

Thomas Philipott
Villare Cantianum, 2nd edition (preliminaries)
King's Lynn
1776

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VILLARE CANTIANUM;
OR,
KENT
SURVEYED and ILLUSTRATED.

BEING

An exact DESCRIPTION of all the PARISHES, BOROUGHES, VILLAGES,
And other respective MANORS in the County of KENT;
AND,

The Original and Intermediate Possessors of them, down to the Author's time.

DRAWN OUT OF

CHARTERS, ESCHEAT-ROLLS, FINES,
And other PUBLIC EVIDENCES;
But especially out of GENTLEMEN'S
PRIVATE DEEDS and MUNIMENTS.

By THOMAS PHILIPOTT, Esq;
Formerly of CLARE-HALL, in CAMBRIDGE.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

An HISTORICAL CATALOGUE of the High Sheriffs of KENT;
Collected by JOHN PHILIPOTT, Esq;
Father to the Author.

THE SECOND EDITION, CORRECTED.

LYNN:

Printed and Sold by W. WHITTINGHAM; R. BALDWIN, Paternoster-Row; H. GARDNER,
Strand; W. LANE, Leadenhall-Street, London; W. MERCER, Maidstone; SMITH and Son,
Canterbury; T. FISHER, Rochester; J. SPRANGE, Tunbridge Wells;
J. HOGBEN, junior, Rye; J. HALL, Tenterden.

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<II>

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<III>

TO THE

NOBILITY and GENTRY of KENT.

My Lords and Gentlemen,

I HAVE at last demolished those difficulties which intercepted this work; in that progress it endeavoured to make, to offer itself up both to yours and the public view. Yet I do not deny, in a piece made rugged with so many knots, several mistakes and omissions must (through inadvertency and mis-information) have slipped in; some of which had their first extraction from the press, and some their birth from my pen; all which I have collected into a table of Addenda, which is immediately subsequent to the preface, whither the reader may retire, to disperse all scruples. *

Secondly, I have not added any numerical alphabet, to direct the reader, since the book is so alphabetically digested, that the work is a directory beam or ray to itself: to which I have annexed, as an appendage, a particular description of all the circumambient Kentish islands.

Thirdly, I have not so tied myself up to those severer discourses which I have extracted from either public or private record, but that I have embroidered this peice with discourses of a softer complexion; as at Bilsington, I have unfolded the

causes of the depravation of the ancient clergy, both in doctrine and manners; at Birling I have discovered the nature of that tenure, antiquity called Tenure per Baroniam; at Ewell I have unravelled the first institution of the Knights Templers, and the probable causes of their total extirpation; at Newington Lucies I have discoured largely of Urn Interment; at Rodmersham, no less of the institution of the Knights Hospitallers; at Werth I have treated of the Antiquity of Seals; at Wymings Would, of the Ancient Dignity of the Pileus; and have at several other places interlaced this work with collateral discourses of the same tincture.

Whatsoever this piece may appear in the whole frame and bulk of it, I do assure you it was not born without your influence, it is ready to die at your command, and cannot live but by your acceptance. But I know you have both art and candor; and as I cannot but hope, but that a merciful interpretation will be emergent from the first, so I cannot doubt but the last will give so noble an allay to your justice, that if it cannot totally absolve, yet it may at least excuse,

(My Lords and Gentlemen)

The humblest of your Servants,

THOMAS PHILIPOTT.

* These omissions are properly inserted in this Edition.

<IV>

To his worthy Friend THOMAS PHILIPOTT, Esq.
Upon his diligent Survey of the Manors of
KENT:
ENTITULED,
VILLARE CANTIANUM.

THOU hast approv'd, friend, by thy worthy pen,
The saying of that learned sage, that men
Are not born for themselves; our friends do claim
In us a share; our parents do the same:
Our country for a third comes in; nay, it
Boasts than the rest a more inherent right.
How as a friend, and child, thy duty thou
Discharged hast, thy more familiars know!
This I affirm, that of his country none
Hath better merited than he alone.
Lambert submit, and Weever too give place;
Nay, thou great Cambden stand aside: Alas!
You have but posted through our country, and
As if pursued, have fear'd to make a stand:
Whereas amongst us he both born and bred,
In every hundred, parish, house t' have led
His whole age seems; and 'mongst us to have liv'd
Ere since from records rights could be deriv'd.

Bold Briton then! when 'tis a crime to be
A gentleman; and when an enemy
He's therefore thought, and in arms to have been,
In whose house arms and ancient coats are seen:
When gules to him his blood, or his estate
To this hath cost; when a true sable fate
From painted sables to a third hath sprung;
Thou dar'st assert what others fear to own:
Thou dar'st by the more equal pen unite
(What pow'rful wrong hath oft disjoin'd) the right
Owner with his possessions; to the son
His father's titles, and dominion
With care transmitting; and the heir dost tell
How he his clods derives: could thou as well
Instruct him how his manors to employ,
As thou dost how, and whence he doth enjoy
The same; then scorn'd letters would at last

Above profaning ignorance be plac'd:
Nor hadst thou travell'd at thine own expence
So many miles; but know thy recompence
Is from thyself; whilst thou a name dost give
To ancient families, thine own shall live.

JOHN BOIS, Esq; of Hode.

<V>

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<VI>

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<i>

The PREFACE to the READER.

ANTIQUITY is the great luminary of time, which dispels those clouds, that like a gloomy screen, interposing between the object and the understanding, cast it into error and misapprehension; and not only of time, but of history too; history, that faithful register of things past, that great informer of the present, and certain prophet of the future; by it we may discover the print which former ages made, and treading that, know how to decline the crooked and irregular paths of danger and misfortune. Antiquity is like the lamp in Tullia's urn, that representing to our view, by grains, and by scruples, the relics and dust of our long-since expired ancestors, which perhaps lay scattered in the wilderness of their own dispersion, erects a monument to their remembrance, so inaccessible to all the onsets and impressions of age and oblivion, that then only it shall languish into decay and dissolution, when nature herself, and time, the moth of nature, shall lie gasping in their own ruins, and the universe itself shall confess its ashes.

And certainly, amongst all those trophies which antiquity hath fixed upon the face of this island, there is none more copious, if we consider

them for quantity, nor more conspicuous, if we represent them in their quality, than those that it hath left scattered upon the continent of Kent; and this must be obvious to the most easy intellect, when it shall discover that in all the eruptions of foreign invaders upon this island, the first track of that thorough-fare hath been laid in, or very near this county, by which they have farther penetrated into the bowels of this nation. We will wave that fiction of Brute, and a party of fugitives, (originally) as the Legend insinuates, of Trojan extraction, and discarded from Italy for some misdemeanor there acted, fixing here, as likewise that series of the kings subsequent to him, being wholly obtruded upon us, by seduced and misguided histories; the brain indeed of Jeffery of Monmouth, being both the forge and the anvil from whence those sparks break forth at first, which made up that ignis fatuus, after which the world hath so long wandered.

First, then, the Roman eagles endeavoured to surprize and seize on the dominions of this island, though they were once or twice so rudely griped by the Britons, near Chilham, in Kent, and some of their noblest plumes torn from them, that they were forced to fly back into Gaul, to new imp their feathers; but breaking in again, with a recollected and multiplied strength, the liberty of this nation stooped, and became a prey to their victorious talons. And now it was ordered, that all pleas, escripts, degrees, edicts, and other things of public cognisance, should be issued out in the Roman dialect, that so the roughness of the Britons, which their warlike inclinations had so long entitled them to, might not only by degrees be filed off, but that likewise being suppld and softened by the Roman culture, they might, without any regret or resentment, support that

ii

load of slavery that sat so heavy on their shoulders, and so at last become wholly rivetted and incorporated into the Roman empire.

But this was only in intention, for the accomplishment and perfection of it was superseded by the inroad of the Goths and Vandals into Italy, which like an inundation, in many signal conflicts, had almost swept away the imperial dignity, and so torn the whole bulk of the Roman empire, that its very spirit was ready to ebb out at those breaches. So that in fine, the emperor was forced to retrieve the guards and stationary legions scattered over this island, with which, like a new stock of spirits, to improve and fortify the heart of the Roman empire, which was ready to bleed out its life at those wounds, that the hands of these barbarous nations had inflicted on it.

And now the spirits of the Britons (a stronger buttress against the eruptions of the pict, than the wall erected by the Romans) being by the engines of a long and habituated servitude, cowed and broken into a degenerate effeminacy, they lay open to all the assaults and impressions of the insolent invader, so that they were forced, either to resign up themselves to the fury and inclemency of the sea, or else offer themselves up to the rage and barbarity of a savage enemy. And now, being divested of all protection at home, and all hope of supply from abroad, being forelaid and intercepted by the invasion of the Goths on the empire, they made their addresses to the Saxons, a martial people then inhabiting that nether part of Germany, which is washed by the rivers of Elbe, Weser, and Rhine, who instantly, upon covenant and assurance of a vast guerdon to balance their services, under the conduct of Hengist and Horsa, embarked for Britain, and landed in the isle of Thanet, and shortly after, with such vigour and animosity, repressed the insolencies of the Picts, that they shut them up within the cloisters and recesses of their own mountains. But it might be said of them, as it was anciently of religion; religion brought forth riches, and the daughter devoured the mother: So these Saxons, from assertors and protectors of the Britons, became at last invaders of them; for they representing to the other Saxons the healthfulness of the air, and the temperateness of the British climate, who were over-stocked and cloyed

with excess of people, and were willing to evacuate that surcharge of inhabitants into foreign colonies, they instantly attacked any advantage that might put them into hostility with the Britons; and pretending that that compact, so solemnly stipulated and transacted between them and Hengist, was infringed and violated, they poured themselves in like a cataract upon this island, so that the Britons, to secure themselves from the fury of this deluge, after many vigorous attempts to make it flow back again, shut up themselves within the solitudes and recesses of Wales and Cornwall, whilst on their ruins their adversaries erected and fixed their Saxon Heptarchy; which again, after many mutual encounters, wherein almost every turf of this island was bespattered and bedewed with blood, found a public tomb in the West-Saxon monarchy.

But scarce was the basis of it established, whose cement was so much blood and tears, but God, who corrects the ambitious by retaliation, and chastises the insolencies of one invader, by casting another into competition with him, put the Dane into balance with the Saxon, who like a whirlwind threw himself upon this island, so that all the blooming glories of the

iii

Saxon greatness did wither and shrivel up, being suddenly nipt and blasted by this northern tempest. I shall not decypher the long, many, and impetuous encounters between these two fierce nations, with the effusion of blood and the ruin and depredation, that discomplexioned every part of the land; indeed, they are of so disordered a memory, and then so blended and confounded in the persons, times, and places, upon which the scene of these deformed tragedies is intricately fixed, that it would be (as one well observes) another war to the reader to overlook them. In brief, after a signal combat personally commenced between Edmund Ironside and Canutus, in the isle of Athelney, both armies on either shore being spectators, the Saxon diadem was by reciprocal compact to be divided between them; which after the decease of Edmund Ironside, at Oxford, (which event whether it were natural or artificial, is yet a controversy) wholly invested the temples of Canutus.

But alas! upon what a frail and uncertain pedestal is all human greatness settled! For the lustre of this new erected monarchy, had no sooner displayed its beams in Canutus, but like an unthrifty taper it began to glimmer in Harold, and absolutely expired in Hardiknute, who dying issueless, the current of royalty ran back again into the chanel of the Saxon blood, which flowed in the veins of Edward, surnamed the Confessor; who likewise deceasing without issue, William duke of Normandy, upon a pretended donation from the last Edward, entitles himself to the right and interest of the English diadem.

But this certainly was invalid, for no testamentary collation can ravel or disorder succession, which with an indissoluble link is chained and fastened to the nearest of blood, and of which the nation is to take the sole and proper cognisance. And to assert his title (which was fixed on the point of his sword) he arrives in Sussex with a numerous army, to check whose farther progress in this island, Harold advances likewise with a considerable army (whose body had before evaporated its best and noblest spirits at those wounds, which it before had received in a bloody encounter commenced with Harold Harfanger, king of Norway) and near that place, where afterwards was founded the abby of Battel, puts his claim to the scepter, likewise, to the decision and umpirage of the sword; and after a fierce dispute, found the tomb of his new purchased royalty in the carnage of this field, upon whose ruins, William, now a conquerour, climbs up the ascent of the English throne.

His first design (after he had scattered all those clouds of discontent, that might possibly have enwrapt the rays of acquired majesty in some new umbrage) was to take a survey of each man's particular interest and patrimony, which was enrolled and recorded in a public register, commonly called Doomsday book; upon pretence, that from a general computation

of the revenue of the nation, he might discern what strength might be collected to intercept the violent attempts of any foreign invader upon this island. But indeed to make a strict inquisition into the forfeitures of the lands of those that had been in hostility under the ensigns of Harold against him, that with those he might not only endear and gratify his partisans, but likewise by reinvesting the chiefest of his adversaries in those possessions which were by their enmity escheated, oblige them to maintain his title and scepter. Yet it is observable, that he engaged all those that had received any

iv

lands or demans of him, either by any new concession, or re-investiture, to hold them in escuage, that is by knight's service, by which they were obliged, whensoever either public necessity, or his commands did exact it of them, to attend his person, either actually or virtually, that is by proxy, with horse and arms; and by this art he had always a power in reserve to repress and scatter all solleviations or sudden insurrections at home, and contradict all the attempts and animosities of adversaries from abroad; that so he might become considerable to his enemies, and useful to his friends. Thus have I compendiously wound up the several invasions made on this island, in which Kent was so much concerned. But there is another invasion that I have not yet numbered, which hath been more ruinous and destructive to the noblest families of this island, than any of those above recited; and that is the riot and excess, that like an infectious cloud, whose noisome womb drops nothing but disease and pestilence, hath lately broke in upon this nation, and so withered the root of the most ancient gentry, that they have shrunk into their own ruins, and fall neglected and forgotten. Indeed our modern luxury is like the poison of the viper, it blasts invisibly, and destroys insensibly, and they that are softened with it, are like a tree, that feeds those worms that must devour it; or like iron, that supplies that rust which will corrode it. Indeed 'tis observable, that those families have continued in their splendor longer, whose seats and habitations have engaged them to a remoter distance from the verge and sphere of the city, than those whose revenue and patrimony are confined upon a place infected with so much debauchery, and let loose in so great excess. Yet, 'tis remarkable that the cadets, or younger slips issued out from some of those stems, who by their own vicious exorbitancy have crumbled into an irreparable decay, by being inoculated upon other families, have by this transplantation contracted new sap and verdure, and again sprouted out and flourished. For families are like the river of Arethusa, they sometimes sink in one place or county, and again rise in another.

I shall now take the county of Kent under survey and prospect, and represent to the public view, those several antiquities, which in my search, I found to lie wrapt up either in common records, or shut up in the private muniments, escripts, and registers of particular families; from whom I have endeavoured to pluck off the veil, that they may for the future stand as an alphabet to point out those families that are yet in being, that are totally extinguished, or that lie entombed in other names and extractions, which by marriage have swallowed up the heir general. In the pursuit of which I confess I have not cloistered myself up in the nice restraints of any precise or particular method, because that flood, both of private and public intelligence, which like a torrent broke in upon me, swept away whatsoever my busy fancy had built upon the sands of any curious or methodical invention; but 'tis here, as in some rivers, who though they wander in a crooked and irregular channel, yet are they the same streams still, as long as they hold correspondence with their first fountain and original.

I shall remit all to the justice and candour of the reader; with the first he may arraign and censure, with the last absolve and excuse.

THOMAS PHILIPOTT.

<This new edition of Philipott's book was published at King's Lynn in 1776. At least three copies are available online, one through ECCO and two through Google books. I have not seen the prospectus, but Richard Gough (who signed up for a copy) reports the gist of it as follows: 'William Whittingham, bookseller at Lynne, is reprinting this work at one guinea subscription. The numerous errata and addenda of the old edition will be inserted in their proper places, with authentic corrections from the MS notes of a gentleman deceased; a copious index, by the same hand (to be printed separately for the old edition, price 2s. 6d.); the orthography modernized; and a new map of the county from the latest and best surveys' (Gough 1780:442-3). From the place of publication, and from the gratuitous mention of Bromley College (p. 83), I would guess that the 'gentleman deceased' was one of the Lee Warners of Walsingham Abbey – probably Henry Lee Warner (1688-1760), who had grown up and lived in Kent before establishing himself in Norfolk. But I have no concrete evidence for that. Whatever the story behind it, this edition is of no value in itself; it is useful only as a guide to the textual intricacies of the first edition. Anything not derived from that edition is printed red. – C.F. August 2011.>