

William Nicolson
The English historical library, 2nd ed.
London
1714

THE ENGLISH
Historical LIBRARY.

In Three PARTS.

GIVING A
Short View and Character of most our
HISTORIANS either in Print or Manuscript:
With an Account of our
Records, Law-Books, Coins,
AND OTHER
Matters Serviceable to the Undertakers of a
GENERAL HISTORY
OF
ENGLAND.

The SECOND EDITION Corrected and Augmented.

By W. NICOLSON Arch-deacon (now Bi=
shop of CARLILE.

<Latin motto>

LONDON,
Printed for TIMOTHY CHILDE at the White-Hart: and ROBERT KNAPLOCK
at the Bishop's-Head, in ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD. M. DCC. XIV.

<Part I>

15

.....

KENT. Let 'this be observ'd for the Honour of Kent' (says an (a) 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 Pitts expressly reckon the 'Itinerarium Cantiae' among John Leland's Composures; so that I should think he bestow'd something of more Care than ordinary in disposing the Remarks he made on this County. W. Lambard's Perambulation of Kent, was indeed the first Account which was (b) publish'd; and it was not only highly applauded by Camden, and other Chief Judges of such 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 (c) 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 (d), it appears, fully *propos'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 (e) Treatises already publish'd. However, we are not wholly depriv'd of this great Work, some part of it having been lately publish'd under the Title of (f) '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 dis=

*sic

covering the true Situation of those ancient Places. Philpot's (g) '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 (h) Countreyman 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 (i) 'Survey of Kent' (you may take (k) Dr. 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 it. To these, I think, we may add John Weever's (l) 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 (m) 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

(a) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 38. (b) 4to. Lond. 1570, 1596, &c. (c) Apost. Bened. in Angl. p. 162. (d) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 33, 34, 35. (e) Antiq. of Canterb. p. 77, 88, 381. (f) 8vo. Oxon. 1693. (g) Fol. Lond. 1659. and 1664. (h) Kennet's Life of Somn. p. 37, 38. (i) 4to. Lond. 1659. (k) Life of Somn. p. 37. (l) Fol. Lond. 1631. (m) Angl. Sacr. Par. I. p. 668.

16

Authority. Both Mr. Somner's Excellent (a) Treatise of Gavelkind, and Silas Taylor's (b) 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 (c) said to have written 'De Rebus Cantuarensibus', about the Year 1390. John Twyne (d) mentions some Collections that he had made tending to Illustrate the Antiquities of this City: But 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 (e) 'Antiquities of Canterbury; or, a Survey of that ancient City, with its Suburbs and Cathedral': A work which secured 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 Author's Enemies and Friends) as a Piece most exquisitely Perfect in its Kind. This Book was (f) publish'd again, some Years ago, by the late industrious Mr. N. Battely; with such Additions and Corrections, as the Author thought necessary to leave behind him: But these are not so considerable, as the learned Writer of Mr. Somner's Life had represented them. This was fit to be premis'd, that the worthy Publisher might not be defrauded of the due Reputation of (what is entirely his own) the 'Second Part' of this Volume; which bears the Title of 'Cantuaria Sacra', and (relating wholly to the Affairs of the Church) will have its Place amongst our Ecclesiastical Writers. However, there's an Elegant Posthumous Discourse (written by this Gentleman's Brother, the late Archdeacon Battely) which is call'd (g) 'Antiquitates Rutupinæ'; and properly belongs to this Part. It gives the Reader a most entertaining Account of the Antient Rutupinæ and Regulbium, with other Cities and Ports on the Coasts of Kent, well known to the Romans, whose Money, and other Utensils, is here daily discovered, and was plentifully collected by the curious Author. 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.

.....

(a) 4to. Lond. 1660. (b) 4to. Lond. 1663. (c) Jo. Pitts, p. 552. (d) Comment. de Reb. Albion. (e) 4to.

<Part II>

126

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 Deusdedit, or Adeodatus, who is (a) said to have recorded the Acts of all his Predecessors; which was no mighty Undertaking, since **he** 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 enlargement 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 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 Dorobernensis (that is, Monk of Canterbury) has left three good Treatises on this Subject, which bear the following Titles; (d) 1. 'Tractatus de Combustione & Reparatione Dorobernensis Ecclesiæ.' 2. 'Imaginationes de Discordiis inter Monachos Cantuarienses & Archiepiscopum Baldewinum.' 3. 'Vitæ Dorobernensium Archiepiscoporum.' R. de Diceto's History of these Primates was discover'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 (e) very short, and mostly stuff'd with Matters foreign to the purpose. Mr. Pits (f) 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, 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 Steph. 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, (g) whose Book has been vainly enquired after by some of our most Industrious Antiquaries, and (particularly) by (h) 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 (i) Enlarged it, it may probably prove only the same with his History of the (k) Abbots of St. Augustines. Steph. Birchington's Performance, is largely accounted for by his late (l) 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 (m) 'Antiquitates Britannicæ'. Arch-bishop Parker was generally reputed the Author of this admired Book; till (n) Mr. Selden transferr'd the Honour of it to (His Grace's Chaplain) Mr. Josseline, who has since enjoy'd it. I confess, I am far from being of AB. (o) Bramhal's Opinion, That the conclusion of the Preface proves the Arch-bishop himself to have been the Author of that Book: But it does fairly intimate that the Composer of it (whoever he was) did desire the World should be=

(a) J. Pits, p. 109. (b) Vespasianus, B. 20. (c) Vid. Præfat. ad Ang. Sac. vol. 2. p. 9. (d) Inter X Script. Edit. Lond. 1652. (e) Angl. Sac. vol. 2. p. 677. (f) p. 304. (g) So Pits, p. 355. But Bale knew not when he liv'd. (h) W. Somner, Pref. to Antiq. of Canterbury. p. 8. (i) Vid. Pits, p. 355. et 529. V. etiam Thorn. inter X. Script. (k) Bibl. Cott. Vitellius, D. 11. (l) H. Wharton, in Præfat. ad

Angl. Sac. vol. p. 18. 19, &c. (m) Fol. Lond. 1572.
& Hanov. 1605. (n) Hist. of Tythes, cap. 9.
(o) Consecration, &c. of Protestant Bishops,
p. 165.

127

lieve that most of his Materials were handed to him by that Learned Metropolitan; who was also, he says, the Director and Overseer of the whole Work. In the same 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 accommodation of a few choice Friends) that had the 29 Pages, which make up that Life: So that 'twas not to be expected that the Foreign Publishers should Print it otherwise than as 'twas commonly sold by our English 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 Antiquary will easily take notice of many and many more. So imperfect will always be the most compleat Works of any single Man (c)! **The late Learned Mr. Nicholas Battely has corrected several Mistakes, and supply'd many Defects, in the 'Antiquitates' (to which he has also given us a most Accurate *Suppliment) in his 'Cantuaria Sacra'; which makes a Second Part of his Noble Edition of Mr. Somner's Antiquities already mention'd. The Succession of the Arch-bishops, Priors, *Deacons, Arch-deacons, &c. is no where else so particularly recounted.**

*sic

*sic

.....

(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 Chapter 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.

134

.....

ROCHESTER. The most venerable 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 accounted 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 (d) 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 (e) 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 (f) 'Chronicon Claustris Roffensis' is the same with the 'Textus'.

.....

..... (b) Angl. Sac. vol. 1. p. 329. (c) Vid. H. Spelman Glos. in voce 'Excommunicatio'. (d) Id. ibid. voce 'Ordale', & apud E. Brown, in Append. ad Fascic. Rerum Expetend. &c. p. 903. (e) Orig. juridic. passim. (f) Sub hoc Titulo citatur Sæpius in Monast. Angl.