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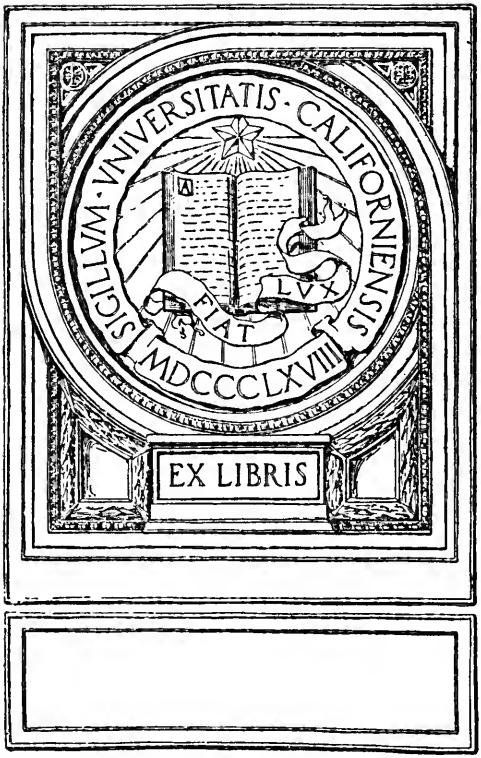
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Old Cottages & Farmhouses

in

Kent & Sussex

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UNIV. OF
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STUDIO OF MR. F. D. HARDY, CRANBROOK, KENT.

OLD COTTAGES

AND FARMHOUSES

IN

KENT AND SUSSEX

UNIV. OF CALIFORNIA

ILLUSTRATED IN ONE HUNDRED PLATES

PRINTED IN COLLOTYPE FROM

A SPECIAL SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS

TAKEN BY

W. GALSWORTHY DAVIE

WITH SOME DESCRIPTIVE NOTES AND SKETCHES

BY E. GUY DAWBER, ARCHITECT

LONDON:

B. T. BATSFORD, 94 HIGH HOLBORN

1900

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PREFACE

WHEN, two years ago, Mr. Galsworthy Davie showed me a number of photographs that he (an amateur) had been taking during a short tour through some of the small towns and villages of Kent and Sussex, I was struck not only by the charm and interest of many of the subjects, but also by the excellence of the photographs themselves. Mr. Davie, for some years a member of the Architectural Profession, and no mean draughtsman, possesses the well trained eye of the artist, and this has availed him much in the choice, not only of his subjects, but also of the point of view, and, on turning over the collection, I felt that if I could induce him to make a further tour, and take for me some more examples of the charmingly picturesque Old Cottages and Farmhouses for which these two Counties are so famous, I should be able to make of them a book that could not fail to please many—Architects, Artists, Archæologists, and others—who delight in the quaintly-beautiful architecture that still remains to us in our villages and hamlets as yet almost undisturbed by modern developments—or improvements!

This done, I realised how greatly it would add to the interest and value of the views if they were accompanied by some short account of the chief features of the buildings, marking their varying types and the changes that took place in their construction and general treatment, and in Mr. Guy Dawber I was fortunate in

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meeting with one—an Architect, an Archæologist, and a devoted admirer of these simple, yet picturesque buildings, already well acquainted with many of the subjects chosen. To him I am indebted for the valuable "Descriptive Notes and Sketches" which precede the plates, and add so much to their interest and to their usefulness for purposes of study.

Should this volume meet with the appreciation I venture to hope for it, I shall shortly issue a companion illustrating the same humble class of buildings from other counties, for which purpose I have already secured a number of photographs by Mr. Davie.

The Publisher.

November, 1900.

LIST OF PLATES

Arranged Alphabetically under Towns and Villages in each County.

KENT.

SUSSEX.

OLD COTTAGES & FARMHOUSES

IN

KENT & SUSSEX

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DESCRIPTIVE NOTES AND SKETCHES

BY

E. GUY DAWBER.

THE Domestic Architecture of England is a subject so well worn, that in dealing with any portion of it, it would be difficult, if not indeed impossible, to avoid going over ground that has already been made familiar to most of those who take an interest in it; but in its humbler phases which we see around us in the form of cottages and village buildings, there are many points of interest that are apt to be overlooked and which may with advantage be investigated.

Fig. 1.–Panel of Ironwork in Door, Forester's Hall, Canterbury.

The architecture of the larger houses, which has been the subject of so much research, lies somewhat in a category by itself, and doubtless owes much to foreign influence and execution. It is, therefore, amongst the smaller and more homely buildings, standing modestly by the wayside, that we must look to find work conceived and carried out by English hands.

Perhaps we do not sufficiently realise that it is this old cottage architecture that has made the inhabited parts of our country so picturesque, and has added so greatly to the

quiet beauty of our villages and hamlets, for the forms and colours of English cottages and farm-houses are almost always pleasing in themselves and in harmony with their surroundings.

The cottages of Kent and Sussex possess many points and characteristics in common, and no attempt therefore is made to deal with them here from any novel standpoint, or to trace their historical or architectural evolution, but merely to draw attention to some of the typical features both in their design and construction.

The domestic abodes of the poor in rural districts during the Middle Ages owing to the poverty of their materials and the fragile manner of their construction, have long since disappeared, so that we know but little of their nature and extent, but in the earliest times they must have been but few in number, for many of the people lived and slept under the roof of the master's house, and were dependent on him for their maintenance. It was only in later years, when some sort of independance had been attained, that they had separate abodes, and even then they must have lived in a miserable state of squalor and wretchedness, for, with walls of rough unhewn stone, roofs of thatch or straw, windows unglazed, and floors of bare earth, they could have been but comfortless dwellings.

It may be said without fear of contradiction, that the love of neatness and order is one of the national characteristics of Englishmen, and to a great extent this *trait* is borne out in the manner in which the cultivated portions of the country are treated—fields set out and bordered by hedges and fences, the roads well kept up and cared for, and every man, whether a large landowner or village labourer, concerned either with his many acres, or his simple cottage garden.

And if this is so noticeable in the country itself, in the houses

and cottages it is even more so, for here each seems built for comfort and convenience, and suits its position, showing more than anything else, that what is best adapted for its purpose is the most beautiful.

The old country cottages and yeomen's houses still remaining are well worthy of care and regard, if only for the simple lessons they teach us of the beauty of fitness of purpose. They never pretend to be anything but what they are, and there seems to be no effort in either their construction or ornamentation, but merely a simple handing on from generation to generation of well-worn and tried tradition. There is, as a rule, nothing fantastic in their outline, or frivolous in detail, qualities which invariably spoil the character of any building by detracting from its simple dignity.

One of the main features of building generally in the olden time, was suitability to situation and the use that was invariably made of the local materials at hand. The geological formations of England not only give a distinctive character to the districts which they compose, but also to the buildings themselves, and where we find the materials that nature provides used in any given part of the country, there without doubt do we see the most beautiful architecture, because it is the most appropriate. Consequently there still remain even amongst the fast vanishing and ever changing relics of the past, examples of homely and unpretending building, as full of vitality and interest as many of the larger and more noticeable edefices.

In certain districts throughout the country we meet with well defined styles, which for many years were carried on with but little change. The detail and design varied perhaps with the introduction of fresh ideas and newer fashions from time to time, but the legitimate use of the local materials was still adopted on the old

traditional lines, and to a large extent influenced the character of the building.

It is pleasing to trace in the architecture of a country the reflection of its geological structure, and in the counties under consideration this is especially noticeable, for we find typical and distinct characteristics and styles, as eloquent of thought and vitality as anywhere else in England.

The old builders certainly used well-known traditional forms and details, but in such a way and with such a freshness and individuality of treatment, that each house seems to stand out distinct from its neighbour, though we acknowledge at once that every detail is familiar and what we have seen before. Perhaps it is this very similarity of idea that throughout this district permeated the whole of the work and gives it such a broad and dignified feeling, for wherever we turn and carefully examine the old architecture still remaining, we find the same evidences of a fertile resource that made the best of its opportunities, and by so doing obtained the most satisfactory results.

Sussex to-day is, like its neighbouring counties Kent and Surrey, mainly devoted to agriculture; but though it no longer ranks as a manufacturing centre, it at one time contained the Birmingham of mediæval England, and carried on an enormous trade in iron.

The period from which the iron was first worked is lost in antiquity, but it is probable that the Britons had already discovered the iron-fields before the invasion of the Romans. The trade increased rapidly throughout the Middle Ages, until in the 16th and 17th centuries the iron works of Sussex were of very great importance, but the vast consumption of wood, and the consequent rapidly diminishing forests, coupled with the improvement in smelting by coal, made the production of iron too costly, and the

trade gradually died out, until at the commencement of the 19th century it ceased to exist as a local industry.

Throughout the district there are numerous remains of Sussex iron work, the chief, and by far the finest specimens being the iron monumental slabs found in many of the churches.

In Wadhurst Church, amongst others, there are in the floor of the chancel and nave some score of finely executed examples, dating from 1625 to 1720, with lettering, heraldic charges, and coats of arms, modelled and cast in very strong relief, and in the churchyard of Brightling there is an upright cast-iron head-slab over an inch and a quarter thick, dated 1760, with modelled wreaths of fruit and flowers, surmounted by a moulded cornice, an interesting though somewhat late example of the iron-caster's art. In many of the old farm-houses iron fire-dogs and fire-backs can yet be met with, many dating to the building of the house itself.

The entire weald of Kent and Sussex was formerly covered with thick forests, and until their destruction for use in smelting the iron ore, extending over many centuries, most houses were built of timber, only the larger and more important ones being of stone or brick.

The timber houses of this district, of which even in their disguised form a great many remain, constitute a class somewhat by themselves, and though mutilated to a great extent both in plan and elevation, they yet show us pretty clearly the arrangement of a yeoman's house in the 16th century.

The most usual plan was practically a continuation of the old mediæval one—an oblong hall or common room in the centre, with offices or other rooms at either end, forming wings; sometimes the wing was built at one end only, but more frequently the plan was symmetrical.

This type of plan indeed was the prevailing one throughout

England, and was most probably the origin of the E and H shaped plans on a larger and more extensive scale, which developed in the reigns of Queen Elizabeth and James I., but throughout Sussex and Kent we find it, or some modification of it, in nearly all the houses of any antiquity. Gradually the plan became enlarged or altered, until in the 18th century it lost its distinctive character, though for many years it remained the type of the English country house.

In the earliest arrangements the plan was a simple parallelogram with ends slightly breaking forward, and the upper storey at the floor level projecting, or sometimes carried around the entire building.

Of the former plan a beautiful, though much mutilated, example still remains in the Manor House at Pattenden, in Kent (plates 1 and 2), which dates from the early part of the 16th century, having been built for the Standard Bearer of Henry VIII.

Here we have the central dining room or hall, with a beamed ceiling, every joist being deeply and richly moulded. The wings project slightly, that on the right containing the original entrance door and oriel window adjoining. The upper part and the flanking ends are carried out at the floor level, and the roof taken over the entire house independently of the projecting wings, with curved braces supporting the plate between—indeed this recessed upper part of the centre is, as it were, a typical feature of the earlier timber houses, and can be seen again and again throughout the district. Stone Hill Farm, near Chiddingly, and the Inn at Hollingbourne (plates 3 and 4), may be mentioned as typical examples, while others are shown on plates 5, 6, 7, 8, 9.

At this point a few words may not be out of place with regard to these early timber houses. Broadly speaking, as they resemble each other in plan and elevation, to a certain degree, so they do in their construction—which is simple in the extreme, and

though doubtless well known to the majority of architects, some account of it may yet be of interest to those who have not analysed the clever method of their framing.

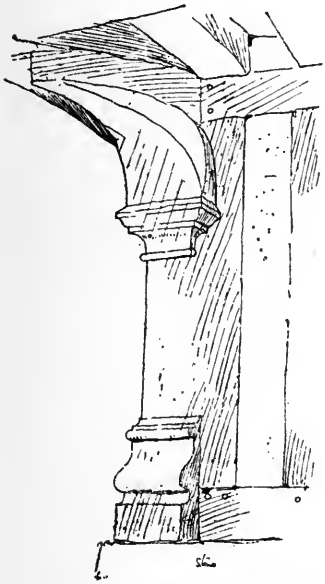

Fig. 2.—Angle Post, Pattenden, Kent.

The plan was set out and a base or foundation wall built, generally of brick or stone, high enough to keep the cill well above the ground. Into this cill-piece heavy storey-posts of timber, some 8 or 9 inches square, were fixed upright, about 7 or 8 feet apart, those at the angles being generally larger and formed of the butt of a tree placed root upwards, with the top part curving diagonally outwards to carry the angle posts of the upper story, as shewn in fig. 2 and in the examples on plates 2, 3, 4, 5, and 56.

Upon these main posts beams were laid across the building, projecting forward some eighteen inches in front of the framing below, those to the angles being set diagonally, and shewing (with the others) in the rooms inside.

Into these beams others were connected longitudinally, and to these latter again the floor-joists were tenoned, projecting the same distance as the main beams mentioned above. In the 16th century work the ends of the joists were covered with a large and deeply-moulded facia (see fig. 3), but in the later examples this was abandoned and the ends of the joists were merely rounded off, shewing as in examples on plates 1, 8, and 33. The framing of the

upper storey then followed that of the ground floor, the plate or cill being now laid on the ends of the overhanging timbers.

The house in its first stage was a mere timber skeleton, and, until the framing was well advanced, had to be propped and stayed from the outside. The slots to receive these stays are still shewing in the larger timbers on the ground floor of many of the houses.

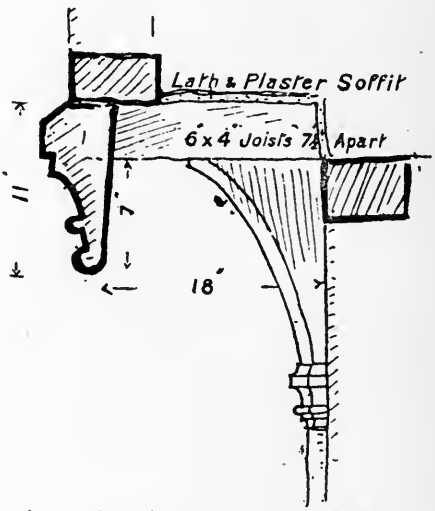

Fig. 3.—Smugley Farm, Goudhurst, Kent. Detail of overhanging part.

The spaces between the main uprights were filled in with windows or framing, the timbers for which were generally about 8 or 9 inches apart and nearly as much in width, the closeness of the timbering being one of the characteristics of early work; and it was not until later that they were set further apart and curved, and shaped braces introduced. The divisions between the timbers were then filled with wattles or laths, and chopped straw and clay, and the surface plastered flush with the woodwork.

At Smugley Farm, near Goudhurst, and Stonehill Farm, near Chiddingly, shown on plates 3 and 10, the method of framing the timber can be clearly seen, as the overhanging part is divided into bays, and the construction both inside and out can be examined.

These houses were chiefly built of oak, which generally shrinks, and their construction in great measure depended upon the security of their mortices and tenons. When, therefore, in time the joints shrank apart or decayed, and the buildings settled, they were, in

order to keep out the weather, either plastered all over on the outside, hung with tiles, or covered with deal boarding—indeed, very many of the tile-hung houses are the old 16th century timber-framed ones in a new shell. A particularly fine one is that in the main street in Robertsbridge, given on plate 11, and although now completely transformed, this example contains most of its old features intact. The smaller house at Tenterden, on plate 12, may be instanced as another example.

In general character and appearance these timber-framed houses bear but little resemblance to those of Shropshire or Lancashire. We miss the elaborate setting out of panels with diapering and cusping, and as a rule find only the plain vertical timbering, varied with the introduction of curved braces, as at Mayfield or Rye (see plates 13, 14, and 15). The quaint village of Tenterden, so renowned for its steeple and the legends connected with it, contains two houses, shewn in plates 16 and 17, which are typical of the early 16th century work. The smaller one is delightful in its quiet simplicity, and yet rich in strong detail.

Its doorway was originally central, with a bay on either side, but one only, on the left hand, now remains. The ends of the joists as at Pattenden and in all the early examples, are covered by a boldly moulded facia, and the main beams, between the joists, carrying the projecting upper part, are emphasised by the curved supporting brackets under them. A moulded cill runs through as a string, and breaks forward around the oriel windows, placed centrally over the bays below, and the steep tiled roof crowns all. The whole composition, though maimed and modernised, is yet delightfully simple; there is nothing in it, indeed it may be only a fragment of a larger front or longer house, but as it now stands it is full of quiet charm and repose.

In most old houses, the rooms were low, seldom more than 8 feet high, and the roof was brought well down on to the side walls, so that the upstairs rooms were frequently badly lighted and ventilated, and little or no use was made of the large space in the roof over them. When gables were introduced and windows arranged in them, the ceilings were taken up higher, and good rooms resulted, but in many of the cottages the bedroom accommodation was necessarily bad.

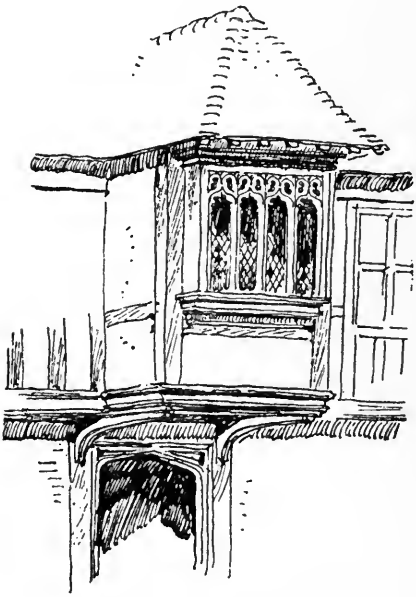

Fig. 4.—Bay-window, "The Lion" Inn, Wingham, Kent.

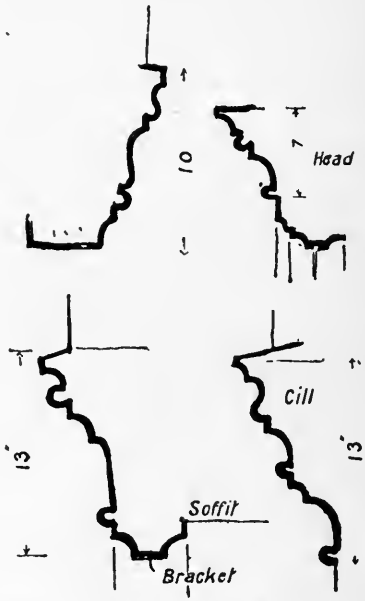

Fig. 5.—"The Lion" Inn, Wingham, Kent. *Details.*

Windows as a rule were small with moulded wooden frames and mullions, filled with lead lattice glazing. Most of the original ones have gone, and where the houses have been tiled or weather boarded, new ones of a section more in keeping with the times have been inserted, but enough remain to show pretty well what they were like. At Tenterden there are several treated as oriels, swung

forward slightly on richly moulded cills, or on cut and shaped brackets, as on plates 18, 19, 20 and 21. The cornice at the top is moulded, and generally carried close up under the eaves, or projecting gable over. Sometimes the angle mullions had shafts with moulded caps and bases worked upon them, though these are only found in early work.

In Canterbury (fig. 8.) there are several good windows, and in the village of Wingham in Kent, at the "Lion" Inn, there is a remarkably picturesque one carried out

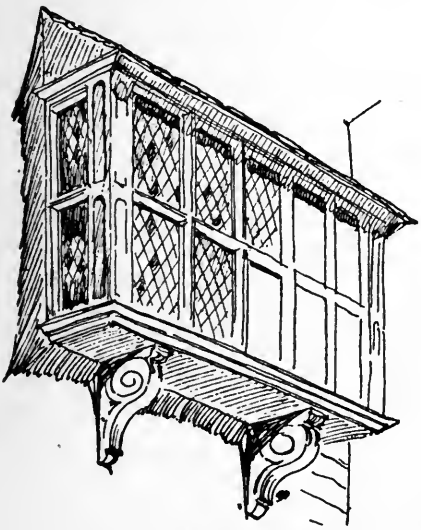

Fig. 6.—Bay Window, Rochester.

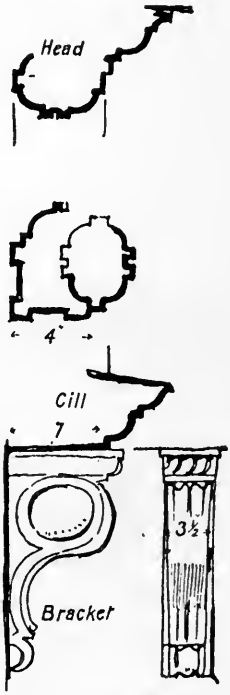

Fig. 7.—Bay Window, Rochester. *Details.*

on brackets over the entrance doorway, having the upper portion of the four lights filled with tracery, as shown on figs. 4 and 5.

Another effective arrangement was to place a bay window, sometimes swung out on the first floor only, as in the examples given from Rochester above, figs. 6 and 7, but more frequently carried up

from the ground, under a gable which projected forward on brackets and overhung it. There are many instances of this amongst the larger houses in the district, and typical ones are given from Beckley, Mayfield, Sedlescombe, and Sissinghurst, see plates 22, 23, 24, and 25.

The doorways, too, of the 16th century have quite a Gothic feeling and are generally arched, with carving in the spandrels, and moulded jambs and stops. At Pattenden and Smugley Farms, almost adjoining, the original doors and framing remain, and beautiful examples they are of strong and serviceable carpentry, as also are those illustrated in plates 1, 6, 7, 10, 16 and 26. These doors were made of plain upright boards, moulded on the face, rebated over each other and spiked to cross braces behind, no framing or tenoning being used at all.

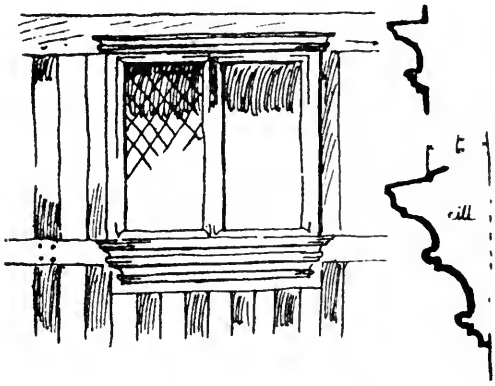

Fig. 8.—Window at Canterbury.

Latterly we find the doors framed with styles and rails, many of them richly moulded and studded with nails, and often with carving or strap-work in the upper portions. An example from the Post Office at Wickhambreaux is illustrated in fig. 9.

In many of the houses, one or more of the ground floor rooms have the open beamed ceilings, very finely moulded with deeply cut hollows and beadings, but as time went on this very delightful treatment died out, and square or simply moulded beams and joists were used.

The whole framing of the houses underwent a change; the rich luxuriance ceased and a plainer treatment prevailed altogether. The timbers were placed further apart and curved braces were inserted, with larger plaster panels, see examples on plates 27 to 33; much of the elaborate overhanging was given up, being carried out only at the sides or ends of the houses, the troublesome arrangement of the angle post and diagonal beam being avoided, see plates 34 and 35. There is a very good instance of this latter type of half timber work at Grove End Farm, near Tunstall, and at the Well House, near Northiam, Sussex, illustrated on plate 36.

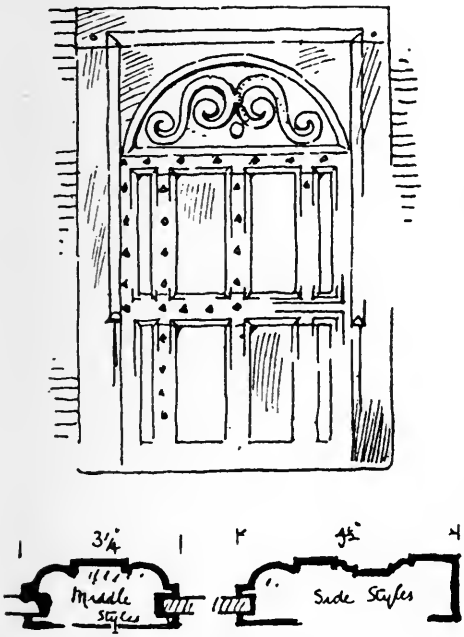

Fig. 9.—Doorway at Post Office, Wickhambreaux.

When gables were used, the builders had an additional opportunity for the display of their ingenuity, for not content with filling the spaces with timbering of varied patterns, the whole gable was in most cases brought forward beyond the face of the wall below, on carved and moulded brackets (see figs. 10 and 11). Many beautiful examples can be seen at Canterbury and Rochester, and at Sedlescombe, Mayfield and Beckley in this district as shown on plates 37 to 40.

The barge boards to these gables came in for their share of attention, and many even now remain. At first they were merely

stout boards cusped or foliated at the edges, until in the 16th century they were ornamented with perforated tracery with carving in the spandrils, as shown on plates 14, 23, 24, 36, 37, 38 and 40. With the change of style in the Jacobean period, they were covered with sunk arabesque work or shaped to a fanciful

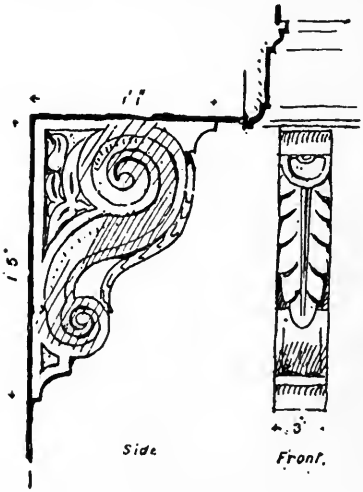

Fig. 10.—Bracket at Canterbury.

Fig. 11.—Bracket at Canterbury.

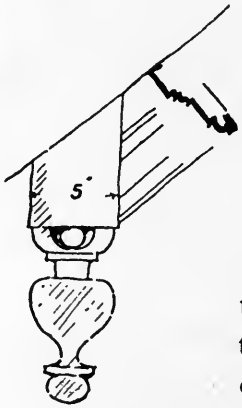

Fig. 12.—Barge Board and Pendant at Canterbury.

outline, though sometimes they were richly moulded with ornaments in the form of dentils, beads, and egg and tongue enrichments applied to the face. Some terminated in pendants at the eaves (see fig. 12) or were housed into a finial at the ridge. They were generally kept out some eight or ten inches from the face of the gable, but in the 18th century we find them placed close against the wall, without any space behind, and numerous instances can be seen in Canterbury and other places, chiefly on the plaster-fronted houses.

Many of these barge boards can be seen throughout the district, but perhaps the Gothic ones at Wingham and the Jacobean ones at

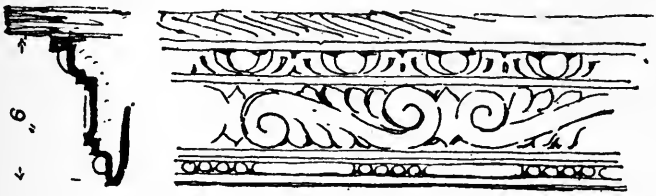

Fig. 13.—A Barge Board, Canterbury.

Canterbury and Steyning, see figs. 13 and 14, are amongst the most characteristic, together with those at Sedlescombe, Mayfield and Beckley.

In these districts of Sussex and Kent we are now speaking of, chimneys are a very special feature, and quite one of the most important elements in the external effect of a great many of the houses. The liberal use of materials in their construction, the simple yet bold way in which they rise from the roofs, or spring in rich clustering shafts from the sides or gable ends, is always an attractive feature in these cottages, and one that greatly enhances their beauty.

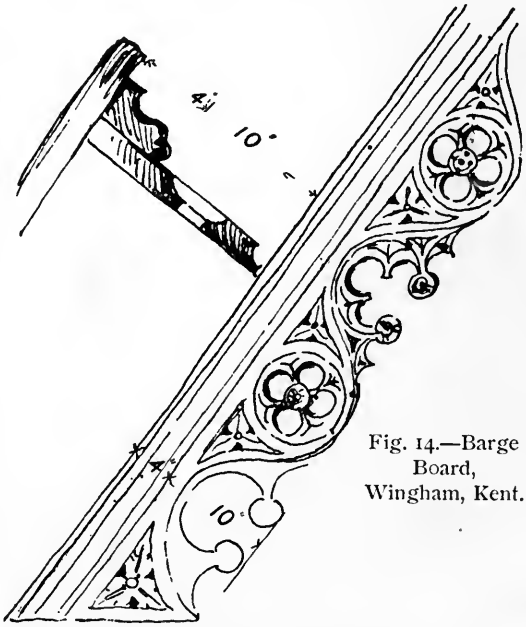

Fig. 14.—Barge Board, Wingham, Kent.

The variety of plan adopted is almost endless, and the utmost ingenuity seems to have been exerted in their arrangement,

(see plates 41 and 42). They are placed generally at either end of the building, or they rise in a mass from the centre of the roof, and as if these old builders disliked too much uniformity, we notice when the latter plan is adopted, various projections and settings forward, many without apparent reason, except the love of novelty or change. The stacks at Easebourne and at Byworth, springing from the ridges, of which illustrations are given on plates 43, 44, 45 and 46, together with those at Hawkhurst, Ticehurst, Beckley and Mayfield, though all similar in detail, are very unlike in plan, while at Wadhurst and Tenterden are some particularly eccentric in their arrangement. (See fig. 15.)

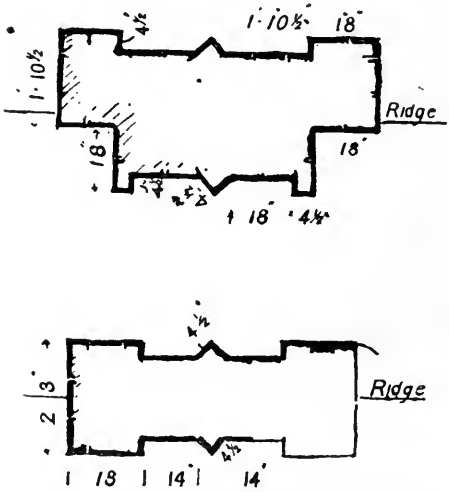

Fig. 15.—A favourite type of Chimney at Ticehurst.

When springing out of the roof, the chimneys are lofty, and rise sheer up without mouldings or bases, beyond one or two plain projecting courses set on each face; the roof tiles are weathered up to the base of the stacks and no lead is used at all, but the detail of the oversailing courses and the general arrangement of the caps is almost identical in all of them, showing how the tradition was handed on from house to house. See figs. 16 and 17.

In those parts of Sussex and Kent where stone was freely quarried, many of the cottages are built of it, but here, as in other districts in England, the builders were confronted with the difficulty of carrying up the stacks above the roof-line in stone. The nature

of the stone was such that it did not lend itself to the customary separate shafts, formed of thin slabs, set on edge one over the other, like the Northamptonshire and Yorkshire chimneys, and to take them up in ordinary stone walling would have made them altogether too cumbrous and bulky, so that before leaving the roof, the stone was abandoned and brick unreservedly used as a substitute. Hence it is that we so frequently see in this part of England the pleasing combination of the base of the stack, which generally projects from the face of the wall, being built of stone, and the shafts above the sloping set-offs, where it diminishes, being in red brick.

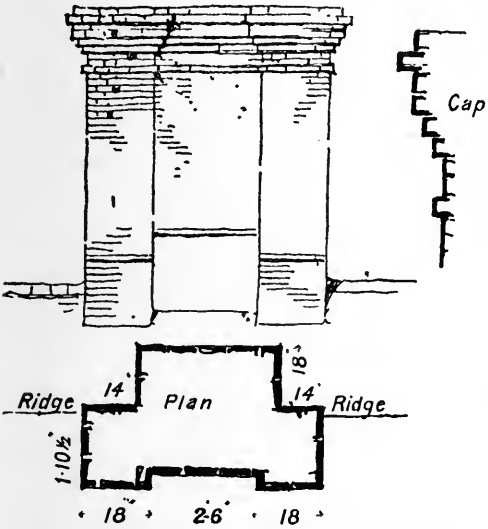

Fig. 16.—Chimney Stack, Udimore, Sussex.

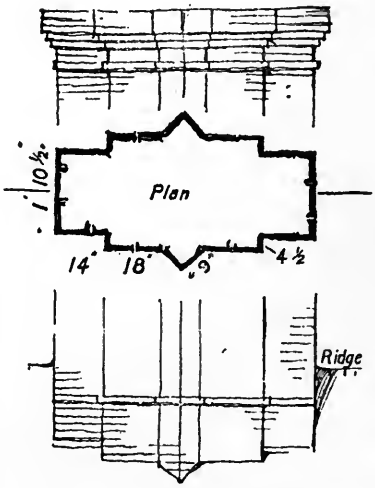

Fig. 17.—Chimney, Kilndown.

In the country around Pulborough and Petworth, a district of stone, there are many beautiful examples of this treatment, the lower portion sometimes forming a large ingle recess lighted by small windows. The sloping sides of the roof are tiled and finished on

the outer edge by a series of brick crow-steps, and the stack is then carried up either in detached shafts or in a clustered group.

Some excellent examples are found at Tillington, and Bean Lodge, near Petworth, and one at Penshurst, illustrated on plates 47, 48, 49 and 50, in which the shafts are separate and placed diagonally, each face being made 2½ bricks in width, a proportion that is universally observed, and one that always gives satisfactory results.

In the house at Lamberhurst (plate 51) and at Wadhurst, there are some fine chimneys with detached octagonal shafts, and in numerous other parts of the county interesting examples are to be found, though the most usual treatment is the simple central stack, with plain oversailing courses as a cap.

In the district round Robertsbridge particularly, there are some peculiar tops to the chimneys, a sort of cylindrical brick cap, plastered over, tapered in shape, and forming a kind of rude chimney pot; these were evidently built at the same time as the stacks.

In the house near Sedlescombe, dated 1604 (plate 52), the chimney stack at the gable end is finished with a richly moulded base and shaft above, formed of one square set diagonally over the other in plan, a common arrangement in many other parts of England about this period, and one that is repeated again in the chimneys of Brook House, near Crowborough. At Chelsfield and Tunstall Manor are some elaborate stacks (see fig. 18) with panels sunk and filled with plaster; a somewhat similar treatment, but all in brick, being found in the very bold central chimney at Swiggshole Farm, near Horsmonden, illustrated on plates 53 and 54.

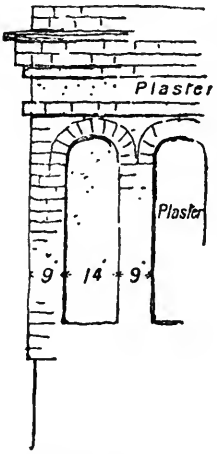

Fig. 18.—Chimney, Tunstall Manor, Kent.

The ingenious way in which these chimneys were managed invariably excites a feeling of admiration, for simple as they are, built of plain unmoulded bricks, the old builders always obtained satisfactory results, and a breadth and sense of proportion sadly lacking in cottage chimneys of the present day.

In these old cottage buildings, as we noticed before, the roof is one of the principal features in the construction, sheltering the whole house and conveying at once a kindly feeling of homeliness. It is always bold in outline, simple in plan and picturesque in grouping and arrangement, and there is no doubt that these Kent and Sussex houses owe a great deal of their charm to the fact that the roofs are so unbroken in their surface and treatment.

If we except an occasional dormer looking somewhat out of place, the roofs consist of simple spans, and in the earlier houses, uninterrupted by gables or projections, but carried through from end to end and hipped from all corners. Typical examples of this treatment of the roof can be noticed in the illustrations from Tenterden, Chiddingly, Sissinghurst, Pattenden, and many others. See plates 1, 3, 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 25 and 30. Sometimes when the chimney stacks are at each end, the roof is carried through and finished with gables, as in the case of the houses at Lamberhurst and Sedlescombe, shown on plates 52 and 53.

In the tiled and thatched roofs, hips are more frequently met with than gables, and hardly a roof seems complete without them, though where stone walling and mullioned windows are used, gables are more noticeable, as, indeed, is the case elsewhere in England.

The old red tiles that we find on the roofs of the cottages and buildings are thicker and more unevenly burnt than our modern ones of to-day. The holes for the pegs or rails are not so accurately placed, and the general effect of the irregularity of the

tiling and the texture of the surface, produces a softness and delicate play of light and shade that is very pleasing.

This diversity of surface can be seen in many of the illustrations given, but more particularly in the house at Swaylands, near Penshurst, and in the cottages at Goudhurst (plates 55 and 56) where the strongly accentuated and characteristic treatment of the hips can be noticed.

The plain half round ridge tile is the invariable rule, one, indeed, that might well be followed to-day, for perhaps no simpler or more satisfactory finish to a tiled roof has yet been found.

A picturesque feature, though a small one, of the roofs are the small gables at the juncture of the hips. When the gables are cut back, or hipped (a very favourite treatment in this district), the hip rafters are tenoned into the nearest common rafters at a lower level than the ridge, and the small triangular space is then either hung with tiles or plastered (see plates 56, 57 and 58).

Another feature in the roofs is the pleasant way in which the eaves of the cropped or hipped gables project some little distance in front of the other tiling, giving a strong line of shade—an instance is illustrated at Limden Farm, near Ticehurst, on plate 44, and it may also be noticed in Wadhurst and many other houses throughout the district.

Thatched roofs are frequently met with, and here the hip treatment is even more prevalent than with the tiled ones. At Amberley, Littleworth, Burwash (plates 59 to 65), and various other places, there are excellent examples, in many of which the roofs are continued down over the low wings at either end of the cottages.

There is no doubt that these old cottages gather a great deal of their charm and simple picturesqueness from the fact that the roofs are so unbroken in their surface and treatment, and though the

little use to which the space inside was devoted, and the apparent wastefulness of their construction, would appall the modern builder, yet it is this same evident disregard of economy that makes them so effective. Quite apart from anything else, a roof of high pitch unbroken or cut up, has a value, and gives a character to the building it covers which is distinctly pleasing.

Many of the Sussex houses in the stone districts are covered with the Horsham stone slates, thick and heavy, and somewhat incongruous amongst the red tiling, some examples being found on plates 3, 66, 67 and 68. The slates are very large at the eaves and diminish in the usual manner to the ridge, but they lack the finish and texture of the small Cotswold stone slates, and are more nearly allied to the heavy roofs of Lancashire and Yorkshire. We notice that directly these slates are used, the pitch of the roof is flattened, for these old builders, so sound in their practical knowledge, at once recognised the impossibility of covering with heavy stone slates steeply sloping sides, where all the drag and strain would be on the pegs and laths, and to this can doubtless be attributed the reason of our constantly finding these roofs cemented and stopped with mortar, for their flat pitch has the disadvantage of not always keeping the wet out, without extraneous aid.

In many parts of Sussex, and particularly in the neighbourhood around Petworth, a group of houses is to be met with in which an admixture of stone, locally quarried, is used with brick. Examples will be found on plates 69–72. The mullions, doorways, and general walling are of stone, with the label mouldings, strings and arches in brick, and though hardly the treatment one is accustomed to see, it has a local character and individuality that is very pleasing. In Kent there are also many instances of flint and brick buildings, the post office at Wickham being perhaps one of the

best. It has one long roof, with crow-stepped gables and chimneys at either end, and with gabled projections on the sides, in one of which is the arched entrance porch. The walls are of flint and stone in checkered squares, with the gables and chimneys in brick, the whole making a delightful composition, both in design and colour (see plates 73 and 74).

Though plaster was the more general filling between the timbers of the houses, yet brick is occasionally used, and there are several instances to be seen, one of which at Orpington is shown on plates 75 and 76, where the bricks are placed herring-bone fashion.

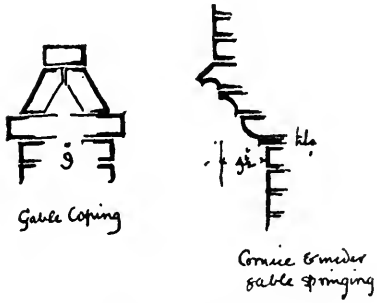

Fig. 19.—Details at Post Office, Wickhambreaux.

In the flint and chalk districts of West Sussex we find the former material adopted (plate 77), while stone is used in other parts of the county, in fact it is this invariable use of the local material at hand that makes these houses so human and so interesting.

When speaking of roofs and walls, we naturally come to consider a method very frequently seen, namely, the hanging tiles, perhaps the most striking characteristic of the cottages and buildings in a very large part of Kent and Sussex. Hardly a house is to be seen in which it is not used—in some the upper storey only is covered, in others the gables, and in others again almost the entire house down to the ground, and various examples will be found on plates 78 to 84. This treatment is, of course, too well known to need any special description, but one or two points in connection with it might be emphasized.

As noticed previously, many of the tiled houses are the old

timber-framed ones, their general outline and arrangement being often visible under their new veneer; but in the 18th century, the method of tile hanging was adopted very freely, and much of the new building was treated in this pleasant manner.

As a rule the tiles used for hanging on the walls were flatter and thinner than those on the roofs, owing probably to the process of selection, and they were bedded solid in mortar, making an absolutely waterproof wall. They finished close up against the window frames, with no mouldings or finishings of any kind, two or three courses being tilted out slightly over the window heads and at the bottom of the vertical hanging, which in nearly every case is brought down to the top of the ground-floor windows. In much of the work the tiles merely butted against wooden angle fillets, though in some cases those purposely made for angles are used.

The close adherence to these few ways of using the tiles, makes the houses of Kent, Surrey, and Sussex so attractive. There is always a compactness and trimness about them, that shows how thoroughly the builders understood the purpose of the tile hanging as a protection against the inclemency of the weather, and how by confining themselves to using it in a legitimate manner, they obtained such satisfactory and picturesque results.

We notice that as soon as they began to indulge in the use of fish-tailed or fancy tiling the general effect became somewhat marred, and though perhaps a few interspersed here and there in occasional bands may not be detrimental, yet when entire houses are covered, the feeling of repose is certainly missing. The old house at Robertsbridge, shown on plate 11, is an instance in point.

There is so much of this delightful tile work all through the district, that no one particular village can be singled out for special notice, but in Goudhurst, quaintly perched on the crest of a hill, are

some very charming examples, several with the tiling brought down nearly to the ground; and in Wadhurst a group of old gabled houses surrounding the churchyard are particularly pleasing and picturesque.

Fig. 20.—House Front at Canterbury.

These notes would be incomplete without reference to the quiet plaster fronted houses which abound in both counties, and in Kent in particular. These, though somewhat later in date than the timber framed ones, are interesting and suggestive of what might be done to-day, if only our modern building bye-laws were not prohibitive.

Canterbury contains a great deal of this type of building, its chief characteristic being the projecting of each successive storey beyond the one below, carried forward on moulded and carved corbels. Country villages, too, abound with this simple yet effective work, and the contrast of the yellow-white plaster and the tile roofs is very charming. Many of the houses are the old timber ones covered with a plaster skin, and these as in the case of the cottages at Horsmonden, shown on plate 85, are easily distinguishable, but a large number are original in their construction, and were never intended to be finished in any other material than plaster,

as in the case of the houses at Midhurst, shown on plates 86 and 87.

The streets of Canterbury contain a typical series of plaster-fronted houses, all with gables facing the roadway, with richly moulded facias and barge boards, ornamented with pendants and terminals. The oriel windows under overhanging storeys are a common

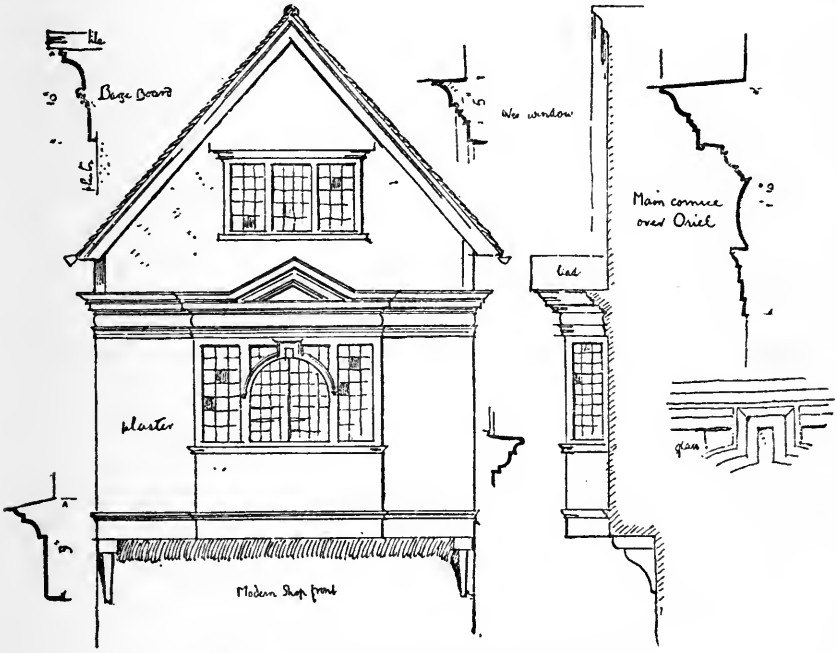

Fig. 21.—Plaster-fronted House at Canterbury.

feature, sometimes carried on brackets, as in the house in North Lane, on plate 88, or occasionally swung out at the level of the floor, with the facia running across the full width of the house, as at the well-known Fallstaff Inn, and the houses opposite, in St. Dunstan's Street, shown in plates 89 and 90. The excellent joinery of the windows and woodwork generally is well worthy of notice. (See fig. 21.)

The weather-boarded houses must not be overlooked, for these again are typical of the district and are treated in a thoroughly architectural manner and with due appreciation of the material. The boarding, some 6 or 7 inches wide as a rule, butts against upright fillets at the angles, as in the case of much of the weather tiling, but often it is mitred and continuous around the whole building, as at Hawkhurst. (See plates 91 and 92.) When quietly treated, as at Hurst Green, Mayfield, Cockshott, and in the picturesque old mill at Witherden, it is peculiarly effective, the material being generally deal, painted a pale stone colour. Examples are given on plates 93, 94, 95 and 96. As mentioned previously, owing to the shrinkage of the timber, etc., many of the old framed houses were covered with tiling or boarding, and elm was often used for this purpose, with the edges left following the line of the trees growth, and when exposed to the weather it bleached to silvery grays and russets. The house at Sissinghurst, on plate 97, which is one of early date, is cased in boarding of this kind.

Frequently, also, the boarding was tarred, making a very effective contrast with the red roofs and walls.

The coast towns and villages in this corner of England contain houses different in many ways from the inland ones we have been speaking of, and bear evidences of the influence of foreign intercourse and exchange of ideas. The gabled houses of the towns and villages along the N.E. coast of Kent show Dutch feeling and detail, instances being given from Canterbury and Wingham, figs. 22 and 23, and the brick and flint work is a study in itself, evidencing a different school of thought from that of the East Anglian villages.

Here again there is much excellent brick work of the 18th century, both plain and moulded, and in Deal there is a beautiful

series of wooden windows and delicately moulded shop fronts, which are unique in their way and excellent examples of joinery. The bay windows of these seaside towns are a feature in themselves, carried up as they often are from the ground to the tops of the houses, sometimes four and five storeys high, and three-sided, or, as in Brighton and other of the south coast towns, semi-circular on plan, built of small squared flints, which in later years have been coated with tar.

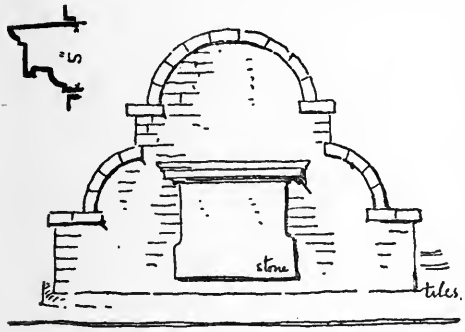

Fig. 22.—Gable over Entrance to Maynard's Spital, Canterbury.

The two counties of Kent and Sussex contain so many and such admirable examples of simple building, from the early timber framed houses to the later 18th century brick ones, that their careful study would amply repay the lover of homely English architecture, and though it is beyond the scope of these few notes to deal with their characteristics in detail, yet perhaps enough has been said to arouse a deeper interest in a subject that has not received as much appreciation as it merits, and to help in the study of the following beautiful series of plates which show examples of well-nigh every type, and cannot fail to give point to these remarks.

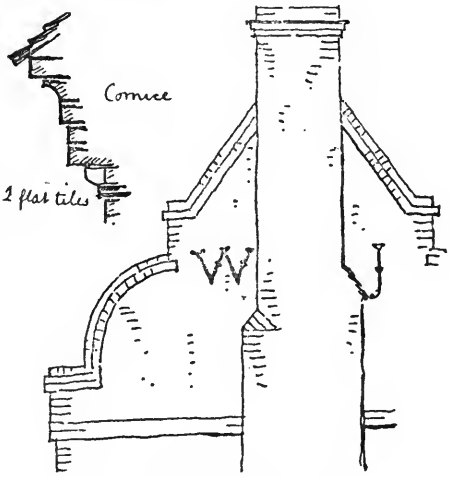

Fig. 23.—Gable at Wingham, Kent.

And in conclusion, is it out of place to raise a plea on behalf of these eloquent though silent witnesses to the craftsmanship of our village ancestors, and to urge that those who have the care or reparation of old cottages and farmhouses should treat them with a gentle hand and tender regard. Unfortunately, many are being swept away, and the dwellings of our forefathers, so closely interwoven with the life and history of the country, and possessing such an intensely human interest, are being rapidly destroyed, in many cases to make way for what can only be regarded as but doubtful improvements. Go where we will amongst these old villages and country towns and contemplate any old building, untouched by the hand of the "restorer," and it is impossible not to be impressed by its beauty and subtle charm: the mullioned windows and latticed frames, the tiled roofs a kaleidoscope of varied colours, the venerable walls covered with lichens, the absence of any meretricious or needless ornament, and the wonderful feeling of homeliness that pervades every feature, all combine to produce the very essence of simple and beautiful architecture.

I do not suggest that merely for the sake of their antiquity or picturesqueness unhealthy or insanitary houses should be retained; but I do most strongly urge, that where it is possible to save them, we should hesitate before breaking any of the few remaining links that bind the villages and country towns of to-day with the interests and associations of the past.

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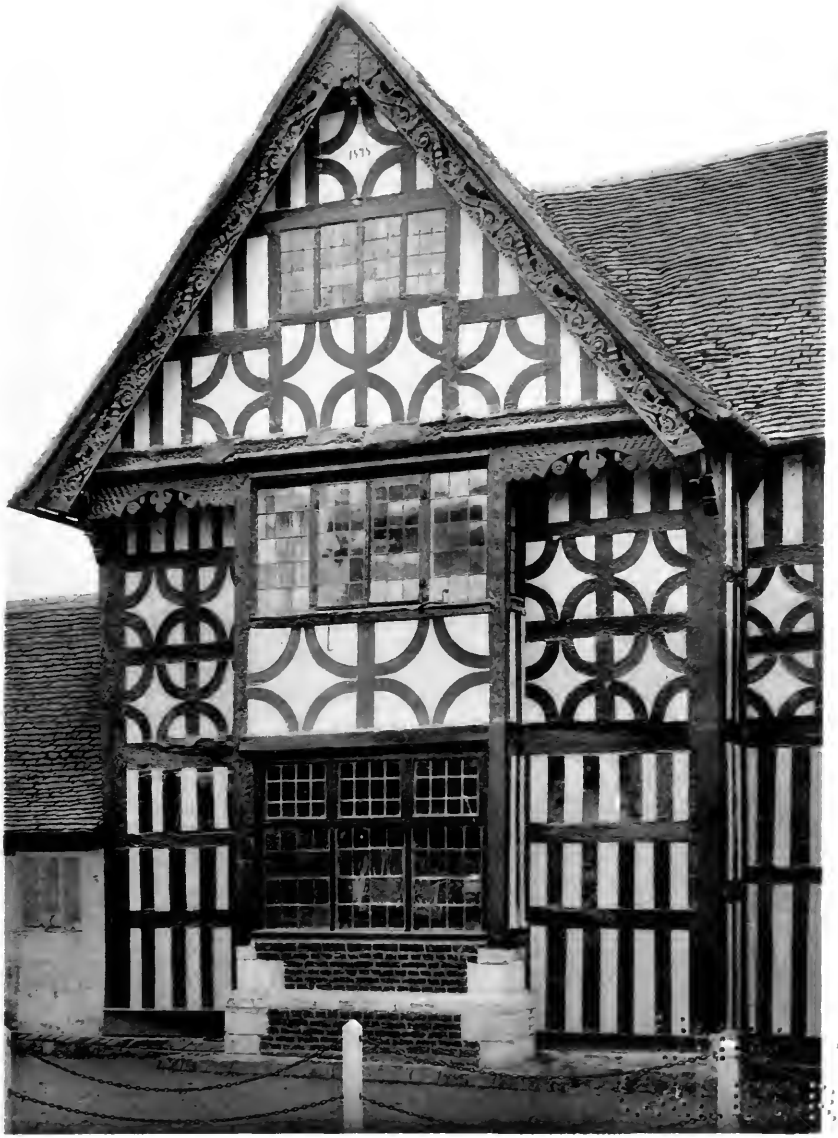

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СУГЛОВИЧ
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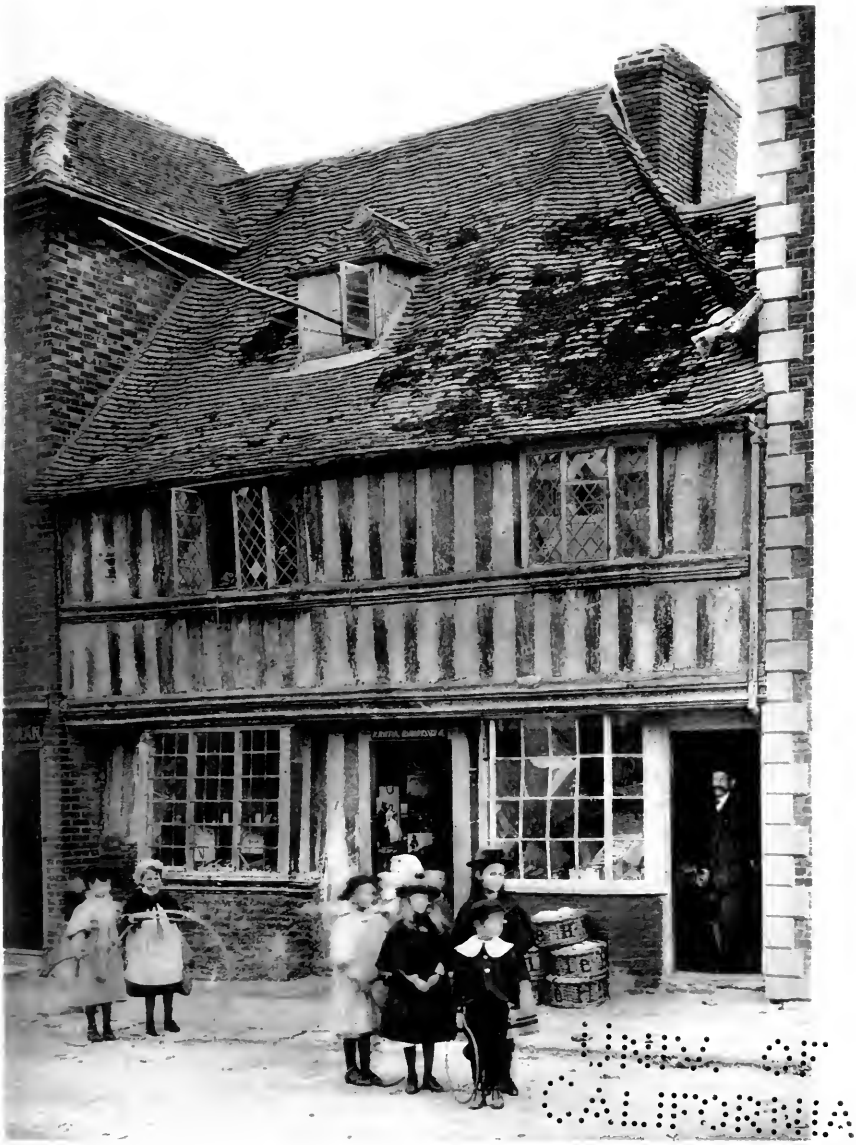
Pl. 17.



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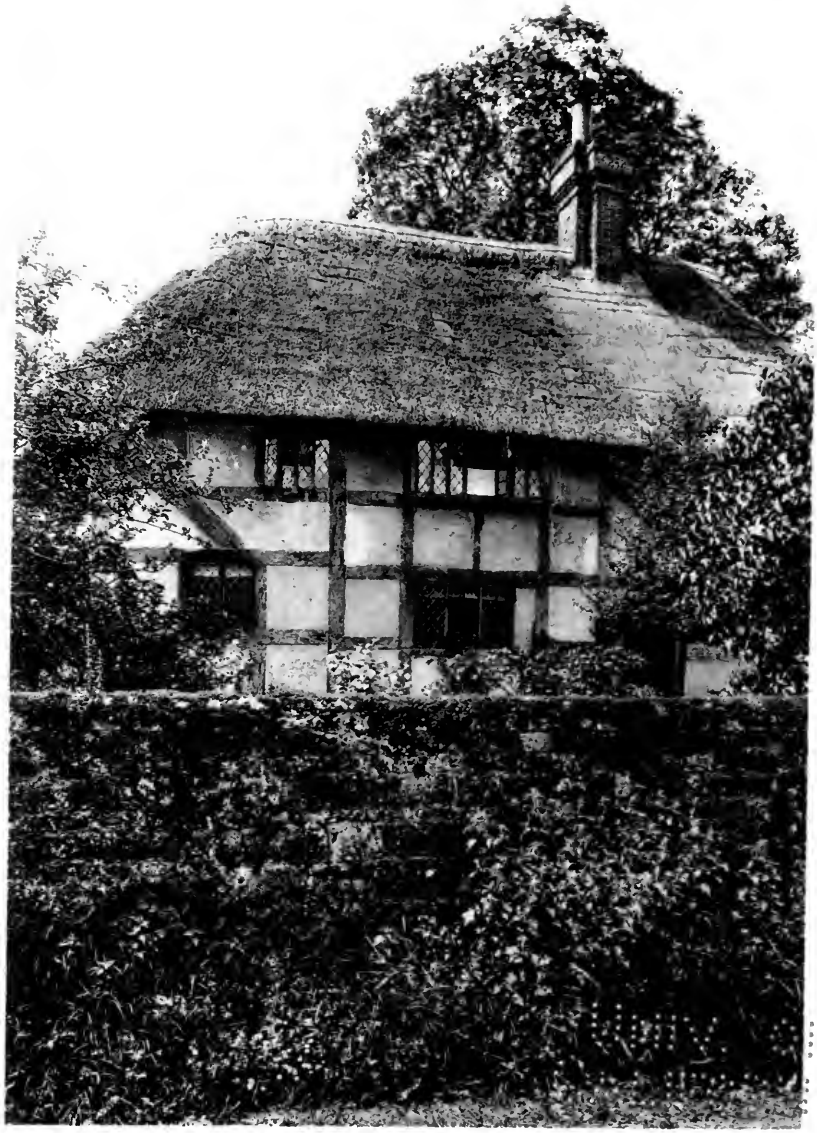

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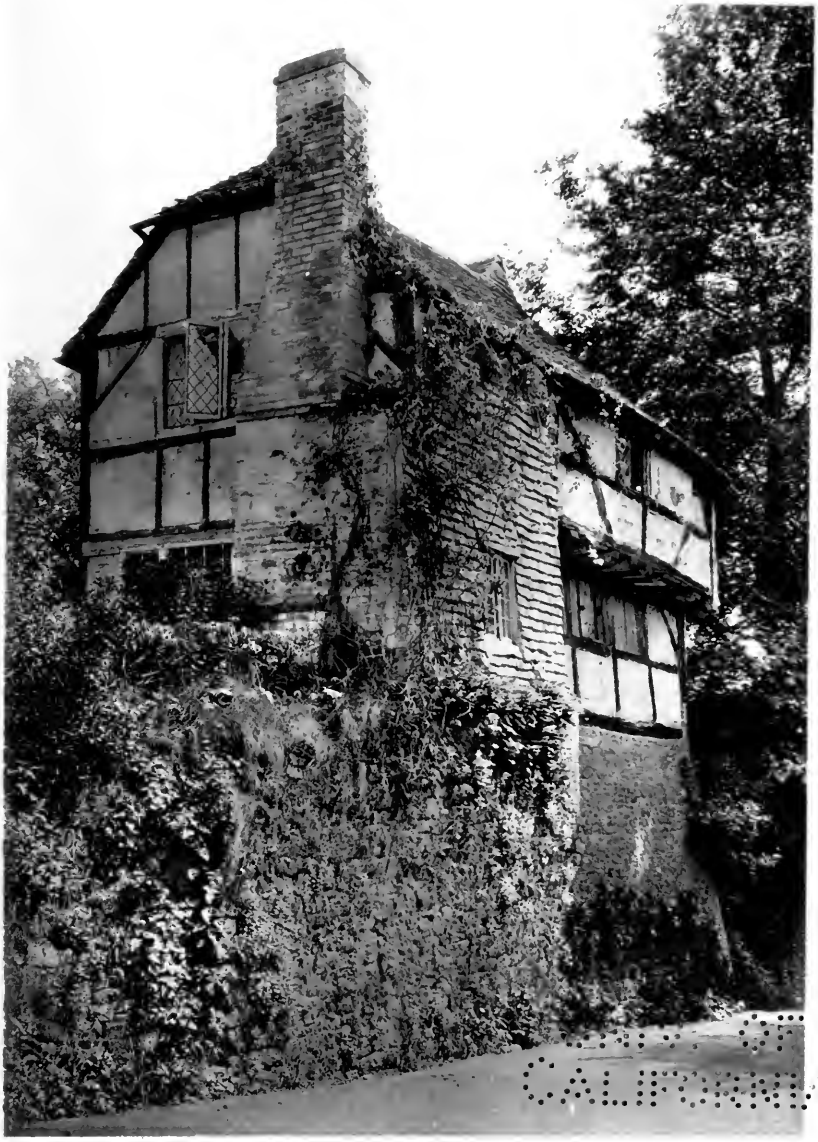

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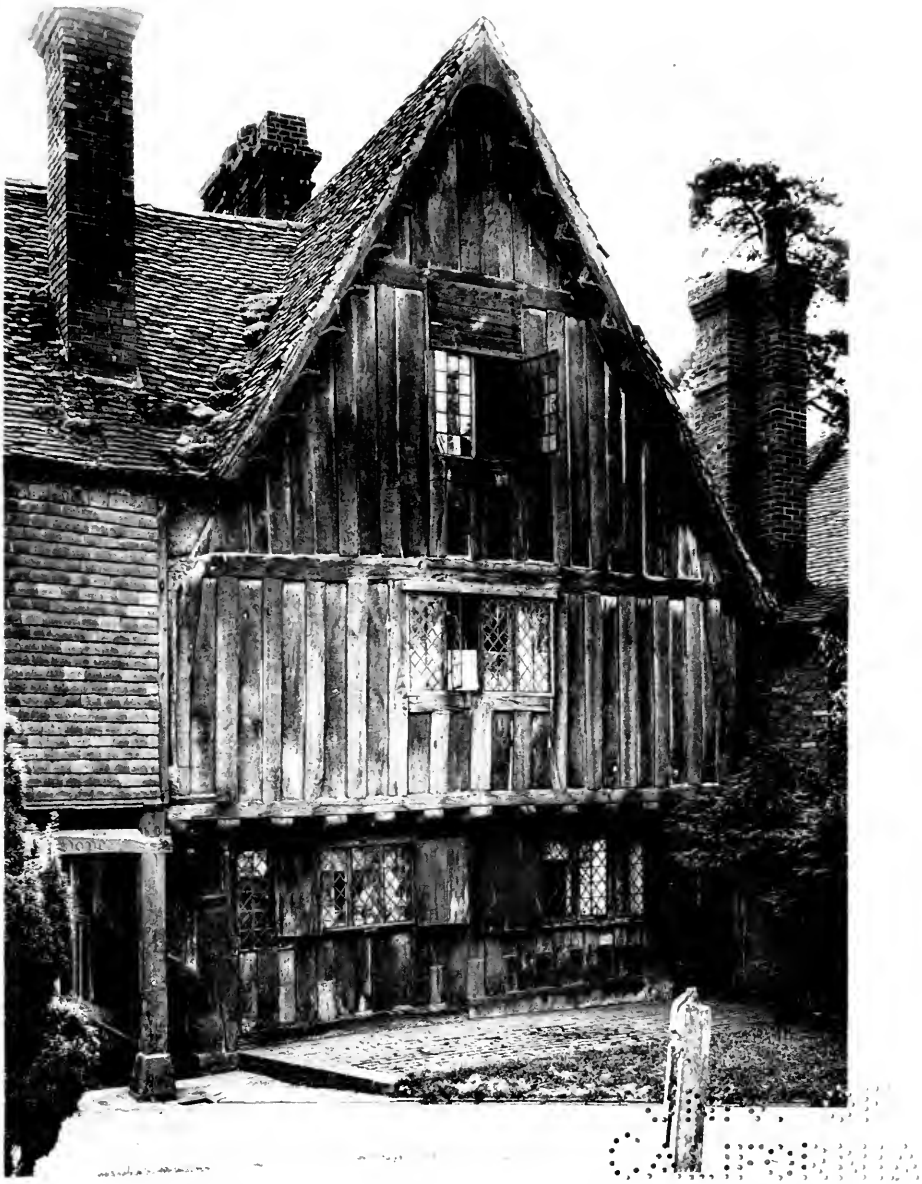

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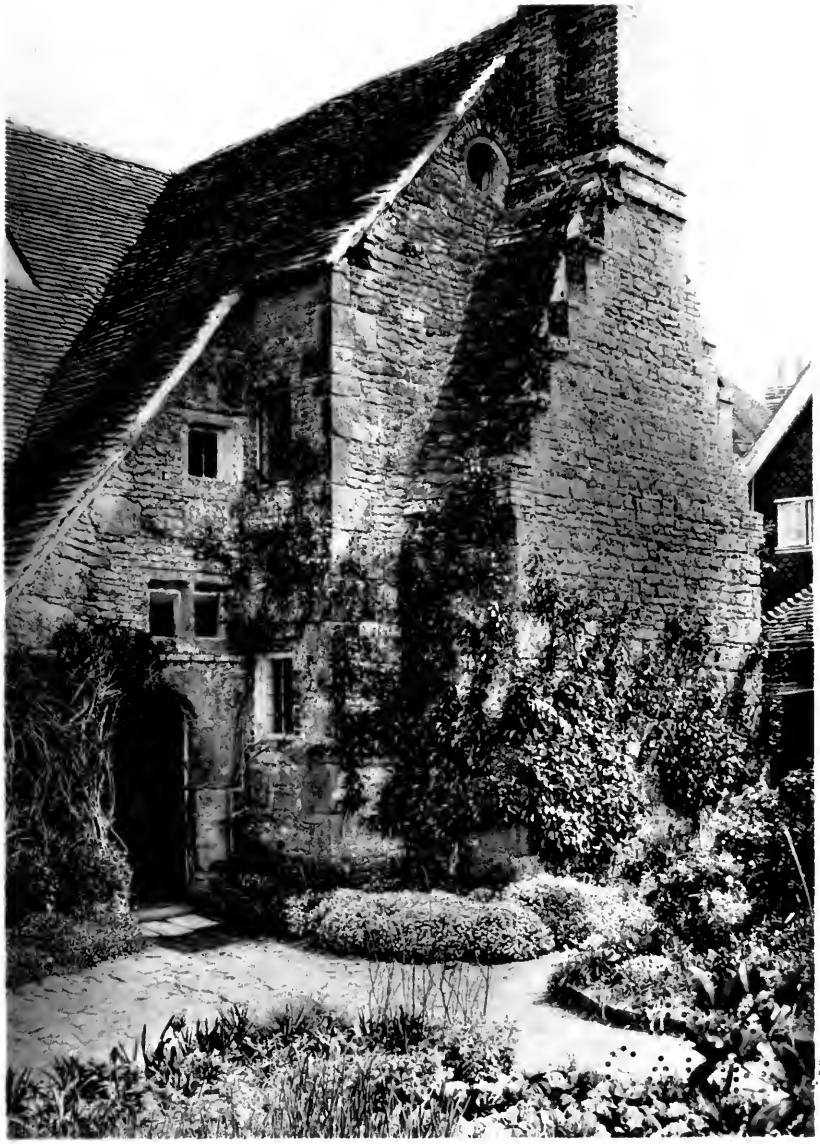

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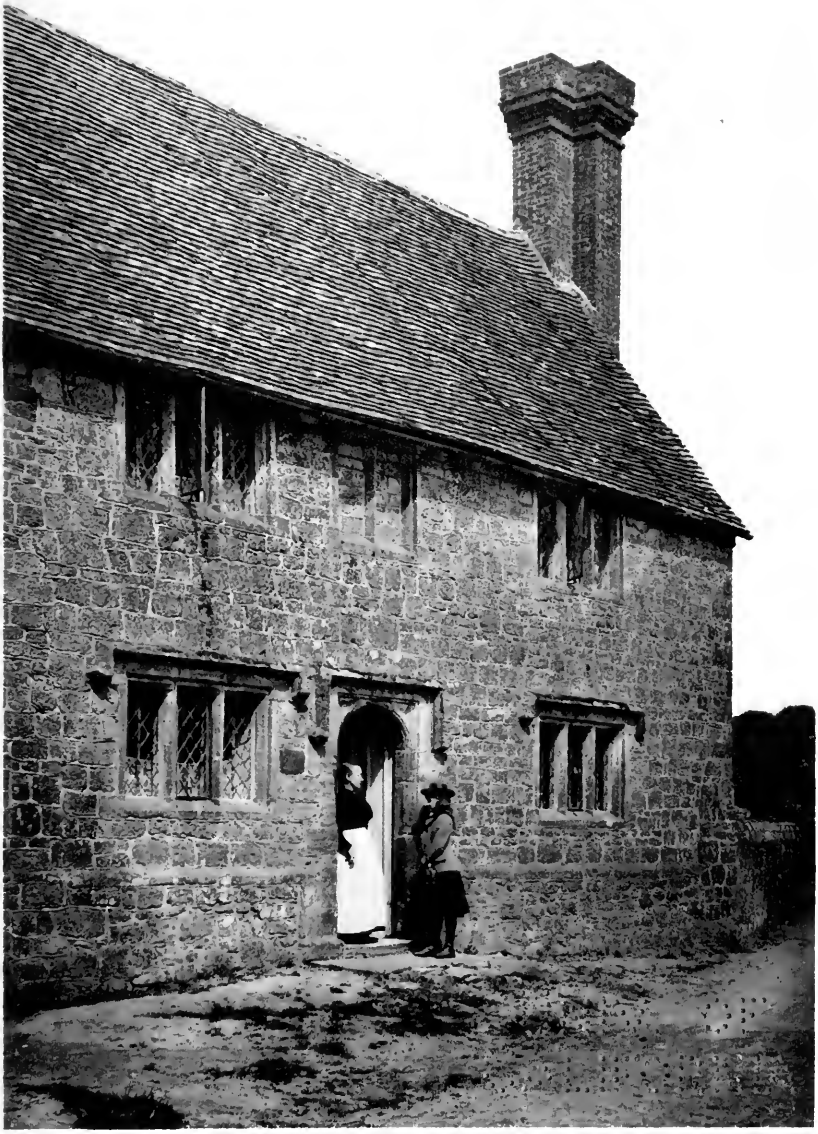

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TRIAL 02

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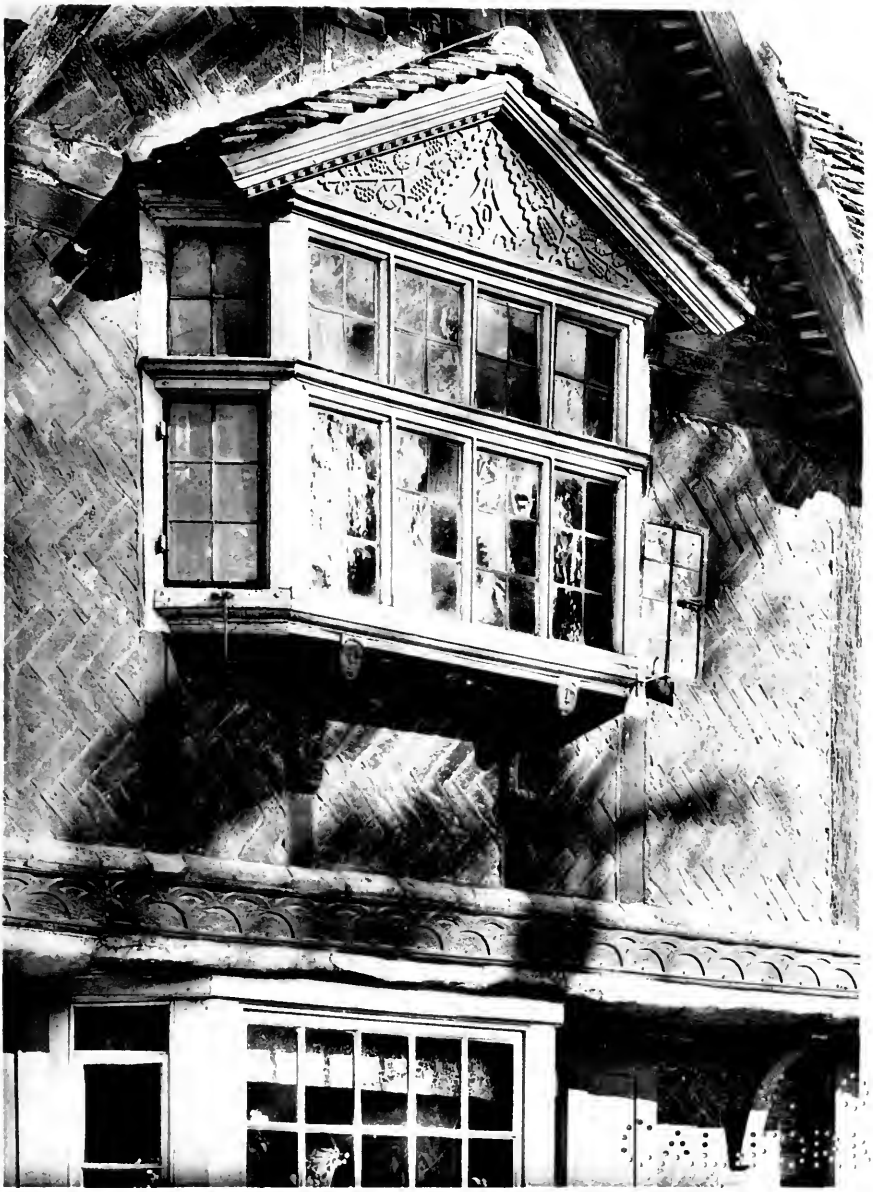

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IN ST. DUNSTAN'S STREET, CANTERBURY, KENT.

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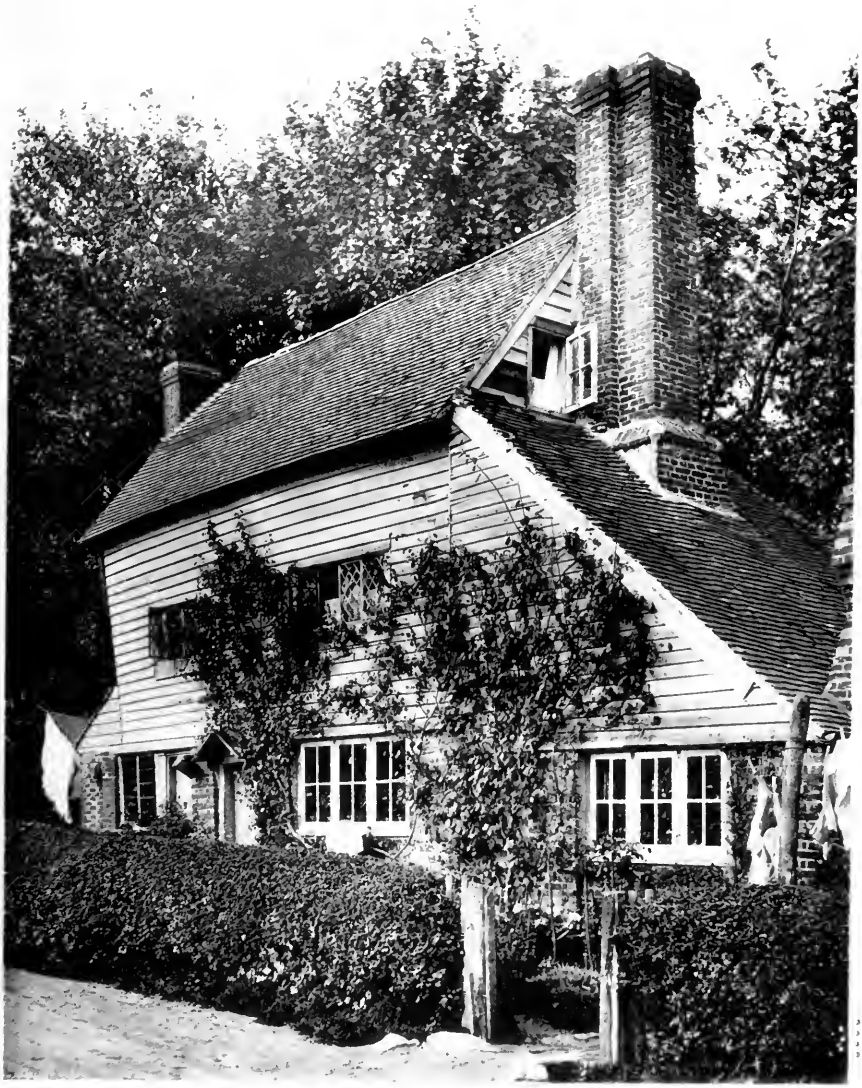
MARKET CROSS HOUSE, HAWKHURST, KENT.

AT HAWKHURST, KENT.

BORROWED

AT HURST GREEN, SUSSEX.

CYTHARBRY
DMV 9L



AT MAYFIELD, SUSSEX.

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COCKSHOT COTTAGES, BETWEEN HAWKHURST AND HIGHGATE, KENT.

WITHERENDEN MILL, TICEHURST, SUSSEX.

AT SISSINGHURST, KENT.

COTTAGES AT MINSTER, KENT.

AT RYE, SUSSEX.

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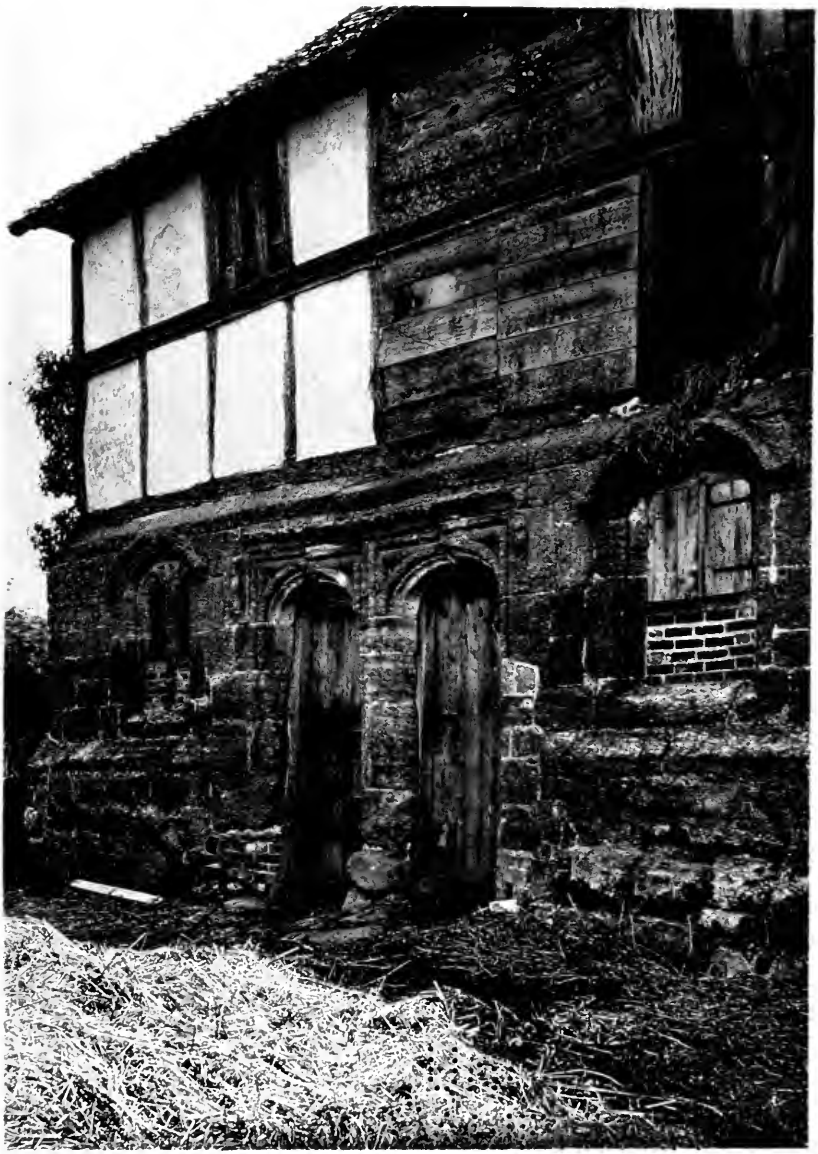

IN FARMYARD, PULBOROUGH, WEST SUSSEX.

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14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

LOAN DEPARTMENT

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