

**The Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-
Blakeborough Collection of Yorkshire Folklore**

Archive List and Index

Archives of Cultural Tradition

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Biographical History

Richard Blakeborough (1850-1918), collector of folklore and author, was born in Ripon, North Yorkshire, on January 24th 1850, the son of Richard Blakeborough, a jeweller and clock maker. He was descended on his mother's side from the Fairfax family and was also distantly related to the Brontës. Blakeborough was educated at St. Agnesgate Grammar School, and from his childhood acquired a keen interest in nature and the lore and legends of his county of birth. After leaving school he assisted his father in his business but was allowed later to fulfil his ambition to become a doctor.

As a folklorist, Blakeborough's most important contribution was in the collection of folklore and dialect in the North Riding of Yorkshire. In the early 1870s he copied large portions of the manuscript notebooks of David Naitby (1774-1838) and Robert Hird (1768-1841), who were themselves North Riding collectors and had obtained material dating from the seventeenth century and earlier. Blakeborough was not, however, an armchair scholar, and he obtained his information (including the Naitby and Hird items) by fieldwork, as he noted in his 'Oddments Gathered from All Manner of People at Various Times, Dating from 1865'. A small part of the vast amount of material he amassed is contained in his books *Wit, Character, Folklore and Customs of the North Riding of Yorkshire* (1898), *Yorkshire Toasts, Proverbs, Similes and Sayings* (1907) and the posthumous *The Hand of Glory and Further Grandfather's Tales and Legends of Highwaymen and Others* (edited by his son, John Fairfax-Blakeborough, and published in 1924). Further examples from his collections appear in his extensive newspaper articles. As with other nineteenth-century collectors, he adapted the language slightly for publication, or even 'suppressed' (his own word) certain lines or whole verses where he regarded the original as being 'too free'.

Blakeborough's dialect recitations and writings were equally important aspects of his enthusiasm for Yorkshire lore and speech. Two volumes of the former, based largely on his character Mrs. Waddleton, appeared in 1921 and 1924. The Waddleton sketches were humorous dialect readings, sometimes commenting on contemporary events, such as 'The Relief of Maficking' or 'The Sufferjettes'. In a serious vein were his dramatic poems in the Cleveland dialect *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* (1899) and *Aud Nan o' Sexhow*. Other works included a novel, *More than a Dream*, and the comedies *Tomboy*, *Auntie* and *Downhill*, which were toured by the Dacre Company.

Richard Blakeborough was a member of the Folklore Society and the local (Ripon) archaeological society, and was, for a time, curator of the Ripon Scientific Society. In his last years he lived in Norton-on-Tees where he died on April 23rd 1918. He left one son, Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough. An older child, Derrick ('Rick'), had died in July 1899.

Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough (1883-1976), folklorist and writer, was born on January 16th 1883 in Guisborough. After leaving school he spent three months in a broker's office but his inherited interest in writing led him to join the staff of the *Middlesborough Evening Telegraph* (later the *Evening Gazette*). At twenty-one he became a freelance writer, specialising in country sports and horseracing. From childhood, Fairfax-Blakeborough had been keenly interested in horses, racing and hunting and he gained practical experience of horses in a three year spell at a training stable in Cleveland, in addition to his two days a week of hunting.

During the First World War he served as a Major in the 15th/19th King's Hussars, being awarded the Military Cross. After the war he became a racing judge at Sedgfield and remained a licensed Turf official until shortly before his death. At the same time, he became

secretary of the Cleveland Bay Horse Society, a post he held for twenty years, later becoming the Society's president. He also owned, rode and raced his own horses.

John Fairfax-Blakeborough was the author of 112 books on the history of horse racing, Yorkshire folklore and the Cleveland Bay (horse), among the best known of which are *Yorkshire Days and Yorkshire Ways* (1935) and *The Spirit of Yorkshire* (1954, written with his son Richard Noel John Fairfax-Blakeborough). He also wrote regular columns for the *Darlington and Stockton Times* (for 54 years) and *Yorkshire Life*. He died at his home, Low House, Westerdale, Whitby, on January 1st 1976.

Content and Character

Richard Blakeborough's manuscripts were originally extremely extensive. In a 'Pen Portrait' of the author in *Yorkshire Notes and Queries* (No.11, Vol.1, Feb. 1905), the anonymous writer remarks "so one big book of manuscripts after another was filled with myth and legend and put somewhat untidily away" and adds, with reference to Blakeborough's *Wit, Character, Folklore and Customs of the North Riding of Yorkshire*, "the book did not contain one hundredth part of his collection - and it is not a small volume."

The surviving manuscripts in the present collection amount to thirteen bound volumes and a series of fragments, some of which latter Blakeborough probably intended to have bound. Certain of these items were drawn upon for books and newspaper articles, but the total amount is probably less than was originally collected.

On Richard Blakeborough's death, the manuscripts passed to his son, Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough, who referred to them for his own works on Yorkshire folklore. Following his death the manuscripts appear to have been sold with the Blakeborough library, and the material here listed was purchased by the National Centre for English Cultural Tradition from a York bookseller in April 1982.

The Blakeborough manuscripts contain:

- Copies and extracts from the notebooks of Robert Hird and David Naitby, together with fieldwork collected by Richard Blakeborough
- Original dialect rhymes and sketches
- Published folklore articles and folktales
- The correspondence and papers of Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-Blakeborough.

The original manuscripts of Hird and Naitby which Richard Blakeborough copied in part, and from which the older part of his folklore collection derives, appear to have amounted to four notebooks. Two of these were purchased by the Beresford-Pierse family (Lords of the Manor and Squires of Bedale), later deposited in the North Yorkshire County Record Office, Northallerton (reference 2V, microfilm number 1855), and since published as Hird's *Annals of Bedale* (edited by Lesley Lewis, 1975, Vols.1-4). The whereabouts of the other two notebooks is not known, although certain material in the Calvert Collection, of which a typescript list is held in the Institute of Dialect and Folklife Studies at the University of Leeds, appears to be very closely related to Blakeborough's copies and extracts from Hird and Naitby. It is possible that material in the missing notebooks and that in the unlocated Calvert collection is identical.

Arrangement

Richard Blakeborough's method of arranging his collections was idiosyncratic and makes the notebooks difficult to refer to. The diary entries of Hird and Naitby are transcribed in the same notebook with no obvious regard for chronology or subject arrangement, although it is possible that this merely mirrors the arrangement of the original diary entries. These

comprise items of oral tradition noted on the day on which they were collected, together with copies from manuscripts to which Hird and Naitby had access (such as ‘Mistress Mickle’s Almanack Book’, ‘Horner’s Item Book’, G. Key’s ‘Prentice Book’ and inscriptions on endpapers of bibles). Dates are often given which refer either to the date of collection or the date at which the event recorded occurred. These dates are often different, some events having taken place a century or more earlier. In the list that follows the date given is that at which a particular event occurred or until which a custom or belief was known to have been observed.

The following is a summary list of the manuscript and printed items contained in the Blakeborough Collection. The list is based on that produced by a volunteer working in the Archives some time in the late 1980s/early 1990s. The description, arrangement and reference numbering are preliminary measures pending the production of a more detailed descriptive list. The collection is currently held in five boxes, with each item inside separately numbered (i.e. the first item in Box 1 is labelled ‘1.1’).

- The collection was re-folded, re-boxed and all fragile items placed in polyester sleeves during October 1996.
- Titles in inverted commas are those given by the Blakeboroughs. Other subject headings are given in wording which seemed most appropriate to the content of the event, custom or belief recorded. Diary entries have been analysed in this way, except where they occupy two lines or less.

Box 1

- 1.1 Clear copy of *Doctor Dame or How Granny Doctored*. Green exercise book. nd.
- 1.2 Yorkshire Scrapbook 1874-1907 [separate list available].
- 1.3 ‘Yorkshire Rhymes, Dale Songs, Skits and Oddments’. Exercise book - no cover, nd [separate list available].
- 1.4 ‘Yorkshire Charms and Incantations In Use Throughout the North Riding’. Exercise book – no cover, nd [separate list available].
- 1.5 ‘A Collection of Valentines Dating from 1750 to 1820’. Also a brief description of St. Valentine’s Day with some examples of Valentines messages; and notes on the custom of racing for the bridal garter in North Yorkshire and South Durham. Exercise book - no cover, nd.
- 1.6 ‘Rhymes in the Dialect of the North Riding of Yorkshire’. Exercise book – no cover, nd [separate list available].
- 1.7 ‘The Legend of Au’d Nan O’Sexhow. Also known as ‘T’hunt o’ Yatton Brigg’. Exercise book (19pp. - no cover, nd).
- 1.8 Mell Supper Act entitled ‘Will’s Bodderment’ Known to Have Been Acted 1800’ (pp.3-7) and ‘T’Squire’s Ride’ ca. 1820 (pp.8-19). Exercise book - no cover - containing handwritten play texts. nd.
- 1.9 ‘Yorkshire Customs of [?] Olden Tyme’: A Mell Supper description (description, including that of a Hiring Fair, pp.1-10; A Mell Supper Act, pp.11-34). Exercise book, nd.
- 1.10 ‘The Tykes View of a Boarding School Miss One Hundred Years Ago’. A note incorporating verses written in 1790 and 1807. Exercise book (9pp., nd).
- 1.11 ‘Ye Olde English [Wedding] Customes’. Exercise book - no cover, nd [separate list available].
- 1.12 ‘A Country Wedding a Century Ago’. Description of wedding customs, especially the bridal garter ca.1800. Exercise book - nd.
- 1.13 ‘A Yorkshire Farmer’s Mode of Curing an Ardent Lover’. Exercise book pages, nd.

- 1.14 'A Yorkshire Scrap Book'. An explanation of the origins of the Naitby manuscript and its fate. 2 copies (11pp. and 13pp.) First handwritten copy is probably a draft for the second, which appears to have been written as an article. nd.
- 1.15 'Yorkshire [North Riding] Superstition, Folk-lore and Customs Past and Present'. Exercise book (9pp. but blank after p.3) - no cover, nd.
- 1.16/1-19
Ms. material 1900-1902 and undated: correspondence and poetry, various authors including [Richard] Blakeborough and Lesley Lewis [separate list available].
- 1.17/1-13
B/W photographs of racehorses, trainers [?and owners] relating to Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough's book *Malton Memories and I'Anson Triumphs. Being an Account of the Sporting History of Malton etc.* (1925) [separate list available].
- 1.18/1-5
Correspondence (1950-1974): R.C. Luck, Ray Hill, Lesley Lewis to John Fairfax-Blakeborough.

Box 2

- 2.1 Correspondence and papers (1922-1925) relating to Major [John] Fairfax-Blakeborough's book *Malton Memories and I'Anson Triumphs. Being an Account of the Sporting History of Malton etc.* (1925).
- 2.2 Manuscript copy of the diary of David Naitby (ca. 1820) and copies of extracts from Robert Hird's *History of Bedale*, copied 1874 [separate list available].
- 2.3 Typescript copy of 2.2 above in a black hard-backed clasp folder [separate list available].
- 2.4 'Legends of the North Riding' [dated 1900]. Hard-backed book containing press cuttings of articles by Richard Blakeborough intended for publication in book form [separate list available].

Box 3

- 3.1 'Yorkshire Legends and Superstitions and Tales Our Grandmas Told' by Richard Blakeborough. Marked on front cover with title and "Author's Proofs and Research Notes" [press cuttings of articles, as in 2.4 above]. nd.
- 3.2 'Yorkshire Readings' (1890-1891) by Richard Blakeborough. Hard-backed notebook with landscape scene painted on the front cover [separate list available].
- 3.3 'Waddleton Sketches' (1893-1907) by Richard Blakeborough. Hard-backed notebook [staples removed] [separate list available].
- 3.4 Partial, uncorrected typescript copy of 3.3 above.
- 3.5 Sketches and rhymes (1894-1912) by Richard Blakeborough. Hard-backed book with RB's signature and heraldic device on the front cover [separate list available].

Box 4

- 4.1 Sketches and recitations [nd] by Richard Blakeborough. Hard-backed notebook [incomplete - starts page 21] [separate list available].
- 4.2 'Yorkshire Oddments and Sketches' by Richard Blakeborough. Hard-backed notebook [bound Oct. 23rd 1897] [separate list available].
- 4.3 'Waddleton Sketches' (1911) by Richard Blakeborough: 'Mrs. Waddleton on the school trip' (pp.1-17) and 'Woman's duty to Man' (pp.38-52). Hard-backed notebook.
- 4.4 Small white envelope containing lock of blonde hair. Envelope marked "Rick's hair. Died 3rd July 1899 - Near the Wood Hut [?Carthorpe]". [Derrick Fairfax-Blakeborough was Richard Blakeborough's son.]

- 4.5 Rhymes written by Richard Blakeborough (1868). Hard-backed book with a picture of a girl and a dog on the front cover [separate list available].
- 4.6 Small white envelope containing a pressed flower. Handwriting on the envelope: "A little daisy plucked from my dear lad's grave the day after he was buried 4th July 1899". ['Rick' of 4.4]

Box 5

- 5.1 'Oddments Gathered from all Manner of People at Various Times, Dating from 1865' [beliefs, charms, rhymes], North Riding of Yorkshire. Hard-backed notebook [separate list available].
- 5.2 Typed (A4) version of 5.1 above. ["Brought in by 'Reg' 19.2.1985"]
- 5.3 Hard-backed notebook giving details of racehorses, owners and colours of jockeys. Front inside page stamped 'Major J [ohn] Fairfax-Blakeborough, Grove House, Norton on Tees'.
- 5.4 Newspaper cuttings ca. 1900-1955, including articles by Richard Blakeborough; a history of Bedale; correspondence with the editor of the *Darlington and Richmond Chronicle* re. a Wensleydale roadside memorial; some Yorkshire ghosts; and 5 coloured drawings from a magazine [undated] [separate list available].
- 5.5/1-22
Newspaper cuttings [many in very poor condition] - articles [many undated] by Richard Blakeborough, including corrected proofs (1901-1913); and articles reworked for the book *The Hand of Glory* [separate list available].

Conditions of Access and Use

The collection is open for reference to all University of Sheffield students and other bona fide researchers, by appointment with the Archivist. The photocopying of certain items, by the Archivist, is permitted, although the more fragile pages in the earlier notebooks may only be copied at the discretion of the Archivist. Where researchers quote passages and/or examples, a full source reference (name of repository, collection title and item reference code) should be cited.

In addition to the summary list above, some of the notebooks have had their contents listed in greater detail, and these lists are included in the main body of the collection catalogue. These are indicated in square brackets in the summary section above.

A combined subject, personal and place name index appears in the catalogue, at the end of the detailed lists.

Blakeborough 1.2

Small bound volume of 58 handwritten pages. Includes dialect writing, some of which has no title [first line given in the list below]. The inside back cover shows the Blakeborough family tree.

Interesting facts in science and natural history (p.3).

Hush let me think once more (first line; pp.5-8).

Well you may stare friends at my appearance (first line; pp.10-11).

Black horseman (p.11).

T'war a drie night as the squire's end drew nigh (first line; p.12).

Proverbs and Sayings (pp.13-28).

Biographical notes (pp.13-14).

A collection of legends:

The story of Dorothy Gray (pp.15-16).

The story of Annie of Gayle (pp.16-18).

The white cow of Wardle Rigg (pp.18-23, p.25).

Lines to my dear wife (p.26).

My dear wife's lines on her boy D[errick] F[airfax] B[lakeborough] (p.27).

Pipe (p.28).

Friendship (p.28).

Birthday (p.29).

Reflections at Stockton 1906 (pp.32-33).

Jack's story of the bad queen and a poor little boy (p.33).

Reflections on the end of the year 1888 (pp.35-36).

Woman (p.36).

Reflections on the end of the year 1887 (pp.37-39).

Reflections on the end of the year 1886 (pp.39-40).

Reflections on the end of the years 1885, 1884 (pp.40-41).

Im Memoriam Zep (a dog) (p.42).

Reflections on the end of the years 1883, 1882, 1881, 1875 (pp.43-46).

Genealogical notes on the Blakeborough family (p.48).

Proverbs and Sayings (pp.48-56).

That often we speak and nasty things say (first line; pp.57-58).

Blakeborough 1.3

Exercise book containing 52 handwritten pages of Yorkshire dialect rhymes, Dale songs and skits.

Preface (pp.2-3).

Doggerel used at the ducking of a witch (pp.4-6).

'Wa au'd 'uns 'ev 'ed oor day'. Sung at farmers' dinner, 1820 (pp.7-9).

Johnny Clayclod [song] (pp.9-11).

'Sen Mary Went' by Richard Blakeborough (pp.12-13).

A'e now't to deea wi' t' lasses (first line; pp.14-16).

Tha're all on 'em efther t' same Gam' (first line; pp.16-18).

Nance and Tom (1800) (pp.19-23).

'Ah've been to Lunnon Toon'. Sung at a Mell supper, 1750 (pp.24-27).

Concerning the rhyme of Rob and Bessie (pp.28-30).

Robbie to Bessie. Copied from Hird's diary 1785-1815 (pp.31-32).

A False Lover (1814) (pp.33-34).

Song on the times. T' wo'lld's gahin wrang (pp.35-37).

Rhymes of the times. Oor lasses (pp.38-41).

Scraps of skits sung in the Dales about 1800 (p.42).

Hunting song ca.1790 (pp.43-44).

Come a hunting [?song, ca.1800] (pp.45-49).

Parson squire and horse, against the forbidding of gleaning [newspaper cutting] (pp.50-52).

Rural outrages. Newspaper cutting from the *Newcastle Courant*, 6.11.1830 (p.52).

Blakeborough 1.4

Exercise book with 25 pages of 'Yorkshire charms and incantations to use throughout the North Riding'.

Introduction (p.2)

Garter charm. To be repeated on St. Agnes Eve (pp.3-4).

Garter charm. Used 1734 (pp.4-5).

A charm for a maiden to repeat when there is a ring around the moon, ca.1820 (pp6-7).

'For a love philtre which be so mighty...that none can withstand' [taken from David Naitby's manuscripts] (pp.8-10).

Berry charm. [From Robert Hird's diary, 1720] (pp.10-11).

The feather charm. [From David Naitby's manuscripts, 1820] (pp.11-14).

Mad Martha o'Muker (p.14).

The gathering of May dew. [From David Naitby's and ? Calvert's manuscripts] (pp.15-21).

Charm to win the favour of the bees (pp.22-23).

'This charm be very powerful to make brave' (pp.24-25).

Blakeborough 1.6

Exercise book (42pp.) containing Yorkshire dialect rhymes on marriage and the custom of racing for the bridal garter.

Lines recited by the winner of the bridal race (pp. 1-2).

Comment on the bridal garter ca. 1807 in a letter from William Denis of Pickering to Thomas Ewbank of Malton [from the Calvert Ms.] (pp. 2-3).

Rhymes of the Times:

'Mothers, shame on ye' (immodesty in women's dress), 1799 (pp. 4-5).

Press cuttings relating to immodesty in women's dress (p. 5).

'On wedding, women and like' (pp. 6-10).

'Yance' (p. 11).

'The gleaner's lament' ca. 1848 (p. 12).

'Bridal song' ca. 1700 (pp. 13-15).

'Thoughts for a sermon' by AK 1840 (pp. 16-20).

'Lines by AK' 1838 (pp. 20-21).

'A literal version of thoughts for a sermon' 1840 (pp. 22-26).

'A boarding school Miss' 1798 (pp. 27-29).

'Times a flitting' (pp. 30-31).

'A country wedding in 1800' (pp. 32-36).

Garter singing (pp. 37-39).

A wedding nominy ca. 1800 (p. 40).

Singing the nominy (pp. 41-42).

Blakeborough 1.11

Exercise book [12pp., undated] containing notes on English wedding customs.

Racing for the bridal garter (pp. 1-2).

Barring-out (pp. 3-4).

Wishing 'em Luck (pp. 5-6).

The walk to church and friends greeting the bride and groom (pp. 7-8).

Tossing t'plate (pp. 9-10).

Claiming t'bride's garter (pp. 11-12).

Blakeborough 1.16

Manuscript material including correspondence to/from Richard Blakeborough and poetry [some dialect].

- 1.16/1 Correspondence from Metcalfe Johnson, April 1900.
- 1.16/2 Correspondence from H.B[eresford Perin], July 12th 1902. Refusal of permission to look at a manuscript in his possession.
- 1.16/3 Reply [copy] to 1.16/2 above [no date]. Also a copy of a letter from Lesley Lewis, January 1974.
- 1.16/4 Correspondence from C.F. Howard (Middlesbrough), August 6th 1902, re. custom and belief concerning cauls and other folklore (5pp.).
- 1.16/5 Poem 'Don't you think it is time/ You returned to your home.' [first line]
- 1.16/6 Poem 'On Rick's Death' (1899). [Derrick Fairfax Blakeborough, the son of Richard Blakeborough, died July 3rd 1899.]
- 1.16/7 Wensleydale Nicknames.
- 1.16/8 Article [undated] 'Yorkshire Domestic Medicine or East Riding Bluff. Founded on one of Mr. Blakeborough's Sketches. A Dialogue.'
- 1.16/9 Letter starting "Dear Madam" from Richard Blakeborough [ca. 1890s] re. charms against the devil and witches.
- 1.16/10 Dialect writing beginning "If you wish to be honoured in Heaven..." [no title, no date].
- 1.16/11 Silhouette of Abe Braithwaite (1876) and [William] Hird (1872), Robert Hird's son.
- 1.16/12-19
[?Richard Blakeborough crest] [8 copies].

Blakeborough 1.17

Selection of black and white photographs, mainly racehorses and trainers.

- 1.17/1 Sir Tatton Sykes with a Leger winner - from an oil painting [no date].
- 1.17/2 Blair Athol - winner of the Derby and St. Leger [from a painting - no date].
- 1.17/3 [?Caravan/?Horse Box - no date].
- 1.17/4 Highfield, Malton. Mr. L'Anson's former home.
- 1.17/5-6 William Harding [I'Anson's head man]. 2 copies.
- 1.17/7 Horse named ?Caller. Winner of 51 races. [Photo of a painting].
- 1.17/8-9 Anon. Man in a frock coat and top hat. Taken in Scarborough. 2 copies.
- 1.17/10 William Sanderson. Photo taken in Bolton.
- 1.17/11 John Charlton. From a drawing/painting.
- 1.17/12 [?Tom] Green. Famous northern racehorse trainer.
- 1.17/13 Packing for photographs, marked 'William I'Anson - Photo's and Letters'.
Address label reads 'Major J. Fairfax-Blakeborough'. 2 George VI stamps on front.

Blakeborough 2.4

Press cuttings of articles [on local and supernatural legends, traditional remedies, customs and beliefs] by Richard Blakeborough intended for publication in book form.

The weird mystery of the moor. A Gainsborough legend. (pp.1-5)
Humpy o'Grinton. An ancient worm legend. (pp.6-10)
The good witch of Hambleton. A legend of Upsall castle. (pp.11-13)
Manuscript note on the legend of Upsall castle. (pp.14-15).
The Highwayman. A true story of [?Leeming] Lane. (pp.16-18)
The maid of the golden shoon. An Ingleby legend. (pp.20-28)
Chats with our grandmothers. (pp.29-72)
A chat with Mrs. Trott (pp.30-31)
A chat with Mrs. Trott and Mrs. Smith (pp.32-34)
Mrs. Trott and Mrs. Smith (pp.34-37)
An old custom killed (pp.38-40)
Warnings [rites, superstitions of death and the death chamber]. (pp.40-42)
Death signs. (pp.43-45)
Mrs. Megson on weddings. (pp.46-51)
Mell suppers. (pp.52-54)
Mell acts. (pp.55-57)
Harvesting 100 years ago. (pp.58-60)
The village feast. (pp.61-66)
Folk Medicine. Wraith crossing. (pp.67-69)
A hundred years ago. Doctors and their ways. (pp.70-72)
Round the hostel fire. (p.73)
Legend of the old Ingleby Arncliffe Hall. (pp.74-78)
A Castleton mystery. (pp.79-82)
The Yafforth spectre. (pp.83-87)
The Giant's lapstone. (pp.88-90)
Thorald and Gydolph. (pp.91-97)
The Mouse Maiden. (pp.98-109)
The Wraith of Little Smeaton Hall. (pp.110-113)
The Kildale spectres. (pp.114-118)
Bonny Bona. Old coaching days at the sign of the York gate. (pp.119-128)

Blakeborough 2.4 cont'd

Elf the dwarf. Sign of the Fox and Hounds, Urra. (pp.129-143) [Cf. 'On Ye Fox Hounds Inn Orra', p.33 below.]
Sarkless Kitty. A suppresses legend. (pp.144-148)
Ye Good Old Days. (pp.149-152)
Sweet Molly of the Black Lion, Richmond. (pp.153-157)
A lovesick maid 100 years ago. (pp.158-161)
The Coach Ghost. (pp.162-166)
The Magic Arrow. (pp.167-179)
Old Hagglegstone's curse. Beliefs and customs of village life 100 years ago. (pp.180-189)
Nanny Newgill, the Broughton witch. (pp.190-198)
The wicked giant of Penhill. (pp.199-203)
Letter relating to the giant of Penhill. (p.205)
Among the election poets. Pro Boer or pro Briton. (p.209)

Inside back cover. Drawing of a Knight with parts of the armour named.

Blakeborough 3.2

Notebook entitled 'Yorkshire Readings' (1890-1891) by Richard Blakeborough [titles and/or first lines].

Mrs. Waddleton's visit to see t' Fleet. (pp.1-20)
Mary Bubbles drops in to see Mrs. Waddleton. (pp.21-32)
Mr. Jones has bought a bicycle. (pp.33-50)
The silver medal. (p.51)
I vunce did live in Burmah. (pp.52-53)
Programme of Mrs. Dr. Smith's evening party. (p.55)
Speech at AGM. (pp.56-57)
Verse from parish register, Evercreech, Somerset. (p.62)
Mr. and Mrs. Waddleton go to the races. (pp.63-82)
Programmes for evening's entertainment. (pp.82-84)
?The great uncle aunt eater. (p.85)
The porky pine. (pp.85-86)
Chimpangroos. (pp.86-87)
Alligator. (p.87)
Pair o' dice. (p.87)
Turtle ring dove. (p.87)
The Tamplillewreck or Twiddle Funk. (p.88)
Press cutting: 'Our extra special novel curiosity hunter'. (p.88)
Those evening bells. (p.89)
Little Jim. (p.89)
Excelsior. (p.90)
The north wind will blow. (p.90)
Press cuttings - mainly verse. (pp.91-92)
Verses (p.92)

Blakeborough 3.3

Notebook entitled 'Waddleton Sketches' (1893-1907).

[?Mrs. Waddleton] Goes to the Fair. (pp.2-13)

Afternoon tea at Eliza Mary Johnson [incomplete]. (p.14)

Mrs. Waddleton on the relief of Mafeking. (pp.16-34)

Mrs. Waddleton writes an advertisement. (pp.35-42)

Mrs. Waddleton explains her troubles to Mary Bubbles when writing an advertisement being in want of a servant. (pp.46-60).

Mrs. Waddleton on the sufferyjettes [sic.]. (pp.76-91)

Blakeborough 3.5

Sketches and rhymes by Richard Blakeborough 1894-1912.

Mrs. Waddleton takes a lodger. (pp.1-22)

Mrs. Waddleton attends the scientific dressmaking and button making class. (pp.23-41)

Mrs. Waddleton in London. (pp.42-56)

Stories. (pp.56-58)

Verses to Kit. (p.64)

Mrs. Waddleton sketches [incomplete]. (pp.65-78)

Dandy Jack [poem]. (pp.79-81)

Written by my wife, The Garden of Love. (p.82)

Lecture notes on Yorkshire dialect. (pp.124-151) including Yorkshire sayings (p.142) and the possessive pronoun (pp.143-144).

Stories 1-5. (pp.145-147, 149)

Mrs. Waddleton goes to the dentist. (pp.153-154)

Mrs. Waddleton pays a visit to York. (pp.155-64)

Mrs. Waddleton takes charge of a bull pup for one night. (pp.165-183)

Mrs. Waddleton rides a bicycle. (pp.184-196)

Blakeborough 4.1

Notebook containing sketches and recitations by Richard Blakeborough.

Mrs. Waddleton sketch [incomplete]. (pp.1-5)

Lights and Shadows [recitation]. (pp.6-16)

Mrs. Waddleton having been to Stockton races goes to see Mrs. Jump. (pp.17-32)

Mrs. Jassip having heard that Mrs. Waddleton has been to Stokesley Fair drops in to hear about it. (pp. 33-46)

Dandy Jack [recitation]. (pp.47-51)

The Old Man's story. (pp.52-62)

Kaceljevo. (pp.63-66)

The signalman's story. (pp.67-72)

Mrs. Waddleton takes charge of a bull pup for one night [draft]. (pp.77-90)

Blakeborough 4.2

Notebook containing 'Yorkshire Oddments and Sketches' [verses, songs, stories and rhymes].

It's neean sa lang sin' [verse]. (pp.1-2)

Yorkshire sayings (partly used by Morris). (pp.3-18, 20-22, 26, 27)

It's better deean when young [verse]. (p.19)

A bonny bairn t' mak [verse]. (p.20)

It's t'waay [verse]. (pp.21-22)

T' ma sweetheart. (p.23)

A bit or a tak in [verse]. (pp.24-26)

If [verse]. (p.27)

They're nut t' seeam noo [verse]. (p.28)

T' mother's prayer [verse]. (pp.28-29)

They're kittish things t'deea [verse]. (pp.30-31)

Memory. (pp.31-32)

A blighted young chap [song]. (pp.33-34)

At owt but luv much be [verse]. (pp.34-35)

An opinion [verse]. (p.36)

The balloon ascent [narrative]. (pp.37-42)

Mrs. Waddleton pays a visit to the dentist. (pp.42-47)

The story of a witch. (pp.47-56)

T' chap fra Lunnon [verse]. (pp.56-59)

Mrs. Waddleton tells Mary Bubbles of her visit to Stockton races. (pp.60-82).

T' lass fra Lunnon. (pp.83-85)

T' aud chap's taal [verse]. (pp.86-97)

T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg. (pp.98-119)

Mrs. Waddleton teels Mary B. aboot when they went t' see t' Fleet. (pp.120-136)

Children's rhymes. (pp.132-133)

Kuck signs. (pp.137-138)

Blakeborough 4.5

Rhymes written by Richard Blakeborough (title or first line).

A reverie on life. (pp.1-2)
A little chaff. (pp.3-4)
Philosophers have lived in every age. (p.5)
Memory. (pp.5-6)
Kacelvevo. (pp.7-9)
A Kiss. (p.9)
On returning love's tokens. (p.9)
Goodbye little glove. (p.10)
We met by chance. (p.10)
Out tablet. (p.11)
To Maptie. (p.11)
I want your better nature. (p.12)
On seeing a young lady pass my study. (p.12)
Window 1874. (p.12)
The stars. (pp.13-14)
Slowly and gradually I rise from my stone. (p.14)
A rhyme. (p.14)
I've just come up from Yorkshire. (p.14)
Asking for a photo. (p.15)
To Maptie. (pp.15-16)
Oh 'twas a beautiful world we live in. (p.16)
Reason why. (p.17)
A kind word and a smile. (pp.17-18)
Upstairs within my bedroom. (p.18)
First day. (p.19)
The day after. (p.19)
Moral. (p.20)
I doubt if he who lolls his head. (p.20)
Wait a minute. (pp.20-21)
A smile. (p.21)
Battered and smashed up. (pp.21-22)
Once upon a time no matter when. (pp.22-25)
The three stepping stones. (pp.25-27)
A smile poetical. (p.27)
Pride. (p.28)
Confession. (p.28)
Courtship. (pp.29-30)
Hackhall. (pp.30-31)
Our baby. (p.32)
? On CH seventh birthday. (p.32)
The vision of the soul. (pp.33-58)
Very sad to be nervous. (pp.58-59)
Paul Snuggs. (pp.59-61)
Blighted young man. (pp.61-62)
There's still a chance for me. (p.63)
I am really quite bewildered. (p.64)
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The wily politician. (pp.74-76)
The old man's story. (pp.76-82)
The collision. (pp.82-83)
Slathery's light dragoons. (pp.84-85)
The signalman's story. (pp.85-88)
Lights and shadows. (pp.88-93)
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The cow. (p.95)
Oh my waxworks. (p.95)
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Never again will I play with a wasp. (pp.97, 99)
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True blue Ciss. (pp.100-105)
Woman. (p.106)
I say, look here. (pp.107-108)
Where blows the wind today? (p.109)
They're kittish things to deea. (pp.109-110)
T' chap fra Lunnon. (pp.110-111)
That lass fra Lunnon. (pp.111-113)
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Reflections on the end of the year 1890. (pp.115-116)
Reflections on the end of the year 1889 [incomplete]. (pp.117-119)

Blakeborough 5.1

Notebook containing a compilation of rhymes and notes collected in the North Riding of Yorkshire, inscribed on title page 'Oddments Gathered from all Manner of People at Various Times, dating from 1865. Superstitions, Charms, Rhymes & c. All belonging to the North Riding of Yorkshire. Bound at Guisborough Aug. 1st Wednesday 1883 ['March 7th 1883 Ent. Here' added in smaller hand]. Came to Guisborough July 28 1882.' Stamped '14 Mar. 1900'.

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Printed table of Kings and Queens of England from the Conquest. (p.1)

Printed photograph of Mr. William Scorer. (p.2)

Note on the contents of the notebook, April 27th 1883. (p.3)

To My Boy in Heaven. Obituary [?for son Derrick ('Rick')] July 3rd 1899. (p.3)

'Signs of the Sea.' [Rhyme - ?from the Naitby Ms.] (p.4)

Weather notes, 1903. (p.4)

Honey Cake Charm. Ann [?Caggill], Bedale 1876. (pp.5-6)

Notes on the coronation and death of Edward VII. (p.5)

Storm Signs. Mr. Mattison, Leeming, 1875. (p.6)

Notes on Mafeking night [?in Guisborough]. (p.6)

'Ducking a Witch. Dictate by Abe Braithwaite.' [from the Naitby scrapbook, June 16th 1792]. (pp.7-9)

Notes on the celebrations on the relief of Pretoria. (p.7)

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Lines repeated by Molly Cass, the Leeming witch, over two lovers about to be married, whom she declared to another person would both die on the same day. (p.9)

Storm signs [from a Staithes fisherman via Mr. Mattison]. (p.9)

Note on the end of the Boer War. (p.9)

'Afore Cann'lmas Day.' A. Braithwaite, 1875. (pp.10-11)

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Note on the death of Queen Victoria. (p.11)

Directions to overcome the power of a witch given by the wiseman of Reeth [North Yorkshire]. (pp.12-16)

A Witch Incantation. William Boulton of Lastingham (died April 1905, aged 84). (p.12)

Press cutting referring to one of Blakeborough's Waddleton sketches, 1909. (p.16)

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'What Whitsuntide has in Store.' Announcement referring to engagement by Blakeborough at Bridlington, 1909 [loose]. (p.21)

Note on the death of John and Mary Watson, two of [?Blakeborough's] informants, April 13th 1909. (p.22)

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'Leeds Au'd Parish Church', also published as 'The Wensleydale Lad's Visit to Leeds'. (pp.24-26)

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'Death Signs' [rhyme]. (p.25)
 The 'Hossin-Steean'. (p.26)
 'On the dialect of the North Riding - Old Time Words [verse by Richard Blakeborough]. (p.26)
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 'Thoughts for a Sermon. Written by A.K. 1840.' [from Dr. Spence's scrapbook] (pp.82-83)
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 'Robbie to Bessie.' [copied from a collection by J.Hird]. (pp107-108)
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 Press cutting relating to women's games directed at unfaithful men. (p.110)
 'Doggregel [sic] said to a bride by the winner of the Bridal Race.' Ann Hewson, 1878. (p.111)
 'To the Bees. To be said over the hives, on a death.' [Belief - death and burial] Ann
 Hewison, 1876. (p.111)
 'Xmas Card' [rhyme]. Richard Blakeborough, 1901. (p.112)
 'The Old Mill Wheel' [Coverham, North Yorkshire]. (p.112)
 'On Ye Fox Hounds Inn Orra' by Richard Blakeborough, 1902. (pp.112-113)
 'Love Charm' by Mr. Hird. (pp.113-114)
 'The Bilsdale Hunt' by Richard Blakeborough, 1906. (p.114)
 'T' Bo'ds Cum an' Gan.' (pp.114-115)
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 'Wise Sayings.' (pp.117-120)
 'Wise Saws North Riding.' (pp.126, 132-136)
 'Wensleydale Notes' including
 'Aquatic Sports. Duck Hunting at Middleton.' (pp.137-138)
 'Bridal Ribbons in Durham Bridge.' (p.139)
 'Remarks by an Old Man' [on men's fashions], ca.1790. (p.140)
 Index (pp.153-157)
 'The Topper's Song', ca.1780. [2 loose sheets inserted at the end of the book]

Blakeborough 5.4

Newspaper cuttings, ca.1900-1955. Various subjects relating to North Yorkshire and the North East. Some items are in a particularly fragile condition.

‘With the East Yorkshire Lads in France. No.10: Their dialect bewilders the southerner - with some cause.’ John Fairfax Blakeborough, *Hull Times* [?November] 1917.

‘The Carthorpe Ghost.’ Richard Blakeborough, *Northern Weekly Gazette*, November 1st 1902.

Half of pages 7 and 8 from the *Northern Weekly Gazette*, March 8th 1902. [assorted articles]

‘A Bedale Legend. The Mystery of Dame Peggotty [Kirklan].’ Richard Blakeborough, *Northern Weekly Gazette*, December 7th 1901.

‘The Wraith House. A Story of Old Newton, near Bedale.’ Richard Blakeborough, *Northern Weekly Gazette*, February 1st 1902.

Obituary for Surgeon-Major Metcalfe Johnson, J.P. [?*Lancaster Guardian*, 1902]

Extract from Darlington’s first newspaper, reprinted in a Darlington newspaper [name and date not known].

Page from a parish magazine [July 1904], transcribing items from a Visitation Book at the church of St. Peter and St. Paul [location and date not known].

‘Cherry Stones.’ [no details of author, date or origin].

‘Some Yorkshire Ghosts.’ November 15th 1925.

Announcement of the death of Derrick Fairfax Blakeborough. Son of Richard Blakeborough, died July 3rd 1899.

Three articles on the history of Bedale. November 1955.

‘Lines written after a visit to Studley Park and Fountaine’s [sic] Abbey, near Rippon [sic], Yorkshire.’ (pp.39-40, September 1818. A.B.)

‘When Bedale had [a] School “Dungeon” ‘ (November 1938)

Bedale ‘Harbour’ history. Talk to the Parish Council on the state of the beck. August 1949.

‘A Hundred Years Ago. A Wensleydale Memory. The Fate of Nicholas Carter of Crakehall [near Bedale], *Darlington and Richmond Chronicle* 1926.

Letter to the Editor re. a wayside memorial, [?*Darlington and Richmond Chronicle*] April 28th 1926.

‘A Wensleydale Roadside Memorial.’ Ambler, *Darlington and Richmond Chronicle* [no date].

‘A Wensleydale Roadside Memorial.’ Two letters to the Editor of the *Darlington and Richmond Chronicle*, 1926.

Correspondence to the Editor of the *Darlington and Stockton Times* re. ‘A Wayside Memorial.’ May 20th 1926.

Assorted articles on North Yorkshire history [from an unknown paper - no date].

‘Yorkshire Gossip. A Quaint Yorkshire Character.’ October 5th 1901 [source unknown].

A mixed tandem. Drawing by George Moore (1898) [source unknown].

A sequence of five coloured drawings taken from a magazine. Drawn by Percy [Mag??]. [no date]

Blakeborough 5.5

Selection of newspaper cuttings and corrected proofs of articles by Richard Blakeborough.

- 5.5/1 'The Magic Basin', *Northern Weekly Gazette*, October 4th 1913 [white envelope containing 12 cuttings].
- 5.5/2 'A Brief History of the Legend' [source and date unknown].
- 5.5/3 Ms. of a carol noted by Robert Pears of Driffield, 1969.
- 5.5/4 'The Tragedy at the Four Crossroads' [uncorrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/5 'The Writer's Story' [source and date unknown]; 'The Headless Knight. Being a Narrative of the Howhill Spectre' [source and date unknown].
- 5.5/6 Picture labelled 'I'll leave your carcass for ravens and eagles.' [source and date unknown].
- 5.5/7 'The Sinderby Wraiths. A Tale of Two Brothers. A Story of Two Hundred Years Ago' [source and date unknown].
- 5.5/8 Untitled sheet [incomplete; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/9 'Mine Host's Story' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/10 'The Ghost of Winton Bank' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/11 'The Good Witch of Hambleton [Lincs.]. A Legend of Kirkby Knowle Castle' [corrected proof; no date].
- 5.5/12 'The Tragedy of the Oaken Chamber. The Legend of Old Ingleby Arncliffe Hall' [corrected proof].
- 5.5/13 'A Child's Caul' [source unknown, March 16th 1906].
- 5.5/14 'The Mark's Penance. A Legend of Cover Bridge' [source and date unknown].
- 5.5/15 'Hester's Plum', *Northern Weekly Gazette*, December 20th 1902, p.13 [damaged].
- 5.5/16 'The Fen Moor Murder', *Northern Weekly Gazette*, September 21st 1901, pp.10- 11.
- 5.5/17 'Pennock's Curse' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/18 'Bonny Bona. A Story of Ye Olde Coaching Days given at the Sign of the York Gate' [corrected proof; no date].
- 5.5/19 'The Highwayman. A True Story of Leeming Lane' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/20 'The Wraith of Little Smeaton Hall' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].
- 5.5/21 'The Hand of Glory: A Leeming Lane Story of the Old Coaching Days' [corrected proof; source and date unknown. Different version from 5.5/22].
- 5.5/22 'Tales Our Grandmothers' Told: The Hand of Glory' [corrected proof; source and date unknown].

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Ref: ACT/97-005

Title: The Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-Blakeborough Yorkshire Folklore Collection

Scope: The collection includes copies and extracts from the notebooks of Robert Hird and David Naitby, together with fieldwork collected by Richard Blakeborough; original dialect rhymes and sketches; published folklore articles and folktales; the correspondence and papers of Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-Blakeborough.

Dates: 1750-1820; 1868-1974

Level: Fonds

Extent: 5 boxes

Name of creator: Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-Blakeborough

Administrative / biographical history:

The collection includes copies and extracts from the notebooks of Robert Hird and David Naitby, together with fieldwork collected by Richard Blakeborough; original dialect rhymes and sketches; published folklore articles and folktales; the correspondence and papers of Richard Blakeborough and John Fairfax-Blakeborough.

Richard Blakeborough (1850-1918), collector of folklore and author, was born in Ripon, North Yorkshire, on January 24th 1850, the son of Richard Blakeborough, a jeweller and clock maker. He was descended on his mother's side from the Fairfax family and was also distantly related to the Brontës. Blakeborough was educated at St. Agnesgate Grammar School, and from his childhood acquired a keen interest in nature and the lore and legends of his county of birth. After leaving school he assisted his father in his business but was allowed later to fulfil his ambition to become a doctor.

As a folklorist, Blakeborough's most important contribution was in the collection of folklore and dialect in the North Riding of Yorkshire. In the early 1870s he copied large portions of the manuscript notebooks of David Naitby (1774-1838) and Robert Hird (1768-1841), who were themselves North Riding collectors and had obtained material dating from the seventeenth century and earlier. Blakeborough was not, however, an armchair scholar, and he obtained his information (including the Naitby and Hird items) by fieldwork, as he noted in his 'Oddments Gathered from All Manner of People at Various Times, Dating from 1865'. A small part of the vast amount of material he amassed is contained in his books *Wit, Character, Folklore and Customs of the North Riding of Yorkshire* (1898), *Yorkshire Toasts, Proverbs, Similes and Sayings* (1907) and the posthumous *The Hand of Glory and Further Grandfather's Tales and Legends of Highwaymen and Others* (edited by his son, John Fairfax-Blakeborough, and published in 1924). Further examples from his collections appear in his extensive newspaper articles. As with other nineteenth-century collectors, he adapted the language slightly for publication, or even 'suppressed' (his own word) certain lines or whole verses where he regarded the original as being 'too free'.

Blakeborough's dialect recitations and writings were equally important aspects of his enthusiasm for Yorkshire lore and speech. Two volumes of the former, based largely on his character Mrs. Waddleton, appeared in 1921 and 1924. The Waddleton sketches were

humorous dialect readings, sometimes commenting on contemporary events, such as 'The Relief of Maficking' or 'The Sufferjettes'. In a serious vein were his dramatic poems in the Cleveland dialect *T' Hunt o' Yatton Brigg* (1899) and *Aud Nan o' Sexhow*. Other works included a novel, *More than a Dream*, and the comedies *Tomboy*, *Auntie* and *Downhill*, which were toured by the Dacre Company.

Richard Blakeborough was a member of the Folklore Society and the local (Ripon) archaeological society, and was, for a time, curator of the Ripon Scientific Society. In his last years he lived in Norton-on-Tees where he died on April 23rd 1918. He left one son, Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough. An older child, Derrick ('Rick'), had died in July 1899.

Major John Fairfax-Blakeborough (1883-1976), folklorist and writer, was born on January 16th 1883 in Guisborough. After leaving school he spent three months in a broker's office but his inherited interest in writing led him to join the staff of the *Middlesbrough Evening Telegraph* (later the *Evening Gazette*). At twenty-one he became a freelance writer, specialising in country sports and horseracing. From childhood, Fairfax-Blakeborough had been keenly interested in horses, racing and hunting and he gained practical experience of horses in a three year spell at a training stable in Cleveland, in addition to his two days a week of hunting.

During the First World War he served as a Major in the 15th/19th King's Hussars, being awarded the Military Cross. After the war he became a racing judge at Sedgefield and remained a licensed Turf official until shortly before his death. At the same time, he became secretary of the Cleveland Bay Horse Society, a post he held for twenty years, later becoming the Society's president. He also owned, rode and raced his own horses.

John Fairfax-Blakeborough was the author of 112 books on the history of horse racing, Yorkshire folklore and the Cleveland Bay (horse), among the best known of which are *Yorkshire Days and Yorkshire Ways* (1935) and *The Spirit of Yorkshire* (1954, written with his son Richard Noel John Fairfax-Blakeborough). He also wrote regular columns for the *Darlington and Stockton Times* (for 54 years) and *Yorkshire Life*. He died at his home, Low House, Westerdale, Whitby, on January 1st 1976.

Source: By purchase, in April 1982

System of arrangement: By category

Subjects: Folklore

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