

**THE FLEET REGISTERS.
COMPRISING THE HISTORY OF
FLEET MARRIAGES, AND SOME
ACCOUNT OF THE PARSONS AND
MARRIAGE-HOUSE KEEPERS**

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The Fleet registers. Comprising the history of Fleet marriages, and some account of the parsons and marriage-house keepers by John Southerden Burn

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JOHN SOUTHERDEN BURN

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THE
FLEET REGISTERS.

COMPRISING THE

History of Fleet Marriages,

AND SOME ACCOUNT OF

THE PARSONS AND MARRIAGE-HOUSE KEEPERS,

WITH EXTRACTS FROM THE REGISTERS:

TO WHICH ARE ADDED NOTICES OF THE

MAY FAIR, MINT, AND SAVOY CHAPELS,

AND

An Appendix

RELATING TO PAROCHIAL REGISTRATION.

"Much may be, and much has been, said, both for and against this Innovation upon our ancient Laws and Constitution."—*Blackstone on the Marriage Act.*

BY JOHN SOUTHERDEN BURN,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF PARISH REGISTERS.

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TO

JOHN WILKS, Esq. M. P.

CHAIRMAN OF THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE

ON THE STATE OF PAROCHIAL REGISTRATION,

TO WHOSE EXERTIONS THE COUNTRY IS INDEBTED FOR

THAT IMPORTANT INQUIRY,

THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED

AS A MARK OF RESPECT

BY THE AUTHOR.

P R E F A C E.

IN collecting materials for a History of Parish Registers, the Author first had occasion to refer to the Registers of the Marriages solemnized at the Fleet; since that time he has made a very minute examination of them, and the following pages contain some of the most curious particulars concerning the Registers and the parties connected with them.

It is untrodden ground; indeed hitherto few persons were aware of the existence of such Records, and fewer still know their extent and importance.

Without discussing their validity as a Public Record, and without attempting to place them upon the same footing in respect to evidence as a Parish Register, it must be allowed to them that they have been occasionally admitted as Evidence in the Courts of *Nisi Prius*; and although within the last thirty years they have been generally (though not uniformly) rejected, yet they unquestionably contain the record of many thousands of marriages, of which no other evidence is to be found.

The Author has had some difficulty in compressing within a small Volume the information relative to the Fleet Registers, without entering fully upon the Law of Marriage, and giving an account of the Marriages at the different Episcopal and Dissenting Chapels which were in existence prior to 1754. He has voluminous transcripts from registers of marriages solemnized at such chapels supplied by informa-

tion obtained from an examination of the affidavits made upon application of the parties for licences to marry, (and which are preserved in the Registry of the Bishop of London,) and from notifications of marriages in the public journals of the period, from which he will be at all times happy to afford information. From the circumstance that out of the eighty or ninety chapels in and about London, only fourteen of the Registers remain (some of which are in private hands), these collections are of considerable value.

His thanks are especially due to John Shephard, Esq. the Deputy Registrar of the Consistory Court of the Bishop of London, for free and continued access to the Fleet Books; to the Rev. Daniel Lysons, F. R. and A. S., for many curious extracts from old newspapers; and to Charles George Young Esq. York Herald, Registrar of the College of Arms, for his kind assistance in preparing these pages for publication.

*25, Tokenhouse Yard, Lothbury,
3rd October, 1833.*

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Page 21. Since the 2nd Chapter passed through the press, the name of another Warden of the Fleet has been discovered in the notice of the following petition to Parliament:—

In the 14 Hen. VI. the Duke of Gloucester presented a petition to the Parliament from “Alard Funk, Citizein and taillour of London,” stating, that one “William Venour” Wardeyn of the Prison of the Flete, had in his keeping a prisoner called Piers Mayn Henrickson, Ducheman, and had brought him before the Chancellor into the Court of Chancery at Westminster, in the term of “Scint Johan.” in the xijth year of His Majesty’s reign; but the said prisoner “for defaute of kepinge, and thurgh negligence of his keper, voided and wente out of the Chauncerye into the Seyntuarye of Westmynstre,” &c. &c.—*Miscellaneous Petitions in Parliament in the Tower of London.*

Page 22. In the note it is stated that Robert Castell is said to have translated Vitruvius. The Author has since, however, been favoured with the following note, by the learned translator of the last English edition of the work of that celebrated architect.

Although the Bipont edition of Vitruvius, 8vo. (*Argentorati*) 1807, gives as published in 1730, the following among the English editions,—

“1730 The Architecture of M. Vitruvius Pollio translated into English, with the Commentaries of Inigo Jones and others, and the Latin text, by Robert Castell, London, fol. 2 vols.”

such Book was never published. The fact is, that Robert Castell in his *Villas of the Antients*, which he published in 1728, and which was dedicated to Richard Earl of Burlington, professes that he undertook that treatise as a *preparative* to a translation of Vitruvius into the English language: a work he had long entertained a desire of performing. This intention of Robert Castell was mentioned in the *Acta Erudit. Lipsiæ*, 1731; hence it is probable the mistake of the Bipont Editor. Castell, however, never fulfilled his intention, which was probably prevented by his premature death.