

THE SAXON HISTORY OF THE TOWN AND PORT OF ROMNEY

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I. ROMANUS THE PRESBYTER

We are told in a charter of 740¹ that Romney was granted to the nuns of Lyminge "as Romanus the presbyter formerly held it", i.e. with all the rights and privileges that Romanus once had. Since Romanus is

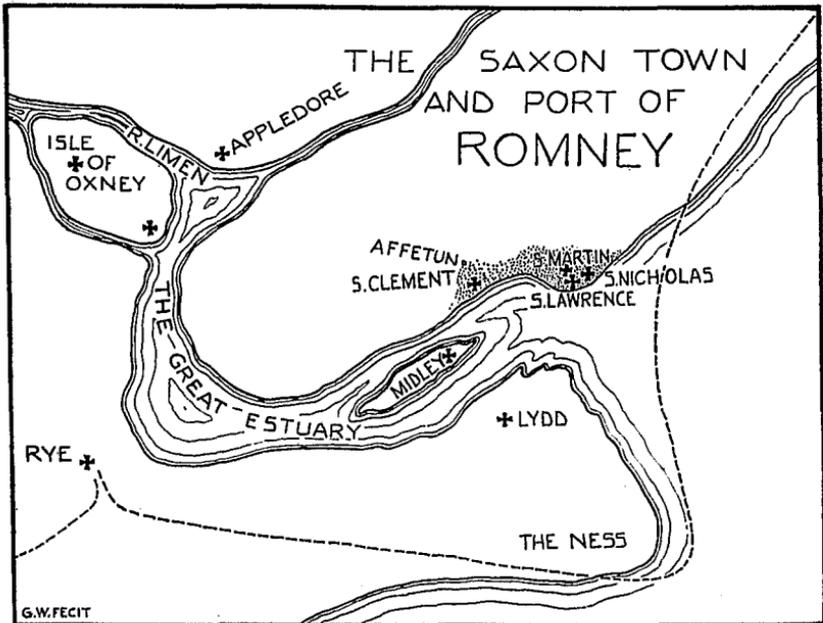


FIG. 1.—A map of Saxon Romney showing the Great Estuary which formed its Haven.

the first owner of Romney, of whom we have any knowledge, it will be well to consider what is known about him.

He first appears in history (*Bede*, III, p. 25) as having come north from Kent to the court of Queen Eanflæd of Bernicia, a lady whose mother had been a Kentish princess. This was somewhere about the year 660 and must have been after he had given up his rights at Romney.

He attended the great Synod at Whitby in 664. This is all we really know about him, but there is good cause to suppose that he really held this land in Romney in trust for the Nunnery at Lyminge when it was founded or, it may be, already possessed it and handed it over to the nunnery. This nunnery was founded by that Kentish princess, Aethelburgh or Eadburgh, whose daughter became Queen of Bernicia and had Romanus with her in Northumberland. She had been less fortunate than her daughter for, when her own husband Edwin King of Deira was slain, she had been obliged to fly from his kingdom and to seek refuge in her native land of Kent. This is how she came to found a home and nunnery at Lyminge. Presumably she brought her daughter with her and, when the latter went north to marry the king of Bernicia, sent Romanus with her. He was perhaps the parish priest of Lyminge and the first to minister the sacraments to the nuns, or he may have been attached to the nunnery at its first consecration. Since no woman could be a priest and administer the sacraments, it was always necessary to make provision of suitable clergy who could conduct the services and also, as occasion required, advise upon the many problems of land-ownership with which an abbess had to deal. It is surely a justifiable conclusion that Romanus was not only the owner of Romney long before our first charter of 740 but that from him it passed into the possession of the new nunnery and that King Aethelbeorht II did no more than confirm what the nunnery already possessed.

This carries the history of Romney back to about 650 at latest.

II. THE SECOND RECORD

Our first glimpse of Romney itself is in a charter of the year 740¹, and this charter still survives and is safe in the British Museum. At that far off period, more than twelve hundred years ago, the settlement at Romney was given by King Ethelbert of Kent to the nuns of Saint Eadburg's foundation at Lyminge.⁰ In this way commenced the long line of religious lords to whom Romney was in one way or another subordinate. The Romney of 740 is not so named but is described as including a fishery, etc., "at the mouth of the River Limen". This river was later known as the Rother, but that name did not become popular until the sixteenth century.² It has had, in the course of its history, at least three openings to the sea. The first was by way of West Hythe, and this was in use during the Roman era. The second grew to importance as the first dwindled away owing to the obstruction of shingle banks. In 740 the river flowed from Appledore and Oxney southward to a great marsh near Rye and then turned east to find its way to the sea in such a course that both Old and New Romney were on its northern shore, while, across a considerable estuary, the church and town of Lydd were already in existence, and Denge Marsh had long been

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a royal heritage. These latter facts we know from another charter of 774 wherein the sea is said to be to the north and east of Lydd.³ The third mouth of the Limen, now the Rother mouth at Rye, was not opened until the thirteenth century, by which period the estuary of 740 had become chiefly mud banks. The great estuary was a sheltered haven which brought to Romney the fame and importance which made it a Cinque Port and this importance was already commencing in 740. The actual description of the village as it was then granted by charter is fourfold.⁴ It included (a) a fishery at the mouth of the river called the Limen Water, (b) part of that country in which is situated an oratory of Saint Martin with (c) the houses of the fishermen and (d) one quarter of one aratrum about that place. This description requires a little elucidation. It is generally thought that a fishery would at that time have consisted of keddle nets, i.e. nets affixed to poles set in a semi-circle near low tide mark and cleared when the next high tide had receded and left within the nets such fish as may have been swimming too close inshore. This type of fishing may still be seen along the Camber sands and elsewhere, but we do not really know that other methods of sea fishing were not as well understood at Romney as they were by the Sea of Gallilee. The shingle banks on which the men of Saxon Romney spread and mended their nets, as their successors did on Yarmouth strand, have long been covered with mud and houses, but one may walk along what is left of them by following the back lane to Old Romney. The "quarter part of one aratrum" is not so mysterious as it sounds. An aratrum was a unit of land of any shape or size which had only one thing in common with other aratra, namely, that it paid the same tax. In theory it may have been, and probably was at one time, the amount of land which employed one plough team, that is, eight oxen, but the fact that land was mostly pasture and used no plough at all by no means excused it from taxation, and no one thought it worth while to choose for its taxable unit some more appropriate name. In 740 the idea of taxing a man in exact proportion to his actual possessions had not yet arisen and the State was content with reasonable approximations. If one had obviously less than a whole aratrum one might be taxed on one, two or three yokes. This unit followed out the plough team idea since four yokes of oxen make a full team. The quarter aratrum of Romney is actually described as one yoke in 1086 (D.B.). Whether or no it was the land now called Yoke Farm it is for the medievalists to determine: the possibility is certainly of interest.

The most important point about Romney in 740 is that it had a church. Doubtless there were many churches in England at that date, but we have seldom any record of them. A dedication to Saint Martin of Tours, a soldier saint, was very popular in early days, witness the

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ancient churches of St. Martin at Canterbury and Dover. It is difficult to know whether one ought to attach any particular significance to the fact that the Romney church is described as an "oratorium". This would seem to denote a church of inferior order, but the existence of a definite dedication rather suggests an independent foundation, and the inferior churches had no burial grounds, an almost impossible deprivation for a village situated as Romney was, between the rage of the sea and the poor roads of the marsh.

There is one feature absent from this Romney of 740 which some people have been willing to fit into the picture. This is the old channel which existed before it silted up with mud and became the Rhee wall on which a main road runs to-day. This channel was actually a canal cut in the thirteenth century when the great estuary was filling up. It was not dreamt of in Saxon days.

III. THE PASTURE LANDS

The charter of 740 does not content itself with a description of the land at Romney but describes also, in some detail, the rights of pasture which went with it. These were to be exercised at some distance from Romney "*next to the marsh called Bishop's Wic as far as the wood called Ripp and the boundaries of Sussex.*" The Bishop's Wic is now known as The Wicks and is in the parish of Lydd. The wood called Ripp has nearly all disappeared but the Ripes at Lydd preserve the name and also the Midripps near Broomhill. The pasture was probably on either side of what is now called the Jury's Gut Sewer (which certainly did not exist in that form in 740) and extended not so far west as the modern boundary of Sussex, which once came down to the sea on the Kent side of Broomhill.

This pasturage right is stated to provide for the feeding of 150 head of cattle. The word "jumentum" is usually used to describe the cattle and this word means draught cattle, the patient ox and perhaps the horse. It could not apply to sheep and this suggestion of 150 draught oxen to be pastured on the Romney meadows must come as something of a surprise to those who have learned to look upon the marsh as sheep country, and sheep fattening country at that, but in 740 the ox was the only form of heavy transport known and was just as important to the men of Romney as the light lorry is to-day.

IV. SHEEP FARMING

We have no evidence of sheep farming in the 740 charter, except the name Bishop's wic. It has been shown by Horace Round (D. B. Essex in *V.C.H.*) that the word "Wic" meant a dairy farm. We are dealing now with the year 740, long before the Danes and Wikings or Vikings descended upon our coasts. These place-names ending in "-wic"

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are nearly always to be found on the coast, or on a river estuary, or at least in marshy country. In just such country was the dairy farm of Saxon times situated, for it was not the cow but the sheep which constituted the wealth of these farms. The sheep provided milk which was mostly turned into cheese, if we may judge from the form in which it appears in the medieval rent rolls, and, after that, they provided mutton. Both cheese and mutton were highly esteemed in 740, but we have no sure evidence of sheep farming in Romney itself until more than a hundred years later. Even then it is rather indirect. In a charter of the year 858 (*B.C.S.* 496) it is said that the manor of Westwell—a long way from Romney up in the hill country—owned certain “Wiwarawics” which provided the lord of the manor with cheese and mutton. The word “Wiwarawics” means dairy farms belonging to the men of Wye. Since Wye belonged to the King he was able to hand over some of these farms to the Lord of Westwell, a friend of his. We should still not know where these farms are situated except for discovering the fact that the Lord of Westwell owned such farms, some hundreds of years later (See *Arch. Cant.*, III, p. 24), very near Romney, as near in fact as the area of Goose Farm in Hope-All-Saints parish. There is no reason to suppose that the Goose Farm and North Fording House of to-day are sited on any different lands to the Wiwarawic homesteads of 858. It is not firm evidence but helps to support the statement that sheep farming was an important industry in the Romney area when we first have a glimpse of it. There is a charter of as early a date as the year 700 (*B.S.C.* 98) which shows that sheep farming was prosperous at the other end of the marsh, near Dymchurch, and there also we find the revealing place-names Orgarswick, Snavewick, etc. There was a “wic-” name in or near New Romney at one time, namely, “Dudmanswike” but its exact position has yet to be determined.

All these varied facts point clearly towards a very great age for the Romney Marsh sheep farming industry and there can be no reasonable doubt that the Romney of 740 knew quite as much about sheep as it did about fishing, but the sheep were small-horned creatures, quite unlike the massive Romney Marsh breed of to-day. Remains of these ancient sheep have been dug up on the sand dunes of West Hythe.

V. THE BATTLE GROUNDS IN THE MARSH

In the Saxon Chronicles which remain to us there are certain references to the Marsh in the year 796. It is not in doubt that at this time King Ceolwulf of Mercia ravaged the kingdom of Kent, but there is some doubt as to just how far he penetrated. Of the two best authorities one says that he got “as far as the marsh” (*oth Merse*) and the other says that he ravaged “the men of Kent and the Marshmen” (*Cantware et Mersware*). In a history of Romney it is not necessary to

discuss the precise interpretation of these phrases. The road to Romney was ill-advised ground for any midland army and it is perhaps unlikely that it wandered so far, although the men of Romney with others were doubtless summoned to resist it elsewhere, for the heathen men of the Chronicle were the dreaded sea rovers from north-west Europe, then called the northmen, but later the Danes. The armies of Ceolwulf of Mercia could never have come upon Romney unaware, but the Danes could and did come up over the horizon and, before the alarm was given, sail well into the estuary and land on sheltered beaches on almost any tide.

In 838 something much worse happened. It is recorded in the Chronicles that "*this year Herebryht the alderman was slain by the heathen men and many with him amongst the men of the Marsh*". Romney must have been deeply involved in this battle, or series of battles. The Danish menace continued and in the year 893 came almost a formal invasion. One can hardly do better than quote the Chronicle itself translated as seems best :

893. *This year the great army of which we have already spoken came from the east and westward to Boulogne. There they took ship and carried themselves over at one time with their horses and all. And they came up with 250 ships into the mouth of the Limen. . . . On this river they rowed up their ships as far as the Weald, four miles from the mouth outwards, and there stormed a fortress in the fens which was half finished and contained a few countrymen.*

In the year following this army left for London and Essex having spent the winter at Appledore. It can scarcely have been a pleasant winter for Romney, but in spite of the famous litany "From the fury of the Northmen, Good Lord, deliver us" there are not wanting hints in the Chronicles suggesting that the coast towns perforce came to some sort of working arrangement with the Danes, an arrangement which was scarcely compatible with loyalty to the Kentish king.

At some time during this first period of the Danish wars the direct overlord of Romney, namely, the nunnery at Lyminge, was abandoned or destroyed and its lands came under the influence, or into the ownership, of the Archbishops of Canterbury. It is important to note here that from now on, for some hundreds of years, the Archbishops were Lords of Romney, and appointed their own bailiffs there.

From the time that the great army of the Danes sailed out of the estuary Romney seems to have enjoyed a long period of peace, but there is just one recorded incident demanding mention. In the year 911 King Edward was in Kent whither he had gone on admiralty business for "*the ships were sailing along the sea by the south-west coast to meet him.*" (A.S.C.) We cannot doubt that the fleet put in to Romney for

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water and stores and it is at least likely that some of them were Romney boats. But the Danes did not then come near the marsh for they were soundly defeated in Mercia.

VI. THE NAME OF ROMNEY

So far as we have reviewed the beginnings of Romney there has been no mention of its name. This appears first in a charter of 895⁷ and again in one of 914.⁸ It is not applied to the town but to the river Limen. In the first case we have "*flumen quod vocatur Rumenea*" and in the other the same stretch of the same river is called the *Rumenesea*. These words mean Rumene-water, the terminal "ea" meaning a river, estuary, etc. The intrusive "s" in the second form of the name is due to the error of a scribe who supposed that "Rumene" was a person whose name had become attached to the river. What "Rumene" really means is till quite unsettled, but we can at least trace it back to 895 which gives it a thousand years of history. It is probably derived from some Celtic root and it is interesting to remember that there is a second Rumney Marsh near Cardiff.

VII. PROSPERITY

In 994 Romney experienced the effects of the second wave of Danish attacks. In the Chronicle for this year we read :

This year came Anlaf and Sweyne to London with 94 ships. And they closely besieged the city. . . . Thence they advanced and wrought the greatest evil that ever any army could do, in burning and plundering and manslaughter, not only on the sea coast in Essex, but in Kent and in Sussex and in Hampshire. Then they took horse and rode wherever they could committing unspeakable evil.

Certainly Romney must have suffered in those days, but it is possible that they saw also the definite beginnings of prosperity. It was not long after, 1008, that the King (ill-advised King Ethelred) ordered a great ship-building programme and we know that the ships were actually built. Equally it is true that they were lost by inefficiency and mismanagement. But they were actually built, and the building was compulsory, a national tax. No doubt the great estuary by Romney was already narrowing with mud banks, as the land slowly, very slowly subsided, but it was still a first-class site for ship building and conveniently near to the mustering point at Sandwich.

The men of the south-eastern ports went out after Sweyne, captured his ships, in 1049 and 1050 (it must be confessed that the year is in doubt). Soon after, in 1052, they witnessed another battle fleet standing off Dungeness. To explain its presence and significance we must introduce some actors in the national history of those days. Edward

the Confessor was still on the throne and his court was a paradise for his Norman friends. Of these the least popular in Kent was Eustace of Boulogne who had not long before called upon the King with a strong retinue. As he was going home and approaching Dover his men donned their arms. In Dover they demanded free lodgings and slew a man who refused them. Thereon the men of Dover, warned by the incident of putting on arms that trouble was likely, fell upon Eustace and his men and killed or wounded several of them. Eustace himself escaped to London and told an evil tale of the men of Dover, how they had attacked him unawares, etc., etc. The King was wroth and ordered Earl Godwin to punish the rebellious town. Godwin was Earl of Kent, and no friend to Normans. He flatly refused to carry out or countenance any punishment of Dover. Thereon he was banished, with his sons, and his Earldom taken from him. Even his sister, the King's wife, although in name only, was deprived of all her goods and sent to the nunnery of Wherwell. The Normans triumphed. Godwin went, where most exiles went in those days, to the court of Baldwin of Bruges, so picturesquely shown to us in the pages of *Hereward the Wake*. Harold, his eldest son, went to Ireland. There they bided their time. All this is in the Chronicles. Then, on the day before midsummer eve in the year 1052, Godwin sailed from Bruges and came to the Ness. It is called "*Naesse the is be suthan Rumen ea*"—the Ness which is south of Romney. His fleet would there be well protected, for no doubt the Earl was sure of a welcome in his old earldom. But his voyage was really an experiment to see what support might be forthcoming. The Confessor's Norman friends persuaded him to call out a land force as well as a fleet to oppose Godwin. When the fleet arrived, Godwin had gone and after some time spent in idleness it melted away. In the meantime Harold had also come out from Ireland and was ravaging the south-west coasts as far as the Isle of Wight. Presently, he was joined by his father and once more they came back to the Ness, having brought under their standard all the ships at Pevensey. At the Ness, virtually in Romney Haven, they collected all the ships from Hythe and Folkestone and Godwin "enticed to him all the Kentish men" as well as many others, the boatmen of Hastings being particularly mentioned. Although King Edward had still 40 long ships at Sandwich, they availed him nothing. Godwin sailed in triumph to London and there made as if to attack the city and the King's ships. Then the wiser heads counselled reconciliation and Godwin was received back into favour while the Normans fled the land. It is particularly to be noted that they did not dare to flee by way of the channel ports. After this there seems to have been peace at Romney until 1066.

No sooner was Harold upon the throne than he experienced trouble

from his brother Tostig who, soon after Easter, in 1066, "came from beyond sea into the Isle of Wight, with as large a fleet as he could get . . . thence he proceeded and committed outrages everywhere by the sea coast where he could land, until he came to Sandwich." Whether he landed at Romney, or failed to land, is not recorded, but it was not many months before a more momentous attempt was made, namely the landing of Duke William's forces. Some at least came to Romney and we have an account of the incident as it appeared to William of Poitou,¹⁰ the conqueror's chaplain (i.e. private secretary). This is tainted evidence and it only exists in very bad Latin, but what he wanted to say is in a paragraph headed "*Profisciscitur ad Romanaerium*". This paragraph may be broadly translated:

When he had buried his dead and given the charge of Hastings to a vigorous custodian, he attacked Romney and exacted what penalty he chose for the slaughter of his men who had landed there in error, and whom the savage people attacked and inflicted upon them the greatest possible damage.

It may be regretted that the first description of the men of Romney is that they were "*fera gens*", but the evidence after all comes from a hostile source. What penalty was exacted by the Conqueror is unknown. It is true that he was "stark to those that withstood him" (*A.S.C.*), but the channel ports were lines of communication and were not lightly to be destroyed. Dover was indeed burned, but this was the accidental act of drunken soldiers and William punished them for it. Romney was certainly not burned. It was probably the citizens rather than the town itself which suffered. And now we are bound to ask ourselves "What manner of town was this Romney which William punished, and which he left in charge of a man named Robert?" The answer must come from records of post-conquest date and chiefly from two of them, Domesday Book itself and the various records collected together in what is called the Domesday Monachorum. The picture these sources give is full of interest. As to the name and size of the town we gain most information from certain lists of Saxon churches which commence the Domesday Monachorum. These tell us that there were two churches called Rumenea. One of these paid 32d. each Easter to the Archbishop, and the other 31d. These church lists are long, but nowhere else in them do we find such sums as these. The usual figure is 28d. for an independent church not attached to any religious house. Lesser churches pay smaller sums, but always a multiple of 7d. except one only of which we have record and this paid 3½d. avowedly because it was so small. Now the two Romney payments added together make 63d. and this fulfils all requirements for it is a multiple of 7d. The inference is that the two Rumenea churches

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had at one time paid 63d. and that this sum had later been divided between them. These two were evidently at Old and New Romney although these specific titles do not yet appear in history. There were altogether four churches, namely, St. Clement (Old Romney) and St. Nicholas, St. Lawrence, and the old foundation of Saint Martin in New Romney. It is thus evident that Romney was a very considerable town and port. We know that Sandwich had two churches, but we are not told that it had more. Hythe had also two churches, like those of Romney at opposite ends of the old anchorage, West Hythe and Hythe itself. But Romney had not only two independent parish churches, but also two others in the then deanery of Lymne. It also had 96 burgesses, a surprisingly small number which rather suggests that the Duke's vengeance had dispossessed many of Romney's citizens. The Saxon owner had been Earl Godwin, which means, in effect, King Harold for the writers of Domesday Book commonly assumed that Godwin had lived until 1066 in order to avoid any mention of Harold. The actual tenant was Aelfsige, otherwise Alsi, an eminent thane of Kent who also owned the far reaching manor of Eastbridge in the marsh. He was probably slain at Hastings.

VIII. THE MINTS

The increasing importance of Romney in the century before the conquest is shown by the use of this town as one of the royal mints. About the year 836 Aethelstan, who was sub-king of Kent and the South-East, had made laws setting out how many mints there might be in each borough, but no mint was then assigned to Romney. It is not until the time of Aethelred the Unready (979-1016) that we meet with coins minted in Romney. One of the men responsible for making this money was named Wulfnoth and he put his name on his coins followed by the words "On Rume". There was no room to spell "Romney" in full. It was not mere pride that caused the moneyer to give these details. He would probably have preferred not to do so, but the regulations were very definite. The country knew from bitter experience that under-weight coins would very soon flood the market if no one could be quite sure whom to hold responsible for them. Other moneyers under Aethelred were named Aethelwine, Leofric, etc. King Cnut carried on the tradition of Aethelred and allowed a mint at Romney. The moneyers appear on their coins as Earnoth, Godman, Godric, Wulnoth, Aelfward and Leofwine. These were not artisans but men of standing in the town of Romney, burgers who could handle silver bullion in a responsible manner and be penalized effectively for any default. They may well have employed artisans to do the actual minting. When Cnut died his son and successor Harold had his coins minted at Romney by Edmaer and Wulnoth. It should be noted that

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coins allow small space for proper names and it may well have been that in other spheres, for example, upon a charter, the name of Wulfnoth would have been correctly spelt. Similar considerations apply to other names. Under Edward the Confessor Romney remained a mint town and it is highly significant that even under the Conqueror one of Edward's moneyers continued in office while two others, both Saxons, were added. In spite of the Conqueror's vengeance on Romney, there were still citizens sufficiently trusted to be allowed to mint coins—or was it perhaps a burdensome duty from which they could not escape although it yielded them little profit? No complete answer is possible to this question.

Since these men whom we call moneyers were in fact foremost citizens of Romney in their day, the only citizens and burgers whose names have survived so long, it is worth listing them below :

Aethelred II (979-1016). Aethelwine, Leofwine, Leofstan,
Manna, Wulfric.

Cnut (1016-35). Aelfweard, Eadnoth, Godman, Godric,
Leofwine, Wulfnoth.

Harold I (1035-42). Eadmaer, Wulfnoth.

Edward the Confessor (1042-66). Brungar, Estan, Wulfmaer,
Leofric.

Harold II (1066). Wulfmaer.

William Conqueror (1066-1087). Wulfmaer, Aelfmaer, Winedaeg.

William II (1087-1100). Wulfmaer, Winedaeg, Coc.

Henry I (1100-1135). Wulfred, Godric.

IX. RUMINELLA.

A surprising incident in the history of Romney occurred in an unexpected quarter when Edward, son of Ethelred the Unready, was an exile in France while Canute occupied the English throne. Edward consorted much with monks and learned men and, from time to time, he made them promises of great things he would do for this and that Norman monastery if ever he came to the throne of his fathers. Such a promise he made between 1032 and 1035 to the Monastery of Mont St. Michel in France. This gift,⁹ which the monks persuaded him to put into charter form, included "the port called Ruminella . . . with mills and fisheries, etc." (*Portum qui vocatur Ruminella cum . . . molendinis et piscatoriis.*) The name of the port should be noted as also the presence of tide mills. Ruminella is a latinized form of Ruminel and this was the usual Norman name for the town as may be seen in Domesday Book and many subsequent records until our native tongue came into its own again. There can be no doubt that this charter purported to give Romney to the monks of Mont St. Michel.

One naturally wonders if ever they got it. There is no question that Edward, when he came to the throne, did in general try to keep promises of this sort. But it is also known that Earl Godwin held the port of Romney and that his tenant is named as holding it in Domesday Book. The monks could not, therefore, have had any but a short tenancy, if indeed they had any. One might dismiss the whole matter as a promise never fulfilled if it were not for the fact that there are certain curious reminders of the name of St. Michael's near Old Romney. On the 6-in. Ordnance Map (*Kent*, LXXXIV, N.W. Revised to 1906) appears a spot marked "St. Michael's Church, site of". On the Tithe Map this is called St. Michael's Glebe and in sale particulars of 1860 St. Michael's churchyard. Although no trace of a church remains, nor any other record of it known to the writer, it is not wise to dismiss this evidence as of no importance and it remains quite possible that someone else, if not Edward himself, succeeded in giving some form and substance to the Confessor's youthful promise, either before or after the conquest.

X. CIVIL CONSTITUTION

The civil constitution of the town was somewhat complicated since it was in part manorial and in part that of a privileged borough. The nucleus about St. Martin's church was part of the Archbishop's manor of Aldington, a manor which was used as a convenient centre for the attachment of outlying possessions even when they were as far off as Romney. In this part lived 25 burgesses paying manorial dues worth £6 to Aldington. The manor of Langport covered the Old Romney shores of the estuary and in this lived 25 more burgesses. There was attached to this manor a yoke of land which is specially mentioned apart from the total valuation of the manor. This is very likely the quarter aratrum of 740. Finally "*in burgo de Romenel*" were 50 more burgesses who did not pay rent to any manor. This was probably that part of the town which seems always to have contained the administrative buildings and the church of Saint Nicholas as well as that of St. Lawrence and the markets. It lies south-east of the High Street and probably grew up from a nucleus of fishermen's shelters out on the shingle banks where they guarded their nets. This area was apparently not within the confines of any manor.

Of the total of 96 burgesses none were exempt from paying to Robert de Romenel the fines for certain named offences, namely, for theft, for breaking the peace and for "forstel" or assault on the highways. These fines formerly went to Aelfsige, or Godwine. The burgesses paid no other dues. Robert and his predecessors had no market tolls or court fines. In return for this exemption the 96 burgesses were bound to perform sea services and these are fully set out

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in Miss Murray's excellent *Constitutional History of the Cinque Ports*, to which reference should be made.

Thus it is that the story of Saxon Romney ends (until worthier hands shall take up the pen). The Norman, Robert de Romney, is living at Affetun, the old manor house by the church of Saint Clement and, in the words of an exile of those days, "Cold heart and bloody hand now rule Engeland."

XI. REFERENCES.

¹ *Cotton Aug.* II, p. 101, *Birch. Cart. Sax.*, p. 160.

² *Place Names of Sussex*, p. 7.

³ *Brit. Mus. Ashburnham* (Stowe), p. 3, *Birch. Cart. Sax.*, pp. 214, 215.

⁴ The original is in Latin which is here translated.

⁵ The extracts in this chapter are from Earle and Plummer's edition of the *Chronicles*.

⁶ Jenkins has several papers in the *Archæologia Cantiana* and reference should be made to the Index of this journal. His best essay for present purposes is in a small and rare booklet printed at Folkestone, undated and entitled *The Chartulary of the Monastery of Lyminge*.

⁷ *Birch. Cart. Sax.* 572.

⁸ *Idem*, 638.

⁹ This charter has been discussed by Haskins in his *Norman Institutions* (Harvard Historical Studies), p. 273, where further references are given. There is no good reason for doubting its authenticity.

¹⁰ The work of William "Pictavensis" is published in Vol. CXLIX of *Patrologia* (Garnier Fratres); and in *Historiæ Anglicanæ . . . Selecta Monumenta*, published in 1807 and not readily accessible.

TRANSLATION OF THE ROMNEY CHARTER OF A.D. 740

(*Birch. Cart. Sax., No. 160*)

+ In the name of the Lord God, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Always to furnish glorious assent to laudable desires and pious petitions is well known to be right, and so much the more when these desires and petitions have regard to the expansion and increase of the life of the priests of Christ and his servants.

Wherefore I, Aethelbeorht, king of Kent, for the health of my soul, have freely given and do give to Lord Cuthbert the Archbishop, at that time abbot having the rule of that monastery, my fishery which is at the mouth of the river whose name is Limin ea, and part of the field in which the oratory of St. Martin is situate, and the fishermen's houses, and beyond this the fourth part of a ploughland about the same place, and another portion of my legal right (sufficient for) the pasturing 150 cattle next to the marsh which is called Bishop's wic, as far as the wood called Ripp, and to the bounds of Sussex, as Romanus the priest of the church of the blessed Virgin formerly held it.

But because it is necessary to take care lest presumption is able to deny or to throw doubt on our present grant at some future time, it has pleased me to issue this deed by which I forbid not only all my successors and heirs, but even myself also, to dare to do anything at any time other than what has been established by me, and those who by chance neglect to have regard to it, and end the days of this present life without proper compensation, let him know that he has incurred the wrath of God Almighty and is separated from the company of all the saints, because he has tried to dishonour the most sacred place of the Blessed Virgin Mary. But those who protect these augmentations and do nothing against them, may they hear the voice of the most merciful judge saying to the pious—Come, ye blessed of my Father and enter into the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world.

Done in the place called Liminaea, in the year of Our Lord's incarnation DCCXLI and in the third indiction.

- + I, Aethelberht, King of Kent, have confirmed this grant made by me with my own hand with the sign of the holy cross.
- + I, Cuthberht, by the grace of God Archbishop, agree and sign this pious grant of the aforesaid king.
- + Sign-manual of Balthard
- + Sign-manual of Aethelhun
- + Sign-manual of Dunuualh, butler.
- + Sign-manual of Duunuallan
- + Sign-manual of Aldberht, prefectus
- + Sign-manual of Aethelnoth.