

the end of the XVIIth century, they were sold to pay the debts of the owner. In 1714 the estates came into the possession of a family called Bligh, one of whom, in 1725, was created Earl of Darnley. This family still possess the estate. The park is extensive; some of the oaks are more than twenty feet in girth. The park had the reputation of producing excellent venison. Queen Elizabeth and Charles II. both visited Cobham. Driving past the lodge, we set out for Rochester. The view as you descend the valley of the Medway, through Strood, is grand. The city of Rochester as it rises from the slope across the Medway presents a perfect picture. In the foreground is the massive stone bridge spanning the river. From the bank, building rises upon building till they reach their crowning glory in the ancient Cathedral and the castle. The most prominent feature is the Norman keep, hoary with age, and covered to the summit with clinging ivy. Somewhat lower down and behind is to be seen the tower of the Cathedral.

"What a study for an antiquarian!" were the very words which fell from Mr. Pickwick's mouth, as he applied the telescope to his eye.

"Ah! fine place," said the stranger, "glorious pile—frowning walls—tottering arches—dark nooks—crumbling stair-cases—old cathedral, too—earthy smell—pilgrims' feet worn away the old steps—little Saxon doors—confessionals like money-takers' boxes at theatres—queer customers, those monks—Popes, and Lord Treasurers, and all sorts of old fellows, with greai red faces, and broken noses, turning up every day—buff jerkins, too—matchlocks—sarcophagus—fine place—old legends, too—strange stories: capital."

"The principal productions of these towns (Rochester and its suburbs)," says Mr. Pickwick, "appear to be soldiers, sailors, Jews, chalk, shrimps, officers and dockyard men."

Clattering across the bridge, which is a handsome stone structure, we drove up the High street and pulled up at the old "Bull" inn, now the Victoria and Bull. It has the usual notice up outside that it is mentioned in Pickwick. It is a quaint place, with wainscoted walls. Although the inn is old the charges are very modern. It will be remembered that in an upper room in this building took place the memorable ball in which Jingle insulted the redoubtable Dr. Slammer. The castle is an imposing structure, consisting of a massive Norman keep and the remains of its guarding walls. The keep is grey with age and covered in part by ivy. It now serves the more peaceful purpose of a pigeon-loft. The grounds are laid out in picturesque gardens overlooking the Medway, and contain an elegant memorial of the Queen's Jubilee in a Queen Margaret Cross.

The castle is said to have been built by Gundulph, Bishop of Rochester, towards the end of the XIth century. Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, to whom the town had been granted by his half-brother the Conqueror, was besieged here because of his implication in a conspiracy in favor of Robert of Normandy. King John, Simon de Montfort, and Wat Tyler also besieged it.

A grand tournament was held in the castle by Henry III. in 1251. The structure was repaired by Edward IV., but soon after fell into decay.

Rochester was the seat of a church, founded by Augustine as early as 604 A.D. This edifice was partly destroyed by the Danes, and was rebuilt by Bishop Gundulph at the beginning of the XIIth century. The building is comparatively small, being only 310 feet in length. It is very plain inside, but contains a fine crypt.

To get into the choir you must ascend a flight of steps. There are a number of interesting tombs, among them one to the Worthy Master Richard Watts, who founded a charity near by "for six poor travellers, who, not being rogues or proctors, may receive gratis for one night, lodging, entertainment and fourpence each." The glory of the cathedral is its magnificent west front, with a richly carved door in the Norman style.

Through Rochester, the Roman *Durobrivae* passes the Roman road, Watling street. Many a time must the Canterbury pilgrims, leaving the Tabard inn in the Borough, have travelled over this road to worship at the shrine of the good St. Thomas of Canterbury.

Repassing the bridge, where our readers will no doubt remember Mr. Pickwick had his colloquy with the dismal man, we at length reached Gadshill. This is a hill, as its name signifies. At the top is a large house, which, though somewhat altered in appearance, is substantially the same as when Dickens owned it. Here in the retirement of a charming country district beloved by all around, Dickens lived for the last years of his life, and produced many of his best works. The inspiration of the place clings about his writings in an unmistakable manner. Frequently he used to saunter through the pleasant walks of Cobham Park, and even pursued his journey up to London. In many of his shorter pieces he describes the delight he felt in doing this. Gadshill is also famous in Shakespeare's *Henry IV.*, where Falstaff and the riotous Prince Hal waylay some honest travellers, and Falstaff gets rather the worst of it. This is commemorated by the Sir John Falstaff Inn near by. Leaving Gadshill the road leads by the quaint old church of Chalk with its curious sun-dial, through Milton and back to Gravesend. This whole region is of great beauty and interest to those who are historically and artistically inclined. Lying in the stream at Gravesend afforded opportunities for considerable thought and romancing. Every few moments steamers were coming and going forward to all parts of the world. The amount of traffic is enormous. It happened to be Whitmonday when we were there. As a consequence, all "Lunnon" was out. Countless excursion steamers came down on their way to Southend, Margate, Ramsgate and other places, crowded to the top of their funnels. The 'Arrys and 'Arriets were all there; babies squalling, mouth-organs and key-bugles playing; pandemonium everywhere. Various sweet melodies of the day, such as "Ta-ra-ra-boom-de-ay" and "Get yer 'air cut," floated across the