# THE GENEALOGY OF THE FAMILY OF RODNEY OF RODNEY STOKE,

## As Compiled in the Seventeenth Century by Sir Edward Rodney, Knt.

*(From a MS. formerly in the possession of the late Hon^ble William Powell Rodney.)*

To my deare | davghters | Elizabeth | Penelope | Anna Iane | and Kathe | rine Rode- | neys ~ mdclv.

This little Tract of our family I penned in your Brother George his lifetime & meant to haue directed it to him that hee might haue seene from example of his owne family what to follow & what to fly. But since it hath pleased God (the great Arbiter of our liues and deaths) to take him from vs to Himselfe (as I verily hope & beliue) and in his death to put the period to my name & family. Whatsoever was from mee intended to him, doth necessarily fall vpon you And although some of you are already [translated or[1]] transplanted into other familyes, and the rest by Gods providence shall be in due time; yet your Children I suppose may take both pleasure & profit to be made acquainted with their maternall ancestors; and especially learne from them to be thankefull to God, for being borne from noble & religious parents, from whence they are as likely to deriue good qualities with their bloud, as all other irrationall & inanimate Creatures do from their stockes and seeds, as my Motto tells from y^e^ Poet, Non Generant Aqvilæ Colvmbas.

Horat: Ode:
Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis
Est in iuvencis est in equis patrum
Virtus: nec imbelleis feroces
Progenerant aquilæ columbas

Of good & valiant the like are bred
In beasts their Sires great courage doth appeare
Eagles beget not doves, and all are led
To good or ill, as natures law doth steere.

Besides it cannot be but a great contentment to them to haue the greatest part of their bloud from a family which God hath blessed with so many discents as this tract doth mention; & all of them matcht into so many noble familyes; which though now it be come to the period, after the space of 500 yeares the common period of kingdomes & all great familyes is yet matter of thanks-giving to God that it lasted so long, and that through so long a tract of time it hath not contracted any blemishes or spots of infamy, It is ordinary to perpetuate the memories of men by Monuments, which yet we see Time the great devovrer doth deface, and therefore I thought it best to keepe my selfe aliue amongst

[1] Erased.

you by this [Parchment(1)] monument of writing, by which being dead I may yet speake to you; as it is sayd of Abel in the Epistle to the Hebrews. I haue lived through the mercy of God to see you brought vp in the knowledge of his truth, and in the loue of his lawes, from which I hope neither prosperitie nor adversitie shall ever make you depart. Many things haue made mee weary of the world & to prepare my selfe to meete the King of terrors without feare and amazement [with Job(1)]. All my worldly care is to leaue you all in a comfortable condition for lively-hood & subsistance, and to follow after mee, in a vertuous and religious course, that so wee may at last meete againe in the company of Saints and Angells, singing Hosanna's and Haleluiah's eternally in Heaven. The good Lord pardon every one that prepareth his heart to seeke God, the Lord God of his Fathers, though hee be not cleansed after the purification of the Sanctuary, 2 Cron: 18: 19:

## Præfatio.

Rodneyorum familia vnde orta, quosve ab initio habuerit maiores exteras an indigenas, non compertum habeo: ignorantiæ causa est quod radices agit in ea tempora, quæ diris motibus et bellis, rerum notitiam obscurâ reddunt: Radices appello maiores huius familiæ omnes qui præcesserunt Richardum de Rodeney sub Henrico tertio, Edvardo primo et secundo, nam illi quasi in imo terræ agentes et absconditi suorum notitiam posteris reliquerunt dubiam, et in quâ vix acquiescere potest diligens veritatis indagator. Nomina tamen eorum recitavimus, et ea quæ de illis constans in hâc domo fama et tabulæ genealogicæ loqũntur Illud Poetæ, Vixere fortes ante Agamemnona Multi &c. Horat: Ode: In omni ævo in omni gente fidem obtinuit, præsertim in privatis familijs scriptoribus parum curæ, et quæ raro famam aucupant, sed regibus et heroibus curandum relinquunt, quorum facta et res gesta trahuntur in exempla. Ad Richardum illum testimoniis nitimur publicis et privatis luce clarioribus vlterius progredere, obscura omnia et densæ nebulæ; nec habemus vnde subsidia afferamus huic argumento, Silent Archivæ publicæ in domesticis scrinijs præter tabulas genealogicas nihill hodie invenitur; quicquid habemus de Britania et eius incolis ante Henricum tertium pænes fidem est paucorum Monachorum ex quibus inter alia, hoc annotandum, transfretasse in hânc insulam ex diversis Europæ partibus alienarum gentium plena agmina honoribus et divitijs nostris inhiantia, imo ex continenti Reges ipsos accepimus. Virg: Æne: 1°: Magna iuvenum comitante caterva Ex Dania Canutum (ne altius ascendam) et Saxones Anglos, Romanos, nativis commixtos memorem Ex Normania Gvlielmvm qui omnia hîc nova reddidit, Regem, Subditos, Legem, Linguam: Ex Gallîâ Stephanum facto non iure regem, Ex Aquitaniâ Henricum secundum hæreditano[2] iure matris Matheldæ Augustæ, Quid de Lodovico Gallo loquar, qui regnante Iohanne et filio eius Henrico tertio, Rege Angliæ inaugurato; quas turbas et mutationes credibile dedisse illum dum

[1] Erased.
[2] *sic*, for hæreditario.



purpurâ nostrâ indutus Londinũ et maximam regni partem in prædam accepit et possundedit, Quos turbines et tempestates concitavit civile illud bellum inter Johannem & Subditos, inter Stephanum & Matheldam, dum filij patres nati cognatos amici amicissimos, hostili animo infestant et debellant? Vere quadrat in hoc ævum illud Poetæ Virg: Monstrum horendum informe ingens cui lumen ademptum, Lumen sapientiæ, charitatis et iustitiæ, dum ignes et fasces suos attollit superbia, avaritia, feritas. Inter tot fluctus & procellas, quis lares agros, parentes suos agnoscit? quis potuit curare origines suas ad posteros transmittere? Certe illa ætas magna facinora et vtriusq, fortunæ multa exempla suis tenebris obruta tenet, dum vnusquisq, pro aris et focis militat depositâ Commentariorum et Monumentorum curâ et anxietate. Hanc ego tandem aliquando in me suscepi, et rubiginem qua patrum meorum incuria, vel temporis iniuria, familiæ nostræ adhæsit, delendam curavi, vt veritati suus constat honos et claritas, et posteris non deessent exempla domestica, ad vitam suam formandam et dirigendam; præcipue ad laudãdum Devm optimum maximum qui dum facientes iniquitatem tanquam fœnũ velociter arescent, et quem admodum olera herbarum cito decident; nos tamen miseros homunciones hæreditare terram patitur, et tanta rerum omnium vicessitudine avitas retinere sedes. Psal: 37: 2: 9: Si in quibusdam hallucinari evidear, ne mihi vitio vertant filii lectores, qui primus post quadringentos plus minus annos, huic operi manum admovi; sed veritatem potius suis laboribus illustriorem reddant. Mihi deest otium, et quod scriptoribus maxime desiderandum, animus curarũ expers, tranquillus et quietus. Det Devs omnipotens vt commemoratio beneficiorum eius et seminatio quæ a Domino facta est ex nomine nostro me scriptorem, filios et nepotes lectores, officii nostri sedulo commonefaciat et misericordiæ suæ in Christo dignos reddat. Amen.

## The Preface in English.

When the family of the Rodeneyes first began, and whither their Ancestors were forrainers or natives of England, I cannot finde: the reason of this ignorance is because their roote runnes vp into those times, which by reason of horrible commotions & civill warres become darke & obscure. I call all those Ancestors the roote which lived before Sir Richard Rodeney who lived vnder Henry. 3. Edward. I. and Edward. 2. For they all like rootes vnder ground, haue left to posterity, a very vncertaine knowledge & remembrance of them, and such as a diligent searcher of truth, can hardly rest satisfied withall. Yet haue I recited their names, and what constant tradition in our Familey & their pedigree doth mention..

Many brave men lived before Agamemnon who are now buried in obscurity, a fate which befalles every age and every family; especially private famileys, of whom Writers take little care; and who seldome hunt after fame, which they leave to Princes & great men, whose actions serue for examples to those of lower orbes.

For that Richard de Rodeney wee have testimoney both publike

& private as cleare as the Sunne. Beyond him the times are darke & cloudy, without any furniture to this Argument. The publike Records reach no farther, neither amongst my private evidences doe I finde any thing besides the Genealogie or Pedigree.

Whatsoever wee know of great Britaine & her Inhabitants, wee take vpon the credit of some Monkes, from whom wee may obserue amongst other things, That multitudes of people came into this Iland, from divers parts of Evrope, gaping after wealth & honour. Nay wee haue had some of our Kings from the continent with great troopes of followers. As CANUTUS from Denmarke, That I looke no further backe to y^e^ Saxons, English, Romans, who were mingled with our natiues from Normandy WILLIAM, the first who made a great change here of King, Subiects Law & Language. From France STEPHEN a King in fact, though not in right: From Aquitaine HENRY. 2. Heyre to this Crowne by hereditary right from his Mother MAUD the Empresse, What shall I say of LEWIS of France, who in the reigne of King JOHN and his Sonn HENRY. 3. was crowned King by the revolting Nobility. What troubles & vexations did hee make what alterations whilest wearing our Diadem hee made a prey of London and the greatest part of the kingdome.

The warre betweene King JOHN and his subiects, raysed no small tempests amongst vs, and that betweene King STEPHEN & MAUD the Empresse no lesse, where the Sonne was against the Father, the neerest kinred & the best friends made a prey of each other. That of the Poet may as fitly be applyed to this age, as to POLYPHEMUS. AN HORRIBLE & DEFORMED MONSTER THAT WANTED AN EYE. Where nothing but pride avarice & cruelty were to be seene while wisedome charity and iustice disappeared and hid their heads. Now amonst such stormes of tempests who almost could finde out their Parents, or Patrimony, or who would take care for descents of familyes.

Certainely that age produced many worthy examples of both fortunes, which lye buried vnder the darkenesse of those times, & whilst every man fought for his life, they tooke no care to leaue Commentaries & Monuments behinde them. But now at last I haue taken this care vpon mee, & to file of y^t^ rust which by the negligence of my Ancestors, or by the iniury of time hath growen about our famyly, that truth may be restored to its honour, and posterity want no domesticke examples to guide & direct their liues: especially to prayse GOD for his mercyes to vs, whilst other evill-doers shall be cut downe like y^e^ grasse & wither like the greene herbe, yet hath hee continued vs to inherite y^e^ earth, & to keepe the seats of our Ancestors in y^e^ midst of so great changes. If I mistake in what I write, let not my Children whom I intend only to be my readers blame mee, who first after 500 yeares have vndertaken this worke, but rather cleare the passages by their industery, For my part I want leasure, & which Writers most desire a calme & quiet minde, free from cares & anxietyes. The LORD grant that my numbring vp his mercyes to my family, & the continuing of our name through so many ages, may stirre both



mee & my Readers to a carefull performance of our duties towards him, & make vs worthy Partakers of his mercy in CHRIST JESUS. AMEN AMEN.

The names of the severall Mannors which Sir Richard Rodeney dyed seized of, with their yearely rents—what became of those mentioned in the Pedigree, to be in Cornwall & Devon, I know not, unlesse the Daughters who were Heires before Sir Richard Rodeney carryed them away.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Stoke-Gifford since Stoke-Rodeney the annuall rent then | ... | 40 pounds |
| Backwell ... ... | ... | 70 pounds |
| Tilleyscourt ... ... | ... | 06 pounds |
| Twerton ... ... | ... | 27 pounds |
| Salford ... ... | ... | 15 pounds |
| Windford ... ... | ... | 18 pounds |
| Hallotrow ... ... | ... | 12 pounds |
| Lamyatt ... ... | ... | 30 pounds |
| Lovington ... ... | ... | 09 pounds |
| Dinder ... ... | ... | 13 pounds |
| Over-Badgeworth ... | ... | 24 pounds |
| Congresbury-Rodeney ... | ... | 16 pounds |
| In Bristoll about ... | ... | 50 pounds |
| The totall ... | ... | 330 pounds |

These Mannors are vpon the improved value twenty times the rent which comes to aboue Six thousand pounds by the yeare.

Besides these Mannors; they had the Demesnes at Rodeney-Stoke worth at this day Three hundred pounds per annum; and a Demesnes at Backwell worth Two hundreds pounds per annum. Besides a Parke at Backwell conteyning about One hundred and forty acres of land stored with Fallow-Deere and full of Great-Timber.

## NOSCE TEIPSVM

Cap: I. THAT the orignall & beginning of all the great nations of the earth (the Hebrewes only excepted) are so wrapped vp in all obscurity, that they are not to be discerned by the greatest wit and industry of man, is a truth so cleare and manifest, as if it were written with a beame from the Sunne; lesse marvayle is it if private familyes loose their springs, whose fame all others neglect, and themselues eyther through sloth and other diversions are not carefull to preserue; both the publike & private comming vnder the fate of great rivers whose streames & windings and issues are visible & apparant, but their fountaines and first heads hardly to be knowne besides it fareth with the intellectuall eye looking vpon times a farre off, as with the materiall eye vpon remote obiects; both are apt to giue false iudgements; and to relieue themselues only by coniectures neither are coniectures w^th^out due honour amongst wise men; for being the conclusions of reason drawne frō probable grounds, they suffice, if not to convince the vnderstanding, yet to giue convenient satisfaction,

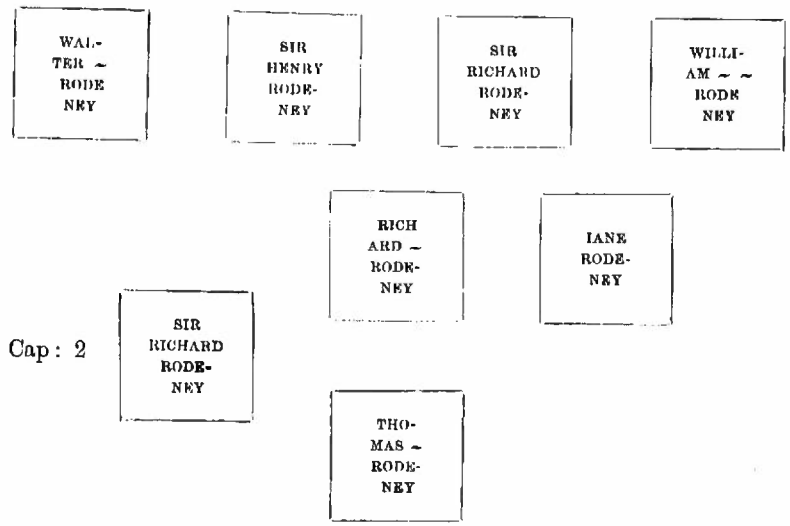
Historians haue alway vsed them, and the great Antiquary (Camden in Epist: ad Lectorem) saith if wee should exclude coniectures, wee should banish a great part of the best human learning out of the world; As a farther supply to these losses, common fame is received as an Authour of some authority; and in Storyes which run their roote high into ages past; no thing occurres more ordinarily, then these & the like phrases. So it was reported; the speach was; the fame went. Tenet fama, sic fertur; dicunt. LIVIVS Dec. 1.

Let no man therefore accuse me of vanity, or ambition if I make vse of fame & coniectures, when I cannot produce better witnesses, till I come to 400 yeares, I will proue my matter by the evidence of publike recordes, private deeds, seales and reasons drawne from matter necessary; if afterwards I grope in the darke, Let it not displease my Reader more then it doth mee; for I blesse GOD for his mercyes to my family; and comfort my self not a little with this hope, that the foundation of it was layde in the favour of the ALMIGHTY, because hee hath vouchsaffed to continue it thus long a member of his Holy-Church, Whereas Hee hath not dealt so with many other familyes; but suffered them like Meteors to waste in a short time, after their first appearance; I speake not this to iustifie our selues aboue other men; For I know that all of vs more or lesse haue been overcome by human frailty, and that the Convulsions of our worldly fortunes in this present age, haue been the iust punishm$^{ts}$ of our sinnes, that liue in it, or our forefathers or both. But in this I reioyce that neither in the memory of mā or in Recordes beyond that even to our first roote doth there remaine any staine or impression of ŧhose foule deeds, which sticke fast to some other houses; As of murder treason rebellion & the like, Their faults whatsoever are not written in great letters, or become the subiect of publike fame, or the Courts of Iustice; but as they lived without scandall, so they dyed without shame, goeing out of the world by the ordinary gate of sicknesse, and never by the hand of violence, some few excepted of ancient times, y$^{t}$ died in the Warres. And the late vnfortunate Gentleman SIR GEORGE RODENEY who fell by his owne sword, And although the civell dissentions in the Barrons warres, did engage most mē in one side or other, yet they for anything I can finde lived in a calme amidst those tempests, & were not entangled in the Quarrells of the time, the reason of it may be that having a firme estate of their owne & able to subsist of themselues they kept independent, living within their owne Orbe, and mastering those affections of envy & ambition, which commonly doe but rayse men for a greater fall.

They had been alwayes from the time wee first discover them, of the middle ranke of Subiects which is the most safe place. Cives medii salvi sunt maxime, Arist: lib 4$^{o}$: cap: 11$^{o}$ Few or none of better estates vnder the degree of Lords, vntill the great floud of Church-lands (whereof they possessed not one foote) improved many mens fortunes to a great height. Nay which is strange, from SIR RICHARD RODENEY, who was borne vnder HENRY the third, to SIR GEORGE RODENEY who dyed in the 42 of ELIZABETH the space of



aboue 400 yeares, they stood like Mare mortuum, and neither ebbed nor flowed in their fortunes; they were so provident not to lessen. But neither by marriages which is the ordinary step of augmentation, nor by any other meanes did they make any addition, insomuch, that at this day I giue the Coate single, which my first Ancestor gaue, without quartering any other; Only MAVRICE RODENEY sold land in Bristoll about ffifty pound old rent. And SIR IOHN RODENEY my great Grandfather made some alterations by setling the two Mannours of Congresbery and Over-Badgeworth being Forty pound old rent vpon his two younger Sonnes, which last had proved no alteration at all at this time; if other accidents had not befallen vs, which hath given the Period to our worldly fortunes; but these things will better appeare in the particular passages which follow and will become part of the Readers observation.




Cap: 2

THE entrance which I will make into this worke shall be by handling these seven in one chapter my evidence concerning them, being almost of one nature, & of lesse strength, then those which follow; & for which I must be beholding to common fame & probabilities to know them, which I will recite only and leaue as I received, without straining for arguments to gaine the Antiquitie of a hundred yeares or more. It hath been a constant traditiō in our family, that wee came into this land with MAVD the Emprisse, from forraigne parts & that for service done by RODENEY in her Warres against King STEPHEN the Vsurper; Shee gaue them Lands & Estates within this Kingdome. I confesse I haue no evidence by mee to prove this tradition besides the Pedigree; yet my want thereof will not make it false in it selfe, though it gaine the lesse credit w$^{th}$ others. There was an Evidence which would haue much strengthned this tradition; but it miscarried at the time of SIR

GEORGE RODENEY'S death, whereof I received information from my Mother, who had seene it often, & knew that my Father was exceedingly displeased for the losse of it, which was a Peice of Brasse of the length & bredth of two foote, or thereabouts wherein was insculped in ancient characters the names of those Mannours and Lands given by the Emprisse.

Of SIR HENRY RODENEY, the second man in the Pedigree, there is mention made in the White Booke belonging to y^e^ Deane & Chapter of Welles, as Doctor BARLOW the late Deane of Wells my Sonne GEORGE his Godfather did informe mee; There being suites of Law between the Deane & Chapter, and some others about Lands, all parties referred themselues to the arbitrement of SIR HENRY RODENEY this was in the reigne of K: HENRY the Second, which agreeth well in point of time with the note set on him in the Pedigree, that hee was Steward to the young King HENRY who was crowned in his Fathers lifetime.

I will here insert what Doctor PIERCE told mee goeing to visit him the 4^th^ day of May 1638 to wit, That hee had read my name in an Ancient Booke belonging to the Cathedrall Church of Wells, and found the said name as ancient as the foundation of that Church, which was almost three hundred yeares before the Conquest. Whether our family descended of that man or no, or whether his Posteritie went into the parts beyond the Seas and at last came over with MAVD the Emprisse according to the tradition aforesaid as a thing vncertaine I shall mention no further; yet it is possible it might be so. M^r^ RICE DAVIES who married a Daughter of M^r^ MAVRICE RODENEY told mee of a River in Wales called ÆBBA RODENEY, and that it was so called of the RODENEYS who were slaine there; Now the note in the Pedigree speakes of SIR RICHARD RODENEY who was slaine at Hereford by LEOLIN Prince of Wales in the yeare of grace 1234 and of his eldest Sonne whose name was RICHARD, also slaine with his Father.

There is mention in the Pedigree of SIR RICHARD RODENEY slaine at Acres, in the fourth yeare of RICHARD. I. and of WILLIAM RODENEY who dyed in y^e^ way to Rome as hee went to the Pope, Embassador from King IOHN and was buried at Viterbon. That SIR RICHARD RODENEY who was slaine by LEOLIN Prince of Wales was married to IANE the Daughter of SIR IOHN EASTLEY Knight, and that hee had two sonnes, RICHARD slaine as aforesaid with his Father & THOMAS, That RICHARD the elder Brother married MARGARET y^e^ Daughter of BVRNELL, and left one Daughter only named IANE [who was that same IANE[1]] who was married to SIR THOMAS PATISHALL Knight, That THOMAS Brother to RICHARD and Heyre male to his Father married MARGARET, Daughter to SIR ARNOLD MOVNTNEY by whom hee had issue, SIR RICHARD RODENEY Knight, of whom wee are to speake next. Onely wee will part from these Seven, with this one observation, That RICHARD the sixth man in the Pedigree left only a Daughter behinde him; But what Land shee carryed out of the family is vnknowen.

[1] Erased.

*(To be continued.)*