

**THE BARONS OF THE
CINQUE PORTS, AND
THE PARLIAMENTARY
REPRESENTATION OF HYTHE**

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The Barons of the Cinque Ports, and the Parliamentary Representation of Hythe by George Wilks

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GEORGE WILKS

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UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



Edward W. Lathrop

Ino. Dorrell Poets

THE BARONS OF THE
CINQUE PORTS,
AND THE
PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION
OF
HYTHE.

BY GEORGE WILKS, ESQ., TOWN CLERK.

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

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TO SIR EDWARD WILLIAM WATKIN, BART., THE PRESENT REPRESENTA-
TIVE OF THE BOROUGH OF HYTHE IN PARLIAMENT, THIS WORK
IS MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

UNIV OF
CALIFORNIA

P R E F A C E.

AN investigation as to the rights of the Town to the Foreshore, necessitated by proceedings taken against the Corporation by the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, disclosed amongst the Records of the Town matters connected with the Parliamentary History of the old Cinque Port, which I thought might be of some interest to my fellow-townsmen, and possibly to others, for the local history of these small towns is one of those atoms from which one can gather the history of the country. To such towns as Hythe we are indebted for the maintenance of that municipal life which retained amidst many struggles the liberties of the people against the encroachments of the Crown and the nobles, and preserved the rights of freedom and liberty amidst many attempts at curtailment. The principle embodied in their Charters was local government, pure and simple. There was no centralization. They managed their own affairs. Every freeman had a vote; they taxed themselves, chose their own Magistrates, elected their representatives to Parliament, and, as will be seen, paid the expenses of the latter, who were bound to be Freemen of the town. Such was the government of Hythe four hundred years ago. The long period, some six centuries, over which my enquiries have been directed, and the desire to give facts rather than my own opinion, have extended my work somewhat more than I intended. As will be seen, there are still many Parliaments in which I have been unable to obtain the names of the Barons of Hythe, and I shall be much obliged for any information as to these, and for any corrections or additions to the history of the different Members.

I am indebted to my friend and fellow-townsmen, Mr. Mackeson, F.G.S., who preserved from destruction many of the interesting letters, which were condemned as rubbish, for placing at my disposal his valuable notes; also to Lord Tweedmouth, Sir Edward Watkin, Bart., M.P., the late Col. Deedes, and many others who have kindly supplied me with much information.

GEORGE WILKS,
Town Clerk.

Hythe,
1892.

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BY THE TOWN CLERK.

AUTHORITIES : Lords' Committee's Reports touching the Dignity of a Peer of the Realm ; Parliamentary Return of Members ; Stubbs' Select Charters ; Stubbs' Constitutional History ; and the Hythe Town Records.

HYTHE is indebted to Simon de Montfort, the celebrated Earl of Leicester, for its separate right to Parliamentary Representation. In the War between Henry III. and his Barons, the Cinque Ports took part with the Barons ; on the 14th May, 1264, the Royal Army was defeated at Lewes, whither the Barons had hurried with 15,000 Londoners to the relief of the Cinque Ports, the King was taken prisoner, and his son, Prince Edward, soon after surrendered to the victorious Earl.

On 14th December, 1264, Writs for the Parliament of 1265 were issued by the Earl in the King's name, the representatives of Towns being summoned for the first time. The Writs were tested at Worcester, and addressed to the Archbishop of York, and to the Bishops, Priors, and other Church dignitaries. The Writ addressed to the Bishop of Durlham (the other special writs being in the same form) recited that owing to the disturbances which had taken place, Prince Edward had been delivered as a hostage "pro pace in regno assecuranda et firmanda" (for assuring and establishing peace in the Kingdom) ; and that the disturbances having been quieted, for the purpose of providing for his deliverance and for the full security and tranquillity of peace, to the honour of God and benefit of the whole Kingdom, and for other affairs which without the advice of the Bishop "et aliorum praelatorum et magnatum nostrorum" (and others of our Prelates and

Magnates) the King would not dispatch, it became necessary for the King to have a Conference with them. The Writ then commanded the Bishop to be in London at the Octave of St. Hilary, "nobiscum et cum predictis praelatis et magnatibus nostris, quos ibidem vocari fecimus, super præmissis tractaturi, et consilium vestrum impensuri." (to treat with us and with our aforesaid Prelates and Magnates, whom we have caused to be called there, touching the premises, and to impart your counsel.) Similar Writs attested at Woodstock were issued in the same month (December) to other Church dignitaries, and to the Earl of Leicester and twenty-two other Magnates, but to no other laymen, so far as appears by the record.

Besides these Writs there are mandates to the Sheriffs of the Counties to send two Knights from each Shire, and to the Cities of York and Lincoln and other Boroughs to send each two Burgesses; and the mandates to the Cinque Ports are first of all briefly summarised as follows:—

"Item in forma predicta mandatum est baronibus et probis hominibus "Quinque Portuum prout continetur in brevi irrotulato inferius." (Also in the form aforesaid it is commanded to the Barons and good men of the Cinque Ports, as it is contained in the Writ enrolled below).

The Writs to the Cinque Ports are then fully recorded in the following words:

"Rex baronibus et ballivis portus sui de Sandwico salutem."

"Cum praelatos, magnates, et nobiles regni nostri, tam pro negocio liberationis Edwardi primogeniti nostri, quam pro aliis communitatem regni nostri tangentibus, ad instans Parliamentum nostrum, quod erit London' in octabis Sancti Hilarii convocari fecerimus, ubi vestra sicut et aliorum fidelium nostrorum presentia plurimum indigemus: vobis mandamus, in fide et dilectione quibus nobis tenemini, firmiter injungentes, quod, omnibus aliis prætermissis, mittatis ad nos ibidem quatuor de legalioribus et discretioribus portus vestri, ita quod sint ibi in octabis prædictis, nobiscum et cum praelatis et magnatibus regni tractaturi, et super præmissis auxilium impensuri, &c."

"Similiter mandatum est singulis portibus per se."

(The King to the Barons and Bailiffs of his Port of Sandwich, greeting. Whereas we have convoked the prelates, magnates, and nobles of our Kingdom, as well for the matter of the liberation of Edward our first born, as for other matters touching the Commonalty of our Kingdom, to our forthcoming Parliament, which will be in London at the Octave of Saint Hilary, where we greatly need your presence, as also that of others our lieges: we command you, by the faith and affection with which you are bound to us, strictly