

ENGLISH CROWN GRANTS

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649371594

English crown grants by S. L. Mershon

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Cover @ 2017

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BY

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(A narrative of Colonial History)

*THE FOUNDATION OF COLONIAL LAND TITLES
UNDER ENGLISH COMMON LAW*

NEW YORK

THE LAW AND HISTORY CLUB

PUBLISHERS

39 CORTLANDT STREET

1918
MAY 10 1918
LIBRARY

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FOREWORD

The American Bar Associations, Historical Societies, Colonial Organizations and all thoughtful citizens have a vital interest in the unique history and present-day dominating influence, in America, of the old English Crown Grants.

Their virility is unimpaired despite the flight of centuries.

The Royalty of the past frequently restricts and restrains the Democracy of to-day.

It was the personal will and whim of the English Sovereigns, as expressed in the English Crown Grants, that prescribed the basis of Governmental, Commercial, Educational and Industrial Institutions, in the American Colonies, which Colonies subsequently constituted "the Original Thirteen States."

English Crown Grants are to-day powerfully active elements in our National Life.

Great Universities, including Yale and Princeton, many ancient and wealthy churches, sit tight and smug under powers received by them, in their charters, from autocratic hands now long since crumbled into dust.

Ferries are now operating in New York because English Kings, centuries ago granted the franchises so to do. Competition therewith is restrained because the olden time and long since deceased monarchs decreed that such Ferries should constitute a monopoly.

FOREWORD

The most powerful title company in the world has recently announced that it will not guarantee its land title searches covering lands in one of the Boroughs of Greater New York, if required to make such searches back to the English Crown Grants.

Every foot of land, in that designated Borough depends, for a complete chain of title, upon some one basic Grant from the English Crown.

To ignore that fact is fatalistic, to defy it is recklessness, especially in the face of the indictment of the land titles of an entire Borough of Greater New York by the world's most powerful title company.

Incredible disregard of the rights descending under English Crown Grants, confirmed by treaty between Great Britain and the United States of America, which treaties are "the supreme law of the land," has precipitated costly litigation involving vast areas of lands of immense values in the Borough of the Bronx, on Riverside Drive, at Coney Island, Rockaway Beach, Oyster Bay, Northport, Lake Champlain, the Hudson River and many other places in New York State.

Like controversies have involved land titles in Maryland, Delaware, Virginia and other States.

The uniform and inflexible attitude of both Federal and State Courts has been to sustain the legality and inviolability of the English Crown Grants as covering lands Granted by the English Crown in the American Colonies.

The English Crown Grants of lands on Staten Island have been selected by the author as the most diversified, yet favorable grouping of Grants, to illustrate the discussion of the problems involved.