WOODSOME HALL,

YORKSHIRE.

WOODSOME, to speak by the book, is in the ancient and wide-spreading parish of Almondbury, a member of the Wapentake of Agbrigg, a parish of thirteen townships on a spur of the Pennines. But there is a village within Almondbury whose name is Huddersfield, which, lying by the water, has taken its share of the trade that built the tall chimneys in Yorkshire and Lancashire, and in the grimy prosperity of Huddersfield the fame of the mother parish has been swallowed. Ask now where Woodsome may be, and you will be told that it is near Huddersfield. Near as the house is to the looms and the mills of Huddersfield, Woodsome keeps all the wild and lonely beauty which should belong to an old Yorkshire hall. It is as untouched by the great industry of its neighbour as it was when Camden wrote of Almondbury as "a little town upon a high and steep hill which hath no easy passage or even ground into it but on one side," as quiet as when Chetel and Swein ploughed the four Almondbury ploughlands set down in Domesday Book.

Farnley Tyas, the township which holds Woodsome, is still content to plough and sow, and to send the milk and butter of its dairies to Huddersfield market. This Farnley has its name from the Tyas family, ancient lords of Woodsome. They were here in the thirteenth century, these Tyases—*Teutonicus* their name in Latin deeds ; for Tyas is *Teutsch*, the German, by which we may know how far they had wandered before they had their hearth-fires in Almondbury.

Three hundred years later Woodsome was in the hands of another local family, the Kayes, and Arthur Kaye left his mark on the work of Woodsome Hall, and was buried in Almondbury Church, where is his monument, a stone rudely incised with his effigy in full harness, sword and dagger at his sides, the inscription showing forth his marriage with Beatrix Wentworth of Bretton, and his death as an old man in 1582. Before his death he had given Woodsome into the hands of his son, and dwelt "for quietness" upon his Lancashire lands, having married a second wife when stricken in years. Soon after his death, his son John retired in his turn from Woodsome Manor and went to live at Slaithwaite, getting his discharge in the Armada year from the commission of the peace for the reason that he could no longer sit his horse.

Robert Kaye, the young lord of Woodsome, built the northward part of the house in stone, bought farms, as his father had done, to round off his estate, repaired the millhouse and enlarged the decayed chapel on his land at Slaithwaite. He died in 1620, his son John following him to the grave in 1641, before the troubles of the Civil War surged about Woodsome ; for the Civil War brought trouble and honours to the house. Sir John Kaye, knighted at Whitehall in the year of his father's death, was staunch for the King, a colonel of the Royalist Horse. His loyalty made him a baronet, but cost Woodsome £500 in redemption money when the Parliamentary Commissioner assessed loyalty at a price. He saw the King restored before his death, Almondbury parish register burying him in 1662 as one "adorned with every kind of virtue, in piety towards God, in fidelity to the King, in affability and kindness towards all, second to none." His son, Sir John, the second baronet, sat a county member in four Parliaments, and died in Queen Anne's reign. He had been a zealous magistrate against the Nonconformist.

Oliver Heywood, the Halifax Presbyterian preacher, had once to bring his preaching licence to Woodsome, and looked sourly on the good company of the hall, where was open house, feasting, drinking and revelling, a great number of gentlemen being there on that winter day, "among whom was Mr. Thomas Horton, musician, Master of Misrule, as they call him." This hospitable baronet's eldest son, Sir Arthur, who died in 1726, was the last Kaye to revel with his neighbours in Woodsome Hall, which a daughter and heiress brought to her husband, George Legge, Viscount Lewisham, eldest son of the Earl of Dartmouth. The Legges who thus became Yorkshire landlords descend from one Edward Legge, who is said to have sailed as one of the Raleigh adventurers in 1584. As Vice-President of Munster, his name is often encountered in the Irish State papers of his time. His own years were but seventy-three at his death in 1616, but his children, if we may credit their dates, were marvels of longevity. Elizabeth, his eldest child, an ancient spinster learned in five tongues, Margaret and John, each lived to be 100 years or more, while to



ON THE TERRACE.



FROM THE SOUTH-WEST ANGLE.



FIREPLACE IN THE HALL.



THE OLD HALL.

his daughter Anne is assigned the astounding age of 112 years.

Of the sons, Richard, John and Robert were honest cavaliers in arms for King Charles. The eldest son, William, was brought young out of Munster by his godfather the President, Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby, and was soon on the Continent, trailing a pike in the Dutch and Swedish service. But he was in England for the wars of King and Parliament, and if any name comes well out of the story of those dismal years, it is that of honest and single-minded William Legge.

Not that great deeds are counted to him. The fortune of war set against William Legge from the first. In the first year of the struggle he failed in his mission to secure Hull, and a skirmish sent him prisoner to the Gatehouse. He was an obstinate man, however, and the Gatehouse could not hold him. At Lichfield siege he was to be taken again. At Chalgrove he had once more regained the Royal ranks, when "Sergeant-Major Legge's courage engaged him too far among the rebels," and he was like to be carried off a third time had not those behind pressed on and released him. At Newbury the King's eye was upon his sword-play, and when night had fallen King Charles would have knighted him on the field had he not refused the honour. That he might not go unrewarded, the King unbuckled the weapon which he had worn all that day, a hanger with an agate handle set in gold, and gave it to William Legge, in whose family it was an heirloom until burglars long afterwards took it from their house. From this time onward he was about the King's person. "Be sure to take care of honest Will Legge; he is the faithfullest servant ever king had," was one of the King's last messages to his son as he lay waiting for his death. So many times was he laid by the heels, and so many times did he come out of bonds, that there would seem to have been, even among the bitterest Roundheads, a distaste for hanging honest Will. His neck, however, was in some danger after Worcester fight when, serving the son with the loyalty and ill-fortune with which he had followed the father, he was wounded and once more a prisoner. Coventry Gaol held him for the gallows, but in an old woman's frouzy clothes he slipped out of this his last adventure. At the Restoration he might have had an earldom, but his livelihood had not grown with his honours, and he could but hope that his sons might live to merit the Royal favour. His age at death was but sixty-two; so strenuous a life could not touch the years of his long-lived brothers and sisters.

The well-earned peerage came to his son and heir, George, who had the Dartmouth barony in 1682. Risking his life in the sea service as freely as his father had risked his ashore, he was admiral of the fleet when King James would have smuggled the infant Prince of Wales out of England by way of Portsmouth. George Legge's remonstrance, with the fleet to back it, barred the way, but another route was found. Committed to the Tower on a charge of plotting against King William, he was unable to break prison as his father had done, and died in the lieutenant's custody of a sudden apoplectic stroke. His only son, William Legge, was advanced in 1711 to be Viscount Lewisham and Earl of Dartmouth. It was this Earl's son, who died in 1732 of the small-pox in his father's lifetime, who married the heiress of the Kayes, a lady who took the Earl of Guildford for a second husband. The eldest surviving son of the Legge and Kaye match was William, second Earl of Dartmouth, the peer who "wears a coronet and prays," a Minister of State whom his contemporaries pictured as a methodistical Sir Charles Grandison. A younger brother of the Earl was that more capable man, Henry Bilson-Legge, a politician who showed himself a business man and a financier when the country had few such at its councils.

From such a stock come the Earls of Dartmouth, who own this house of Woodsome. It is still a house of their Kaye ancestors, although the Legges have had a good care of their inheritance. The great hall is perhaps the oldest part, a room whose making is dated by the names carved in the large and bold letters of the first half of the sixteenth century on the mighty beam which spans the wide hearth—ARTHVR KAYE and BIATRYX KAYE—with a fleur-de-lys and a rose for stops, and the Kaye shield between. At the mantel-side hang the skull and attires of a hart, which may stand for the hart's head shield of the Legges. So we have more than five centuries of the house's history about this great fireplace, which recalls to memory that jolly company of Yorkshire neighbours whom Heywood, the Puritan, saw gathered about this very hearth, the Lord of Misrule in the midst of them; and on the wall is the old clock which even then was marking the hour—a clock whose shield of arms shows that it is here in the home for which it was wrought. Above is the gallery, in which the harpers and fiddlers made music, and from two inner latticed windows the knight or his dame could glance down at what was passing in the hall. All about are pictures of Kayes and Legges, the heiress of the Kayes and the Lord Lewisham, her mate, with these. But most curious are those pictured boards which hang from iron cranes in order that their backs may be viewed. Old Arthur Kaye, whose name is over the fireplace, is here in his hall, painted at the age of seventy-six years, in girdled gown, the family tree of his progeny springing from his loins—"the fruit of the house of Woodsome." Says the legend:

Here Arthur lies in quiet rest
Who justly dealt and none oppressed.

At the back are fifty-six shields of gentle houses, "the divers coats of sundry friends" that are of kin to the house of Woodsome. The picture shown in our illustration has John Kaye's wife



WOODSOME HALL.

painted in her forty-fourth year, a rhyme below setting forth the *vita uxoris honestae*, which is

> To live at home in housewifery,
> To order well my family,
> To see they live not idly,
> To bring up children virtuously,
> To relieve poor folk willingly,
> This is my care with modesty,
> To lead my life in honesty.

Such a house should have its haunted room, and this is not wanting at Woodsome, where "Rimmington's closet," a room upstairs once used for muniments, was long haunted by the ghost of James Rimmington, a steward of the house, and a just steward as far as may be known, who died in 1697. A robin is one of the shapes which his unquiet spirit takes within walls, but in Woodsome Lane he has been seen galloping wildly with a brace of dogs in leash, all as recorded with decent Victorian doubt by a Mr. Howell, who told the tale to a historian of Huddersfield. At the back of the house rise the tall trees of the greenwood, from which Woodsome has its name. The house front as it stands may be recognised for its main lines in the old painting which hangs on the wall in the hall. The hall itself is in the midst of it, with gabled wings on either side. Over the arch of the entry is the date 1600, and above this the muniment room has 1644 for its year. Before the house runs a paved terrace walk, with a balustrade before it, from which Kayes and Legges have for ages looked down upon the unchanging scene of the valley of Farnley.



IN THE QUADRANGLE COURT.