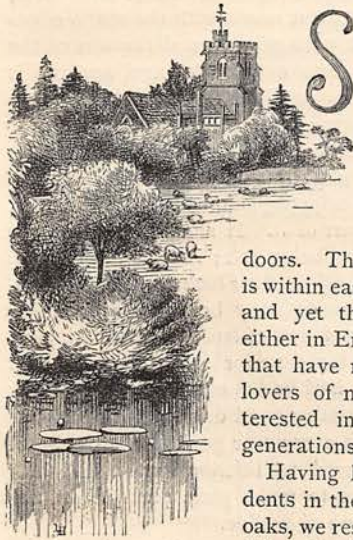


till they are sufficiently baked. Larger articles, such as pies, must be put in the hotter part till they have risen and the crust is light, then be removed into the cooler part, to allow the meat as well as the pastry to be cooked through. With pies of any size, it is always

well to lay a sheet of paper over the pastry as soon as it has risen, to keep it from scorching, and then to let it bake gently, that the contents of the pie may be tender. And above all things we must never forget that "the oven will not look after itself."

PHILLIS BROWNE.

A HOLIDAY VISIT TO IGHTHAM.



SOME people travel great distances to see beautiful scenes and places of interest, apparently oblivious of those which are not far from their own doors. The county of Kent is within easy reach of London, and yet there are few parts either in England or out of it that have more to attract the lovers of nature, or those interested in the life of past generations.

Having lately become residents in the vicinity of Sevenoaks, we resolved on exploring this classic neighbourhood,

and marked out Ightham as the place for our first visit.

It was a cold January day. The ground on the roadside was covered with a copper-coloured carpet of fallen leaves, and the woods and the copses were beautiful with hoar-frost. A keen air smote the face as the wheels of the carriage and the hoofs of the horse resounded on the frozen gravel, but there was ample compensation for the cold. Through innumerable gaps in the wayside thicket appeared the broad expanse of the Weald—a picturesque and richly cultivated country, with a shadowy margin of dense woods and low hills.

Passing through the pretty village of Seal, we were soon ascending the far-famed Oldbury Hill, and then to our left appeared the long regular embankment which marks the site of an ancient British oppidum (or town) of the larger class.

The number of British and Celtic oppida has not been calculated. They are to be found all over the country, and some of them cover a vast space, with a boundary so strongly fortified that they were evidently intended to serve the joint purpose of a fortress and a settled habitation.

Such is Oldbury. The area which was occupied by the British village is reckoned to be 137 acres, and the whole is defended according to the nature of the ground. Where the precipitous sandstone rock is absent a formidable rampart and fosse has been made, but the character of the intrenchment has been greatly

deteriorated by the removal of material for road-making purposes.

Leaving the carriage we climbed a portion of the embankment by a rugged modern road. The ancient roads are visible, but they are overgrown with trees. A profusion of wood also makes it difficult to trace the form of the area, but it is ascertained to be of an almost accurate oval. Hasted mentions the existence of a cave half filled by the sinking of the earth, but there is now no indication of its position. It has disappeared like the dwellings and store-houses of the people, which must have been numerous by the quantity of flint implements, drilled stones possibly designed for hammer-heads, knives and arrow-points, which are continually discovered upon the surface of the ground. The footsteps of our ancestors are hidden beneath the rare mosses, uncommon ferns, beautiful heaths and grasses which abound in the neighbourhood; but we realise their presence, we look upon the landscape which they saw—the same undulating fields and sunlit hills, in new garments perchance, but still the same—the same brook bursting forth from its sandy bed, unscathed by the finger of time, which mocks us with its melodious and sad refrain—

"Men may come, and men may go,
But I go on for ever."

The last habitation in this large British village could scarcely have disappeared before the Norman Conquerors began to build their moated houses and castles in the neighbourhood. There is a fine specimen of a fortified dwelling of this period in the hamlet of Ivy Hatch, about two miles from Oldbury.

In the first two centuries of the Norman government, the residences of the barons and the gentry presented a striking evidence of the military character of the tenure of lands under the crown.

Every great landholder by knight's service erected and resided in his castle; his retainers formed the garrison; he became a prince paramount in his own fee or lordship, and often exercised the highest judicial rights. His friendship and alliance was also of no small importance to the sovereign of the realm, for in cases of disputed title to the crown the lords of these domestic strongholds were frequently enabled to prolong the contest between the claimants, by opening their gates to the vanquished or retiring party. This was the case in the wars between Matilda and Stephen and the partisans of the Red and White Roses.

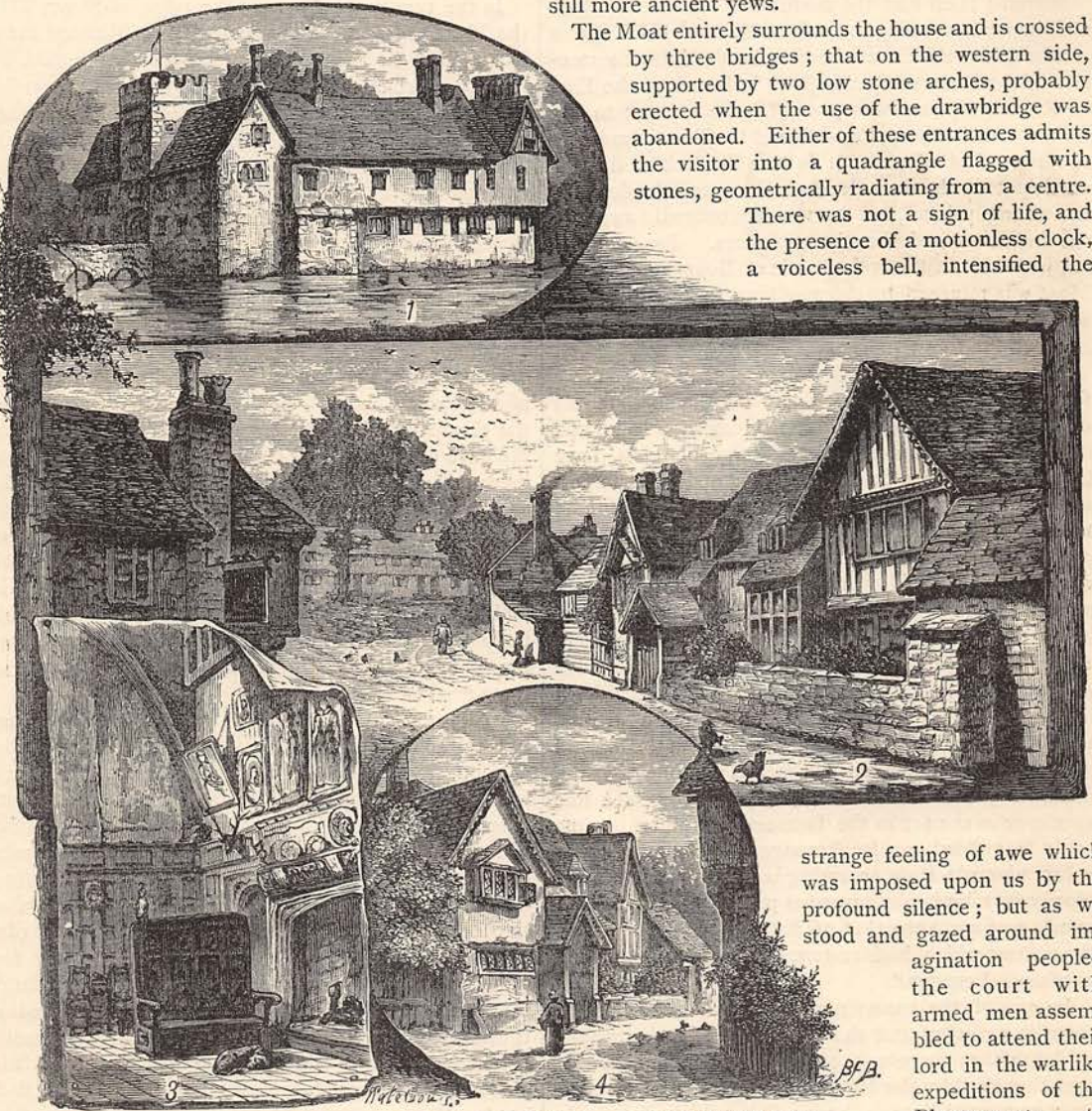
We reached Ightham Moat by a narrow winding road,

bordered by a wood on the right, and a pretty serpentine rivulet on the left. The latter terminates in a lake which supplies the water of the Moat. The sun was shining pleasantly on its half-frozen surface as we descended several rugged steps, and alighted on the grassy terrace which faces the façade of the ancient

obliterated by the alterations or additions which have been made at various periods. These irregularities, however, add to the picture it presents, and time has touched them all with the most delicate shades of colour. Tufts of moss or fern relieve the sombre hues of Norman masonry, and the warmer tints of the Tudor gables are softened by the shade of aged cedars, and still more ancient yews.

The Moat entirely surrounds the house and is crossed by three bridges; that on the western side, supported by two low stone arches, probably erected when the use of the drawbridge was abandoned. Either of these entrances admits the visitor into a quadrangle flagged with stones, geometrically radiating from a centre.

There was not a sign of life, and the presence of a motionless clock, a voiceless bell, intensified the



1. THE MOAT HOUSE. 2. THE MAIN STREET, IGHTHAM. 3. THE DINING HALL, IGHTHAM MOAT HOUSE. 4. THE TOWN HOUSE.

strange feeling of awe which was imposed upon us by the profound silence; but as we stood and gazed around imagination peopled the court with armed men assembled to attend their lord in the warlike expeditions of the Plantagenets, to take their part in the struggles of the

house. The Moat surprises by its sudden appearance—a step, and it is seen, with its watch-tower and its gables, its antique windows and gates, surrounded by a low parapet—a silver line of water overshadowed by trees that have seen centuries of years.

It is a quadrangular building, with a frontage each way of about 100 feet. That on the eastern side is the most ancient. Mr. J. H. Parker gives the date of erection as probably about the year 1340, but the original character of the architecture is almost

Roses, or to fight to the death in the fatal battle of Bosworth.

Sir Ivo de Haut is first mentioned as an owner of the Moat. He died possessed of it in the reign of Henry II., but the main structure of the building is probably of more ancient date. The keep bears a strong resemblance to similar towers erected by the Conqueror and his barons. All the upper storeys are in the old English half-timbered style. The gables are acutely pointed, and the windows surmounted by the

label moulding known as the Tudor. The large window which lights the dining-hall is of the same period. It is divided by mullions into five compartments, and was probably an addition made by Richard Haut, a descendant of Sir Ivo, in the reign of Henry VII. Portions of the hall and the chapel bear evidence of the same date.

Richard Haut had the misfortune to lose the Moat and its manor during the rule of Richard III. It was confiscated to the Crown, because he aided the insurrection of the Duke of Buckingham in favour of the Earl of Richmond, and was given by the usurper to Sir Robert Brackenbury, Constable of the Tower, probably as a reward of silence. It is true Sir Robert did not participate in the dark deed which caused the death of the young princes, but he was undoubtedly aware of the intention and the circumstances. Brackenbury fell with his master at the battle of Bosworth, and the Moat was returned by the new king to its former possessor, with whose descendants it remained until the latter end of that reign.

Ascending a short flight of oaken stairs, we found ourselves at the door of the old family chapel. It is rapidly falling to decay. Rats and mice and an innumerable quantity of bees have located themselves in its recesses, and it is impossible to dislodge them. But though the communion table and the altar-rails have long disappeared, the pulpit, the old seats, and the priests' confessional remain. There is also the carcass of a curious organ said to be one of the earliest erected in England. It bears the inscription "Ludovicus Thewes me fecit, 1579." The ceiling of the building is waggon-roofed and painted in compartments with the portcullis, a badge of Henry VII., and a quiver with arrows, possibly a cognisance of the house of Haut. Several stained glass windows remain intact, and one of them, illustrating St. George with his red cross, is a fine specimen of the art in the fourteenth century. "One could fancy," writes a local topographer, "that one saw before him old Haut returning bodily from Bosworth's bloody fray, and offering up his praises in this his own family oratory to the God of Battles, for the event of the contest which had restored to him his home and patrimonial estates."

In one of the rooms now used as a bed-chamber, there is a piscina, and the stone arch of a doorway—evidence that there was once a more ancient chapel than that used by the Hauts. There is also a crypt, now converted into a beer-cellar, which is finely arched over with stone vaulting of early English date.

The rooms open one into the other or are connected by long, low corridors. Most of the dormitories are peculiarly small, but as much space as possible is given to the other apartments. The great hall is thirty feet in length, and twenty feet in breadth. Its chief interest lies in a fine Gothic window and a singular recess in the wall which was discovered some years ago. The rafters of the roof were formerly exposed, and the louvre through which the smoke ascended in the days of the Hauts was then visible, but it is now

ceiled over. The weatherings of the entrance doors at either end are adorned with very ancient corbels carved as heads, and have acutely pointed arches.

On one side of the wall is a large piece of tapestry probably made by Dame Dorothy Selby, a mistress of the Moat who was renowned for her needlework.

In the twenty-third year of the reign of Henry VII., the Moat passed from the possession of Richard Haut into that of Sir Richard Clement—by what reason we are not informed. Sir Richard Clement was succeeded by his brother, whose daughter carried it by marriage to Sir Hugh Pakenham. Hugh Pakenham had no male heirs, and his only daughter and successor married Sir William Sidney, the soldier of Flodden Field. Although Sir William had not then succeeded to Penshurst Place, he had a residence at Penshurst, and an arrangement was made by Sidney and his wife's father under which Ightham Moat was alienated and sold to Sir John Allen, Lord Mayor of London.

In the reign of Henry VIII., Sir John Allen was one of the Privy Council. Stow tells us that "he was of the Company of Mercers; a man of liberal charity. He gave to the City of London a rich collar of gold, to be worn by succeeding Lord Mayors; also 500 marks as a stock for sea-coal, and the rents of those lands which he had purchased of the king, to the poor of London for ever; and during his life he gave bountifully to the hospitals, prisons, &c., of that city. He built the Mercers' Chapel in Cheapside, in which his body was buried, which was afterwards moved into the body of the hospital church of St. Thomas of Acon."

In 1592 Sir Charles Allen, grandson of the Lord Mayor, sold Ightham Moat to Sir William Selby, a younger brother of Sir John Selby, of Branxton in Northumberland, with whose descendants it still remains. He appears to have been a soldier of some reputation, winning laurels in the Irish wars, and in his achievements on the Borders against Scotland. In the latter part of his life he resided at the Moat, where he died at the advanced age of eighty in 1611. His successor was a nephew bearing the same name, who left what was then considered a large sum to the poor by way of dole. He was interred at Ightham Church, March 1st, 1637, under his uncle's monument; and his widow, Dame Dorothy, was left in possession of the Moat until her death. It then became the property of Mr. George Selby, of London, who afterwards resided there and was Sheriff of the county in the twenty-fourth year of King Charles I.

A popular report, credited by Hasted, assigns the Moat to George Selby for the sake of the name; but in the details of Sir William's will, given in the "Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica," we find him emphatically called "my cousin." We learn also from the same source that the famous "Saracen's Head," once so dear to antiquaries, belonged to the Selbys, and originally bore the sign of the "Crown." Major Luard-Selby is the present possessor of the Moat.

Another manor and residence in the parish of

Ightham which claims notice on account of its antiquity is that of St. Clere, but it wants the interest of the Moat. St. Clere was formerly called Aldham, from Sir Thomas Aldham, its owner in the reign of Richard I., who was with that king at the siege of Acon in Palestine. One of his descendants dying without male issue in the reign of Edward II., it became the property of John St. Clere, who possessed it in his wife's right. After his death Isolda, his widow, paid respective aid for it at the making of the Black Prince a knight. St. Clere was held for a short time by Sir Thomas Bulleyn, father of Queen Anne Bulleyn, conjointly with one Anthony Windsor; but the latter selling his moiety to Richard Farmer in the tenth year of King Henry VIII., Sir Thomas soon afterwards did the same. Farmer conveyed it to George Multon, of Hadlow, and one of his descendants alienated it, in the reign of King Charles I., to Sir John Sidley. His grandson dying without issue in the year 1702, it was sold by the trustees to William Evelyn, Esq., who became High Sheriff of the county in 1723. His descendants were residing at St. Clere until a few years ago.

Close by the church is a curious house of oak and plaster, with very fine gables and chimneys, probably the village inn in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

The church is dedicated to St. Peter, and is a small edifice with a square embattled tower containing five bells. It was anciently compelled to pay 9d. chrisment to the mother church of the diocese, and in the fifteenth year of King Edward I., we are told, it was valued at twenty marks. The worth of the rectory, according to the king's books, was £15 16s. 8d., and the yearly tenths £1 11s. Hasted says that the patronage of the benefice was always accounted an appendage of the manor of Ightham, but of late years the advowson has been the property of the rectors.

The church contains some fine monuments. On the north side of the chancel is that of Sir Thomas Cawne. It represents a recumbent knight in the military costume of the fourteenth century, in a very perfect condition. It appears that he was owner of the Moat at Ightham, although the fact has hitherto escaped the researches of Kent topographers. From his will, written in Latin, we learn that he bequeaths the manor of Aldham, or St. Clere, to his wife Lora, and that of "La Mote" to his son Robert, who was six years of age at the time the testament was made. After his burial £200 were distributed among his poor relations, and £200 were given to poor labourers, his neighbours, "who had little to maintain themselves;" the same sum was also left to the religious brotherhoods of London and Kent, for the saying of elaborate masses for his soul and the souls of all the faithful. He also directs a memorial window to be placed in the north part of the church near the altar of St. Mary. It represents Sir Thomas Cawne, and his wife Lora, daughter of Sir Thomas Morant, of Morant's Court, Chevening Parish, in gorgeous garments of purple and gold.

On the south side of the chancel are the monuments of the Selbys, recumbent effigies of the two

Sir Williams and a half-length figure of Dame Dorothy, in an oval recess. The countenance is that of a benevolent and intelligent matron, with traces of past beauty in the finely chiselled features. Her age at the date of her decease was sixty-nine, and the sculpture is evidently intended to represent her at that period of her life. She wears a thick veil draped about her head and shoulders, such as was worn by matrons and widows of her condition.

The background of the recess is filled in by a piece of tapestry, said to be the work of Dame Dorothy herself, and a tablet of slate engraved with an allegorical picture. The needlework illustrates the life of Adam and Eve in Paradise; and the tablet shows the Pope seated at a table in conclave with two cardinals, a monk, a friar, and an individual with a cloven foot. They appear to be giving instructions to Guido Fawkes. In the background are depicted two ships in full sail, supposed to be on their way to England; whilst at the right-hand corner are represented the Houses of Parliament, with vaulted cellars in which are placed barrels of gunpowder with fagots laid over them, and Guido Fawkes with lantern in hand advancing towards them. An inscription beneath the figure of Dame Dorothy thus describes her many virtues and the singular ornaments upon her tomb.

D. D. D.

To the precious name and honour of Dame Dorothy Selby.

She a Dorcas was,

Whose curious needle turned the abused stage
Of this lewd world into the golden age;
Whose pen of steel and silken ink enrolled
The acts of Jonah in records of gold;
Whose art disclosed that plot, which had it taken,
Rome had triumphed and Briton's walls had shaken.
In heart a Lydia, and in tongue a Hannah,
In zeal a Ruth, in wedlock a Susannah;
Prudently simple, providently wary,
To the world a Martha, and to heaven a Mary.

Who put on immortality } of her pilgrimage 69.
in the year } of her Redeemer 1641.

It is traditionally asserted that Dame Dorothy Selby either wrote or interpreted the meaning of the mysterious letter which was sent to Lord Monteagle, warning him not to attend the Houses of Parliament when they were threatened with destruction by the Gunpowder Plot. A line in the inscription on her monument appears to confirm this statement; but, on the other hand, it may refer to a piece of tapestry representing the subject worked by the lady, who had a great reputation for her skill in this species of needlework.

In 1639 Ightham Church appears to have undergone some restoration. Sir John Sedley of St. Clere, writing to Sir Edward Dering of Surrender, in the month of March, tells him that "John Bulbanke hath (as he tells mee) almost done his church-work at Itham, and tooke the advantage of this holy day to wayte on you to know your pleasure, though I am much afreyd hee hath worked so long in Itham Church that hee hath almost gotten himself a place in the churchyard, beinge I doubt fallen into a deepe consumption. We shall both lose a good joyner and an honest man."