

We are told that it was a house and thirteen acres of land. The moat may have served for a fish-pond, but it also afforded protection from surprise by reckless or desperate night marauders. It stood on the edge of the wild open heath land, and there can have been no lack of needy wayfarers, ready to enrich themselves by fair means or foul. "The subterranean passage," remarks the writer of the paper in the magazine above quoted, "was no doubt constructed for the purpose of enabling the brethren to pass to and fro from the church unobserved, and, as they may have had no chapel attached to the house, of going unmolested to the vigils and services in the dark nights and mornings. It is then no great stretch of the imagination to picture on this spot the home of a small colony of the Brethren of the Holy Cross—perhaps the home of a few sent down, and changed from time to time, from the convent in the heart of London, just under the fortress walls. The brethren may possibly have had some spiritual charge in the parish. The church, as we have seen, was in the hands of the Priory of S. Mary Overie, the magnificent church of which, under the name of S. Saviour's, Southwark, still attests the splendour of the convent. And it is not unlikely that many of the services in the church here would have been conducted by the brethren from the little convent in the fields close by, even if they were not responsible to the priory for all the duties of the parish. Here, then, on the ground now in great measure covered by dwellings abutting on the road which is known as the Vant Road, stood, in what must have been the seclusion and quiet of perfect country, the moated monastery of which no known trace now remains."

The principal part of the village of Tooting lies about a quarter of a mile to the north of the church, at the junction of the Mitcham Road with that leading to Merton and Epsom. Here, in what is called the Broadway, are several good shops and houses, a large Board School, a bank, the police-station, and other public buildings. Here, too, are one or two fine old mansions with iron gates, most with extensive grounds annexed. One of these, called Fairfield House, is now, and has long been, a collegiate school. Another large house on the north side of the Broadway, called Eldon House, which has been modernised by a facing of stucco, is thought to be part of the mansion once occupied by the Maynards, and which Queen Elizabeth honoured with a visit, as mentioned above. This house, a few years ago, was occupied by a wealthy Portuguese Jew, named Salvador, and some of the contiguous property is now known as the Salvador

estate. At the corner of the Merton Road and Garratt Lane is a large, square, brick-built mansion, with steep roof, called The Limes, from the trees with which its grounds are surrounded. The iron gates and red-brick piers, surmounted by stone urns, are very fine. One of these old mansions was at one time occupied by Lord Trimleston; the rich iron gates bore a coronet as part of its ornamentation. These, however, have been taken away. Sir Richard Blackmore, a city physician and poet, commemorated by Pope, had his country house here:

"Blackmore himself, for any grand effort,
Would drink and doze at Tooting or Earl's Court."

In the main street are two old inns—the "Angel" and the "Castle"—both remarkable for their low rooms and huge beams across the ceiling.

In the centre of the village, close to Tooting Corner, there stood formerly an institution known as Druett's School, devoted to the care of pauper children from some district in London in which the cholera made most fearful ravages in the year 1848, doubtless through bad sanitary arrangements. No less than 120 victims of this epidemic were buried in Tooting churchyard in the course of a fortnight. The view of the building is given in the *Illustrated News* for January, 1849.

In the Longley Road, near the centre of the village, stands the Jewish Convalescent Home, which was founded in 1869 for the reception of Jewish convalescents—men, women, and children.

The greatest and the most celebrated name connected with Tooting is that of Defoe. In the main street of the village, a few yards north of the "Angel" Inn, stands the Defoe Presbyterian Chapel, which is said to have been founded here by that reverend man of letters in 1688. The present fabric is a commonplace brick building, with the inevitable three windows and a door below; by the side of the door is a panel of stone, recording the above historical associations of the spot. On either side stand a pair of tombstones, as guardian angels, to welcome those who enter; the interior is dull and prosaic enough for the Georgian era.

When he first founded this chapel, Defoe is said to have lived at a house, no longer in existence, near Tooting Corner, close to which runs a row of small villas, called after him Defoe Road. He also resided at one time in an old-fashioned house on the road to Mitcham. It looks like a country parsonage, and has very much altered since Defoe's time; but the fact of its having been occupied by him is recorded on its front gate.

Defoe was quite young whilst he was at Tooting,