble, which is the subject of the present book, to the whole. The part north of the Ribble is shaded.

The greatest length of the entire county along a line drawn from the Three Shire Stone at Wrynose in the north to near Stockport in the south-east is about 80 miles, while an east and west line from Formby Point to the county boundary east of Rochdale is over 40 miles long.

The greatest length of North Lancashire is about 48 miles along a line from the Three Shire Stone to Preston, while an east and west line from near Blackpool to Stonyhurst College shows a width of about 25 miles.



Map, showing relation of that part of the county treated in this work to the whole county

The whole county has an area of 1,203,365 acres or about 1880 square miles, that of the northern portion being approximately 462,000 acres or about 722 square miles.

The population of Lancashire by the recent census of 1911 was 4,768,474. Of these people, over 4 million inhabited South Lancashire and only about 400,000 dwelt in North Lancashire. It will be seen, therefore, that owing to the great number of industrial towns in South Lancashire and their paucity in North Lancashire the number of people per square mile is very much less in the northern division than in that south of the Ribble.

Lancashire is the sixth county in England as regards size. Yorkshire has nearly three times its area, and Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Devonshire, and Northumberland are each a little larger than our county, which is itself about one twenty-fifth of the size of all England.

The shape of the county is very irregular. That of the southern portion is more regular than the rest, being of a roughly oval outline with the longer axis of the oval extending from west-south-west to east-north-east. This part has few indentations of any size. The Ribble estuary forms a marked indent on the coast-line, and north of this river the width of the county suddenly contracts, as the eastern boundary here advances many miles westward. Owing to this and to the coastal curve of Morecambe Bay, the county south of Lancaster is very narrow, but widens again to the north of Lancaster, up the valleys of the Lune and Wenning. Near Silverdale the county of Westmorland comes to the sea, and the rest of Lancashire,

usually spoken of as "Lancashire north of the sands," is therefore detached from the portion which we have already considered. This detached portion is very irregular, being broken by estuaries on the south, and having a somewhat sinuous boundary-line inland.

The county may be divided into the Lancashire plain

Coniston Old Man in Winter

on the west and the high ground on the east. Much of the plain is in South Lancashire, but extends north of the Ribble where the ground west of a line connecting Preston and Lancaster belongs to it. The high ground is not continuous, but is broken up by valleys and by lowlands around Morecambe Bay. The high ground in South Lancashire along the boundary between Lancashire and

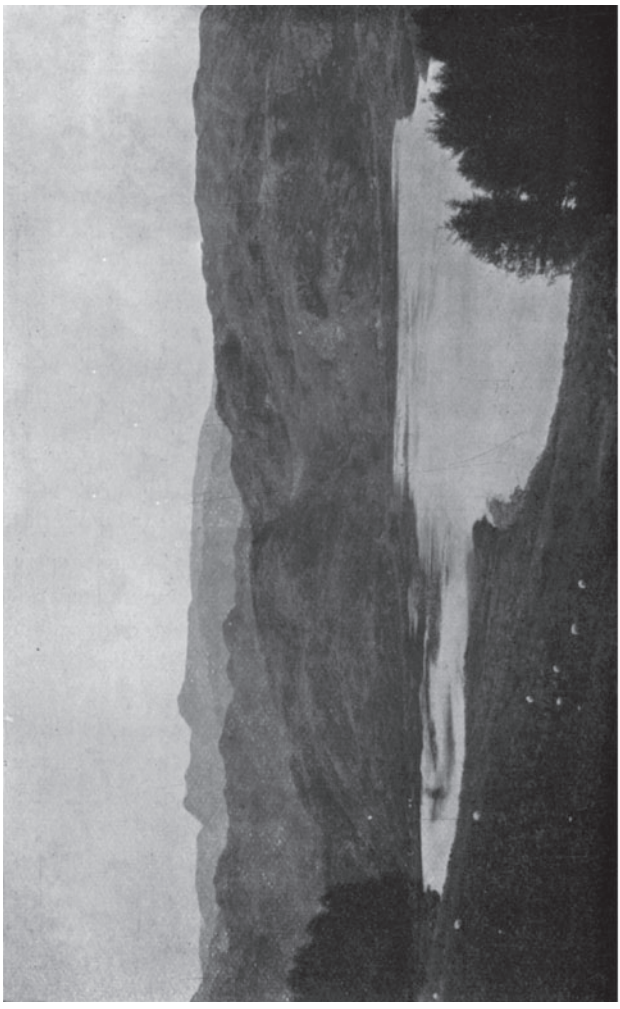
Yorkshire belongs to the Pennine Hills; to the west of these hills are minor elevations connected with them. Another tract of high ground in North Lancashire lies to the east of the North Lancashire plain. It is a nearly circular mass of which the eastern part belongs to Yorkshire. At the north end of Morecambe Bay, the Kent estuary causes the most northerly portion of the county to be absolutely detached from the southern part. This northern portion is largely highland, part of which belongs to the English Lake District.

The whole county is in contact with five other counties, namely Cumberland on the north-west, Westmorland on the north-east, Yorkshire on the east, Derbyshire on the south-east, and Cheshire on the south. The western portion from the mouth of the Duddon to that of the Mersey is coast-line.

Most of the drainage is westward into the Irish Sea, the principal river-basins being those of the Lune, Ribble, and Mersey, but about four miles south-west of Burnley a very little portion of Lancashire is drained by streams which join the Yorkshire Calder and not the Lancashire Calder, and accordingly their waters are discharged into the North Sea by the Humber estuary.

The populous nature of the southern part of the county is due to the large number of industrial centres therein, of which Manchester and Liverpool are chief. It has been already noted that but few centres of industry exist in the more sparsely inhabited northern portion.

Manchester is a cathedral city. The diocese of



Tarn Howes, Coniston
(*Lancashire in foreground, Westmorland in background*)

Manchester includes most of North Lancashire, while the rest of the northern part of the county is in the diocese of Carlisle, of which a suffragan bishop takes his title from the town of Barrow-in-Furness.

Lancashire is not only a county but a county palatine, being so made by Edward III in 1376 when he conferred the title of Duke of Lancaster upon his son, John of Gaunt, and gave him royal rights over the county where he afterwards held his court. The reigning sovereigns still retain the title of Duke of Lancaster. The duchy of Lancaster is not the same thing as the county palatine, for possessions of the duchy exist in other counties also.

The river Ribble has been selected as the dividing line between the two portions of Lancashire because it forms the southern boundary of a tract of agricultural land, which on the whole separates an industrial centre in South Lancashire, largely dependent upon the occurrence of coal, from another in North Lancashire which is in turn largely influenced by the rich deposits of iron ore.

It is true that the large town of Preston standing on the north side of the Ribble belongs rather to the South Lancashire industrial centre, but apart from this exception the division is a fairly natural one.