

**THE MODEL MERCHANT OF THE
MIDDLE AGES,
EXEMPLIFIED IN THE STORY OF
WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649444625

The Model Merchant of the Middle Ages, Exemplified in the Story of Whittington and His Cat
by Samuel Lysons

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

www.triestepublishing.com

SAMUEL LYSONS

**THE MODEL MERCHANT OF THE
MIDDLE AGES,
EXEMPLIFIED IN THE STORY OF
WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT**



The true portraicture of RICHARD WHITTINGTON, thrise Lord Maior of London, a vertuous and godly man, full of good Workes (and those famous); he builded the Gate of London, callod Newegate, which before was a miserable doungeon. He builded Whittington Colledge, & made it an Almose house for poors people. Also he builded a greate parte of y^e hospitall of S. Bortholomewes in Westemithfield in London. He also builded the beautifull Library at y^e Gray Friars in London, called Christe's Hospitall; Also he builded the Guilde Halle Chappell, and increased a greate parte of the East end of the saied halle, beside many other good workes.

THE MODEL MERCHANT

OF THE MIDDLE AGES,

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE

Richard

STORY OF WHITTINGTON AND HIS CAT:

BEING

AN ATTEMPT TO RESCUE THAT INTERESTING STORY FROM THE REGION OF
FABLE, AND TO PLACE IT IN ITS PROPER POSITION IN THE
LEGITIMATE HISTORY OF THIS COUNTRY.

BY THE

REV. SAMUEL LYSONS, M.A.,

RECTOR OF MODMARTON, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, AND PERPETUAL

CURATE OF ST. LUKE'S, GLOUCESTER;

AUTHOR OF "THE ROMANS IN GLOUCESTERSHIRE," "ÆSOP'S FABLES
CHRISTIANIZED," ETC.

"——— Now I think of the sonne
Of Merchandy—Richard of Whittingdon,
That Loude sterre and chief chosen flour;
What hath by him our England of honoure?
And what profit hath been of his riches?
And yet lasteth daily of his worthinesse."

Libel of England's Policie, &c.,
printed in Hackluyt's Collection.

LONDON:
HAMILTON, ADAMS, AND CO., 33, PATERNOSTER ROW.

GLOUCESTER:
A. LEA, 2, WESTGATE STREET.

1860.

THIS MEMOIR
OF ONE OF THE MOST
DISTINGUISHED MEN OF THEIR COUNTY,
(IN THE HOPE THAT THE
EXAMPLE THEREIN CONTAINED MAY BE
EXTENSIVELY FOLLOWED,)
IS AFFECTIONATELY
DEDICATED TO THE YOUTH OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE,
BY THEIR SINCERE FRIEND,
SAMUEL LYSONS.

Hempsted Court,

September 19th, 1860.

"All thynges in this booke that ye shall rede,
Doe as ye lyst, there shall no manne you binde
Them to beleve as surely as your crede ;
But notwithstanding certes in my mynde,
I durst well swere as true ye shall them fynde,
In every point each answer by and by,
As are the judgements of Astronomye."

Sir Tho. More to them that seek fortune.

"Seest thou a man diligent in his business? He shall stand before kings: he shall
not stand before mean men."—*Proverbs* xxii. 29.

PREFACE.

IF books were as scarce in the present day as they were at the time when the subject of this Memoir lived, no apology would be needed for adding one more small volume to the catalogue of existing publications; but when the author himself admits the impossibility of making acquaintance with even a thousandth part of the literature of the age in which he lives, some sort of excuse ought, perhaps, to be offered for obtruding another volume, however small, upon a public already satiated with food for the mind. In the present instance he feels that the subject of his biographical notice has never met with the commonest justice; that his hero has hitherto been made the handle of a mere childish romance;* that he has been cast aside as a myth by some graver writers, or has been so misrepresented in the histories hitherto presented to the public, which are full of inaccuracies and anachronisms, that it seems difficult to place his story in its true light, so as to claim for so distinguished a character his proper place in the biography of our country: he trusts, therefore, that this notice of so celebrated a man will not be thought altogether out of place. The author wishes it to be clearly understood that this little work does not pretend to give a full development of the life and character of Richard Whittington; it is simply thrown out as an essay, compiled from documents which have come under the author's

* The author fully believes that ninety-nine persons out of a hundred are not aware that the history of Richard Whittington is anything else than a romance, or child's story, and have no idea that he had a real existence.

notice—attracted as he was to the subject by the fact of his having in his possession an early copy of Elstrack's rare and curious engraving of Whittington, coupled with the further discovery that he was a fellow-County-man—and has gradually extended itself to its present length out of its original intention, simply as an instructive and entertaining lecture to the inhabitants of his county town, and is presented to the public at the earnest request of many who heard it. Being unwilling therefore to place before his readers any statements which he could not substantiate by documentary and other evidence, he has taken such pains as time and opportunity have allowed, in the midst of a variety of other pursuits, to collect materials from authentic records which may, he trusts, lead others who have more time at their disposal to give some attention to the subject, and follow out the biography of a man so pre-eminently worthy of an abler pen and greater research.

The author has to acknowledge his especial obligations to Mr. Brewer, the able Secretary of the City of London School, and author of the *Life of John Carpenter*, (one of Whittington's executors,) for the assistance he has given him, in most liberally lending him a collection of notes which he had himself made with a view to a similar biography. His thanks are also due to Henry Eugene Barnes, Esq., Clerk to the Mercers' Company, for permission to inspect the original Ordinances of Whittington's Hospital and other interesting documents in the possession of that Honorable Company. He would also wish to record his thanks to Sir Charles Young, Garter King at Arms, to Mr. Courthope, Somerset Herald, and Mr. Addams, of the Herald's College, London, for the kind manner in which they placed the documents of the College at his disposal.

THE MODEL MERCHANT

OF THE

MIDDLE AGES.



WELL do I remember the extreme delight with which, when a boy, I revelled in the popular story of *Whittington* and his Cat*. I confess that I took an immense interest in the narrative—an interest, perhaps, only surpassed by the disappointment I have felt in after life in hearing, on all sides, that it was a mere fiction, simply a tale made up to amuse children. Nevertheless, a certain amount of desultory reading, in which I have indulged in later years, introducing to my notice passages scattered here and there in historical and old topographical works, coupled with a very curious and ancient portrait which I have in my possession, have called my attention to the question of the reality of my hero's existence, and have led me to make further inquiries into the subject. The result is that, strange as many parts of the story may be, it appears, to my mind, to have a strong claim to admission into a prominent place in the history and biography of our country. It is with the view, therefore, of rescuing this interesting

* The name of Whittington is written in various ways:—Whitingdon, Whytynton, Whytyngdon, Whittington, Whytyngton, Wityndon, Whytindon, Witinton, Whytinton, Wittingdon, Wittington, Wityngton. I believe that the most usual is with the single *t*, as his will gives it, and a *y*,—Whityngton. I have, however, preferred to adopt that mode of spelling by which the name has been more generally known in modern times.