

# COMPOSITIONS FOR KNIGHTHOOD, TEMP. CHARLES I.

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FEW of the acts of Charles I. were more unpopular than the revival of claims to fines from those who were liable to take up their knighthood;<sup>1</sup> giving occasion, as Blackstone says, "to heavy murmurs." At first there were not many who paid; but after the dissolution of the third parliament strict measures were taken to compound with those, who had neglected to appear, as well for their contempt as for their being excused from receiving the order.

Accordingly, in 1629, the king was furnished by Richard Wright with precedents of fines imposed on persons, who having, temp. Hen. II. (III.?) £10 or £15 per annum, and temp. Hen. VIII. £40 per annum, in lands, omitted to take upon themselves the order, and it was suggested that fines might be again levied on the same ground.<sup>2</sup> The king availed himself of the suggestion, and issued on 28th January, 1629-30, a commission to sit in London and treat with all the king's subjects who would compound for their fines in respect of their knighthood, and for non-attendance to receive it at the coronation;<sup>3</sup> the Attorney General Heath having the care, and the Barons of the Exchequer declaring the King's right. In July these commissions were sent into the different counties, and these were twice renewed in the following year.

The instruction to the commissioners was, to take no less

<sup>1</sup> Under the so called statute *de militibus*, but which was a mere writ (6 Edw. I.) entered on the rolls. For this date, and several valuable notices of "feudal and obligatory knighthood," see a paper

by Francis Morgan Nichols, Esq., F.S.A., in Arch., vol. xxxix., p. 189.

<sup>2</sup> State Papers, Domestic, Chas. I. vol. clv.

<sup>3</sup> *Ib.*, vol. clix., and Arch., vol. xxxix.

than three and a half times as much as the persons compounding were found rated in the subsidy;<sup>4</sup> but in the majority of cases an uniform fine of £10 was accepted.

A copy of the returns, giving the names of all who paid in the different counties, was entered in a book, still preserved at the Record Office, and known as the "Book of compositions," in the auditors' receipts of the Exchequer, whilst a special commission issued to examine into the cases of those who had made default, or claimed not to hold land of the required value.

The returns for Sussex will be interesting to the members of our society. The collectors were Sir Walter Covert, Knight, and Richard Lewknor, Esq. In Sir W. Covert's return the parishes are not given, but Mr. Lewknor supplied his. They are printed under the different rapes.

## HASTINGS RAPE.

	£	s.	d.		£	s.
Willm Yealding	-	10		Francis Norman	-	10
Herbert Lunsford <sup>5</sup>	-	10		Zabulon Newington <sup>9</sup>	-	10
John Atkings	-	13	6 8	George Courthope <sup>10</sup>	-	12 10
Richard Keete	-	10		Thomas Euridge	-	10
Alexander Elliot	-	10		Asack Haygat	-	15
James Browne	-	10		Richard Dunck	-	10
Nicholas Maunser <sup>6</sup>	-	10		Willm. Scott, Esq. <sup>11</sup>	-	10
Michael Martin	-	13	6 8	Thomas Taylor <sup>12</sup>	-	10
John Westbourne	-	10		Willm. Faulkner <sup>13</sup>	-	10
Nicholas Weekes	-	10		Robert Foster, Esq. <sup>14</sup>	-	17 10
Thomas Allechorne <sup>7</sup>	-	10		Henry Sheather <sup>15</sup>	-	12
Thomas Waters	-	10		Edward Higham <sup>16</sup>	-	10
John Cruttenden <sup>8</sup>	-	10		Allen Gibbons <sup>17</sup>	-	10

Under the special commission the following are returned:

## HAWKSBORROW HUNDRED.

John Budgeon, not appeared	John Barham hath pleaded in the Exchequer
William Hemsley, not appeared	
William Roberts, <sup>18</sup> not appeared	William Langham hath not above xv <sup>14</sup>
Steven Bine saith he is discharged in the Exchequer	

<sup>4</sup> Rushworth.

<sup>5</sup> Afterwards Sir Herbert, of Wylie, in East Hoathly, brother of Col. Lunsford.

<sup>6</sup> Of Hightown.

<sup>7</sup> Of Catsfield.

<sup>8</sup> Of Burwash.

<sup>9</sup> Of Salehurst.

<sup>10</sup> Of Whiligh, Ticehurst.

<sup>11</sup> Of the Moat.

<sup>12</sup> In Hawksborough hundred.

<sup>13</sup> In Foxearle hundred.

<sup>14</sup> Of Battle, see ante, p. 27.

<sup>15</sup> Of Battle.

<sup>16</sup> In Ninfield hundred.

<sup>17</sup> Of Battle.

<sup>18</sup> Of Warbleton.

## FOXEARLE HUNDRED.

William Relfe<sup>19</sup> saith he hath a tally at London, and did shew us a certificate directed to the sheriff of the discharge of his issue

SHOWSWELL HUNDRED (Ticehurst parish only),

Anthony Apsley,<sup>20</sup> Esq., not appeared, but we are informed he hath a tally  
Richard Thomas, gent, is gone to Gowerhurst in Kent.

## GOULDSPURR HUNDRED.

John Edwards not appeared, by reason of one of his children came newly home to him out of a house late visited with the plague; but since he has appeared, and made his composition, &c.

## BALESLOW HUNDRED.

William Crispe,<sup>21</sup> Esq., saith he hath pleaded in the Exchequer  
George Martin,<sup>22</sup> no lands, &c.; as we are informed he hath purchased £120 per annum.

## GESTLINGE HUNDRED.

Laurence Ashborneham,<sup>23</sup> Esq., not appeared  
Henry Carleton,<sup>24</sup> gent, no lands  
Richard Stevens, gone to Hastings, not appeared.

## GOWSTROW HUNDRED.

Anthony Reeve<sup>25</sup> showed a tally for x<sup>li</sup>.

## NINVILL HUNDRED.

Richard Alfery showed a tally for xv<sup>li</sup>.

*Assessments not in former List.*

## BATTELL HUNDRED.

	£	s.	d.
Thomas Baker, gent, to paie	10	0	0

## NINVILL HUNDRED.

John Elvery to paie	13	6	8
John Edwards to paie	12	0	0

Upon warrants directed unto the townes of Rye, Hastings, and Winchelsey for the able inhabitants in estate to appear before us at Battayle, the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of September last, and uppon our other warrants directed unto the townes of Seaford and Pevensey, in the like maner, to appear before us at Buxted upon the 23<sup>rd</sup> day of this moneth, being places fit and convenient to treat with them about composition for their non-attendance at his Ma<sup>ty</sup>s coronacion, all of them (but them of Winchelsey, who returned us no answer, nor did appeare before us) gave us answer that they had petitioned the Lords of his Ma<sup>ty</sup>s most honourable privy council to be exempt from this composition, and that they dwelling within the Cinque Ports were not by their charters and libertyes to appeare out of the ports; and desired that they might be excused of any wilfull contempt. But none of them came or offered to make any composition for their non-attendance at his Ma<sup>ty</sup>s coronacion.

## PEVENSEY RAPE.

	£		£
Willm. Baggante	- 10	John Alchorne <sup>26</sup>	- 10
Isaack Burgess	- 10	Nicholas Whiteheade	- 10
Thomas Newton	- 10	John Foster, gent	- 10
John Smith	- 10	Edward Ellficke <sup>27</sup>	- 10
Magnus Bine	- 10	John Elliott	- 12
James Atwells	- 10	Richard Elficke	- 10

<sup>19</sup> Of Ashburnham.

<sup>20</sup> See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. xiv., p. 114.

<sup>21</sup> Of Ore. In the subsidy he was returned as a recusant.

<sup>22</sup> Of Crowhurst.

<sup>23</sup> Of Guestling.

<sup>24</sup> Of Fairlight, son of Geo. C. Bishop, of Chichester.

<sup>25</sup> Of Brede.

<sup>26</sup> Of Hartfield.

<sup>27</sup> See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. vii., p. 131. for pedigree of Elphick, of Sutton.

	£		£ s. d.
Nathaniel Newington	- 10	Thomas Chowne, <sup>32</sup> Esq.	- 15
John Mittle	- 10	John Humfrey <sup>33</sup>	- 10
Robert Lucas	- 10	Thomas Sanders, <sup>34</sup> gent	- 13 6 8
Robert Drew	- 10	Andrew Skinner <sup>35</sup>	- 10
John Langeridge	- 10	William Garraway, <sup>36</sup> Esq.	- 15
Thomas Luck <sup>28</sup>	- 10	Thomas Comber <sup>37</sup>	- 10
Hugh Luck <sup>29</sup>	- 10	Herbert Boorde, gent <sup>38</sup>	- 13 6 8
Richard Ballard, <sup>30</sup> gent	- 10	John Alfrey	- 10
Edward Bendge <sup>31</sup>	- 12	Willm Gyles <sup>39</sup>	- 10
John Athoroll	- 10	John Moone <sup>40</sup>	- 10
Richard Thorpe, gent	- 10	Thomas Storer <sup>41</sup>	- 10
Willm. Nicholas	- 10	John Edwards <sup>42</sup>	- 12

## UNDER THE SPECIAL COMMISSION.

## LONGBRIDGE HUNDRED.

Leonard Digginson pleads nonage, had not £20  
 John Ashhurst (Amburst ?), no land  
 John Hunny, not appeared  
 Richard Stapley, no land  
 William Gyles<sup>43</sup> pleads insufficiency  
 John Barton, gent, pleads in the Exchequer

## RINGMERE HUNDRED.

Robert Morley,<sup>44</sup> not appeared  
 Thomas Storer, not £20.<sup>45</sup>

## ALFRISTON HUNDRED.

Thomas Page, not appeared  
 Humfrey Rowe,<sup>46</sup> not appeared

## DILL HUNDRED.

Richard Page, not £20  
 John Holeman says he is discharged by Tally

Alexander Worger,<sup>47</sup> not £20

John Chitty, not £20

Nathaniel Mills,<sup>48</sup> not appeared

Nicholas Stonestreet,<sup>49</sup> neither goods nor lands

<sup>28</sup> Of Wadhurst.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Of Frogfirle.

<sup>33</sup> Of Wadhurst.

<sup>34</sup> Of Wadhurst.

<sup>35</sup> Assessed in Loxfield Pelham hundred.

<sup>36</sup> In Hartfield hundred.

<sup>37</sup> Of Lindfield.

<sup>38</sup> See Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. vi., p. 203.

<sup>39</sup> Of Lindfield.

<sup>40</sup> Of Rotherfield.

<sup>41</sup> In Ringmer hundred.

<sup>42</sup> Of Mayfield.

<sup>43</sup> Of Berwick.

## EAST GRIMSTEED HUNDRED (parish only).

Henry Bellingam, not appeared  
 John Heaselden, not appeared  
 John Crispe, no land, but 60 per ann.  
 John Bottin, not appeared

## TATENORE HUNDRED.

Thomas Hargson hath pleaded in the Excheq<sup>r</sup>

## SHIPLAKE HUNDRED.

Thomas Lunsford, Esq.,<sup>50</sup> not appeared  
 John Durrant<sup>51</sup> pleads insufficient  
 William Barham, not £20  
 Thomas Thunder,<sup>52</sup> not £20  
 Thomas Elphick,<sup>53</sup> not £20  
 William Suson, not appeared  
 Thomas Jeffery,<sup>54</sup> gent, not appeared

## RUSHMONDEN HUNDRED.

Thomas Michelborne,<sup>55</sup> not 40  
 Sackville Currer, Esq., not appeared

## LOXFIELD DORSETT HUNDRED.

Nich. Stone,<sup>56</sup> discharged by Tally  
 Thomas Woodgate, not 12<sup>li</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Of Glynde.

<sup>45</sup> But he paid.

<sup>46</sup> Elder brother of John Rowe of Lewes.

<sup>47</sup> Of Hellingly.

<sup>48</sup> The same.

<sup>49</sup> Of Hailsham.

<sup>50</sup> Of Wylie, father of Col. L.

<sup>51</sup> Of Waldron.

<sup>52</sup> Of Chiddingly. See Suss. Arch. Coll., xiv., p. 232.

<sup>53</sup> Of Stonehill, in Chiddingly, ib., p. 230.

<sup>54</sup> Of Chiddingly Place, ib., 221.

<sup>55</sup> Second son of Richard M., of Bradhurst, in Horsted Keynes.

<sup>56</sup> Of Framfield.



## COMPOSITIONS FOR KNIGHTHOOD,

## UNDER THE SPECIAL COMMISSION,

The *Names of the other Compounders* were—

Thomas Rapley of Warnham	10	<i>Names of those refusing, &amp;c.</i>	
Arthur Woodgate of Horsham	10	Thomas Worsencroft of Wiston	
Richard Wheatly of Hitchingfeld	10		x <sup>li</sup>

## ARUNDEL RAPE.

	£		£
Thomas Edmonds of Eastergate, gent.	10	Giles Garton of Bilinghurst, Esq.	10
John Kinge of Loxwood, yeom.	10	Thomas Page of Madehurst, yeoman	
John Tilly of Barnham, yeom.	10		10 10 0
Richard Jackman of Loxwood, yeom.	10	George Shud of Kirford, yeom.	10
Thomas Cherryman of Pulborough, yeom.	10	John Page of Pulborough, yeom.	10
Ralph Cowper of Slinfold, <sup>68</sup> Esq.	10	John Monke of Wigenholt, gent.	10
Walter Bartelott of Stopham, <sup>69</sup> Esq.	10	John Apsley of Pulborough, gent.	10

## THE SPECIAL COMMISSION RETURNED

Anthony Nash of Yapton, yeoman,	not £40	Owen Bachelor of Pulborough, yeoman	not £40
Richard Younge of Eastergate, yeoman	not £40	Edward Freeman of Billinghamurst, yeoman	not £40
John Staker of Climpinge, yeoman	not £40	George Naldrett <sup>70</sup> of Rudgwick, yeoman, was in ward	
Robert Ayles of Phelpam, yeoman	not £40	William Only of Pulborough, lunatic, and in the custody of Henry Bartelott, Esq <sup>re</sup>	
Henry Ayles	not £40	John Elson of Barneham, died 2 Car.	
Thomas Theoneden of Slinfold, gent	not £40	John Hill of Slinfold, gent., dead	
		John Madgwick of Lymister, gent., dead.	

## CHICHESTER RAPE.

	£		£
Cox Ryman of Appledram, gent.	10	Willm. Cawly <sup>71</sup> of Chichester, gent.	14
John Smyth of Aldingborne, yeoman	10	Thomas Aucock of Chichester, yeom.	10
Richard Holden of Westwittering, gent	20	John Webb of Hastings, Esq.	20
John Compton of Lavant, yeom.	10	Anthony Foster of Trotton, Esq.	15
Willm. Drury of Watergate, Esq.	10	Thomas Smith of Binderton, gen.	10
Thomas Greene of Westmarden, gent.	12	S <sup>r</sup> Thomas Boyer of Leythorne, baronett	70
Willm. Cobden of Westdeane, yeom.	10	Thomas Buckley of Chidham, Esq.	14
Thomas Soane of Walderton, yeom.	12	Willm. Parker of Cocking, yeoman	
Richard Challen of Cocking, yeom.	12		11 13 4
Willm. Todman of Heyshott, yeom.	10	Edward Rose of Westerton, yeom.	10
John Capron of Eastborne, yeom.	10	Nathaniell Yeomon of Mundham, gent.	10
John Pannet of Chichester, Alderm.	10		

<sup>68</sup> In the Escheator's account for 18th Eliz. (1576), Ralph Cowper, of Slinfold, who died in that year, is described as yeoman.

<sup>69</sup> See *Suss. Arch. Coll.*, vol. xv., p.

<sup>70</sup> The will of John Naldrett, of Rudg-

wick, ob. 1547, is in the Escheator's return, 39 Hen. VIII.

<sup>71</sup> Afterwards M.P. for Chichester, and one of the signers of the warrant for executing Charles I.

In the first part of the return to the Special Commission some names in Chichester rape are obliterated, but the exemptions claimed are—

Will: Sandeham of the city of Chichester, carpenter, had not £40 per ann. at the time of his Ma<sup>ty</sup> Coronation

Will: Fowell, of the city of Chichester, had not £40, &c.

Will: Madgwick of Cumdy (Cowdry), yeoman, had not £40.

The names of the holders in 1417 of land worth £20 a year in Sussex, are printed in Vol. X. of our Collections (p. 129). Very few of those names are to be found in the lists now given; the possessions of the great lords continued, but the families of freeholders in 1411 had mostly parted with their property before 1630. New names therefore appear in the present return, and the number was increased by the division which had taken place among the middle classes of lands once held by the monastic orders.

The persons summoned for payment were satirised in some Hallamshire verses—

“Come all you farmers out of the country,  
Carters, ploughmen, hedgers, and all—”

And these lists show a large number of yeomen and other families in our county, who did not appear at the visitation of 1634, and yet were owners of land of the amount required for knighthood. We find among them, however, many whose rise into the class of yeomen and gentry had taken place during the preceding two centuries, and many whose descendants are still freeholders amongst us.

One example may be mentioned. On the 4th February, 1562, died William Cobden, the younger, leaving a son, John, then 8 years and 7 months old, and a widow, having devised to her during the son's minority forty acres of land, 20 acres of pasture, and four acres of meadow, and common of pasture on the Downs in Westdean, called *Archery*, late parcel of the Hospital of Arundel, worth, by the year, 66<sup>s</sup> 8<sup>d</sup> 7<sup>2</sup>;<sup>72</sup> for this same property, as worth £40 a year, the descendant<sup>73</sup> was fined for knighthood, although his name is not in the visitation of 1634. For the same property also another William Cobden voted in 1734, Richard Cobden voting for a freehold at Midhurst.

The names of other families of whom similar notice might be made will occur to the readers of these pages.

<sup>72</sup> Escheator's account, 4th Eliz.

<sup>73</sup> Thomas Cobden was a contributor

of £25 to the fund raised to resist the Armada. Suss. Arch. Coll., vol. i., p. 34.