

THE SERVICE OF SHIPPING OF THE  
BARONS OF FAVERSHAM.

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THE town and port of Faversham appear to have been of some importance from very early times. During the Roman occupation of Kent, its navigable creek, with the neighbouring encampment at Syndale, attracted inhabitants, and it continued to maintain its prestige under the Saxon kings. It was described in 811 as the King's Town called Fefresham.

From about the year 892 it has given its name to the Hundred, and in 903 King Athelstan (who succeeded King Alfred) held a Witenagemot there.

In 1147 King Stephen founded the Abbey, and endowed it with the Manor and Hundred of Faversham.

It would appear from the earliest Royal Charter to Faversham, still in existence, dated 4th June 36 Henry III. (A.D. 1252), that the barons of Faversham, with their combarons of the Cinque Ports, had enjoyed considerable privileges from the time of King Edward the Confessor. The barons must have been a regularly organized community having duly constituted officers, without whom many of their admitted privileges could not have been exercised, such as the power of compelling all persons living within their liberties to plead in their courts; the cognizance of causes criminal and civil; the power to try and convict felons, etc. The Corporation of Faversham always claimed to be such by prescription, that is, to have existed "time whereof the memory of man runneth not to the contrary," and this time of memory was assumed by law to commence from the beginning of the reign of Richard I.

The first mayor of whom we have notice was Thomas Everard in the 21st Edward I. (1292), but "the mayor of Faversham" is named in a writ dated ten years previously.

In the Charter of King Edward I. to the Cinque Ports the barons of the ports are stated to owe to the King from year to year

by sea, if need be, fifty-seven ships, of which number the town of Faversham owed one ship. The ships to have forty days of summons, and find for the King in each twenty men and the master. Every ship was to be armed, furnished, and fitted at the proper costs of the Cinque Ports when they should be summoned. The ships were to tarry fifteen days in the service of the King at the proper costs of the Cinque Ports; and after the fifteen days past they were to tarry at the cost of the King, and the master of the ship was to take for a day 6d., the constable 6d., and each of the others 3d.

In 1282 King Edward I. issued a precept to his well-beloved and trusty the barons and bailiffs of the port of Faversham, stating, "Because we are about to set out with our army upon our expedition into Wales against Llewellyn, son of Griffin, and his accomplices, our rebels, we do command you upon the fealty, homage, and love in which you are bound unto us, that the half of your service which you owe, you will pay unto us in every way at Chester, on the Feast of St. Peter's Chains next ensuing; so that you be with us there in the Cullet of water in the vill of Chester well protected and ready to go forth with us and our trusty subjects to repress the rebellion and assaults of the said Llewellyn and his accomplices; and do you give full faith unto our well-beloved and trusty Stephen de Pencestre, Constable of Dover, whom therefor we send unto you. And those things which he shall say hereon on our behalf in all manners do."

The King chiefly by the help of the Cinque Ports completed the subjugation of the Welsh, who had hitherto defied the power of England.

In the same year a writ came to the mayor and barons of Faversham referring to an act of piracy by two men of Winchelsea and their companions, being in a ship called "La Crayere," against a ship of Witsand, near Boulogne, laden with merchandize, which had left Flanders, and was passing up the Thames towards London; and commanded the sub-wardens in the ports and along the coast to seize the ship called "La Crayere" if within their jurisdiction, and attach the bodies of the sailors thereof.

In 1293 a hundred sail of the Cinque Ports navy fought with a fleet of 200 Frenchmen, took or sunk all the vessels and slew many of the mariners, so that France was thereby for a long time after destitute of seamen and shipping.

In the end of 1298 the barons of the Cinque Ports were warned

to have the whole of their service of fifty-seven ships ready for the expedition to Scotland of the next year. Faversham contributed one ship. The average of the crews now reached thirty-four, but the vessels still carried only one mast. This fleet was commanded by Gervas Alard of Winchelsea as admiral and four captains. The admiral received 2s. a day, the captains 1s. The fleet was ordered to be taken to Skymburness in the Firth of Solway, where it would be in the neighbourhood of Carlisle.

The Cinque Ports fleet is said to have captured twenty-eight ships and routed 16,000 men, but this is by no means certain.

The rights of the free barons of Faversham, many of whom were tenants of the abbot and convent as lords of the manor, and the rights of the abbot and convent were often conflicting; and with a view of terminating or preventing litigation, and even breaches of the peace, many of the manorial claims were compounded from time to time for a fixed annual money payment.

In 1301 the abbot of Faversham was imprisoned in Dover Castle for trespassing on the Cinque Ports jurisdiction, and the archbishop, who supported him, only escaped punishment through the intervention of his suffragans.

The barons appear to have been a rough and hardy set, well adapted for the defence of the country whilst at sea, but much disposed to litigation in their local court of Portmote.

In 31 Edward I. (1302-3) Gilbert de Dover, a baron of Faversham, came before the mayor, bailiffs, and jurats of Faversham, saying that the men of Calais had taken him in his ship opposite Deal, carried him to Calais, and there imprisoned him, and having seized and carried off his chattels in several parcels to the value of £43 10s. 8d., still unjustly withheld from him those goods to his damage in 20 marks. This he proved with his comprovers, Stephen son of Stephen le Taylur, Gilbert Hughelot, William de Herteye, William Hughelyn, and Simon de Tenham, who all with Gilbert made oath.

On another day in the same year this Gilbert de Dover was accused by Simon Baldock of coming into a boat which Simon had hired of Alan Bisshopp, and carrying off the sails.

In 1303 Warin at Stroud of Seasalter complained of William the brother of Gilbert of Dover and others for coming to his fishwell ("piscinarium") and carrying off the fish to his grievous damage. The defendants acknowledged that they were there, but carried away nothing of his, but bought the fish they took away of

John Dod and Peter Kok. From this we may infer that the Sealsalter wears represent those existing 600 years ago.

A writ was issued from Stirling 10th June 32 Edward I. to the mayor and bailiffs of Faversham reciting at length certain complaints of the abbot of Faversham. The return to the writ states that the mayor and bailiffs do not hinder the abbot from holding his courts of his own tenants, and collecting from them rents and amerciements by his bailiffs and servants, but that they themselves have all the royal liberty and the same charter which the other barons of the Cinque Ports have; and nothing else do they claim except that which the King granted to the men of Faversham by the said charter, and of which right the King was seised at the time of making the charter, their service being one ship for the King's use yearly. *To no one else than the King can they or will they attorn.*

In 34 Edward I. (1305) Gilbert de Dover appointed John le Packere, Baron of Sandwich, his proctor, more especially to demand, recover, and receive his goods which had been stolen and taken from him by sea and land since the truce and peace made between the Kings of England and France.

In a release of sums paid by the barons of the Cinque Ports of the King's wardrobe, dated 6th June 34 Edward I. (1305), the following names are mentioned:—

GERVAS ALARD, Admiral.

WILLIAM PATE, JUSTIN ALARD, WILLIAM CHARLES of Sandwich, and JOHN DE AULA of Dover, Captains of the Fleet of the Cinque Ports in Scotland in 28 Edward I.

REGNIAL DE PEYN.

RALF BASSET (Captain of Munition at Blaman).

NICS. BARET, Clerk.

NICS. DE FESNE of Sandwich.

ADOMAR DE VALENC, Lieutenant of Scottish Sea.

RICHARD DE BEREฟอร์ด, Treasurer of Ireland.

In 1320 (14 Edward II.) a letter came from the mayor, bailiffs, and community of Newcastle-on-Tyne, saying they had learned from their well-beloved fellow burgess and neighbour, Gilbert Haukyn, that as his ship called the "Godyer," laden with goods and merchandize, was on its way towards that town from parts beyond sea, a ship of Faversham called the "Skynkvyn," of which Gilbert de Dover was master, coming from the parts of Scotland

where it had been on the King's service, met the "Godyer" off the coast near Orford in Suffolk, on which Gilbert de Dover, Peter Hanyn, and other men at arms on board, of the town of Faversham, made an attack upon her, and chased her till she went ashore; by reason of which she was split in the hold from one end to the other, when Gilbert de Dover and the others boarded her and carried off goods to the value of £20 to the damage of Gilbert Haukyn of £40, they therefore asked that for friendship's sake the mayor, barons, and good men of Faversham would make Gilbert de Dover and the others give satisfaction for the losses inflicted.

In the following year, 15 Edward II., May (1322), a letter was received by the mayor and barons of Dover, enclosing a copy of the Royal Mandate under the privy seal, stating that the King has heard that many misdoers have put to sea with a great fleet to molest him and them and all the realm, and to injure merchants coming with victuals to them; and it is therefore his wish that all the Cinque Ports and the towns and havens shall make ready their ships with double equipments, and he charges them on their good faith and allegiance forthwith to get ready all their ships and to await commands from Robert Battaile, his admiral. He further wishes that if any ship be taken at sea it shall be brought to land safe and sound with the people, and they be safely kept until it be known what and whose they are. When this matter shall have been disposed of, they are to withdraw under the admiral's advice to the parts of Scotland to damage the enemy there in all ways that they know of and may. The mayor and barons of Faversham (Faversham being a member of the port of Dover) are therefore to have four ships fitted out forthwith.

A writ of privy seal, dated at Rothewell in Scotland 6th June 15 Edward II. (1322), was directed to Robert Bataille, our admiral, and our good people of the fleet of our navy of the Cinque Ports, referring to the doubtful attitude of the Count of Flanders, and charging them upon their fealty that between them and his good people of Yarmouth they would have good look out upon the sea, and with one accord would go forth to sea in as great strength and as good array as ever they might; and would use such counsel that the sea should be his own and open and sure, and that merchants, as well strangers as denizens, bringing victuals for his war in Scotland, and all others coming towards his realm, and his people on the coasts, might thereby be assured and kept in quiet from damages and evil attempts on part of his ill wishers. And if

they saw that between them and his said people of Yarmouth they might thereto suffice, he should desire much that the navy of the coast towards the west should go speedily towards the parts of Ireland and the Isles as was fully provided in his Parliament. And if it happened that any ship of his opponents were taken upon the sea, let it be brought safe and sound with the men to land to know fully their condition.

In the accounts of the same year we find the following items :—

Expenses of William le Barber going to Sandwich to know how the sailors were disposed towards the fleet, 20<sup>d</sup>.

For taking our ship the "Barge" out of the marsh to the wharf, 4<sup>d</sup>.

Given to a messenger of Dover bringing a copy of the King's writ that the passage be better guarded on Monday before the Feast of S<sup>t</sup> Peter's Chair, 6<sup>d</sup>.

Given to a King's messenger bringing a writ dated Monday next after Feast of S<sup>t</sup> Gregory that we shall have 2 men before the King himself, 6<sup>d</sup>.

Given to John Wade for his expenses to Sandwich to know the day when the men of Sandwich were to set out for our Lord the King at York, 4<sup>d</sup>.

Delivered to Henry Andrew and Robert Shipman for their expenses in going to our Lord the King at York on Friday before Palm Sunday, 60<sup>s</sup>.

A Parliament was summoned to meet at York on 2 May 1322, and Andrew and Shipman were probably returned and attended as members for Faversham.

A small parchment indenture states that on 20th June 11 Edward III. (1337), a covenant was made between William at Forstalle, Peter Shipman, John his son, Peter Lucas of Hamme, and John de Wy, of the one part, and the mayor and community of Faversham of the other part, that they should let to the mayor and community a ship called "La Katerine," with all her rigging and gear, for the King's service whenever the King might please, and after such service on the ship coming safe to Faversham the mayor and community should pay as large a sum for the hire as any of the Cinque Ports for the hire of any ship and of such tonnage let to them should see fit to be paid upon faithful inquisition made. And by a deed of same date it was agreed that the mayor and community should forfeit to William at Forstalle and others

100 marks for the ship "La Katerine" if in going or returning it perish by peril of sea.

In this same year (1337) watch and ward were ordered to be kept on the sea-coast, and the abbot of Faversham was required to find two men at arms to keep ward at Walmer and thirty-three in Sheppy, of whom twenty-five were to be of Milton and Merdenne, three of Boughton, and the remaining five of Faversham.

In 1347 King Edward, in order to supply a covering force for his army besieging Calais, as well as a sufficient number of vessels for the blockade of the port and guard of the Channel, made a general demand for ships, large and small, as well as for seamen. The first of these squadrons mustered at Sandwich. The total number amounted to 710 ships and 14,151 men, of which the five Cinque Ports, two ancient towns, and three of their members, namely, Seaford, Faversham, and Margate, provided 105 ships and 2140 men; the supply of Faversham being two ships and fifty-three mariners, although their proper quota was one ship only.

Soon after the accession of Henry IV. we meet with the last of the Cinque Port officers who attained distinction, Henry Pay of Faversham. In 1405 he, with the Cinque Ports ships under his command, was concerned with Lord Berkeley in the capture off Milford Haven of a French squadron which had been sent to the support of Owen Glendower, an opportune service which broke up the alliance. In 1407, at the head of the Ports fleet, he succeeded in making an immense capture—no less than 120 ships laden with iron, salt, and wine.

He was buried at Faversham Church in 1419. Probably his character and services added to the estimation in which his fellow-townsmen were held, and it is perhaps significant that a few days before Pay's death King Henry V., by letters patent dated 8th March, granted that a mace should be carried before the mayor for the time being, within the liberty, with the arms of the Cinque Ports fixed in the head of it. This was evidently intended as an additional symbol of independent jurisdiction.

In 1565 the Cinque Ports towns had become from various causes in a depressed state. Faversham contained only 380 houses, eighteen ships and vessels, and fifty persons occupied in merchandize and shipping.

In the same year Dover had only 358 houses (thirty-two less than Faversham); its ships and crayers, varying from 120 to 4 tons burden, numbered only twenty, and the persons occupied in

merchandise and fishing 130. The other ports were in the same condition. Yet in 1588 the ports raised amongst themselves £43,000, and set out with that money thirteen sail under Lord Henry Seymour.

The Armada collected and equipped by Philip II. of Spain for the subjugation of England consisted of 132 ships (besides caravels), 3165 cannon, 8766 sailors, 2088 galley slaves, 21,855 soldiers, 1355 volunteers (noblemen, gentlemen, and their attendants), and 150 monks; the whole under the command of the Duke of Medina-Sidonia.

The English fleet to oppose the Armada, under Lord Charles Howard, Sir Francis Drake, and Sir John Hawkins, was ready for sea in December 1587.

The Armada sailed from Lisbon, and was soon after dispersed by a storm in May 1588. It was re-collected and entered the channel off Cornwall on 19th July 1588. It suffered in a series of engagements from 21st to 27th July 1588, and was dispersed by five ships sent into its midst.

The part taken by Faversham to oppose the Armada will now be described:—

On the 17th December 1587 a *cesse* of £400 was ordered by the common council of the town to be made on the inhabitants of Faversham to provide a ship of war of fifty tons to serve in the narrow seas against the Dunkirkers and other of Her Majesty's enemies, and Abraham Snoode with Edward Buddle, one of the mariners of Faversham, were deputed to go to London to provide the ship. The Cinque Ports and their members were afterwards required to provide five serviceable ships, none under the burden of sixty tons, and one handsome pinnace, to be put in readiness and furnished for two months with victuals, mariners, munition, etc., by 25th April 1588, and to join with Her Majesty's Navy on the seas, or to be otherwise employed according to direction to be received from Her Majesty's Council, or the Lord Admiral; and at a Guestling at Dover on the 11th April it was agreed that the shipping should be apportioned as follows:

Winchelsea, Hastings, and members	One ship of 60 tons.
Rye and members . . . . .	One ship of 60 tons.
Romney and members . . . . .	One ship of 60 tons.
Dover and members . . . . .	One ship of 100 tons.
Sandwich and members . . . . .	One ship of 80 tons.
Hythe, a pinnace not under 24 tons.	



The Faversham Commissioners at the Guestling "upon some uncurteous speaches and harde dealyngs of the townsmen of Dovor," concerning the service by Dover and its members of 100 tons, thought it good for the avoiding of further controversy and strife between Dover and Faversham that Faversham should find of itself a ship of forty tons or thereabouts of the 100 tons imposed on Dover. It was accordingly so agreed by the Guestling; and cesses amounting to £310 were afterwards made by the Corporation of Faversham on the inhabitants and lands in the liberty of the town to pay the cost. A ship belonging to Abraham Snoode and Edward Buddle, called the "Hasarde," was provided.

Portions of the town accounts of this period have been destroyed by damp, but some of the fragments which remain contain items of money paid for wages before the service began, viz., from 23rd April to 8th May, money paid to Buddle and others for press money; and to Nicholas Turner, captain, and Robert Colwell, purser of the ship; and the names are given of many of those employed, consisting of master and mate, the steward, cook, surgeon, corporal, shipwright, five sailors, two garsons, four soldiers, a trumpeter, and others.

The ship was discharged, and lying at the quay in the creek at Faversham on 30th August 1588.

In 1596 the Cinque Ports and their members were required to provide four serviceable ships, none under the burden of 160 tons, presently to be put in readiness, and furnished for five months with victuals, mariners, munition, and other necessary provision and furniture, by 1st April, to join with Her Majesty's Navy on the seas, or to be otherwise employed according to direction from the Council or the Lord Admiral.

At a Guestling at Dover on 7th January it was agreed that Dover and her members should find one ship of 160 tons with the help of Hythe for twenty tons and £10 in money. Faversham to find forty tons of the 160 imposed on Dover and her members. A cesse was made of £300 for the same forty tons. This shipping was sent with other forces to Calais.

The supply of ships by Faversham would appear to have ceased with the reign of Queen Elizabeth, but in the reign of Charles I. the service of shipping became degraded into one of the means resorted to of raising the money which the King could not obtain from Parliament. From 1626 to 1639 various sums of considerable amount were demanded from the Cinque Ports and their members

## 282 SHIPPING OF THE BARONS OF FAVERSHAM.

as ship-money, but in 1641 ship-money was declared by Parliament to be illegal, and from thenceforth no demand was made on them, either to supply vessels or to pay their value.

The service of shipping was not the only aid rendered by Faversham. Mention might also be made of the trained bands of soldiers, the furnishing of armour and munition and the Cinque Ports Militia, but time and the limits of this paper will not permit a description of them.

The inhabitants of Faversham have held the privilege and responsibility of local government for many centuries. The present Corporation may be congratulated in succeeding without any break to the ancient rulers of their town; on their respect for old traditions of usefulness; and their ability to discharge the many additional responsibilities which modern legislation is constantly casting upon them.