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Introduction and Notes: Volume 1

Edited by C.L. Kingsford

Excerpt

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The Suruey of London, containing the Page 1
originall, antiquitie, encrease, moderne estate,
and description of that Citie.

AS the Romane writers to glorifie the citie of *Rome* drew the originall thereof from Gods and demie Gods, by the Troian progenie: so *Giffrey of Monmouth* the Welsh Historian, deduceth the foundation of this famous Citie of *London*, for the greater glorie therof, and emulation of *Rome*, from the very same originall. For he reporteth that *Brute*, lineally descended from the demy god *Eneas*, the sonne of *Venus*, daughter of *Iupiter*, about the yeare of the world 2855. and 1108. before the natiuitie of Christ, builded this city neare vnto the riuier now called *Thames*, and named it *Troynouant* or *Trenouant*.
But herein as *Liuius* the most famous Hystoriographer of the Romans writeth, *Antiquitie is pardonable, and hath an especial priuiledge, by interlacing diuine matters with humane, to make the first foundation of Citie more honourable, more sacred, and as it were of greater maiestie.* Trinouantum hath the written copie. Liuius.

King *Lud* (as the foresaid *Giffrey of Monmouth* noteth) afterward, not onely repaired this Cittie, but also increased the same with faire buildings, Towers and walles, and after his owne name called it *Caire-Lud*, as *Luds* towne, and the strong gate which he builded in the west part of the Cittie, he likewise for his owne honour named *Ludgate*. Caire Lud, the Citie of Lod, but Luds towne is a Saxon word.

This *Lud* had issue two sons, *Androgeus*, and *Theomantius*, who being not of age to gouerne at the death of their father, their vncler *Cassibelan* took upon him the crowne: about the eight yeare of whose raigne, *Iulius Cæsar* arriued in this land, with a great power of Romans to conquer it, the manner of which conquest I will summarily set down out of his owne Commentaries, which are of farre better credit, then the relations of *Giffrey Monmouth*.

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Antiquitie of London

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Cæsar's Com-
mentaries.
li. 5.

Trinobants
Citizens of
London.

Mandubrace
and the Tri-
nobants yeeld
to Cæsar, and
he defended
them.

Cassibilins
towne west
from London,
for Cæsar saith
80. miles from
the sea.
Cities of the
Britaines were
combersome
woods forti-
fied.

The chiefe gouernment of the *Britons*, and ordering of the | warres, was then by common aduice committed to *Cassibilin*, whose Signiorie was separated from the Cities towards the sea coast, by the riuer called *Thames*, about fourescore miles from the sea: this *Cassibilin* in times past, had made continuall warre vpon the Cities adioyning, but the *Britons* being mooued with the Romans inuasion, had resolued in that necessitie to make him their Soueraigne and Generall of the warres, (which continued hote betweene the Romans and them) but in the meane while, the Trynobants which was then the strongest Citie well neare of all those countries (and out of which Citie a yong gentleman called *Mandubrace*, vpon confidence of *Cæsars* help, came vnto him into the maine land of *Gallia*, now called *France*, and thereby escaped death, which he should haue suffered at *Cassibilins* hande,) sent their Ambassadors to *Cæsar*, promising to yeeld vnto him, and to doe what he should command them, instantly desiring him, to protect *Mandubrace* from the furious tyrrany of *Cassibilin*, and to send him into their Cittie, with authoritie to take the gouernment thereof vpon him. *Cæsar* accepted the offer, and appoynted them to giue vnto him 40. Hostages, and withall to finde him graine for his armie, and so sent he *Mandubrace* vnto them.

When others saw that *Cæsar* had not onely defended the Trinobants against *Cassibilin*, but had also saued them harmlesse from the pillage of his owne souldiers, then did the *Conimagues*, *Segontians*, *Ancalits*, *Bibrokes*, and *Cassians*, likewise submit themselues vnto him, and by them hee learned that not farre from thence was *Cassibilins* towne, fortified with woods, and marish ground, into the which he had gathered a great number both of men and cattell.

For the *Brittons* cal that a towne (saith *Cæsar*) when they haue fortified a combersome wood with a ditch and rampire, and thether they resort to abide the approach of their enemies, to this place therefore marched *Cæsar* with his Legions, hee found it excellentlie fortified, both of nature, and by mans aduice: neuerthelesse he resolued to assault it in two seuerall places at once, whereupon the *Britons*, being not able to endure the force of the *Romans*, fledde out at another

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part, and left the towne vnto him : a great number of cattell he found there, and many of the Britons | he slue, and others *Page 3* he tooke in the chase.

Whilest these things were a doing in these quarte(r)s, *Cassibilin* sent messengers into Kent, which lieth upon the sea, in which there raigned then 4. particular kings, named *Cingetorex*, *Caruill*, *Taximagull*, and *Segonax*, whom he commanded to raise all their forces, and suddenly to set vppon, and assault the Romanes in their trenches, by the sea side: the which when the Romanes perceyued, they salied out vpon them, slue a great sort of them, and taking *Cingetorix* their noble Captaine prisoner, retired themselues to their campe in good safetie.

When *Cassibilin* heard of this, and had formerly taken many other losses, and found his Countrey sore wasted, and himselfe left almost alone by the defection of the other cities, he sent Ambassadors by *Comius* of *Arras* to *Cæsar*, to entreate with him concerning his owne submission, the which *Cæsar* did accept, and taking Hostages, assessed the realme of *Brytaine* to a yearely tribute, to be paied to the people of *Rome*, giuing straight charge to *Cassibilin*, that he should not seeke any reuenge vpon *Mandubrace*, or the *Trinobantes*, and so withdrew his army to the sea againe.

Brytaine sessed to pay a yearly tribute to the Romanes.

Thus farre out of *Cæsars* Commentaries concerning this Historie, which happened in the yeare before Christes natiuitie 54. In all which processe there is for this purpose to bee noted, that *Cæsar* nameth the Cittie of *Trinobantes*, which hath a resemblance with *Troy noua*, or *Trinobantum*, hauing no greater difference in the Orthographie, then chaunging *b.* into *v.* and yet maketh an error whereof I will not argue, onely this I will note that diuerse learned men do not thinke *ciuitas Trinobantum*, to be well and truely translated, the Citie of the *Trinobantes*: but it should rather be the state, comunalty, or Signiory of the *Trinobantes*: for that *Cæsar* in his Commentaries vseth the word *ciuitas*, onely for a people liuing vnder one, and the selfe same Prince and law: but certaine it is that the Citties of the *Brytaines*, were in those dayes neither artificially builded with houses, nor strongly walled with stone, but were onely thicke and combersome woods plashed within, and trenched about: and the like in effect doe

Trinobant now London.

Cities of the Britaines not artificially builded with houses, nor walled with stone.

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Strabo, Pomponius Mela, Tacitus, Dion.

London most famous for Marchants & intercourse.

The Britons had no houses but cottages.

The Britons went naked, their bodies painted.

Richborow in Kent.

Verulamium. Cilcester, Wroxcester. Kenchester.

other the Romane and Greeke Authours directly affirme, as *Strabo*, *Pomponius Mela*, and *Dion* a Senator of *Rome*, which flourished in the seuerall raignes of the Romaine Emperours, *Tiberius*, *Claudius*, *Domitian*, & *Seuerus*, to wit, that before the ariuall of the Romans, the Brytons had no towns, but called that a town which had a thicke intangled wood, defended as I saide with a ditch and banke, the like whereof the Irishmen our next neighbors doe at this day call *Fastnes*. But after that these hither partes of Brytaine were reduced into the forme of a Prouince, by the Romanes, who sowed the seedes of ciuilitie ouer all Europe: this Citie whatsoever it was before, began to be renowned, and of fame. For *Tacitus*, who first of all Authours nameth it *Londinium*, saith that in the 62. yeare after Christ, it was, albeit no Colonie of the Romanes, yet most famous for the great multitude of Marchants, prouision, and intercourse. At which time in that notable reuolt of the Brytons from *Nero*, in which 70000 Romanes and their confederates were slaine, this Citie with *Verulam* neare *Saint Albons*, and *Maldon* in *Essex*, then all famous: were ransacked and spoyled. For *Suetonius Paulinus*, then Lieutenant for the Romanes in this Isle, abandoned it, as not then fortified, and left it to the spoyle.

Shortly after, *Iulius Agricola* the Romane Lieutenant, in the time of *Domitian*, was the first that by adhorting the Brytaines publikely, and helping them priuately, won them to build houses for themselues, Temples for the Gods, and Courts for Iustice, to bring up the noble mens children in good letters and humanitie, and to apparell themselues Romane like, where as before (for the most part) they went naked, painting their bodies, &c. as al the Romane writers haue obserued.

True it is I confesse, that afterward many Cities and Towns in Brytaine vnder the gouernment of the Romanes, were walled with stone, and baked bricke, or tyles, as *Rich borrow*, *Ryptacester*, in the Isle of *Thanet*, till the chanell altered his course, besides *Sandwitch* in *Kent*, *Verulamium* besides *S. Albones*, in *Hartfordshire*, *Cilcester* in *Hampshire*, *Wroxcester* in *Shropshire*, *Kencester* in *Herefordshire*, three myles from *Hereford* towne, *Ribcester*, 7. miles aboue *Preston*, on the water of *Rible*, *Aldeburge* a mile from *Borrowbridge*, or

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Wathelingsstreet, on *Vre Riuer*, and others: and no doubt Leyland.
 but this Citie of *Lon|don* was also walled with stone, in the Page 5
 time of the Romane gouernement here, but yet verie lately, Of the wall about London.
 for it seemeth not to haue beene walled in the yeare of our
 Lord 296. because in that yeare when *Alectus* the Tyrant was
 slaine in the field, the *Franks* easily entered *London*, and had
 sacked the same, had not God of his great fauour at the very
 instant brought along the riuer of *Thames*, certaine bandes of
 Romaine Souldiers, who slewe those *Frankes* in euerie streete
 of the Cittie.

Wall about the Cittie of *London*.

IN few yeares after, as *Simeon of Durham*, an auncient
 Writer reporteth, *Hellen* the mother of *Constantine* the Great, Simeon of Durham.
 was the first that inwalled this Citie, about the yeare of Christ,
 306. but howsoever those walles of stone might bee builded
 by *Helen*, yet the Britons, (I know) had no skill of building
 with stone, as it may appeare by that which followeth, aboute
 the yeare of Christ, 399, when *Arcadius* and *Honorius* the
 sonnes of *Theodosius Magnus*, gouerned the Empire, the one
 in the East, the other in the West, for *Honorius* hauing
 receyued *Britaine*, the Citie of *Rome* was inuaded and de-
 stroyed by the *Gothes*, after which time the Romaines left to
 rule in *Britaine*, as being employed in defence of their Terri-
 tories nearer home, whereupon the Britaines not able to
 defende themselues against the inuasions of their enemies,
 were manie yeares together vnder the oppression of two most
 cruell nations, the *Scots* and *Pictes*, and at the length were The Scots & pictes inuade this land.
 forced to sende their Ambassadors with letters and lamentable
 supplications to *Rome*, requiring aide and succour from thence,
 upon promise of their continuall fealtie, so that the Romaines
 woulde rescue them out of the handes of their enemies.
 Hereupon the Romaines sent vnto them a Legion of armed
 Souldiers, which comming into this I|land, and encountering Page 6
 with the enemies, ouerthrew a great number of them, and
 draue the rest out of the frontiers of the Countrie, and so
 setting the Britaines at libertie, counselled them to make a
 wall, extending all along betweene the two seas, which might
 be of force to keepe out their euill neighbours, and then

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Britaines vn-
skilfull of
building with
stone.

returned home with great triumph: The Britaines wanting
Masons, builded that Wall not of stone as they were aduised,
but made it of turfe, and that so slender, that it serued little
or nothing at all for their defence, and the enemie percey-
uing that the Romaine Legion was returned home, forthwith
arriued out of their boates, inuaded the borders, ouercame
the country, and as it were bare down all that was before
them.

Whereupon Ambassadors were eftsoones dispatched to *Rome*
lamentably beseeching that they would not suffer their
miserable countrey to bee vtterly destroyed: then againe,
an other Legion was sent, which comming vpon a sodaine, made
a greate slaughter of the enemie, and chased him home, even
to his owne Country. These Romaines at their departure,
tolde the Britaines playnely, that it was not for their ease or
leasure to take vpon them any more such long and laborious
journeys for their defence, and therefore bad them practice
the vse of armour and weapons, and learne to withstand their
enemies, whome nothing else did make so strong as their
faint heart and cowardise, and for so much as they thought
that it would bee no small helpe and encouragement vnto
their Tributary friendes, whome they were now forced to
forsake, they builded for them a Wall of harde stone from
the west sea to the east sea, right betweene those two Citties,
which were there made to keepe out the enemies, in the selfe
same place where *Seuerus* before had cast his Trench. The
Britaines also putting to their helping hands as laborers.

Witchendus.
Wall of stone
builded by
the Romains,
betwixt the
Britaines and
Scots.

This Wall they builded 8. foote thicke in breadth, and 12.
foot in height, right as it were by a line from east to West, as
the ruines thereof remayning in many places til this day, do
make to appeare. Which worke thus perfected, they gaue the
people straight charge to looke well to themselues, they teach
them to handle their weapons, and they instruct them in war-
like feates. And least by the sea side southwardes, where
their ships laye at harbor, the enemie shoulde come on
land, they made vp sundrie Bulwarkes each somewhat distant
from the other, and so bid them farewell as minding no more
to returne. This happened in the dayes of the Emperour
Theodosius the yonger, almost 500. yeares after the first

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arriuall of the Romaines here, aboute the yeare after Christs incarnation, 434.

The Britaines after this continuing a lingering and doubtful war with the Scots and Pictes, made choice of *Vortiger* to be their king and leader, which man (as sayeth *Malmesbery*) was neither valourous of courage, nor wise of counsell, but wholly giuen ouer to the vnlawfull lusts of his flesh : the people likewise in short time being growne to some quietnes gaue themselves to gluttony, and drunkennes, pride, contention, enuie and such other vices, casting from them the yoke of Christ. In the meane season a bitter plague fell among them, consuming in short time such a multitude, that the quicke were not sufficient to bury the dead, and yet the remnant remayned so hardened in sinne, that neyther death of their friendes, nor feare of their own daunger, could cure the mortality of their soules, wherevpon a greater stroke of vengeance insued vpon the whole sinfull nation. For being now againe infested with their old neighbors the *Scots* and *Pictes*, they consult with their king *Vortiger*, and send for the Saxons, who shortly after arriued here in Britaine, where saith *Bede* they were receyued as frends : but as it proued they minded to destroy the countrie as enemies, for after that they had driuen out the *Scots* and *Pictes*, they also draue the Britains some ouer the seas, some into the waste mountaines of Wales and Cornewall, and deuided the Countrey into diuers kingdomes amongst themselves.

Malmesbery :
Bede.
The Britaines
giuen to glut-
tony, drunken-
nes, pride and
contention.

The Britaines
plagued for
their sinfull
life.

Witchendus.
Bede.
The Saxons
sent for to
defend the
Britaines, but
they draue
them into the
mountaines.

Saxons vn-
skilful of building
with stone.
Benet a Monk
brought in
Masons.

Woden
churches and
golden
priestes.

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Monasteries
of rotten
timber.

These Saxons were likewise ignorant of building with stone, vntill the yeare 680. for then it is affirmed that *Benet* Abbot of *Wirrall*, maister to the reuerend *Bede*, first brought artificers of stone houses, and glasse Windowes into this Iland amongst the Saxons : Arts before that time vnto them vnknown, and therefore vsed they but wodden buildings. And to this accordeth *Policronicon*, who sayeth that then had yee wodden Churches, nay wodden Chalaces and golden Priestes, but since golden Chalaces and wodden Priestes : And to knit vp this argument, king | *Edgar* in his Charter to the Abbey of *Malmesbury*, dated the yeare of Christ 974. hath wordes to this effect : All the Monasteries in my Realme, to the outward sight, are nothing but worme eaten and rotten tymber,

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and boordes, and that worse is, within they are almost emptie, and void of diuine seruice,

Thus much be said for walling, not only in respect of this Citie, but generally also of the first within the Realme. Now to returne to our *Trinobant*, (as *Cæsar* hath it) the same is since by *Tacitus*, *Ptolomeus*, & *Antonius* called *Londinium*, *Longidinium*, of *Amianus*, *Lundinum*, and *Augusta* who calleth it an auncient Citie, of our Brytaines *Lundayne*, of the old Saxons, *Lundenceaster*, *Lundenbirig*, *Londennir*, of strangers *Londra*, and *Londres*, of the inhabitants, *London*, whereof you may read a more large and learned discourse, and how it tooke the name, in that worke of my louing friend M. *Camden* now *Clarenceaulx*, which is called *Britania*.

Camden.

The Citie of London destroyed by the Danes, and again repaired. The Citie of London lay wast, and not inhabited for the space of almost 50. yeres.

W: Malmesbery.
Asser.
Marianus.
Florentius.

This Citie of *London* hauing beene destroyed and burnt by the Danes and other Pagan enemies, about the yeare of Christ, 839. was by *Alfred* king of the west Saxons, in the yeare 886. repaired, honourably restored, and made againe habitable. Who also committed the custodie thereof vnto his son in law, *Ethelred* Earle of *Mercea*, vnto whome before he hath giuen his daughter *Ethelfled*.

And that this Citie was then strongly walled, may appeare by diuerse accidents, whereof *William* of *Malmesberie* hath that about the yeare of Christ 994. the Londoners shut vp their gates, and defended their king *Ethelred*, within their walles against the Danes.

In the yeare 1016. *Edmond Ironside* raigning ouer the west Saxons, *Canute* the Dane bringing his nauie into the west part of the bridge, cast a trench about the Citie of *London*, and then attempted to haue won it by assault, but the Citizens repulsed him, and draue them from their walles.

Also in the yeare 1052. Earle *Goodwin* with his nauie sayled vp by the South ende of the Bridge, and so assailed the walles of this Citie.

W. Fitzstephen.
Page 9
The Citie of London walled round about by the Riuer of Thames.

William Fitzstephen in the raigne of *Henrie* the second, | writing of the wals of this Citie, hath these wordes. *The wall is high and great, wel towred on the Northside, with due distances betweene the towres. On the Southside also the Citie was walled and towred, but the fishfull riuer of Thames with his ebbing and flowing, hath long since subuerted them.*

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By the Northside, he meaneth from the riuer of Thames in the east to the riuer of Thames in the west, for so stretched the wall in his time, and the Citie being farre more in length from East, to West, then in breadth from South, to North, and also narrower at both endes then in the middest, is therefore compassed with the wall on the land side, in forme of a bow, except denting in betwixt *Creplegate*, and *Aldersgate*: but the wall on the southside, along by the riuer of Thames, was straight as the string of a bow, and all furnished with Towres or Bulworkes, (as we now terme them) in due distance euery one from other, as witnesseth our Authour, and our selues may behold for the land side. This may suffice for prooffe of a wall, and forme thereof about this Citie, and the same to haue beene of great antiquitie as any other within this Realme.

And now touching the maintenance, and repairing the saide wall, I reade that in the year 1215. the 6. of king *Iohn*, the Barons entring the City by *Ealdgate*, first tooke assurance of the Citizens, then brake into the Jewes houses, searched their coffers to fill their owne purses, and after with great diligence repaired the walles and gates of the Citie, with stones taken from the Jewes broken houses. In the yeare 1257. *Henrie* the third caused the walles of this Citie, which was sore decayed and destitute of towers, to be repaired in more seemely wise then before, at the common charges of the Citie. Also in the yeare 1282. king *Edward* the first, hauing graunted to *Robert Kilwarby* Archbishop of *Canterburie*, licence for the enlarging of the blacke Friers Church, to breake and take downe a part of the wall of the Citie, from *Ludgate* to the riuer of Thames: he also graunted to *Henry Waleis* Maior, and the Citizens of *London*, the fauour to take toward the making of the wall, and inclosure of the Citie, certaine customes, or toll, as appeareth by his graunt: this wall was then to bee made from *Ludgate* west to *Fleetebriidge* along behinde | the houses and along by the water of the *Fleet*, vnto the riuer of Thames. Moreouer, in the yeare 1310. *Edward 2.* commaunded the Citizens to make vp the wall alreadie begunne, and the tower at the ende of the same wall, within the water of Thames neare vnto the blacke Friars, &c. 1328.

Walles of London repaired: Roger of Wendouer: Mathew Paris: Ranulph Cogshall.

Math. Paris.

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the second of *Edward* the 3. the walles of this citie was repaired. It was also graunted by king *Richard* the second in the 10. of his raigne, that a toll should bee taken of the wares, solde by lande or by water for ten yeares, towardses the repairing of the walles, and clensing of the ditch about *London*. In the 17. of *Edward* the 4. *Ralfe Ioseline*, Maior, caused part of the wall about the citie of *London* to bee repayed, to wit, betwixt *Aldgate*, and *Aldersgate*. He also caused the Moorefield to bee searched for clay, and Bricke thereof to be made, and burnt: he likewise caused chalke to be brought out of Kent, and to be burnt into lime in the same Moorefield, for more furtherance of the worke. Then y^e Skinners to begin in the East made that part of the wall betwixt *Aldgate* and *Buries* markes, towardses *Bishopsgate*, as may appeare by their armes in three places fixed there: the Maior with his companie of the Drapers, made all that part, betwixt *Bishopsgate* and *Alhallowes* church in the same wall, and from *Alhallowes* towardses the *Posterne* called *Mooregate*. A great part of the same wall was repayed by the Executors of sir *Iohn Crosby*, late Alderman, as may appeare by his armes, in two places there fixed: and other companies repayed the rest of the wall to the *Posterne* of *Creplegate*. The Goldsmiths repayed from *Creplegate* towards *Aldersgate*, and there the worke ceased. The circuit of the wall of *London* on the landes side, to wit from the tower of *London* in the East, vnto *Aldgate*, is 82. perches: from *Aldgate* to *Bishopsgate*, 86. perches: from *Bishopsgate* in the North, to the *Posterne* at *Creplegate*, 162. perches: from *Creplegate* to *Ealdersgate*, 75. perches: from *Ealdersgate* to *Newgate*, 66. perches: from *Newgate* in the west, to *Ludgate*, 42. perches, in all 513. perches of assise. From *Ludgate* to the *Fleete* dike west, about 60. perches: from *Fleete* bridge south to the riuer *Thames*, about 70. perches: and so the totall of these perches amounteth to 643. euery perch consisting of 5. yeards and a halfe, which do yeeld | 3536. yardes and a halfe, containing 10608. foote, which make vp two English miles and more by 608. foote.

Patent.

Circuit of the wall from the east to the west.

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