

William Nicolson
The English historical library
London
1696—9

THE
ENGLISH
Historical Library:

OR, A
Short View and Character
Of most of the
WRITERS
Now Extant, either in Print or Manuscript;
Which may be
Serviceable to the Undertakers of a
General History of this Kingdom.

<part I>

By WILLIAM NICOLSON, A.M.
Arch-Deacon of Carlisle.

<Greek motto>

LONDON,
Printed for Abel Swall and T. Child, at the Unicorn,
in St. Paul's Church-Yard, M DC XCVI.

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KENT. Let 'this be observ'd for the Honour of Kent' (says an (b) Ingenious and Learned Gentleman, Native of this County) 'that while other Counties (and but few of them) have met with single Pens to give the History and Description of them; ours has had no less than four Writers to celebrate the Glories of it, Lambard, Somner, Kilburn, and Philpot.' He will not, I Hope, take it ill, if we enlarge the Catalogue. Both Bale and Pits expressly reckon the 'Itinerarium Cantiaë' among John Leland's Compo= sures; so that I should think he be= stow'd something of more care than or= dinary in disposing the Remarks he made on this County. W. Lambard's Perambulation of Kent was indeed the first Account which was (c) publish'd; and it was not only highly applauded by Camden, and other Chief Judges of such

..... (b) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 38.
(c) 4o. Lond. *1570.

*<1576>

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Matters, but gave the hint to many more Men of Learning to endeavour the like Services for their several Counties. 'Twas not well approv'd by the Gentlemen of the Roman Communion. Reiner (a), particularly, censures it as a

Work undertaken and carry'd on with a Design to expose the Lewdnesses and Debaucheries of the late Inhabitants of the Monasteries of that County; in describing whereof (he thinks many things are spitefully misrepresented. Mr. Somner (b), it appears, fully purpos'd to have given us the Antiquities of the whole County; and had certainly made very great Progress towards the completing the Work, as appears by his Manuscripts now in the Library of the Cathedral Church of Canterbury. 'Tis not doubted but he would mightily have enlarg'd W. Lambard's Perambulation; and he gives us some Specimen of his Design to correct also his Errors, by marking such as came in his way in some of his (c) Treatises already publish'd. However, we are not wholly depriv'd of this great Work, some part of it having been lately

(a) Apost. Bened. in Angl. p. 162. (b) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 33, 34, 35. (c) Antiq. of Canterb. p. 77, 88, 381.

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publish'd under the Title of (a) 'A Treatise of the Roman Ports and Forts in Kent'; wherein (and in Mr. Gibson's Notes upon it) we have as entire a Discourse as we could wish for on that Subject; rectifying a great many mistakes in Camden, Lambard, Philpot, &c. and discovering the true Situation of those ancient Places. Philpot's (b) 'Villare Cantianum' was not written by Thomas Philpot, whose name it bears, but by (his Father) John, Somerset Herald; who is only own'd to be Author of the Additional History of the High Sheriffs of the County: And, what Faith (a Learned (c) Countryman of his puts the Question in my Mouth) can be given to him that could afford to rob his own Father of the credit of his Book. Kilburn's (d) 'Survey of Kent' (you may take (e) Mr. Kennet's word for it) is all Modern and superficial. Another Survey of the County (in proportion to the rest of the same Author's) was drawn by John Norden; which none have hitherto thought worth the handing to the Press, and few have reckon'd so considerable as to mention

(a) 8o. Oxon. 1693. (b) Fol. Lond. 1659. & 1664. (c) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 37, 38. (d) 4o. Lond. 1659. (e) Life of Somn. p. 37.

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it. To these, I think, we may add John Weever's (a) Funeral Monuments; a great share of 'em having been collected

in the Dioceses of Canterbury and Rochester. But let the Reader never forget the Remark made on him by (b) Mr. Wharton; that he has most scandalously mistaken the Numeral Letters and Figures in most of the Inscriptions he transcrib'd: which makes it hazardous for an Antiquary to rely upon his Authority. Both Mr. Somner's Excellent (c) Treatise of Gavel-kind, and Silas Taylor's (d) History of the same, ought also to be referr'd to the Catalogue of this County's Historians and Antiquaries; as explaining an ancient Custom, whereof there are now hardly any Remains elsewhere within the King's Dominions. The History of the City of Canterbury seems to have been penn'd long since by Will. Gillingham, a Benedictine Monk of that place; who is (e) said to have written 'De Rebus Cantuarensibus', about the year 1390. John Twyne (f) mentions some Collections that he had made tending to Illustrate the Antiquities of this City: But

(a) Fol. Lond. 1631. (b) Angl. Sacr. Par. I. p. 668.
(c) 4o. Lond. 1660. (d) 4o. Lond. 1663. (e) Jo. Pits,
p. 552. (f) Comment. de Reb. Albion.

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Mr. Somner assures us he could no more meet with them than with those of Tho. Spott, mention'd by Bale. But its everlasting Monument is W. Somner's (a) 'Antiquities of Canterbury; or, a Survey of that ancient City with its Suburbs and Cathedral': A work which secur'd the Honour of all that the Title-page mentions from the Levelling Fury and Madness of the Time wherein 'twas publish'd, and is deservedly recommended (both by the (b) Author's Enemies and Friends) as a Piece most exquisitely Perfect in its kind. Amongst his Manuscripts at Canterbury, this Book may be seen interleav'd, with large Additions in the Author's own Hand-writing. The Spaw-waters at Tunbridge are treated on by Lod. Rowzee and P. Madan, MM. DD. And the Chronicle of Rochester (collected chiefly from the 'Textus Roffensis', mention'd elsewhere) is written by Edm. Bedenham Esq. MS.

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(a) 4o. Lond. 1640. (b) Kennet's Life of Somn.
pag. 19.

THE
ENGLISH
Historical Library

PART II.

GIVING A
CATALOGUE
Of the most of our
Ecclesiastical Historians,
And some Critical Reflections
upon the chief of them.

WITH
A PREFACE;
Correcting the Errors, and supplying
the Defects of the former PART.

By WILLIAM *NICHOLSON, A.M.
Arch-Deacon of Carlisle.

*sic

London, Printed for Abel Swall at the Uni=
corn in St. Paul's Church-Yard, 1697.

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CANTERBURY, as in Justice
it ought, has had the most and best
learn'd Preservers of its History and
Antiquities of any Diocess in England.
The first of these was Arch-bishop
Deusededit, or Adeodatus, who is (a)
said to have recorded the Acts of all his
Predecessors; which was no mighty
Undertaking, since himself was only
the Sixth from Augustine. The eldest
of those Writers, whose Works are
now Extant, is Gotseline the Monk;
who (besides the Life of Augustine,
publish'd by Mr. Wharton) wrote also
those of the Six following Arch-bishops.
These are now in MS. in (b) Sir Joh.
Cotton's Library: but (being only
Collections out of Bede, with the en=
largement of a few Romantic Miracles)
they have not hitherto been thought
worth the Printing. About the same
time Osbern was Precentor of Christ-
Church; and (upon the (c) unhappy
Fire, which destroy'd most of their

(a) J. Pits, p. 109. (b) Vespasianus, B. 20. (c) Vid.
Præfat. ad Ang. Sac. vol. 2. p. 9.

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Records, A. D. 1070.) took a deal of
Pains in recovering the Histories of the
Arch-bishops; several of whose Lives
were written by him, besides those
we have in Print. Gervasius Dorober=
nensis (that is, Monk of Canterbury)
has left three good Treatises on this
Subject; which bear the following
Titles; (a) 1. 'Tractatus de Combustione
& Reparatione Dorobernensis Ecclesiæ.'
2. 'Imaginationes de Discordiis inter Mo=
nachos Cantuarienses & Archiepiscopum
Baldwinum.' 3. 'Vitæ Dorobernen=
sium Archiepiscoporum.' R. de Diceto's
History of these Primates was disco=

ver'd in the Norfolk Library, after some others (amongst whom he should have been rank'd) were publish'd: And 'twould not have been any great loss if we had still wanted it; being (b) very short, and mostly stuff'd with Matters foreign to the Purpose. Mr. Pits (c) sends us to the Library at Bennet College to enquire after a Manuscript Copy of Arch-bishop Langton's Annals of his Predecessors: But he that runs on his Errand, will find himself mistaken. There are, indeed,

(a) Inter X Script. Edit. Lond. 1652. (b) Angl. Sac. vol. 2. p. 677. (c) pag. 304.

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in that Library some Collections out of the last mention'd Author's History of our Kings, which relate chiefly to the Affairs of this See; the transcriber whereof had some thoughts of Copying out *St. Langton's History of Richard the First, and so prefaced his Work with the Title of 'Annales Stephani Archiepiscopi': But he soon quits that Subject, and so imposes upon a careless Catalogue-monger. The next, in Order of time, was Tho. Spott, Spottey or Sprott, a Benedictine Monk of Canterbury in the Year 1274. (a) whose Book has been vainly enquired after by some of our most Industrious Antiquaries, and (particularly) by (b) one whom hardly any thing on this Subject could escape. The Truth is, Mr. Somner seems to think 'twas rather a Chronicle of the City of Canterbury than of the Arch-bishops; and, if W. Thorn (who was a Monk of the same House, in the Year 1380.) either Epitomiz'd or (c) Enlarged it, it may probably prove only the same

*<Stephen>

(a) So Pits, p. 355. But Bale knew not when he liv'd. (b) W. Somner, Pref. to Antiq. of Canterbury. p. 8. (c) Vid. Pits, p. 355. et 529. V. etiam Thorn inter X. Script.

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with his History of the (a) Abbots of St. Augustines. *St. Birchington's Performance, is largely accounted for by his late (b) Publisher; who has assur'd us that nothing that either this Writer, or any of the former can afford us has been omitted by the diligent Author of the (c) 'Antiquitates Britannicæ'. Archbishop Parker was generally reputed the Author of this admired Book; till (d) Mr. Selden transferr'd the Honour of it to (His Grace's Chaplain) Mr.

*<Stephen>

Josseline, who has since enjoy'd it. I confess, I am far from being of *AB. (e) Bramhal's Opinion, That the conclusion of the Preface proves the *Acrh= bishop himself to have been the Au= thor of that Book: But it does fairly intimate that the Composer of it (whoever he was) did desire the World should believe that most of his Mate= rials were handed to him by that Learn'd Metropolitan; who was al= so, he saies, the Director and Overseer of the whole Work. In the same

*<Archbishop>

*sic

(a) Bibl. Cott. Vitellius, D. 11. (b) H. Wharton, in Præfat. ad Angl. Sac. *vol. p. 18. 19, &c. (c) Fol. Lond. 1572. & Hanov. 1605. (d) Hist. of Tythes, cap. 9. (e) Consecration, &c. of Protestant Bishops, p. 165.

*<vol. 1>

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place the Hannow Edition is blam'd for omitting Parker's own Life; which perhaps was no fault in those that had the care of it. There were only a few Copies of the First Edition (such as were design'd for (a) public Libraries, and the accomodation of a few choise Friends) that had the 29 Pages, which make up that Life: so that 'twas not to be expected that the Foreign Pub= lishers should Print it otherwise than as 'twas commonly sold by our Eng= lish Booksellers. Mr. Wharton every where gives this Writer more respect than any other he's pleased to cite: and yet he (b) observes a great many of his mistakes; and, I do not doubt but any skilful Antiquarie will easily take notice of many and many more. So imperfect will always be the most compleat Works of any single Man (c) !

(a) Ath. Oxon. vol. 1. pag. 588, 589. (b) In notis ad Canon. Lichfield, de Succes. Archiep. Cant. passim. (c) For the Controversy betwixt the Chap= ter of Canterbury and the Arch-deacon, about the Right of Jurisdiction 'Sede Vacante', see Bibl. Cott. Nero, c. 9. Galba, E. 4. Vitellius, A. 2. 8. D. 7. E. 4.

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ROCHESTER. The most ve= nerable Monument of Antiquity that belongs to this Church, is the 'Textus Roffensis'; which may justly challenge a Respect more than ordinary. It was written by Bishop Ernulf, who dy'd in the Year 1124. And (besides the Affairs of this Cathedral, which are ac=

counted for by (b) Mr. Wharton) furnishes us with the Laws of four Kentish Kings, (Ethelbert, Hlothere, Eadred and Withred) omitted by Lambard; together with the Saxon Form of Oaths of Fealty and Wager of Law; the old Form of (c) cursing by Bell, Book and Candle; of

..... (b) Angl. Sac. vol. 1. p. 329. (c) Vid. H. Spelman Glos. in voce 'Excommunicatio'.

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(a) Ordale, &c. I suppose this Book was wisely committed to the care of Sir Roger Twisden, during the confusions of our late Civil Wars: For in his Custody I find it often referr'd to by Sir William Dugdale, in a (b) Work which he Compos'd during those Troubles. Hadenham and Dene's Histories have been pickt, and their choicest Flowers are preserv'd in the 'Anglia Sacra': And the (c) 'Chronicon Claustris Roffensis' is the same with the 'Textus'.

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(a) *Ibid. voce 'Ordale', & apud E. Brown, in Appendix ad Fascic. Rerum Expetend. &c. p. 903. (b) Orig. juridic. passim. (c) Sub hoc Titulo citatur Sæpius in Monast. Angl.

*<read 'Id.'>

C.F. Apr. 2010.