

A TRUE REPORT

OF CERTAIN WONDERFUL

Oberflowings of Waters

IN

Somerset, Norfolk, & other parts of England

A.D. 1607.

EDITED BY

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WESTON-SUPER-MARE :

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PREFACE.

As the interest taken in County histories and topographical works generally has increased so surprisingly during recent years, and is still increasing, few if any explanations are needed for placing before the public a reprint of a very rare and exceedingly interesting black letter tract of 1607 relating to the great floods and inundations in Somersetshire and five other counties in England in that year.

There can be little doubt that the account of these floods, and of the great loss both of life and property caused thereby, contained in this tract is truthful, and is not in anywise exaggerated, for there is no lack of corroborative evidence, and evidence too of the best sort—records made when the events occurred—we set out two instances:

Firstly, in the village of Kingston Seymour [formerly called Kingston Seamoore and referred to in this tract as Kingson] in Somersetshire there is a tablet fixed against the wall of the Parish Church on which there is chronicled as follows :—•

"January 20 1607 & 4th of Jas. I. An inundation of the sea-water by overflowing & breaking down the sea banks; happened in this Parish of Kingstone-Seamore, and many others adjoining; by reason whereof many Persons were drown'd and much cattle & goods were lost; the water in the Church was five feet high & the greatest part lay on the ground about ten days.

WILLIAM BOWER."

Secondly, we find more particulars of "Theise late swellinges of the outrageous waters" in another black letter tract of 1607 entitled "Gods Warning to his people of England by the great overflowing of the Waters or Floudes, lately hapned in South Wales, and many other Places. Wherein is described the great Losses, and wonderfull Damages, that hapned thereby; by the Drowning of many Townes and Villages, to the utter Undoing of many Thousandes of People." The irruption of the waters on Tuesday the 20th January of 1607, about nine o'clock in the morning when "The sunne being most fayrely and brightly spred," is most graphically described: a portion of one paragraph we copy:—

"Then they might see and perceive afar of, as it were in the element, huge and mighty hilles of water, tombling one over another, in such sort, as if the greatest mountaines in the world had overwhelmed the lowe valeyes or marshy grounds. Sometimes it so dazled the eyes of many of the spectators, that they immagined it had bin some fogge or miste, comming with great swiftness towards them, and with such a smoke, as if mountaeyns were all on fire; and, to the view of some, it seemed as if myllyons of thousands of arrowes had bin shot foorth all at one time, which came in such swiftness, as [it was verily thought] that the fowls of the ayre could scarce fly so fast; such was the threatenng furies thereof."

We think that every place mentioned can without much trouble be identified with some existing village or town, notwithstanding that the spelling, in some cases, varies considerably; for two centuries and a half ago neither author nor

printer was particular to a letter or two more or less, but both revelled in bad spelling.

By means of one of the many modern systems of reproduction we have been enabled to give two excellent facsimiles; one of the title page with its quaint woodcut, and the other of the first page ; the former is curious as a specimen of the rough and rude woodcutting of the early part of the seventeenth century long before Bewick the pioneer of the art in England flourished, while the latter is interesting as a sample of the antient black letter printing.

The orthography and the punctuation of the original, it is needless to say, we have carefully followed throughout,

E. E. B.

Weston-super-Mare, 1884.

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1607.

A true report of certaine wonderfull overflowinges
of Waters, now lately in Summerfet-shire, Norfolke, and other
places of England: destroying many thousandes of men, women,
and children, overthrowing and bearing downe
whole townes and villages, and drowning
infinite numbers of sheepe and
other Cattle.



Printed at London by W. I. for Edward White and are to be sold
at the Gate of the Gunne at the North doore of P. ules.

TO THE READER.

Reader I have to these late accidents [whereby some parts of this our kingdom have bin punnished] added some other, that hapned in the yeare 1570 to the intent that by comparing the one with the other, Gods Justice and mercy, may both be seene : If those Waters of his wrathe [powred downe then] weare more cruell than these. It is a signe [arid a comfort let it bee unto us] that he doth but stil threaten & shake the rod, for no doubt but our faults at this time are as great as in those daies: If this affliction laide uppon our Countrey now, bee sharper than that before, make use of it ; tremble, be fore-warned, Amend, least a more feareful punishment, and a longer whip of correction draw blood of us.
Farewell.



Newes out of Sum-

merfet shire.

(. . .)



Albeit that these swellinges by and overflowinges of waters proceed from natural causes, yet are they the very diseases and monstrous byrthes of nature, sent into the world to terrifie it, and to put it in mind, of the great God, (who holdeth stormes in the prison of the Cloudes at his pleasure, and can enlarge them to breed disorder on the Earth when he growes angry) can as well now drowne all mankind as he did at the first: But for by these gentle warnings, he would rather haue vs come vnto him, and flye from the points of more deadly Arrowes of vengeance, than bitterly to perish. Hee fills out the measures of his chastisement according to the quality and proportion of our offences: for as the waters transgresse and break their bounds, to the destruction of the fruites of the earth and to the taking away of the liues of man and beast.

Newes out of Summerset shire.

Albeit that these swelings up and overflowings of waters proceed from natural causes, yet are they the very diseases and monstrous byrthes of nature, sent into the world to terrifie it, and to put it in mind, yt. the great God, [who holdeth stormes in the prison of the Cloudes at his pleasure, and can enlarge them to breed disorder on the Earth when he growes angry] can as well now drowne all mankind as he did at the first: But yt. by these gentle warnings, he would rather have us come unto him, and flye from the points of more deadly Arrowes of vengeance, than utterly to perish. Hee fills out the measures of his chastisement according to the quality and proportion of our offences : for as the Waters transgresse and break their bounds, to the destruction of the frutes of the earth and to the taking away of the lives of man and beast.

So have we that should bee subjects to the Almighty King, and [by our oath of Christianity] ought and are bound to paye fealty & allegiance to our Lord and Master, gone beyond the bankes and limits of all obedience, to ye taking away of his love, without which we cannot live, and to the unrecoverable undoing of our owne selves.

Sinne overflows our soules : the Seas of all strange impieties have rusht in upon us: we are covered with the waves of abomination and uncleannes : we are drowned in the black puddles of hellish iniquity: wee swim up to the throates, nay even above the chins in Covetousnes, in extortion, in sensuality, in every one against ye other, in contempt of our Majestrates, in neglect of our lawes, and in violation of those divine statutes, the breach of which is a condemnation to death, and that Death, and everlasting living in Hels fire.

Many a time have we bin summoned to an account for these riotous abuses & misspending the talents put into our hands, we have shifted it off with counterfet sorrow for what wee have done, and with promises to become faithfull servants, and new men; yet grow we worse at noone, than we were at ye suns rising, and at his going down he blusheth to behold us in our nautines. To a strict & strange audite therefore doth God not only cal some of our countrymen now on ye soden] but also to afright us the more to make us look about, doth he strike our Cattle with diseases: he takes away the lives of our beasts fit for labor; he destroies the Corne-fields, and threatens us with famine: he undermines our houses with tempests, to make us feare a desolation.

Read therefore, and read with trembling these his late dreadful judgme'ts, mocke not our selves with vaine hopes, but know that if earthly fathers may be drawne away to forget their owne children, our heavenly father may by the vilenes of our souls be drawne to shake off his own people. Listen then how he menaceth, and stand amazed at the wonders of his wrath.

In January last [towards the end of the moneth,] the sea at a flowing water meeting with Land-floudes, strove so violently together, that bearing downe all thinges yt were builded to withstand and hinder the force of them, the bankes

were eaten through and a rupture made into *Somerset-shire*. No sooner was this furious invader entred, but he got up hie into the Land, and encountring with the river *Severn*, they both boild in such pride that many Miles, [to the quantity of XX. in length, and 4 or 5 at least in bredth] were in a short time swalowd up in this torrent. This Inundation began in the morning, & within few houres after, covered the face of ye earth thereabouts [that lay within the distance before named] to the deapth of XI. or XII. foot in some places, in others more. The daunger yt. this terrible tempest brought w' it wrought much fear in the harts of all that stood within the reach of it, but ye soden and strange cruelty of it, bred the greater terror and amazement. Men that were going to their labours were compelled [seeing so dreadfull an enemy approching] to flye backe to their houses, yet before they could enter, death stood at the dores ready to receive them. In a short tyme did whole villages stand like Islands [compassed rounde with Waters] and in a more short time were those Islands undiscoverable, and no where to be found. The tops of trees and houses onely appeared [especially there where the Countrey lay lowe] as if at the beginning of the world townes had been builte in the bottome of the Sea, and that people had plaide the husbandmen under the Waters.

Who would not have thought this had bin a second *Deluge!* for [at one time these inhabited places were sunke cleane out of sight. *Hunsfielde* [a Market Towne in the sayde Shire] was quite drowned. *Grantham* a village utterly over-flowne. *Kenhouse* another village covered all over. *Kingson* a thyrd village likewise lies buried in salt Water. So [besides other small cottages standing in valies] is *Brian Downe* a village quite consumed. Adde unto these peopled places, the losse of Marshes, Corne-fieldes, Pastures, Meddowes, and so forth, more then can bee numbred : the misery of it no man can Expresse.

In this civill Warres betweene the Land and the Sea, many Men, Women, and Children lost their lives : to save which, some climbed uppe to the tops of the houses, but the rage of the merciles tide grew so strong, yt. in many, yea most of the Villages aforenamed, the Foundations of the buildings being washed away the whole frame fell down, and they dyed in the waters: Others got up into trees, but the trees had their rootes unfastened by the selfe-same destroyer, that disjoynted barnes and houses, and their last refuge was patiently to die.

A lamentable spectacle was it, to beholde whole heards of Cattle, struggling for life with the flouds, Oxen in great numbers were caryed away with the streame, and looked like so many Whales in ye Sea: their bellowing made a noise in the water as if it had bin a tempest, and that ye Sea had roared! The flocks of Sheep that are utterly destroyed by this Land-wracke are innumerable, none knowes the losse for the present but the owners of them : But the whole land wil I feare feele the smart.

A number of most strange shapes of daunger did this monstrous byrth of waters bring forth : of which [for the rarenes] I will set downe some, and none but those that are true. There was a poore Man [a Householder] dwelling in one of the Villages aforenamed, heaing seaven Children : who [in this generall perill] not knowing howe to bestirre himselfe, was desirous to save so much of his goods as possibly hee could: But the violence of the streame multiplying more and more

upon him : It came into his minde to provide rather for his Children: his goodes therefore hee left to the mercy of that which hath no mercy, and loving one of his Children above all the rest, hys feare drave him to run about for the safety of that onely. At last the danger that had rounde about [and within doores] set upon him and his family, was so great, that hee could neither defend that his deerest Childe, nor the rest, but having much ado to get life for himselfe, hee left them and hys whole houshold perishing in the torrent, he getting up to the top of the house, and so escaping. An infant likewise was found swimming in a Cradle, some mile or two fro' ye place where it was knowen to be kept, and so was preserved, for the Cradle was not of wicker as ours are here, but of strong thicke bordes, closely joynted together, and that saved the infants life. The ricks of pease in divers places being undermined at the bottomes, were lifted up mainely from the ground, and swum up and downe in the whole bulke, amongst which a co'pany of Hogs, and Pigs, being feeding upon one of the ricks, and perceiving it to go away more & more fro' the', they got up to ye top, and there maintained the' in eating. Nay which is more strange, conies in great numbers being driven out of their borroughes by the tyde, were seene to sit for safety on the backs of sheepe, as they sworn up & down and at last were drowned with them.

A poore shepheard likewise being in the fieldes, some of his sheepe were strayed from the rest, when the waters began to come in upon the Countrey, which he perceiving, ran with all speede to fetch them in, hoping to save al: but before he had done, having much ado to save himselfe, he was fayne to leave them, and with his bag and bolte, to climb up into a tree : there hee saw the confusion of hys whole flock: they swom too and fro bleating for helpe, he satte tearing his hayre and beating his brests ; crying mainly out but could not save the' : when they were all slain before his eies, he wept then more bitterly to thinke upon his owne tragedy which he saw was now to be acted: he feared drowning, yet hee feared starving more then drowning: he had some victuals with him in the tree; but he knew not how long this siege of waters woulde keepe him in that rotten bulwarke. At length [when he was almost pincht to Death with cold] he espyed a boat which the Country had sent out to save others, to that he called, and in that recovered life.

BRISTOW.

Now bend your eies upon the City of *Bristowe*, and there beholde as much cause of lamentation as in any place of this realme, that hath tasted of the like misery. In the selfe same Moneth of *January*', and much about ye very day, did an arm of the North seas break in [at a spring tide] which overflowed not onely the banckes, but almost all the whole Country round about.

All *Brent-Marsh* is covered over : between *Barstable* and *Bristow* the Sea swelled up as hye as *Bridgewater*. All the low grounds are not onely hidden in this strange deluge, but in danger [by the opinion of men] to be utterly lost. Whole houses were removed from the grounde where they stood, and float up and downe like shippes [halfe sunke.]

Their Corne-mowes and hay-mowes are caryed away with the streame and can never be recovered. All theyr fat Oxen that could not swim are drowned; with such a forcible assault did the Waters set upon the inhabitants, that they who were in theyr houses, and thought themselves safest, could hardly make way for theyr owne lives: by which meanes a number both of men, women, and children perished: theyr deade bodies floate hourelly above-water, and are continuallye taken uppe : It cannot yet be knowne, howe manye have fell in this Tempest of Gods fearful judgement.

Most of the goodes both of Cittizens heere in London that were sent thither, and of the inhabitants dwelling there, as also the Rugs & such other commodity which came from Irelande, to the fayre of Saint *Paule*, which was now to bee kepte there, are [to an infinite value, and to the daunger of many a mans undoing] utterly spoiled and cast away. Goods in dry-fats, and whole packes of Wares are daily taken up, but past all recovery ever to bee good again. This deluge hath covered this part of country by the space of ten miles over in length, at least uppe towards *Bridgewater*. Many thousands of pounds cannot make goode the losse which the Countrey onely hath heereby received. God graunt there ensue no second misery upon this, worse to our Kingdome, than this Plague of Waters.

The miraculous delivery of a Gentleman from death when it had round beset him in the midst of the waters.

A Gentleman dwelling within foure miles of the sea [betwixt *Barstable* and *Bristow*] walking foorth one morning to view his groundes, cast uppe his eyes toward the Sea-coast, and on the sudden was struck into a strange amazémét, for he beheld an extraordinary swallowing uppe of all the earth, that had wont to lye visible and level to his sight: he coulde scarce tell certainly whether he stood upon the ground which he was sure the day before was his owne: Hills and valies, Woods, and Meddowes seemed al to be either removed, or to be buried in the Sea: for the Waters a farre off stood to his judgement many yards above the earth: he tooke them at first for Mountaines and heapes of clouds, but feare being driven backe [with a courage and desire in him to save himselfe from this imminent daunger] home comes hee with all speede that he coulde to his owne dwelling : relates to his wife what hee had seene, and the assured perill that was preparing to set uppon them, and [withall] Counsels her and his whole Family to bestirre themselves, and to gette [with such provision and Goodes as they coulde easily convay away] higher uppe into the Country to some one of his friendes. All hands presently layd about them, [as if that enymies had bin marching to beseidge the Towne] to trusse up what they could and be gone.

And beholde, how swift is mischief when God drives it before him to the punishment of the World. All were laboring to beare away some of the goods, but before their burdens could bee taken up, they were compeld to leave them, and to look about for their lives. The fardels which they had bound up to save from drowning, some of them were glad to leap uppon to escape drowning themselves.

The Gentleman with his Wife and Children got up to the highest building

of the house : there sat hee and they upon two rafters, comforting one another in this misery, when their heartes within them were even dead to themselves from all comfort: they now cared not for their wealth, so they might but go away with their lives : and yet even that very desire of life, put him in mynde to preserve something, by which afterward they might live, and that was a Boxe of Writinges, wherein were certaine bonds, and all the evidences of his Landes : this Boxe he got, with the hard adventure of much daunger; he tyed it with cordes fast to a rafter, hoping what wracke soever should overthrowe the rest of his substance, his mayne estate should bee found safe, and come to shore in that haven.

But alas in the midst of this sorrofull gladnesse, the Sea fell with such violence upon the house, that it bore away the whole building, rent it in the middle from top to bottom, they that could not get up to the highest roomes, were put to a double death, drowning and brayning. In this storme the Husband and Wife lost one another: the Children and Parents were parted : the Gentleman in this whirle-wind of Waves, being forced from his hold, got to a beame, sat upon that, and against his will rode post some three or foure Miles, till at length encountring with the side of a hill [of which lighting place hee was joyfull] there he crept up, and holding notwithstanding his safety still in his hand: there sat he invirond with death, miserably powring out teares to increase ye waters, which were already too abundant: and to make him disperate in his sorrowes, the tirranous streame presented unto him the Tragedy of his deere Wife, and deerest children, She, they, and his Servants were whorried to their deaths by the torrent before his face, & drowned doubly, in his teares, and in the waves. Yet because he should not be altogether the onely slave of misfortune in this Sea-fight, nor be more tryumphed over then others that fell in the battaile. At length [a little to fetch life into him which was upon departing] he spyed his Boxe of writinges [bound as they were to the rafter] come floating-towards him: that he ventured once againe to save, and did so, and in the end most myraculously came off likewise with his owne life.

Of another Gentleman, that having a voyage to make on horse-backey ended it riding after a strange manner.

There was another Gentlemanne in the same Countrey likewise, who being newlie married, determind one morning to take his Gelding, and to ride forth to a Towne not many miles dista't from his owne dwelling, there to bee merrie: his horsse for that purpose stood readie saddled and brideled, he himselfe had drawne on one of his Boots, but before he could fit his Legge to the other, the winde came about, the point of his compasse was changed, his voyage by Lande was to bee made by Water, or else not at al. For the Sea had so beegyrt the house, broken in, lifted of the doores from their hynge, ran uppe into all the Chambers, and with so dreadful a noyse tooke possession of everie Roome, that he yt. was al this while but half a horseman, trusted more to his owne

legges than to the swiftnes of his Gelding.

Uppe therefore he mounts to the very top of all the house, the waters pursued him thither, which he perceiving, got astride over the Ridge and there resolved to

save his life, but *Neptune* belike purposing to try how wel he could ride, cut of the maine building by the middle, leaving the upper part swimming like a Flemmish Hoy in fowle weather.

The Gentleman beeing driven to goe what pace that would carry him which hee sate uppon, helde fast by the Tiles, and such things as he could best lay hold on, and in this foule weather, came he at length [neither on Horse-backe, nor on foote, nor in a Vessell fit for the Water] to the very Towne, where in the morning hee meant to take up his Inne.

A number of these strange Tragi-comicall *Scenes* have been acted upon this large Stage of waters : It would swell into a Massie Volume to Chronicle them all: let these therefore which I have delivered unto you, bee sufficient, as a tast of Gods Judgements: these are ynough to make you know hee is angry, let them likewise be ynough to make us studie how to allay his anger.

Adde unto these, the overflowings in Herefordshire, Gloucester Shire, and in divers Shires in Wales, bordering uppon the Sea, where many lives have beene lost, both of Man and Beast: of all which when the particulars are truely knowne, they shall bee truely published to our Countrey: till then make use of these.

NORFOLKE.

Nor let other Countreys insult over this : as if their robes of seeming puritie [invented by the Divell and his Journey-men] were a defence or Armour of prooffe against the Judgements of Heaven: they stand all within distance, this late and fearefull Inundation of water makes it apparant.

For just the same month of the yeare, weeke of the month, and almost day of the same weeke, In the Countrey of Norfolke, not farre from Kings Lyn, in a place called March-land, happened accidents, though not altogether so violent and mortall as those in Summersetshire, yet accompanied with much damage, and no little danger. About the XX. of this present month of Januarie *Anno. Dom.* 1607. The cheefe violence of winter, being [as they by many rurall observations had quoted] almost spent: The Marishes, and Fens, by reason of the yeeres temperature, somewhat drye, and more forward than in other yeares, everie man to his abilitie, layd out what money hee could spare uppon, Heiffors, and such other young ware, emptying their purses of Crownes to cram the Fens with Cattell, little thinking the water would have made one, and like a new Broome have sweeped all cleane, as shortly it did.

The Fens thus stored with Cattell, Horse, and Bullocks, for it is not unknowne what havocke the rot had made with sheepe in the beginning of Winter, which dyed in such aboundaunce, that even Dogges grewe wearie of

them.

The rot having begun, and in a manner made an end of Sheep, in comes the water as a second and more violent invader, and sweeps away what the rot had left behinde.

It happened upon a night, for when is danger more wakefull than when prevention sleepes, and not so much as drearnes of his furie, A couple of Hors-courers, or to attyre them in a courser litter, Horse-stealers, knowing the night, a gowne to cloake their villanie, came sneaking into the marrish with an intent to make a Market of what was none of their owne. And drave so many of the Cattell as they thoght fit up into the higher grounds: but in the meane time they were hotly pursued with a fearefull Hu and cry, not of Constables, but swifter followers [Viz :] the water, which having broken out at an old breach, in a quarter of an houre, or a very little portion of time, overflowed the Marsh, and that with such unresisted violence, yt. they were enforced to leave their praye [which such fellowes seldome use to doe] fal to prayer, and to take them to their heels, and of all the Cattell in that Marrish [being very many in number] fewe or none were preserved, but those which they had fetched up with an intent to steale: for being overtaken, or rather overrunne by the swiftnesse of the Water, they were dryven some into Creekes, some into Bushes, and some upon little Hillocks, and so eitheir lost, dryven away with the Water, or in conclusion drowned.

The twoo good fellowes [against their willes made good] Seeing what present daunger the water brought in with it, poasted to the Towne whether the Water [had they not made the more hast] had brought the men before them: Raysed the Sexton, got the Keyes of the Church doore, and [as the custome in such daungers] Jangled the Belles, and with a fearefull outcry, raysed the secure Inhabitanes : who imagining some house to be on fire, rose uppe distractedly in their Shirtes, *crying* out Water, Water: of which Element [they were no sooner up,] but they perceived they had too much: Yet were they still various in their opinions, all fearing, yet none knowing truely what to feare: some got up to the steeple, many thinking their had been theevs got into the upper roomes of their Houses, shutting their safeties out, by locking themselves in. Some thinking it had bin but a slight overflowing of a spring tyde, laught at the rest.

The truth once knowne, it was no need to byd them make hast: to expresse how amazedly Men ran up and downe, betwixt sleepe and wake, asking what newes, and receiving no other answer but what newes, was strange. In a word, in this danger, every man layed first hands of what he loved best, some made away with his Wife, some his Children, some careles both of Wife and Children, hurried away his goods. Hee that had seen this troublesome nights worke, would have thought upon the miserable night of Troy. Here waded one up to the middle loaded with wealth, when noting how the water increased, and calling to mind his helplesse Children, with a sigh as loath to part from what hee so deerely had loved, hee throwes it downe, runs to Bedde, wakens his Wife, and from her sides snatches the sleeping infants. Here comes a Husband with his Wife on his backe, and under either arme an Infant. The Sonne carries

the Father, the Brother the Sister, the Daughter the Mother, whitest the unmercifull conqueror breakes downe the Walles of the Houses, taking pittie neither of aged nor Sexe, findes some at playe, some a sleepe in Chayers, many in their beddes, that never dreamed of misfortune till the Water waked them.

Not to stand long, the Water gave them but very-short warning, yet like a mercifull Conquerour, having taken the towne, it gave them their lives, at least all such as were willing to leave their goods. Some covetous to have all, lost all, for striving to save their goodes, they lost their lives.

In this night-massacre some few were drownd but their true names and certaine number, is not yet directly knowne. Up to a hill some halfe myle from the Towne they hasted, where that night, or rather peece of a morning, they reposed themselves.

The next day they might behold their houses wading up to the middles in Water, some calling for Boates out at Windowes, and from the steeples toppe, some swimming uppon plankes, some uppon Fetherbeds, whom as they possibly could, they releevd. Horses that were tyed to the Mangers, at the Mangers were all drowfted, such as were loose swimming up and downe, some recovered the land, some drowned in striving to recover it, whole Barnes of Corne, which the covetous owners horded up in hope of a dearth, the Water discovered and brought foorth, Houshold-stuffe which the night before they packt out of the Houses in hope to have saved, swamme up and downe, with drowned people so confusedly mingled, as men could scarce distinguish their goods, nor know their friends.

Nor did the Water thus confine his tyranie, but joyning with land Waters that fell from the high groundes, It invaded two Villages more, but they having warning of the Aproch, though not power to withstand it, had time to prevent it, by convaying all or most part of their goods and Cattell, to the upland Villages, leaving onely the emptie houses to the mercy of [that which is sayd to have no mercy] the water.

Three Townes thus overflowed with water, could not but bring much losse to the poore inhabitants, yet to increase it, their corne fields [and not only these] but all alongst the coast and lowe Marshes of that country, to the number of many thousand Acars in severall places and fields are toombd and buried in the huge grave of waters, that like a devouring gulfe is never satisfied.

To this there is for the space of ten or twelve miles compasse Marishes and Fens cleane under water. The Cattell fed in those Marshes so sodainely taken, that had they not fled to an Hill, some halfe mile in compasse called *Thruhill*, few or none of them could have scaped with life : yet being there, their safety is very dangerous : for this hill being very high and narrowe in the top, is like a Rocke in the Sea, girdled about with Water, so deepe, that on foote neither Man nor Beast canne passe it, and yet not deepe enough to beare a Boat, by reason of muddy and old shrubs yt. grow in it: by reason whereof the poore beasts have fedde the Hill so bare, as it affordes neither grasse nor wood, and so do their hunger encrease, and sustenance decrease, as they do eate the tops of Molehils, and the very earth it selfe, and with lamentable bellowing

complaine, and as it were make moane to their owners, who beeing willing canne by no meanes releve them. Hee that should see this pittifull famine of Beasts, could not [except hee were too leasi all himselfe] but pittie it.

At last they made shift by cutting a way through the Shrubs and Bushes, to bring abroad a Ferry Boat to the hill, to which the cattell would swim so thick, yt. they had much ado to keepe it from sinking, others seeing their fellowes in the Boate, would throw themselves into the water, and like people at a shipwracke, swarme so thicke about them, and offer such mournefull noyses, that pittied ye fellowes to heare, the Boat being full, other striving to swim after them, being weak, for want of sustenance, were drowned at the Boats side.

In pittie whereof, they concluded to fetch noe more of, but in those Boats convey Hay, and such like fodder, to the Hill, and there feed them: such are not too farre spent and gone, by this meanes they hope to recover, [notwithstanding the best helpe they can apply] they die in great numbers: the sight is to be pittied, the losse grieved at, and the Judgement to be trembled at. For with it, it brings this fearefull expect of a hard and sharpe dearth. For Corne and Cattell, the two cheefe hopes of bounty taken away, what else can we expect, but a fearefull Ruine, and an inevitable desolation, which God for his mercies sake avert.

You have all this while been Spectators of others sad and tragicall events which now [even by our friends, kinsfolkes, and Countrey men] have ben presented on the *Theater* of the world: It shall not be amisse to turne your faces, and to looke backe upon the head of time that is gone from us: weigh therefore those miseries that were measured out in the last Queens raigne in the yeare 1570, with these in 1607, and you shall see our punishment greater, because our treason against God is more horrible.

BEDFORD.

The fift of October about midnight, the Water overflowed so much, that men were faine to forsake their beds, and one woman drowned. Where also were lost a great number of Sheepe, Oxen, Kine, Horse, and other Cattell. Amongst other there, one maister Cartwrite Gentleman, having his House inclosed round about, the water came in so much, that a Cart being lode' with Thorns, did swim about the ground. Hee lost by the same floud, Sheepe and other cattell, to the value of an hundred pound. The same Gentleman had a close gate by the high wayes side, where the water ran over so extreemely, that at the fall thereof it made such an hole, that it was fortie foot deepe, so that no man could passe that way without great danger. To the filling up of the sayd Hole, or Pit, was cast in by the men of the sayd Towne 25 loads of Fagots, and 20 load of Horse-dung, which sayd Faggots and Horse-dung filled not up the hole.

Also one master Lee, at the Freers in Bedford having a fayre yarde, wherein was great store of Elme-trees, whereof three score were blowne downe, with the rootes pulled cleane out of the ground. Also he had a close of

Conies that were cleane deatroyed.

IN THE COUNTIE OF NORFOLKE.

The Sea brake in betweene Wis-bich and Walsocken, & at the Crossekeies drowning Tilny, and old Linne, Saint Mary Teding, Saint Mary Tid, S Johns, Wawple, Walton, & Walsocken, Emney, Jarmans, and Stowe brinke, all being within the space of tenne Myles. At the Crosse-keyes the good man of the Inne had built an house, with a strong foundation joyning into another House being old and not so strong, wherein were certaine Guests, and when the water came in so violently, the good man of the house being in the stronger House, called the men out of the olde House, and they would have gone downe the stayres, but the water was so high, that they could not get downe, wherefore they went backe againe, and brake an hole into the other House, where they went thorow, and the last man was no sooner in, but the olde House fell downe. The Walles of the houses were broken downe, and the Horses that were tyed at the Maunger, [which was made fast in the ground] did swim in the water, when the Stable was cleane caried away, untill the waters were assuaged, and were saved alive, and the people were constrained to get up to the highest parts of the house, and to bee carried away in Boates.

At Yermoth a great part of the Bridge was carried away.

The house upon the Haven, called the Haven-house, wherein was one Nicholas Josselin, the Haven man, and his son, with all their tooles was carryed into the Marshes, VI. miles from the Haven, where it stood upright, where they co'tinued lo'g time without meat or drinke.

Item at Jermansbrig street, was very much hurt done by extreame flouds that were there.

Item one Thomas Smith of Yermouth lost a ship, and VII. men and a Boy in it.

Item at Newarke by Yermouth were lost VII. Sayle.

Item a greate Hulk loden with Oyle and Pitch, was lost at Worry Sand, and about XX. men lost therein and XXX. saved by the Hulk boat.

IN THE BISHOPRIKE OF ELY.

These Townes and villages were overflowed, that is to say, Wisbich, Guyhorn, Parson Drove, and Hobs-house. This Hobshouse being an almes house [& the water breaking down the Walles of it] the wind blew the cloathes of from the bed of a poore man and his Wife, they being acold awaked, and sodainely stept out of his bed to reach up his Cloths, and stept up to the belly in water, and then he thinking himselfe to be in danger [as he was indeed] and he knowing the best way to escape the danger of the Water, tooke his wife on his necke and carried her away, and so were both saved,

Item in Wisbich was a Garden, a Tenice play, and a Bowling Ally, walled about with brick [which was worth twentie li. by yeere to the owner] quite

destroyed by the water.

LINCOLNE SHIRE.

Mumby Chappell the whole towne was lost except three houses.

A ship was driven upon an house the sailers thinking they had bin upon a Rocke, committed themselves to God, and three of the Marriners leapt out of the ship, and chanced to take hulde on the house top, and so saved themselves: and the wife of the same lying in childebed, did clime up into the top of the house, was also saved by the Marriners, her Husband and Childe being both drowned.

Item the Church was wholly overthrone except the steeple.

Betweene Boston and Newcastle were XL. Sea Vessailes, as small Ships, Craiers, and such like, lost upon the Coasts of Boston, Hummerston, Marshchappell, Tetney, Stepney, Nercots, Kelby, & Grimsby, where no ship can come in without a Pilate, which were all lost with goods, Corne, & cattle, with all the Salt coats, where the chief and finest salt was made, were utterly destroyed to the utter undoing of many a man, and great Lamentation both of old and young.

Wentford Bridge being very strong of VIII. Arches in length, had III., of the Arches broken and cleane carried away.

Maister Smith, at the Swan, there had his house [being III. stories high] overflowed unto the third story, and the walles of the stable were broken downe, and the horses tyed to the Manger, were all drowned.

Many men had great losse as wel of Sheep, Kine, Oxen great Mares Coltes of the breed of the great horses, and other cattell innumerable, of which, the names of many of them shall here follow, maister Pella' lost XIC. sheep at Mumb chapel.

In Summercote were lost VC. sheepe that were of the inhabitance there.

Item between Hummerston, and Grimsby were lost XILC. Sheep, of one master Spencers, whose sheapheard about midday comming to his wife and asked his dinner, and shee being more bold than mannerly, sayd hee should have none of her, then he cha'ced to looke toward the Marshes where the 'sheep were & saw the water breake in so fircsly that the sheepe would be lost if they were not brought from thence, said yt. he was not a good shepheard yt. would not venture his life for his sheepe, and so went straight to drive them fro' thence: both he and his sheep were drowned, and after the water being gone: hee was found dead, standing upright in a ditch.

Master Thimbleby lost CC., XX., sheep.

M. Dimock, lost CCCC. sheepe.

M. Marsh, lost CCCCC., sheepe.

M. Madison, lost a ship.

M. William Askugh of Kelsey, sir hugh Askugh M. Merin M. Fitz Williams of Maplethorp lost by estimation XX. M. of Cattell one and other.

Boorn was overflowed to the midway of the height of the Church.

Steeping, was wholly carryed away, where was a waine lode of Willow tops, the body of the wain with ye willowes, carried one away, & the Axiltree and Wheelles, an other way.

HUNTINGTON SHIRE.

In the Town of S. Feds, the water flowed into the Town in such abou'dance that it ran throw the Town and the Church, being in ye midst thereof, having about the Churchyarde a Brick wal, of 2 yardes hie, was so overflowed that boats were rowed over it without touching the same. Item a little fro' Huntington, were III. men riding upo' the Causey being then overflowed [the water on the Causey being not deep and thinking no danger therin] cha'ced to come into a place wher ye water had gulled away the Earth, and the Gravel, were caried away with the water: and willows growing on both sides the way, two of the' caught hold on the willows and left their horses, and saved themselves, and the third chanced to catch a very little twig of a Willow between his fingers, having very litle hold, forsaking his horse, which was carried a great way fro' him, had much paine to keep his hold on the twig, and hold his head above the water, and his Horse returning with force against the streame, came againe unto him, and under him, by which meanes he set his feet upon him and gat better hold of the Willow, and so saved himselfe, and the Horse was immediatly caried away, that he never saw him after.

KENT.

At Broom Hill, in Romney Marsh, foure miles from Rye, the water came in so outrageously, that it brake downe the Marsh Wals, one Master Bury, being owner thereof, who lost by the same a thousand one hundred threescore and two of his sheepe, & it is thought that the Marsh is never like to be gotte' again.

Item, at Erith breach, a Mariner riding by the Marshes, seeing two maids in the marshes perceiving the Waters breaking in so fast, that the Maides were not like to escape, rode unto them and one of them gat up behind him, and the other tooke hold on the Horse-taile, and by that were both saved from drowning.

In the same Marsh were drowned a great number of sheepe.

Item, there in a Marsh land yt. was sowne, were two Boyes keeping Crows, in the afternoone, saw the water breaking in so rashly, gat them up into a cart, that was not far fro' them, where they were faine to tarry untill ye next tide, which came in so boystrously, that it had like to overthrow both the Cart and the Boyes, and the one of them being more stronger than the other, kept the other in his arms, where he with cold, wet, and feare, dyed, so that he was faine to let him fall from him into the water, when hee perceived that he was past recovery.

THE CONCLUSION TO THE BOOKE.

Thus Reader dost thou behold the wounds of thy bleeding Countrie: the sinnes of thy owne soule have stricke it to the heart: there can bee no better physitian than thine own ame'dment: prepare thy receiptes therefore, least this mother of thine [and of many Millions more] fall sicke to the death. It is to bee feared that this swelling of Waters in the wombe of this our beautiful kingdo'e, will ingender more strange and more incurable diseases, and infecte the whole Nation. The earth by this wating is likely to growe barren : Famine [in stead of fruit] doth threaten to grow in our fields : We must eate the bread of sorrow and drinke our owne teares in stead of wine. Cast up thine eyes therefore and thy hands to the judgement seat of heaven, and with inflamed zeal strive not only to drie up these shewers of the Divine vengeance, that do now raigne upon our heads, but those also which sleepe in the bosome of the cloudes to drowne us in the depth of Gods Judgement hereafter.

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