man, indeed, may prefer a temperate region, favourable to
the exercise both of mind and body; but the savage will go
where he can most readily satisfy savage wants; he will not,
therefore, betake himself to temperate, still less to Arctic
regions, until driven there by increasing density of
population.

But are we justified in concluding that even the cave men
were the earliest human settlers in Western Europe? Surely
not. The whole history of Palaeontology is a standing protest
against such an assumption. We have not indeed as yet the
materials to decide the question, but if we were to express
any opinion on the subject, it would seem more philosophical
to imagine that the genus *Homo* dates back to a period as
ancient as the other widely-spread genera of Mammalia;
and that wherever the bones of deer, elephants, horses,
oxen, and dogs are to be found, there we may fairly expect
er long to discover also the remains of man.

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ON THE HISTORIC INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH LINCOLN
HEATH. BY THE REV. EDWARD TROLLOPE, M.A., F.S.A.,
PREBENDARY OF LINCOLN.

On a former occasion I brought before you “The Alluvial
Lands and Submarine Forests of Lincolnshire,” and now
I have selected that of “Lincoln Heath.” Duty compels me
to cross Lincoln Heath very frequently—twice every two
months, besides on other occasions: this must be done,
whether winds or calms prevail—whether deep snows envelope
the road, or clouds of dust rise up from it—whether the sun
forces me to throw aside all superfluous covering, or the cold
to hug my cloak and wrapper with grim energy. I have,
therefore, seen the Heath not only often, but under all
aspects, which has perhaps led me to make what I can out
of it from all possible sources as a means of cheering me when crossing its dreary expanse, and these materials I am about to place at your disposal. The Heath, as you are well aware, extends almost from Sleaford to Lincoln in an irregular pear-shaped form about sixteen miles long. Its surface is by no means flat, for in the first place it rises gradually from under the "Oxford" clay stratum on the east, and terminates in a steep ridge as it sinks suddenly towards the "lias" district on the west; but besides this, its whole surface consists of a series of gentle undulations resembling those of the Atlantic after a storm, and the straight white road topping these in succession on its way northwards, does not very inaptly represent the foamy track of some vast steam-ship, such as the Great Eastern leaves behind her in calm weather, while the shadows of the little clouds passing over the surface of the Heath, just as they do on the real ocean, add to the correctness of the comparison. But now let us see what our subject is really made of by slicing in two one of its ridges. Beneath a thin layer of light soil, from 9 to 18 inches in depth, we shall find a thick stratum of limestone, belonging to what geologists call the series of the "great oolite." At some very remote period, and during countless centuries, water was gradually depositing the limy particles with which it was charged on the clay beneath it, until it formed a coating many feet in thickness, sometimes sympathising with the undulations of the subsoil, and sometimes drifting into its deeper hollows, so as to cause a considerable degree of variation in its thickness. It has also been subjected to other subsequent disturbing causes, from the pent-up powers of the earth’s deeper recesses. A remarkable example of this may be seen in the second railway-cutting between Sleaford and Grantham, where an upward thrust from below is exhibited, forming a rounded eminence beset with fissures, now filled in with earth that
has been washed in from the surface. Such is a brief sketch of the geological features of Lincoln Heath.

The first of the incidents connected with the Heath refers us to the Celts or ancient Britons, who, after circling away from the east through the southern parts of Europe, at length emerged from the dense forests of Kesteven, then teeming with wolves, and probably with bears and beavers, as well as with countless varieties of birds that have now long since become extinct. A British stronghold then certainly existed at Lincoln under the name of "Caer Lin," and at Sleaford several British brass "celts" or axe-heads, and one of stone, have been discovered, showing that the same people occupied this extremity of the Heath as well as the other; but, before it was brought into cultivation, many other clearer traces of the Britons were scattered over its surface, such as raised circles, indicative of their habitations, trenches for their defence, as at Scopwick, and tumuli or mounds, marking their last resting places. These, I believe, have now all been levelled by the plough, but in another part of the county I have myself had the satisfaction of discovering some eight or nine raised circles of earth, once doubtless topped by British huts, viz., in the parish of Tetney; and from a spot still nearer, viz., Billinghay, I have secured a brass sword of the usual leaf-shaped form used by the Britons and other early peoples. In vain did the British tribes of Lincolnshire war against that great invading nation which eventually swept over the face of this fair island and secured its dominion, and which will constitute the second incident of the Heath, and connected with "Rome." It was probably rather more than one hundred years after Caesar's first invasion of England before Lincolnshire began to feel the hard yoke that had previously been experienced in the south, but at length the firm tramp of the 6th Roman Legion was heard marching from one extremity of this
county to the other, with victory always in front, and nothing but slavery in the rear. Then a large colonial city arose at Lincoln, termed "Lindum Colonia;" and here, on the southern extremity of the Heath, was a smaller settlement, chiefly on the site of the Old Place, where at times many Roman coins have been found, and also others near the site of the Castle. But the Heath itself was scored with the impress of the Roman rule, the evidences of which remain to the present time.

Near Caistor, in Northamptonshire, one of the four great Roman roads, "the Ermin-street," was divided into two, the one represented by the modern road from Deeping to Bourn, but branching off at Graby bar is now called Mareham-lane, and was formerly continued past the Old Place, crossing the Heath at Coggleford Mill, Leasingham Moor, and thence passed along the eastern edge of the Heath by Ruskington, Ashby, Blankney, Metheringham, Dunston, Nocton, Potterhanworth, and Branston to Lincoln. In the parish of Ashby a tessellated pavement was discovered some years ago, forming the flooring of a Roman house, and much Roman pottery at Potterhanworth when some building was going on there under the direction of the late Incumbent. This, however, was only a minor or occupation road, the great military road forming the main branch of the Ermin-street, following the present line of the North road from Stamford to Colsterworth over Witham Common, by Ponton, Cold Harbour, and Londonthorpe to Ancaster, and thence over the Heath, in a straight northerly direction, to Lincoln. At Ancaster was a permanent military station of the usual square form, surrounded by a deep ditch, and a bank of corresponding height. Here very many Roman coins have been found, and on one occasion a mass weighing two stones on the premises of Mr. Eaton; but the most remarkable reminiscence of the Romans there is a group of the "Deæ
Matres,” or beneficent local presiding deities, who were supposed to bring good fortune to those that honoured them. This piece of sculpture was found in Ancaster church-yard, with a small incense altar before it, just as it was left by the Romans. Through Ancaster and over the Heath hurried the Emperor Constantine on his way to York, for the purpose of joining his father, Constantius Chlorus, in that city, then called Eboracum, and either then or on his return a complimentary inscription was set up by the way side, just as we now erect arches of evergreens to celebrate the advent of royal or other popular personages to our respective localities or towns. But at length the power of the Roman Empire was shaken, and all its life’s blood was, as it were, forced to retire from its extremities to sustain its central vitality; and Britain, feeling her weakness when deprived of her bold and hardy masters, saw the last Roman Legion leave her shores with regret, knowing that other invaders were ready to pour in upon her soil, with whom our next incident is connected, viz., “the Saxons.” They had circled away from Asia like the Celts, but took chiefly a more central course, thus peopling Germany, until they arrived on the shores of the German Ocean and the Baltic. Thence three tribes, the Angles, the Jutes, and the Saxons, made incursions upon our shores before the departure of the Romans, and after that event gradually got possession of nearly the whole of England, carrying on a war of eradication against the poor Britons, who at length were alone to be found in the hills of Cumberland, the fastnesses of Wales, and the wilds of Cornwall. Of these the Angles possessed themselves of Lincolnshire, and their traces are still revealed both at Lincoln and about Sleaford and Ancaster: no doubt then but what the Heath witnessed the marchings and countermarchings of that people many a time, although I am not aware that any of their traces
have been actually discovered upon its surface. I could have brought some of their weapons for your inspection, but these are much decayed; they consist of swords, spear heads, knives, and the large bosses of their shields. These were found in making the railway hence to Boston, very near the spot where the line crosses the town street; and although it was reported to me that "some of Oliver Cromwell’s old soldiers had been found there, bagonets and all," I soon had the pleasure of finding out that these relics were a thousand years older than had been anticipated, and that from them might be gathered what was the character of the weapons used by our Anglo-Saxon forefathers. One object, however, that was found at Ancaster, is of undoubted Saxon make, and probably a "coffin," for when discovered it contained the remains of a human being, whose body had been burnt—in fact all that could be collected from the funeral pile; but amongst these was one little object of considerable interest, namely, half of a bone hair comb, in a perfect state of preservation, and as I have found similar half combs in other Saxon funeral vases in this vicinity,—this by no means being a solitary instance of the kind,—I believe that the other halves of these were preserved by the sorrowing relatives of the deceased as reminiscences, because they were certainly never deposited in the urns whole, and because the fractures are as fresh as on those days of mourning when they were originally made.

A different people now rules in England over its Saxon population—the "Norman Conquest" has taken place; but as William I. never passed over the Heath, although he was at Lincoln, we can not raise up the shadow of his memory in connection with our present subject. Pass we on then to the year 1200, when a remarkable sight was witnessed on the Heath. It is nearly the end of November (the 23rd), and precisely 662 years ago. The Heath is veiled with a dense
fog, as though it were covered by a pall, whose folds thicken as they sink into the hollows beneath it. But I see one streak far darker than any other in the Ancaster valley, and it appears to be moving upwards along the High dyke! Surely that can not be a fog, for I see lights sparkling in the midst of it? No; it is a funeral procession—a great and good man has died in London, and now his body is on its way for interment at Lincoln; last night it rested at Ancaster; now a solemn chant rolls mournfully over the Heath northwards of that point, and from the midst of kneeling groups of villagers I see a long procession of priests and choristers filing onwards, headed by one bearing a golden crucifix, veiled with their black drapery; next are four bearing lighted lanterns fixed on the ends of poles, then another priest carrying a veiled silver crosier or Bishop’s staff, and then follows a coffin on an open carriage covered by a black pall, ornamented by one large silver cross reaching from one end of it to the other, and lastly more ecclesiastics terminate the procession. Who is it that is thus honoured, and for whom is the largest bell at Ancaster now tolling? It is for Hugh, the celebrated Bishop of Lincoln, Hugh of Avalon, near Grenoble, who was specially invited by Henry II. to come over to England for the purpose of founding the first Carthusian Monastery at Witham, and was afterwards consecrated Bishop of Lincoln; Hugh—who boldly resisted wrong when it was attempted even by his Royal patron and his successor, the impetuous 1st Richard; Hugh—the builder of a great part of the Cathedral at Lincoln, and who laboured with his own hands at the work; Hugh—who was regarded as a saint by those who lived in his days, and as one who could work miracles. A King is waiting to aid in carrying his body to the grave when it reaches Lincoln, and he shall be assisted by three archbishops, fourteen bishops, more than a hundred abbots, and innumerable earls and barons. These shall place the
body reverently in the grave before the altar of St. John the Baptist, on the north side of the Cathedral; but it will not rest there, for Hugh’s reputation as a Saint shall rise; and 80 years later, in the presence of another King, his body shall be placed in a silver coffin, and that beautiful feature of the Cathedral, commonly called “Angel Choir,” shall be built, chiefly for the purpose of containing this precious deposit; nor shall the brother of so holy a man be forgotten, for in the town of Sleaford two days after the burial of Bishop Hugh, will King John confirm to Peter de Avalon two Knight’s fees at Histon, in Cambridgeshire.

“The Templars.”—The next Heath view brings us to the date 1338, when Edward the 2nd had lately become King of England. It is a cold windy January morning, and there is snow upon the Heath; already this lies deeply in the hollows, is curling over like foam from the sides of banks, and is tailing away in light drifts from every bush; but yet at a point upon the Heath, some six miles northwards of Sleaford, there is a stir among men, and I hear a clinking like that of some small streamlet imprisoned beneath the ice, yet gurgling onwards. But it is no water that makes that noise: it is produced by countless little steel rings clashing against each other, and now I see its origin before me. First a score of archers ride on, and then a reverend personage follows, preceded by one bearing a white wand; and then a long train of knights clad in chain armour from head to foot, covered with gaily emblazoned surcoats; but some only of these are fully armed, the others wearing white mantles with a red cross upon the left breast, bearing no weapons; and these are followed by a considerable number of men-at-arms. What means all this? It is John de Cormel, the Sheriff of Lincolnshire, aided by twelve knights and their forces, who has just seized the Knights Templars at Temple Bruer, and is carrying them off to the Claxgate prison at Lincoln. That functionary had first been sworn by
one of the King’s clerks to obey all and every such commands as he may receive from his Sovereign, and then a writ was instantly served on him ordering him to capture all the Knights Templars at their establishment upon the Heath suddenly and unexpectedly. William de la More, therefore, the last Preceptor of Temple Bruer, and at the same time the last Grand Prior of all England, is gazing now for the last time upon the circular church and the great pile of buildings that hitherto belonged to his order; his eye is resting fondly awhile upon one small square tower within which was his private chapel before he leaves all behind—that tower that still remains, and serves to indicate the site of this once great Templar Preceptory. Originally the Templars constituted an order, founded in 1118, that was sworn to defend all pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem; and as the Abbot of the convent of the Temple afforded them some accommodation in the first instance, they from that circumstance were called “Templars.” At first the order was very poor, but it soon became so popular that lands and money were showered upon it from all directions, until its wealth led to its corruption and to jealousy on the part of the nobles of England, as well as on that of the 2nd Edward. Temple Bruer was founded by the Lady Elizabeth de Cauz (temp. Henry 2nd), and in after days possessed lands or tenements in almost all the surrounding parishes, amounting together to upwards of 10,000 acres. For sixteen years will King Edward keep these lands thus wrested from the Templars, and then he will bestow them upon another very similar order—the Hospitallers, or Knights of St. John, who after repeated quarrels about the respective boundaries of their lands with the Delalaunds of Ashby, will in their turn be compelled to disgorge their possessions at the spoliating command of Henry 8th.

"John, King of France."—And now let us suppose that fifty-one years have rolled away since the dissolution of the
Templar establishments, but that we are still upon the Heath, near the High-dyke. It is the 4th of August, 1359, a period of the year when sportsmen are now preparing for campaigns against the grouse on our northern moors; but England had three years before the above-named date captured other game, and now I see the most precious of those spoils upon the Heath. First advance two local hired guides on horseback, then twenty-two archers, followed by four knights in conical helmets, chain gorgets, and plate armour covered with gaily emblazoned surcoats. But then appear three remarkable personages; the one on the right, in full armour, I perceive from his heraldic bearings to be William Baron d'Eyncourt; but who are the other two? The one, on that noble white horse regally trapped, clothed in violet velvet trimmed with ermine and relieved by a wide hip-band of gold set with costly gems, is John the Good, the captive King of France, and that fine spirited lad who rides upon his left, clad in light blue velvet powdered with golden fleurs de lys, is his son Philip, who, like the steed he bestrides, is impatient at being compelled to trot gently along in his place, when both feel the firm but elastic turf of the Heath beneath them. Let him have patience, however, for presently he shall be free once more, and shall, as Philip the Bold, become the founder of the second Ducal House of Burgundy, without those English men-at-arms behind him, with which the present procession closes. In vain was the personal bravery of the King and his son exhibited on the battle-field of Poictiers, when he with 60,000 men was defeated by 8,000 English! Fighting to the last, he and that young Prince now beside him were nearly smothered by the crowd of their enemies eager for their capture, but at length yielding to Denis de Morbec they lived to grace the triumphant entry into London of their great victor the Black Prince; and now they must abide awhile at Somerton Castle, and the King must beguile his captivity with books, music, chess,
and backgammon, the Prince with hawking and coursing on the Heath. I could tell you many anecdotes of their doings in this county, having made myself intimately acquainted with their habits, but I will mention only one to show how different were the manners of the 14th century from those of the 19th. One day the King’s Lincoln tailor, Tassin de Breuil by name, came over to Somerton with a new suit, or to receive orders, or at all events on business, when the Royal captive said, “Mr. Tassin, I want a coat;” but instead of ordering his measure to be taken, he added, “Sit down Tassin, and I will play you a game at backgammon for one;” so the King and the tailor sat down to the game, and his Majesty of France most properly lost it, for there still stands in the Royal accounts the following item:—“Lost, at backgammon, to Tassin de Breuil, a ‘cote-hardi,’ i.e. an overcoat!” But while we laugh, let us not forget that noble act of King John of France, who after his return to his own domains, upon the flight of some of the hostages rendered up to England as security for his promised ransom, immediately once more crossed the Channel and delivered himself up to Edward of England; nor one of his noble sayings in connection with that act: “If justice and good faith should be banished from all the rest of the world, these ought ever to be found in the hearts as well as on the lips of Kings.”

“Funeral of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York.”—It is now a hot day in July (the 27th), in the year 1466, and again a grand funeral procession is crossing the Heath, but on this occasion it is coming from Lincoln southwards towards Grantham, where the mourners will rest awhile; and strange to say this is the funeral of one who has been dead for six years. Two knights in plate armour, covered with black surcoats, advance first, followed by a troop of horse; next a long train of priests follow, one of whom bears a veiled crucifix, and others massive wax lights, while they chant
a solemn dirge for the dead; then is borne a banner emblazoned with the Royal arms, surmounted by a Ducal coronet, and then follows the coffin raised upon a lofty car drawn by seven horses, and covered by a canopy of black, powdered with crowned initials in silver; but the most conspicuous ornament of this car is a figure of an angel in silver placed in front of it. Does this express a hope that he whose body it overshadowed had obtained a crown immortal? Not so; but that had he lived he would have worn an earthly crown—that of England; for it is the remains of Richard Plantagenet, Duke of York, who was slain at the battle of Wakefield, that are now being transported from St. John's Priory, at Pontefract, to their final burial-place at Fotheringhay. But who follows as chief mourner? One whose face would have been handsome but for its villainous expression, and whose figure we can at once see is deformed, notwithstanding the drapery he has skilfully thrown around his person: this is Richard Duke of Gloucester, who shall be King, after he has become the murderer of his brother's children; and as Richard 3rd, of evil memory, shall lose his kingdom and his life on Bosworth Field. Such was one of the reminiscences of the fearful wars of the Red and White Roses; from the effects of which this county was comparatively speaking tolerably free, although one of my own name, I regret to say, proved a fearful scourge to it immediately after the battle of Wakefield, to which I have already alluded. The victorious Lancastrian army, to whom Queen Margaret had promised the spoil of all the counties south of the Trent, was under the command of Sir Andrew Trollope, whose terrible doings are thus described by the chroniclers Stowe and Speed, and the historians Hollingshed and Peck:—

"Andrew Trollope, Grand Captain, and as it were leader of the battle, with a great army of Scots, Welshmen, and other strangers, besides the northern men, destroyed the
towns of Grantham, Stamford, Peterborough, Huntingdon, Royston, Melbourn, and in a manner all the towns by the way unto St. Albans, sparing neither abbeys, priories, or parish churches, but bore away crosses, chalices, books, ornaments, and other things whatsoever was worth the carrying, as though they had been Saracens and no Christians."

"Henry VIII."—A very different view is now revealed. 'Tis something like a bridal party, rather than a funeral, that now appears on an early August day when the short scanty herbage of the Heath is brown from the heat, and its distant undulations are apparently quivering beneath the rays of the sun, the very rabbits with which it abounds so plentifully declining to appear upon its surface until the shadows of its scattered bushes and numerous ant-hills begin to lengthen as the day draws on. And now a blaze of scarlet flashes forth to add to the heat of the scene, for 50 men in short coats of that brilliant hue, trimmed with black and gold, advance on horseback with grand halberts in their hands, rich like themselves with scarlet and gold. Then follow other personages glittering with jewels, and then come a most remarkable pair—the one upwards of six feet in height and bulky beyond proportion, mounted on a steed of commensurate size: his features were probably once good, but now his vast expanse of face is scarcely relieved by his short light-red hair, and although his complexion is naturally exceedingly fair, his face at present is of one uniform deep rosy hue, for he is exceedingly hot, and his steed fully sympathises with him in that respect. His vest is of white satin slashed and puffed, and rich with embroidery of gold and small pearls: his short coat is of murrey-coloured velvet, edged with minever: round his neck is a wide jewelled collar of immense value, and on his head is a flat black velvet cap, ornamented with a curling white feather and a cluster of diamonds. His expression indicates a strong will and an
imperious temperament, but his face is now beaming also
with unmitigated delight as it turns towards his companion,
who is in every respect his opposite. This is a pretty but
a very little lively lady in her first youth, who might well
be the daughter, but really is the wife of him who rides
beside her. A semicircle of large pearls edges her head-
dress in front above her plainly-parted hair, and this termi-
nates behind in a veil of silver gauze that floats over her
shoulders: her tightly-fitting robe is of blue satin decorated
with single diamonds round the top, in conjunction with
golden embroidery: her hanging sleeves are trimmed with
minever, and round her neck is a collar of the purest pearls,
terspersed with great diamonds. The large man, I need
perhaps scarcely say, is Henry VIII., the little lady,
Catherine Howard, who has been his fifth wife for just
a year. Henry is now on his way to York for the purpose
of meeting there his nephew, the King of Scotland. He
has held a Council at Sleaford, and will dine at Temple
Bruer in the half-ruined buildings of the old chivalrous
order of the Templars; and he will enter Lincoln still
more brilliantly habited, as will the Queen. After a while
he will again cross the Heath on his return, coming from
the residence of Wymbish, of Nocton, to this place, where
he will receive the Portuguese Ambassador; but within six
months that young gay smiling wife of his, on whom he
now gazes with such rapture, will find a grave within the
precincts of the Tower, for at his own desire her head will
have been struck off, and she will have shared the same
dreadful fate that was experienced by one of her predecessors
—Ann Boleyn.

"Charles I. and the Civil Wars."—And now let us suppose
that another century has passed away, and let us look upon
a third cavalcade crossing the Heath towards Lincoln, but
from a different point, namely, Grantham. First a single
trooper appears in a steel cap, back and breast plates,
mounted on a thick-set steed; then two more; and next half a dozen trumpeters, to whose instruments are attached small banners embroidered with the arms of England and France. But who is he that now advances? A personage of middle size, but commanding mien and handsome features; on either side of whose pale lofty brow, and melancholy features, terminating in an auburn pointed beard, hang waving curls of dark brown hair until they rest upon his rich lace collar; his person is nearly covered by a large black velvet cloak, relieved only by one glittering ornament on the left shoulder, but when this envelope partly opens, a still more brilliant decoration is seen beneath, hanging from his neck by a wide blue riband. It is Charles I. on his way to Lincoln for the purpose of interesting the people of this county in behalf of the Royal cause. Let him then pass by—let his few attendant nobles follow—let the captain of the guard in his suit of half-armour and his sword drawn, trot on; let his troopers two after two follow him, with their steel caps glittering in the sun, and let us mark the issue of the King’s mission. The citizens of Lincoln will profess to be loyal, but next year their loyalty will be sorely tried—the war between the Parliament and King Charles will have begun, when Lincoln will declare for the former, and Grantham for the latter. Then the Parliamentary Commissioners will hurry over the Heath to seize the Grantham Corporation plate, and bands of their party will follow for the purpose of plundering such gentlemen’s houses as may be supporters of the royal cause, when poor Mr. Dymocke’s house, near Metheringham, will meet with peculiar attention at their hands, because he is the Royal champion, and nothing will be left in it, the servants’ clothes, down to the poor cook’s working dress being ruthlessly carried off. But a change is at hand: Grantham has been seized by Col. Cavendish for the King, where he is joyfully received, and Belvoir Castle is occupied by Sir Peregrine Bertie; in vain does the
Parliament party send a detachment across the Heath from Lincoln, under Major Drake, who is forced to retire, and is imprisoned on his return on account of his failure; but a second attack, under Lord Grey, is successful, and Grantham changes masters for a time. Then the war takes another turn, and Colonel Cavendish (March 23rd, 1643) again captures Grantham, thus enabling the Judges to follow, who hold an assize there for the trial of offenders, and especially of those who had taken a part in the plundering before alluded to. And now Sleaford comes on the tapis, for thence a Parliamentary force of 800 horse under the Earl of Lincoln, Lord Willoughby of Parham, and 200 dragoons under Hotham attempt to take Grantham; but their intention is known, Cavendish is on the alert, he has laid an ambush in Belton-lane, and there his foes begin to drop by scores, so that they fly—first to Ancaster—fighting as they fly, and thence disperse themselves wildly over the Heath; but a third of the force is captured, and amongst these are the two Members for Boston, Sir Anthony Irby and William Ellis. But once more the fortune of war changes. A regiment has been raised in Huntingdonshire, and its captain now advances into Lincolnshire, takes Croyland, that had been previously long held by Captain Welby, and fights the Royalist troops on the same ground in Belton as before, but now with most complete success, so that he is able to send the following letter to the Metropolis, directed to William Lenthall, the then Speaker of the House of Commons—“Sir: God hath this evening given us a glorious victory over our enemies; they were, as was informed unto me, 21 colours of horse troops, and three or four of dragoons. It was late in the evening when we drew out our forces, consisting of about twelve troops, whereof some of them so poor and broken that you shall seldom see worse. With this handful it pleased God to cast the scale of victory on our side. For often we had stood a little above musket
shot, the one body from the other; and the dragoons having fired on both sides for the space of half an hour or more; they not advancing towards, we advanced to charge them, and advancing our whole body after many shots on both sides (but their bullets still flew over our heads and did us no harm), we came on with our troops a pretty round trot, they standing firm to receive us; but after about half an hour in that posture, and some great shot spent on both sides, our men most violently and resolutely marched up and fiercely charged on them. Whereupon their hearts instantly failed them: a spirit of trembling came upon them, and they were immediately routed and ran all away, and we had the execution of them, two or three miles out at least; and I verily believe that some of our soldiers killed two or three men apiece in the pursuit. The true number of men slain we are not certain of, but by creditable report, and estimate of our soldiers, and by what I myself saw, there were very little less than a hundred slain and mortally wounded, and we lost but two men at the most on our side. We took forty-five prisoners, besides divers of their horses and arms, and rescued many prisoners whom they had lately taken of ours, and we took four or five of their colours, and so marched away to Lincoln.” And who do you think was the writer of this letter, and whose name is subjoined?—Oliver Cromwell!

“The Dangers of the Heath,” which forms the concluding portion of my subject. And now are you prepared for a scene of horror,—for a fearful contest for life on the heath between a knight and a witch? Long had one of those dangerous creatures haunted this locality some centuries ago (so says the legend); sometimes she was seen cowering over a fire emitting a blue unearthly light, and sometimes flitting bat-like through the shades of night intent on mischief towards man and beast, when a certain knight made a vow that he would rid the heath of so great a pest.
When watering his horses, therefore, at that little pond at Ancaster formed out of a portion of the old Roman ditch, and now shaded by a widely spreading willow, he prayed that the horse best calculated to bear him safely during his coming adventure might give some token to that effect; upon which a grand steed, termed "Bayard," tossed up his head wildly and neighed again and again. On that horse then is our hero of the moment now mounted and on his way to the witch's usual place of resort. Soon he sees a mysterious light proceeding from a deeply-recessed hollow in the rock, whence rushes out a haggard creature with glowing yellow eyes, long grey hair streaming in the wind, and bony hands and feet armed with pointed claw-like nails, who deals him many a buffet. In vain does he cut at his assailant with his trusty sword, for she is like a gutta-percha figure, and his weapon is only blunted by his blows, until at last, with one tremendous blow, he succeeds in wounding her, but at the same time snaps his sword in two! Then, maddened by pain, the witch has sprung upon poor Bayard's back behind the knight, intending to tear him from his horse, but the good steed flies, and still faster as the witch's claws deepen in the shoulders of the knight and the flanks of the horse; when happily the former calls to mind a cross road near at hand, and if he can but reach this he is safe. He pulls the left rein, therefore, and away away bounds Bayard in that direction, until with one prodigious effort he clears the point of junction, and the witch falls dead before the leap is accomplished. The spot where this scene is said by tradition to have occurred is still called "Bayard's Leap." But real deeds of violence have been many times perpetrated on the heath. One was long recorded in the nave of Lincoln Minster to this effect: "Here lies John of Ranceby, formerly Canon of this church, who was with malice prepense nefariously slain on the 'Haythe' (spelt thus) in the year of our Lord 1388 by William ———. God have mercy upon
his soul." The surname of the murderer had been effaced either by accident or design. In latter times it was men's purses rather than their lives that were in great danger on the heath—from highwaymen, by which it was infested. Even in the last century the Windmill House in a parish called Leasingham, I am told, was a favourite place of assemblage for these gentlemen of the road, as they were termed, and that little hollow on the Lincoln road in Dunsby parish, now marked by a row of cottages, was the most common scene of attack upon travellers. But there were natural dangers arising from the character of the heath in olden days. When no well-kept roads traversed it, and it could boast of still fewer houses upon it than at present, poor folks were often lost upon its dreary expanse, and some died from prolonged exposure to cold and wind and snow on the heath. In my own parish register are several evidences of such misfortunes; within a space of 53 years 9 poor travellers having apparently just reached Leasingham, on the southern confines of the heath, to die. They run as follows in the list of burials:—"Elizabeth Ping, a stranger;" "Susanna Ellis, a traveller;" "Dolton Pickworth, a poor stranger;" and sometimes even still shorter, such as "A travelling woman," or "A travelling man," without a name at all, yet these speak of unknown sufferings as well as of unknown persons. Two remarkable instances of thank-offerings for preservation from starvation on the heath still throw light upon this point: the first is connected with Blankney, where a small field was left to the parish by a female whose life had been saved through the tolling of its church bell, on condition that that bell should be rung every evening at 8 o'clock. The other case is connected with Potterhanworth, where 23 acres of land, called Culfrey-lands, were left by a traveller who had been rescued from the heath by hearing the sound of Potterhanworth church bell, on condition that that bell should be tolled every evening, at
10 minutes to 7, by the oldest parishioner who had not received parochial relief, and who was to have the proceeds of the land as his fee. But at length a greater benefactor was found in the person of Sir Fras. Dashwood, who erected Dunston Pillar, and placed upon its summit a large glass lantern that was lighted every night for the purpose of guiding benighted travellers on their way across the heath. And no doubt it served that purpose well, but yet it did not always enable people to get to their own homes in safety, especially when they had been carousing at the Green Man club, formerly much frequented by the gentry of the neighbourhood, and when far more liquor was unhappily consumed than now, for it is recorded that two of these on their way towards Lincoln, after they had been assisted into their carriage, and their coachman had been previously assisted into his box, thought it prudent to give him the following directions:—"John, be sure you keep the pillar light upon your right, and then we shall get home safe," before sinking into sleep. But when they awoke and found the sun was rising, and that they were still near the Pillar, and still in their carriage instead of being in their beds, one of them called out, "Why, John, where are we? Upon which John answered, "Oh, its all right, sir, the light is still upon my right;" and so it was, for he had been circling round it all night, and was not much nearer home than when he began to drive.

And here I will conclude, happy if I have been able to add anything to your stock of information respecting the Historical Incidents connected with a large and important district in an adjoining county.

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GEOLOGICAL EXCURSION.

It having been suggested that if the members of the Geological and Polytechnic Society of the West Riding