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AN ACCURATE  
DESCRIPTION  
OF  
*BROMLEY,*



In Kent,  
ORNAMENTED WITH VIEWS OF THE CHURCH  
AND COLLEGE,

INCLUDING EVERY THING INTERESTING  
AND AMUSING  
IN THAT DELIGHTFUL PART OF THE COUNTY,  
AND  
*FIVE MILES ROUND,*

---

FROM THE WORKS OF  
CAMDEN, | HARRIS, | PHILIPOT,  
HASTED, | SEYMOUR, | &c. &c.  
WITH  
*ORIGINAL ANECDOTES, OBSERVATIONS, &c. &c.*

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BY  
THOMAS WILSON.

London:

PRINTED FOR  
J. HAMILTON, NO. 46, PATERNOSTER-RROW;  
AND,  
T. WILSON, BOOKSELLER, BROMLEY, KENT.

1797.



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## DEDICATION.

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TO  
THE INHABITANTS OF BROMLEY,  
IN KENT:

*LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,*

**T**HIS dedication is dictated by gratitude: the many favors I have experienced during a residence of five years among you, has impressed on my mind all the interest for your happiness that can spring from a grateful heart, and probably I shall never have a better opportunity of returning thanks.

If the original part of this work does not possess much erudition, it at least conveys all the truth I have been able to collect.

The great demand, of late years, for provincial history, and local anti-

quities, will, it is hoped, render this an acceptable present to every person interested in, or acquainted with, this desirable spot. The work is chiefly compiled from the most reputable and respectable authorities; and in the original matter, I have endeavoured to unite the agreeable with the useful.

To my FRIENDS and neighbours in Bromley, I cheerfully submit this little volume, conscious that where I may have deservedly incurred censure, censure will be my portion; and that, if at all I shall have merited praise, praise will not be withheld.

I have the honor to subscribe myself,

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

With perfect esteem and gratitude,

Your much obliged

And obedient

Humble Servant,

THOMAS WILSON.

Bromley Library, August 21st, 1797.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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*THE attempt to render this book worthy, the acceptance of the inhabitants of Bromley, and its environs, is found more arduous than was at first expected, not for want of materials to furnish subject matter, for perhaps no county in the kingdom can boast more reputable authorities, or greater information; but in searching into the authenticity of every circumstance related, and in endeavouring, to the utmost, to place them before the reader in a distinct, connected, and entertaining point of view.*

*In a word, where truth and perspicuity have been the invariable objects of pursuits, in a work of this nature, that pursuit must be attended by many fears for its success.*

*Should this endeavour to please meet with the approbation hoped for, and a second edition (in due time) make its appearance, there shall, at least, be added a map of five miles round Bromley, including the roads, lanes, and principal seats and villages.*

*And where I may be indulged to make a drawing, the second edition of this work shall be ornamented with views of some of the elegant and beautiful mansions round this delightful spot.*

*This Plan must necessarily enhance the price of the book; but at the same time, render it a more desirable purchase.*

*Any communications will be thankfully received by the editor.*

---

## *PREFACE.*

---

**I**N diverting the attention of the curious from a general Survey of the County, to a contemplation of the beauties of a particular spot, I could quote precedents from every corner of the kingdom; various have been the causes of celebrity of different places; some acquire fame from the possession of the mineral springs, the remains of an ancient fortification, or of boasting from an authenticated tradition the birth or burial place of some great hero, whose only merit consisted in a destruction of the human species. These have grown the fashionable resort of the literati, when, from their natural soil, situation, or distance from the metropolis, they might have remained unnoticed, in the obscurity which nature originally designed them. What other fate.



could have awaited the town of Stratford-upon-Avon? had not the birth of the great Shakespear almost conferred on it the honor of canonization. Without doubt this mighty Bard, in his juvenil days, discovered early traits of a most brilliant genius : but could it enter the imagination of his warmest admirer, that many years must elapse after his death, before the world could find out his transcendent merit, and that then, the admiration of his talents would produce an enthusiasm, to pay him a just tribute of praise, equal to that which caused the pilgrimage of the Mahometans to the tomb of their Prophet, or that as famous, recorded in our own times, performed by certain devotees, to do homage at the shrine of Beckett, of Canterbury; yet, with either of these might be compared, that theatrical procession to Stratford, which drew after it the fashionable world, to celebrate the memorable Jubilee : so true it is, that we seldom see the greatness of man's merit until we find the want of it in his successors. My Readers will, perhaps here call in question the aptness of my allusions to the business of these sheets; but I must humbly remind them, that I am well aware what subjects of my strictures will please the present age; and that those remarks I must un-

willingly omit, for various reasons, will meet with ample discussion hereafter. Travelling round Bromley and its environs, the learned of every profession will meet with something to gratify their several pursuits. The remains of ancient fabricks will feast the curiosity of antiquarians, while the admirers of agriculture will find delight in the variegated shades of the fertile valley.

An equal degree of pleasure fills the mind of the romantic investigator, in surveying from the lofty eminence, the beautiful surrounding country; thence descending gradually, he follows with rapture the intricate mazes of each winding stream: these are the natural observations of different minds, upon the pleasing scenes before them. But I easily anticipate the various remarks, which will occupy the attention of the historian in the next century. Divested of that party zeal which now influences every sect; the philosopher will contemplate the habitation of the great;—there, exclaims he, lived the greatest Worthy of his time, called into public life at an early age, when the national affairs were rapidly hastening to an awful crisis; he possessed all the requisites of his situation; his general knowledge of things was such as is rarely gained, but

by long experience :—a purity of principle, from which he could not be diverted, and a most inflexible firmness of mind appear in his conduct, through many trying difficulties which occurred in his administration: the prejudices raised against this great man, were many and violent; but they have subsided, and his memory is now revered by every true political hemisphere. Many other noble characters reside in this neighbourhood, to the comfort and assistance of its numerous peasantry, whose lives are made happy by their munificence; these will in time, enrich the page of history, and be held out as an example worthy of imitation, to the opulent of every country.

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\*.\* The editor hopes to be pardoned, should any subscriber's name be omitted, as it has not been intentionally done.

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AN  
ACCURATE DESCRIPTION  
OF  
*BROMLEY,*  
In Kent,  
AND FIVE MILES ROUND.

---

**B**ROMLEY is a pleasant market town, situated on the river Ravensbourn, distant from London ten miles: it consists of two principal streets; the first of which you enter on the road from London, having the workhouse (which was erected in 1731) on your right hand, and the college on the left. This street ends with a handsome row of houses, having the

**B**

church on the right, and the Bell Inn on the left hand.

To the east of the Bell Inn, is a spacious, airy, and well-disposed market place, where a weekly market is held on Thursdays: in the centre stands a very commodious market-house; the lower part of which is used by those persons who attend the market, to deposit and dispose of their goods: and in the room above are held the meetings of the Commissioners of the Court of Requests, who assemble and hear causes every other Thursday: it is also frequently hired for sales by auction.

Quitting the market place, you go into the other street, leading to the Tunbridge Wells road, having the White-Hart Inn on the left hand, and ending with the delightful house of Samuel Rickard's, Esq. on the right.

The air, though not very clear, is both wholesome and temperate.

King Edgar, in the year 700, gave the manor to the Bishop of Rochester, who has a palace at a little distance from the town, where is a mineral spring, the water of which has been found to have the same qualities as that of Tunbridge Wells.

This is not what Philipot calls St. Blase's well: he says, "it anciently  
 "had an oratory annexed to it, de-  
 "dicated to St. Blasius, which was  
 "much frequented at Whitsuntide,  
 "because Lucas, who was legate for  
 "Sixtus the Fourth, here in England,  
 "granted an indulgent remission of  
 "forty days; enjoined penance to all  
 "those who should visit this chapel,  
 "and offer up their orisons there in  
 "the three holidays of Pentecost."

The well dedicated to Saint Blasius is about 200 yards N. W. of the mineral spring, in a field near the road, with eight oak trees in a cluster, on an elevated spot of ground adjoining.

A cultivated mind will receive much pleasure, in contemplating the numerous beauties surrounding this delightful spot.

The mineral spring having been said to possess the same qualities as the Tunbridge waters, I shall relate what the Rev. John Entick (in his present state of the British empire) says of those springs.

With regard to the qualities of the waters, Dr. Whistler informs us, "that in a dry season he could perfectly distinguish a gas of vitriol." Dr. Madan writes, "that they were sensibly impregnated with volatile and spirituous exhalations."

The virtue of this water, according to Dr. Hales, may be preserved from August to January, by mixing five drops of oil of sulphur with one quart of it: the same will preserve all chalybeate waters, so as to make them fit to drink in remote places:---in a word, it is a light and comparatively pure chalybeate; it operates by stool and urine, and sometimes by vomit, when it meets with a foul stomach. A spoonfull of common salt will, in the first glass, answer the use of physic.

Allen informs us, that Tunbridge waters is an effectual remedy in obstructions of the glands of the mesentery; it is also an efficacious remedy in recent dropfies, broken constitutions, and all disorders of the stomach. Rouze recommends this water to cure ulcers in the kidneys and bladder, and when the bladder is stuffed with phleg-



matic matter, resembling stone, and in bloody urine : it cures the cholic, vomiting, hiccough, and worms : it is a good anti-venereal, being of a remarkable drying faculty ; it likewise strengthens the brain and origin of the nerves ; it is good in the headache, vertigo, and convulsions ; in long and tedious agues, in the dropfy ; black and yellow jaundice, and hard swellings of the spleen, the scurvy, green sickness, fluor albus, and other female disorders : it opens obstructions, cools the blood, strengthens the retentive faculty, helps sore eyes and pimples ; and, when drank with judgment, cures obstinate and inveterate looseness.

I have here introduced a list of the names of the principal inhabitants in the town and parish of Bromly ; as Directories have been found of the

greatest utility, in large towns, it is hoped this will bear a comparative degree of merit.

## GENTRY.

<b>BURROW</b> , Edward, Esq. F. M.P.	
Bunn	Robert, Esq.
Booth	John, Esq. F.
Bradshaw	Ebenezer, Esq. F.
Dubois	George, Esq. Plaistow
Harrison	Andrew, Esq. F. Wigmore
Harrison,	John, Esq. F. ditto
Johnson	William, Esq. F. ditto
Norman	George, Esq. F. Bromley Common
Newnham	Thomas, Esq. F. South Borough
Rickatts	Samuel, Esq. F.
Rohde	Major, Esq. F. Bromley Common
Raikes	Thomas, Esq. F. Plaistow
Reid	Thomas, Esq.
Scott	Major John, F.
Thelluffon	P. Esq. Plaistow, F.
Wells	William, Esq. Wigmore, F.
Weston	William, Esq. Bromley Common

Young  
Fish  
Bristol

— Esq. Plaistow  
Samuel, Esq.  
Francis, Esq.

## CLERGY.

Horsley

Right Rev. Dr. Samuel, Lord  
Bishop of Rochester

Smith

Rev. Dr. Henry, Curate

Price

Rev. Andrew, Chaplain to the  
College

Baker

Rev. John, M. A.

## LAW.

Holding  
Bristow

Enoch, Esq. Attorney  
John, Gent. ditto

## PHYSIC.

Child

William, Esq. F. Surgeon and  
Apothecary

Reed

Henry, Esq. ditto

Roberts

William, Gent. ditto

Scott

James, Gent. ditto

## TRADERS.

## A

Adams	Samuel, Watchmaker
Alexander	Nicholas, F. Butcher
Ashworth	Leonard, F. Grocer
Atherfold	Thomas, F. Shoe-maker
Alexander	Joseph, Tallow/Chandler
Atkins	Robert, Linen Draper

## B

Bentley	Matthew, Writing-Master
Bath	James, Farrier
Battersby	George, Brazier
Bentley	William, Taylor
Barrel	Jonathan, Rose and Crown
Blake	James, Grocer
Burt	Matthew, Excise Officer
Bexhill	Jarvis, Plumber and Glazier
Borer	Edward, ditto
Brown	William, Cooper

## C

Chapman	Richard, Wheelwright
Churcher	James, Shoe-maker

## C

Chalkley	William, Baker
Corbet and Marshall	Stone Mafons
Coleman	John, Blacksmith
Coffin	Edward, F. Stage Master
Coffin	John, Tyger, Mafon's Hill
Corker	Elias, Greyhound
Callow	William, Haberdasher
Carter	John, Ironmonger
Cripps	Elizabeth, Toy Shop
Clayton	Sarah, Compaffes

## D

Dunn	John, Upholsterer
Day	William, Leather Breeches Maker
Draper	William, Wheelwright
Dollery	William, Taylor
Dale	John, Grocer
Davis	James, Rifing Sun

## E

Edney	William, Farrier
Eaton	Christopher, Butcher

## F

Floyd	Samuel, Pastry Cook
-------	---------------------

G.

Gibson          John, Baker

H

Hibbert          Booth, F. Master of the Academy

Hudson          William, F. Ironmonger

Hind             Jacob, Shoemaker

Hair             Hugh, Linen-draper

Hoskins          William, Taylor

I

Ifard            John, Butcher

Innous          George, Taylor

K

Kibblewhite    Thomas, Stage Master

L

Lafcoe          John, F. Saddler

Lavender        William, Writing Master

Leggat          William, Shopkeeper

## M

May	William, F. Brandy Dealer
May	Ann, Baker
Miller	Thomas, Inn Keeper
Marshall	William, F. Coal Merchant

## N

Norton	----- Milliner
Newel	James, Coach Maker
Nichols	John, Taylor

## O

Ofmond	John, Shopkeeper
--------	------------------

## P

Page	George, F. Bricklayer
Pippet	John, F. Hair Dresser
Pieters	John, Master of the Academy
Prime	Henry, Webb-street, Inn-keeper
Preston	Thomas, Grocer

## R

Rawes	Richard, F. Master of the Academy
Ribright	Thomas, Glass Miller
Rogers	William, Shoe-maker

## S

Staples	Henry, F. Carpenter
Sale	John, F. ditto
Soans	William, Bricklayer
Skinner	Ambrose, Saddler
Smith	Robert, Coal Merchant
Starkey	Richard, Linen Draper
Stidolph	Godfrey, Nurseryman
Stidolph	Henry, Star and Garter
Singer	Daniel, Blacksmith
Storer	William, Gingerbread Baker
Simmonds and Scofield,	Carriers

## T

Tape, & Co. F. Brewers	
Taylor	James, Whitesmith

## W

Wilson	James, Innkeeper
Wilson	Thomas, F. Bookfeller
Westbrook	John, Corn Dealer
Wood	John, Tallow Chandler
Woodham	William, Hair Dresser
Woodham	James, Cooper



## THE CHURCH

STANDS on rather an elevated spot of ground, a little out of the body of the town, near to the centre: it is a handsome old structure, and beautiful within: a large sum of money was expended by the parish in the year 1792, when it was repaired, and considerably enlarged; at which time, Dr. Thomas, the then Bishop of Rochester, gave 500*l.* towards defraying the expence.

I have met with a very old account, which says, “this church was originally  
“ dedicated to Saint Blaise: but for the  
“ last 700 years it has been considered,  
“ and certainly is, that of Saint Peter  
“ and Saint Paul.

In the city of Lubeck, in the dutchy of Holstein, in Germany, and in the heart of that city, stands St. Mary's

church: there is in this church a curious painting, called, *Death's Dance*. I have often considered clocks in this light; but in many churches that have clocks, the *dance* very frequently stands still.

I never walk in a country church-yard, but I experience a pleasing melancholy:

“ Every stone that we look upon, in this  
“ repository of past ages,

“ Is both an entertainment and a monitor.”

*Plain Dealer.* vol. i.

My intention, when I began this little work, was, to select from the tomb-stones some of the most striking records, meant to be conveyed to posterity; but I found such a sameness run through the whole: they tell us only *this*:—

Such a one was born, and died:  
every where proving, “ Death levels

“all distinctions,” that I gave up the idea.

“How lov’d, how *valu’d* once, avails thee not;  
 “To whom related, or by whom begot;  
 “A heap of dust alone remains of *thee*;  
 “’Tis all *thou* art, and all the *proud* shall be.

*Pope’s Miscellany.*

I shall therefore only notice such as may appear beautiful in the composition, or singular from the cause.

In the following will be found composition and cause united: it is engraved on a stone placed against the east-end of the church, on the outside.

Near this Place lies the Body of

ELIZABETH MONK,

Who departed this Life

On the 27th Day of *August*, 1753.

Aged 101:

She was the Widow of JOHN MONK, late of this  
 Parish, Blacksmith,  
 Her second Husband,

To whom she had been a Wife near fifty Years,  
 By whom she had no Children;  
 And of the Issue of the first Marriage none lived  
 to the second ;

But V I R T U E

Would not suffer her to be Childless :  
 An Infant, to whom, and to whose Father and  
 Mother she had been Nurse  
 (Such is the Uncertainty of temporal Prosperity)  
 Became dependent upon Strangers  
 for the Necessaries of Life :

To him she afforded the Protection of a Mother.

This parental Charity  
 Was returned with filial Affection ;  
 And she was supported, in the Feebleness of Age,  
 by him whom she had cherished in  
 the Helplessness of Infancy.

LET IT BE REMEMBERED,

That there is no Station in which Industry will  
 not obtain Power to be liberal,  
 Nor any Character on which Liberality will not  
 confer Honor.

She had been long prepared, by a simple and  
 unaffected Piety,

D

For that awful moment, which, however delayed,  
 Is universally sure.  
 How few are allowed an equal Time of Probation?  
 How many, by their Lives,  
 appear to presume upon more?

To preserve the memory of this  
 person; and yet more, to perpetuate  
 the lesson of her life, this stone was  
 erected by voluntary contribution.

---

The late Dr. Hawkesworth resided  
 many years in this town; it is impossi-  
 ble for me to do justice to his character,  
 that must be left to a much abler pen;  
 but I may be permitted to say,

He *lived* universally respected;  
 He *died* universally lamented.

On a neat marble monument, in  
 the church, near the chancel, is the  
 following record:

TO  
The Memory of  
JOHN HAWKESWORTH, L. L. D.

Who died the 17th of November, 1773,  
Aged 58 Years;

That he lived ornamental and useful to Society,  
in an eminent Degree,  
Was among the boasted Felicities of the present  
Age:

That he laboured for the Benefit of Posterity,  
let his own pathetic Admonition  
at once

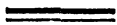
Record and Realize.

*From the Adventurer, No. 140.*

“ The hour approaches, in which, whatsoever  
praise I have acquired by these compositions,  
will be remembered with indifference, and the  
tenour of them alone will afford me comfort.  
Time, who is impatient to date my last paper,  
will shortly moulder the hand, that is now writing  
it, in the dust, and still the breast, that now  
throbs at the reflection ! But let not this be read  
as something that relates only to another ; for a  
few years only can divide the eye, that is reading,  
from the hand that has written.

This awful truth, however obvious, and however reiterated, is yet frequently forgotten ; for surely, if we did not lose our remembrance, or at least our sensibility, that view would always predominate in our lives, which alone can afford us comfort when we die."

*Bromley, Kent, March 8th, 1754.*



The following will be considered elegant and affecting ; it is engraved on a handsome marble monument in the churchyard :---

Beneath this Stone are interred  
 The Mortal Remains  
 Of ELIZABETH SCOTT,  
 Wife of Major JOHN SCOTT,  
 Of this Parish :  
 She was born on the 19th of April, 1746,  
 And died  
 On the 26th of October, 1796,  
 In the 51st Year of her Age :  
 Though afflicted for several Years  
 With the Disorder which put a period to her Life,

She had, for many Months past,  
 Been unusually well and cheerful :

On Friday, the 21st of October,  
 While sitting with her Husband, and two of her  
 Children, at Dinner,

She was suddenly taken ill :  
 The Pain which she sustained was as violent as it  
 was unexpected :

She bore it with exemplary Fortitude  
 And Christian Resignation,  
 And retained the full Possession of her Faculties,  
 Almost to the latest Hour of her Existence :  
 After taking a most solemn and affecting Leave  
 Of her Husband,  
 And her Children ;  
 After giving her Directions, or expressing her  
 Wishes

On every Point that had a Relation to her worldly  
 Concerns ;  
 Remembering at that awful Moment  
 The Poor and the Needy,  
 To whom she had ever been a generous Benefactress ;  
 After expressing her humble,  
 though confident Hope,  
 Of a BLESSED IMMORTALITY,  
 She resigned her Soul  
 to the Will of her Creator,

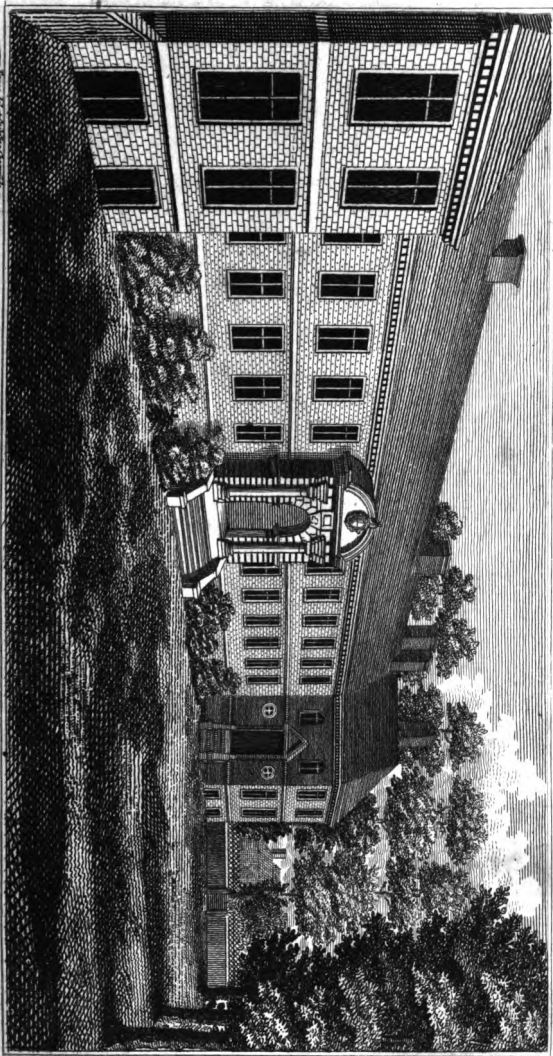


And expired  
 without a Pang or a Sigh,  
 On the Fifth Day of her Illness.  
 In a World where none are Faultless,  
 Perfection is fought in vain;  
 But her Virtues  
 Were many, useful, and active:  
 She was a faithful and affectionate Wife;  
 A careful  
 And tender Mother;  
 A humane and a charitable Woman;  
 Her failings,  
 Whatever they were,  
 Affected herself alone.  
*Semel, calcanda, via Lethi.*

---

## COLLEGE.

THE annexed plate will be found  
 a good representation of Bromley Col-  
 lege, which is not only an ornament  
 to the town, but reflects immortal  
 honor on the founder.



Engraved by J. H. H. 1857

*This view of BRONLEY COLLEGE, is dedicated, with the utmost respect to  
 MAJOR JOHN SCOTT by his Obedt. Son-in-law: Thomas Wilson.  
 Published according to Act of Parliament in Aug. 1857.*



This excellent building for **HONORABLE RETIREMENT**, was erected by Bishop Warner, in the reign of Charles the II<sup>d</sup>. for twenty clergymen's widows, with an allowance of 20*l*. a year, and 50*l*. a year to the chaplain.\* This was the first endowment of the kind ever established in England. The munificence of the late Rev. Mr. Etherington, who left 2000*l*. to this college; and of the late Bishop Pearce, who left 5000*l*. to it, has enabled the trustees to augment the allowance to the widows to 30*l*. *per ann*. and that of the chaplain to 60*l*. In the year 1792, ten more houses were added, and endowed with 20*l*. a year each.

*The historian should be just, it is his duty :---*there are many good houses

\* Who must be a member of Magdalene College, Oxford; of which society Bishop Warner was a Fellow.

in Bromley, and a greater number of bad ones\* than I ever witnessed in any other market town, of, or near, the same size ; but this is not so much to be wondered at, when it is mentioned that there are also more poor inhabitants.

The want of some manufactory to employ the younger branches of the poor, is much to be lamented ; as from charitable motives I am willing to think want of employ is the principal cause of so many of them being brought up in idleness ; consequently, the whole of their support falls either on the parish, or the parent.

### AMUSEMENTS.

HERE are but few amusements ; the community is too small to support

\* It is but justice to observe, that within the last twelve months, several improvements have taken place.

expensive ones ; therefore the whole of them consist of a very respectable subscription concert, and one circulating library.

The members *of*, and subscribers *to* the concert, assemble in the winter months, at the White Hart Inn ; and in the summer they are constantly accommodated in the beautiful garden of Enoch Holding, Esq. a handsome greenhouse is at those times fitted up as an orchestra, while the variegated surrounding beauties fill the mind with the most pleasing sensations, and give to this charming spot the appearance of enchantment.

“ I seem through consecrated walks to rove ;

“ I hear soft music die along the grove :

“ Here too,

“ The twining jessamine and the blushing rose,

“ With lavish grace , their morning scents diffuse ;

“ close ;

E

“ The swelling tube-rose and jonquil declare

“ The stronger impulse of an *ev'ning* air.

” *Prior's Sol.*”

## STAGES.

There are four stages from this town, two for the City, and two for Westminster: those for the city set out from Bromley every Morning at nine o'clock, Sunday excepted, and return from the Spread Eagle, in Gracechurch-street, and the Boar's Head, in Fleet-street, at four in the afternoon, in the summer months; but in the winter they leave London at three o'clock, and on Sundays they leave Bromley at seven in the morning, and make two journeys on that day.

The Westminster coaches set out from Bromley at four in the afternoon, sleep in town, and return from the Swan, Charing Cross, and the Mitre

and Dove, Westminster, at nine o'clock the next morning.

There are likewise two errand carts, which leave Bromley every morning, at eight o'clock; go to the King's Head Inn, in the Borough, and the Cross Keys, in Gracechurch-street, and return in the evening.

### VISITING.

As every man is, in his own opinion, fit to go abroad in print, so every occasion that can put him upon prating to mankind, is sufficient to set his pen a running.

Yet I hope to be pardoned for the following intrusion: in this, as in most country towns, there is a great deal of visiting and friendly intercourse. I have somewhere met with an author who recommends the ninth command-



ment as a fit companion for every tea-table in the world.

One grand ingredient in happiness is reputation ; and though it does not appear to be equally dear to all, with me it is invaluable.

A man must have attained very far either in innocence or impudence, who can entirely defy the censure of others, and be indifferent as to what is said about himself.

## POST OFFICE.

THE mail comes in from London every night (Sundays excepted) about ten o'clock ; proceeds to Seven Oaks, and returns to London, through this town, about three o'clock in the morning.

## FAIRS.

THERE are two fairs annually, on February the 14th, and August the 5th.

that in August is attended by numbers of persons from London, and the country round; it has a considerable shew of horses and other cattle; also great quantities of toys, &c. &c.

### INNS.

HERE are three good inns; the principal one is the Bell, in the centre of the town, kept by Mr. James Wilson: the next is the White Hart, at the east-end of the town, kept by Mr. Henry Webb Prime; and the third is the Swan, at the west end of the town. No post-chaise run from the last, but it is a comfortable house for travellers; kept by Mr. Thomas Miller.

### MILL.

ON the river Ravensbourn, close to the town, stands a mill, many years used for making paper; but for the

last two years it has been employed in grinding and polishing concave and convex mirrors, from one to five feet diameter: the present occupier is Mr. Thomas Ribright, an ingenious artist, formerly an eminent optician, in the Poultry, London. I received from this gentleman an invitation to visit his house and grounds, which I accepted, and am able to say the situation of this mill is extremely pleasant; and the delightful, rural, and romantic prospects it affords, are well worthy the observation of visitors: a large sheet of water, with a pleasure boat upon it, give the friends of Mr. Ribright an opportunity of enjoying, on that element, one of the most pleasing prospects I ever beheld.

## BENEVOLENCE.

THE charities of this kingdom are proverbial: the benevolence of

the rich in this part of it I have witnessed, with heart-felt pleasure : during the late severe winter, the liberal subscriptions of the rich supplied the poor with all the necessities of life ; and their private donations procured them some of the comforts. At the time I have mentioned, many of the middling class, and some of the tradesmen gave in proportion to their ability, to relieve the wants of their distressed neighbours.

But the rich are in the constant habit of alleviating their sorrows.

It is my firm intention to avoid every *degree* of personality, from a wish not to offend, or I could here mention the names of some, who do much justice to the title of Christian, and honor to their country.

Suffice it,---that *here* are such,---and *many* such.

Let the poor,\* then, after a grateful tribute of thanks to their *God*, shew a proper sense of obligation to their benefactors.

Let them reflect,---be grateful,---and remember,---that the beautiful form of LIBERTY has no connection with HELL-BORN LICENTIOUSNESS.

## SITUATION.

BROMLEY is situated five miles west of St. Mary Cray, fourteen miles east of Seven Oaks, twelve east of Westerham, twenty-nine east of Maidstone, six south of Croydon, in Surrey, and ten S.S.E. of London.

\* The situation of the common people in England is preferable to that of any other country. Here LIBERTY rescues the poor from oppression, and enables them to pass their days in peace. Inured to rustic toil, they enjoy health, and all their real wants are supplied by BENEVOLENCE.

The country is healthy, and the inhabitants in general are long lived,\* for instance :

On the 27th of December, 1776, was buried in Bromley church yard, THOMAS LETTS, Cordwainer ; and shortly after appeared in a newspaper the following account of him :

“ Lately died, in the 90th year of his age, at Bromley, in Kent, Thomas Letts, who was born at Croydon, in Surrey, by trade a shoe-maker ; though a master in the course of many years, with industry and sobriety, he never was worth five pounds, nor was he ever in want ; to his *last* he continued to make both *ends* meet, and peaceably resigned his *all* when the *thread* of life was *waxed* out.”

\* There are many inhabitants now living at a great age, and several have died during the editor's residence in Bromley, between 80 and 100 years old.

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The environs are beautiful in every point of view, and the number of good houses surrounding the town in all directions, is much greater than in many other parts of England I have been in.

This work will not admit of a particular description of each gentleman's seat; but for the information of strangers, I shall enumerate those immediately adjoining the town, describing their situation only.

- \* 1 Bishop of Rochester's palace.
- 2 The seat of Robert Bunn, Esq. Wigmore-Lane.
- 3 The house of — Leverton, Esq. ditto
- 4 The seat of Mrs. Munn, ditto.
- 5 The seat of George Dubois, Esq. Plaistow.
- 6 The seat of ——— Young, Esq. ditto.
- \* 7 *Freeland House*, the seat of Thomas Raikes, Esq. ditto.
- \* 8 *Plaistow Lodge*, the seat of P. Thellusson, Esq. ditto.

- 9 The seat of Charles Long, Esq. Bromley-Hill.
- 10 The seat of Major John Scott, Bromley, (West end).
- 11 The seat of the late Robert Booth, Esq. Beckenham-Lane.
- 12 The seat of George Grote, Esq. ditto.
- 13 Church House, formerley the residence of the late Alderman Hayley.
- 14 The seat of Thomas Reid, Esq. Bromley, (East end).
- \* 15 The seat of Samuel Rickatts, Esq. Bromley, ditto.
- 16 The seat of Edward Borrow, Esq. Bromley, ditto.
- 17 The seat of William Weston, Esq. Bromley, ditto.
- \* 18 The seat of George Norman, Esq. ditto.
- 19 The seat of Major Rohde, Esq. ditto.
- 20 The seat of Thomas Newnham, Esq. South Borough.

With a number of others less noticeable.

Those marked thus\* may properly be deemed *fine seats*; all the others are handsome buildings.



The more I examine into the works of ancient historians, the less am I inclined to transcribe them here: were all the learned accounts I meet with to be inserted, they would fill a folio volume.

And here let me candidly confess, the loss I frequently am at, from not having received a more liberal education, often meeting with parts I do not comprehend: were I to, give them whole, I must betray my ignorance; and to send them forth in a mutilated state, would destroy their effect.

I shall, therefore, only select such parts, as will convey necessary information, trusting to the candour of my readers for their liberal indulgence.

Philipot says, there are two good seats within this parish, which were all of temporal interest, and pretend to a deep antiquity; the first is Sunbridge, which formerly was the patrimony of a noble family, called, Blund Peter le

Blund; was constable of the tower of London, the thirty-fourth year of Henry the Third; and Ralph le Blund, his grandchild, paid respective aid for his lands at Bromley, which he there held by a whole knight's fee, of the bishop of Rochester, in the twentieth of Edward the Third; and when this name was entomed in a female heir, this feat went with her to the Willoughbies, from whom the Earl of Linsey is descended; and when some years it had vested in this family, by the circumstance of purchase, it became the patrimony of Booth, when this name was likewise wound up in an heir general, the Betenhams of Pluckley, by marrying with her, became lords of this mansion, and continue still proprietor of it.

Simpson is the second feat of account: though in ages of a latter inscription, it contracted that name, yet

anciently it was the demesne of Bankewell, a family of signal repute in this track. John de Bankewell had a charter of free warren, to his lands in Bromley, in which this was involved, in the thirty-first year of Edward the First; and Thomas de Bankewell died seized of it, in the thirty-fifth year of Edward the Third; and when this family was shrunk, at this place, into a final extinction, the next who were eminent in the possession of it, were the Clarks; and one William Clark, that flourished here in the reign of Henry the Fifth, that he might not be obnoxious to the statue of Kernalion, obtained licence to erect a strong, little pile of lime and stone, with an embattled wall, encircled with a deep moat, which is supplied and nourished with a living spring: but this man's posterity did not long enjoy it; for about the latter end of Henry the

Sixth, John Simpson dwelt here by right of purchase, and he having much improved the fabric, settled his name upon it, and indeed, that is all that is left to evidence they were once owners of it; for in an age or two after this, it was conveyed to John Stiles, Esq. of Beckenham, from whom descends Sir Humphrey Stiles, Knight and Baronet, cup bearer to the late king Charles; and him does Simpson confess for its instant owner. Thus far Philipot, which is acknowledged by Seymour.

This house and lands are now the property of Lord Gwidan, occupied by Samuel Rickatts, Esq. but was many years tenanted by Mr. Jeremiah Ringer, a truly worthy character, who still resides in the house.

From the salubrity of the air, and pleasant situation, Bromley abounds with boarding schools; the most dis-

tinguished is the excellent academy of Mr. Richard Rawes, in the High-street.

Bromley gives name to the whole hundred where it is situated, and hath been many ages part of the demesne of the church: it was given, as appears by the records of the church of Rochester, by John Later, a goldsmith of London, to the bishop of that see, in the year 1300.

## DERIVATION & DEFINITION.

**BROMLEY**, in old English, from *Brome* and *Leab*, which is pasture, now called *Ley*, and is the same with *Bromefield*.

In a word, to sum up the beauties of Bromley, and its environs, rural elegance and rural simplicity appear in their most fascinating forms; here magnificent seats and handsome villas, afford inexhaustible gratification to

curiosity, and innocence and peace adorn the humble roof.

How often is human life spent in wishes which terminate in nothing! but this I hope will not be the case with my wishes for the health, happiness, and prosperity, of the inhabitants of Bromley, and its neighbourhood.

May that happy peace of mind attend them, which is ever united to a consciousness of piety and innocence, and which is an introduction to that happiness reserved for us in a future world, to crown our patience and our sufferings in this.

## WIGMORE.

One mile east of Bromley stands this very delightful hamlet: here are some good houses, in particular those belonging to Andrew Harrison, and William Wells, Esqrs. there is also a

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very ancient house, which must have been erected 198 years, having the date 1599 on the brick-work, in front: at that time I make no doubt it was considered a very respectable building; and though I have not been able to procure any historical account, probably it was then the largest house in the hamlet.

There is likewise a neat small meeting-house, attended by the disciples of the late Mr. John Wesley.

The taste of travellers is various; what appears minute and trifling to many, is, to others, at least a matter of entertainment. Let the reader, who has not seen Wigmore, take a view of this charming spot, and he will find many beauties which I have not room to enumerate.

From Wigmore I proceed to

## SOUTHBOROUGH. \*

THIS is a romantic, pleasant spot, about two miles from Bromley, and one from Wigmore: here are a few good houses; that of Thomas Newnham, Esq. the most conspicuously so. I had heard this place was famous for having been an ancient barony of one of the feudal lords; was shewn a farm house, that had been the baron's court-house; another, which had been the jail, and was told some strange stories of various hues; but could collect nothing authentic, therefore gave up the search.

\* Borough signifies a fortified place, or defence.

“ As when a traveller a long day past

“ In painful search of what he cannot find,

“ At night's approach, content with the next

“ cot,

“ There ruminates awhile his labour lost;



" Then cheers his heart with what his fate  
 " affords,  
 " And chants his sonnets, to deceive the time,  
 " 'Till the due season calls him to repose."

*Young's Night Thoughts.*

The bishops of Rochester, before the conquest, were possessed of the manor of South Fleet, a village in Kent. I shall here beg leave to introduce an historical fact, which, though not immediately connected with this work, is not entirely foreign, and will convey information :

The court of Southfleet, as not unusual in ancient times, had a power of trying and executing felons : this jurisdiction extended not only to acts of felony done within the vill ; but also over criminals apprehended there, though the fact had been committed in another county : an instance of the exercise of this claim, in the year 1200, is mentioned by T. Blunt, in his ancient tenures.

It was of two women, who had stolen some clothes in Croindene (supposed to be Croydon) and the men of that place having pursued them to Southfleet, they were there imprisoned, and tried by the lord Henry de Cobham, and other discreet men of the country, who adjudged them to undergo the fire ordeal; or, examination of the hot iron: by this foolish test, one of them was exculpated, and the other condemned. The two chief species of trial by ordeal, were those of fire and water: both these modes might be performed by deputy; but the principal was to answer for the success of the trial, the deputy venturing some corporeal pain for hire, or perhaps for friendship. This, observes Sir William Blackstone, "is still expressed in that common form of speech, of going through fire and water to serve another." Fire ordeal was per-

formed, either by taking up in the hand, unhurt, a piece of red-hot iron; or, by walking barefooted and blindfold over nine red-hot plough shares, laid lengthways, at unequal distances; and if the party escaped unhurt, he was adjudged innocent; if not, he was condemned as guilty; no doubt there was generally a collusion in every mode of trial of this nature. Water ordeal was performed by thrusting the bare arm into boiling water, and if the person was not scalded, he was pronounced innocent; or he was thrown with a rope about the waist into a river; if he sunk, he was acquitted; but if he floated therein, it was a sufficient proof of criminality, because they judiciously concluded, that the pure water would not admit a guilty wretch into it.

# KESTON; or *Keyser's Town*;

By BASTON, the old Roman Colony.

THIS certainly is a delightful part of the county; and most probably, in the days of the feudal system, was a lord's barony.

The church is an ancient building; but has less the look of a church on the outside I ever remember to have seen.

Keston is four miles from Bromley; it is remarkable for the remains of Julius Cæsar's Camp, and a cold bath, called, Julius Cæsar's well.

The following sonnet, written upon the remains of the Roman camp, near London, by William Hamilton Reid, will be found equally applicable here.

“ Time-honor'd spot, tho' erst this rampert  
 “ ground,  
 “ The conquering sons of hostile Latium bore,  
 “ Their swords just reeking with the Briton's  
 “ gore:

" The tented fields with stately banners crown'd.  
 " Tho' on these sloping plains, the phalanx wide,  
 " With nodding plumes, that stretch'd their  
     " shades afar,  
 " O'er looking Thames's lonely currents glide;  
 " But watch'd again, to pour the tide of war;  
 " Yet shall each vestige, proud of arms, remain  
 " The cumb'rous mound, and trench-indented  
     " field,  
 " Till, in her turn, o'er Rome shall Albion reign,  
 " And nations cover with her sun-broad shield;  
 " Nor fail her bards, from burning shells to raise  
 " The wreaths of glory in immortal lays."

*Gentleman's Mag. July, 1787.*

At Keston are several good houses,  
 and some handsome villas: here, like-  
 wise, stands *Holwood House*, the seat of  
 the Right Honourable William Pitt,  
 Chancellor of the Exchequer, which he  
 purchased about twelve years ago, of  
 Mr. Randall, ship-builder. The house  
 is a small, neat, white building; it is  
 more simple than elegant, and built  
 on a rising ground, which commands  
 one of the most fertile, variegated, and

extensive inland prospects in the whole county: the house is sheltered from the east winds by a number of fine elms, which do not interrupt the view of the adjacent hills; it is protected from the north and west winds by an extensive wood, whence the house takes its name.

A stranger visiting this house, to view the country mansion of the prime minister of Great Britain, would be exceedingly surprised, to find it so insignificant in size and external appearance.

But when it is known that the house was purchased in its present state, merely for its situation, being in the vicinity of his father's house, at Hayes; of Lord Camden's, at Chiselmurst; of Lord Sydney's, at Frognaal, &c. a neighbourhood to which, even from his infancy, he may be supposed to

have a strong partiality, the stranger's surprize will undoubtedly cease. The principal room is the drawing room, which Mr. Pitt has added ; it is about fifty feet by thirty ; it has one handsome bow window, which faces the south ; next to this is a smaller apartment, which is his eating room ; the rest of the house is appropriated to domestic offices and servants, except chamber for himself.

The prospect is the chief beauty of the house ; on the north-west the eye is presented with a vista, through which is seen Bromley, Sydenham, Norwood, Dulwich, Peckham, and London, where St. Paul's majestically rises, as if artificially erected, to terminate the view. Due north there is a natural break, which admits the eye between Shooter's hill, and St. Paul's, to range over a large part of Essex : from the north to the north east, is an

extended prospect of hills, woods, and vales, from Shooter's hill to near Gravesend. In this part of the view, is contained all that country which lies on the south-side of the Thames; the space between the north-east, and the east, comprehends most of the villas, villages and market towns, lying between Dartford and Wrotham; and from the east to the south is a view of the villages of Down, Cudham, and Nockhold; but the *coup d'oeil* of this situation is beautiful indeed; it may not, perhaps, be improperly stiled an amphitheatre of parks, woods, and villages, spires, hills, and mansions, which in these charming prospects are not only various, but extensive.

This house is also remarkable for having been the residence of the once lovely, but unfortunate G. A. Bellamy; her portrait, engraved by Bartolozzi,



is annexed, and will serve to shew the mutability of human life, as her memoirs have been read, and are remembered by many.

The river Ravensbourn takes its rise here, from apparently a very trifling spring; flows hence through Hayes, Bromley, Beckenham, and Lewisham; and crossing the great road at Deptford-bridge, falls into the Thames below. I take the road that leads through Ferneborough and Bromley, to London, and comes within half a mile of this house, to be the Watling-street,\* and indeed the only road the Romans had from London into Kent. There is still remaining, from Ferneborough to Bromley, and between Bromley and New Cross, the appearance of a Roman road, if we judge from its breadth, generally of

\* Saxon for winding street.

forty-five yards, or more. From New Cross, it is defaced by all that building, brick-making, and gardening, so frequent about the town: it seems to have pointed through Camberwell and Walworth, east of Newington church, by the end of Kennington-lane, to the fields, between Lambeth and Southwark.

On the 11th of July, 1797, in company with three of my children, I visited

### FERNEBOROUGH,

So named, from the soil about it yielding fearn and brakes.

In this instance, I shall relate the whole of the historical account, as given by Philipot, and then notice some few observations, which I have occasionally made in different visits to this place.

Ferneborough is but a chapel of ease, devoted to the honor of St. Giles; but belongs to the mother church of Chelfield, which is dedicated to St. James, as appears by the records of the church of Rochester: it was a principal seat of the Lord Grandison, who made this the head of their barony: William de Grandison held it at his death, which was in the ninth year of Edward the Third.

Otho, Lord Grandison, this man's son, obtained a charter of free warren to it, in the eighteenth year of Edward the Third; but long after this it did not remain linked to the inheritance of this family; for in the reign of Richard the Second, I find Fleming invested in the possession, whose tenure was very transitory, for not long after, by purchase, it was brought into the demesne of Petley, from whom, by as swift a fatality, it went away to Peche, of Lullington, which family determined

in Sir John Peche, in the reign of Henry the Seventh, who dying issueless, Elizabeth, his sister and heir, brought this, and a spacious inheritance, to her husband, John Hart, esq. from whom William Hart, esq. now of Lullingston, is lineally extracted, and in right of this alliance, is at this present intitled to the possession and signiory of Ferneborough.

It appears that a grant of a market was obtained for this place, in the reigns of Edward the First, and renewed in that of Edward the Third: and a grant of a fair added, to be held at the feast of St. Giles, the eve and eight days following, both of which are discontinued; but how long, I have not been able to learn. In the course of my perambulations, I have visited thirteen churches, and noticed the same lines added to the tombstones in all of them, except in this

one instance, on a stone in this church-yard, are the two following lines :

“ The toils of life and pangs of death are o’er ;  
 “ And care, and pain, and sickness, are no more.”

After visiting such a number of the *schools of wisdom*, from whence the most instructive lessons may be drawn, and every ruder passion hushed, I proceeded to a more lively theme. Leaving the church, I was invited into the grounds of Mr. Thomas Simpson Giles, a respectable nursery-man and gardener: in this place the prospect they command is beautiful beyond description.

“ My roving sight  
 “ Pursues its pleasing course o’er Nockholt’s  
     “ mount,  
 “ With that fair crescent crown’d, of lofty  
     “ beeches,  
 “ Its own peculiar boast.”

Here, at one prospect, I had the view of seven different churches, viz. Ferne-

borough, Down, Cudham, Hasted, Nockholt, Chelfield, and Orpington, with the country open all around me.

Quitting this charming spot, I received an invitation to view the garden and grounds of Mr. Joseph Griffin, a very respectable gardener in the village.

This I date the pleasantest excursion I made during a twelvemonths search at different times for information, I had three of the younger branches of my family with me, who were indulged by my friendly host with permission to refresh themselves *from every tree in the garden*, while he obligingly attended me through a well cultivated piece of ground of seven acres; after having some refreshment in the house, I took my leave of this hospitable family, and pursued my road to Chalk Place. At Ferneborough is a

a good inn (the George) kept by Mr. George Tibbs.

## CHALK PLACE

IS the neat house and handsome gardens of Mrs. Blackman; I am better able to describe this charming spot than many others, as by the invitation of its respectable owner, I visited, and spent some hours in viewing it.

The house, gardens, and ground adjoining, consists of 100 acres, the grand front of this rural elegant little mansion is near the side of the road, leading from Bromley to Ferneborough; a new room, one of its happiest improvements, was added by the late John Lucie Blackman, Esq. to the south end.

Nature had already formed this delightful spot for the hand of cultivation; and the grounds have been laid out with great taste. A small green house

contains a collection of curious exotics; the flower garden which furrounds the house, deserves particular notice : nothing can surpass the elegant simplicity of this charming little paradise, all planted by, or under the inspection of Mr. and Mrs. Blackman. Adjoining to this, is a full stocked kitchen garden, at the end of which is a large piece of land, consisting of a well cultivated melon ground; the remaining acres are used as a farm by Mrs. Blackman.

The house stands exceeding pleasant, and the attic chambers command an extensive prospect ; it was formerly a farm house, known by the name of Chalk Barn; in the course of a few years, by judicious alterations and improvements (though at considerable expence) it has become a handsome villa, and is one of the happiest combinations of art and nature that can be



imagined; during my walk round Mrs. Blackman's garden, I had the honor to attend that lady herself.

The trees are all of them furrounded by roses and honeysuckles, and a great variety of flowers, planted in the most pleasing and romantic situations.

Who can paint  
Like *nature*; can Imagination boast,  
Amid his gay creation, hues like these?  
And can he mix them with that matchless skill,  
And lay them on so delicately fine,  
And lose them in each other, as appears  
In ev'ry bud that blows.

*Thompson's Spring.*

After having taken some refreshment in this hospitable mansion, I returned home much gratified.

## HAYES.

I SET out with pleasure to view the late residence, and favorite retreat of

the "ORNAMENT OF MANKIND."

This pleasant village is rendered famous by the great Lord Chatham, having lived here for many years.

The house which he built, and in which he lived, has since his death been inhabited by ——— Bond, Esq. and Lord Lewisham; but has lately been sold to D. Dehaney, Esq. whose residence it now is. Directly opposite to this house stands the church, a beautiful Gothic edifice, the inside consisting of only one aisle, is regular, and though small, the whole is the workmanship of a master.

The neighbourhood is healthy and pleasant, and has a number of good houses in it. To record any thing farther of Hayes, would be to repeat what I have said of some other retired spots.

## WICKHAM (WEST.)

*That is Domus super vicum West,*

THIS is a large parish in Kent, between Croydon and Bromley, at nearly an equal distance from each. In this parish are two villages, the one at a small distance, after having passed Wickham Green from Beckenham; and the other about a mile further to the south. In the former, is the seat of Richard Jones, Esq. besides several other good houses; in the latter are the church, and the ancient manor-house, called West Wickham-Court, the property of John Farniby, Esq. in right of his lady, who is of the Leonard family.

At Wickham Court lived the celebrated Gilbert West, author of "Observations on the Resurrection of Christ" here he devoted himself to learning and piety; and "here (says Dr. Johnson) he was very often visited by Lit-

tleton and Pitt, who, when they were weary of faction and debates, used at Wickham, to find books and quiet, a decent table, and literary conversation."

There is at Wickham a walk made by Pitt, and what is of more importance at Wickham; Littleton received that conviction, which produced his "Dissertation on the conversion and apostleship of St. Paul."

In a summer-house Mr. West placed the following inscription, in imitation of Ausonius. "ad Villam,"

"Not wrapt in smokey London sulphurous clouds,

"And not far distant stands my rural cot ;

"Neither obnoxious to intruding crouds,

"Nor for the good and friendly too remote.

"And when too much repose brings on the  
"spleen,

"Or the gay city's idle pleasures cloy ;

"Swift as my changing wish, I change the scene,

"And now the country, now the town enjoy."

A weekly market was held in this town, on a Monday, granted by a charter of free warren to the manor of West Wickham, in the 11th year of Edward the Second; after a variety of fluctuations, I find in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, this manor devolving to Sir Christopher Heydon, who, about the latter end of that Queen's reign, passed it away to Sir Samuel Leonard, father to Sir Stephen Leonard: I have before mentioned its present possessor.

During my residence in Bromley, I have witnessed some improvements in this village; but not such as can be intitled to historical record.

After being kindly entertained at the house of John Scott, Esq. I returned by Pickhurst-Green.

## PICKHURST GREEN

IS a pleasant spot, at nearly an equal distance from Bromley, Beckenham,

Wickham, and Hayes. Here Vicary Gibbs, Esq. lately resided in a neat small house, situated in a charming garden, the property of lord Gwidar.

Here also is a rural public house, the sign of the Fox, and Hounds, much frequented at holiday time, by the surrounding inhabitants.

### BEKENHAM

IS a beautiful rural and retired village, one mile and half from Bromley. Near here is Langley (from long pasture) the elegant seat of lord Gwidar; not far from which are lord Auckland's house and park, called, Eden Farm. At the south end of this village are the handsome house and neat gardens of Laurence Banyer, Esq. and there are several other good\* houses in the neighbourhood.

\* It is to be hoped that a more accurate description of the surrounding seats may be ob-

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The road to Croydon runs by the front of Mr. Banyer's house, and on the right hand is that leading to Penge Common, and Rockles; from whence is a new road made to Dulwich: by this way from the village of Bekenham, the distance to London is shortened two miles; and promises, if kept in good repair, to be the general road from Holwood, Hayes, Wickham, Langley Park, and Eden Farm, &c. being more in a direct line to London, from those places, and affording a most delightful prospect of part of Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, and Essex.

tained, should a second edition of this work be printed; but the editor never *has*, nor ever *can*, accept any thing at a gentleman's house (not even a view of the premises) without the owner's knowledge and permission, which will be respectfully applied for, thankfully received, and gratefully acknowledged.

Philipot mentions the following seats as places of note in this parish:

- 1st. The manor of Bekenham, held by Richard de Rokely, and relates a number of its possessors, down to Mr. Henry St. John.
- 2d. Langley, held by its original possessor, John de Malmain, who obtained a charter of free warren to his lands; and after various fluctuations, leaves it in the possession of Sir Humphrey Stiles, Knight and Baronet.
- 3d. Kelseys;—and,
- 4th. Foxgrove.

The church is a very ancient edifice, exceeding neat in the inside, and ornamented with a great number of rich and costly monuments, of the Burrell's family, and others.

An extraordinary circumstance happened here near Christmas, 1791, the steeple of this church was destroyed by lightening; but a new one was put up in 1796, made of copper, in the form of an extinguisher.



The church yard contains a great number of tomb stones, all telling *the same plain tale*. I have selected one, which, from the cause, appeared to me very affecting, erected to the memory of a child : it says,---

A GIRL,  
Aged four Years, one Month, and 18 Days,  
Killed by the  
Careless Discharge of a Pistol,  
At the Distance of 337 Yards,  
August 25th, 1766.

Close to the church, there are three small neat alms houses, with the following inscription on the centre one :

ANTHONY RAWLINS  
Built these Houses for the Use of the Poor  
Of this Parish  
Of BECKENHAM,  
A. D. 1694.

Here is, likewise, a good work-house, on a healthy pleasant spot, about half a mile in the road to Bromley.

There are several gentlemen's seats round this delightful village: the most conspicuous is, Bekenham Place, the seat of John Cator, Esq. Bekenham takes its name from the Beke, or small stream there.

### ELMS END,

ABOUT one mile from Bekenham, adjoining the beautiful park of Lord Auckland; I apprehend must have acquired its name from the number of elm trees growing on this very rural spot.

Here are only about twenty small houses; but I have noticed it from being on the edge of the borders of Kent; as from this place a stone may be thrown into the county of Surrey.

*For improving life, or living much in a little time,* retirement and study have been recommended; situated here with a good library, both are to be found.

## PLAISTOW

IS a hamlet, in the parish of Bromley; it certainly is a rural, retired spot; but when you have seen the few gentlemen's houses that are in it, nothing remains deserving notice, the rest being hovels, and the inhabitants poor; but content often takes up her abode in a cottage.

Sundridge House,\* late the elegant seat, beautiful park, and extensive pleasure grounds, of William Wilson, Esq. are situated here. This estate, including the manor, and a pretty villa, now in the occupation of George Dubois, Esq. were sold by auction, the 1st of June, 1792, for 18,000l. to George Lind, Esq. and in 1796, re-sold to ----- Scott, Esq. of Chiselmurst, who is building a new house on this truly enchanting spot.

\* This is the seat which Philipot calls Hempstead Sunbridge.

## HEMSTED

IS a hamlet of Bromley ; has only one gentleman's house in it, which the late J. Doddsley, Esq. Bookfeller, of Pall Mall, to whom it belonged, made his country residence.

The rest of the hamlet consists of some good farms and labourers cottages.

## MOTTINGHAM,

ABOUT three miles from Bromley, is in the hundred of Blackheath, and a hamlet to Eltham. A strange and marvellous accident happened at this place, upon the 4th day of August, 1585, in a field belonging to Sir Percival Hart :---suddenly a part of the ground began to sink, and continued gradually so to do, till three great elm trees growing thereon, were carried so deep into the bowls of the earth, that

no part of them were to be seen. The compass of the hole is about 80 yards, and so deep, that a line of 50 fathoms finds no bottom.

Philimore and Harris both add, that another piece of ground sunk in like manner, about ten yards distance from the former, so nigh a dwelling house, that the inhabitants were greatly terrified, and quitted their habitation.

Events of this kind must lead the mind into the most awful reflections, directing our attention to the final consummation of all things ; when

- “ The cloud-capt towers,
- “ The gorgeous palaces,
- “ The solemn temples,
- “ The great globe itself,
- “ Yea, all which it inherits, shall dissolve,
- “ And, like the baseless fabric of a vision,
- “ Leave not a wreck behind.”

*Shakespeare.*

The name of this village signifies the town proudly seated : it is derived from Mod, in Saxon, proud or lofty.

**ELTHAM**

IS eight miles from London, four from Bromley, and two from Chislehurst, in the hundred of Blackheath, anciently called Ealdham (the Old Town). It formerly belonged in part to the king, and partly to the Mandevills, from which it came to be called Eltham Mandevill.

Anthony Beck, Esq. of Durham, having fraudulently secured the possession of this manor, beautified the capital mansion, and left it to the crown: the stone-work of the outer gate being castle-like, is a remnant of the work of his age; but the palace itself is in a more modern stile. Edward the Second frequently resided here; where his queen was delivered of a son, who had the name of John of Eltham; possibly from this circum-

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stance, it is improperly called King John's Palace.

The manor belongs to Sir John Shaw, who has an elegant seat and plantations, called, Eltham Lodge.

On a part of Shooter's Hill, in this parish, is a lofty tower, erected by Lady James, to commemorate the share which her husband, the late Sir William James, had in the reduction of a fort, in the East Indies. This structure, which is called Severndroog Castle, is erected from a design, by Mr. Jupp, and is of a triangular form, with turrets at each angle: it is seen at a great distance.

This town was once the retiring place of our kings; and here were enacted the statutes of Eltham, by which the king's house is still governed: it has the honor to give title of Earl to the Prince of Wales; and though there appears no remains of

a royal palace, this town is well built and large, inhabited by rich citizens, and farmers of good repute. Here is a market on Mondays, and a fair on Palm Monday, Easter Monday, Whitsun Monday, and 10th of October, for horses, cattle, and toys; and there are two charity schools, to teach and cloath twenty boys, and ten girls.

### LEE,

WHICH takes its name from *Lega*, in Latin, a sheltry place, is a village in Kent, on the south-side of Blackheath, about two miles from Eltham: it contains the handsome seat, gardens, and pleasure grounds of Lord Dacre, to whom they came in right of his lady, the sole daughter and heirefs of Sir Thomas Fludyer. Here is likewise the ancient family seat of Boones, now the property of Charles Boone, Esq.

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but in the occupation of Benjamin Harrison, Esq. On the summit of the hill, next the heath, stands the ancient church of Lee, in a situation particularly rural and picturesque. In the churchyard are two fine monuments; the one of the Boone, and the other of Fludyer families. The great astronomer royal, Dr. Edmund Halley, is interred here, with a Latin inscription, which is printed with his life. My next excursion was to

### CHISELHURST:

IT is three miles from Bromley, two from Eltham, and two from Wigmore. Here is Camden Place, the seat of Earl Camden, which was formerly the property of the celebrated antiquarian of that name: here he composed the principal part of his "Annals of Queen Elizabeth." This was the birth-place of Sir Nicholas Bacon,

lord keeper, in that reign ; and father of the great Francis, Viscount St. Albans : here, also, was born the famous Sir Francis Walsingham. This house is now the residence of Mr. Alderman Lushington.

Chiselmhurst may be considered in a romantic point of view : \* the common is strewn with houses by patches, the good and the indifferent indiscriminately jumbled together, as if by the hand of chance. Here, also, is Frog-nal, the seat of Lord Viscount Sydney : and Bertie Place, whose handsome house and grounds are now the residence of the Right Honorable Charles Townsend, brother to Lord Sydney ; its name of Chiselmhurst is, from the growth of wood, so called.

\* Should this small work make its appearance in a second edition, any information of a *local* nature that may be communicated, will be thankfully received by the editor.

Here are some considerable chalk pits, the entrance to which have an awful appearance ; it has frequently reminded me of Bunyan's description " of the Valley of the Shadow of " Death. These pits are extensive, and strangers have sometimes been induced to visit the inside of them from curiosity ; but I would caution them from entering without lights and a guide : I have known two instances of parties visiting these pits, with lights, who having ventured in to some distance ; have wandered about without being able to find their way back, the lights having been exhausted, and themselves left in total darkness for many hours, until their friends, who knew their intention at setting out, on not finding them return, had sent in guides, and brought the wanderers back to life and light.

Here is one good fair held annually on the Wednesday and Thursday, in Whitfun week.

## FOOTS CRAY

DERIVED its name from one Votes, that held it in the Conqueror's time ; is twelve miles from London, and four and a half from Bromley, in the road to Maidstone.

Here the world is surpris'd at a modern edifice, called, Foots-Cray-Place; it was built by Bouchier.Cleve, Esq. a pewterer, of Cheapside, after a design of Palladio.

This beautiful house became the property of Sir George Young, who married Mr. Cleves's daughter, and was sold for less than a third part of the original expence, to Benjamin Harrence, Esq: the hall is octagonal, and has a gallery round, which leads

to the bedchambers; it is lighted from the top, and is very beautiful. The house, which is built of stone, stands on a rising ground, with a gradual descent to the water, which, from the house, appears to be a small river gliding through the whole length of the ground; and in that part of the water opposite to the house is a fine cascade, constantly flowing out of it; but this water, which appears to be such a pretty, natural stream, is an artificial one, brought from the river Cray.

The country round here is as romantic and charming as it is possible to conceive.

The west of England is considered as the region of landscapes; but many situations round Bromley can boast some equally picturesque and beautiful. From this village I proceeded to

## St. MARY CRAY.

SAINT MARY, on Croy River, is in the hundred of Rokesly : although this is a market town, yet it is but a chapel of ease to Orpington. The market, formerly held on a Wednesday, appears to be discontinued ; but how long I am not certain. Here is a charity school, and a fair on the 13th of February.

## ORPINGTON,

In the hundred of Rokesly, was, in the twentieth year of William the Conqueror, wrapped up in the ecclesiastical patrimony, and belonged to the monks of Christchurch ; and if you will make an inspection into the pages of Dooms-day book, and consult that general register, you will find it at this time thus rated: "*Orpendum, &c.*"

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The alms houses at this place owe their foundation to the pious and charitable beneficence of Percival Hart, Esq. of Lullingstone.

In the seventh year of King John, the prior and monks of Christchurch, obtained a market to this manor, to be held weekly on a Wednesday; with which franchise it continued invested until the twenty-ninth of Henry the Eighth; but how much longer I have not been able to learn, as there are no traces of a market at this time.

This delightful village is situated on the river Cray, between St. Mary Cray and Farnborough.

There are a number of good houses surrounding it in every direction. The principal seats in this parish are Crofton, Bark Hart, and Tubbingden: the last of these is partly situated in Ferneborough. Round these parts are many

woods of birch, from whence the broom-makers, in and about London, are supplied with that commodity. The name of this place is much changed in the present orthography, for Dorpendun was the old name, partly British, and partly Saxon, signifying the head of the water rising under the hill there.

### LEWISHAM; or, *The Watery Town.*

MY last excursion was to this place. I shall endeavour to describe the road to it from Bromley, and then give such an historical account of this village as may serve for the information of its inhabitants, or a guide to strangers.

You leave Bromley by the London road, when, having passed the work-



house on the left hand, you arrive at the gravel pits, commanding a rural prospect of Sydenham, Clayhill, Bekenham Church, and the windmill, on Bromley Hill, passing the handsome seat of Charles Long, Esq. you immediately have a view of London, with St. Paul's Church, and the hills of Hampstead and Highgate beyond: here one of the most astonishing views breaks out at once such a prodigious valley, every where painted with the finest verdure, intermixed with numerous villages and hamlets, that it is past description. Here, also, you have the best view of the magnificent house of P. Thelluffon, Esq. at Plaistow; and on the other hand, the handsome seat of John Cator, Esq. at Bekenham; nothing can exceed this prospect, unless that which Hannibal exhibited to his disconsolate troops, when he bade

them “ behold the glories of the Italian plains.”

“ Here fancy wing thy rapid flight  
 “ O’er oaks, in deepest verdure dight,  
 “ Whose writhed limbs, of giant mould,  
 “ Wave to the breeze their umbrage bold.  
 “ Bear me, embowering shades between,  
 “ Through many a glade and vista green;  
 “ Whence silver streams are seen to glide,  
 “ And towering domes the horizon hide,  
 “ To Bromley’s hill, and fringed Mound,  
 “ Where lavish nature spreads around  
 “ Whate’er can captivate the sight,  
 “ Elisian lawns, and prospects bright.”

*Salmagundy.*

## SOUTH END.

This is a hamlet belonging to Lewisham, at an equal distance from that village and Bromley.

The river Ravensbourn runs through this pleasant spot, and turns two corn-mills; that, occupied by Mr. Nattrass, deserves the particular notice of the

traveller, from its singular, romantic, and beautiful gardens and grounds. Here are three good public houses, and the brewhouse of Christopher Lance, Esq.

There are several good houses in this hamlet; in particular those of Mrs. Flowers; Richard Forster, and — Saunders, Esqrs.

One mile nearer to Lewisham, stands

### RUSHY GREEN,

IN a very pleasant situation, with houses on one side of the road only, and the green opposite; but how it obtained the name, I have not been able to learn. Lewisham is a village in Kent, five miles from London, and five miles from Bromley. In this parish is a hill with an oak upon it, called, the Oak of Honor, because Queen Elizabeth is said to have dined

under it. The original tree, which served for a canopy to this illustrious princess, is long since perished; but care has been taken to plant an oak on the spot, that this traditional anecdote might not be forgotten. The church is a new and elegant edifice; a branch of the river Ravensbourn runs through the street of this village, and is a great addition to its beauty: the village is one mile in length, has a number of good houses in it, but is a place of very little trade. There is a good bridge and two free-schools, one for Latin the other for English, founded by the Rev. Mr. Abraham Calf, once minister of this parish, with allowances to such scholars, as shall be sent from it to the university, and left under the direction of the Leather-feller's company of London.

In the centre of the town stands the brewhouse of Messrs. Constable and

Fordham, for porter, ale, and table beer: this house affords employ to a number of persons, and gives the appearance of business to that part of Lewisham.

I shall now proceed to quote the whole of Philipot's account of this ancient and rural village.

“ Lewisham is in the hundred of Blackheath, was a manor belonging to the priory which was erected here; but who the founder was, is unknown; this alone we find, that king Henry the Third, by a new inspection, confirmed it with all the franchises and immunities annexed to it: it was, when it flourished most, but a cell of benedictine monks, belonging to St. Peter's, in Gaunt, and paid to them 40s. *per ann.* as a rent-service, and so continued, till King Henry the Fifth perceiving the ill effects and impres-

sions which the influence of priories, aliens, and their fraternities, might cause upon those religious persons who were his subjects, who were altogether chained by a connection of canonical obedience to them, suppressed this, and sundry others of the like nature; and with their revenue endowed that stately monastery, which he erected at Sheene, storing it with Carthusian monks, and dedicating it in the name of Jesus of Bethlem; and in the patrimony of this cloister did this manor lie included, till the total dissolution, in that general shipwreck, in the reign of Henry the Eighth, and then it returned to the crown, and there was lodged, till Queen Elizabeth, in the fifth year of her government, granted it to Ambrose Dudley, earl of Warwick, who

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soon after exchanged it for other lands with the said princefs; and ſhe, in the year 1575, granted it in leafe, for a ſpace of forty years, to Sir Nicholas Stodart, of Modingham; which expiring in the year 1605, King James paſſed it away in leafe, for forty years more, to Sir Francis Knolls, and the fee-ſimple in reverſion, to John Ramſey, earl of Holderneſs, who dying before the expiration of the leafe, gave it to his brother Sir George Ramſey, whoſe ſon, John Ramſey, when the former leafe was worn out, which was about the year 1645, ſold the fee-ſimple to Mr. Reginald Grime.

Catford, in this pariſh, was formerly a manor, which anciently was involved in the inheritance of the Herring-hill in Erith, and John Abel had a charter of free warren to this, and other of his lands in Lewiſham, in the 23d year of

Edward the First; and after this family was worn out, the Lords Mountacute were lords of the signiory fee simple of it; for William de Mountacute, Earl of Salisbury, obtained by charter a confirmation of the free warren, to this manor of his of Catford, in the 5th year of Edward the Third; and in this noble family did the possession dwell, till Richard de Nevil married Eleanor, daughter and heir of Thomas de Mountacute, Earl of Salisbury, and in her right, had the title of that earldom; and the possession of this place enstated upon him, and divers of the windows of the most ancient houses in Lewisham are stained and coloured with his arms. This was that Richard, who gave up his life to the cause and quarrel of the house of York, and with Richard, Duke of York, most resolutely asserting the



truth and justice of their title to the crown, perished in the fatal and unfortunate battle, commenced with the partizans of the Lancastrian claim, between Sandall and Wakefield; and afterwards his son, Richard, Earl of Warwick (he that broke and pieced up the scepter as he pleased) and his younger son John Nevil, created Marquis Montacute, by Edward the Fourth, in the year 1470, fell in that disastrous encounter, waged with Edward the Fourth, at Barnet, upon whose ruins and tombs he built his throne, and with their blood cemented the fabric of his future greatness; but whether upon the shipwreck of this family, it came by escheat to the crown, or else to George Duke of Clarence, second brother to Edward the Fourth, who married Isabel, daughter and co-heir of Richard, Earl of Warwick, is uncertain, though

it is probable he did; because, in a great house of Mr. Street's, at Lewisham, the arms of the Duke of Clarence stand empaled with Nevil. In times of a more modern aspect, Catford belonged to the Palsteds, a family of very great antiquity in Surrey; for Hugh de Palsted gave lands called Inwood, by his deed, dated the 16th year of King John, to the abbey of Waverley, in that county; but whether this place came to them or not, by grant from the crown, or by purchase from some other, I am ignorant; it is certain that Francis Palsted, cousin and heir to Richard Palsted, sold Catford to Brian Annesley, Esq. in reversion, after the death of Elizabeth, wife of John Wooley, and widow of the said Richard, in the 20th year of Queen Elizabeth; and he afterwards dying without issue male, his two daughters,

married to Sir William Harvey, afterwards Lord Harvey, of Kidbrook, in Kent; and Sir John Wildgoose, shared the inheritance of this place. There were two chantries founded at Lewisham, one by Richard Walker, for one priest to celebrate mass at the altar of the trinity, for the founder's soul; the other by Robert Fitx, who, by the appointment of his last will, the 17th of Henry VII. devised that his two houses, the Lion and the Ram, in the Stews, on the bank side, near London, should be sold to build the charity house, and endow it with maintenance for one priest to celebrate at the altar of the trinity, in Lewisham church, for the founder's soul."

Here ends Philipot's account: and the great fluctuation of property has put it out of my power to procure the

just descent of the different possessors of Catford.

## SYDENHAM

STANDS on a fine hill, is three miles from Lewisham, three from Bromley, and eight miles from London, a village in Kent, famous for its medicinal wells; here is a number of good houses, and Sydenham is much improved within the last twenty years; is in the parish of Lewisham, and has a neat chapel of ease.

It bears no mark of its vicinity to the capital; many houses were scattered round a large wild common, and those who love an occasional contemplation of unimproved nature, will find great satisfaction in a visit to Sydenham Common.

The world is continually growing wiser; there was a time, when nobody

would read a book that had not been wrote half a century. An Otway was suffered to starve; but living merit is now rewarded; the author of a duodecimo volume, if deserving of notice, receives it.

Many individuals will discover something omitted in this "*Description*" as every man's observation differs more or less from that of his neighbour; but let each single individual endeavour to bring together the same quantity of materials, they will then judge with liberality, and pardon my errors.

The Editor's labours, and search are at an end. To assist the inhabitants of Bromley, or its occasional visitors, in the choice of their excursions, is a principle object of the foregoing publication; to be an entertaining companion in these excursions is another; he

has not only described whatever he found curious in the works of nature or of art, but where any place has been distinguished by some memorable circumstance, he has not forgotten how much the incidental recollection of it may improve the sources of conversation; we shall be reminded, where the statesman mused in retirement on the welfare of his country; where a Camden, or a Hawkesworth, enriched the age by their learned and sensible productions, or a Lyttleton received the first convictions of religious truths; it is natural to view such scenes with a degree of enthusiasm, and to consider the ground we tread as almost sacred.

I am no worshiper of rich men; I honor good sense, and an honest mind, in every situation of life; should Pro-

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vidence, in its own wise and just dispensations, be pleased to add to the number of my days, I shall reflect, with satisfaction on the impartiality, with which I have endeavoured to give this trifle to the world.

FINIS.