

## CORDWAINER WARD: ITS HISTORY AND TOPOGRAPHY.

BY ARTHUR BONNER, F.S.A.

THE little book recently issued under this title is from the pen of Mr. A. Charles Knight, C.C., who was Hon. Secretary of this Society during 1916 and Acting Assistant Secretary for several months in 1915. Mr. Knight's work for the Society was on the purely business side, and this appears to be his first essay in antiquarian or historical authorship. The work appeals to the general reader as a useful and interesting account of the Ward, illustrated by two sectional maps of the district in the 16th ("Agas") and 18th centuries and a plan of the present date, and by views of houses and other objects of local character; and including information concerning the present Alderman and Councillors, with portraits; conveyed in a neat and pocketable volume.

Some passages and statements in the book, however, can hardly be allowed to pass without comment or correction here. For instance, on p. 54 we are told of Cannon Street that "many eminent authorities claim that it was part of the ancient Roman highway that ran through the City and was called Watling Street through its whole length"; and on pp. 69-70, of the present Watling Street: ". . . there is little doubt that this street . . . was the first main highway through the City" and that "it is generally agreed that this was the 'principal middle street or Prætorian Way' of Roman London." These statements are inaccurate, and are liable to convey to the *uninstructed* reader a confused and quite wrong impression: probably to the effect that in Roman London there was a "Watling Street" which ran along the line of the present (a) Cannon

Street, or (b) Watling Street, or perhaps (c) a blend of the two, as their lines do not coincide, and which formed a sort of a High Street in the Roman city. But, first, the probable line of the Roman road—of which the Roman name is unknown, and which the “Anglo-Saxons” afterwards called Watling Street—when it reached London and passed from the western gate (near Newgate) to the bridge over the river (near Billingsgate), ran in a south-easterly direction and *crossed the line* of our Cannon Street; and, secondly, the present City street which is known as Watling Street is not on the line of that Roman way, and its name in this connection is misleading. Mr. Knight gives few references, and we have no clue to the identity of the “authorities” he indicates as endorsing these contradictory statements, and also, it would seem, the somewhat startling description “principal Middle Street or Prætorian Way” so boldly applied on the slight basis of the scanty facts available.<sup>1</sup>

On p. 70, “Leland refers to it (Watling Street) as the ‘Noble’ or High Street of the City” can hardly be taken direct from Leland, as his words (Collectanea, ii, 361; edn. 1774) are: “Nobilium via, Athelingstreate, Watelingstreate corrupte,” and they do not bear any such meaning. As Mr. Knight only a few lines previously (p. 69) takes cognisance of the fact that “Athelingstrate” is the original name of this street, and Watling Street is a later name, his error here can scarcely be due to misreading of the O.E. noun “Atheling” (= a Prince, a Noble) as an

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<sup>1</sup> The facts concerning Roman London are authoritatively stated in the “Victoria County History of London,” pp. 1 to 146 (1900), by Messrs. Reginald A. Smith, Francis W. Reader, and H. B. Walters. Two small pieces of Roman roadway have been found in the vicinity: (a) beneath Queen Street, by the end of Budge Row, which may confirm the S.E. line given above for the Watling Street; and (b) beneath the W. end of Eastcheap, pointing about E. and W., roughly parallel with the river.

adjective; and in any case the words "the 'Noble' or *High Street of the City*" are erroneous and misleading.

On p. 56, "As late as the 14th century the north side of Cheapside from the Guildhall was open ground, reserved for jousts and other entertainments." I think this statement was made elsewhere some years ago, but acquaintance with modern research should have prevented its re-appearance at this date. As the streets in this vicinity—Ironmonger Lane, Lawrence Lane, Milk Street, Catte (later Cateaton and finally Gresham) Street, etc.—were existing in the 12th century, this clearly cannot be correct.

Further record-searching seems called for on such points as the following:—

(P. 35) "1283" is given as apparently the earliest date for the name of St. Mary Aldermary, whereas it is seen in Wills proved in 1272-3 and in 1275 (Dr. Sharpe's Calendar, i, 13 and 20).

(P. 38) The earliest date for the incumbent of St. Antholin = "1181," whereas "Willelmus presbiter de Ste. Antonio" is named in a deed of c. 1120 (Calendar of St. Paul's MSS., 63b).

(P. 44) Basing Lane "was so named after an early owner, probably Peter de Basinges" (Will of 1275), whereas there was a Robert de Basinges there or near before 1262 (P.R.O. Anct. Deeds A 1936).

(P. 67) *Re* St. Benet Sherehog, the vague reference to 12th century documents might advantageously have been made more precise by reference to "Alfwinus sacerdos Scerehog" in deeds of c. 1125-35 calendared on pp. 61b and 65b of the St. Paul's list, and also to "Willelmus Serehog" of a rather later St. Paul's deed (Calendar 63b), who also figures as priest of that church in a P.R.O. deed of c. 1150-60 (Anc. Deeds A 7360); as these deeds show that the church existed under that name at this earlier period; while Dr. Sharpe's useful footnote on the

name in his "Wills" (ii, 196) would have been a better reference than Riley's "opinion."

On p. 17 Mr. Knight dates as "circa 1115"<sup>2</sup> the valuable List of Lands in London held by the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's (St. Paul's Calendar 66), apparently unaware of the correction made by the master-hand of Dr. J. H. Round ("Geoffrey de Mandeville," 435-6), who shows that it must have been written c. 1125-32. Mr. Loftie's identification of the "Warda Liuredi" of this document with Cordwainer Ward (p. 18) was conjectural and has not been confirmed by evidence, and in placing Liured at the head of the list of Aldermen (p. 98) there should be some qualification, especially in view of Dr. J. H. Round's criticisms of Mr. Loftie's handling of this and other early documents and the persons named therein.

On p. 17 Mr. Knight cites from the Calendar of the St. Paul's MSS. (p. 62a) a reference to "Osmundus Corduanarius" as "under date 1141"; but the deed dated 1141 shows "Herbertus corduanator," and not Osmundus, who figures in the preceding document, which is undated, and may, I judge, be a few years earlier. In the same paragraph the O.F. *cordouanier* is misspelt "cordowainer." In this connection I notice on p. 47 "the original name (of Bow Lane) was Cordwainer Street"; but the records show that "Corveisere" (c. 1210) and perhaps its equivalent "Corveysere" (1216-72) are earlier forms than "Kordewaner" (1260) or Cordwaner, c. (1279). Similarly, on p. 54 "Candelwrich" is given as "the earliest form of the name" of Cannon Street, whereas there is

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<sup>2</sup> Probably following Loftie ("Historic Towns, London," 93, etc.), who, however, assigns it to "before 1115." J. E. Price, in his "Guildhall," gives a facsimile and an extended translation of this notable document—which, by the way, is not a "list of the wards," as is implied by Mr. Knight (p. 17), although it fortunately mentions most of them.

a slightly earlier record of "Candelwrithte," "-wrich" being (like "-writhte") a misspelling of M.E. *wriht*—a fact which Mr. Knight might have used in elucidation of the name. These points are correctly given in this Society's Transactions (N.S. III, 299-300, and 212), which Mr. Knight includes in his "List of Principal Authorities."

A venture into the thorny domain of Place Name etymology on p. 71 is unhappy. The curious name of Wringwren Lane—a lane mentioned by Stow, but now non-existent—is said to be "probably derived from the A.S. *wīnwringa*, meaning winepress." This suggestion is made without regard to philological and phonetic considerations, and the progression of *wīnwringa* to *wringwren* is quite impracticable and inadmissible. The two words are distinct, and are compounds of the O.E. words *wīn* and *wringa*, and *wringa* and *wrænn* (or *wrenn*); an original *wīn* cannot be represented by "*wring*," nor by "*wren*"—either would be a phonetic impossibility, and the guess is a very unfortunate hazard to put into cold print.

#### THE GIFT OF STONEHENGE TO THE PUBLIC.

At the suggestion of Sir Edward Brabrook the Council of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society tendered to the generous donor an expression of its gratitude for the patriotism and public spirit evidenced by his gift of one of the most interesting of our national monuments. Mr. Chubb replied as follows:—"Bemerton Lodge, Salisbury. 9th October, 1918. Dear Sir,—I beg to thank you for your letter of the 4th inst. containing the expression of appreciation from the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society. Will you kindly convey my thanks for this to your president, Sir Edward Brabrook, and to the members of your Society. Such expressions as these show me that I have done the right thing in giving our oldest and most renowned monument to the nation. It was indeed a sacrifice to part with it, but one has the satisfaction of knowing that henceforth Stonehenge is safe and secure from the whims and idiosyncrasies of any private owner.—Believe me, yours truly, C. H. E. CHUBB."