

SURNAMES:

BALDERSTON, BOLDEYSON, BOLDERSTONE, BAWSON, &c.

Mr. C. D. Hardcastle, Leeds, writes in reply to "J. R.," Hawes (CCCLXXIX.), in reference to "the origin and derivation of the name Balderston":—

The place-names Balderston (Lancashire), Balderton (Notts), Balderby and Baldersdale (Yorkshire), Bald-riugham (Northamptonshire), Baldernock (Stirling), &c., and the surname Balderson, are generally supposed to be derived from the personal name Baldur, Balder, or Bealdor, which, as well as the root Bald in the older Teutonic languages, signifies valour, courage, daring, and in the more modern, including the Anglo-Saxon, chief, lord, prince. The following may also be referred to the same source:— Baldock-Herts. Baldon - March, and Baldon-Toot, Oxford; as well as the surnames, Baldwin, Bawden, Balder, Botter, Poulter, Paulding, &c. There is a Bolderston Hall, at Mirfield, built by John Bolderston, M.D., a native of Nunbrook, Mirfield, who was born in 1676, and died in 1738. The word occurs twice in the Anglo-Saxon poem of Beowulf, in the sense of Prince or Lord.

(*tha*) Ic wæs syfan wintre,
 pa mec sinca baldor,
 frea-wine folca,
 sæt minum fræder genam,
 heold mec and hæfde
(*th*) Hrdeol cyning.

"I was seven winters old,
when me the lord of treasures,
the noble friend of nations,
from my father took,
held and had me
Hrethel the King."

(*th*) Stid-mod gestod
(*th*) wid steapne rond
 Wedera bealdor ;

"Stubborn of mood stood
against his towering shield
the Weders' prince."

In the Teutonic Mythologies, Baldur, among the northerns, and Baldæg or Bealdæg, among the southernns, was the third son of the god Odin or Woden. The Scandinavian legend runs that Baldur, the fair, white god, was beloved, but foredoomed to an early death. His mother Frigga, to secure his invulnerability, induced all created things to take an oath not to harm him or to cause his death, but she omitted the mistleto. Lok, the destroyer, anxious to compass his death, disguised as an old woman, made the acquaintance of Frigga, ingratiated himself into her favour, and obtained from her the secret of her omission. He then made a pointed shaft of the magic plant, and on a festal occasion, when the companions of Baldur were playfully presenting their harmless weapons to his breast, placed it in the hands of the blind god Hodur, who pierced him and caused his death.

"Lex" writes to the effect that at Balderston, a hamlet of Blackburn, in the county of Lancaster, a family of the same name resided in the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.