History and antiquities
of Nottingham

James Orange

HISTORY

AND

ANTIQUITIES

OF

NOTTINGHAM,

IN WHICH ARE EXHIBITED

THE VARIOUS INSTITUTIONS, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, ARTS, AND
MANUFACTURES OF THE PEOPLE;

THEIR SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC HABITS;

CIVIL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS,

UNDER EVERY SUCCESSIVE GOVERNMENT, FROM THEIR CONQUESTS BY THE NORMANS,
DANES, SAXONS, ROMANS, AND EARLY BRITISH INDEPENDENCY,
DOWN TO THE PRESENT TIME:

FORMING A CONDENSED BUT COMPREHENSIVE

ENGLISH AS WELL AS LOCAL HISTORY,

CHRONOLOGICALLY ARRANGED.

BY JAMES ORANGE,

Author of the Life of Vason, &c.

VOLUME I.

The foundations of part of this fort have, a few years back, been discovered at the south end, as we have before stated, on the site of the present new watch house, so that again Dr. Deering and Mr. Blackner are both wrong.

Marianus Scotus informs us that not only did Edward the Elder build a bridge, but also on the south end of it he did build a little town over against the old town of Snodengaham. Any stranger reading this would, if he were to visit the locality, at once pronounce this to be Bridgford, and though Dr. Thoroton is of opinion that Bridgford is not the town alluded to, because Stowe expressly says, the town built by Edward was over against the old town of Nottingham, and that before the Saxon form of government was altered by the Normans, Bridgford was a member of Clifton Soc, and not of Nottingham.

Here we must beg leave to dissent from Dr. Thoroton, for as to situation, certainly Bridgford is opposite to Nottingham; and Stowe does not hint that the town erected by Edward ever did belong to the old town of Nottingham ; beside there is not room for building a town on the south end of the bridge, even now, and there was much less formerly—for even within historical memory the course of the Trent, from below the bridge, took a much more southerly direction than it does now—which every old inhabitant will tell you. This ancient part of the channel of the Trent may be very distinctly traced, pursuing a wild, natural course by lady bay, and onward to Adbolton, close by where a church used to stand (a) and the ancient channel in this place is full of water, still known by the name of old Trent ; and what is rather remarkable, as Mr. J. Spencer, of Adbolton, informed us, on whose farm the church-yard is, that the land between old Trent, and its present more confined limits, belongs to Colwick, to which it pays rates, though they have no road to it, except across the Trent; lest this land should be lost to Colwick parish,

(a) The places of the graves in the field, in the occupation of Mr. Spencer, clearly mark out the site of that which was once a village church-yard—the foundations of the church are clearly distinguishable; the tower at the west end was six paces square; the length of the church, from west to east, about twenty, the breadth about eight, and had one isle, on the south side, making it in all nearly eleven paces wide, but there is no pear tree marking the site of the church, as Mr. White tells us. There is a stone where the tower stood, 1664, which was probably the time service was discontinued. From the parish book, in the possession of Mr. Lowe, of Basingfield, we learn the church had been a rectory, having the tithes of 850 acres of arable land, was pulled down in 1746. Bricks and tiles sold for £3 12s;; stone, £1 10s.; wood, £1 15s.; bells, £5 10s. 6d. Paid Dr. Bedsman, rector of Holme Pierrepoint, £4 7s. 6d. The silver cup was sold to the rector, with the consent of the parish, for 17s., and a silver spoon, of 17s. value bought in its stead, which is still at the church at Holme Pierrepoint.

from which it is by the river disjoined, the parish authorities go
over once a year, make a hole in the ground, into which a boy
puts his head, to keep its possession in rememberance.

There is only another circumstance connected with the Trent
bridge to which we feel it necessary to solicit a few moments at-
tention, and that is, to the origin of the name of lady-bay, at
which place there is now a toll-bar, called lady-bay bar. The
opinion of Mr. Blackner, that the name was given it from the cir-
cumstance of its being the pasture of my lady's bay mare, or a
mare pasturing there called lady bay, is ridiculous. Surely a more
unfounded opinion was never hazarded on any subject, by any
person, than this. Now are we not told that the bridge itself
took its name from certain baths which were there erected, and
can we suppose there were gentlemen's baths, and none for the
ladies? If the gentlemen's baths, of which we have so frequent
mention, were on the north end, is it not very likely that the ladies'
baths would be at the end opposite? As at that place in the river
opened out wide, forming a natural bay or port in miniature, such
a place would be chosen for erecting the ladies' baths.

Besides, as it is usual for ancient churches, &c., to give name
to places adjacent, so it would not be wonderful if the chapel on
the bridge should give name to this remarkable port in the river,
and as this was St. Mary's or ladies' chapel, this place, which
was so near, would naturally be denominated lady's bay.

CHAPTER VI.

Athelstan, 925. Edward died soon after he had completed his
works in this town, in 925, and was succeeded by his natural son,
Athelstan, the younger children, though legitimate, were of too
tender years to rule a nation so much exposed to foreign inva-
sions, and subject to internal convulsion, as Britain then was. In
his reign Nottingham was threatened with another Danish inva-
sion, for in 937, and the twelfth of Athelstan's reign, under Anlaf,
the Danes sailed up the Humber with a large fleet of 620 ships,
casting anchor on the Lincolnshire coast. Athelstan marched with
his army against them, and gained over the enemy one of the most
splendid victories at Brun, in South Lincolnshire, ever recorded
in the annals of British warfare, in which seven Danish earls and
five of their kings were slain. To encourage commerce Athelstan