

## CHAPTER XX.

### *Miscellany.*

#### THE ROCHDALE PRESS.



THE history of the Rochdale press is a brief one, as it was not until late in the last century that we find evidence of one being set up here; but in the middle of the sixteenth century Rochdale sent some of her sons to London to learn the art of printing. On the 25th December, 1562, Henry the son of Henry Bamforthe of Rochdale, husbandman, was apprenticed to John Cawood (the printer of Bible that bears his imprint) for eight years. On the 25th December, 1565, John the son of James Chetam of Rochdale, husbandman, and John the son of John Holles, late of Rochdale, smith, deceased, were bound apprentice to Lucas Harys and Gyles Huke of London, respectively for nine and eleven years.<sup>1</sup> But for long after this period there were no booksellers' shops or printers in Lancashire—at all events not in the small towns—the limited supply of literature required being purchased from the itinerant chapman.

In 1713 however Rochdale supported a bookseller, as appears from the title-page of a visitation sermon by Henry Newcome, rector of Middleton, which was sold by "R. Scofield, bookseller, Rochdale,"

This Robert Schofield was succeeded by his son, John Schofield,<sup>2</sup> whose daughter Alice was baptized 21st November, 1730, her father being described as "staconer."

The first edition of Tim Bobbin's "View of the Lancashire Dialect," printed in 1746, was sold by "Mr. [John] Scolfield," whose name also appears on the title-page of Defoe's "Memoirs of a Cavalier."

<sup>1</sup> Register of Stationers' Hall.

<sup>2</sup> John Schofield was bap. 3rd June, 1703, and in 1729 he married Mary Dawson of Rochdale. In 1739 the curate of Milnrow lodged with Mrs. Scholfield, stationer [see p. 212].

Alice Schofield (the daughter of John Schofield) took her father's business and disposed of it shortly before her death in 1804 to Mary Scholfield Lancashire,<sup>1</sup> who died in 1836.

Probably the first Rochdale printer was M[ark] Nield of Blackwater Street, who in 1796 printed some articles for a Milnrow Sick and Burial Society. [See p. 60.] This Mark Nield was probably the brother of Luke Nield, the parish clerk, and son of Daniel Nield of Bury.

Another printer was James Hartley who purchased in 1805 the shop which had been occupied by Alice Scholfield. The earliest issue from his press is dated 1796.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Wood, about this time, also printed several works, amongst others a sermon by James Burgess, which was written in 1797. [See p. 265.] In this year also was printed, by J. Ashworth of Rochdale, "The Rules and Orders to be observed by the Union Society."

Early in the present century Mary Scholfield Lancashire, Joseph Littlewood, and James Westall each published several books.

The first local newspaper was the "Rochdale Recorder;" its price was sevenpence; it appeared in 1827. In 1851 the "Rochdale Sentinel" was started, in 1856 the "Rochdale Observer," and in the following year appeared the "Standard;" the two latter were amalgamated. The "Pilot" was begun in 1858 and the "Spectator" in 1859. In 1871 appeared the "Rochdale Times."<sup>3</sup>

#### ROCHDALE THEATRES.

The first theatre in the town was built by a man called Chorlton<sup>4</sup> towards the end of the last century. It was situated in Anchor Yard near where the Town Hall now stands.<sup>5</sup>

It was doubtless in this theatre that Ryley performed in 1787. The following passage from Ryley's "Itinerary"<sup>6</sup> refers to his visit :

<sup>1</sup> Mary Scholfield Lancashire was the grand-daughter of Josiah Lancashire of Salford, who in 1741 (24th December) married at Manchester, Ann the daughter of . . . . . Schofield, who was doubtless in some way related to the Rochdale family. Josiah Lancashire, brother of Mary Scholfield Lancashire, was the father of the Josiah Scholfield Lancashire of Rochdale who died in 1850.

<sup>2</sup> "Articles to be observed by the members of the Benevolent Society of Rochdale." James Hartley was the son of Ralph Hartley of Fieldhouse, and was born in 1769.

<sup>3</sup> Several fortnightly and monthly papers have appeared, but none of them had long lives.

<sup>4</sup> Chorlton kept a grocer's shop in the Packer, and was killed in a disturbance about the right of way out of the road to Sparrow Hill.

<sup>5</sup> Nuttall's MS. Notes.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. vi., 339.

“At Rochdale I had a circle of respectable acquaintance and had every reason to expect a crowded room, when a circumstance happened which obliged me to postpone the performance.” The incident alluded to was the imprisonment for the night of Ryley’s attendant George, who it appears, having stopped at a public house in Royton, had used expressions which led to his being arrested as a Jacobite, and to some of the stage effects being destroyed by the bar-parlour patriots. Ryley however recovered the cost of his damaged goods and “Mr. Collier, son of the celebrated Tim Bobbin,” painted fresh canvas for him. He stayed two nights in Rochdale, the performance being “New Brooms.”<sup>1</sup>

In 1793 the chapel in Toad Lane [see p. 258] was vacated by the Wesleyans and was converted into a theatre.<sup>2</sup> In this building from time to time the leading “stars” appeared, amongst whom were the Kembles, Liston, Young, Vandenhoff, Miss Foote, and Miss Farren (afterwards the Countess of Derby). In the Rochdale Free Library is a collection of local playbills referring to the year 1798, from which it appears that during that season a company from the Theatre Royal, Manchester, occupied the boards, and on the 8th August, by the desire of the “High Sheriff,<sup>3</sup> Captain Hamer, and the officers of the Rochdale Volunteers,” Monk’s ‘Castle Spectre’ was performed; at another performance (27th August) the ‘New Rochdale March,’ composed by Mr. Bianchi and dedicated to captain T. Royds,” was played, and on the 3rd of the same month there was a pantomime, in the course of which one of the performers leapt “over the Vicarage and Church of Rochdale, through a variegated sun and a hogshead of fire.”

The Toad Lane theatre was pulled down in 1865. The present Theatre was erected in 1867 by a limited company.

#### MILITIA CLUB IN 1796.

At this time and for many years afterwards everyone was liable to serve in the Militia, and in consequence, in various parts of the kingdom, gentlemen formed local clubs, the object of which was to provide funds to furnish substitutes in the event of any of its members

<sup>1</sup> The Itinerary, vi., 336.

<sup>2</sup> It afterwards was purchased by Jonathan Fildes of Quarry Hill, whom John Ryley on a later visit calls his “old friend.” He also names his printer and agent, Miss Lancashire.

<sup>3</sup> John Entwisle of Foxholes.

being drawn at the ballot. The minutes of one of these Rochdale clubs has been preserved;<sup>1</sup> it consisted of twelve members and met at the Blue Ball Inn (landlord, Charles Hopwood). Mr. J. Lyon Taylor was the chairman. The other original members were Ralph Standring Shaw, Robert Bell, John Smith, junior, Joseph Heap, Richard Shuttleworth, William Massie, Thomas Lord, John Cheetham, Henry Ormerod, Charles Stott, Robert Leech.

RETURNS MADE BY THE JUSTICES OF THE PEACE, 1620 AND 1636.<sup>2</sup>

1620.

“The certificate of Raphe Asheton and Robert Holt, Esqrs., two of His Majesty’s Justices of the Peace, touching service by them done within the p’ishes of Rachdale and Middleton in putting forth of pore apprentices and other services in obedience to His Majesty’s instruction, and in execution of the lawes of the realme. In 1620, bound out of pore apprentices in said p’ishes 300 and upwards, w<sup>ch</sup> time the pore were restrained from wandering, and provided for by law.”

1636.

At this time the Justices met only once a month, and between their meetings some cases it appears were dealt with by the constables. The return reads:—“The Monthly Meetings have been duly kept, at w<sup>ch</sup> meetings divers offences have been by the officers to us presented, and the offenders punished, the particulars of w<sup>ch</sup> since last assizes wee have made bould to certify as follows:—At meeting on 1st 9<sup>bris</sup>, 1636, Susan Ogden, Nicholas Birch, John Haworth, Richard Smith, John Buckley, and Henry Kershaw, all of Rachdale, were convicted for suffering typling in their houses, and were punished. The constables of Rachdale, Spotland and Butterworth certified of the punishment and sending away according to the statute of ten wandering vagabonds.”

At the next meeting on 6th December, 1636, Ralph Healey of Castleton was convicted for suffering tippling in his house, and the constables reported that “they had punished some twenty wandering rogues.” In March, 1636-7, James Redfern of Wolstenholme was convicted of being drunk and paid “five shillings to the use of the pore;” and Samuel Greaves and William Byrom, being convicted of “tracing and killing two hares in the snow,” paid twenty shillings each “to the use of the

<sup>1</sup> In the author’s possession.

<sup>2</sup> Record Office.—State Papers, Dom. Soc., Vol. 351, No. iii.

pore." At this meeting Simeon Lord, Richard Duerden, James Lightowlers, Sylas Brearley, Abraham Cheetham and Charles Lord, "being poore," were bound apprentices to the churchwardens of Rochdale.

## RUSHBEARING.

This form of annual Wakes, although peculiar to the north of England, is too well known to require description. Not only the town of Rochdale, but Milnrow and Whitworth had each their festival, with the accompanying rushcarts, morris dances, and garlands. As the population increased the ancient custom appears to have been abused; in 1780 Dr. Hind the vicar found it necessary to forbid the rushes being brought into the Parish Church on the Saturday, and also to order the sexton not to give out the usual notice to bring them. In 1770 garlands were placed in the church on Saturday and fetched away on the Monday, and then carried round the town.<sup>1</sup> The rushcart has now almost entirely disappeared, although the annual holiday is observed as heretofore.

Bishop Gastrell in 1717 alludes to "the disorderly custom called Rushbearing (at Milnrow), on Saturday next before St. James's Day." The church is dedicated to St. James. At Whitworth the feast is sufficiently near St. Bartholomew's Day to point out its origin [see p. 45].

Although rushcarts have not quite become extinct, they are now rarely seen in the parish. Some thirty years ago the advent of Rushbearing was marked by the cracking of whips; these whips were made of rope and string, the lash being five feet long and the handle about eighteen inches, and when skilfully used the result was a crack as loud as a pistol shot.

## ROCHDALE MOCK CORPORATION.

This was one of the Jacobite Clubs which were not uncommon in the early part of the last century. Although it met at Rochdale, many of its members lived elsewhere. A roll of its proceedings is preserved in the Chetham Library. Its title appears to have been "The Honourable Corporation of Rochdale." It was formed in 1712, when its officers were Abraham Kershaw, mayor; Peter Ormerod, sheriff; William Farrackley, recorder; and Peter Ashton, chaplain. The records consist chiefly of election of officers "over a bowl of punch" and the infliction of fines for non-attendance.

<sup>1</sup> Raines' MSS., xiv., 438.

## SPA W SUNDAY.

A custom of repairing to Knoll Hill and Blackstone Edge on the first Sunday in May was long prevalent in the district, and the day was formerly known as Spaw Sunday. As far as Blackstone Edge is concerned the custom has not yet died out.

## SUPERSTITION ABOUT CHAPEL CROFT AT BUTTERWORTH HALL.

Within the last twenty years it was believed that if the grass grown on this meadow was the first mown and carried away without rain falling, none of the hay from the neighbouring meadows would be "housed" dry, and for years the Chapel (or Chapel Yard) Croft was mown after the others.<sup>1</sup>

## WITCHCRAFT IN THE 16TH CENTURY.

The belief in witchcraft was at this period widespread throughout the land, and that the inhabitants of this parish were no wiser than their neighbours is evident from the fact that, in 1597, one Alice Brerely of Castleton obtained a pardon after being condemned to death for having killed James Kershaw and Robert Scholefield by witchcraft.<sup>2</sup>

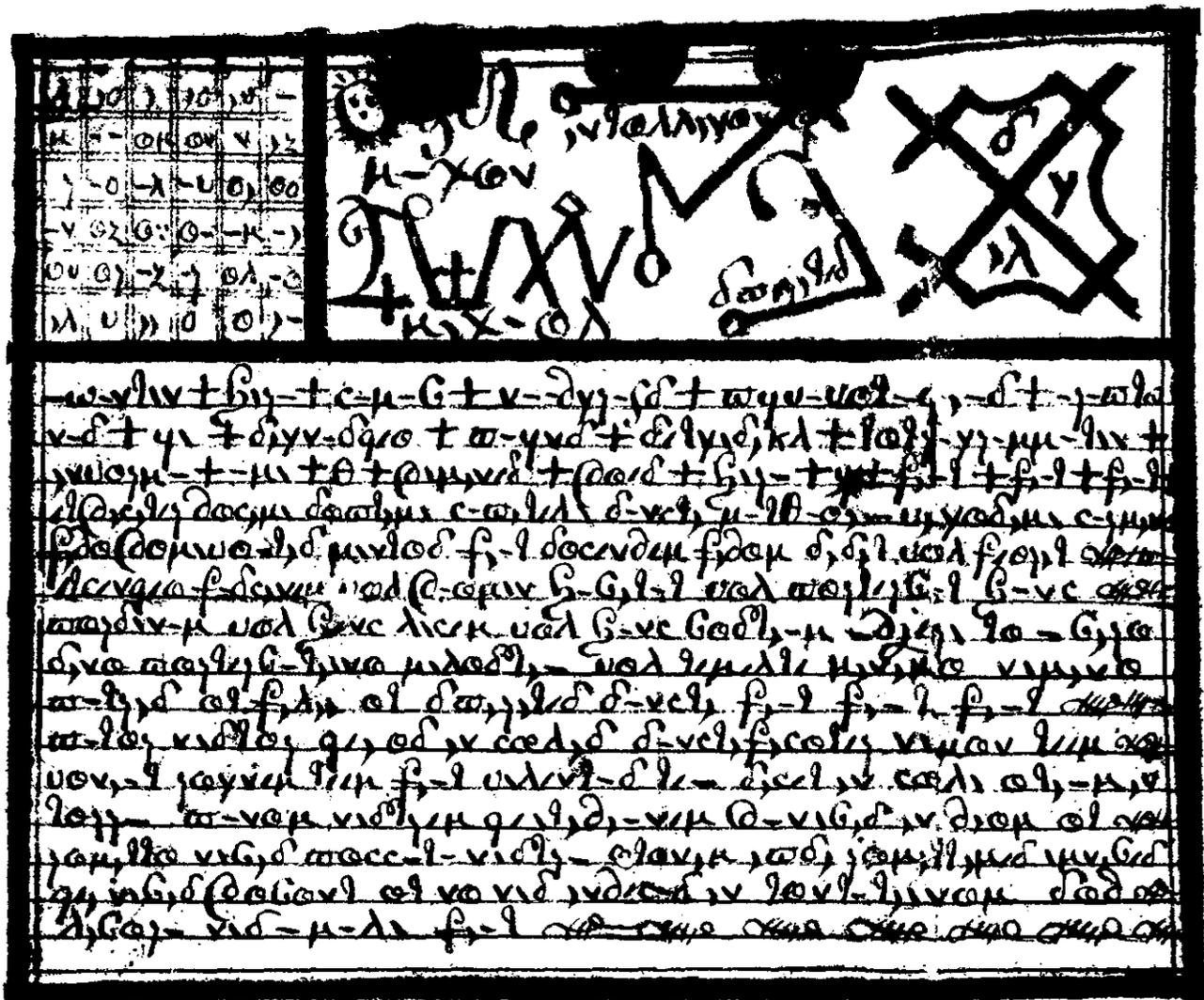
## A CHARM OR EXORCISM AGAINST WITCHCRAFT AND EVIL SPIRITS.

In pulling down an old barn at Healey in 1876, beneath one of the roof timbers the workmen discovered a small wood box, which contained a charm written in cipher,<sup>3</sup> of which, on the opposite page, is a fac-simile. The table on the top corner is a magic square dedicated to the sun, on which the numbers are expressed by letters formed from the Greek alphabet; any six sums in this square taken in a straight line make the number III, and together make up a total of 666, being the number of "the beast" (Rev., xiii., 18). In a line with this square are the symbols of the sun and moon and under them the word "Machen," strife or contention; below this is a symbol consisting of a Jerusalem cross and the sign of Jupiter; beneath this is the word "Michael." In the centre is a symbol to which no meaning can be attached, and above it is the word "Intelligence;" the other figure, on which is "sigil," is the seal of the sun. Of the body

<sup>1</sup> Parson's Book (MS. by Canon Raines) at the vicarage.

<sup>2</sup> State Papers, Dom. Soc., cclxiii.

<sup>3</sup> Now in the Rochdale Free Public Library.



FACSIMILE OF A FORMULA OF EXORCISM (OR CHARM) FOUND AT HEALEY.

[SLIGHTLY REDUCED.]

γλ - + 0ν +

9093-γγ-144-98ν

of the charm the first two lines are meaningless words in the Greek character, and end with the word "tetragrammaton." What follows is in Latin and may be translated into "I love God, the Lord God, the Hour, Christ, let it be done, let it be done; let it be done as it is said in the xvii. chapter of St. Matthew and at the twentieth verse. By faith ye may remove mountains. Let it be according to your faith. If there is or shall be however a bewitcher or a demon dwelling in, or in the habit of disturbing, this person, this place, or this thing, I exorcise it to depart without any disturbance, trouble or the least tumult, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Then follows the Lord's Prayer. On the back of the paper is endorsed "Agla en Tetragrammaton." The four letters in the "Agla" form the initial letters of a cabalistic word meaning "Thou O Lord, art mighty for ever." "Tetragrammaton" is the Hebrew Jehovah.

A charm almost exactly like this was found in the beginning of this century under a brass plate on a tombstone in a Lancashire churchyard,<sup>1</sup> and another one was discovered in the roof of a barn at West Bradford, near Clitheroe.<sup>2</sup> The belief in this kind of charm lingered long in Lancashire, and probably none of these exorcisms are more than 100 or 150 years old.

#### ROGER BREERELEY, THE FOUNDER OF THE "GRINDLETONIANS."

In 1626 Roger Breereley [or Breirley], clerk, held (by descent from his grandfather, Roger Breereley) a close of land near the site of the reputed castle in Castleton. This Roger Breereley, clerk was the fourth son of Thomas Breereley of Marland. He is said to have been the founder of a religious sect called the "Breirlists or Grindletonians." He was for some years of Grindleton in Yorkshire, and afterwards held the perpetual curacy of Burnley Church, where he died in 1637. During his life he underwent much persecution; at one time he was kept prisoner at York pending the hearing of fifty charges against him of false teaching and the like, not one of which being proved he was set at liberty and allowed to continue his ministry. Roger Breereley was also a poet. His sermons and poems were published in 1677, under the title of "A Bundle of Soul-convincing, Directing and Com-

<sup>1</sup> See *The Reliquary*, x., 130.

<sup>2</sup> *Lancashire Folk Lore*, 63.

forting Truths; clearly deduced from diverse Texts of Holy Scripture, and practically improven both for Conviction and Consolation: being a brief summary of several sermons preached at large by that faithful and pious Servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. Rodger Breirly, Minister of the Gospel at Grindleton in Craven." The preface to this scarce book tells us that Brereley's "life and conversation were comely in the eyes of the sons and daughters of Sion, and beautiful in the streets of that city, so that none could lay shame thereon." Some of the poems possess considerable merit, and are not without wit and humour. The following lines conclude the poem on "Self Civil War:"

"I am not with my self, as I conceive  
Wretch that I am, my self, my self deceive.  
Unto my self, I do myself betray,  
I from my self, banish my self away,  
My self agrees not with my self a jot,  
Knows not my self, I have my self forgot,  
Against my self I have mov'd wars unjust,  
I hurt myself and I myself distrust,  
My self I follow and myself I fly,  
Besides my self and in my self am I.  
My self am not my self—another some  
Unlike my self and like myself I am,  
Self sons self furious and then way-ward else  
I cannot live with—nor without my self."

An elder brother of Roger Brereley was Abel Brereley, who was parish clerk of Rochdale.

#### THE JULY FLOOD.

This term is locally applied to a storm which took place 4th July, 1838. The effects of the flood were mostly felt in the Spod valley, where it swept away Spotland Bridge. It is recorded that near to the site of the bridge the stream rose to a height of fifteen feet; of course all the mills and houses near to its banks were much damaged.

#### FOOTBALL MATCHES.

As late as 1775 these matches between the various hamlets in the parish were played in the streets of Rochdale, with an occasional divergence into the bed of the river.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> MS. Notes by William Nuttall, the author of "Rochdale, a Fragment," published in 1810.

## COCK FIGHTING ON SHROVE TUESDAY.

As late as 1830 the boys at the Grammar School were permitted to indulge in this sport in the school-house.

## BAUM RABBIT.

This name was given to a ghost which for many years was firmly believed to haunt the vicinity of St. Mary's Chapel (Cheetham Street). Why it chose this locality or why it usually assumed the form of a white rabbit has never been divulged.

## CRACKNEL FRIDAY.

Some fifty years ago Good Friday morning was known as Cracknel Friday, and children calling on their friends were regaled with small thin cakes known as cracknels.

## THE STOCKS.

It will be seen from the views of Whitworth and Littleborough Chapels that the stocks were in both cases within the chapel yards; the stocks in Rochdale were just outside the churchyard;<sup>1</sup> the upright stones of the latter still remain; upon them are cut the letters "w. w." and the date "1666."

## OLD CROSSES.

In 1650 the remains of a cross stood at Stubley, near Portsmouth. [See p. 423.] The ordnance map shows also a hill in Wardle called Stubley Cross Hill. At the junction of the Oldham and Ripponden Turnpike with the road to Cold Greave, in Ogden, is marked the site of an old cross. The market cross in Rochdale remained in its original position until about the beginning of this century, when, tradition says, it was pulled down wilfully by some drunken men, and was afterwards removed to Goose-lane.

## BEACONS.

Most of the hill tops in the parish have been utilized for beacons, certainly Knoll Hill, Brown Wardle, Blackstone Edge, and the hill behind Stones in Todmorden [see p. 473] were so used.

<sup>1</sup> Before this is printed they will be placed inside the yard.

## DEANS GREAVE TRADITION.

There is a farm near Stubbylee (in Brandwood) where tradition says that a Danish chieftain was buried, who had been killed in a battle between the Danes and Saxons somewhere near Broadclough.

## THE MANSTONE.

This was anciently known as the Monstone and gave its name to Monstone Edge. It is a large piece of rock which lies close to the boundary line between Healey and Wardle. The tradition about it is that it was thrown to its present position by Robin Hood from Blackstone Edge, and certain impressions on its surface are said to be the marks of the fingers and thumb of the thrower. It was doubtless deposited here by glacial action—rock of a similar character is found on Rushy Hill.

## ROCHDALE CLOTH HALL.

Near the end of last century a Cloth Hall was built on land near Lord Street for the use of the manufacturers of the district, but from some cause or other it fell into disuse and was converted into cottages. The neighbourhood where it stood is still called Cloth Hall.

## MILITARY STATIONED AT ROCHDALE.

From the early part of this century to 1846 detachments of troops were regularly stationed in Rochdale, their head-quarters being Summer-castle, and what is now known as Barrack Yard.

## THE PARISH CLERKS.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the clerk was an officer who at all events considered himself a man of some importance in the parish. A complete list is not obtainable, but the following particulars are of interest.

ABEL BRERELEY [or Brearley] was a son of Thomas Brereley of Marland, and brother of Roger Brereley the Grindletonian [see p. 535]; he was clerk in the early part of the seventeenth century. On 6th September, 1633, he married Jane the daughter of John Street, a woollen draper of Rochdale<sup>1</sup> [see p. 51].

RODOLPH [or Ralph] WEBB succeeded Brereley; his name appears on the last page of the first volume of the Registers as clerk, 24th August, 1637, and he was buried at Rochdale 30th January, 1690.

<sup>1</sup> John Street's will was proved in 1632; his goods, &c. (as per inventory), were valued at £458.

HENRY BUTTERWORTH appears to have acted as clerk (probably as deputy to Webb, who was then aged) in 1684; he held office until his death in April, 1697.

ROGER WHITWORTH is named in the churchwardens' accounts as parish clerk in 1697; how long he held office is unknown.

HENRY BAXTER was certainly clerk in 1724, and continued to hold office until 1752.

RALPH TAYLOR for some years assisted Henry Baxter, who was his uncle; he succeeded to the clerkship in 1752, and retained it until his death in 1783 [see p. 334].

ROBERT TAYLOR, the son of the last clerk, on the death of his father succeeded to the office, which he held until 1794 [see p. 334]; he was also landlord of the public house known as Amen Corner. [Chap. XIX.] He was followed by

LUKE NIELD, who was the son of Daniel Nield, the master of the Bury Charity School; he was clerk from April, 1795, to his death; he died 5th June, 1810 in his 70th year. He left a somewhat curious manuscript note book, recording all the fees which he had received during his tenure of office; this is now in the Free Public Library.

DANIEL NIELD was the son of the last clerk; he was appointed 24th June, 1810, and held the office until his death, 10th February, 1832; he was also landlord of the Golden Ball Inn. He had fifteen children, and several of his descendants are still living in the parish. He was succeeded by John Grindrod, who had to give a bond not to keep a public house.

#### A CENTENARIAN.

Robert Brearley, who died at Milnrow 19th September, 1889, in his one hundred and third year, was the son of Robert Brearley of Milkstone, who was first a weaver and then landlord of the Pack Horse Inn, Church Stile, Rochdale, where he died 1st March, 1807, aged fifty-four; his widow (née Ruth Whitworth) survived until 1845. Robert Brearley, the centenarian, was born 20th May, 1787, and baptized at the Parish Church on the 16th June, following, and he was there married 7th January, 1810.<sup>1</sup> He was buried at Milnrow 24th September, 1889.

<sup>1</sup> The proofs of Brearley's age admit of no doubt. His younger brother, Thomas (who was well known to the writer), died in 1879, aged 79.

## KEMP STONE.

On the moors a little to the west of Allerscholes, and not far from Reddysore Scout, is a large piece of rock with a flat top which is known by this name. There is no evidence to show how long it has been so designated; its name may therefore be of great antiquity or of comparatively recent origin.

## 17TH CENTURY TOKENS.

After the death of Charles I. the want of small change was much felt by all classes of tradesmen, and this led to the issue of tokens representing pennies and farthings. In 1672 their issue was suppressed by Act of Parliament. The following were issued at Rochdale:

O. John Bvtterworth<sup>1</sup>—Bust of the Queen of Bohemia crowned.

R. Of Rathdell. 1662. I.—8. ( $\frac{1}{4}$ d.)

O. James Hamar<sup>2</sup> of—An eagle and child.

R. Ratchdall. 1655—I.H. ( $\frac{1}{4}$ d.)

O. Richard Kenion—His halfpeny.

R. Of Rachdall. 1666—R.K.

O. Richard Kenion—His half-peny.<sup>3</sup>

R. Of Rachdall. 1667—R.I.K.

O. Robert Martlers—The Weavers Arms.<sup>4</sup>

R. In. Rochdall. 1666—His half-peny.

O. Iosva Strengfellow<sup>5</sup>—The Grocers Arms.

R. In. Rochdale—I.S. ( $\frac{1}{4}$ d.)

Milnrow produced one token:

O. Richard Milne<sup>6</sup>—An hour glass.

R. Of Milnrow. 1671—His half-penny.

Towards the close of the next century a large number of tokens were issued here as in other parts of the county, but they are neither very rare nor of great value.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John Butterworth was a mercer, his will was proved at Chester in 1667.

<sup>2</sup> James Hamer was the third son of Ralph Hamer of Wuerdle [see p. 405].

<sup>3</sup> A branch of the Kenion family lived in Church Lane—this was probably one of them.

<sup>4</sup> This was not one of a Rochdale family.

<sup>5</sup> There was a Ralph Strengfellow living in Rochdale in 1593, and shortly afterwards several others of the same family appear to have settled here. In 1670 Robert Strengfellow of Rochdale, mercer, purchased a messuage from Edmund Taylor of Glodwick.

<sup>6</sup> This was one of the family whose descent is given on p. 386.

<sup>7</sup> For list of eighteenth century tokens see Batty's Cat. of Copper Coinage.