

COTSWOLD CHARACTERS

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Cotswold Characters by John Drinkwater

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JOHN DRINKWATER

**COTSWOLD
CHARACTERS**

Cotswold Characters.

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BY

JOHN DRINKWATER

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Foreword.

THE Cotswold country is, as I think, the most beautiful in England. Not that it is by nature more lovely than that which, perhaps, any county can show. It is a commonplace to us who know this small country of ours that there is hardly any stretch of twenty miles in it which does not flatter us in the belief that there is no more tender or subtle landscape on earth. But the Cotswolds, especially in the more secluded corners, have the added glory of an almost unbroken tradition of character and of building. The country from which these sketches sprang is high up above the great Stroud valley, the neighborhood of the famous wool-staplers of the sixteenth century, when the Cotswold flocks brought those merchants to a prosperity which they spent partly making themselves noble dwelling-places out of the lovely Cotswold stone. The country then bred a great race of masons, and the stock has never died out. I am myself the tenant of a small cottage on a