

Elizabethan Charter . . .

TRANSLATED FROM THE LATIN

ELIZABETH by the grace of God Queen of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, TO ALL TO WHOM these present Letters shall come, Greeting.

WHEREAS we are given to understand that the Barons and Inhabitants of the Town and Port of Hastings in our County of Sussex, being one of our Five Ports, are and from time whereof the memory of man is not to the contrary have been and have remained a body corporate and politick by the name of Bailiff, Jurats and Commonalty of the town and port of Hastings aforesaid in our said County of Sussex,

AND WHEREAS the Inhabitants of the said town and port have most humbly prayed us that we would vouchsafe to extend our grace and favour in this behalf,

AND WE for the better regimen, governing and bettering the said town and port would vouchsafe to make, conduct and create the inhabitants of the said town and port into one body corporate and politick of Mayor, Jurats and Commonalty,

WE THEREFORE, the said Queen, willing that for the future for ever there shall always be in the said town and port one certain and undoubted manner for the keeping of the peace and regulating and governing the people of the said town and port and its members,

AND THAT the said town and port for the future for ever shall be and shall remain a town or port of peace and quiet to the dread and terror of evildoers and for the reward of the good, and that our peace and justice may be kept and preserved there without any further delay,

OF OUR SPECIAL GRACE, certain knowledge and meer motion* We have ordained, constituted and granted, and by these Presents for us, our heirs and successors, do ordain, constitute and grant that the said town and port of Hastings in our said County of Sussex for the future shall be a free Town and free Port by itself, and that all the members of the said town and port shall be connected and joined together as parts, parcels and members of the same, from time to time and at all times for ever and shall be accepted and reputed to be in such manner and form as they were before the granting of these Presents,

*The traditional translation of *mero motu* — meaning "free goodwill".