

LONDON BEFORE THE CONQUEST

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649147328

London before the conquest by W. R. Lethaby

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

W. R. LETHABY

**LONDON BEFORE
THE CONQUEST**

LONDON BEFORE THE CONQUEST

LONDON BEFORE
THE CONQUEST
BY W. R. LETHABY



"Now would I fain
In worldys playn,
Some honoure sayen,
And bring to mynde
Of that auncient cytie
That so goodly is to se."
—*Fabyan.*



LONDON
MACMILLAN AND CO., LIMITED
NEW YORK : THE MACMILLAN COMPANY
MCMII

All rights reserved

DA680
L6

GENERAL

*"Londres est mals riche cite,
Moltur n'ad on Cristienté
Par esillance, ni melx assisé,
Melx garnie, de grant prisee ;
Al pe del mur li curr Tamise
Par li vent la marchandise
Des tutes les qui sur
U marchans Crestiens vient."*

Roman de Tristan.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	1

CHAPTER I

ORIGINS—THE LEGEND OF LONDON—THE BRITISH CHURCH—THE ENGLISH COME TO LONDON— ALFRED'S LONDON	6
---	---

CHAPTER II

RIVERS AND FORDS	38
----------------------------	----

CHAPTER III

ROADS AND THE BRIDGE	52
--------------------------------	----

CHAPTER IV

THE WALLS, GATES, AND QUAYS	74
---------------------------------------	----

CHAPTER V

THE CITADEL—SOUTHWARK—THE DANES' QUARTER— THE PORTLANDS AND CNIHTENGILD	101
--	-----

CHAPTER VI

	PAGE
THE WARDS AND PARISHES—THE PALACE . . .	126

CHAPTER VII

STREETS—CRAFT GILDS AND SCHOOLS—CHURCHES . . .	145
--	-----

CHAPTER VIII

THE GUILDHALL—LONDON STONE—TOWN BELL AND FOLKMOTE	175
--	-----

CHAPTER IX

THE GOVERNMENT OF EARLY LONDON	187
--	-----

CHAPTER X

LONDINIUM	198
---------------------	-----

APPENDIX

ON MATERIALS FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF MAPS OF EARLY LONDON	212
--	-----

INTRODUCTION

A great burh, Lundunaborg, which is the greatest and most famous of all burhs in the northern lands.—*Ragnar Lodbrok Saga.*

OF the hundreds of books concerning London, there is not one which treats of its ancient topography as a whole. There are, it is true, a great number of studies dealing in an accurate way with details, and most of the general histories incidentally touch on questions of reconstruction. Of these, the former are, of course, the more valuable from the topographical point of view, yet even an exhaustive series of such would necessarily be inadequate for representing to us the ancient city in a comprehensive way.

In an inquiry as to the ancient state of a city, a general survey, besides bringing isolated details into due relation, may suggest new matter for

consideration in regard to them, and offer fresh points of proof. For instance, the extra-mural roads were directed to the several gates, the gates governed the internal streets, while these streets ran through wards, and gave access to churches and other buildings.

The subject of London topography is such an enormous one, and the involutions of unfounded conjecture are so manifold, that an approximation to the facts can only be obtained by a critical resifting of the vast extant stores of evidence. In the present small essay I have, of course, not been able to do this in any exhaustive way; but I have for years been interested in the decipherment of the great palimpsest of London, and, in trying to realise for myself what the city was like a thousand years ago, I have in some part reconsidered the evidences. The conclusions thus reached cannot, I think, be without some general interest, although from the very nature of my plan they are presented in the form of notes on particular points, and discussions of opinions commonly held, with little attempt at unity, and none at a pictorial treatment of the subject.

Of mistaken views still largely or nearly uni-