During the years 1890-1893 the Yorkshire Weekly Post newspaper published a series of articles under the general title *By the Banks of the Yorkshire Rivers*. Each article describing one of the rivers was divided into several parts, accompanied by a bird’s-eye view strip map of the section of river described, with the surrounding villages, major houses, roads, railways and other features of interest. Strip maps of the major rivers of Europe, such as the Rhine, Rhone, Danube and Thames, have always been popular with tourists, but this series is unusual in covering nearly all the rivers of the largest county in England, with a total length of over 500 miles (800 km). Most of these rivers are tributaries of the Ouse, which has as its estuary the river Humber (Fig.1). For its time the series is somewhat old-fashioned, because bird’s-eye views were beginning to give way to ichnographic plans with engravings, or later photographs, of the places of interest added alongside, but maps with perspective views are still popular and the charm of those described here lies in the sketches, some quite detailed and others much less so, of the features described in the texts accompanying them.

Preceding the first article, on the river Wharfe, is the statement ‘We commence this week a series of articles on the rivers of Yorkshire, in which it is proposed to deal with the principal features of our county streams in a simple and concise manner, and, without entering much into detail, pointing out what there is to be seen and how best to see it. We venture to believe that the routes and other information given on the accompanying bird’s-eye view will be of undoubted service to
pedestrians and tourists in the coming summer months, whilst the appended distances, which are taken from the six-inch ordnance survey maps, will greatly aid them in marking out their weekend wanderings.'

At the end of the final part of the description of the Wharfie is the statement 'The articles on the Wharfie which have appeared in The Yorkshire Weekly Post are now published collectively in book form. The work which is printed on superfine paper, is handy in size, and convenient for the pocket and contains a folding view of the Wharfie showing the river from mouth to source in one continuous length. To be had of all booksellers, or at The Yorkshire Post offices, Leeds. Price sixpence.' By 15th July, about three weeks after this was written, the third 'edition' was published, which gives an indication of the popularity of the articles and books at the time. Subsequently The Yorkshire Post published nine further books based on the river articles, shown as 2 to 9i and 9ii in the table. The dates of publication in the newspaper and of first publication in book form are given there, together with the dimensions of the maps as reproduced in the books.

The newspaper articles are not signed and the name Tom Bradley first appeared when they were issued in book form. A further book by Tom Bradley containing a description and strip map of the river Washburn was published in 1895 as number 10 of the series, now described as 'Bradley's Yorkshire Rivers'. Unusually, the map is signed 'T. Bradley 1895' and is marked 'Copyright', as is the front cover of the book, again unusually. The map is coloured, rather crudely, in three colours. No articles on the Washburn appeared in the newspaper before the book's publication and it seems to have been published by the author. Advertised in the book is Bradley's Yorkshire Rivers No.11 - The Humber, which is said to be 'In the Press'. I have not been able to find any copy of this book and the British Library catalogue says that the description of the river Humber is missing from both copies of the river series held by the Library. No book in the series describes the river Ribble, although articles on this river were published in the newspaper (see table). The Ribble does not flow entirely within Yorkshire and that may be the reason for its omission from the series of books, or there may have been some dispute between Bradley and the newspaper.

The books subsequently went through several 'editions', and the latest complete facsimile reprint of the series was published in 1988 by the Old Hall Press. In this edition the Washburn map was reproduced in black and white for uniformity with
Fig. 2
The head streams of the river Swale and the high fells (60% enlarged).
Tom Bradley’s Yorkshire Rivers

The maps

On each map the direction of flow of the river is from the top to the bottom. In the books the maps are described as bird’s-eye views, but strictly speaking they are bird’s-flight views, where each section of the countryside is effectively seen from a uniform angle of vision. The maps do not have a proper scale, because various features are exaggerated, including the width of the river and the buildings of special interest. Nevertheless, it is possible to give rough overall scales for the maps, and these are shown in the last column of the table. Where a region such as the City of York is shown to a very different scale from the rest of the map it has been disregarded in estimating the overall scale. In this article only a few examples of the work can be given.

The headstreams of most of the Ouse-Humber system lie within the Yorkshire Dales or North York Moors National Parks, or within the North Pennines, Nidderdale or Howardian Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. In particular, the headstreams of the whole system, the rivers Swale and Ure, both rise in the Yorkshire Dales National Park near the border between the present North Yorkshire and Cumbria. Bradley gives a splendid representation of the high fells in this region (Fig. 2, previous spread), dominated by Great Shunner Fell at 2,344 feet (716 m).

Turning now from the most northerly to the most popular of the Yorkshire dales, Wharfedale, Fig. 3 (left) shows the section from Otley to Addingham. At the bottom right is Farnley Hall, still occupied after many years by the Fawkes (now the Horton-Fawkes) family. Many of the pictures by their famous guest, the artist J.M.W. Turner, are still in the Hall. What is represented here is the late eighteenth century south front added by John Carr to the earlier Hall dating from about 1600. Further north lies Denton Hall, also by Carr, with its giant Ionic columns and pediment. This was owned by the Fairfax family, famous for the Parliamentarian general Thomas Fairfax, who lived further down the valley at Nun Appleton, not shown in the extract.

Almost opposite Denton we enter the outskirts of Ilkley. Ben Rhydding is dominated by the Hydro, with its splendid towers and turrets, sadly demolished in 1955. Nearby are the famous Cow and Calf rocks, from which a good view of the valley can be obtained. Beyond are shown other large hotels that were built at the height of Ilkley’s fame as a hydropathic spa town. The railway now reaches Ilkley by a line that passes through Burley but no longer through Otley, and it no longer continues beyond Ilkley station. The bridges crossing the roads in Ilkley and Addingham have long since been removed. The representation of many of the railways on the maps is no longer in accord with the modern realities, though in Wensleydale, the valley of the Ure, the railway that ran through the upper reaches is being
reopened as a tourist attraction. Fig. 4 (right) shows the lower reaches of the Ure, from just above its confluence with the Swale to form the Ouse, as far as Ripon.

Both of the railways shown in Fig. 4 are now dismantled. The most prominent buildings shown are Newby Hall, Ripon Cathedral and the old Bishop’s Palace. The central tower of the Cathedral is perhaps a little higher than it should be, but overall the church is well represented. The old Bishop’s Palace is a Victorian building in the Tudor style. The Wren-style architecture of Newby Hall is well indicated and the nearby church of Skelton-cum-Newby is given the prominence it deserves. Bradley tells the tragic story of ‘the most deplorable hunting catastrophe which marks the history of the sport in Yorkshire’ when three men were drowned in 1869 at the horse-ferry shown across the river at Newby.

Fig. 5 (over page), which shows the river Ouse at York, drawn to a larger scale than the rest of the map, is an example of how Bradley treated a townscape. The whole of York within the city wall is shown, only slightly compressed in the direction perpendicular to the river. The most obvious building is, of course, York Minster, somewhat exaggerated in size but otherwise fairly accurately drawn. The wall appears most clearly in the region behind the Minster. Other buildings illustrated include the four bars, or entrance gates, to the City and a number of the many medieval churches. To the south is the racecourse and further south, close to the river, is the Archbishop’s Palace at Bishopthorpe, parts of which go back to the early thirteenth century. To the north, just beyond Clifton, the large building is the former lunatic asylum.

Another townscape, not illustrated here, is the enlarged section of Leeds shown on Part 1 of the strip map of the river Aire, which extends from the mouth of the river to Kirkstall. In this case Bradley could only show a narrow section of the city along the river. What is very striking is the contrast between the open country of the region immediately downstream from Leeds and the city itself; it is possible to count over a hundred factory chimneys in the section Bradley shows. The open country is not entirely devoid of industry, however; a few factories and a colliery are shown. Much of the housing for the factory workers in the city is shown highly schematically, but the main churches, the Town Hall, the Corn Exchange and the three railway stations, only one of which now exists, can be clearly seen. Upstream, the Leeds and Liverpool canal lies in the valley with the river and the railway.

The Esk is the only river featured in the series whose water flows directly into the North sea, at Whitby, rather than via the Humber. Bradley gives a fine enlarged impression of Whitby and its harbour, with the Abbey and church on the south cliff, the old town nestling below the cliff and
stretches along the river and the new town with its large hotels on the north cliff (Fig. 6 right). The tower on this cliff is that of Union windmill after its sails were removed; it was demolished in 1923. There are many boats in the harbour and three outside, the latter greatly exaggerated in size and including a paddle steamer. The bathing huts on the beach are indications of the attractions of the town for holiday-making and as a health resort. Less than two miles up the river is the village of Ruswarp where Bradley says that the boating is 'most excellent'. Further along he says that 'the whole valley is one panorama of unalloyed loveliness, save and except the blur of the furnaces and ironworks as we drop down the hill at Grosmont'. Along the river many tributaries are shown and Bradley comments that they are the reason for 'its wide proportions in the lower reaches'. The former railway line from Scarborough to Whitby, including the bridge over the Esk, has now become part of National Cycle Route 1.

The texts
The texts of the books vary in length from 25 pages for the Rye and Riccall to 49 pages for the Aire part II and each is followed by a table of distances and an 'index' listing topics in page order. The texts each describe a walk up the valley from the river's mouth almost to its source, pointing out interesting features. They have the inevitable 'purple passages' expected in texts of the late Victorian period, liberally interspersed with quotations of verse. Bradley is also very fond of ghost and other supernatural stories; in fact he cannot resist a good story in general. The historian will, however, find much information of interest, especially about the families who built and lived in the many grand houses shown, but would be wise to check its accuracy before relying too heavily on it. Anglers will also find much information about their sport over a hundred years ago, but members of IMCoS will, of course, find the books of interest chiefly for their maps.

The author of the articles and books
Harry Speight says that Tom Bradley, the author of 'Coaching Days in Yorkshire, &c., was the son of a blacksmith, John Bradley of Bingley, who died aged 83 in 1897, and that he had a brother William.' There is no doubt that this is the same Tom Bradley who wrote the river books; Coaching Days... is advertised in the river books and the stylised TB monogram that Bradley used on illustrations in that book is the same as appears on the map of the river Ure.

Bradley was born in 1851 in Bingley and was still living there with his parents in 1881 when he was described as a 'Surveyor (Land)'.

32 IMCoS Journal
Although he does not seem to have married he does not appear with his parents in 1891 and I cannot find him in the census for that year, which was during the time when he was describing himself as an artist and journalist and writing his various books. These included, in 1893, *The Yorkshire Anglers’ Guide* and, in 1896, *Jackson’s Cyclist’s Guide to Yorkshire.* During those years he gave various addresses in Leeds in the books and elsewhere, but these seem to be largely of premises that were warehouses or workshops. Nevertheless, it seems likely that he was living somewhere in Leeds.

When his father’s will was granted probate, in April 1898, Bradley was again referred to as a surveyor, but at the time of the 1901 census he was listed as a ‘Variety Theater [sic] Manager’ and was with his mother in Bingley. She died in 1902 and from at least 1921 Bradley lived with his nephew, the son of his brother William, and his family at various addresses in North Leeds until he died in 1934. On his death certificate his occupation is given as ‘an Architect’. His effects were assessed for probate at £84 16s. 7d. I have been unable so far to find anything further about him, other than that as well as illustrating some of his own books he contributed drawings to illustrate William Cudworth’s *Histories of Bolton and Bowling* and almost certainly contributed drawings to various newspapers.

**Notes**

1. Only one set of articles referred to two rivers, the Rye and its tributary the Riccall in the NE of the county (see Fig.1)

2. Examples of early panoramas of the Rhine by Wilhelm Delskamp can be seen on the web site [http://www.historic-maps.de/stadtansichten-panoramen/fluss-panoramen/](http://www.historic-maps.de/stadtansichten-panoramen/fluss-panoramen/), last visited 1st October 2011. See also the article mentioned in note 3 below.

3. See, for instance, Kit Barten’s article on ‘A Rhine Journey’, *IMCOs Journal* 123, Winter 2010

4. The original volumes measured 18.2 × 12.6 cm. The Old Hall reprints (note 5 below) were slightly larger at 21.6 × 14.5 cm. The sizes of the maps were not changed.

5. The Old Hall Press, Burton Salmon, Leeds (1988). The books are now available through the British Library, Historical Print Editions, a service offered by Amazon for on-demand printed copies from digital files of eighteenth and nineteenth century books that have been filmed from the British Library’s collections.

Table 1. The publication dates of the *Yorkshire Rivers* series and characteristics of the maps

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>River</th>
<th>Original publication in <em>The Yorkshire Weekly Post</em></th>
<th>First separate publication</th>
<th>Length × width of map in cm</th>
<th>Scale, miles per inch*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Wharfe</td>
<td>5 parts, 1890: 24 May, weekly to 21 June</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>99½ × 8½</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Nidd</td>
<td>3 parts, 1890: 28 June weekly to 12 July</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>73 × 9½</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Ure</td>
<td>5 parts, 1890: 19 July, 2 Aug, weekly to 23 Aug</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>98½ × 9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Swale</td>
<td>5 parts, 1890: 30 Aug, 20 Sep, weekly to 11 Oct</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>94½ × 8½</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Ouse</td>
<td>6 parts, 1891: 18 April, irregularly to 20 June</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>119 × 8½</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Derwent</td>
<td>7 parts, 1891: 27 June weekly to 8 August</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>122 × 7½</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Rye &amp; Riccall</td>
<td>3 parts, 1891: 15, 22 and 29 August</td>
<td>1891?</td>
<td>65 × 8½</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Esk</td>
<td>3 parts, 1891: 5, 12 and 26 September</td>
<td>1891?</td>
<td>67½ × 9½</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9i</td>
<td>Aire</td>
<td>15 parts, 3 Oct 1891 irregularly to 26 March 1892</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>137 × 8½</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9ii</td>
<td>Aire</td>
<td></td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>138½ × 8½</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Washburn</td>
<td>Not published in <em>The Yorkshire Weekly Post</em></td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>96 × 10</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>Ribble</td>
<td>9 parts, 1893: 15 July weekly to 9 September</td>
<td>No book?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humber</td>
<td>A book advertised in 1895 but no copy found</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All scales approximate. One mile per inch is equivalent to 1: 63360

7. Harry Spight, *Chronicles and Stories of Old Bingley: a full account of the history, antiquities, natural productions, scenery, customs and folk-lore of the ancient town and parish of Bingley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire*. Elliot Stock, London, 1898, p.264. Starting from this information it has been possible, by the use of the census returns, the electoral registers, indexes of wills, births and deaths, directories etc. to deduce the outline of Bradley’s life. *Old Coaching days in Yorkshire* was first published in 1889 by The Yorkshire Conservative Newspaper Co. (*The Yorkshire Post*), Leeds, and contains many illustrations drawn by the author.


9. William Cudworth in the preface to his *Histories of Bolton and Bowling* [townships of Bradford] (T. Brear and Co., Bradford, 1891) thanks ‘Mr Tom Bradley, of Bingley…..for drawings’. They occur on pp. 51, 85, 87 and 341 and opposite pp. 56, 341 and 342. The London-based *Graphic* for Saturday, 24th September 1887, issue 930, p.4 has an article about a railway accident at Doncaster which ends with the statement ‘Our engraving is from a sketch by Mr Tom Bradley, 20A, Basinghall Street, Leeds’.

David Bower has had a long-standing interest in maps. Since retirement from the academic staff of the Department of Physics in the University of Leeds he has taken a particular interest in the 16th and 17th-century mapping of Britain and in map projections. He has written articles on the maps of the Saxons for *Imago Mundi* and on maps by Robert Saxton and by John Dee for *The Cartographic Journal*.