

Geoffrey cannot help thinking that the poor child has made on the whole but a sorry exchange, as she opens a locket on her watch-chain, and shows him Uncle Tom's shrewd, kind face—the face of a man to be trusted.

Joan meets them at the gate, as they reach the Lodge.

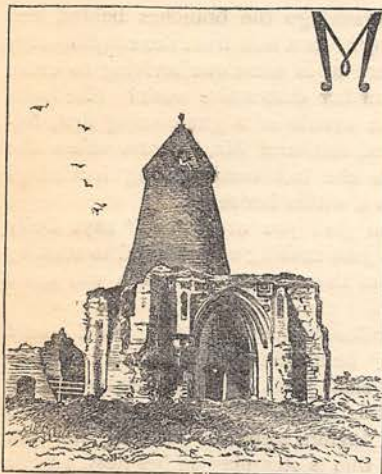
"I was just coming to fetch you, Dolly," she says cordially. "I am sorry I am so late, but as I have walked over to Croworth and back this afternoon,

I dare say you will pardon me, particularly as I see Mr. Ingram has been so good as to forestal me. It is really too kind of you," she continues, turning to him; "you shouldn't listen to mother."

"It is a pleasure to me," he answers, "more especially if I have saved you an additional walk, after your seven miles;" and Joan's heart gives a bound, as she tells the children to go home, and conveys Dolly and Mr. Ingram into the house.

END OF CHAPTER THE SEVENTH.

## THE NORFOLK "BROADS:" A HOLIDAY RESORT.



**M**EN spend much money and go far afield in search of sport, adventure, and picturesque scenery, and often overlook that which can be more cheaply obtained at their own doors.

There is a region which comparatively few are aware of, where fish-

ing, shooting, sailing, and the charms which wildness and loneliness possess, are within easy reach. For the yachtsman and boat-sailor, there are 200 miles of deep and navigable rivers, broad, clear, and slow of current, with 2,000 acres of lake connected with the rivers. For the fisherman, the fishing in all these rivers, and in most of the lakes, is free, and the catches of bream and roach are counted by the stone-weight, and of pike by the score. For the naturalist the vegetation is tropical in its luxuriance, the heron, the snipe, the redshank, grebes, ducks, and waterfowl of every ilk are in abundance; and of all her products Nature is bountiful. For the sportsman, the shooting on all these miles of navigable river is open, and to the chief estuary the winter frosts bring thousands upon thousands of fowl, amid which the punt-gun may deal destruction. The scenery is that which fascinates by its space and its colour. It is flat, truly, but a large portion of the flat plain is water, which, whether its calm is blue as the sky and white as the clouds, or its storm has shifting colours which have no name, is always beautiful. Then there are forests of reeds, ten feet high, with purple feathery tops, which with flags and bulrushes rustle in the wind, and undulate like the waves of the sea. From lake to lake the wide rivers wander sinuously, and on their banks are fantastic windmills. Yellow iris flowers, beds of meadow-sweet, purple loose-strife, blue forget-me-nots crowd through

the reeds to look at the white water-lilies, amid which the coots are swimming. Picturesque sailing barges with brown sails, and yachts with snowy canvas, are more frequent than houses, but when the houses appear they are embowered with trees, and have a delightful irregularity of outline, and the contempt for straight lines caused by marshy foundations. Then for wildness: the only way to effectually explore this district is by water, and as inns are few and far between, you must have a craft on board of which you can comfortably sleep. And in its lockers you must have great store of provisions, or you will have to fall back on the produce of your gun and rod.

Yachts of from five to ten tons, possessing a comfortable cabin to sleep two or three, and a fore-castle for the man, can be hired, including a man, for from three to five pounds a week.

This El Dorado is within four hours' journey of London, yet even the title of this paper will give no idea to many where it is situate. It is the eastern part of Norfolk, with a little of Suffolk, and roughly speaking may be said to be a triangular stretch of country, with a base of some twenty-five miles along the sea-coast, and its apex at Norwich, twenty-five miles inland. Through this tract run three principal rivers—the Yare, the Bure, and the Waveney—and by following the course of these we can best give to our readers a picture of this Dutch-like country.

The Yare, as it twists through the city of Norwich, is narrow, and overhung with old buildings, which irresistibly remind one of the cities of Holland and Belgium. Below the city the river widens out into a noble stream, and hoisting the sails of our yacht, we glide on with a favouring breeze, past Thorpe, with its woods and gardens; Whitlingham, with its ruined church on the hill, and velvet glades between the trees; Postwick, and Bramerton, where there are low hills picturesquely clad with trees, and then we get out into the open marshland, where the breeze blows true as on the sea. Surlingham Ferry, with its group of trees around the house, is passed, and then eight miles from Norwich is Coldham Hall, a famous fishing hostelry, the station for which is Brundall. Here there are always yachts and wherries. The latter are peculiar to these waters; they are large, shapely craft, of from thirty to seventy tons burthen, of shallow draught, and propelled by one huge sail. They sail very fast, and

go to windward excellently. Their mission is to carry the inland traffic, and the men who have charge of them are, as a rule, very civil and obliging.

A genuine "Broad" landscape consists of water, marsh, gay with many-coloured grasses and flowers, windmills, and, moving about here, there, and everywhere, the high-peaked sails of the wherries. Yachts rigged wherry-fashion are very comfortable and handy craft. The windmills on the river-banks are not for the purpose of grinding corn, but for pumping the water from the marsh drains into the river, which is generally higher than the flat country through which it flows. The whirling arms work a turbine wheel which dashes the water up from the lower to the higher level. The old-fashioned windmills are now being supplanted by steam-mills, which drain a larger district more effectually, and are kept up by the various land-owners who are jointly served by a particular mill.

The fall of the river is only four inches to the mile, and the tide ebbs and flows nearly up to Norwich. The rise and fall of the tide, however, is very small, and the current is not fast, so that no better river for sailing can be found. Yachts can be safely moored close to the bank, in, if you choose, twelve or fourteen feet of water.

Snipes are very plentiful in the marshes near Coldham, and their curious drumming can be heard any day in spring and summer. In a wood close by there is also one of the small heronries which are not infrequently in the Broad district.

We have passed two small Broads, Surlingham and Rockland, but they are growing up very fast. Each year the reeds encroach a little on the water, and the decaying weeds add a little to the mud at the bottom. The Broads, as these inland seas are called, are all shallow, some of them extremely so.

As the day advances the wind freshens, and we speed faster; past Buckenham Ferry, another tree-encircled fishing station; Cantley, where the chief regattas are held on account of the great breadth of the river and the depth of the water, and where comfortable quarters may be obtained at the Red House; Hardley Cross, a stone erection connected with the jurisdiction of the river, and standing at the mouth of the small though navigable river Chet, which runs up to Loddon; and reach Reedham, a large village standing on a high bank. Here there is a railway swing-bridge which is open save at train time. Here is the entrance to the New Cut, a straight, wide canal three miles long, which connects the Yare with the Waveney, and is a short cut to that river. We keep on, however, for some miles until there opens out a magnificent sheet of water four miles long and of proportionate width. This is Breydon Water, and at its lower end we see the spires and towers of the semi-Dutch town of Great Yarmouth. The channel across is marked out by stakes at regular intervals, and we spin across in company with wherries, spritsail barges from Kent, shrimp-boats, sailing-boats, and gunning-punts, all anxious to make the most of the ebb. We have reached Yarmouth, twenty-six miles from Norwich, by river, and as we look back we see one of the mar-

vellous and indescribable sunsets for which this flat land is famed.

The river narrows and bends southward for three miles before it reaches the sea, and it is on the narrow spit of land between the river and the sea that Yarmouth is built. Of its attractions we have not space to speak. Early in the morning, while the tide is yet flowing, we lower our mast, and pole or *quant* (the long pole used to propel the vessel when the wind fails being in Norfolk called a *quant*) up under two fixed bridges into the river Bure, and then we sail away north-westward through a tract of marshes which are rather dreary until we reach Acle. Two miles northward of this place lie the Ormesby Broads, containing altogether 800 acres, and famous for fish. There is another fixed bridge at Acle, but the mast swings in a tabernacle and is easily lowered and raised, a weight being attached to its lower end. The great masts of the wherries have a ton and a half of lead on the heel, and are swung with the greatest ease.

We sail on through a country increasing in beauty until we come to the mouth of the river Thurne, up which we go. You will often see the eel-sets, or places where the professional fishermen have a right of setting their eel-nets. A large boat with a hut built upon it forms their lodging, and with the nets hung out to dry forms a picturesque group. Overhead you will be struck by the number of hawks there are—kestrels and marsh-harriers chiefly.

Passing Heigham Bridge we come to Kendal Dyke, and turning into it, presently come to a very wilderness of reeds and water called Heigham Sounds; then through another similar Broad, called Whiteslea, disturbing great pike and other fish as we pass through the shallow water, and then the great expanse of Hickling Broad opens out before us. This is 400 acres in extent, but the shores are so low, and dim, and indistinct that it seems much larger. The water is brilliantly clear, and the bottom, which is only from two to four feet below us, is of yellow gravel. Of course, only boats of light draught of water can sail all over; others must keep to the channels, which are marked out by stakes. The skating here last winter was simply superb. This was the headquarters of the lateen-rigged yachts of light draught, which were formerly very numerous on these waters, but are now being superseded by the cutter-rig. A narrow but deep dyke bordered with tall reeds leads to a remarkably pretty and secluded Broad called Horsey Mere. From here the sand-hills on the coast are plainly visible; for at a distance of five-and-twenty miles by river from the sea we are yet within a mile and a half of it, and the ebb and flow of the tide is felt.

Returning to the Thurne, we sail up through Martham Ferry—where a pontoon or raft is made to stretch right across the river, removable when craft are coming—on to Martham or Somerton Broad, another lonely expanse of water and reeds close by the sea.

As night is falling, we may either drop our anchor in the middle of a Broad, or moor the yacht to the bank of the river where it may happen to be firm, and no one will disturb our rest.

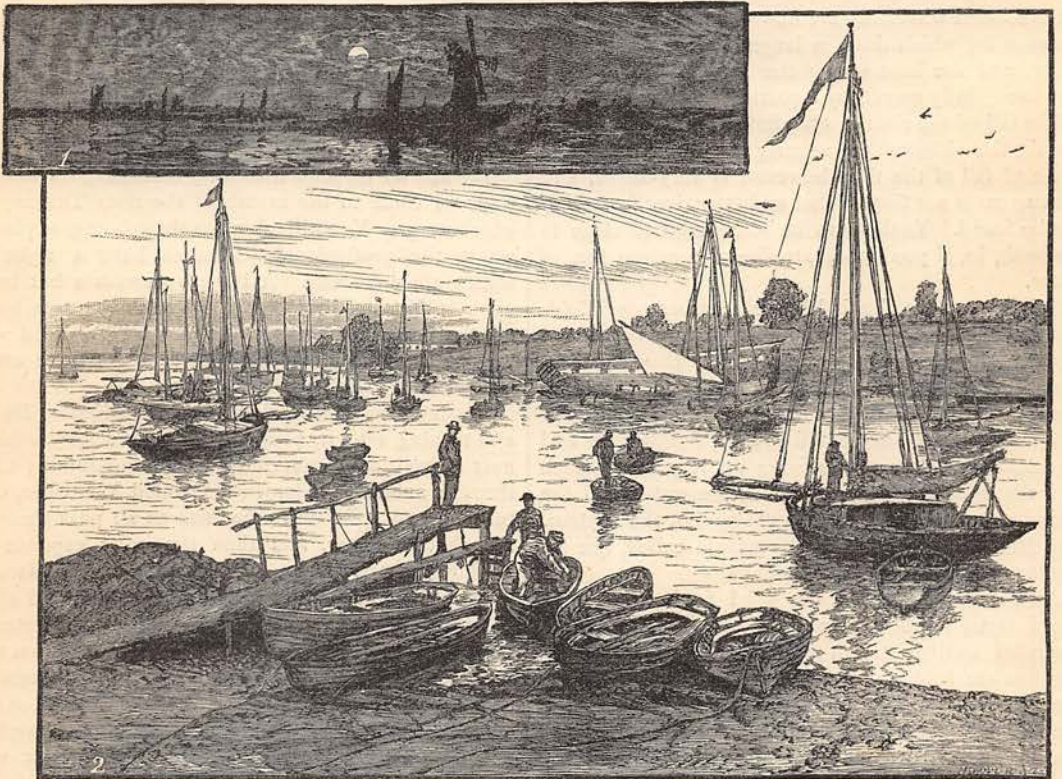
Sailing back to the Bure we continue up its course, passing on the right the striking ruins of St. Benedict's Abbey, and enter the mouth of the river Ant, up which we sail for five miles, and reach Barton Broad, a splendid sheet of water diversified by islets, and bordered on one side by woods. Three miles further is Stalham Broad. The fishing on these waters is most excellent, and free. Stalham may now be reached by train from Yarmouth.

Back again to the Bure, and soon we come to Broad after Broad. On the left are South Walsham Broad, Ranworth Broad, well worth a visit, and two or three

Castle are some Roman ruins which must on no account be passed by.

At St. Olave's we come to the other end of the Cut which left the Yare at Reedham. The river is an excellent sailing-river, being wide and very deep close to the banks.

A branch or dyke as wide as the river leads on the left to Oulton Broad, the gayest and most civilised of all because of the number of yachts and boats upon it. There are several inns in the village of Mutford at the lower end of it, where the visitor who has no yacht to be happy in will be most comfortably en-



1. THE BROADS BY NIGHT.

2. OULTON BROAD.

others. Then on the right, Hoveton Little Broad and Hoveton Great Broad, the latter a breeding-place of the black-headed gull; and on the left the two Salhouse Broads, where one may see the rarest beauty of wood and water.

A little further, and we turn in through a "gatway," and drop our anchor in Wroxham Broad, the most generally admired of all. It is deeper than the others, and always enlivened by the white sails of yachts. Here we are seven-and-twenty miles from the sea, and the river is navigable much further.

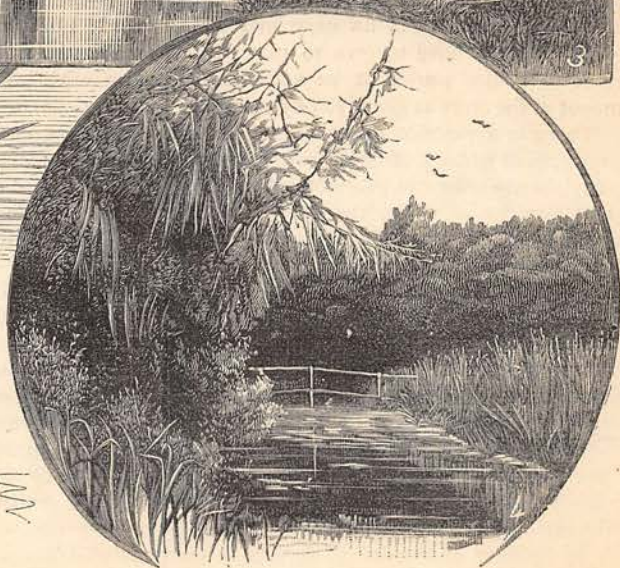
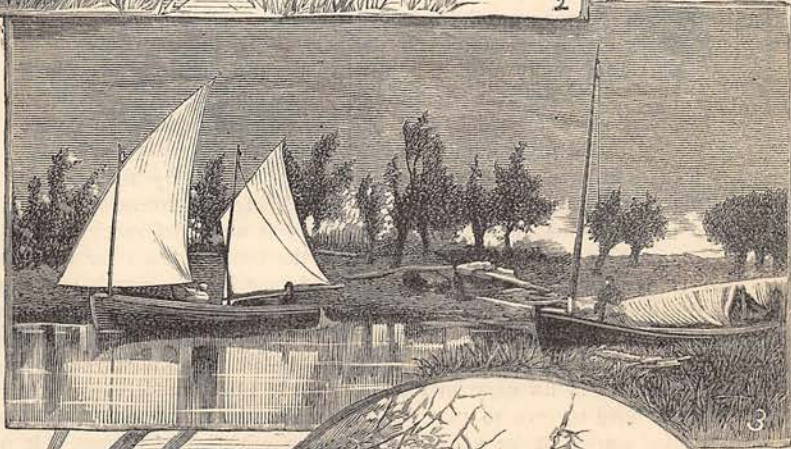
Now back again to Breydon Water, and on reaching the top of it we turn to the left up the river Waveney and into Suffolk. On the left at Burgh

tertained. Boats, and tackle, and bait are all to be had here, and fish in abundance on the Broad. Lowestoft is a mile and a half away, and there is an outlet to the sea through Lake Lothing, which is connected with the Broad by a lock.

Up the Waveney one meets with a lovely sylvan country and good fishing, but no Broads. At Beccles, fifteen miles up, there is a fixed bridge, and the river is navigable many miles further.

This is but a meagre account of a district in which the writer has spent many happy days, but space forbids his enlarging upon it to the extent that he considers its due.

G. CHRISTOPHER DAVIES.



1. DRAINAGE MILL ON RIVER THURNE. 2. HORNING VILLAGE. 3. LATEEN-RIGGED BOAT—HICKLING. 4. DYKE, OFF THE BURE, NEAR COLTISHALL.