

THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649089789

The English countryside by Ernest C. Pulbrook

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

ERNEST C. PULBROOK

**THE ENGLISH
COUNTRYSIDE**

THE · ENGLISH
COUNTRYSIDE



1. STREATLEY MILL, BERKSHIRE.

Drawn by A. E. Newscombe.

THE ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE

By
ERNEST C. PULBROOK



OF
SPAIN

LONDON
B·T·BATSFORD·LTD : 94·HIGH·HOLBORN

1915

DA 667
P8

*Our little land of shine and rain,
Our land of grey and green,
The stubble-field, the shady lane,
Each old familiar scene;
The bare-backed cliffs, the rippled sand,
The closely girding waves.
And, in hushed nooks of hallowed land,
Those dear sequestered graves.*

JESSIE POPE.

NO. 1000
ANNAPOLIS

PREFACE

WE live in times when change is so rapid that customs and institutions of even a decade ago are no longer familiar. Everywhere the old is giving place to the new, and the methods of our forefathers are too leisurely for this hurrying age. The whole face of England is being rapidly altered, and this is perhaps more noticeable in the country, even in the most remote districts, than in the towns, where we look for change and improvements. So many old landmarks are being swept away that it seems time to call a halt and at least to take a survey before the old is banished by the new. In the towns it is perhaps almost too late to begin to preserve the buildings of the past, but in the country it is different. During most of the nineteenth century the country stagnated while the towns grew and prospered, but now ease of communication and the desire to see the country has brought about a change; the city is being regarded only as a workshop and the country as the place in which to live. People, too, are beginning to understand that rural England is, and has always been, as important as the towns, and that scattered up and down the land are places not only beautiful in themselves, but full of the associations of the past. Each has played its part in the making of England as we know it to-day, and each has some story to tell, if we can only learn to read. An old rubbish heap may contain a wealth of romance, and a commonplace custom may have had its origin in the days when the inhabitants of these islands were little better than barbarians.

Although there is now so much change—perhaps because of it—we all are beginning to understand the romance of old things, and as rural England is gradually becoming one vast holiday resort, we are

learning to take an interest in our priceless heritage. It is not an uncommon occurrence to be asked what that old building is, or the origin of that bridge, or how it comes about that this little village has such a large church. Of course, the answer will be found in many a weighty tome or archæological magazine, but the everyday man has little leisure to enter into close study of such matters, even if he have the inclination. But put the main outlines before him simply and brightly, attract his attention even slightly, and he will begin to discover an interest in the common things to be found all over the country, and to understand something about the wonderful past of England. In these hard-working days the doctors tell us that we want more exercise and more fresh air, but the man born and bred in the town often finds the countryside dull and uninteresting unless he is shown that it is perhaps more attractive than the city, although its delights are more natural and less manufactured. An English landscape is always beautiful, and when we understand something about the cause of its fashioning, interest is added to beauty, so that we find new attractions and new hobbies where we had not expected.

This must be the excuse and the apology for the following pages. They do not contain deep archæological facts or pretend to set forth new historical research, but merely make an attempt to show the ordinary man something of the wonders revealed by a day's walk in any part of England, just the commonplace things that anyone may find for himself without haunting museums or poring over musty documents. They do not claim originality or learning, but are the bold attempt of one who knows and loves the English countryside to awake the same interest in those who may be inclined, perhaps unconsciously, to consider that the towns and cities alone are England. Stern critics may say the picture is over-bright, and that the sombre side of country life is left untouched, but, when all is said and done, there is more cause for gratitude than regret. In these days the tendency is to look on the worst side of things, and the disadvantages of rural England have been painted so frequently of late that a little optimism can do no harm. In a critical study of

PREFACE

vii

the countryside misery would have its place as well as happiness, but in a book which attempts only to set forth its attractions in order to arouse interest, harping on tragedy would do little good and would repel rather than charm. To stimulate knowledge is to awaken sympathy, and one cannot learn to know rural England without wanting to reduce its hardships and relieve its monotony. This cannot be done without knowledge, and you cannot expect to understand the countryman without knowing something of the past and the events that have made his life what it is. And there is true joyousness in the country—the joy of harvest, the joy of a fine evening or the coming of spring, the joy of rain after drought. The country teaches patience and hope ; it soothes the nerves ; and its wide spaces bring content and teach the immensity of things as life in the fretting city can never hope to do. If this book helps some to understand the wonderful interest of any corner of our countryside, and how much of its past is worth preserving, it will not have been written in vain.

E. C. P.

56 CHAPTER ROAD,
WILLESDEN GREEN,
February 1915.