



*King Charles III Coronation  
As Seen Through The Baron's Eye*

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On Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2023, King Charles III was crowned, in the sight of God and his people. As Baron of the Cinque Ports, I represented Tenterden at his Coronation Ceremony, it was a very humbling experience and one I will never forget.

Before sharing the day's event, I should like to give the back story how Tenterden became a Cinque Port and how the Mayor gained the title of Honorary Baron.

It all started in 1041, when Edward the Confessor set out his requirement to the south coast Portsmen to use 20 of their ships, each with a crew of 21, for 15 days of service annually. This was the start of the formation of ports serving the monarch.



In 1066, Duke of Normandy, William the Conqueror defeated King Harold on Senlac Hill, seven miles from Hastings. At the end of the bloody, all-day battle, Harold was killed with an arrow shot in the eye.

William was determined to be seen as the legitimate king of England. He set his sights on being crowned in the new Abbey Church that Edward the Confessor had built beside his Palace at Westminster. For almost a thousand years, Westminster Abbey, with the Shrine of St Edward, King and Confessor, at its heart, has remained the place of coronation for our monarchs.

William's Charter (written then in old French), coined the term "Cinque Ports" as at that time there were only five recognised ports. In return, William's requirement was for the annual provision of 57 ships for 15 days.

Cinque Port Barons were first invited to coronations by King Richard I (known as the Lionheart) Coronation on the 3 September 1189 as King of England. Richard's coronation ceremony was remarkable as it was the start of contemporary accounts being recorded.



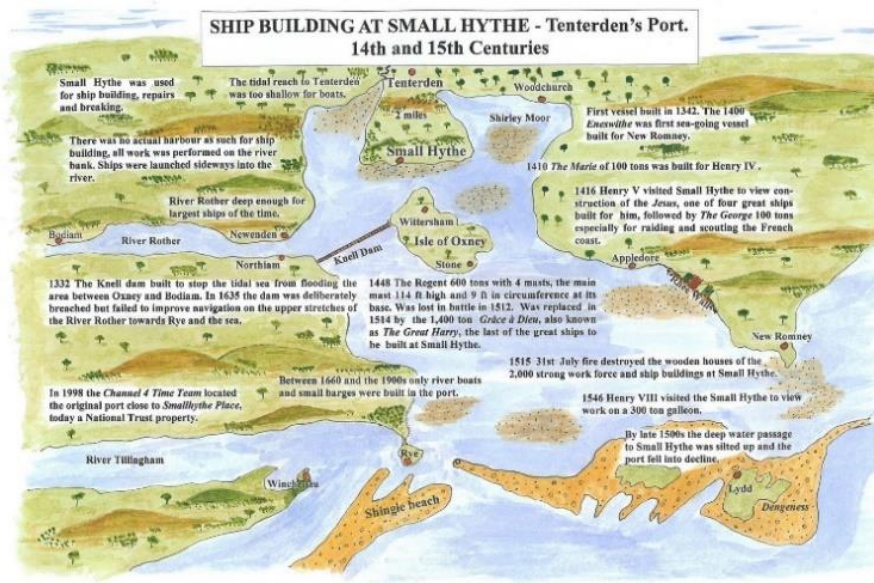
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From then, the Cinque Port Barons, by tradition, carried the canopy over the monarch as he or she walked to and from the coronation. Afterwards, the Barons normally gave a share of the canopy to Christ Church at Canterbury. Another tradition was for the Barons to sit on the immediate right hand of the King or Queen at the banquet that followed the ceremony. That was the cause of much of the brawling among those who wanted to be regarded as "first at the banquet."

The last time the canopies were borne by the Cinque Port Barons, was at the coronation of George IV where they had the cheek to ask the king for the state treasury to pay for the colourful robes they wore. That request was swiftly rejected.

William IV, who reigned for only seven years, did not invite them nor did his successor Queen Victoria in 1837 who was not amused. But Edward VII renewed the tradition of attending the coronation in 1902, but without the merit of carrying the canopy.

Today the Cinque Ports maintain their historical and ceremonial significance. Their label "Cradle of the English Navy" is justified with pride in our nation's maritime achievements. The Cinque Ports fleet had aimed at undisputed sovereignty in the English Channel and fulfilled the Kingdom's defences



It was only in 1449, that Tenterden officially became a member of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports though a Charter issued by Henry VI, in recognition of our ship building. Today only 14 members exist within the confederation. The Lord Warden of the

Cinque Ports remains the "Keeper of the Coast" and notable holders of the post have included the Duke of Wellington, and Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother. The medieval privilege to claim attendance at a Coronation continues to this day and thus may be awarded to a "Baron of the Cinque Ports".



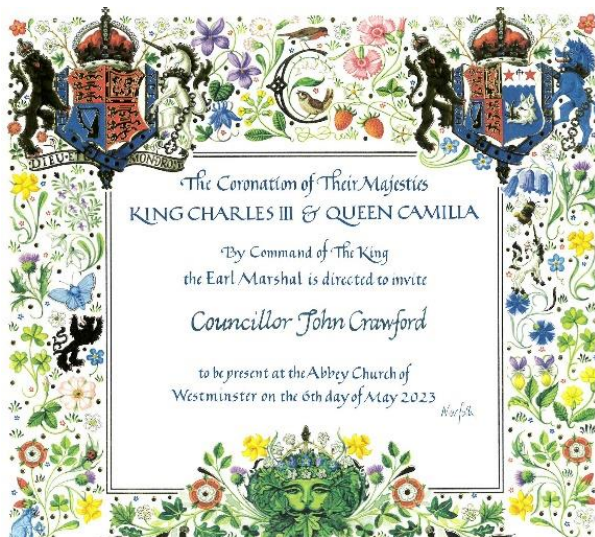
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On the 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022, great sorrow spread across our town, and the entire country, on the announcement her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II had died at Balmoral Castle. She was mourned by our town, our country, the commonwealth and across the world. She was loved and admired her for her service she provided to our great nation and the commonwealth.

With great sorrow, there is also great happiness, when the Prince of Wales took his rightful place as our new monarch, which signifies the continuity of our nation's legacy.

As Mayor of Tenterden, I read the St James Palace proclamation and added my own thoughts and best wishes on the town hall balcony on the 12th September 2022. Prayers for our new monarch, were read by Canon Lindsay Hammond & Reverend Jeanette Kennett. The ceremony ended with me as Mayor, leading three cheers for His Majesty the King and singing of the national anthem. The day was extremely well attended with well-wishers from the town and beyond.

It was announced that King Charles III Coronation, a state ceremony was to be held on Saturday 6th May 2023. His majesty requested a smaller coronation compared to his mother, with a guest list of 2,200 attendees, to include senior members of the UK Royal Family; Royalty from abroad; politicians from our government and overseas; celebrities; representatives of the UK community; plus the 14 Cinque Port Mayors, as Barons.



I was humbled to be invited as Mayor of Tenterden to Represent Tenterden Cinque Port town as one of the 14 Barons. To say I am very honoured and privileged, would be an understatement.

On this occasion, we were not asked to perform any duty, though my predecessor Baron Stanley Day did hold the Standard for the High Commissioner for Ceylon in the 1953 coronation.

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Prior to the King's coronation, all the Barons stayed in modest accommodation in Woolwich Arsenal to avoid a long drive from our home towns. It was an early start before the dawn chorus birds could start singing. We all congregated for a very early breakfast, though we were so animated, none of us really felt hungry. The Barons were in their morning suits and the Baronesses in their fine dresses.

After numerous group photographs, the coach picked us up at 06:30 am and drove us to the south side of Lambeth Bridge, arriving around 07:15. Though the weather forecast days before had threatened heavy rains, we were welcomed by a warm



and still morning. It was a pleasure to stroll across the bridge enjoying the magical sight of Westminster Place on the north side of the Thames.

All along the bridge, there were smiling faces - the official marshals looked after us and encouraged photographs. We had a wonderful backdrop with the sun sneaking through the clouds, for a group photograph and a set of individual ones.

On the north side of the bridge, we were met by more smiling faces asking for our ticket invitation. With them were a group of police executing the serious side of their job, but nevertheless joined in with the banter and good humour. It already started to feel like a party event.

We entered Victoria Tower gardens and were met by the Lieutenant Governors for Jersey, Isle of man and Guernsey, where we chatted for a few minutes talking about pubs in Jersey. Afterwards, a vast marquee swallowed us up - it was the Coronation equivalent of the Heathrow Airport security checks. There were rows of body scanners two thirds of the way down, each with its own queue, which we joined after proving our identify with a passport and driving license.



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Time in the queue went quickly, as I had a long and very pleasant conversation with one of the Lord Lieutenants, who I think was Peaches Golding from Bristol.

At the scanner we had the normal routine of emptying our pockets, but were allowed to continue wearing our badge of office. Strangely when we went through the scanner, it beeped warning the officer the presence of metal. One of the female officers used a hand held scanner to find another hidden object and came up trumps. I had forgotten I had a packet of polos which was wrapped in foil. Nevertheless, the officer joking said I was allowed to take them through.



Our exit was through Black Rod's Garden, past the House of Lords to King Richard I statue on the right.

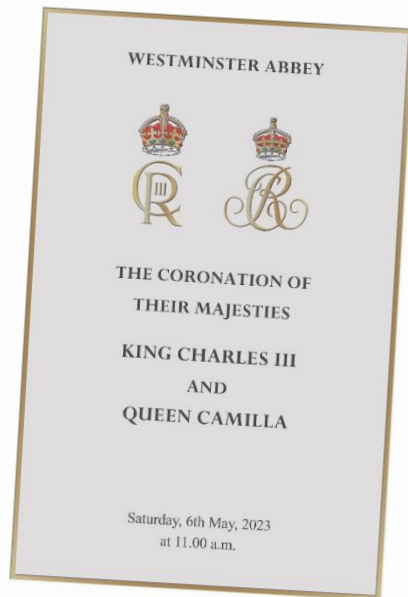
Since he was the first King to invite the Barons to his coronation, it was only fitting we had another group photo.

Finally, we reached the entrance of Westminster Abbey at 08:15 and were met by the Westminster Abbey Dean, The Very Reverend Dr David Hoyle.

As I was the last of the 14 to enter, I managed to have a quiet chat and explained who we were and the privilege bestowed upon us for attending.



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Walking into the Abbey we were greeted by a very officious lady, who in a loud voice instructed that no photographs were to be taken during the service. As far as I am aware this rule was observed. We each received the Coronation Order of Service which is absolutely magnificent. I did ask if there was A Spare for our Tenterden Museum, but was advised to ask later, but unfortunately not. Looking around the Nave, we were completely amazed how full the Abbey had already become and the service did not start until 11:00. An usher took us to the zone where we were to sit. Three of us were to the side of the pulpit and the remaining Barons by the Quire Aisle.

The music before the 11:00 service commenced at 09:30 on the dot, together with the switching off of the Abbey's internet service to prevent streaming to social media. I have been to a number of Albert Hall Proms of outstanding music, but to listen to this extraordinary two and half hour arrangement was out of this world. The acoustics in the Abbey were amazing. The quality was at the next level and utterly breath-taking. The extracts were mainly from eminent composers: Johann

## *Music before the service:*

*The Monteverdi Choir and English Baroque Soloists perform*

Magnificat anima mea *Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750)*  
from Magnificat in D BWV 243

Ehre sei dir, Gott, gesungen *Johann Sebastian Bach*  
from Christmas Oratorio BWV 248

Singet dem Herrn ein neues Lied *Johann Sebastian Bach*  
from New Year Cantata BWV 190

Ecce sacerdos magnus *Anton Bruckner (1824–96)*

*Matthew Jorysz, Assistant Organist, Westminster Abbey, plays*

Alla breve in D BWV 589 *Johann Sebastian Bach*

*The Coronation Orchestra plays*

Brighter visions shine afar\* *Judith Weir (b 1954)*

Jupiter from The Planets *Gustav Holst (1874–1934)*  
arranged by Iain Farrington (b 1977)

Crossing the Stone/Tros y Garreg *Karl Jenkins (b 1944)*  
Soloist: *Alis Huws*

Sacred Fire\* *Sarah Class (b 1979)*  
Soloist: *Pretty Yende* text by *Grahame Davies (b 1964)*

Crown Imperial *William Walton (1902–83)*  
composed for the Coronation of George VI (1937)  
arranged by *John Rutter (b 1945)*

Fantasia on Greensleeves *Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872–1958)*

Be thou my vision; Triptych for Orchestra\* *traditional Irish melody*  
*Nigel Hess (b 1953), Roderick Williams (b 1965),*  
*and Shirley Thompson (b 1958)*

*The Assistant Organist plays*

Voices of the World\* *Iain Farrington*

*The Orchestra plays*

Coronation March\* *Patrick Doyle (b 1953)*

Trumpet Tune *Henry Purcell (1659–95)*  
Soloists: *Jason Edwards* *Organist of Westminster Abbey 1679–95*  
*and Matthew Williams* arranged by *John Rutter*

Arrival of the Queen of Sheba *George Frideric Handel (1685–1759)*  
from Solomon

Oh, had I Jubal's lyre from Joshua *George Frideric Handel*  
Soloist: *Pretty Yende*

Care selve from Atalanta *George Frideric Handel*  
Soloist: *Pretty Yende*

Nimrod *Edward Elgar (1857–1934)*  
from Variations on an Original Theme arranged by *Iain Farrington*

*Peter Holder, Sub-Organist, Westminster Abbey, plays*

Flourish for an Occasion *William Harris (1883–1973)*

Prelude on 'Rhosymedre' *Ralph Vaughan Williams*

\*composed for this service

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Sebastian Bach; George Frideric Handel; and Iain Farrington. They were presumably three of King Charles favourite composers.

A very pretty young and well-dressed lady appeared to be lost and was asking if the seat next to us was free - we had to say no as it was occupied by one of the Barons. However, I did point out that two rows in front there appeared to be spare seat. She was pleased with that suggestion and claimed it for the whole service. It was not until later; I was told the lady was in fact Katy Perry – small world. Over the next hour there was a constant stream of the respectable and the famous walking past us looking for friends and the toilet facilities.

At 09:30 there was a steady stream of foreign royalty and heads of state walking up the Nave Aisle, all very happy to be part of our UK special occasion. There are too many names to mention, but the list was impressive. For me, I will never be present at an event where you witness so many powerful and eminent people in a very short period of time. Yes, there were TV reality and competition presenters such as Ant and Dec who I met in the Abbey. But it was the distinguished guests that was so impressive, those with the real power to change for the better, the way of life for the world and its democracy.

At 11:00, the King Charles arrived and you were able to hear a pin drop. He and Camilla looked amazingly calm, regal and in full control of the occasion. One could not help but be impressed with the organisation ensuring that everything went smoothly and it did.

Being in the Nave, one could not see the alter or the actual service, but with the large televisions displays on both sides of the Abbey, no one missed any part of the ceremony.

There is one part, known as “The Recognition”, where there is congregation participation. The Archbishop reads various statements and we all responded by “God save King Charles”. It felt like we had actually contributed to his coronation.

Sometime later, The Right Honourable Rishi Sunak the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Northern Ireland read the Epistle to the Colossians. The reading took place on the pulpit about four metres from where I was sitting.

We didn't see the Anointment as this takes place behind private screens.



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Afterwards the Archbishop placed the St Edward's crown on the King's head, but it required a certain amount of adjustment to sit elegantly and firmly.

Of the hymns sung, I made national television – my fame for 2½ seconds singing “Praise, my soul, the King of heaven”. If I had known, I

would have practiced a few days before so I looked proficient.

Amazingly, nearly five hours had elapsed since we arrived until the time we left. No doubt the quickest passage of time I have ever experienced. To be honest, I did have one comfort break where I raised my hand so the usher could show me out to the outside facilities.



At the end of the service we had an excellent view of the royalty and previous PMs.

At the very end, we left the same way we came in, through the main entrance.



A day I will treasure forever of privilege, excitement, exhilaration and pure heaven.

The following day, the town of Tenterden celebrated the Kings Coronation with our “Coronation in the Park” event, a truly family affair. I as the Honorary Baron of the Cinque Ports and Mayor of Tenterden gave the following speech.

*“Good afternoon everybody, I hope you have all enjoyed yourselves today on this great occasion? I would like to say a few words before to celebrate King Charles III Coronation yesterday. Some of you will be aware, I had the honour to attend and represent this great town of Tenterden as an Honorary Baron of the Cinque Ports. A memory I will never forget.*”

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*As we watched King Charles III take his rightful place on the throne, the ceremony symbolised the passing of the baton from one monarch to the next, and it signifies the continuity of our nation's legacy.*

*We are reminded of our rich history, heritage and traditions that define this country and our town as a Cinque Port.*

*Let us use this occasion as a reminder of the values that define our country of compassion, integrity, and respect for all. For our town, let us work together to build a more just and equitable society, where everyone has the opportunity to thrive, prosper and have healthy lives.*

*Today has been a notable Tenterden occasion, that will be remembered for generations to come. As the Mayor of this great historic town, it is my honour to bring our auspicious 'Coronation in the Park' ceremony to a close.*

*May God bless our new King, Charles III, and our great nation.*

*Three cheers for King Charles III. Hip Hip Hooray; Hip Hip Hooray; Hip Hip Hooray.*



*I ask you to join me and the 'Heart of Kent Show Choir' to sing the National Anthem"*

My final words for this unique coronation occasion:

**'God save the King'.**

*Baron John Crawford*

Mayor of Tenterden  
A Baron of the Confederation of Cinque Ports  
10<sup>th</sup> May 2023