

**HISTORICAL
PARTICULARS RELATING
TO SOUTHAMPTON**

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Historical Particulars Relating to Southampton by John Bullar

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JOHN BULLAR

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TO SOUTHAMPTON**

HISTORICAL PARTICULARS

RELATING TO

SOUTHAMPTON.

COLLECTED

BY JOHN BULLAR.

SOUTHAMPTON:

PRINTED BY AND FOR T. BAKER,

AND PUBLISHED BY HIM FINSBURY PLACE, LONDON;

SOLD ALSO BY I. FLETCHER, SOUTHAMPTON.

1820.

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MAY 1975

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE few particulars which are presented to the public in the following pages, were collected at intervals, in the course of reading, many years ago. They were seen by the late ARTHUR HAMMOND, Esq. who urged the compiler of them to undertake a history of his native place; offering to use his influence with the Corporation, to obtain access to the sources of information in their archives. Want of leisure prevented him from availing himself of so liberal and important an offer; and the same cause

L. H. & M. 27th August, 1841

is likely to continue to operate. His friend Mr. THOMAS BAKER, however, unwilling that the few collections which he had made, should be altogether lost, undertook to publish them. In this imperfect form, they bespeak the candour of the public: to which they are committed, with a hope that the publication of them may stimulate some able person to take up a subject, which might be made, it is probable, both instructive and entertaining.

HISTORICAL PARTICULARS

RELATING TO

SOUTHAMPTON.

VARIOUS conjectures have been formed respecting the etymology of the name Southampton. Some have derived it simply from the Saxon words *ham*, a house, and *tun*, or *ton*, a town; the word *south* having been prefixed since the Norman conquest, to distinguish it from other towns of similar name. Others contend for its derivation from the Anton or Southampton Water, on the pleasant margin of which it is situated.*

Little authentic information can now be

* See on this subject Sir H. Englefield's "Walk through Southampton," p. 2—5. In the earliest charter, (Henry the Second's,) the town is called *Hanton*: in later charters, *Sudhanton*, *Suhampton*, and *Suthampton*. This speaks strongly for Sir H. Englefield's etymology.

gained, as to the origin and earliest state of the town. Some fanciful authors, indeed, are inclined to give it an antiquity of four or five ages prior to the Christian era.* But it would be impertinent to detain the reader with fables that can be considered as of no better authority than *Amadis de Gaul*, or the *Seven Champions of Christendom*. It has been well observed by an intelligent historian, "That there can be nothing more uncertain, more obscure, or of which we are more ignorant, than the transactions which took place in this country during the British ages; that is, before the arrival of the Romans here."†

There is no authority for imagining that Southampton existed during the government of the Romans in Britain: no traces of the masonry of that people have ever been discovered, nor any of their coins found in it. The notion that the ancient station *Clausentum* occupied this spot, has been fully proved to be erroneous, both by

* Geoffrey of Monmouth; Ross of Warwick.

† Polydore Virgil.

the arguments of the Rev. Richard Warner,* and by the discoveries which have been made at Bittern, on the northern bank of the Itchen, where the Roman Clausentum was undoubtedly situated.

The recorded history of Southampton does not commence till the ninth century; and the first accounts are very disastrous. The fierce and sanguinary Danes, who infested the English coasts without intermission for almost two centuries, made repeated descents on old Hampton, and more than once left traces of their fury in fire and blood. In the year 838, during the reign of Ethelwolf, they landed from a fleet of thirty-three galleys, and committed sad depredations and atrocities on the town and its inhabitants. Wolphard, the governor of the county, however, collected a body of forces, and marched to the spot; where, in a bloody engagement, he defeated the invaders, and drove them to their ships.†

About the year 860, in the reign of Ethelbert,

* In a work entitled "An Attempt to ascertain the Situation of the ancient Clausentum," 4to. 1792.

† Saxon Chronicle, p. 73. Leland's Collectanea, i. 192.