

The Anglican and Methodist Church of St Matthew Rastrick

A History

1. From the Romans to the 14th Century

1.1 Early Christianity in Britain

A short time after the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, a man named **Saul of Tarsus**, a citizen of Rome, living in Palestine had a remarkable earth-shattering experience as he was walking along the road from Jerusalem to Damascus, the capital of what is now Syria. He had an experience which he described as coming face to face with the Risen Jesus ¹. The result was that his life completely changed, he became Paul the Apostle, who would eventually teach and preach the Good News of Jesus Christ in the City of Rome, not as free man but as a voluntary prisoner to escape the clutches of the Jews in Jerusalem. He arrived in Rome in 60 AD and spent two years under house arrest. Paul was aware that there are already Christians in Rome - he had written to them (Acts 28, vv 14,15) Romans 1 v7. During his time of house arrest he 'proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught the facts about the Lord Jesus Christ quite openly and without hindrance.'²

The events that followed are a story in themselves but suffice to say that Christianity continued to develop in Rome and elsewhere, even in the face of considerable persecution by the Roman authorities, in particular by the Emperor Nero, who in AD 64 rounded up and ordered the killing of Christians, who were accused of starting a colossal fire in the city of Rome. Despite the opposition of the Roman authorities, **Saint Peter** was made the first Pope, the first Bishop of the Church in Rome, in AD 33.

The Romans first conquered the north of England in AD 71, but many years were to pass before events elsewhere in the Empire forced them to withdraw. They finally left in AD 409.

In his book 'The History of Brighouse, Rastrick, and Hipperholme' dated 1893 J. Horsfall Turner describes how the Romans developed a network of roads to assist the movement of troops and goods in subduing and governing the newly conquered territory of Britannia. In particular he identifies the road from Chester (Deva) to York (Eboracum) following a route across the Pennine hills via Slack near Outlane (Cambodunum), crossing the River Calder at Snake Hill Ford (in present Brighouse) and then following Clifton Common and High Moor Lane to Hartshead and Cleckheaton on its way to York. In our locality, Horsfall Turner believed that the Roman Road came down from Fixby Ridge, possibly crossed Clough Lane close to the new Fire Station, vis : "Mr. John Taylor, of Clough House, states that more than a ccentury ago Jonas Wilkinson, whilst reclaiming land from the waste in a field now known as Lower Hopper-take, near Slade Lane top, found his operations obstructed by a paved road which passed across the waste in the direction of Fixby Ridge." The Roman road then passed along what is now Church Street, although there was no church there at that time, and went down Gooder Lane to Snakehill ford, just downstream of the present Huddersfield Road bridge over the River Calder. On the 1854 Ordnance

¹ Acts 9 v 1 ff

² Acts 28 vv 30, 31

Survey 1:10,560 map³, a possible line of the Roman Road can be traced from Tofts Grove via Castle Hill, Brook Grain Hill, Rosemary Hill onto the northern part of Gooder Lane, then heading in a straight line for Snake Hill at the river Calder, then continuing in a straight line in a north-easterly direction for the foot of Clifton Common.



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Extract from O.S. 1854 map of Yorkshire, showing location of St Matthew's Church Rastrick (to the SW of the red marker by the word 'Rastrick')

There is little evidence on the ground for this assertion, although a Roman coin has been found at Castle Hill, Rastrick, the site of an ancient fort. However, it is possible that the Roman Road passed by the site of what is now St Matthew's Church.

To the south-east of Rastrick, a Roman tile kiln has been discovered at Grimescar, in Grimescar wood next to Grimescar Road and traces of the Roman Road were recently (in 2015) exposed next to Lindley Moor Road (A643), at its junction with Crossland Road.⁴

In Roman Roads in Britain by Ivan D. Margary (1973) under the Title :
712 MANCHESTER—OLDHAM—SLACK—LEEDS—THORNER (46.5 miles)
The author Margary states :

From Castle Shaw the road climbed on to the moors northward to March Hill, now buried in the peat, but traceable in places by slight differences in the vegetation. It seems certain, however, that from near this point the present Oldham - Huddersfield road, which runs in

³ <https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/Map/413581/421050/10/100391>

⁴ www.castleshawarchaeology.co.uk/lindleymoort.htm

long straight lengths, represents it as far as Pole Moor. Then the Roman road diverged a little to the south of it onward past Outlane, passing just to the north of the Roman fort at Slack (close to Outlane), where its course was established when the fort was excavated. Traces of the agger can still be seen in the fields there. Then the road over Old Lindley Moor to Rastrick continues the line very directly, although in its central part the present road lies a few yards to the north and the agger appears in the fields, 30 feet wide and 1 foot high. It keeps along the highest ground till the descent at Rastrick is reached.

It is very probable that the road continued straight on through Brighthouse and Cleckheaton, passing along the north side of Whitechapel Road, where it would be just to the south of the Roman fort at Snelsing. Then the present road to Leeds, running in straight lengths over high ground, almost certainly represents it. It must have continued to the north-east to join near Thorner the roads 72 or 729 leading to Tadcaster, but its course has not yet been traced.⁵

Notes

1. Castle Shaw: a Roman fort near Delph, formerly in the West Riding of Yorkshire now in Greater Manchester.
2. 'Agger' (Latin word): The agger was an artificial embankment that gave Roman roads the proper draining base.



View of Rastrick and the route of the Roman Road from Hartshead Cross

It is probable that Christianity was first brought to England by the Romans in the early first century AD, along with the worship of many of their deities. However, Christianity demanded exclusive allegiance from its followers. It was this intolerance of other gods, and its secrecy, which upset the Roman authorities and led to repeated persecutions of Christians. Christians were forced to meet and worship in secret. **Emperor Constantine** the Great (272 - 337 AD) saw Christianity in a new light - he thought that the worship of just one God could be used to his political advantage to unite the empire. It was Emperor Constantine who therefore decreed in AD 313 that Christians be granted freedom of worship; they would be tolerated in the Roman Empire.

The Roman occupation of England, and part of Scotland, ended at the beginning of the 5th Century AD. They were forced by events elsewhere in the Empire to withdraw from England in AD 409.

⁵ <http://romanroads.org/margary/rr712.html>

It could be argued that it was **Saint Augustine's** famous mission in 597 AD from Pope Gregory the Great in Rome to King Aethelbert of Kent that really set up the future course of Christianity in Britain, creating a strong alliance between Christianity and Kingship.

But before continuing with this part of the story, we must take a detour to see what was happening in Ireland, Scotland and Northumbria with the Celtic Church.

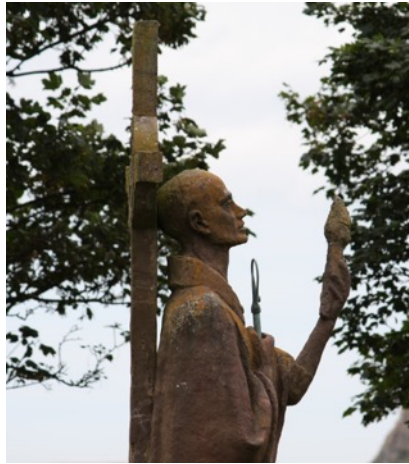
The Celtic Church meets the Roman Church in Northumbria

How did **Saint Patrick** bring Christianity to Ireland? The answer is - He didn't. Pope Celestine had sent **Palladius** to Ireland in 431 as their first Bishop, probably many years before Patrick proclaimed the Gospel in Ireland as a missionary.

Patrick's date of birth may have been 386 or 387, but this is not certain. His place of birth is equally uncertain - perhaps Kilpatrick in Scotland, perhaps Ravenglass in Cumbria, or even some suggest at Banwen (West Glamorgan) in Wales. Patrick was first taken to Ireland when he was a young man aged 16, captured by pirates from his home in Britain and sold into slavery. He escaped after six long years to the northern coast of France, where he became a monk and later a priest. Patrick returned to Ireland somewhere between 432 and 460 as a missionary priest. He concentrated his work in north-east Ireland, and his first church was at Saul, near present-day Downpatrick, south of Belfast in County Down. He preached to the Kings and their households and met with varied levels of success. One of his methods was to 'Christianise' the Celtic Pagan festivals. For example, Patrick reputedly lit an Easter bonfire on Slane Hill near the Hill of Tara while the King was having his own Pagan bonfire there.

Columba was born in 521 in County Donegal, the grandson of Niall of the Nine Hostages, an Irish King of the 5th century. He entered the monastic school of Clonard Abbey, County Meath and later became a monk and was ordained priest. In 563 AD **Saint Columba** left Ireland with twelve companions in a wicker coracle and settled with the Gaels of Dál Riata, where he was granted the Island of Iona, off the Isle of Mull in Scotland, to found his monastery. Here began the Celtic Christian Church in Britain.

St. Aidan was an Irish monk from the monastery St. Columba had founded on the island of Iona. In 635 AD the Northumbrian King Oswald (reigned 634 to 643) summoned Aidan to be bishop of his kingdom. Oswald granted Aidan and his companions the small tidal island of Lindisfarne for a new monastery in Northumbria, England.



St Aidan's Statue at Lindisfarne

Previously, in 627A.D. the Anglian King of Northumbria, Edwin, converted to Christianity and was baptised by the Roman Missionary Saint Paulinus (see 1.2 below). The monastery at Streaneshalch (meaning Streane's headland and later given the name Whitby by the Vikings) was founded in about 657A.D. by Hild (614-680), daughter of an Anglian nobleman, with the support of Oswiu (612-670), then ruler of Anglian Northumbria. Streaneshalch must have been particularly important to the Northumbrian royal family as a number of its members were buried there. King Oswiu followed the practice of the Celtic church, having been brought up in exile in Dál Riata after his father's death (Æthelfrith d. c. 616) at the hands of King Edwin, but his wife Eanflæd, followed the Roman practice of calculating the date of Easter.

The **Synod of Whitby** (664 A.D.) was a Northumbrian synod where King Oswiu of Northumbria summoned eminent clerics from the rival branches of the Church - Bishop Colman of Lindisfarne and Wilfrid, Abbot of Ripon. After asking 'Who is the gatekeeper of heaven?', and receiving the reply 'Saint Peter', King Oswiu ruled that his kingdom would calculate Easter and observe the monastic tonsure according to the customs of Rome, rather than the customs practised by Irish monks at Iona and its satellite institutions. Thus the English Northumbrian Church leaned towards the church of Rome and left the Celtic church in the backwaters of history. But the Celtic church continued to flourish. However, the decision at Whitby had radical effects on the religious map of the North of England. Colman, Bishop of Lindisfarne and leader of the Scottish party at Whitby, returned to Scotland rather than adopt new ways. Many others went with him. Eata, the abbot of Melrose, was appointed Abbot of Lindisfarne as well, to serve under the new Bishop Tuda. With two monasteries to look after, Eata appointed **Cuthbert** as prior of Lindisfarne, where he sought the solitude of his hermitage on the island Hobrush, (later known as St Cuthbert's Isle). In the Priory meetings in the Chapter House, Cuthbert sought to reconcile the new modified monastic rule of the Roman church while still observing the Celtic spirit.

Within ten years of the Synod of Whitby, Northumbria was subject to the ongoing spread of Christianity from the south and from Rome :

The Monkwearmouth - Jarrow monastery was founded in 674 AD by Benedict Biscop, first with the establishment of the monastery of St Peter's, Monkwearmouth on land given by

Egfrid, King of Northumbria. His idea was to build a model monastery for England, sharing his knowledge of the experience of the Roman traditions in an area previously more influenced by Celtic Christianity stemming from missionaries of Melrose and [Iona](#). Was this perhaps as a consequence of the synod of Whitby? The new king was showing that the Roman traditions of the Anglo Saxons were going to take precedence over the Celtic traditions, brought from Ireland, Iona and Lindisfarne.

The **Venerable Bede**, author of 'The Ecclesiastical History of the English People', lived and died in between the twin monasteries of Wearmouth and Jarrow in the Northeast of England between 673 and 735 AD and wrote or translated some forty books on practically every area of knowledge, including nature, astronomy, and poetry. The Venerable Bede is widely regarded as the greatest of all the Anglo-Saxon scholars.

In AD 685 **Saint Cuthbert** became Bishop of Lindisfarne, and in AD 710 the Lindisfarne Gospels were produced in his honour after his death. Following the Viking raids on Lindisfarne in AD 793, the monks of Lindisfarne finally left the monastery in AD 875, taking the remains of St Cuthbert with them and moved first to Chester-le-Street and then to Durham in AD 955.

During the 'Harrowing of the North' by William the Conqueror, in 1069 St Cuthbert's Community fled from Durham with St Cuthbert's coffin to escape the Norman army. They sought refuge on Lindisfarne and were surprised by the receding tide allowing them to cross to the island. They proclaimed it to be a miracle of St Cuthbert. Then in December 1069 St Cuthbert's Community returned to Durham from Lindisfarne with the saint's body only to find the town had been destroyed. A worse discovery was that Bishop Aegelwine had robbed Durham of its richest treasures and fled.⁶

The present **Durham Cathedral** replaced the 10th century "White Church", built as part of a monastic foundation to house the shrine of Saint Cuthbert of Lindisfarne. The treasures of Durham Cathedral include relics of St Cuthbert, the head of St Oswald of Northumbria and the remains of the Venerable Bede.

⁶ <http://www.englandsnortheast.co.uk/NorthConquered.html>

1.2 Christianity Reaches the West Riding of Yorkshire

Surprisingly, the story of how Christianity reached the West Riding of Yorkshire had already begun with the conversion of the Anglo-Saxons, so we return to St Augustine's mission to England

*The Anglo-Saxons were pagans who worshipped a variety of Germanic deities. It is said that **Pope Gregory the Great** saw a group of blond slave children in the market and asked where they were from. He was told that they were Angles (that is Anglians, a Germanic tribe from whom the English gained their name). The Pope is supposed to have replied, 'Not Angles, but Angels' and decided to send missionaries to Britain to convert its rulers to Christianity.⁷*

Whatever the truth of the story, Gregory did send missionaries to England. In 597 **Saint Augustine** arrived in Kent and established a new church at Canterbury.

Augustine was followed in 601 by another missionary from Pope Gregory in Rome, the missionary's name was the monk **Paulinus**. His job was to Christianize the Anglo-Saxons from their native Anglo-Saxon paganism.

In 625 Saint Paulinus came north to Deira, as chaplain to Princess Ethelburga (Æthelburh) of Kent, who was a Christian, and who was to marry King Edwin of Northumbria. Upon arrival, Paulinus set about converting King Edwin to Christianity from worshipping the old Saxon gods. He spent two years persuading Edwin of the benefits of the new faith, and after escaping an assassination attempt, winning in battle and the birth of a daughter, Edwin was persuaded. Having taken on the Christian faith, Edwin's High Priest, Coifi, destroyed an important pagan temple at Goodmanham, near Market Weighton. Coifi then persuaded the gathered crowd to take up the new Christian faith. A few days later on Easter Sunday 12 April 627 Paulinus baptised King Edwin and many of his family and close followers at a hastily constructed wooden church in York.⁸

Mass baptisms followed in the river Swale at Catterick and in the river Ouse.

Bede wrote in Chapter 14 of his Ecclesiastical History: 'So King Edwin, with all the nobles of his race and a vast number of the common people received Holy Baptism in the year of our Lord 627. He was baptised at York on Easter Day in the church ... which he had hastily built of wood'. Paulinus' patience, skill and faith had been rewarded.

All this happened 8 years before St Aidan established his monastery at Lindisfarne.

Paulinus built a new church at York (he was the first Bishop of York (625 - 633 AD) and at **Campodonum** (not to be confused with Cambodunum i.e. Slack near Outlane). Campodonum is Bede's name for the Roman settlement, which is probably somewhere near Leeds. This church was destroyed in 633 after Penda of Mercia defeated and killed King Edwin at the Battle of Hatfield Chase. The stone altar which once stood in the church at Campodonum survived the fire, and in Bede's day was in the monastery of the abbot Thrythwulf 'in the wood of Elmet'.

Did Paulinus build a church at Dewsbury?

⁷ Early Christianity <http://www.archaeology.wyjs.org.uk/vikingweb/Christianity.htm>

⁸ Tim Barber : realYorkshireBlog.com and Bede : Ecclesiastical History of the English People II.13

The answer is - Probably. *"In Campodonum where there was also a royal dwelling, he built a church."* Some experts say 'Campodonum' is not identifiable; some say Doncaster; some Dewsbury. Only Dewsbury has an ancient stone which records that *"Hic Paulinus praedicavit et celebravit"* – *Here Paulinus preached and celebrated*. See 'Paulinus' in the website of Dewsbury Team Parish Church ⁹, where there is more information about the Saint.

Bede on writing of Paulinus' activities, states:

"... in Campodonum, where there was then a villa regia (royal dwelling) , he (Paulinus) built a church which was afterwards burnt down, together with the whole of the buildings, by the heathens who slew King Edwin. In its stead, later kings built a dwelling for themselves in the region known as Loidis. The altar escaped from the fire, because it was of stone, and is still preserved in the monastery of the most reverend abbot and priest Thrythwulf, which is in the forest of Elmet".¹⁰

Loidis is an early name for Leeds, still surviving in the village names of Ledsham and Ledston to the east of the city.

Elmet was an independent Brittonic kingdom covering a region of what later became the West Riding of Yorkshire. For a map of Elmet see [historyfiles.co.uk](http://www.historyfiles.co.uk) ¹¹ Elmet roughly covered an area bound by the river Wharfe in the north, the river Trent in the east, the river Don in the south, and the Pennine watershed in the west. No one knows for certain where abbot Thrythwulf 's monastery was located, but local historians have made claims for several places in West Yorkshire including Dewsbury, Morley, Potterton (near Barwick in Elmet), and Kirkburton. Of these Kirkburton and Dewsbury would seem to have the stronger claims.

Besides the tradition that Paulinus preached at **Dewsbury**, there is later documentary evidence suggesting that Dewsbury might once have been a minster church in Anglo-Saxon times. The role of the minster was to evangelise in the area for which it was responsible. To do this it would establish subsidiary churches in outlying areas. These 'daughter churches' would then offer part of their income to the 'mother church'. In the medieval period Dewsbury was still receiving money from parishes in Wakefield, Bradford and Halifax suggesting that at one time **it was responsible for one large parish covering the whole of the upper Calder valley**. The church also has a substantial collection of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture, which would equally suggest that it was a church of high status. Dewsbury has an ancient stone which records that *"Hic Paulinus praedicavit et celebravit"* – 'Here Paulinus preached and celebrated'.

A new project 'The Paulinus Way Project', set up in 2008 by Rev Canon Owen Page and the PCC at St Mary's Church, Todmorden seeks to describe the missionary route used by Paulinus through Yorkshire between Todmorden and York. More information on The British Pilgrimage Trust website.¹²

⁹<https://dewsburyteamparish.org.uk/heritage/st-paulinus/>

¹⁰ The Ancient Kingdom of Elmet <http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/BritishElmet.htm>

¹¹ Map of Kingdom of Elmet. https://www.historyfiles.co.uk/FeaturesBritain/BritishElmet02_Full.htm

¹²<https://britishpilgrimage.org/portfolio/paulinus-way/>

With the death of King Edwin at the hand of the pagan 'King' Penda (former warlord of Mercia) on the 12th October 633 at the battle of Hatfield Chase¹³, Paulinus had lost his protector and patron. He was forced to return to Canterbury with Edwin's Queen Ethelburga and her children. The spark of new Christian faith in Northumbria, including what eventually would become West Yorkshire, was extinguished by the pagan Penda and his alliance with the Welsh king Cadwallon. Eventually, after the battle of Heavenfield (near Hexham) in AD 633/4, when Cadwallon was defeated by the Northumbrian King Oswald, the door opened for the Celtic church to make its influence felt in the person of the Irish Ionan monk Aidan (see above).

After his time as Bishop of York, Paulinus moved back to Rochester as Bishop of Rochester from 634 to 644. He died in 644 AD.

So here we have a strong possibility that Christianity had reached Dewsbury prior to AD 633, and it seems possible that the Gospel spread to the Calder Valley around Rastrick around that time or later. However, its establishment was interrupted by events of the 9th and 10th centuries, notably the Viking invasion.

The writer has still to uncover the next 450 years' events in the West Riding of Yorkshire, whilst Aidan was establishing his Monastery at Lindisfarne, and the Vikings were invading England in AD797, to their defeat at Stamford Bridge in 1066. The Norman invader, who became William I of England, was actually another Viking whose roots can be traced to Rollo (c.846-c.932) or Ganger Rolf (Gange-Hrólfr) from Ålesund, Sunnmøre, Western Norway. *'Rolv was so big that a horse could not carry him, therefore he walked on foot everywhere.'*¹⁴ The 'Saga om Gange-Rolv' was later written in Iceland in the 1300s. Clearly a time of great upheaval in Europe and England.

We should not forget that the Saxon Cross base in the St Matthew's churchyard dates from the 8th to the 11th centuries. See Section 1.3 following.

Notable events in Yorkshire and beyond between 664 and 1028 A.D. included :

664A.D.

Synod of Whitby and further events in the North-east - see above

685 A.D.

King Ecgfrith of Northumbria was defeated by King Brudei Mac Bili of the Picts at the **Battle of Nechtansmere** (or Dun Nechtain) in Scotland, on Saturday the 20th May 685. Not only was this battle of crucial historical importance to the history of Scotland, but it was also of tremendous importance to the cultural life of the north of England, because it brought to the throne of Northumbria the scholarly Aldfrith under whose patronage the arts would flourish as never before. Aldfrith was an illegitimate half-brother of King Ecgfrith and had been living in exile on the island of Iona. King Aldfrith was destined to reign for two brilliant decades (685-705) of what has been called the Golden Age of Northumbria, when scholarship and the arts flourished - the period which saw the creation of the magnificent Lindisfarne Gospels.¹⁵

¹³ Bede 'The Ecclesiastical History of the English People' Part II Chap. 20, also <https://lasmithwriter.com/battles-of-anglo-saxon-england-hatfield-chase-ad-633/>

¹⁴ Fra de Første Fotefar (From the first footsteps) Sunnmørsposten forlag Ålesund 1984

¹⁵ 'Lindisfarne' by Magnus Magnusson, Oriel Press 1984

793 A.D. Viking attacks on the monastery of Lindisfarne herald a new age for the British Isles and Europe. *'In this year terrible portents appeared over Northumbria, which sorely affrighted the inhabitants: there were exceptional flashes of lightning, and fiery dragons were seen flying through the air. A great famine followed hard upon these signs; and a little later in that same year, on the 8th of June the harrying of the heathen miserable destroyed God's church on Lindisfarne by rapine and slaughter.'*¹⁶

867 A.D.

Viking army kills rival kings of Northumbria, capturing York

Osberht and Ælle, two rivals for the Northumbrian throne, were engaged in battle outside York when a Viking force arrived. The Vikings - who had assembled a 'Great Army' equipped for conquest rather than raiding - took advantage of the opportunity to defeat and kill both kings. They also slaughtered many people both inside and outside the city, before moving south. The city became Jorvik, the Viking capital in England. Northumbria, which during the seventh century had been the most powerful kingdom in the land and the cradle of a scholarly renaissance that had transformed north-western Europe, was destroyed.¹⁷

886 A.D.

Alfred, King of Wessex, agrees a treaty with Vikings to divide England

Alfred, king of Wessex, had retaken London and now brought the Vikings under King Guthrum to terms. The treaty between Wessex, Guthrum and the East Angles divided England. Alfred and Wessex retained the west, while the east (between the Thames and Tees rivers) was to be Viking territory - later known as the 'Danelaw' - where English and (Danish) Vikings were equal in law.

927 A.D.

Æthelstan, King of Wessex and Mercia takes over Northumbria

Æthelstan, grandson of Alfred the Great, drives Vikings Guthfrith and Ealdred out of Northumbria and destroys the city of York, on his way north, changing his title from 'King of the Anglo-Saxons' to 'King of the English'. Coins struck in Æthelstan's name after 927 bore the legend 'King of the whole of Britain'.¹⁸

954 A.D.

Eric Bloodaxe, the last Viking king in England, is forced out of Jorvik (York)

Eric Bloodaxe, an exiled son of Harald Finehair, king of Norway, was invited to take over the kingdom of Jorvik (York) around 946 AD. He was welcomed by Athelstan, king of Wessex, who wanted Eric to protect his kingdom from Scots and Irish invaders. A hard and despotic ruler, Eric reputedly killed many of his brothers in disputes. His rule was repeatedly contested by Viking rivals, until he was eventually driven out of Northumbria and killed as he fled north.¹⁹

¹⁶ celebrated annal from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle

¹⁷ 'In Search of Alfred the Great' by Eduardo Albert and Katie Tucker

¹⁸ 'The Anglo-Saxons' by Marc Morris published by Penguin Books 2022 'Imperial Overstretch?' p.263

¹⁹ BBC History http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/timeline/vikinganglosaxons_timeline_noflash.shtml

Further afield, Christianity was adopted at the Allthing (parliament) in **Iceland in the year 1000 A.D.** as their national religion. Þorgeirr goði (Thorgeir, Chieftain or heathen priest), who held the office of law-speaker, proclaimed that all people in Iceland should be baptised and believe in one God. The story set down in the Kristni Saga (Story of the Conversion)²⁰ is remarkable in that although the conversion of Iceland was made for political purposes, it was extremely effective in spreading the Gospel.

Æthelred reigned over the Anglo-Saxons from 978 but throughout his reign he struggled with repeated incursions into his kingdom by Viking armies. His nickname 'Unready' was a poor translation of 'badly advised'. Towards the end of his reign the Viking leader **Svein Forkbeard**, son of Harold Bluetooth who had already converted to Christianity in Denmark, sailed up the River Trent and landed at Gainsborough in 1013. After a peaceful reception, he led his army through Danelaw into Wessex, where Oxford, Winchester and London surrendered to his rule. This spelt the end of Wessex as the whole nation regarded Svein as their undisputed king.²¹

One notable Anglo-Saxon king of England was **Canute the Great** (1016-1035), who was also King of Denmark, Knud den Store (1019-1035) and King of Norway, Knut den Mektige (1028-1035).

Canute's Grandfather was Harald Bluetooth. Modern Bluetooth technology (a joint initiative between various Scandinavian companies) was named after Harold for the part he played in trying to unify Denmark and Norway during his reign.

Canute first came to England with his father Sweyn I Forkbeard on his invasion of England in 1013. Canute probably met his wife Ælfgifu at Gainsborough where he had been left in charge of the Danish fleet. Canute became King of England in 1016 after a victory at the battle of Ashingdon in Essex.

Canute built a church, chapel or holy site after winning the battle to commemorate the soldiers who died in battle. A few years later in 1020, the memorial church, known as Ashingdon Minister, was completed on the hill next to the presumed site of the battle of Ashingdon. The church still stands to this day.²²

The first few years of Canute's reign were marked by his giving the Earldom of Northumbria to the Norwegian Viking Eric of Hlathir. But subsequently the Danish element of his entourage steadily decreased. In 1028 the Danes and the English reached an agreement at Oxford - a draft of the treaty survives, written in the style of Archbishop Wulfstan of York, who drew up Canute's laws. It was probably Wulfstan who inspired Canute to reign as a Christian king and thus prevented the Danish conquest from being a disaster to Anglo-Saxon civilisation.²³

In his Letter to the English (1020), Canute links God's law and his royal authority and foreshadows the concept of the divine right of kings. The substance and tone

²⁰ Kristni Saga : Viking Society for Northern Research, University College, London

²¹ Dr Mark Morris - 'The Anglo Saxons' - Penguin Books

²² Wikipedia

²³ HistoryExtra.com Your Guide to King Cnut: the fierce Danish warrior who ruled England

of his enjoinders suggest a confident, decided man and an enthusiastic Christian. He ends his letter thus:

18. And moreover, we admonish that the Sunday festival is to be observed and honoured with all ones might from Saturday noon until dawn on Monday, and that no-one is to be presumptuous as either to practice any trade or to attend any meeting on that holy day.

19. And all men, poor and rich, are to go to their church and make supplication for their sins, and to observe zealously every appointed fast, an honour readily this saints whose feats the priests shall enjoin on us.

20. So that all together through the mercy of the eternal God and the intercession of his saints we can and may come to the bliss of the heavenly kingdom and dwell with him who liveth and reigneth ever without end. Amen²⁴

The story of King Canute and the tide is an apocryphal anecdote illustrating the piety or humility of King Canute the Great, recorded in the 12th century by Henry of Huntingdon.

In the story, Canute demonstrates to his flattering courtiers that he has no control over the elements (the incoming tide), explaining that secular power is vain compared to the supreme power of God.²⁵

For details of Rastrick at the time of the Norman Conquest 1066 and in the **Domesday Book of 1086** see Section 1.3 below.

²⁴ The Anglo Saxon World An Anthology translated with and an Introduction by Kevin Crossley-Holland

²⁵ Wikipedia

1.3 The Saxon Cross Base at St Matthew's

There is evidence of an early Christian presence on the site of St Matthew's Church from the 10th or 11th centuries (or even earlier from the 8th or 9th centuries²⁶) in the form of a Saxon Cross base in the churchyard, much resembling Walton Cross, Hartshead, in character. It is wrought with knots and scrolls and has a cavity on the top for the insertion of a shaft. An old manuscript refers to a cross outside the door of the first chapel of St Matthew (built c 1350): '*And there stood in the street nigh to the chapel door one cross of stone, very finely graven with fretted work*'.²⁷

This cross, like that at Hartshead, would doubtless form the inducement for the erection of an adjacent place of worship.

See also a further reference to the St Matthew's Cross in a 1948 paper by Hugh Travis Clay in section 1.6 below.

*Wayside crosses are one of several types of Christian cross erected during the medieval period, mostly from the 9th to 15th centuries AD. In addition to serving the function of reiterating and reinforcing the Christian faith amongst those who passed the cross and of reassuring the traveller, wayside crosses often fulfilled a role as waymarkers, especially in difficult and otherwise unmarked terrain. The crosses might be on regularly used routes linking ordinary settlements or on routes having a more specifically religious function, including those providing access to religious sites for parishioners and funeral processions, or marking long-distance routes frequented on pilgrimages.*²⁸

For more information on Wayside Crosses see Appendix X

The cross base is a Grade II* listed building and a registered ancient monument.

For details of the ancient monument see Calderdale website

<http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ancient-monuments/monuments-full.jsp?propno=HSKHG0DWL2000&lbrefno=23376&address=Cross+Base+In%0DChurch+Yard+%0DChurch+Street%0DRastrick%0DBrighouse%0DWest+Yorkshire%0D>

See also Appendix G.

For the listed building details see www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-338807-cross-base-in-churchyard-of-st-matthews- See also Appendix G.

²⁶ <http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ancient-monuments/monuments-full.jsp?propno=HSKHG0DWL2000&lbrefno=23376&address=Cross+Base+In%0DChurch+Yard+%0DChurch+Street%0DRastrick%0DBrighouse%0DWest+Yorkshire%0D>

²⁷ old Manuscript in St Matthew's Parish archives 'Accounts of the Restoration of Rastrick Chapel'

²⁸ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1009288>



The Saxon Cross Base in St Matthew's Churchyard

The Cross Base is also described in greater detail on the Historic England Website at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1012874> See Appendix G

A further reference can be found at <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/category/ancient-crosses/page/4/> in the online Journal of Antiquities: an extract:

This three and a half foot-high (1.06metre) cross-base is said to be Anglo-Saxon and probably dates from the 10th-11th century AD. It is all that now remains of a once proud Saxon high cross – the shaft with its decorated cross-head would have stood inside the large, round socketed hole which measures 30cm by 25cm by about 15cm in depth. The rest of the cross has long since disappeared. The base-stone is of dressed gritstone which tapers away about three-quarters of the way up (75cm or 29in); the bottom of the base being square (52cm or 20in).

The carvings on the south and north faces represent 'The Tree of Life' , a concept of worldwide significance e.g. Norse mythology Yggdrasil (or Odin's Horse), and in Christian teaching, referred to in biblical tradition in the Book of Genesis (Genesis Chap 2 v9) and in the Book of Revelation (Revelation Chap 2 v7, Chap 22 vv 2,14,19).

Details of the carvings and its similarities to the Hartshead Cross base are discussed on the web pages of The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture Vol VIII Western Yorkshire 2019.²⁹ There, the Cross Base is described as 9th Century. See also Section 1.5 following for information about the Walton Cross at Hartshead and its relationship to Rastrick.

²⁹ http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=193



Walton Cross, Hartshead

For more details of the **Walton Cross at Hartshead** see The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Sculpture Volume VIII – [Western Yorkshire](#) – by Elisabeth Coatsworth 2019 ³⁰ _

Similar crosses are to be found at Birstall³¹, Thornhill and Dewsbury.³²

Other wayside cross bases in the Calder Valley can be found at Sowerby Bridge (on the Old Packhorse Road at **Slate Pit Hill** between Ripponden and Littleborough NGR SD 98554 18065), Hebden Bridge (**Tinker Cross** on Tinker Bank Lane, Heptonstall NGR SD 98916 28175 and Abel Cross, Midgehole Road, 1.7km north of New Bridge SD 98623 30707) and Todmorden (**Mount Cross** between Cornholme and Stansfield Moor SD 91462 27284) . A description of Mount Cross can be found in the on-line Journal of Antiquities at <https://thejournalofantiquities.com/category/ancient-crosses/page/5/>.

However, these crosses are of different form from the Rastrick Cross base.

(Calderdale Register of Ancient Monuments see <http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ancient-monuments/monuments.jsp>)

³⁰ http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=95

³¹ http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=22

³² http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=193

Questions which arise are:

1. Why was the Saxon Cross erected at its specific location i.e. what was to become St Matthew's churchyard?
2. Who might have erected the cross and at what cost?
3. Why are the St Matthew's Cross and the Walton Cross so similar?
4. What was the area like when the cross was erected? Was there a community with buildings close by, or did the cross stand in the open fields or forest?

Further research might provide answers, but perhaps they are lost in the tide of history.

The 9th and 10th centuries in Northumbria / Danelaw were a tumultuous time, with Viking rulers being ousted by Anglo Saxon kings, see Section 1.2 above 'Notable events in Yorkshire and beyond between 664 and 1028 A.D'

A piece on the background to wayside crosses in general appears in 'Illustrated Rambles from Hipperholme to Tong' by James Parker of Great Horton published 1904, in a section titled 'Interesting Tram Ride and Antiquarian Ramble from Hipperholme through Shibden Dale to Queensbury..... See Appendix X

1.4 The Norman Invasion and Domesday Book

Returning to the 11th century, after the Saxons came the Normans, with William the Conqueror invading England at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. William needed to establish the taxable value of his new kingdom so after his campaign of 'Harrying the North' in 1069-1070 he ordered a survey of what was left. Is this the forerunner of a north / south divide?

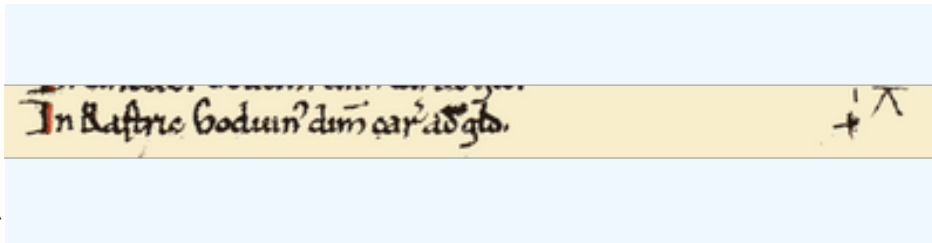
Rastrick is mentioned in the **Domesday Book** of 1086 : ³³

Hundred: Morley

Area: West Riding

County: Yorkshire

Total tax assessed: 0.5 geld units (very small) [Note that by comparison Clifton was assessed at 7 geld units : quite large, Elland 3.5 geld units and Hartshead 2 geld units]



Extract from Domesday Book relating to Rastrick

Taxable units: Taxable value 0.5 geld units. (very small)

Value: (no entry in 'Open Domesday')

Lord in 1066: Godwin.

Lord in 1086: King William.

Tenant-in-chief in 1086: King William.

Phillimore reference: 1W28

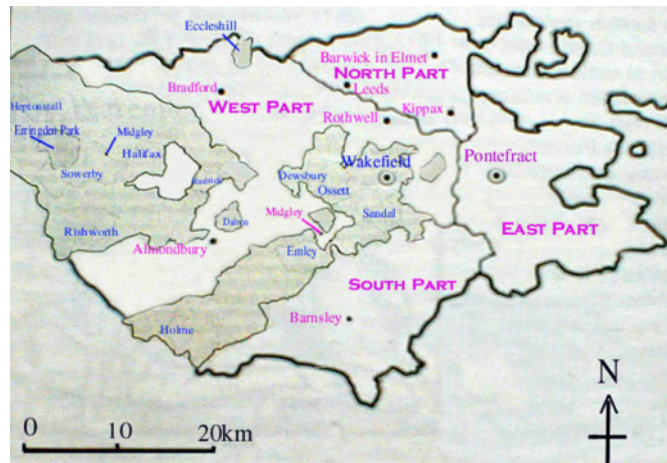
Waste : Implied

Notes 1. Hartshead, Clifton and Elland have details of Ploughland, Woodland and Households, whereas none are recorded for Rastrick.

2. Most of the places in the West Riding (including Fixby and Elland) were under Ilbert de Lacy (Baron of Pontefract) as Lord and Tenant in Chief, but Rastrick stands out as an exception (along with several other places around Wakefield) having King William as Tenant in Chief see <http://opendomesday.org/name/305450/ilbert-of-lacy/>. There is evidence that Ilbert de Lacy fought at William the Conqueror's side at Hastings.³⁴ Note that the boundaries between the Honour of Pontefract (or Feudal Barony of Pontefract) and the Wakefield Manor were complex in and around Rastrick. See <http://midgleywebpages.com/honour.html> and the map below:

³³ <http://opendomesday.org/place/SE1321/rastrick/>

³⁴ Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/De_Lacy#Henry_de_Lacy.2C_4th_Baron_of_Pontefract



The Honour of Pontefract and the Wakefield Manor

(showing Rastrick in the Manor of Wakefield with Elland in the Honour of Pontefract)

3. The manor of Wakefield as a whole had been reduced to 25% of its pre-‘Harrowing’ value according to entries in Domesday Book.³⁵ see ‘Ossett - History of a Town’ The Domesday Book says of West Bretton, Earlsheaton, Shepley, Shelley, Upper Cumberworth and North Crossland. No person lived in any of them. "Now they are waste".

For further information on what was meant by ‘waste’ see the Hull Domesday Project in <http://www.domesdaybook.net/domesday-book/data-terminology/taxation/waste>.

4. The townships of Almondbury, Bradford, Bramley, Elland, Flockton, Huddersfield, Kirkheaton, Morley, Pudsey, Tong, Shipley and Southowram are all described as ‘waste’ in ‘Ossett - the History of a Yorkshire Town Domesday and Beyond.’

5. Geld unit was the tax, assessed per hide, which was the standard unit of land measure. One hide was meant to represent the amount of land that could support a household, roughly 120 acres.

6. The full page image is available on the Domesday Book website at <https://opendomesday.org/place/SE1321/rastrick/>.

7. Although several settlements around Rastrick are described in Domesday Book as ‘waste’ Rastrick’s entry shows only implied ‘waste’. The taxable value is given as 0.5 geld units been very small. There is no ‘Value to the Lord’ quoted.

8. It appears as if King William had yet to decide in 1086 on which of his nobles were to be ‘rewarded’ with the place known as Rastrick!

Domesday Book images kindly made available by Professor J.J.N. Palmer. Images may be reused under a Creative Commons BY-SA licence - please credit Professor J.J.N. Palmer and George Slater.

³⁵ <http://www.ossett.net/domesday.html>

Note: about **Lord Godwin** who in 1066 according to the Domesday Book was Lord of :
Bradley, Farnley [Tyas], Huddersfield, Lindley, and Quarmby in the Agbrigg Hundred, Yorkshire
Acaster [Selby], Colton, Steeton [Hall], Thorp [Arch], in the Ainsty Hundred, Yorkshire
[Old] Lindley, and Rastrick in the Morley Hundred, Yorkshire

but in 1086 was only 'Lord' (see below) of Huddersfield in the Agbrigg Hundred, and Elloughton and Wauldby both in the Welton Hundred near Hull. (*email of 8Mar16 to pete @HuddersfieldOne*)

These are just a few places in Yorkshire attributed to Godwin.
There are many others throughout England with connections to Godwin, which was a very common name.

In HuddersfieldOne³⁶ According to the Domesday Book 'in Odersfelt Godwin had six carucates³⁷ of land to be taxed, affording occupation of eight ploughs. Now the same has it of Ilbert (Ilbert de Laci) but it is waste.' (presumably as a result of William's 'Harrying of the North' in 1069)

Godwin of Odersfeld (Huddersfield) :
At the time of the Domesday Book the feudal system consisted of the following hierarchy (in descending order):

Kings

Tenants-in-Chief (e.g. Ilbert de Lacy)

Sub-Tenants (e.g. Godwin of Huddersfield - see above)

Dwellers of the Manor (i.e. Freeman, Socmen, Villeins, Cottars and Bordars)

Socmen = tenant farmers paying fixed sums to a feudal lord, Villeins = villagers, Cottars = peasant farmers, Bordars = smallholders.

So Godwin of Huddersfield was a sub-tenant of Ilbert de Lacy (Baron of Pontefact) in 1086.

The above Godwin of Odersfelt (Huddersfield) is not to be confused with Godwin Earl of Wessex who died in 1053 at Winchester. Among his children were Harold Godwinson, (c1022 -1066) who became King Harold II of England, and was killed by William the Conqueror at Hastings, and Tostig Godwinson Anglo-Saxon Earl of Northumbria, friend of King Harald III Hardrada of Norway, and killed by his brother Harold II (of England) at the battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066.

Note that most of the slaughter and destruction which characterised William's 'Harrying of the North', appears in many sources to have taken place between York and Durham, but the authors of 'HuddersfieldOne' suggest that the laying waste of towns and villages also took place around Huddersfield. This is supported by the large number of settlements in the Calder valley that are described in the Domesday Book as 'Waste'.

³⁶ <http://www.huddersfield1.co.uk/huddersfield/huddsdomesday.htm>

³⁷ The area of land that a team of 8 oxen could plough in one year

A good starting point for further study, although there is no specific reference to Rastrick, is The Ecclesiastical History of England and Normandy by Odericus Vitalis, who was a Benedictine Monk and lived from 1075 -1142. He is said to have had first-hand knowledge of what happened during those times. The books were translated by Thomas Forrester M.A. in 1854. The relevant volume which describes in detail 'the harrying or harrowing of the north' is Volume 2, Chapter 5 and starts at page 21. The above book is available on line and the following link takes the reader to the relevant page 21 onwards - just click on the right page to turn it over to the next.³⁸

<https://archive.org/stream/ecclesiasticalhi02ordeuoft#page/20/mode/2up/search/york>

I suspect that once William's army had found a way across the Humber, they made easy ground travelling to Pontefract but the book describes how they were spread over 100 miles and travelled along paths of valleys that were so narrow that two horsemen couldn't walk side by side. How many such places exist between Pontefract and York apart from this area of the Calder Valley?

Further, in the blog AngloNoelNatter, the blogger quotes from Peter Rex :

In 1070 the Normans were still acting like a bunch of war criminals, not least in the North of England (*Half the vills of the North Riding and over one third of those of the East and West ridings [of Yorkshire] were wholly or partially wasted.* ' Peter Rex (2004) *The English Resistance*, Stroud: Tempus, p.106).³⁹

³⁸ Thanks to Andy Eccles - email of 9 March 2016 - Rastrick in the Domesday Book

³⁹ <https://anglonoelnatter.wordpress.com/tag/harrying-of-the-north/>

1.5 Post-Conquest Church Building, and Feuding

Lewes Priory was founded by William de Warrenne, First Earl of Surrey, and his wife Gundrada between 1078 and 1082 on the site of a Saxon church dedicated, like the Priory, to St Pancras. William was a leading Norman baron, who had fought at the side of William the Conqueror at Hastings, and possessed extensive lands in Sussex and elsewhere in England. Lewes was the first Priory in England belonging to the reformed Benedictine Order of Cluny, based in France in Burgundy. It became one of the wealthiest monasteries in England.⁴⁰

Fountains and Rievaulx Abbeys were founded in 1132 and Kirkstall Abbey was founded in 1152 by Cistercian monks.

St Peter's Church, Hartshead, on the north side of the Calder Valley between Brighouse and Cleckheaton, was recorded as a place of worship in 1120 when the Earl of Warren, the Second Earl of Surrey, granted it to the Priory of Lewes. Hartshead is possibly the site of an earlier Saxon chapel.⁴¹



The nearby **Walton Cross** (Grid Ref. SE 176238) is a cross base similar to that in the St Matthew's churchyard (see Section 1.3 above) and is said to date from the 10th/11th centuries, or even the late AD800s or early AD900s from the carvings.⁴² The cross base is thought to be a way-marker (Wagestan or Waystone), also used as a preaching cross.

Walton Cross, Hartshead, looking towards Rastrick

The **Parish Church of St John, Halifax**, now Halifax Minster, was established in the mid 12th century: *The manor of Wakefield was granted to William, second Earl de Warenne by Henry I, probably in 1106.* Sometime between 1106 and 1121, Benedictine monks, from the Cluny Priory of Lewes in Sussex, were given the Halifax portion of the manor of Wakefield by the same second Earl of Warrenne.⁴³ *The earliest church on the site was probably built around 1120, immediately to the north of the current church.*⁴⁴ *The Warennes gave the church (St John, Halifax) to Lewes Priory, a gift confirmed in 1147 by the third earl. The church was granted to Hubert Walter c.1170-1186.*⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Lewes Priory Trust <http://www.lewespriory.org.uk/history-overview>

⁴¹ Malcolm Bull's Calderdale Companion http://www.calderdalecompanion.co.uk/kk_83.html

⁴² Spen Valley Civic Society <http://www.spenvalleycivicsociety.org.uk/heritage/walton-cross>

⁴³ Weaver to Web <https://www.calderdale.gov.uk/wtw/search/controlServlet?PageId=Detail&DocId=100026>

⁴⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1133928> Church of St John the Baptist

⁴⁵ <https://www.crsbi.ac.uk/site/1423/> The Corpus of Romanesque sculpture in Britain and Ireland

The second Earl de Warenne built the first Sandal Castle (probably a wooden motte and bailey) near Wakefield.⁴⁶

St Mary's Church, Elland was built in 1180 at a time when Henry de Eland decided that he did not like the people of Elland travelling to Halifax to worship.



St Mary's Church, Elland

The Chancel Arch, St. Mary's Elland

Stones in the chancel arch have been dated to about 1170 - 80, but most of the present church dates from the 13th and 14th centuries. It is thought that stonemasons from Kirkstall Abbey church moved to Elland in around 1175 bringing their skills with them. Elland was a chapel of ease to Halifax. Henry de Lacy (grandson of Ilbert de Lacy), who was the founder of Kirkstall Abbey, held Elland.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ <http://www.midgleywebpages.com/index-3.html#Second>

⁴⁷ <https://www.crsbi.ac.uk/site/122/> The Corpus of Romanesque sculpture in Britain and Ireland

Up until around 1350, when the first chapel was built at Rastrick (see Section 2.1 following) **St Mary's, Elland** served as the Parish Church for the people of Rastrick.

1.6 The 13th and 14th Centuries before the First Chapel

During the reign of King John, in the period leading up to Magna Carta (signed on the 15th June 1215 and reneged on by King John before September 1215), England was placed under interdict by Pope Innocent III such that ⁴⁸*'ordinary people could not hear mass, or take sacraments of the Church, nor could burials take place in consecrated grounds.'* Effectively churches in England were closed for five years.

Later, during the reign of Henry II, we find that the Cistercian Nunnery at Kirklees (later **Kirklees Priory**) was founded by Reiner le Fleming, Lord of the manor of Wath on Dearne, whose grant was confirmed sometime before 1240 (perhaps 1155 ⁴⁹) by William, Earl Warenne, and in 1236 by Henry III. From the years 1306 to 1315 there seems to have been some scandal at Kirklees, especially with regard to three of the nuns, Alice Raggid, Elizabeth Hopton and Joan Heton.⁵⁰ However, it was another three nuns, Cecila Topcliffe, Joan Leverthorpe and Katharine Grace who are commemorated in the name of the public house, 'The Three Nuns', at Cooper Bridge. These three nuns sought refuge at a guest house of the priory and ran it as a hostelry.

The Priory was not dissolved in 1535 but continued unto 1539 when it was surrendered by Joan Kyppes, the last Prioress, with eight inmates and a value of £29 18s 9d. This was the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries under Henry VIII, which led to the closure of the First Rastrick Chapel - see Section 2.1 following.

Kirklees Priory was sited in what is now Kirklees Park, near Clifton, Brighouse. All that remains of the Priory are the long doubled-aisled barn, parts of the old Farm House, calf house and the Gatehouse, all standing as the Old Farm in Kirklees Park. The Nunnery/Priory is registered as an Ancient Monument - see <http://www.calderdale.gov.uk/environment/conservation/ancient-monuments/monuments-full.jsp?propno=NCGQ1LDW0H800>

In the late 13th century Rastrick was described thus:

*'Rastrick in the Parish of Halifax, Wapentake of Morley and Manor of Wakefield; 4 miles SE of Halifax. By an **inquest taken in 1284**, it appears the village of Rastrick was rated at 13 shillings, and contained only six freemen; the rest were according to that inquest "NATIVI TENENTES VILLAINS or bondsmen ", such as were at the pleasure of the lord, both in their persons, children and goods.'* Source: History, Directory & Gazetteer of the County of York: Queenshead, Rastrick. Edward Baines 1822. Baines was the editor of the Leeds Mercury newspaper.⁵¹

In his paper to the Halifax Antiquarian Society (H.A.S.) on the 3rd February 1948, Hugh Travis Clay M.A. (one of the Clay Family who dedicated the east window in memory of their mother) describes the cross at Rastrick thus:

The earliest date when the well-known pre-Norman cross in Rastrick churchyard is mentioned may be in 1309, when the Extent of 1309 (H.A.S. Rec. Ser.) (a legal document)

⁴⁸ Magna Carta — The Lincoln Story : Lincoln Cathedral 2014

⁴⁹ Wikipedia - Kirklees Priory

⁵⁰ "Houses of Cistercian Nuns: Kirklees Priory" in a History of the County of York Vol 3 ed William Page London 1974

⁵¹ From Weaver to Web

of that date records a family who evidently lived close to it, as we find it used as a cognomen (a surname or nickname) to describe a man of the name of Hanne.

As far as is known, there was at that time no chapel at Rastrick. The Cross was probably erected on a piece of waste land by the road, not far from its present position, some of the Common fields spreading themselves to the south of it, and on the north was un-enclosed land, now Raw Hill (off Jumble Dyke).

At that time the only road through Rastrick seems to have crossed the river at Rastrick Bridge, where a wooden bridge was recorded as being present in 1275 (now Bridge End), gone up the Common (Rastrick Common) to Church Street, down to Rastrick beck and up Tofts Grove, where at the top it branched to Elland and Fixby.

Salmon Croft lay on its north side, above the stream still so-called today, with the pond at the bottom by the bank of the stream, as it stood in living memory, where also the stocks were situated until about 1886.

The numerous springs just here, and the stream, must have brought into being a very early settlement, as the Cross and Castle⁵² indicate. Even today, six or seven wells are known to exist, or to have existed, with a very short distance of each other; doubtless there were more.

The guidepost ⁵³ at Tofts Grove is from the 18th century, but indicates that the route was still in use 500 years later! The routes to Leeds, Bradford, Huddersfield and Elland are shown.



The Tofts Grove Guide Post

⁵² Castle - Castle Hill, Rastrick

⁵³ see <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1133814>

For further information about the roads through Rastrick see Appendix W
T. Jefferys' Map of Yorkshire, surveyed between 1767 and 1770.

In his paper to the Halifax Antiquarian Society on 'The Early Inhabitants of Rastrick' Travis Clay continued:

To return to Hanne del Crosse, he is described as holding one acre⁵⁴, one perch, and in conjunction with John son of Richard, half an oxgang⁵⁵.

In the Manorial Rolls of 1314, Peter son of Henry del la Croix of Rastrick gives 40d. as a heriot (death duty) on five acres with buildings in Rastrick, after his father's Henry's death. This holding he disposes of at the next court. "William de Rastrick gives 40s. to take 5 acres with buildings in Rastrick from Peter son of Henry de la Croyce"

It is interesting to note that the third chaplain of the Free Chapel of St Matthew, Rastrick was named Thomas-del-Cross (1368 to 1411).

The surrounding area of Elland, Brighouse, Quarmby, Lockwood and Crosland Moor, all feature in a saga of kidnap, revenge and murder in the **Elland Feud** between the de Lacy (Honour of Pontefract) family and the de Warren (Manor of Wakefield) family between 1312 and 1354.

See <http://www.midgleywebpages.com/feud.html>

and

www.lowercalderlegends.wordpress.com/2010/04/901/the-elland-feuds/

(scroll down the page almost to the bottom) for the details.

There are many more interesting on-line sources.

Brighouse Wood Lane between Brookfoot and Lane Head, Brighouse, Cromwell Bottom Wood, Elland Mill at the site of the present Elland Bridge (then a ford crossing of the River Calder), Elland Old Hall (demolished for the Elland By-pass) and Ainley Top all figure in the saga.

All this has to be seen against the backdrop of the Black Death pandemic (1348 to 1349) - see Section 2.1 following.

⁵⁴ Acre : area of land tillable by a yoke of oxen in one day, a rectangle one chain by one furlong, approx. 4,047 sq. metres

⁵⁵ Oxgang, between 15 and 20 acres, the area which could be ploughed using a single ox in an annual season

1.7 The Ecclesiastical Boundary Stone

Some 200m to the south of St Matthew's church, there is a stone built into the boundary wall of No. 15 Crowtrees Lane. This hammer-dressed gritstone monolith with spiral carvings in the form of a bishop's crozier is believed to have been an ecclesiastical boundary. Details can be found on www.britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/en-338822-stone-built-into-west-face-of-wall-to-nu see appendix H.



The Ecclesiastical Boundary Stone,
Crowtrees Lane, Rastrick

sunbright57 in the Northern Antiquarian Forum states: *This stone is rather an oddity as no one knows what it is doing here. It stands some 4 feet high and is arched-shaped with an almost pointed top to it. It has a spiral carving close to the top and a thin line carving around the edges. It was apparently dug up from beneath the road when the new road was being constructed to allow trams to run in 1923; the stone was then placed in the wall for safety.*

Historians think it could date from the 10th-11th century and be Viking in origin and possibly the lower section or shaft of an old cross. The spiral motif is thought to be reminiscent to a bishop's crozier and is considered to mark an old ecclesiastical boundary. So could the stone be a boundary marker?

The Stone is Grade II listed. ⁵⁶

Other sources state that the stone was discovered by local antiquarian H. Travis Clay in 1913, when the Rastrick Library was built.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Northern Antiquarian Forum <http://northernantiquarian.forumotion.net/t311-the-spiral-stone-or-crowtrees-stone>

⁵⁷ The Corpus of Anglo Saxon Stone Sculpture http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=194

Is there a connection with the St Matthew's Saxon Cross, or some other cross? In 'The Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Stone Sculpture' Volume VIII Western Yorkshire – by Elisabeth Coatsworth, the writer raise the possibility of the stone having been 'the fragment of a shaft'. J.T. Lang / Heginbottom also drew parallels between the decoration on the stone and that on the cross base in the St Matthew's churchyard.⁵⁸

The road, Crowtrees Lane, is of relatively recent construction. It was opened in 1809 as part of the Huddersfield and New Hey Turnpike Brighthouse Branch, by-passing the older route up Tofts Grove, Delph Hill and Slade Lane.⁵⁹ Naturally, it does not appear on Ainslie's 1770 map, which does not show any features in the current location of the stone.

Are there any carvings on the other three faces of the stone? Could the stone be a part of the missing section of the St Matthew's Saxon Cross (Section 1.3 above)? More research required here.

⁵⁸ The Corpus of Anglo Saxon Stone Sculpture http://www.ascorpus.ac.uk/catvol8.php?pageNum_urls=194

⁵⁹ <https://myrastrick.com/turnpike-road-in-rastrick/>