

HOLINSHED'S CHRONICLES

THE THAMES

1578 & 1587

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THE DESCRIPTION OF THE THAMES, AND SUCH RIVERS AS FALL INTO THE SAME.

CHAPTER XI.

PREAMBLE

Having (as you have seen) attempted to set down a full discourse of all the Islands, that are situate upon the coast of Britain, and finding the success not correspondent to mine intent, it hath caused me somewhat to restrain my purpose in this description also of our rivers. For whereas I intended at the first to have written at large, of the number, situation, names, quantities, towns, villages, castles, mountains, fresh waters, plashes or lakes, salt waters, and other commodities of the aforesaid Isles, mine expectation of information from all parts of England, was so deceived in the end, that I was fain at last only to lean to that which I knew my self either by reading, or such other help as I had already purchased and gotten of the same. And even so it happeneth in this my tractation of waters, of whose heads, courses, length, breadth, depth of chanel (for burden) ebbs, flowings, and falls, I had thought to have made a perfect description under the report also of an imagined course taken by them all. But now for want of instruction, which hath been largely promised, & slackly performed, and other sudden and injurious denial of help voluntarily offered, without occasion given on my part, I must needs content myself with such observations as I have either obtained by mine own experience, or gathered from time to time out of other men's writings: whereby the full discourse of the whole is utterly cut off, and instead of the same a mangled rehearsal of the residue set down and left in memory.

Wherefore I beseech your honour to pardon this imperfection and rudeness of my labour, which notwithstanding is not altogether in vain, sith my errors may prove a spur unto the better skilled, either to correct or enlarge where occasion serveth, or at the leastwise to take in hand a more absolute piece of work, as better direction shall encourage them thereto. The entrance and beginning of every thing is the hardest; and he that beginneth well, hath achieved half his purpose. The ice (my lord) is broken, and from henceforth it will be more easy for such as shall come after to wade through with the rest, sith "Facile est inuentis addere;" and to continue and finish, is not so great a matter in building, as to attempt and lay the foundation or platform of any noble pyce of workmanship, though it be but rudely handled.

But to my purpose. As I began at the Thames in my description of Islands, so will I now do the like with that of famous rivers; making mine entry at the sa river itself,

SUMMARY

Source

of whose fountain some men make as much ado, as in time past of the true head of Nilus, which, till of late (if it be yet described) was never found: or tl Tanais, whose original was never known, nor shall be: for whilst one placeth it here, another there; there are none at all that deal with it exactly. Wherefo leaning to such men's writings as have of set purpose sought out the spring of the Thames; I affirm that this famous stream hath his head or beginning out the side of an hill, standing in the plains of Cotswold, about one mile from Tetbury, near unto the Fosse (an highway so called of old) where it was sometin named Isis, or the Ouse, although divers do ignorantly call it the Thames even there, rather of a foolish custom than any skill, because they either neglect utterly are ignorant how it was named at the first.

From hence it runneth directly toward the east (as all good rivers should) and meeteth with the Cirne or Churne, (a brooke called in Latin Coriniur whereof Cirncester town (by which it cometh) doth take the denomination.

From hence it hasteth unto Creekelade, alias Crekanford,

Lechlade,

Radcotebridge,

Newbridge,

and Eouesham [Eynsham],

receiving by the way an infinite sort of small streams, brooks, becks, waters, and rundels:

Oxford

and here on this side of the town divideth itself into two courses, of which the one goeth straight to Botley and Hinksey, the other by Godstow, a village n far off.

This latter spreadeth itself also for a while into sundry smaller branches, which run not far ere they be reunited, and then beclipping sundry pleasa meadows, it passeth at length by Oxford, of some supposed rather to be called Ouseford of this river, where it meeteth with the Charwell, [River Cherwell] and a little from whence the original branches do join and go together by Abbandune (alias Sensham or Abington as we call it) although no part of it at th first came so near the town as it doth now, till a branch thereof was led thither from the main stream, through the industry of the monks, as (beside th testimony of old records thereof yet extant to be seen)

by the decay of Cair Dour, now Dorchester itself, sometime the thoroughfare from Wales and the west country to London, which ensued upon this fact, easy to be seen.

From hence it goeth to Dorchester, and so to Thame, where joining with a river of the same denomination, it looseth the name of Isis or Ouse (where Ouseney at Oxford is produced) and from thenceforth is called Thamesis.

From Thame it goeth to Wallingford,

and so to Reading, which in time past, of the number of bridges there, was called Pontium; albeit that the English name doth rather proceed from Rhe, or Ree, Saxon word for a water-course or river; which may be seen in Oueree, or Sutheree, for over the Ree, or south of the Rhee, as to the skilful doth readi appear; yet some hold (and not altogether against probability and likelihood) that the word Sutheree is so called of Sudrijc, to wit, the south kingdome whereunto in part the Thames is a bound. But that holdeth not in denomination, either of the said church or name of the foresaid county. Other affirm likewise, that Reding is so called of the Greek word [Greek: rheo] which is to overflow. Certes, as neither of these conjectures are to be contemned, so the la cometh most near to mine aid, who affirm, that not only the course of every water itself, but also his overflowing was in time past called Rhe, by such Saxons as inhabited in this Island: and even to this day in Essex I have oft observed, that when the lower grounds by rage of water have been overflowen, the peop beholding the same, have said; All is on a Rhe, as if they should have said; All is now a river, albeit the word River be derived from the French, and borrow by them from the Latins, but not without corruption, as it was brought unto them. I will not here give notice how far they are deceived, which call th aforesaid church by the name of S. Mary Auderys, or S. Mary over Isis, or Ise: but I will proceed with the course of this noble stream,

which, howsoever these matters stand after it hath passed by Reding, & there received the Kenet, which cometh by the hills that lie west of Marleborough (and then the Thetis, commonly called the Tide that cometh from Thetisford)

hyth to Sudlington otherwise called Maidenhead,

and so to Windlesore (or Windsore) Eaton,

and then to Chertsey, where Erkenwald bishop of London sometime builded a religious house or cell, as I do read.

From Chertsey it hasteth directly unto Stanes, [Staines]

and receiving another stream by the way, called the Cole (whereupon Colbrooke standeth)

it goeth by Kingstone,

Shene [Sheen],

Sion

and Brentford or Bregentford, where it meeteth the Brane or the Brene (another brook descending from Edgworth) whose name signifieth a frog, in th British speech. Upon this also Sir John Thin had sometime a stately house, with a marvellous provision to inclose and retain such fish as should come abo the same.

From Brentfoord it passeth by Mortlach [Mortlake],

Putney,

Fulham,

Battersey,

Chelsey,

Lambeth,

and so to London. Finally going from thence unto the sea,

it taketh the Lee with it by the way upon the coast of Essex,

and another that cometh from Abreche not far off,

and the Darnt upon Kent side, which riseth near to Tanrige

and cometh by Shoreham,

unto Dertford, whereunto the Cray falleth.

And last of all the Medway a notable river (in mine opinion) which watereth all the south and southwest part of Kent, and whose description shall insue.

Having in this maner briefly touched this noble river, and such brooks as fall into the same; I will now add a particular description of each of these last by themselves, whereby their courses also shall be severally described to the satisfaction of the studious.

But ere I take the same in hand, I will insert a word or two of the commodities of the said river, which I will perform with so much brevity as is possible.

Hereby also finding out his whole tract and course from the head to the fall thereof into the sea. It appeareth evidently that the length thereof is at the least, one hundred and eighty miles, if it be measured by the journeys of the land. And as it is in course, the longest of the three famous rivers of this Isle,

FISH

so it is nothing inferior unto them in abundance of all kind of fish, whereof it is hard to say, which of the three have either most plenty, or greatest variety, if the circumstances be duly weighed. What some other write of the rivers of their countrys it skilleth not, neither will I (as divers do) invent strange things of this noble stream, therewith to nobilitate and make it more honorable: but this will I in plain terms affirm, that it neither swalloweth up bastards of the Celtish brood, or casteth up the right begotten that are thrown in without hurt into their mothers lap, as Politian fableth of the Rhene, *Epistolarum lib. 8. epi. 6.* nor yieldeth clots of gold as the Tagus doth: but an infinite plenty of excellent, sweet and pleasant fish, wherewith such as inhabit near unto her banks are fed and fully nourished.

What should I speak of the fat and sweet salmons, daily taken in this stream, and that in such plenty (after the time of the smelt be past) as no river in Europe is able to exceed it.

What store also of barbels, trouts, chevins, perches, smelts, breams, roches, daces, gudgings, flounders, shrimps, &c: are commonly to be had therein, I refer me to them that know by experience better than I, by reason of their daily trade of fishing in the same.

And albeit it seemeth from time to time, to be as it were defrauded in sundry wise of these her large commodities, by the insatiable avarice of the fishermen, yet this famous river complaineth commonly of no want, but the more it looseth at one time, the more it yieldeth at another.

Only in carps it seemeth to be scant, sith it is not long since that kind of fish was brought over into England, and but of late to speak of into this stream, by the violent rage of sundry land floods, that break open the heads and dams of divers gentlemen's ponds, by which means it became somewhat partaker also of this said commodity, whereof earst it had no portion that I could ever hear.

Oh that this river might be spared but even one year from nets, &c! But alas then should many a poor man be undone.

In the mean time it is lamentable to see, how it is and hath been choked of late with sands and shelves, through the penning and wresting of the course of the water for commodity's sake.

But as this is an inconvenience easily remedied, if good order were taken for the redress thereof: so now, the fine or price set upon the ballasse sometime freely given to the merchants by patent, even unto the lands end (Iusques au poinct) will be another cause of harm unto this noble stream, and all through an advantage taken at the want of an "i" in the word ponct: which grew through an error committed by an English notary unskilful in the French tongue, wherein that patent was granted.

TIDES

Furthermore, the said river floweth and filleth all his channels twice in the day and night, that is in every twelve hours once; and this ebbing & flowin holdeth on for the space of seventy miles, within the main land: the stream or tide being always highest at London, when the moon doth exactly touch the northeast and south or west points of the heavens, of which one is visible, the other under the earth, and not subject to our sight.

These tides also differ in their times, each one coming later than other, by so many minutes as pass ere the revolution and natural course of the heavens reduce, and bring about the said planet unto those her former places: whereby the common difference between one tide and another, is found to consist twenty four minutes, which wanteth but twelve of an whole hour in four and twenty, as experience doth confirm.

In like sort we see by daily trial, that each tide is not of equal height and greatness: for at the full and change of the moon we have the greatest floods, as such is their ordinary course, that as they diminish from their changes and fulls, unto the first and last quarters; so afterwards they increase again, until they come to the full and change.

Sometimes also they rise so high (if the wind be at the north or northeast, which bringeth in the water with more vehemency, because the tide which filleth the channel, cometh from Scotland ward) that the Thames overfloweth her banks near unto London: which happeneth especially in the fulls and changes January and February, wherein the lower grounds are of custom soonest drowned.

This order of flowing in like sort is perpetual, so that when the moon is upon the southwest and north of points, then is the water by London at the highest neither do the tides alter, except some rough winds out of the west or southwest do keep back and check the stream in his entrance, as the east and northeast do hasten the coming in thereof, or else some other extraordinary occasion, put by the ordinary course of the northern seas, which fill the said river by the natural return and flowing.

And that both these do happen oft among, I refer me to such as have not seldom observed it, as also the sensible chopping in of three or four tides in our natural day, wherof the unskilfull do descant many things.

But how so ever these small matters do fall out, and how often soever this course of the stream doth happen to be disturbed; yet at two several times of the age of the moon, the waters return to their natural course and limits of time exactly.

Polydore saith, that this river is seldom increased or rather never overfloweth her banks by landfloods: but he is herein very much deceived, as it shall be more apparently seen hereafter.

For the more that this river is put by of her right course, the more the water must of necessity swell with the white waters which run down from the land: because the passage cannot be so swift and ready in the winding as in the straight course.

These landfloods also do greatly strain the finess of the stream, in so much that after a great landflood, you shall take haddocks with your hands beneath the bridge, as they float aloft upon the water, whose eyes are so blinded with the thickness of that element, that they cannot see where to become, and make shift to save themselves before death take hold of them.

Otherwise the water of itself is very clear, and in comparison next unto that of the sea, which is most subtle and pure of all other; as that of great rivers is most excellent, in comparison of smaller brooks: although Aristotle will have the salt water to be most gross, because a ship will bear a greater burden on the sea than on the fresh water; and an egg sink in this that swimmeth on the other.

But he may easily be answered by the quantity of room and abundance of waters in the sea; whereby it becometh of more force to sustain such vessels as are committed to the same, and wherunto the greatest rivers (God wot) are nothing comparable.

I would here make mention of sundry bridges placed over this noble stream, of which that of London is most chiefly to be commended, for it is in manner a continual street, well replenished with large and stately houses on both sides, and situate upon twenty arches, whereof each one is made of excellent free squared stone, every of them being threescore foot in height, and full twenty in distance one from another, as I have often viewed.

In like manner I could intreat of the infinite number of swans daily to be seen upon this river, the two thousand wherries and small boats, whereby three thousand poor watermen are maintained, through the carriage and recarriage of such persons as pass or repass, from time to time upon the same: beside those huge tideboats, tiltbotes, and barges, which either carry passengers, or bring necessary provision from all quarters of Oxfordshire, Berkeshire, Buckinghamshire, Bedfordshire, Herefordshire, Middlesex, Essex, Surrey, and Kent, unto the city of London.

But for somuch as these things are to be repeated again in the particular description of London, annexed to his card; I surcease at this time to speak any more of them here, as not lingering but hasting to perform my promise made even now, not yet forgotten, and in performance whereof I think it best to resume the description of this noble river again into my hands, and in adding whatsoever is before omitted, to deliver a full and perfect demonstration of his course.

SOURCE

How and where the said stream ariseth, is already & with sufficiency set down, noting the place to be within a mile of Tetbury, whereof some do utter mislike, because that rill in summer droughts is oft so dry, that there is little or no water at all seen running above ground in the same.

For this cause therefore many affirm the very head of Isis to come from the pool above Kemble.

Other confound it with the head of the Cirne or Chirne, called in Latine Corinium that riseth above Coberley.

For my part I follow Leland, as he doth the monk of Malmesbury, which wrote the history intituled Eulogium historiarum, who searched the same of s purpose, and pronounced with Leland, although at this present that course be very small, and choked up (as I hear) with gravel and sand.

KEMBLE, SOMERFORD, ASHTON KEYNES

Proceeding therefore from the head, it first of all receiveth the Kemble water called the Coue, which riseth above Kemble town, goeth by Kemble itself un Poole and Somerford, and then (accompanieth the Thames) unto Canes, Ashton Canes, and Howston, holding on in one channel -

RIVER CHURN

until they meet with the Chirne, the next of all to be described.

The Chirne is a fair water arising out of the ground above Coberley, from whence it runneth to Cowley, Cowlesburne, Randcome, and so into the Isis on the left side above Crekelade. These three waters being thus united and brought into one channel, within a little space of the head of Isis,

CRICKLADE

it runneth on by Crekelade, beneath which town it receiveth the Rhe, descending from Elcombe, Escot, Redburne, Widhill, &c. at the fall into Isis, or not far off joineth with another that runneth west of Purton by Braden forrest, &c.

Next of all our Isis meeteth with the Amney on the left hand, which coming from above Holy roode Amney, runneth by Downe Amney, and finally into the Isis a little above Isey. In like sort I read of another that meeteth withall on the right hand above Isey also, which so far as I can call to remembrance, come from about Driffield and falleth so into our Isis, that they run as one until they come at the Colne, although not so nakedly and without help, but that in the voyage, the main stream doth cross one water that descendeth from Swindon, and going also by Stratton toward Sevingham, is itself increased with two rills by the way, whereof one cometh from Liddenton by Wambrey, as I have been informed.

RIVER COLNE

The Colne is a fair river rising by north near to Witchington, & from thence goeth to Shiptons, Compton Abdale, Wittenton, Parneworth, Colne Deanes, at Colne Rogers, Winston, Bibery, Colne Alens, Quenington, Faireford, and west of Lachelade into the river Isis, which hereabout on the southside also take in another, whereof I find this remembrance. The Isis being once past Sevingham, crosseth a brook from southwest that mounteth about Ashbiry, at receiving a rill from bywest (that cometh from Hinton) beneath Shrineham, -

INGLESHAM

it afterward so divideth itself, that the arms thereof include Inglesham, and by reason that it falleth into the Isis at two several places, there is a pleasant isle produced, whereof let this suffice.

LECHLADE, ST JOHNS, RIVER LECH

Being past Lechelade a mile, it runneth to Saint John's bridge, & thereabout meeteth with the Leche on the left hand. This brook, whereof Lechlade take the name (a town whereunto one piece of an old university is ascribed, which it did never possess, more than Crekelade did the other) riseth east of Hampn from whence it goeth to north Lech, Estenton, Anlesworth, east Lech, south Thorpe, Farendon, & so into the Isis.

KELMSCOTT

From hence this famous water goeth by Kenscot -

RADCOT BRIDGE

toward Radcote bridge (taking in the rill that riseth in an odd piece of Barkeshire, and runneth by Langford) and being past the said bridge (now notab through a conspiracy made there sometimes by sundry barons against the estate) it is not long ere it cross two other waters, both of them descending fro another odd parcel of the said county, whereof I have this note given me for my further information. There are two falls of water into Isis beneath Radco bridge, wherof the one cometh from Shilton in Barkeshire by Arescote, blacke Burton and Clarrefyld. The other also riseth in the same piece, and runneth l Brisenorton unto Bampton, and there receiving an armllet from the first that break off at black Burton, it is not long ere they fall into Isis, and leave a pret island.

SHIFFORD, RIVER WINDRUSH, NEWBRIDGE

After these confluences, the main course of the stream hasteth by Shifford to Newbridge, where it joineth with the Winrush. The Winrush riseth abo Shyburne in Glocestershire, from whence it goeth to Winrush, & coming by Barrington, Burford, Widbrooke, Swinbecke castell, Witney, Duckingto Cockthorpe, Stanlake, it meeteth with the Isis west by south of Northmore.

STANTON HARCOURT, EYNSHAM, CASSINGTON

From hence it goeth beneath Stanton, Hartingcourt and Ensham, between which and Cassinton, it receiveth (as Leland calleth it) the Bruerne water. It rise above Limington, and going to Norton in the Marsh, and through a patch of Worcestershire unto Evenlode, between it and the four shire stones, it taketh in rill called Come, coming by the long and the little Comptons. After this also it goeth by Bradwell, Odington, and so to Bleddenton, above which town taketh in the Rolrich water that issueth at two heads, in the hills that lie by west of little Rolrich, and join above Kenkeham, and Church hill. From then also it goeth unto Bruerne, Shipton underwood, Ascot, Short hamton, Chorlebury, Cornebury parke, Stonfyld, Longcombe, and southeast of Woodstocel parke, taketh in the Enis, that riseth above Emstone, and goeth to Ciddington, Glimton, Wotton (where it is increased with a rill that runneth thither fro steeple Barton, by the Beechin tree) Woodstocke, Blaidon, so that after this confluence, the said Enis runneth to Cassinton, and so into the Isis, -

OXFORD, RIVER CHERWELL

which goeth from hence to Oxford, and there receiveth the Charwell, now presently to be described.

The head of Charwell is in Northamptonshire, where it riseth out of a little pool, by Charleton village, seven miles above Banbery northeast, and there issueth so fast at the very surge, that it groweth into a pretty stream, in manner out of hand. Soon after also it taketh in a rillet called the Bure, which falle into it, about Otmere side: but forasmuch as it riseth by Binchester, the whole course therof is not above four miles, and therefore cannot be great. A friend mine prosecuting the rest of this description reporteth thereof as followeth. Before the Charwell cometh into Oxfordshire, it receiveth the Culen, whi falleth into the same, a little above Edgcote, and so descending toward Wardington, it meeteth with another coming from by north west, between Wardingte and Cropready. At Banbery also it meeteth with the Come (which falleth from fenny Conton by Farneboro, and afterwards going by kings Sutton, not f from Aine, it receiveth the discharge of diverse rillets, in one bottom before it come at Clifton. The said water therefore ingendered of so many brooklet consisteth chiefly of two, whereof the most southerly called Oke, cometh from Oke Norton, by Witchington or Wiggington, and the Berfords; and carrying few blind rills withall, doth meet with the other that falleth from by northwest into the same, within a mile of Charwell.

That other (as I conjecture) is increased of three waters, wherof each one hath his severall name. The first of them therefore hight Tudo, which comit betweene Epwell and the Lee by Toddington, joineth about Broughton with the second that runneth from Horneton, named Ornus, as I guess. The last falle into the Tude or Tudelake, beneath Broughton; and for that it riseth not far from Sotteswell in Warwickshire, some are of the opinion, that it is to be call Sotbrooke.

The next water that meeteth without Charwell beneath Clifton cometh from about Croughton, and after this is the Sowar or Swere, that riseth north Michaell Tew, and runneth by nether Wotton. The last of all is the Rey alias Bure, whose head is not far above Burcester, alias Binchester, and Burncester: ai from whence it goeth by Burecester to Merton, Charleton, Fencote, Addington, Noke, Islip, and so into Charwell, that holdeth on his course after th augmentation of the waters, between Wood and Water Eton, to Marston, and the east bridge of Oxford by Magdalene college, and so beneath the sou bridge into our aforesaid Isis.

In describing this river, this one thing (right honorable) is come unto my mind, touching the centre and navel as it were of England. Certes there is an hilly plot of ground in Helledon parish, not from Danbery, where a man may stand and behold the heads of three notable rivers, whose waters, and those of such as fall into them, do abundantly serve the greatest part of England on this side of the Humber. The first of these waters is the Charwell, already described. The second is the Leme that goeth westward into the fourth Avon. And the third is the head of the Nene or fift Avon itself, of whose courses there is no card but doth make sufficient mention; and therefore your honour may behold in the same how they do coast the country, and also measure by compasses how this plot lieth in respect of all the rest, contrary to common judgement, which maketh Northampton to be the middest and centre of our country.

IFFLEY, KENNINGTON, SANDFORD, NUNEHAM

But to go forward with my description of the Ouse, which being past Oxford goeth to Ifly, Kennington, Sanford, Rodley, Newnham, -

ABINGDON

and so to Abington, some time called Sensham, without increase, where it receiveth the Oche, otherwise called the Coche, a little beneath S. Helens, which runneth thither of two brooklets, as I take it, whereof one cometh from Compton, out of the vale and west of the hill of the White horse, the other from King Letcombe, and Wantage in Barkshire, and in one channel, entreth into the same, upon the right side of his course.

SUTTON COURTNEY, APPLEFORD, LONG WITTENHAM, CLIFTON

From Abington likewise (taking the Arun withall southwest of Sutton Courtney) it goeth by Appleford, long Wittenham, Clifton, Wittenham the less, -

RIVER THAME

& beneath Dorchester, taketh in the Thame water, from whence the Isis loseth the pre-eminence of the whole denomination of this river, and is contented impart the same with the Thame, so that by the conjunction of these two waters Thamesis is produced, and that name continued even unto the sea. Thame river riseth in the easterly parts of Chilterne hills, towards Penley park, at a town called Tring west of the said park, which is seven miles from the stone bridge, that is betweene Querendon and Ailsbury (after the course of the water) as Leland hath set down.

Running therefore by long Merston, and Puttenham, Hucket, and Bearton, it receiveth soon after a rill that cometh by Querendon from Hardwike, and a long another on the other side that riseth above Windover in the Chilterne, and passing by Halton, Weston, Turrill, Broughton, and Ailsbury, it falleth in the Thame west of the said town (except my memory do fail me.)

From this confluence the Thame goeth by Ethorpe, the Winchingtons, Coddington, Chersley, Notley abbey: and coming almost to Tame, it receiveth one wat from southeast above the said town, and another also from the same quarter beneath the town; so that Tame standeth invironed upon three sides with the severall waters, as may be easily seen.

The first of these cometh from the Chiltern east of Below or Bledlow, from whence it goeth to Hinton, Horsenden, Kingsey, Towsey, and so into the Thame. The other descendeth also from the Chilterne, and going by Chinner, Crowell, Siddenham, and Tame park, it falleth in the end into Thame water, and the they proceed together as one by Shabbington, Ricot parke, Dracot, Waterstoke, Milton, Cuddesdon, and Chiselton. Here also it taketh in another water from by-east, whose head cometh from Chilterne hills, not far from Stocking church, in the way from Oxford to London.

From whence it runneth to Weston (and meeting beneath Cuxham with Watlington rill) it goeth on to Chalgrave, Stadham, and so into the Thame.

From hence our stream of Thame runneth to Newenton, Draton, Dorchester (sometime a bishop's see, and a noble city) and so into the Thames, -

BENSON

which hasteth in like sort to Bensington, Crowmarsh, or Wallingford, where it receiveth the Blane, descending from Blaneburg, now Blewbery, as I learn.

WALLINGFORD, SOUTH STOKE, [CLEEVE], GORING, BASILDEN, PANGBOURNE

Thus have I brought the Thames unto Wallingford, situate in the vale of White horse, that runneth a long thereby. From hence it goeth by Newenham, nor Stoke, south Stoke, Goring, Bassilden, Pangburne, where it meeteth with a water that cometh from about Hamsted Norris, runneth by Frizelhar Buckelbury, Stanford, Bradfeld, Tidmarsh and Pangbourne.

MAPLEDURHAM, PURLEY, CAVERSHAM

After which confluence it goeth on betweene Mapledorham and Purley, to Caversham, and Caversham manor, -

READING, RIVER KENNET

and a little beneath receiveth the Kenet that cometh thereinto from Reading.

The Kenet riseth above Overton 5 or 6 miles west of Marleborow, or Marlinsborow, as some call it; & then going by Fifeld, Clatfor, Maulon, & Preshut unto Marlebury: it holdeth on in like order to Ramsbury, and northwest of little Cote, taketh in a water by north descending from the hills above Alburn chase west of Alburne town. Thence it runneth to little Cote, Charnhamstreet, & beneath Charnhamstreet it crosseth the Bedwin, which (taking the Chalkburne rill withall) cometh from great Bedwijn, & at Hungerford also two other in one bottom somewhat beneath the town. From hence it goeth Auington, Kinbury, Hamsted marshall, Euburne, Newbery; and beneath this town, taketh in the Lamburne water that cometh by Isbery, Egerston, the Sheffords, Westford, Boxford, Donington castell, and Shaw. From Newbery it goeth to Thatcham, Wolhampton, Aldermaston, a little above which village receiveth the Alburne, another brook increased with sundry rills: and thus going on to Padworth, Oston, and Michaell, it cometh at last to Reading, where (as I said) it joineth with the Thames, -

SONNING, SHIPLAKE, RIVER LODDON

and so they go forward as one by Sonning to Shiplake, and there on the east side receive the Loddon that cometh down thither from the south, as by his course appeareth.

The Loddon riseth in Hamshire betweene west Shirburne and Wooton toward the southwest, afterward directing his course toward the northwest, thorough the vine, it passeth at the last by Bramly, and thorough a piece of Wiltshire, to Stradfyld, Swallowfyld, Arberfyld, Loddon bridge, leaving a patch of Wiltshire on the right hand (as I have been informed.) This Loddon not far from Turges town receiveth two waters in one bottom, whereof the westerly called Basing water, cometh from Basingstoke, and thorough a park unto the aforesaid place.

The other descendeth of two heads from Mapledour well, and goeth by Skewes, Newenham, Rotherwijn, and ere it come at Hartly, joineth with the Basing water, from whence they go together to Turges, where they meet with the Loddon (as I have said already.)

The next streame toward the south is called Ditford brook. It riseth not far from upton, goeth by Gruell, and beneath Wharnborow castell receiveth the Itk

(coming from a parke of the same denomination) from whence they go together by Maddingley unto Swallowfield, and so into the Loddon. In this voyage al the Loddon meeteth with the Elwy or Eluey that cometh from Aldershare, not far by west of Euersley: and about Eluesham likewise with another runni from Dogmansfyld named the Douke: and also the third not inferior to the rest coming from Erin, whose head is in Surrey, and going by Ash becometh limit, first between Surrey and Hamshire; then between Hamshire and Barkeshire, and passing by Ash, Erinley, Blacke water, Perley, and Finchamsted; joineth at last with the Ditford, before it come at Swallowfield.

To conclude therefore with our Loddon, having received all these waters; and after the last confluence with them now being come to Loddon bridge, passeth on by a part of Wiltshire to Twiford bridge,

WARGRAVE

then to Wargrave, and so into the Thames that now is marvellously increased and grown unto triple greatness (to that it was at Oxford.)

HENLEY, REMENHAM, GREENLAND

Being therefore past Shiplake and Wargrave, it runneth by Horsependon, or Harding: then to Henley upon Thames, where sometime a great rill voide itself in the same. Then to Remenham, Greneland (going all this way from Shiplake just north, -

MEDMENHAM, HURLEY, BISHAM

and now turning eastwards again) by Medenham, Hurly, Bisham,

MARLOW, HEDSOR, COOKHAM

Marlow the greater, Marlow the lesse, it meeteth with a brook soone after that consisteth of the water of two rills, whereof the one called the use, riseth abo west Wickham, out of one of the Chilterne hills, and goeth from thence to east Wickham or high Wickham, a pretty market town. The other named Higde descendeth also from those mountains but a mile beneath west Wickham, and joining both in one at the last, in the west end of east Wickham town, they together to Wooburne, Hedsor, & so into the Thames. Some call it the Tide; and that word do I use in my former treatise: but to proceed. After th confluence our Thames goeth on by Cowkham, -

TAPLOW, MAIDENHEAD, BRAY, DORNEY, CLEWER, WINDSOR, ETON

Topley, Maidenhead, alias Sudlington, Bray, Dorney, Clure, new Windsore (taking in neverthesse, at Eaton by the way, the Burne which riseth out of Moor, & cometh thither by Burnham) -

OLD WINDSOR, RIVER COLE

old Windsor, Wraiborow, and a little by east therof doth crosse the Cole, whereof I find this short description insuing.

The Cole riseth near unto Flamsted, from whence it goeth to Redburn, S. Michaels, S. Albons, Aldenham, Watford, and so by More to Richmanswort where there is a confluence of three waters, of which this Cole is the first.

The second called Gadus riseth not far from Ashridge, an house or palace belonging to the prince: from whence it runneth to great Gaddesdin, Hemste betweene Kings Langley, and Abbots Langley, then to Hunters, and Cashew bridges, and so to Richmanswoorth, receiving by the way a rill coming fro Albury by northwest, to Northchurch, Barkehamsted, and beneath Hemsted joining with the same. The last cometh in at northwest from above Chesham, l Chesham itself, then by Chesham Bois, Latimers, Mawdlens, Cheinys, Sarret and Richmanswoorth, and so going on all in one channel under the name Cole, it runneth to uxbridge, where it taketh in the Missenden water, from northwest, which rising above Missenden the greater goeth by Missenden the lesse Hagmondesham (now Hammersham) the uach, Chalfhant Giles, Chalfhant S. Peters, Denham, and then into the Cole above uxbridge (as I have said.) Soe after this our Cole doth part itself into two branches, never to join again before they come at the Thames, for the greater of them goeth thorough the good meadows straight to Colebrooke, the other unto two mills, a mile and a half east of Colebrooke, in the way to London, leaving an island between them of i small size and quantity.

CHERTSEY,

Being past the Cole, we come to the fall of the uindeles, which riseth by northwest neere unto Bagshot, from whence it goeth to Windlesham, Chobham, at meeting with a brooklet coming westward from Bisley, they run together toward Chertsey, where when they have met with a small rill rising north Sonning hill in Windlesoure great parke, it falleth into the Thames on the northeast side of Chertsey.

WEYBRIDGE, RIVER WEY

When we were come beyond this water, it was not long ere we came unto another on the same side, that fell into the Thames between Shepperton on the o side, and Oteland on the other, and is called the Way. The Wey or the Way rising by west, cometh from Olsted, & soon after taking the Hedley brook with (which riseth in Wulmere forrest, and goeth by Hedley and Frensham) hasteth by Bentley, Farnham, Alton, Waiberley, Elsted, and so to Pepper harro where it joineth with the Thuresby water, which cometh not far off from a village of the same denomination. From hence also it goeth to Godalming, and th toward Shawford, but ere it come there, it crosseth Crauly beck, which rising somewhere about the edge of Sussex short of Ridgewije, goeth by vachery par Knoll, Crauly, Bramley, Wonarsh, and so into the Way.

From hence then our river goeth to Shawford, and soon after (meeting with the Abbinger water that cometh by Shere, Albiry, and the chapel on the hill) proceedeth to Guldeford, thence to Stoke, Sutton in the park, Send, Woking, and at Newarke park side taketh in a brook that riseth of two heads, where

one doth spring between two hills north of Pepper harrow, and so runneth through Henley park, the other above Purbright, and afterward joining in on they go forth unto Newarke, and being there united, after the confluence it goeth to Purford court, to Bifler, Waifred, Oteland, and so into the Thames.

WALTON, SUNBURY, MOLESEY, RIVER MOLE

From Oteland the Thames goeth by Walton, Sunbury, west Moulsey, Hampton, and ere it come at Hampton court on the northside, and east Moulsey on the other, it taketh in the Moule water, which giveth name unto the two townes that stand on each side of the place, where it falleth into our stream. It riseth Word forrest, and going by Burstow, it meeteth afterward with another gullet, containing a small course from two several heads, whereof one is also in the forest aforenamed, the other runneth from Febush wood, and coming by Iseld, meeteth with the first above Horley, and so run on in one channel, I say, they join with the Moule water, whereof I spake before.

After this confluence in like sort, it is not long ere the Moule take in another from by north, which cometh from about Mesham on the one side, and another on the other side, running by Ocle and Capell, and whereinto also a branch or rill cometh from a wood on the northwest part. Finally, being thus increased with these many rills, it goeth by east Becheworth, west Becheworth, and over against the Swallow on the side of Drake hill, taking in another that cometh thither from Wootton by Darking and Milton, it runneth to Mickleham, Letherhed, Stoke, Cobham, Ashire parke, east Moulsey, and so into the Thames which after this conjunction goeth on to Kingston, and there also meeteth with another beck, rising at Ewell south of Nonsuch. Certes, this rill goeth from Ewell by the old park, then to Mauldon, & -

KINGSTON, TEDDINGTON, PETERSHAM, TWICKENHAM

so to Kingston town. The Thames in like manner being past Kingston, goeth to Tuddington, Petersham, Twickenham, Richmond, and Shene, where receiveth a water on the northwest side, which coming from about Harrow on the hill, and by west of the same, goeth by Hays, Harlington, Feltham, and Thistleworth into the Thames.

SION, BRENTFORD

The next fall of water is at Sion, near unto new Brainford, so that it issueth into the Thames between them both. This water is called Brane, that is in the British tongue (as Leland saith) a frog. It riseth about Edgeworth, and cometh from thence by Kingsbury, Twiford, Periuall, Hanwell, and Austerle. Thence we followed our river to old Brentford, Mortlach, Cheswije, Barnelmes, Fulham, and Putney, beneath which townes it crossed a beck from Wandlesworth, that riseth at Woodmans turne, and going by Easthalton, meeteth another coming from Croidon by Bedington, and so going on to Mitcham Marton abbey, and Wandlesworth, it is not long ere it fall into the Thames.

Next unto this is Mariburne rill on the other side, which cometh in by S. James, -

LONDON

so that by this time we have either brought the Thames, or the Thames conveyed us to London, where we rested for a season to take view of the several tides there, of which each one differeth from other, by four & twenty minutes, that is forty eight in a whole day, as I have noted before, except the weather alter them.

GREENWICH

Being past London, and in the way toward the sea: the first water that it meeteth withall, is the Brome on Kent side, west of Greenwich, whose head Bromis in Bromley parish, and going from thence to Lewsham, it taketh in a water from by east, and so directeth his course forthright unto the Thames.

RIVER LEE

The next water that it meeteth withall, is on Essex side, almost against Woolwich, and that is the Lee or Luy, whose head riseth short of Kempton Hertfordshire, four miles southeast of Luton, sometime called Logodunum or Logrodunum, & going through a piece of Brokehall park (leaving Woodhouse park on the north, and Hatfield on the south, with another park adjoining) it goeth toward Hartford town. But ere it come there, it receiveth a water (peradventure the Marran) rising at northwest in Brodewater hundred, from above Welwin, northeast of Digeswell, and going to Hartingfeld bury, where the said confluence is within one mile of the town. Beneath Hatfyld also it receiveth the Beane (as I guess) coming from Boxwood by Benington, Aston, Watto and Stapleford, and a little lower, the third arm of increase from above Ware, which descendeth from two heads: whereof the greatest cometh from Barkeway in Edwinstre hundred, the other Sandon in Oddesey hundred, and after they be met beneath little Hornemeade, they go together into Pulcherchurch, or Puckrich, Stonden, Thunderidge, Wadesmill, Benghoo, and so into the Lee, which from hence runneth on till it come at Ware, which was drowned by the rage of the same 1408, and so to Amwell, where on the north side it receiveth the water that cometh from little Hadham, through a piece of Singleshall park, then by great Hadham, and so from Widford to the aforesaid town. From hence also they go as one to old Stansted called Le ueil, branch in such wise ere it come there, that it runneth through the town in sundry places. Thence it goeth forth to Abbats Stansted, beneath which it meeteth with the Stoure, west [Sidenote: (as I remember) of Roidon. This Sture riseth at Wenden lootes, from whence it goeth to Langley, Clauering, Berden, Manhuden, Birchanger (where it taketh a rill coming from Elsingham, & Stansted Mountfitchet.) Thence it hieth on to Bishops Stourford, Sabrichfoord, and beneath this town crosseth with another from the east side of Elsingham, that goeth to Hatfyld, Brodocke, Shiring, Harlo, & so into the Stoure, and from whence they go together to Eastwic, Parmedon, and next into the Lee. These things being thus performed, the Lee runneth on beneath Hoddesdon, Broxburne, and Wormley, where a water breaketh out by west of the main stream, a mile lower than Wormeley itself, but yet within the parish, and is called Wormeley lock. It runneth also by Cheston nunery, and out of this a little beneath the said house, breaketh an arm called the Shirelake, because it divideth Eastsex and Hartfordshire in sunder, and in the length of one meadow called Frithey. This lake runneth not but at great floods, and meeteth again with a succour ditchwater, at a place called Hockesditch, half a mile from his first breaking out, and half a mile lower at Marsh point joineth again with the stream from whence it came before. Thence cometh the first arm to S. Mauly bridge (the first bridge westward upon that river) upon Waltham causy, & half a mile lower than Mauly bridge, at the corner of Ramny mead, it meeteth with the kings stream & principal course of Luy, or Lee, as it is commonly called. The second arm breaketh out of the kings stream at Halifield half a mile lower than Cheston nunery, and so to the fulling mill, and two bridges by west of the kings stream, wherinto it falleth about a stones cast lower at a place called Malkins shelve, except I was wrong informed. Cheston & Hertfordshire men do say that the kings stream at Waltham doth part Hartfordshire and Essex, but the Essex men by forest charter do plead their liberties to hold unto S. Mauly bridge. On the east side also of the kings stream breaketh out but one principal arm at Halifield, three quarters of a mile above Waltham, & so goeth to the corn mill in Waltham, and then to the K. stream again a little beneath the kings bridge.

From hence the Lee runneth on by south on Waltonstow till it come to Stretford Langthorne, where it brancheth partly of itself, and partly by man industry for mills.

KING ALFRED

Howbeit herein the dealing of Alfred (sometimes king of England) was not of smallest force, who understanding the Danes to be gotten up with their ships into the country, there to kill and slay his subjects, in the year of grace 896, by the conduct of this river: he in the mean time before they could return, did so mightily weaken the main channel, by drawing great numbers of trenches from the same; that when they purposed to come back, there was nothing so much water left as the ships did draw: wherefore being set on ground, they were soon fired, & the adversaries overcome. By this policy also much meadow ground was won, & made firm land, whereby the country about was not a little enriched, as was also a part of Assyria by the like practise of Cyrus with the Ganges, at such time as he came against Babylon, which river before time was in manner equal with Euphrates. For he was so offended, that one of his knights whom he loved dearly, was drowned and borne away with the water in his passage over the same, that he swear a deep oath ere long to make it so shallow that it should not wet a woman to the knees. Which came to passe, for he caused all his army to dig 46 new drains from the same, whereby the vow that he had made was at the full performed. *Senec. de Tra. li. 3.*

RIVER LEE continued

But to conclude with the Lee that sometime overflowed all those meadows, through which it passeth (as for a great way not inferior to the Thames) and I fir that being past Westham, it is not long ere it fall into that stream. One thing I read more of this river before the conquest, that is, how Edward the first, son of Alfred, in the year of grace 912, builded Hartford town: at which time also he had Wittham a town in Essex in hand, as his sister called Aelfl repaired Oxford & London, and all this four yeares before the building of Maldon; of some called Hertford or Herudford between three waters, that is, the Lee, the Benefuth, and Memmarran, or rather Penmarran: but how these waters are distinguished in these days, as yet I cannot tell. It is possible, that the Bene may be the same which cometh by Benington, and Benghoo: which if it be so, then must the Memmarran be the same that descendeth from Whitew for not far from thence is Branfield, which might in time past right well be called Marranfield, for of like inversion of names I could shew many examples.

Being past the Lee (whose channel is begun to be purged 1576, with further hope to bring the same to the north side of London) we come unto the Rodon upon Essex side in like manner, and not very far (for four miles is the most) from the fall of the Lee. This water riseth at little Canfyld, from whence it goeth to great Canfyld, high Roding, Eithorpe Roding, Ledon Roding, White Roding, Beauchampe Roding, Fifeld, Shelley, high Ongar, and Cheping Ongar, where the Lauer falleth into it, that ariseth betwixt Matching and high Lauer; and taking another rill withall coming from above Northweld at Cheping Ongar, they join (I say) with the Rodon, after which confluence Leland conjectureth that the stream is called Iuell: for my part, I wot not what to say of it. But hereof am sure, that the whole course being past Ongar, it goeth to Stansted rivers, Theidon mount, Heibridge, Chigwell, Woodford bridge, Ilford bridge, Barkin & so into the Thames.

The Darwent meeteth with our said Thames upon Kents side, two miles and more beneath Erith. It riseth at Tanridge, or thereabouts, as I have been informed by Christopher Saxtons card late made of the same, and the like (I hope) he will do in all the several shires of England at the infinite charges of Sir Thomas Sackford knight, & master of the requests, whose zeal unto his country herein I cannot but remember, & so much the rather, for that he meaneth imitate Ortelius, & somewhat beside this hath holpen me in the names of the towns, by which these rivers for the Kentish part do run. Would to God his plates were once finished for the rest!

But to proceed. The Darwent therefore, rising at Tanridge, goeth on by Titsey toward Brasted, and receiving on each side of that town (& several bankes) river or rill, it goeth on to Nockhold, Shorham, Kinsford, Horton, Darnhith, Dartford or Derwentford, & there taking in the Cray on the left hand they comes from Orpington by Mary Cray, Paules Cray, North Cray, and Craiford, it is not long ere it fall into the Thames. But after I had once passed the fall of the brook, it is a world to see what plenty of Serephium groweth upon the Kentish shore, in whose description Fuichsius hath not a little halted; whilst I giveth forth the herb Argentaria for Serephium, between which there is no manner of likelihood. This neverthelesse is notable in the said herb, that being translated into the garden, it receiveth another form clean different from the first, which it yielded when it grew upon the shore, and thereunto appeareth more fat & foggy substance. Which maketh me to think that our physicians do take it for a distinct kind of wormewood, whereof controversy ariseth among them. The next water that falleth into the Thames, is west of the Wavy Isles, a rill of no great fame, neither long course, for rising about Coringham, runneth not many miles east and by south, ere it fall into the mouth of this river, which I do now describe.

I would have spoken of one creek that cometh in at Cliffe, and another that runneth downe from Haltsto by S. Marys: but sith I understand not with what backwaters they be served, I let them pass as not skilful of their courses. And thus much of the rivers that fall into the Thames, wherein I have done what may, but not what I would for mine own satisfaction, till I came from the head to Lechlade, unto which, as in lieu of a farewell, I will ascribe that distinctio which Apollonius Rhodius writeth of the Thermodon:

Huic non est aliud flumen par, nec tot in agros ullum dimittit rivos quot fundit utrinque.