

GUIDE
To St. Paul's Retreat



Myddelton Lodge Ilkley

ILKLEY

FEW inland watering places are invested with such natural charm and so many historical associations as the Yorkshire town of Ilkley, the "Olicana" of Roman days. Situated on the south side of the Wharfe Valley—pre-eminent among the many lovely dales of the County for the beauty of its scenery, as regards the wild grandeur of its upper course and the extended and fertile vale into which it gradually expands, Ilkley has been most generously endowed by nature. It has been remarked that "when the throes of nature moulded Ilkley, the gods were in a kindly mood."

"OLICANA" OF THE ROMANS

THAT Ilkley is identical with the "Olicana" of the Roman occupation has long since been proved to the satisfaction of the most exacting antiquarian. From the numerous remains of Roman civilisation in and around the town, we are justified in concluding that the invaders regarded the district as of some strategic value. Following their conquest of a district, the Romans built here, as in many other places throughout the country, an almost impregnable fortress, and called it "Olicana." Olicana is first mentioned as a Roman station by Ptolemy about A.D. 188. The site of the fortress, which covered an area of 160 by 100 yards, can still be traced in the field behind the Parish Church. Adjacent to the Lourdes "Grotto," referred to later in this guide-book, stands a facsimile of a Roman altar, made to the order of William Middelton, Knight, in 1608. The original altar, still preserved in the North garden of the Lodge, is said to have been found in the River Wharfe, and sets forth that Claudius Frontinus, Prefect of the Second Cohort of the Lingones, dedicated this stone as a votive altar to Verbeia, the goddess of the Wharfe. It is composed of fine-grained sandstone, complete but with the inscribed surface badly corroded. On the right-hand side is a "patera" in relief, and a small (modern) cutting as though for a bolt.

This altar stone measures four feet ten inches in height, one foot three inches in breadth, and one foot two and three quarter inches in thickness. The inscription has long since vanished beneath the corroding hand of time, but, fortunately, Camden saw it during his visitation of the district and gives it as follows :

VERBEIAE
SACRVM
CLODIVS
FRONTO
PRAEF. COH
II LINGON

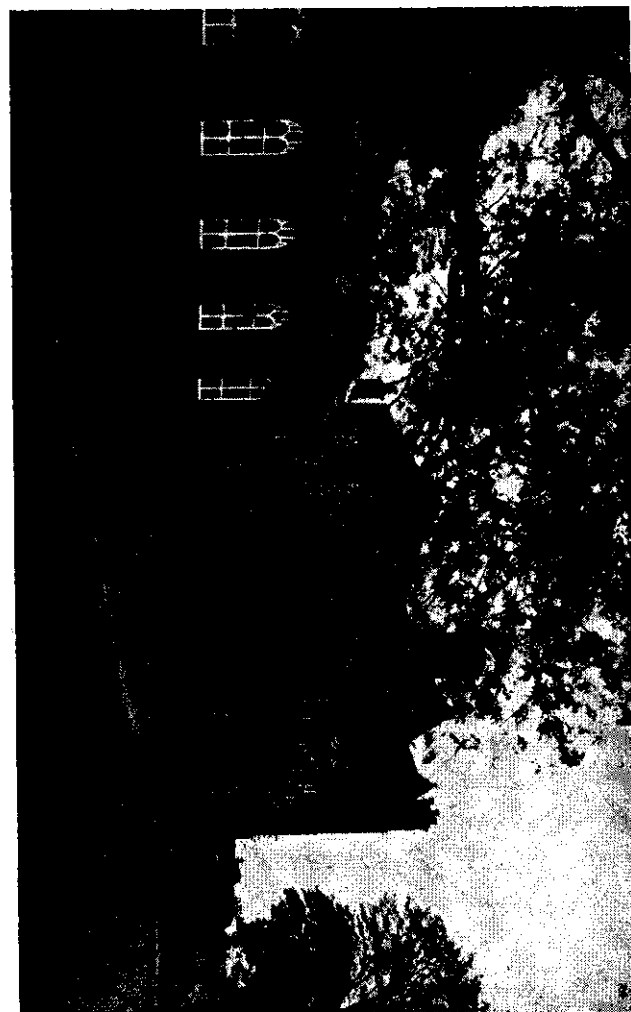
From the foregoing it would appear that The Second Cohort of the Lingones was stationed at Olicana or Ilkley.

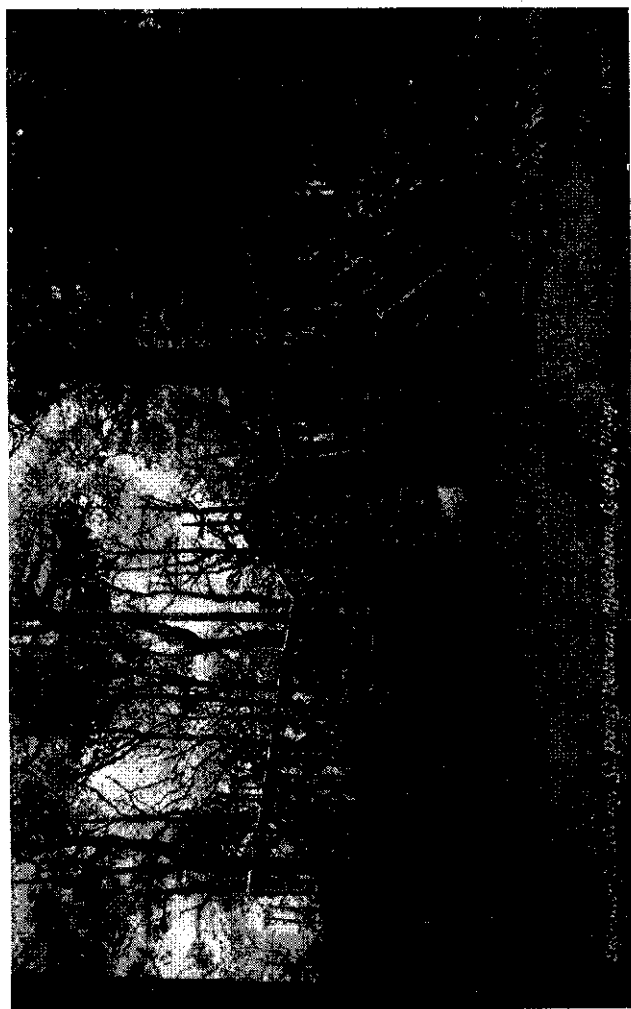
MYDDELTON LODGE

CROSSING the River Wharfe by the old Ilkley bridge, a time-worn three-arched structure erected over two centuries ago, the visitor to this delightful and picturesque part of Yorkshire wends his way up the steep hill leading to the ancestral home of the Middelton family.

Situated in beautiful surroundings on the heights overlooking Ilkley, the present Lodge is an early Elizabethan structure, and, up to the Thirteenth century days of the Middelton settlement in the district, the Lodge then existing was used for hunting purposes by the De Percys, the great Norman barons or overlords. The oldest part of the Lodge, with square tower, wall coursing and quoining, and flat-headed windows with plain label mouldings, adjoins the Chapel and dates from the Thirteenth century. It contains one of the finest old oak staircases in the country. Apart from its antiquity this particular portion of the building has no special historical interest, but the Tudor mansion has, for Catholics at least, all those hallowed associations attached to the ancient Catholic manor houses scattered throughout the land, where the dying embers of a proscribed Faith were saved from extinction through centuries of persecution. The Lodge was for centuries one of the principal seats of the Middelton family, another being Stockeld Park, near Wetherby.

St. Paul's Retreat, Myddelton Lodge. Chapel and Lodge.





THE MIDDELTONS

FOR centuries the Middeltons were lords of the Manor of Ilkley and Myddelton, and played an important part in the religious and civil history of the district. The connection of the family with the Myddelton district dates back almost to the Norman Conquest ; in fact there is evidence of their location here just a century afterwards, although no document gives the actual date of their first settlement which must have been even prior to this period, as they had long before then held lands in the locality. The oldest document, more than seven hundred years old, only refers to the transfer of the estates to a younger son.

At the time of the *Domesday Survey*, (1081-1086), Ilkley belonged to William de Percy, in whose possession it remained for a considerable time. From the de Percys the manor passed into the hands of the de Kymes, and from them to the possession of the Middeltons who held it from the days of Richard III (1484) until comparatively recent times. The sale of the far-famed Ilkley Moor, together with all manorial rights, in the year 1893, severed their long and honourable connection with this beauty spot of Yorkshire.

THE CHAPEL

The Middeltons were ever conspicuous for their unswerving loyalty to the Catholic religion—a loyalty vividly illustrated by the sufferings endured by members of the family, as also by the many documents recording the payment of fines for refusing to conform to the State Religion “ as by law established.” What they did for the preservation of the Old Faith in these parts during penal times cannot be overestimated. In common with the Catholic landed gentry scattered over the country, they made great sacrifices to transmit to future generations the heritage of the ancient faith. In those “ dark and evil days ” they harboured many a priest whose life was threatened, as is evident from the existence of priests’ hiding places discovered in the Lodge during structural alterations in recent times. For generations the “ Secret Chapel ” in the house was the only centre of Catholic life for miles around and hither came faithful

members of the persecuted Church, at the peril of their lives, "o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent," to assist at Mass with the Middleton family. On the old Roman road, about two miles north of Myddelton, there stood in olden days a sign post with the inscription: "To West End Catholic Gate." The "Catholic Gate" is the name still given to one of the paths crossing the moors to the north, down which Catholics came to Mass at Myddelton Lodge.

There are other Catholic Churches to-day in Wharfedale and the surrounding dales, but it is safe to assert that a goodly number of them owe something to the steadfastness of the Middletons, as also to the zeal and self-sacrifice of those missionary priests who officiated as Chaplains to the family in days of persecution. In the Registers of the Lodge Chapel (now preserved in the Catholic Church, Ilkley) can be seen some of the earliest records of the Catholic Revival in the neighbouring townships. In this connection it is interesting to note that the Baptismal Registers of St. Anne's, Keighley, date from 17th February, 1835, and for Keighley baptisms prior to that date, search must be made in the Myddelton Lodge Registers.

Many and noble were the charitable acts which characterised the lives of the early members of this ancient family and these were certainly reproduced in later times in the life of William Constable Middleton (1761-1847), Lord of the Manor of Ilkley from 1820 until his death here on 16th December, 1847. "The good Mr. Middleton" as he was affectionately called by past generations of Ilkleyites, was one of the most charitable, generous and sympathetic men who ever ruled the destinies of an ancient manor.

The present Chapel, adjoining the Lodge, stands as a worthy monument to his piety, zeal and generosity in the cause of that Faith for which his ancestors suffered so much and to which he himself was so passionately devoted. Shortly after the passing of the "Relief Acts" which allowed Catholics to practise their religion openly, the "Secret Chapel" in the house was superseded by the present Chapel which was solemnly blessed and opened on Wednesday, 22nd May, 1825, by the Right Rev. Dr. Baines, Co-adjutor and later Vicar-Apostolic of the Western District. The

actual account of the opening of the Chapel from the *Leeds Mercury* of 25th May, 1825, may interest the reader. "On Wednesday, 22nd inst., was opened the beautiful and chaste gothic Chapel erected by William Middleton, Esquire, of Myddelton Lodge, near Ilkley, in this County. The ceremony was performed in a solemn and impressive manner by the Right Rev. Dr. Baines, of Bath, who, assisted by sixteen priests, sang a Pontifical Mass, after which he ascended the pulpit, and delivered an eloquent sermon upon the passage in St. Luke—Chapter II v, 14. "Glory to God in the highest: and on earth peace to men of goodwill."

For nearly seventy years the Holy Mass was regularly celebrated and the other services of the Catholic religion reverently carried out in the present Chapel until the Middletons left the district in 1893. In that year the Chapel was dismantled, the Altar, Pulpit, Organ, Stations of the Cross and Communion rails being transferred to the Church of the Sacred Heart, Stockeld Road, Ilkley, which had been opened some years previously (1879) and of which the late Very Rev. William Canon Pope, M.A., was the first Parish Priest. The site for this Church and the adjoining Presbytery and School, was presented by the then Lord of the Manor—William Joseph Middleton, Esq.,—grandson of William who erected the Lodge Chapel in 1825.

On the departure of the Middletons from Ilkley, the Lodge was let for some years. Eventually the ancient manor house came into the market and was purchased by the late Mr. Sydney Kellett, a Bradford merchant, resident in Ilkley. To Mr. Kellett, a non-Catholic, much credit is due for the preservation of "Calvary," for during the years of his residence here he maintained intact the outdoor devotional retreat and restored it where necessary. The death of Mr. Kellett brought the estate again into the market, and this time it was purchased by the Passionist Fathers in November, 1922.



THE PASSIONISTS

ON 17th March, 1910, the late Father Alfred Galli, Parish Priest of Ilkley, (1893-1916), wrote as follows to the Rev. Father R. Smith, author of "Ye Illustrated Chronicles of Craven, Yorkshire": "I should like to add, I can bear ample testimony to the loyalty and love of the old people for the Middelton family. It is with aching hearts they tell you of the complete departure of the Catholic religion, and the Catholic traditions from the Old Lodge, once a centre of religious flowers, and of unbounded charity, for every needy case had a right to relief, to bread and milk "ad libitum," freely given to all. Now all is changed and Catholic Myddelton Lodge, like other great Catholic houses in Yorkshire, is no more."

Doubtless a note of sadness runs through Father Galli's letter. It was not given him to see the restoration of the Catholic religion and the Catholic traditions to the Old Lodge some twelve years later. Cardinal Newman's discourse on the "Second Spring" of Catholicism in England, he most probably had read, little dreaming perhaps that the import of that incomparable sermon would find partial realisation at least in the acquisition of Myddelton Lodge by the Religious Order whose founder in England, the Venerable Father Dominic Barberi, actually received Newman himself into the Catholic Church in 1845. When the Passionist Fathers took possession of Middelton Lodge in November, 1922, the links in the broken chain of centuries of Catholic history connected with the Lodge, were duly welded together. In the ways of Divine Providence, it was surely fitting that the Passionists, whose Founder, St. Paul of the Cross, prayed half a century for England's return to the Old Faith, should be chosen to consolidate the noble work carried on for centuries by the Middelton family at Myddelton Lodge.

St. Paul of the Cross was born on 3rd January, 1694, in Ovada, a small town lying among the northern foothills of the Appenines, and belonging to what was, at that time, the republic of Genoa. He died in Rome, on 17th October, 1775, and was canonized by Pope Pius IX on 29th June, 1867. St. Paul's great object in founding the Passionist

Order was the propagation of devotion to the Sacred Passion of Jesus Christ. Like his great prototype—Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles—he desired to know nothing among men but Jesus Christ and Him Crucified. To impart to men a lively knowledge of and an abiding love for the Sacred Passion, is the special vocation of every Passionist and this he can fulfil very effectively through the preaching of Missions and Retreats.

"The source of St. Paul's interest in England is difficult to conjecture" writes the Rev. Fr. Joseph Smith, C.P., in his scholarly pamphlet on the "Life of St. Paul of the Cross" (Catholic Truth Society, London). "A special inspiration of God? Possibly; or possibly a reminiscence of what he had heard of its sufferings for the Faith from his old Carmelite schoolmaster, whose Order had established a foreign mission in this country. However this may be, he prayed perseveringly for England's conversion throughout the darkest period of its Catholic history, when but a remnant of its Catholic people was left. And before he died God rewarded his divine optimism by lifting the veil of the future and giving him a glimpse of a new and resurgent England. One of the last mornings of his life, after celebrating Mass, he was wrapt in ecstasy. Afterwards he could hardly speak for joy. "Oh, what have I seen!" he said, "My own religious in England!" It was his "Nunc Dimittis."

ST. PAUL'S RETREAT

WHEN the Passionist Fathers acquired Myddelton Lodge, many necessary internal alterations were carried out in order to adapt the ancient manor-house to the needs of a religious community. By a scheme of oak-panelling tastefully matching the existing panelling, the original reception hall was divided into two reception rooms, one on each side of the main entrance. The old oak staircase in the north-west portion of the house was, however, left untouched.

At the same time the Chapel was renovated and re-decorated. The chief features of the Chapel are the richly stained glass window above the beautiful altar of marble,

THE CALVARY

and alabaster. The window, the work of Messrs. Earley & Co., Dublin, is composed of two lights and represents, on the left, Christ's Agony in the garden of Gethsemane, and on the right, St. Paul of the Cross accorded a vision of Christ Crucified whilst engaged in prayer. Beneath the Gethsemane scene are the words: "Fiat voluntas tua"—"Thy Will be done," and beneath St. Paul's vision of the Crucified, the words of the Apostle of the Gentiles are recorded: "Mihi vivere Christus est"—"To me, to live, is Christ." In the small upper window is depicted the distinctive sign or badge of the Passionist Order. This sign or badge is worn on the religious habit by the members of the Order and consists of the figure of a heart, surmounted by a cross, and in the middle of the heart the words: "Jesu Christi Passio"—"The Passion of Jesus Christ," with three nails underneath.

The Altar, executed by R. L. Boulton & Sons, Cheltenham, is composed of coloured marbles and alabaster, with a medallion in the centre featuring St. Paul of the Cross in white alabaster. On the Gospel side of the Altar is a handsome statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, and on the Epistle side, a statue of St. Joseph with the Infant Jesus.

The solemn re-opening of the Chapel, and the dedication of the Lodge as a Passionist Retreat or Monastery, under the patronage of St. Paul of the Cross, took place on his feast, 28th April, 1923. On that day His Lordship, the Bishop of Leeds, the late Right Rev. J. R. Cowgill, D.D., consecrated the new altar and sang Pontifical High Mass in the presence of a large and representative body of clergy and laity from various parts of Yorkshire. Passionist Superiors from the Irish, Scotch and Welsh houses of the Order were also present. The special preacher on that historic occasion was the late Rev. Reginald Middelton, S.J., of Craighead House, Bothwell, near Glasgow, second son of the late Charles Marmaduke Middelton, the last Lord of the Manor of Ilkley. The special music of the High Mass was beautifully rendered by the Girl's Choir of St. Joseph's College, Bradford, a choir that has made a great reputation here in Ilkley by many successes in the Wharfedale Musical Festival.

FOR many years "The Calvary" at Myddelton Lodge has attracted the attention and interest of visitors to Ilkley, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. "The Calvary" is the term usually applied to the beautiful and devotional retreat situated in the little copse to the north of the Lodge. It owes its origin to the devotion and zeal of Peter Middelton, Esq., Lord of the Manor, from 1847 to 1866. About a century ago he had this outdoor retreat constructed and the grounds laid out in the form of a Latin cross. Here he spent a good deal of his time in retirement and prayer and, for this reason, was known among his friends as "Peter the Hermit." In the grounds the visitor will notice the shell of a large oak tree, on the back of which is carved the Greek word "EPHMOE," meaning hermit. It is said that Peter sat here in pious meditation after having performed the Stations of the Cross. In past years several Latin inscriptions, carved in oak taken from this old tree, and connected with the Sacred Passion, were to be seen in various parts of the Calvary grounds. Only three remain and these have been fixed up over the rustic entrance. The first reads: "The Royal Way of the Holy Cross." The other two are incomplete but the complete texts are here given for the benefit of the visitor:

"What more could I have done for my people?"

"My people what have I done to you, or in what have I offended you?"

"Thou hast prepared a cross for Thy Saviour."

Passing through the rustic entrance and bearing to the right the visitor reaches the lych gate with its oak door carved on either side. The obverse side presents a delicate carving of Our Lord's Agony in the garden of Gethsemane, with the sleeping Apostles outlined in the background, whilst the angel close by bears the Chalice of consolation. A few terse words from the Evangelists describe the opening scene of Our Lord's Passion: "Tristis est anima mea usque ad mortem." "Pater mi, transeat a me calix iste, non mea voluntas sed tua fiat." "Simon dormis?—non potuisti una hora vigilare mecum." "Sudor ejus sicut guttae sanguinis."

"Fiat voluntas tua"—"My soul is sorrowful even unto death. My Father, let this chalice pass from me; not My Will but Thine be done. Simon sleepest thou? Could you not watch one hour with Me? His sweat became as drops of blood. Thy Will be done" (Matt. xxvi, 38, 42 : Luke xxii, 44).

On the reverse side is a rather crude carving of the "Agnus Dei," The Lamb of God, referring to Our Lord, with the inscription: "Si quis vult post me venire, abneget semetipsum et tollat crucem suam et sequatur me." "Ego sum via, et veritas et vita:—"If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. I am the Way, and the Truth and the Life." (Matt. xvi, 24. John xiv, 6).

Proceeding along a narrow passage, the next object to attract the visitor's attention is a fine stone carving of the Mother of Christ, the Mother of Sorrows, standing beneath the Cross. For she, too, had her part in the Drama of the Redemption, both as Mother of the Redeemer and as the co-Sufferer in His Passion. The various instruments of the Sacred Passion are represented beneath the transverse beam of the Cross. It is interesting to note the skill with which the artist introduces the smallest detail, for even the dice which the executioners tossed for Christ's seamless garment are depicted. On the pedestal of this beautiful carving is inscribed the first verse of the well-known Latin hymn, "Stabat Mater," composed by Giapone da Todi in the Thirteenth century:

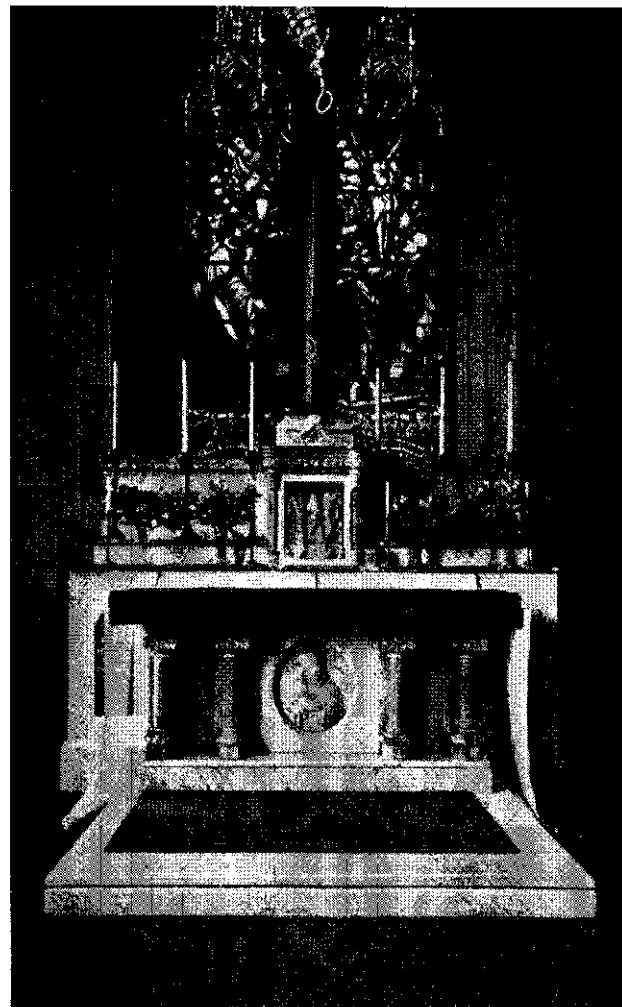
"Stabat Mater Dolorosa
Juxta crucem lacrymosa
Dum pendebat filius"

"At the cross her station keeping,
Stood the mournful mother weeping,
Close to Jesus to the last."

The plaintive verse from the Prophet Jeremias, applied to the Mother of Sorrows, is also quoted:

"O, vos omnes qui transitis per viam, attendite et videte si est dolor sicut dolor meus."

"O, all ye that pass by the way, attend, and see if there be any sorrow like to my sorrow." (Lam. i, 12).



The High Altar

THE STATIONS OF THE CROSS

CONTINUING to the left, the entrance to the Calvary proper is now reached. The remarkable devotion cherished by Peter Middleton towards the Sacred Passion of Christ led him to erect here in his grounds these **Fourteen** finely carved stone monuments in the form of a **Latin cross**. They represent some of the incidents in Our Lord's journey from the palace of Pilate, where He was condemned, to the place of crucifixion at Mount Calvary. These are known to all Catholics as "The Stations of the Cross." These stone carvings, some of which are truly remarkable for their minuteness of detail and delicacy of execution, are said to be a copy of the work of a Sixteenth century Italian sculptor. They were carved by a young sculptor, also an Italian, resident at the time in Leeds, whom Peter Middleton befriended in days of trial and adversity.

The Stations of the Cross as erected here and in every Catholic Church are intended as a substitute for people who cannot exercise their piety on the actual scene of the events which they commemorate. They are aids to recall the Sufferings of Our Divine Redeemer and a reminder that "Christ died for all, that they who live may not now live to themselves, but unto Him Who died for them" (II Cor. v, 15). Some of the incidents depicted are found in the Gospel, others have been handed down by tradition from early Christian ages. The critical observer who would find fault with the inclusion of incidents not found in the Gospel pages would do well to recall the concluding words of St. John's Gospel: "But there are also many other things which Jesus did; which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." (John XXI, 25.)

The Stations of the Cross, though not always in their present form, are of ancient origin. In the Middle Ages, it was the highest ambition of every Catholic to visit the scenes of Our Lord's Passion and the favoured few who were able to realise that ambition were unwilling to let perish the impressions they had gathered on those hallowed spots. On their return to their native countries they set up replicas

of the shrines which they had visited. The practice thus begun by individuals spread throughout Christendom, and the Stations of the Cross became a universal devotion. The Stations in these grounds are probably the earliest surviving open-air Stations in England. Placed at regular intervals on each side of the cruciform pathway, they are numbered from one to fourteen, the first being that on the left at the top of the path. The devotion of the Stations of the Cross is performed by following the numbers and considering the scene portrayed by the artist.

At the top of the cruciform pathway is a large mound of stones designed to represent the "Hill of Calvary" and surmounted by three crosses. Beneath the crosses is a stone tablet bearing the following text from St. John's Gospel:

"Ubi Crucifixerunt, et cum eo alios duos, hinc et hinc, medium autem Jesum."

"Where they crucified Him, and with Him two others, one on each side and Jesus in the midst." (John XIX, 18).

Underneath the "Hill" is a small oratory containing an altar and fragments of ancient crosses believed to have been brought here from Ilkley. There is a tradition that the large stone altar belonged at one period to Bolton Abbey. On the front of this altar the following inscription is still legible:

"Venite ad me omnes, qui laboratis et onerati estis, et ego reficiam vos."

"Come to Me all you that labour and are burdened and I will refresh you." (Matt. XI, 28).

This small oratory was originally fitted up by Peter Middleton for private prayer and meditation.

Behind the oratory is a small room of uncertain date. The two ancient stones preserved here are worthy of note. The first, attached to the north wall, was discovered in 1867, by workmen digging the foundations for the Congregational Church, The Grove, Ilkley. Concerning the meaning of this stone various opinions have been advanced at different periods. The height of this stone is five feet, eleven inches; breadth, three feet, four inches; thickness, nine inches." The subject carved in relief is three standing figures, a woman

in the middle with a man on her left and a child on her right. All are wearing stiff cloaks, conventionally rendered in coarse folds. The features are almost entirely worn away, but it can be seen that the woman has her hair rendered in short, crisp curls and that the man is bearded. She holds two objects which cannot be recognised, and the child holds a small hoop or wreath in its right hand, and a casket (?) with curved handle in the left; the man holds nothing. He is clearly represented as a civilian, as there is no suggestion of any military accoutrement about him. The large "ausate" panel below is, unfortunately, blank, never having been inscribed, but we need not doubt that this is the tombstone of husband, wife and child." ("The Roman Fort at Ilkley" by A. M. Woodward, M.A., *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, Part CXI, 1925).

The second stone, fixed to the south wall, was found beneath the floor of the Choir of the Ilkley Parish Church, during the restoration of 1860. It measures about six feet in length and three feet in breadth and bears two incised figures—one apparently that of a knight, with hands joined in prayer, and the other nearly obliterated. There is an inscription of three lines at the top, four at the bottom and one down the centre. Unfortunately these inscriptions are too much defaced to convey any definite information. The only lettering that can be made out is:—

"The———chelder (of) John———(surname gone)
the———(of De)cember M.cccc I XPE I SOILID (Christ
forgave)——— hys death———purchosed———



THE LOURDES GROTTA

ANOTHER object of interest to the visitor to Myddelton Lodge is the Lourdes Grotto situated at the end of the north garden. This was built by the Passionists shortly after they acquired the property, and rebuilt in 1939. This devotional shrine commemorates the famous apparitions of the Blessed Virgin to the little French peasant girl—Bernadette Soubirous—in the year 1858. The statue is similar to that at Lourdes. In recent years considerable interest has been aroused and revived in these apparitions by the film, "The Song of Bernadette," based upon the well-known novel by Franz Werfel.

NEW CALVARY SHRINE

THIS beautiful and artistic wayside shrine on the left of the main entrance to the Lodge, was erected and solemnly blessed in November, 1948. The life-size figures of Christ, our Redeemer, Our Lady and St. John, were executed by Messrs. Alberti, Manchester. The Cross, of solid oak, and weighing three quarters of a ton, was made and presented by Mr. Brear of Addingham. Already this devotional shrine has attracted much attention and elicited many expressions of appreciation from people far and near. To the numerous visitors who come here year after year, as also to those who pass up and down Lodge Hill daily, the plaintive words of the Prophet recorded on the tablet at the foot of the crucifix must surely make an eloquent and impressive appeal: "O, all ye that pass by the way, attend and see, if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow." (Lam. I).

