

DETLING IN DAYS GONE BY.

DETLING * lies about two and a half miles north-east of Maidstone, on the high road to Sittingbourne. Its position.
As it first catches the eye on the high ground near the Chiltern Hundreds Inn, nestling in its well-timbered nook, under the scarped background of the chalk hill, it presents a pleasing break in the long line of almost treeless Downs which stretch from the Boxley Wood eastward beyond Hollingbourne.

Here elms and walnuts, beeches, firs, and yews, seem to find congenial soil, for they vie with each other in luxuriance of growth. Much of the present picturesque character of the village is due to the late Mr. J. S. Rugg,† who, with considerable antiquarian feeling, delighted to preserve the old wooden cottages that were still left standing, and whose love for timber rescued many an ornamental tree from the woodman's axe, while the whole of the more recent plantation on the hill slope was laid out under his own eye.

The parish stretches from "The Hockers" on the south, to "Cock Hill" on the north, nearly four miles Its extent.
long, but is so narrow that only for a short distance is it even three-quarters of a mile wide. It contains an

* It may be well to note here that the insertion of the letters *b* or *p* in this name is a comparatively modern innovation, and should be persistently repudiated. No intelligent or rational derivation or explanation of the name has, so far as we can discover, been suggested or conjectured. The name was spelt *Detlinges* by the Monkish historians of the Conqueror's time, or *Detlinge*, a hundred years later in the *Pedes Finium*. the survey of lands made by Richard I. ; or *Dettelinge* according to the Register of Archbishop Peckham, (see Appendix B.) at the close of the fourteenth century, or *Detlinge*, in various documents of the reign of Edward III. Eventually the final *e* was dropped ; and it is always written *Detling* in the Parish Registers of the sixteenth and greater part of the seventeenth centuries ; as also in the Parliamentary Survey of 1648.

Towards the end of that century, however, the letter *p* occasionally makes its appearance, and in the year 1705, simultaneously with a new Vicar, the Rev. John Martin, the obtrusive *b* creeps in, and from that time has been generally adopted ; until the present generation have endeavoured to eliminate both the *p* and *b*, and restore the older and simpler spelling of the name.

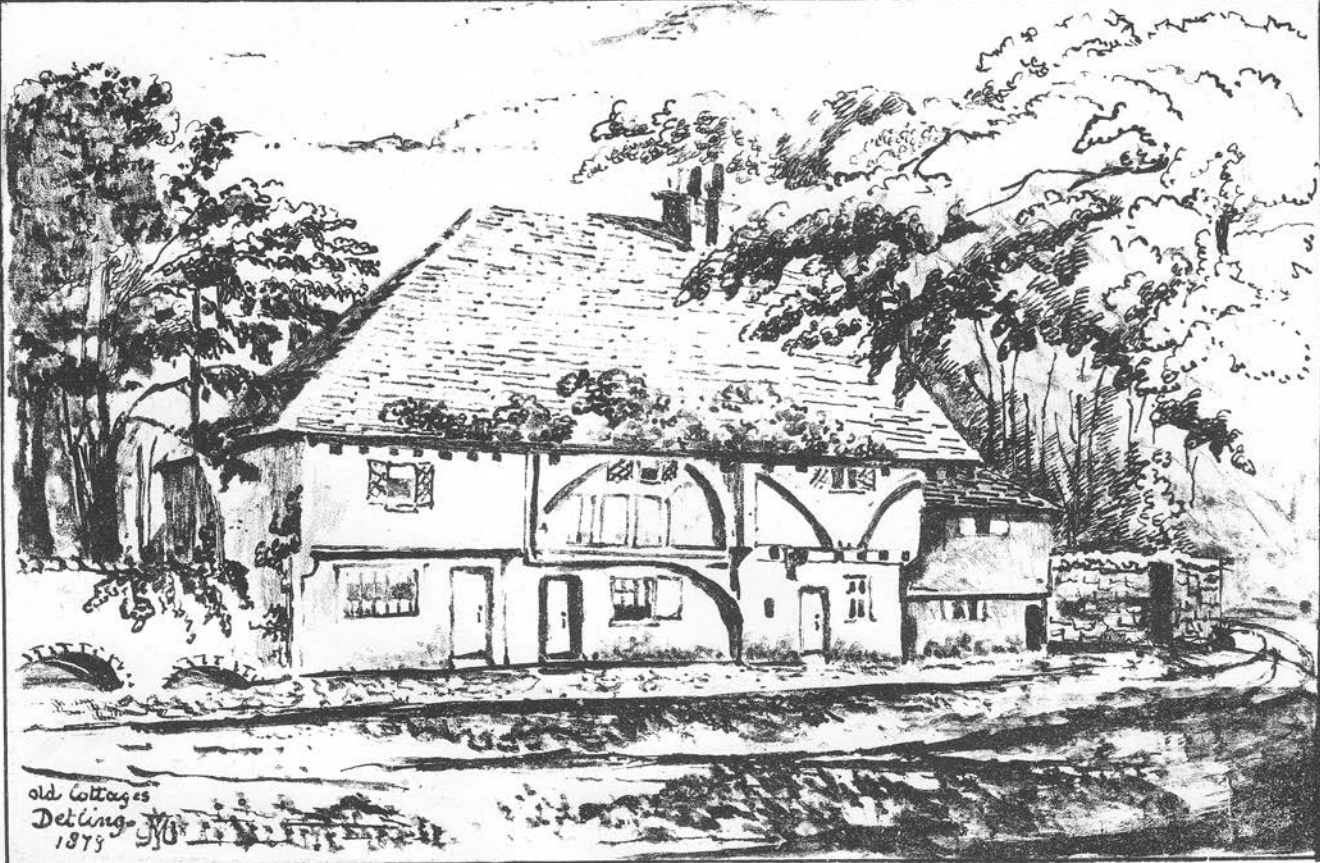
† His sudden death on March 2nd, 1878, caused a loss which the parish feel deeply, and will long deplore on many accounts.

area of about 1590 acres, of which nearly one-third is woodland. The population, according to the census of 1871, is a little over 300.

THE MANOR.

Athough, as has been said, Detling is not specially named in Domesday Book—where its absence Early mention of it. probably arises from its being regarded only as a *mesne* manor, or a part of the larger one of Maidstone—yet was it sufficiently recognised as an independent property, ten years before the Domesday Survey was made, to occupy a prominent place in the earliest State Trial recorded after the Conquest. In the Penenden Heath Trial When the Conqueror had suspended Stigand, the Saxon Archbishop of Canterbury, on the ground of informal and uncanonical consecration, he committed the charge of the temporalities of the Primacy, to his half-brother Odo, bishop of Bayeux in Normandy, whom he also created Earl of Kent. Lanfranc, on being appointed to Canterbury, when it eventually became vacant by the deposition of Stigand, discovered that Odo had been guilty of wanton violation of national customs, of gross misappropriation of Church revenues, and even of the seizure of lands belonging to the See. Now it is a strong proof of the Conqueror's desire that equity and justice should be maintained among his new subjects that he at once convened a *Sciregemôt*, so to say, "held an assize," in which he himself was represented by his influential and powerful subject Godfrey, bishop of Constance,* on whom he strictly enjoined the duty of seeing

* Thorpe's "Registrum Roffense," p. 27.



old cottages
Detling
1879