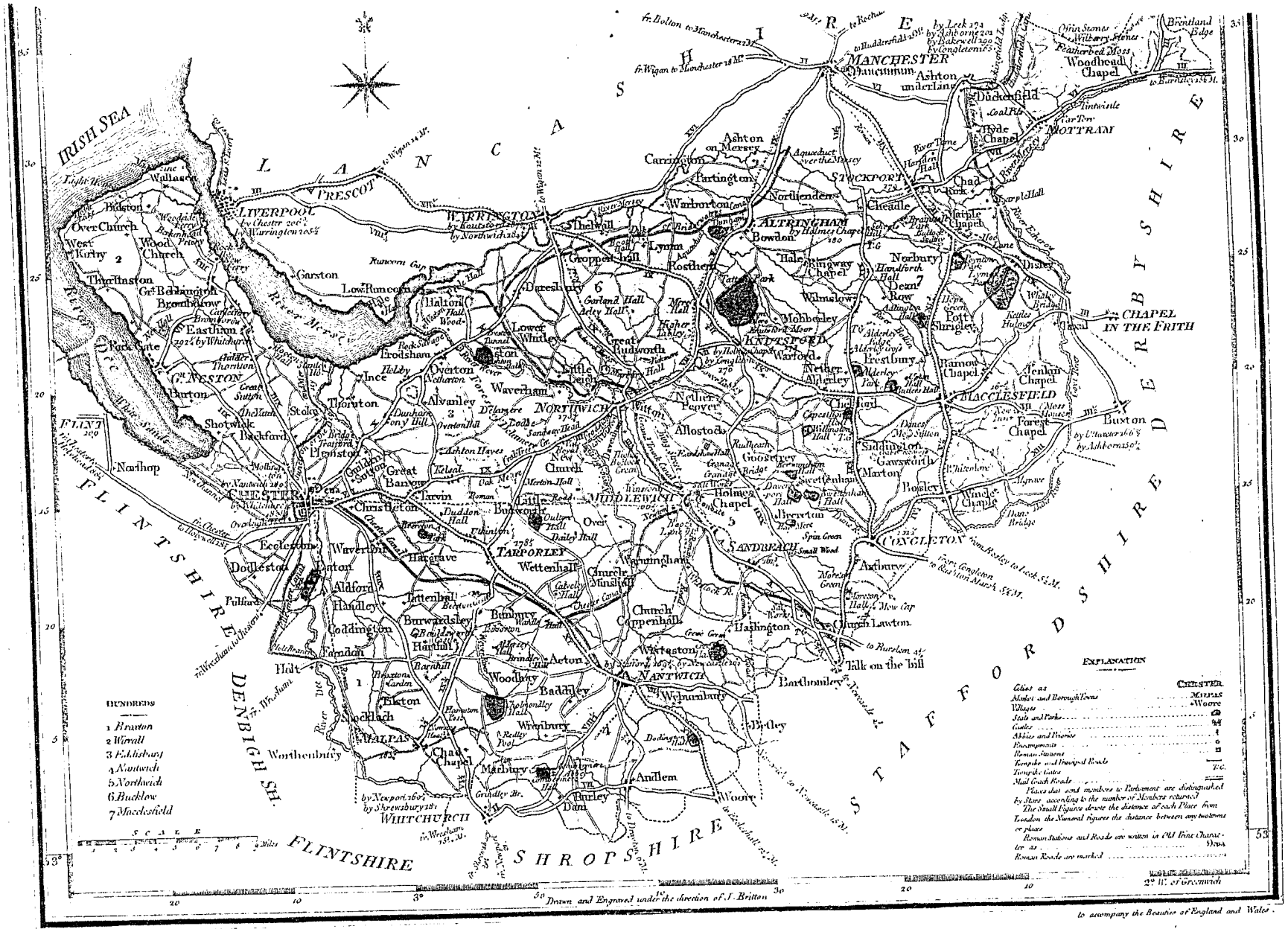
CHESHIRE.

Name, and Early History.—Previous to the Roman invasion, this county was occupied by the *Cornavii*, a name of extremely dubious etymology; but probably meaning "inhabitants of the winding streams."—The Romans made it part of *Flavia Cæsariensis*—It subsequently belonged to the kingdom of Mercia; after this, it fell into the hands of the Danes, who being defeated by Alfred the Great, that monarch made this district a province of the kingdom of the West Saxons. The present *name* of the county is derived from the Saxon word *Cestrescyre*. From the earliest records of our history this district has always enjoyed a peculiar civil jurisdiction. Alfred constituted Etheldred, a prince of the race of the Saxon kings, to be duke or governor of it. They enjoyed this dignity till they were deprived of it by Canute the Dane, who vested the government in the Earls of Chester. After the Conquest, William still maintained the government in the Earls thereof; to the 2d Earl, Hugh Lupus, he granted still more extensive powers in the province, and made it a palatine county, conferring upon it sovereign authority. The Earls held an independent parliament, and courts of law, in which treason and other offences against the *Sword of Chester* were as cognizable as all such offences would have been at the Court of Westminster against the crown itself. The sword with which Lupus was invested is still preserved in the British Museum. Lupus in his turn created 8 barons, to whom he also delegated an inferior degree of judicial authority over their own vassals. The barons had their peculiar and independent courts, and had even power of life and death in all cases not immediately belonging to the Earl's sword, or the royal authority.—Henry III. made some alteration in the government of this county. He first vested the earldom in the king's eldest son, who is therefore to this day Earl of Chester. After the lapse of three centuries, the palatine government was materially changed and weakened. Henry VIII. first made the county subordinate to the crown; but he did not so far destroy its independence, but that he left it possessed of considerable privileges, which it still maintains, being a palatine county. Except in cases of error, foreign plea, and foreign vouchers, all determinations out of the county are deemed void, "*et coram non judice*:" i. e. as having been made before one who is not a proper judge, or an inadequate tribunal. And indeed for no crime except that of treason can any inhabitant of this county be tried out of it, having its own Judge of the court at Chester. The present Chief Justice is Sir William Garrow, His Majesty's Attorney-General; the other Judge, Mr. Justice Burton.

Situation, Boundaries, Form, Extent, Population, and Divisions.—This is an *inland* county, *bounded* on the N. by Lancashire and a part of Yorkshire; on the E. by Staffordshire and Derbyshire; on the S. by Shropshire and a small detached part of Flintshire; and on the W. by Denbighshire, Flintshire, and the river Dee. One of its hundreds, however, is situated between the estuaries of the rivers Dee and Mersey, and is bounded at its N.W. extremity by the Irish sea.—The *form* of this county approaches to an oval, excepting that it has two projecting horns extending E. and W. from its Northern side: the one is the hundred of Wirral, just alluded to; the other is a portion of the Macclesfield hundred, branching out between Derbyshire and Yorkshire. The *extent* of the county, from horn to horn, is nearly 60 miles; but its greatest real length, taken across the county, not quite 40. Its greatest breadth, from N. to S., 30 miles; and contains about 670,000 acres.—The *population* returns of 1811 give the following estimate: 41,187 inhabited houses; 110,840 males, 116,190 females: making a total population of 227,031 inhabitants; having increased, since the year 1801, 35,280.—This county is divided into 1 city, 7 hundreds, 11 market towns, and 81 parishes; besides 9 parishes in Chester, which is a city and county of itself. It is in the diocese of its own name, and contains 8 deaneries.

Air, Surface, Soil, Water, and Produce.—With the exception of Westmoreland and Lancashire, it has been observed, that more rain falls in this than in any other county. The prevailing winds are the westerly, blowing from the Irish sea and the Atlantic ocean. Hence the air, though often moist and damp, is mild and temperate; nor are the frosts at any time either long or severe. Four-fifths of the county have generally a flat even surface; but in other parts the hills and rocks are high and barren. The districts on the borders of Derbyshire and some parts of Staffordshire have numerous rude and projecting eminences. Alderley Edge, about 5 miles from the increasing town of Macclesfield, is a singularly formed hill, rising gradually from the S.S.E., and falling almost perpendicularly towards the N. The high rock, called *Tegg's Nose*, near Langley, on the borders of Staffordshire, is also a remarkably high and bare rock; but perhaps the most remarkable object of this kind is the insulated rock of Beeston, about two miles from Tarporley, near Chester. The perpendicular height of this rock, which is composed of sand-stone, is about 366 feet, reckoning from Beeston bridge; and on its utmost summit are the remains of an ancient castle erected in 1220, and then deemed impregnable. So conspicuous is this castle from almost all parts of the surrounding country, that it is proverbial in the neighbourhood in expressing any other obvious object: "As plain as Beeston Castle."—The *soil* is so extremely varied and intermixed, that it is impossible to give any concise adequate description of it. Clay and sand are, however, the most prevailing kinds; but these are every where blended and confused: on this account clayey loam, or sandy loam, according as one or the other prevails, have been thought most accurately descriptive of the general nature of the Cheshire soils. Heath, peat moss, or marsh land prevail in parts bordering on Derbyshire; in the *Macclesfield Forest*, as it is still called; in *Delamere Forest*, and *Frodsham Marsh*, near Chester; and in *Featherbed Moss*, the very utmost limb of the N.E. point of the county.—The *natural productions* of the county are chiefly FOSSIL SALT, corn, timber, and coal. The Salt-Rocks in the *Wiches* are uncommonly rich and productive. There is also a little copper and lead ore in the parish of Alderley; but it has done very little beyond the expense of procuring, smelting, &c. There is also here a portion of good freestone. Coal is plentiful and cheap; but perhaps not equal in goodness to the Lancashire or Staffordshire coal. It is plentiful in the hundred of Wirral, near Park-gate; and still more so between Macclesfield and Stockport; and a little, but very bad, and fit only for manufacturing purposes, on Macclesfield Common, nearly a mile from that town.—Cheshire is a well watered county. The principal rivers are the *Mersey* and the *Dee*. Besides these, there are several rivulets,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SHROPSHIRE
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DENBIGHSH.
MANCHESTER
LIVERPOOL
PRESCOT
WARRINGTON
ALTRINGHAM
STOCKPORT
MOTTRAM
KNUTSFORD
MACCLESFIELD
CHAPEL IN THE FRITH
NORTHWICH
MIDDLEWICH
NANTWICH
CONGLETON
TARPORLEY
CHESTER
FLINT
HALPAS
WHITCHURCH
HUNDREDS
1 Broxton
2 Wirrall
3 Edisbury
4 Nantwich
5 Northwich
6 Bucklow
7 Macclesfield
SCALE
Miles
EXPLANATION
Cities &c
Market and Borough Towns
Villages
Seats and Parks
Castles
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Places that send members to Parliament are distinguished by Stars according to the number of Members returned
The Small figures denote the distance of each Place from London the Numeral figures the distance between any two towns or places
Roman Stations and Roads are written in Old Roman Character &c
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MOLLAS
WOORE
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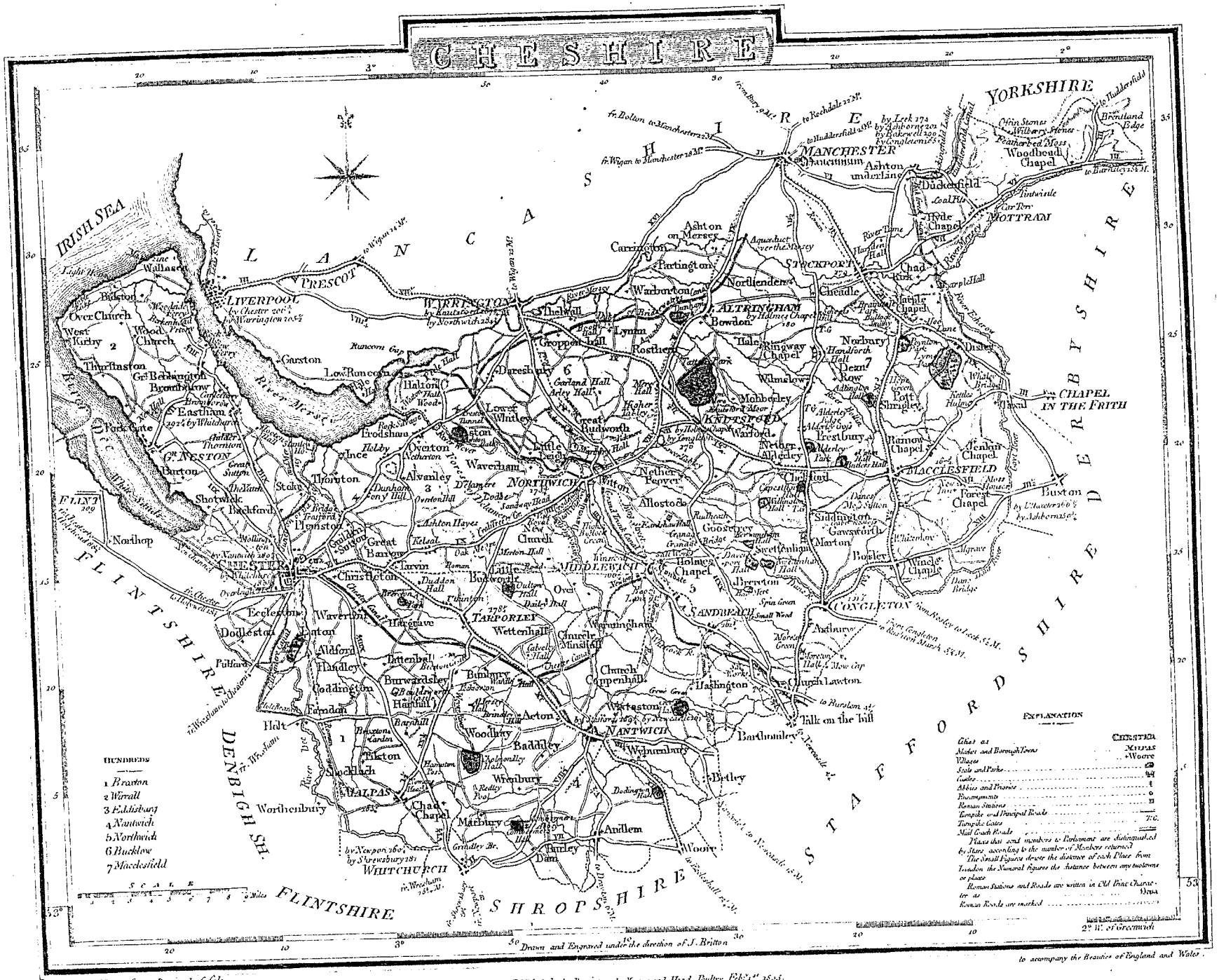
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