



Fig. 1 Boggart Hole Brook,
which runs through the park.

The Suburban Boggart Folklore in an Inner-City Park

Ceri Houlbrook

Introduction

In 1932, folklorist Ruth Benedict stated matter-of-factly that ‘folklore has not survived as a living trait in modern civilization’.¹ If we cast our gaze back to the views of earlier folklorists, it becomes clear that this assertion was a popular one, certainly not exclusive to the 20th century. In 1879, for example, William Henderson remarked that ‘old beliefs and superstitions, which have held their ground in the universal mind from the remotest antiquity, are fast fading away and perishing’.² Folklore has long been heralded a fragile, tenuous, and endangered phenomenon.

Consequently, society has gone to great lengths to conserve its folk-beliefs and customs, convinced that they would someday soon become utterly and irrevocably extinct, and it was, so the theory goes, the 20th century that witnessed this inevitable extinction. The fertile fields in which folklore once flourished are now hostile and barren, and it is the oft-blamed twins of urbanisation and industrialisation that are perceived as the two prime culprits.

The Industrial Revolution drove the ‘folk’ from their traditional world of rural hamlets and villages to the cities and, according to George M. Foster, who was writing in the 1950s, this transition into an impersonal urban environment proved fatal for any folk customs that attempted to penetrate the cities’ boundaries. Industrial economies, he wrote, ‘are not conducive to the continuation of folk culture. Hence, it can be assumed that folk cultures will disappear in those places where a high degree of industrialization develops’.³ Fifty years later, Harry Redner took a similar stance, attributing our loss of local, native culture to ‘cultural homogenization ... which we now describe by that ominous term “globalization.”’; the Western world has, Redner asserted, become a ‘monoculture’, in which no local traditions or customs can survive.⁴

Redner and his predecessors paint a rather dour picture, the contention being that folklore cannot, and has not, survived the processes of urbanisation, industrialisation, and globalisation. Consequently, the majority of the Western world is now believed to have no folklore, save for the rapidly disintegrating residues of folk-beliefs that belong to a past age. However, not all folklorists concur with this rather pessimistic outlook. Richard M. Dorson remarked that ‘everywhere one hears the lament that new technological systems have doomed the old word-of-mouth folkways. How can man talk above the roar of the machine?’,⁵ and yet, as Dorson himself asserts, ‘man’ clearly does continue to talk – even in the post-industrial, urban societies of the modern day.

Donald McKelvie, for example, studying the folk-traditions of the industrial and urban areas of the West Riding of Yorkshire, found that folklore was in fact thriving. Family and neighbourhood traditions flourished in the forms of sayings and proverbs,⁶ and beliefs in lucky talismans, superstitious rituals, and ‘magic’ cures still abounded in the Bradford area. McKelvie thus concluded that ‘folk traditions not only survive, but thrive, in the large urban areas’.⁷ He was, however, conducting his research in the 1960s; over five decades have now passed. Can we claim that folk-tales and beliefs are still evident in the urban centres of the twenty-*first* century? It is the purpose of this paper to address this question.

Boggart Hole Clough

There is, I argue, nowhere better to discover if folklore survived industrialisation than in arguably the first – and consequently prototypical – industrial city in the world: Manchester. This paper will therefore explore the folklore of Manchester, focusing specifically on an urban park named Boggart Hole Clough, situated less than three miles north of Manchester’s city centre. It covers 171 acres, skirting the border between the areas of Blackley and Moston, and consists of two playgrounds, an athletics track, a lake, several seasonal brooks, and numerous deep, heavily forested ‘cloughs’, a local dialect word for a steep-sided, wooded valley, which give the park its name (Figs 1-2). It survived deforestation, unlike other areas of Manchester, through its use as a deer-park, owned and exclusively used by the Lords of Manchester.⁸



Fig. 2 One of Boggart Hole Clough's many narrow, wooded cloughs.

As demonstrated by Simon Young in his in-depth research on the park,⁹ there were a plethora of folktales centred on Boggart Hole Clough and the supernatural creatures said to reside within its densely wooded areas, primarily – and unsurprisingly – the ‘Boggart’. These folktales date chiefly to the 1800s, when they were recorded by 19th-century folklorists and local writers (see below). At this time, Boggart Hole Clough was situated in a rural area; as Roby wrote: ‘Not far from the little snug smoky village of Blakeley, or Blackley, there lies one of the most romantic dells, rejoicing in a state of singular seclusion, and in the oddest of Lancashire names, to wit the “Boggart-Hole”’.¹⁰ However, over the past century and a half, Blackley has undergone a significant shift from rural to urban, following its official incorporation into the city of Manchester in 1890, and a considerable boom in housing construction in this suburb in the 1930s. Consequently, Boggart Hole Clough is now classified as an urban park, surrounded on all sides by housing estates, apartment blocks, and busy roads (Figs. 3-4).

Because of its location in the sprawling suburbs of arguably the world’s first industrial city, Boggart Hole Clough epitomises the rural-to-urban transition, and therefore, according to the theories of Foster and Redner, any folklore connected to it should have ceased to exist, yet another victim of the destructive forces of modernisation. Is this the case? In order to consider this, we must first explore the park’s original folklore.



Fig. 3 A block of flats overlooks Boggart Hole Clough's lake.



Fig. 4 A busy road and bus route borders Boggart Hole Clough.

Nineteenth-Century Boggarts

The Boggart of Boggart Hole Clough first appears in John Roby's *Traditions of Lancashire*, published in 1829. Roby, born in Wigan in 1793, was a local writer, and in his work on the tales and customs of Lancashire, he recounted a story concerning a farmer from Blackley, George Cheetham, whose farmhouse was haunted by a Boggart. This Boggart, who is described as a 'strange elf ... sly and mischievous', torments Cheetham's family with numerous pranks, from snatching the children's bread and butter, dashing their milk to the ground, and making loud noises throughout the night – although, occasionally, he was known to 'behave himself kindly', churning cream for the family and scouring the pans. It is the tale of this Boggart, according to Roby, which gifted Boggart Hole Clough with its 'oddest of Lancashire names'.¹¹

Although this tale appears, at first glance, as a piece of local lore, supplied by the residents of Blackley, this was not the case. It was, in fact, by Roby's admission, Thomas Crofton Croker, a pioneering Irish folktale collector, who provided this story. Croker had apparently heard the tale from 'a very worthy old lady'.¹² However, it is the opinion of British folklorist Jennifer Westwood that, concerning the story of George Cheetham and his haunted farmhouse, 'there is nothing to suggest that it was known to the local people before Roby's *Traditions* appeared'.¹³ Roby simply required an aetiological legend that would illustrate the origins of Boggart Hole Clough's name, and so he utilised Croker's tale, with close parallels in Yorkshire, claiming that the 'Hole' of Boggart *Hole* Clough refers to a hole in the wooden

partition that covered a closet beneath George Cheetham's staircase, which the Boggart supposedly used 'as a peep-hole to watch the motions of the family'.¹⁴ This was not a local tradition, but an example of *borrowed* folklore.

In Westwood's opinion, a more accurate record of local folklore comes from Samuel Bamford's 1844 *Passages in the Life of a Radical*, in which Bamford recounts a story of three local men – Plant, Chirrup, and Bangle – who venture into "Boggart," or 'Fyrin-Ho' Kloof," also known as 'the glen of the hall of spirits', after nightfall.¹⁵ As Bamford wrote, they were attempting to gather St. John's fern seed, which was believed to possess magical powers and supposedly grew in abundance in Boggart Hole Clough.¹⁶ However, this 'glen of the hall of spirits' proves an inhospitable place for the three men:

Darkness came down like a swoop ... beautiful children were seen walking in their holiday clothes, – and graceful female forms sung mournful and enchanting airs. The men stood terrified and fascinated ... A crash followed, as if the whole of the timber in the kloof was being splintered and being torn up, – strange and horrid forms appeared from the thickets, – the men ran as if sped on the wind.¹⁷

Westwood believes that this record is probably a far more accurate reflection of the local beliefs of the time than Roby's tale was, and as we can see, the two stories have very little in common: both refer to supernatural beings residing in Boggart Hole Clough, but while Roby's tale centres on the Boggart himself, Bamford makes not a single reference to this creature, instead populating his 'kloof' with dark figures and ghostly apparitions of women and children.

Other local folklorists from the 19th and early 20th centuries exhibit a similar variety. George Milner described Boggart Hole Clough in his work *Country Pleasures*: 'we climb the knoll; and here, on the summit, is the lonely farmhouse which gives the place its name – Boggart Hole Clough'. He briefly mentioned the farmer 'who was the victim of the pranks of this Robin Goodfellow, this "drudging goblin" and "lubber fiend" as Milton puts it'; however, this 'Bar-Gaist [i.e. Boggart] was a homely sprite; and, as this is a home no longer, he is gone too'. The farmhouse, in Milner's day, had become vacant and was falling into disrepair, and so, as this particular tradition goes, the Boggart had moved on.¹⁸

Charles Roeder, in his 1907 work on *Some Moston Folklore*, only referred to this Boggart-haunted farmhouse briefly: 'A lonely farmhouse at the bottom of this clough had its bar-gaist, a lonely creature enough, who would render many good services to the occupants'.¹⁹ This 'lonely creature' hardly resembles the 'strange elf ... sly and mischievous' of Roby's account, but Roeder populated Boggart Hole Clough with numerous other supernatural creatures: 'a boggart, which assumed the shape of a cow, lying down beside the Platting, which, when once kicked at by a couple of farmers, uttered an unearthly penetrating low'; 'the east end of Boggart Hole Clough was haunted with the nut-man, that used to shriek terribly at times as it flitted among the hazel bushes'; and, additionally, '[o]ne of the pits harboured an uncanny evil spirit and was called the Devil's pit'.²⁰

As Charles Hardwick wryly noted: 'Once call a place "Boggart Ho' Clough", and especially such a place, and I can easily imagine, in a very short time, that many of the floating traditions of the neighbourhood would fasten themselves upon it.'²¹

Twenty-First-Century Boggarts

Having established that Boggart Hole Clough was rife with folklore in the 19th century, it is now time to consider if such tales still exist in the 21st. The most obvious place to start is with the 'folk' themselves: the local residents of the areas surrounding Boggart Hole Clough. Some preliminary oral history accounts were collected by the author in the early 2010s (hereafter quoted), but grant bids are currently being submitted to fund a much larger project, with the aim of collecting intergenerational folklore from local communities. The results of this project will hopefully feature in a future issue, while this paper will focus instead on a different, perhaps less obvious, category of folklore purveyor: the commercial.

Numerous scholars have examined how commercialism has impacted and modified folk traditions world wide. Millie Creighton, for example, considers the impact 'nostalgia tourism' has on the folk traditions of Japan. Gabriela Muri, focusing on a tourist attraction in the Montafon valley, Austria, considers how central tourism is to the process of imparting and interpreting folk traditions; whilst Helaine Silverman studies how archaeological commercialism has influenced contemporary constructions of history and traditions in Peru.²² Venetia Newall offers numerous examples from across Europe of such 'showcase tactics', recounting illustrative anecdotes such as how schoolboys from Inzell, Germany, were instructed by their headmaster in 1955 to build models of 'ghosts' from their local legends out of moss and branches, and to display them at the roadside to 'please summer visitors'.²³

Commercialism evidently plays a prominent role in the transmission and perpetuation of folklore, and a particular term has been coined to encapsulate this: 'folklorismus'. Its simplest definition comes from Amy Gazin-Schwartz and Cornelius Holtorf's work, *Archaeology and Folklore*: they characterise folklorismus as examples of folklore that 'are adopted for a particular reason'.²⁴ This is the conscious reutilisation of folklore and the deliberate adaptation of tradition, a phenomenon – alternatively, and more negatively, referred to as 'fakelore' by Dorson²⁵ – which is employed most often for commercial purposes.²⁶ Folklore is consciously adopted – maybe by individuals, maybe by whole communities – for the purposes of commercialism, to attract tourists or customers or consumers. And the tales of Boggart Hole Clough appear to have been similarly utilised.

Just over a mile south of Boggart Hole Clough, in Newton Heath, is the 'Boggart Brewery', which was established in 2000. The brewery has utilised the Boggart tradition in more than just its name, but also in the naming of several of its beers and ales, such as the 'Boggart Dark Mild' and 'Boggart's Brew' (Fig. 5), and its website claims to have sourced its wooden pump clips from 'branches from trees in the Boggart Hole Clough park – where else!'. This same website summarises several variations of the Boggart legend, as well as issuing a comical warning:

Beware – the Green Boggart could still be there, more than likely masquerading as a brewer at the Boggart Hole Clough Brewery ... Are you brave enough to ‘exorcise’ your right to join the latest Boggart drinker’s cult? Perhaps you will discover that the Boggart’s beers are better than any ‘spirits’.²⁷

This example typifies the utilisation of folklore for commercial purposes: not only have the Boggart traditions been harnessed to advertise a commodity, but they have also been adapted in order to fit this commodity.



Fig. 5 The ‘Boggart’ holds a pint of Extra Rum Porter in this Boggart Brewery label.

We witness this again in the form of the ‘Boggart monolith’, erected by the Boggart Hole Clough Community Action Trust (hereafter BHCCAT) in October 2009. Peter Milner, the Trust’s secretary, explained that when they felled a beech tree in accordance with the Conservation Biodiversity Management Plan, rather than disposing of it, they decided to ‘do something a little different with this tree’.²⁸ So they upturned the tree and buried its upper-half deep into the ground of a narrow clough, so that its roots are now at the tree’s peak rather than its branches. They then carved a face into its trunk, and dubbed it ‘the Boggart monolith’ (Fig. 6).



Fig. 6 The 'Boggart Monolith'
erected by the BHCCAT.

The Boggart, however, appears to have undergone yet another reinterpretation, for Milner views it not as a mischievous creature but as a 'protective deity', which has been charged with 'looking after the entrance to this little clough', and for this tradition, Milner has drawn on the etymology of the word 'Boggart', which may have derived from the German *Bärgeist*, translating as 'bar [gate] ghost'.²⁹ Milner has interpreted the 'gate ghost' as 'something that protects little areas. Especially if you've got quite a tight entrance, like this little clough'.

While Milner denies that the 'Boggart monolith' was erected and so-named for commercial reasons – 'We're not big on publicity because when you're big on publicity it doesn't really help wildlife' – he admits that it was designed to have an impact on those visitors who do come across it: 'you might be rather shocked by it when you first come across it, surprised by it'. It was, therefore, intended to vivify the experiences of the park's visitors. However, not only does it add to the already rather eerie ambience of Boggart Hole Clough, but it also demonstrates the work that BHCCAT does in the park: sparking a visitor's curiosity, the 'Boggart monolith' would subsequently increase public awareness of the ecological problems that the trust deals with. The Boggart tradition has therefore been reutilised as a publicising tool for environmental issues.

There have, however, been far more blatant commercial uses of the Boggart legend, most of which were undertaken to encourage visitors and local residents to use the park. In September 2008, for example, a play written by Stef Portersmith, entitled *Boggarts of the Clough: A Fairytale*, was performed within Boggart Hole Clough, its characters played primarily by local residents. Families brought picnics and sat amongst the trees to watch the play, which had adapted the traditional Boggart legends to make them more suitable for a younger audience. The Boggarts, for instance, are branded 'ugly stupid creatures that like to live in muddy holes', and the two main characters are 'Mr Boggart' and 'Mrs Boggart', who spend much of the play trying to catch meat for their dinner – from birds and squirrels to the children in the audience – and making humorous exclamations such as 'Boggartin' 'ell!' when they invariably fail.³⁰

The park's administrators have utilised various other methods to encourage the spread of Boggart Hole Clough's folklore. The visitor's centre provides information about the Boggart legend: a short paragraph written on a hand-out map, given to visitors, warns anyone picnicking in the park, 'Watch out in case the Boggart – a mischievous imp said to live here – nicks your sarnies', and in one corner of the visitor's centre is a papier-mâché model of a Boggart, made and donated by students of North Manchester Boys School (Fig. 7). This Boggart model was created as part of a project, which ran in 2006-7, led by Zest, a healthy living organisation, which aimed to encourage children from local schools to learn about nature and their local folklore.



Fig. 7 The papier-mâché 'Boggart' in the park's visitor centre.

As part of this project, the park warden took a group of children from Holy Trinity CE Primary School, located less than a mile south of the park, to quiet spots within the forest of Boggart Hole Clough.³¹ Here he asked them to sit quietly and consider the following questions: How do your surroundings feel and smell? What noises can you hear? Where do you think the Boggart might live? Is the creature underground, or in a tree? How many do you think live in the park? The children were then asked to search for signs of the Boggart, such as footprints in the mud or holes in the ground. Back at school, they were then given more detailed lessons on the folklore of the park. They were asked to write their own poems about the Boggart, and to make Boggart masks and sculptures of the Boggart from chicken-wire, which they then hid within the park for each other to find. They were also instructed, as homework, to ask their parents and grandparents if they knew any tales about Boggart Hole Clough.

Despite the derogatory name of 'fakelore', such tactical adoption of folklore is not regarded in modern-day scholarship as a necessarily negative process. Folk 'traditions' are fluid and malleable, and the employment and adaptation of folk customs for commercial reasons can – and often does – have positive effects. Regina Bendix asserts that changes are not only made to traditions to encourage tourism, but to maintain the traditions which are at threat *because of* tourism.³² Expressing a similar sentiment, Muri advocates that mass media has 'been instrumental in preserving [Austrian folk] traditions',³³ while Creighton asserts that in some cases tourism marketing has provided Japanese villages with the economic means to remain intact and retain their traditions. 'One may bemoan the loss of tradition to commercialization,' she writes, '... but in some cases these forces have also brought about the means to keep traditions bemoaned as lost from disappearing altogether'.³⁴

Recrafting the Community

Although there are earlier examples of folklorismus at Boggart Hole Clough,³⁵ such tactical uses of the park's folklore seem to occur primarily in the last one or two decades – and they particularly seem to be flourishing during the 2000s. There appears, therefore, to have been a recent boom in the deliberate transmission of the folklore of Boggart Hole Clough.

However, the question remains: what sparked this boom? Why have members of the local community, from park wardens to primary school teachers, felt the need, in the last one or two decades, to encourage the dissemination of the park's folklore? The answer is, partly, commercialisation; in the case of the 'Boggart Brewery', for example, the figure of the Boggart has been appropriated simply to aid in the selling of a product. However, the park warden of Boggart Hole Clough claimed that their main aim is not to attract tourists but to encourage the *local* residents to use and learn about their park. The folktales, therefore, are being utilised less to promote the park to visitors from further afield, and more to establish a sense of local community, a sense that has undoubtedly declined in the last century.

In preliminary oral interviews with older local residents, there was a general sense that in the first half of the 20th century Boggart Hole Clough was something of a hub for social gatherings: 'it was lovely on a Saturday afternoon, because in the summer they'd always have a band, and everyone was there', reminisced one woman, while another local resident, whose 'mum and dad had their honeymoon on Boggart Hole Clough lake', claimed that the park 'used to be thriving at weekends'. However, she went on to say that

'up to probably when I was about fourteen or fifteen, it was in its heyday and then after that – so you're talking forty-something years ago – it went downhill'. The park no longer acted as the focal point for the community because, in the latter half of the 20th century and in the opinions of several local residents, there no longer was any coherent sense of community.

This decline is far from unique to North Manchester. Robertson *et al.* studied perceptions of the 'local community' in Stirling, Scotland, and found that there had been a stark deterioration of community spirit in the last generation, a belief expressed by residents: 'It's all changed', claimed one woman in her eighties. 'There was a time when everybody knew each other ... I wouldn't say so now'.³⁶ The closure of groups and clubs, the lack of neighbourly contact, the decline of local businesses: these are all symptoms of this deterioration, and we find similar symptoms across the Atlantic, where America is suffering from what Robert D. Putnam has termed 'civic decay'.³⁷ Putnam listed "[t]elevision, two-career families, suburban sprawl' as the culprits for this ebbing of community spirit,³⁸ and Diarmuid Ó Giolláin added 'telecommunications, rapid international transportation and computerization'.³⁹ Evidently, inherent traits of modern society, which are so often blamed for the supposed demise of folklore, also appear to be held responsible for the decline in community spirit.

However, this decline has subsequently sparked something of a resurgence: communities country-wide are taking pains to re-establish this supposedly lost community spirit. Since the late 1990s, for instance, there has been what Bo Stråth has termed an 'identity boom' and 'it is generally only in periods of identity crisis that we look for new identity and social community'.⁴⁰ An interest in communal identity is usually only triggered by a *slump* in communal identity; this decline is therefore necessary in the re-establishment of community spirit. However, a community does not simply re-define itself. It must call upon certain tools and methods, and as Konrad Köstlin and Scott M. Shrake observed, in the attempt to re-affirm both local and national identities, 'support is usually sought in traditional folk culture'.⁴¹

It is unsurprising that folklore has been drawn upon for such a reason. The folktales of an area play an integral role in colouring, shaping, and consolidating its identity, for in their sharing of a local past – be it historical or mythological – the local residents are drawn together and united.⁴² As one local resident of Boggart Hole Clough claimed: 'I do think it's really important to keep the stories going, to keep the folklore going. I think that's really important to our essence.'

Georgina Boyes, studying the English 'Folk Revival', observed that the 'potential of folk culture as a source of replacement for an ailing and perverted national culture proved widely acceptable';⁴³ at the end of the 19th and start of the 20th century, societies such as the English Folk Dance and Song Society and the Folklore Society went on what Boyes termed a 'rescue mission'. England was believed to be losing much of its cultural identity – a loss attributed to a familiar pair: urbanisation and industrialisation – and so the revival of folksongs and dance was perceived as a method of preservation. At roughly the same time, Ireland was doing much the same thing. The early 1900s saw the revival of the Irish language and a new gravity given to Irish folklore as a 'nation-building resource'.⁴⁴ In the 1930s, the Director of the Folklore of Ireland Society, Ó Duilearga, requested anybody in possession of collections of folktales to make them available for publication so that Ireland's heritage would not become lost or forgotten.⁴⁵ These folktales were salvaged from the past to be utilised in the present, as a tool in the consolidation of a community, and so too are the tales of Boggart Hole Clough.

Conclusion

This paper has illustrated the numerous ways in which the folklore of Boggart Hole Clough, particularly the figure of the Boggart, has been consciously adapted and recontextualised. While these examples may not constitute 'fakelore' – for the traditions have not been overtly distorted – they still adhere to Gazin-Schwartz and Holtorf's definition of 'folklorismus': examples of folklore that 'are adopted for a particular reason'. And the primary 'particular reason', in this case, was to re-establish the park's importance to the local community. This method is obviously beginning to work, for as one local resident remarked: 'things are starting to pick up now, people are starting to care about their park again, which is really nice for the area'.

The pandemic slump in community spirit – another 'symptom' attributed to industrialisation and urbanisation – was believed to be harmful to folklore. If the 'folk' have no sense of local community, then can local customs and traditions really hope to survive? Surprisingly, it would appear so, for the acknowledgment of this slump led to a keen desire to re-establish a sense of community. To do this, extra effort went into reintroducing and revivifying the area's folk culture. Without the slump in the community spirit, there would have been no revival of the area's folklore; the threatened state of an entity or phenomenon is a 'structural necessity' for revival.⁴⁶

This applies not only to the fluctuating sense of community spirit, but to folklore itself. As Boyes explains, 'without the notional existence of the rapidly disappearing Folk, there would be no rationale for a Folk Revival'.⁴⁷ This decline in the community's cohesion, purportedly symptomatic of our modern, urbanised society, was, in fact, an integral contributing factor to the recent resurgence in the folklore of Boggart Hole Clough.

In conclusion, folklore does not prosper in these large urban areas *despite* the modernity of their environment, but *because* of it. Rather than rejecting modernity, folklore has embraced it, and we find that the tales of Boggart Hole Clough have been incorporated seamlessly into numerous aspects of modern-day society, from marketing to environmental education. The 21st century ironically proves to provide the ideal environmental conditions under which folklore can, and does, flourish. So when Benedict stated that 'folklore has not survived as a living trait in modern civilization', she could not have been more mistaken. Folklore is very much alive today, as are the Boggarts of Boggart Hole Clough themselves, in popular imagination. If we consider the various reinterpretations

and manifestations of the Boggart over these past decades, from the papier-mâché models created by local primary schools to the protective 'Boggart monolith', it is clear that the park is more populated with Boggarts now than it ever was.

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Notes

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10. John Roby, *Traditions of Lancashire*, vol. 2 (Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown, and Green, 1829), 295.
11. Roby, *Traditions*, 295-9.
12. Roby, *Traditions*, 296.
13. Jennifer Westwood, *Albion: A Guide to Legendary Britain* (Paladin Books, 1987), 367.
14. Roby, *Traditions*, 299. The farmer in the Yorkshire version was called George Gilbertson, although in both stories their neighbours are called John Marshall. As Cheetham was a well-known family name in the area, Roby or Croker may have changed it to make it more applicable to north Manchester. Roby's text reads, "Mr Crofton Croker, a name familiar to all lovers of legendary lore, has kindly communicated the following tale. In substituting this, in place of what the author might have written on the subject, he feels convinced that his readers will not feel displeased at the change, and assures them it is with real gratification that he presents them with an article from the pen of the writer of 'The Fairy Legends'. Not far from the little snug smoky village of Blakeley, or Blackley, there lies one of the most romantic of dells, rejoicing in a state of singular seclusion, and in the oddest of Lancashire names, to wit the "Boggart-Hole." ... I will tell you of some of the pranks of this very Boggart, and how he teased and tormented a good farmer's family in a house hard by, and I assure you it was a very worthy old lady who told me the story."
15. Samuel Bamford, *Passages in the Life of a Radical* (1844), in W.H. Chaloner (ed.), *The Autobiography of Samuel Bamford, volume two* (Frank Cass & Co., 1967), 137.
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