trade of piracy which that nation carried on, there ſeems to be nothing improbable in that conjecture. It is more certain that there were churches erected in theſe iſles, and that there were in them alſo many monks and hermits, before the conqueſt.

The fertility of the iſlands is much inſiſted upon in all the accounts; and it is expreſsly ſaid of St Mary’s, that it bears exceeding good corn, inſomuch that if men did but caſt corn where ſwine had rooted, it would come up. There is mention made of a breed of wild ſwine, and the inhabitants had great plenty of fowl and fiſh. But notwithſtanding the fertility of the country, and the many commodities that men had or might have there, it was nevertheleſs but thinly peo­pled; and the reaſon aſſigned is, becauſe they were liable to be frequently ſpoiled by French or Spaniſh pirates. In Leland’s time, one Mr Havers of Wiltſhire, and Mr Whittington of Glouceſterſhire, were proprie­tors of Scilly, and drew from thence, in rents and com­modities, about 40 merks a-year.

The inhabitants at that juncture, and long before, appear to have carried on a ſmall trade in dried ſkate and other fiſh to Bretagne, with which they purchaſed ſalt, canvas, and other neceſſaries. This ſeems to be the remains of a very old kind of commerce, ſince, for many ages, the people of that country, thoſe of the Scilly iſles, and the people of Cornwall, looked upon themſelves as countrymen, being in truth no other than remnants of the ancient Britons, who, when driven out by the Saxons, took refuge in thoſe iſlands, and in that part of France which had before been called *Armorica,* and from hence ſtyled *Bretagne, Brittany,* or Li*ttle Britain,* and the people *Bretons.* This, in all proba­bility, was a great relief to thoſe who dwelt in thoſe iſles; who, during the long civil war between the houſes of York and Lancaſter, had their intercourſe with England ſo much interrupted, that if it had not been for this commerce with their neighbours on the French coaſt, they might have been driven to the laſt diſtreſs.

The Scilly, or Silley iſlands, lie due weſt from the Lizard about 17 leagues; weſt and by ſouth from the old Land’s End, next Mount’s Bay, at the diſtance of 10 leagues; and from the weſtern Land’s End, they lie weſt-ſouth-weſt, at the diſtance of ſomething more than nine leagues. There are five of them inhabited; and that called *Sam*ſ*on* has one family in it. The largeſt of theſe is St Mary’s, which lies in the north lati­tude of 49 degrees 55 minutes, and in the longitude of 6 degrees 40 minutes weſt from Greenwich. It is two miles and a half in length, about one and a half in breadth, and between nine and ten miles in compaſs. On the weſt ſide there projects an iſthmus. Beyond this there is a peninſula, which is very high; and upon which ſtands Star Caſtle, built in 1593, with ſome outworks and batteries. On theſe there are upwards of threeſcore pieces of cannon mounted; and for the defence of which there is a garriſon of an entire company, with a maſter-gunner and ſix other gunners. In the magazine there are arms for 300 iſlanders, who, when ſummoned, are bound to march into the fortreſs. Underneath the caſtle barracks and lines ſtands Hugh Town, very improperly built, as lying ſo low as to be ſubject to inundations. A mile within land ſtands Church Town, ſo denominated from their place of worſhip; it conſiſts of a few houſes only, with a court-house. About two furlongs eaſt of this lies the Old Town, where there are more houſes, and ſome of them very convenient dwellings. The number of inhabitants in this iſland is about 600 or 700; and it produces to the lord proprietor 300 1. *per annum.*

*Treſcow* lies directly north from St Mary’s, at the diſtance of two miles. It was formerly ſtyled *St Nicholas’s island;* and was at leaſt as large as St Mary’s, though **at** preſent about half the ſize. The remains of the abbey are yet viſible, the ſituation well choſen, with a fine baſon of freſh water before it, half a mile long and a furlong wide, with an ever-green bank high enough to keep out the ſea, and ſerving at once to preſerve the pond, and ſhelter the abbey. In this pond there are moſt excellent eels, and the lands lying round it are by far the beſt in thoſe iſlands. There are about half a ſcore ſtone houſes, with a church, which are called *Dolphin Town;* an old caſtle built in the reign of Henry VIII. called Oliver’s Caſtle; and a new block-houſe, railed out of the ruins of that caſtle, which is of far greater uſe. This iſland is particularly noted for producing plenty of the fineſt ſamphire, and the only tin works that are now viſible are found here. There are upon it at preſent about 40 families, who are very induſtrious, and ſpin more wool than in St Mary’s. Its annual value is computed at 80 l. a-year.

A mile to the eaſt of Treſcaw, and about two miles from the moſt northern part of St Mary’s, lies the iſle of *St Martin’s,* not much inferior in ſize to that of Treſcaw. It very plainly appears to have been for­merly extremely well cultivated; notwithſtanding which it was entirely deſerted, till within ſomewhat leſs than a century ago, that Mr Thomas Ekines, a conſiderable merchant, engaged ſome people to ſettle there. He likewiſe cauſed to be erected a hollow tower twenty feet in height, with a ſpire of as many feet more; which being neatly covered with lime, ſerves as a day- mark for directing ſhips croſſingthe channel or coming into Scilly. St Martin’s produces ſome corn, affords the beſt paſture in theſe iſlands, nouriſhes a great num­ber of ſheep, and has upon it 17 families, who pretend to have the ſecret of burning the beſt kelp, and are ex­tremely attached to their own iſland. As a proof of this, it is obſervable, that though ſome of the inhabitants rent lands in St Mary’s, yet they continue to reſide here, going thither only occaſionally.

*St Agnes,* which is alſo called the *Light-houſe Iſland,* lies near three miles ſouth-Weſt of St Mary’s; and is, though a very little, a very well cultivated iſland, fruit­ful in corn and graſs. The only inconvenience to which the people who live in it are ſubject, is the want of good water, as their capital advantage conſiſts in ha­ving ſeveral good coves or ſmall ports, where boats may lie with ſafety; which, however, are not much uſed. The light-houſe is the principal ornament and great ſupport of the iſland, which ſtands on the moſt elevated ground, built with ſtone from the foundation to the lanthorn, which is fifty-one feet high, the gallery four, the ſaſh-lights eleven teet and a half high, three feet two inches wide, and ſixteen in number. The floor of the lanthorn is of brick, upon which ſtands a ſubſtantial iron grate, ſquare, barred on every ſide, with one great chimney in the canopy-roof, and ſeveral leſſer ones to let out the ſmoke, and a large pair of ſmith’s bellows