

soul-struggle fought out on this very ground, we may expect to find in that poem many local references. To this place often came Arthur Hallam "from brawling courts and dusty purlieus of the law" to drink the cooler air and mark "the landscape winking through the heat." Here often he joined the rector's happy family "in dance and song and game and jest." To this place was brought the cruel news of Hallam's death which felled the poet's sister in a swoon and turned her orange-flowers to cypress. Here for many gloomy years the broken-hearted poet plied the "sad mechanic exercise" of writing verse to soothe his restless heart and brain.

Adjoining the birthplace of the poet, and partitioned from it by a row of trees is "The Moated Grange," with which all readers of Tennyson have become familiar in the sad lyric of "Mariana." It is a desolate looking place and a fit abode for the forlorn maiden who cried in her despair :

"I am aweary, aweary,  
I would that I were dead."

The Grange is interesting because of its connection with another of Tennyson's poems. The old house is the reputed residence of John Baumber, the Northern Farmer. In the churchyard opposite I read the names of many Baumbers, that being the commonest name on the tombstones.

The only other structure of interest in Somersby is the little church of which Tennyson's father was rector for many years. It is very small and very old.

When, a few years after his father's death, the Tennysons departed from Somersby "to live within the stranger's land" we hear a minor chord in the great memorial elegy sounding thus :

"Our father's dust is left alone  
And silent under other snows ;  
There in due time the woodbine blows,  
The violet comes, but we are gone."

About a furlong beyond Somersby Church is one of the prettiest spots this

dull old earth can show,—*"Holywell Glen :*"

"Here are cool mosses deep,  
And through the moss the ivies creep,  
And in the stream the long-leaved flowers  
weep,  
And from the craggy ledge the poppy hangs  
in sleep."

Its a wild, romantic spot—the favorite haunt, we may be sure, of the poet's boyhood. Trees of many kinds—larch and spruce and ash and beech and sycamore—clothe the steep sides of a natural terrace that slopes down to the bottom of a gorge through which flows a limpid stream. This beautiful glen takes its name from a natural well over which the stream courses. Long years ago, it is said, visitors came from far and near to taste of this "holy well" and to enjoy its healing virtues. If the water of this well has no supernatural merits, I can at least attest its superior quality, taking a draught of it, as I did, in my extremity of thirst on a warm August afternoon.

I had always clung to the ancient saying that poets are born, not made. My views are somewhat altered since I have seen the glories of Holywell Glen and all the enchantments of rustic Somersby. Here, if anywhere, nature could inspire the most sluggish spirit and put some music into the tamest heart.

But I must leave this rustic nook and this quiet hamlet. As I leave Somersby behind and climb the hill on the road to Horncastle I recall those sad stanzas of "In Memoriam" in which Tennyson gives voice to his regret at leaving forever the home and the haunts of his young days :

"I climb the hill ; from end to end  
Of all the landscape underneath,  
I find no place that does not breathe  
Some gracious memory of my friend.

No gray old grange, or lonely fold,  
Or low morass and whispering reed,  
Or simple style from mead to mead,  
Or sheepwalk up the windy wold ;

Nor heavy knoll of ash and haw  
That hears the latest linnnet trill,  
Nor quarry trench'd along the hill,  
And haunted by the wrangling daw ;