

## EXAMPLES OF MEDIÆVAL SEALS.

WE resume with satisfaction the contributions to the history of mediæval seals, encouraged by increasing interest in researches of this nature. The materials existing in this country are of great extent and value, and the opportunities afforded by the meetings of the Institute, more especially the museums formed year after year at each annual assembly of our Society, have drawn forth numerous matrices and impressions, which might otherwise have remained lost amidst the stores of private or local collections. In the present year, at the meeting in Cambridge, upwards of three hundred matrices were produced, chiefly Italian, but comprising also several valuable English examples, and presenting a remarkable illustration of this department of Mediæval Art. It is, however, from depositories, such as those of the collegiate muniments at Cambridge, to which Mr. Ready has been liberally permitted to have access, or the archives at Canterbury, whence some of the following examples are derived, that we may hope hereafter to obtain our most valuable materials. The perfect security and accuracy, with which even the most fragile impressions may be copied by aid of gutta-percha, have brought within our reach facilities hitherto unattainable.

1. SEAL of ALICE, COUNTESS OF EU. She was the daughter and eventual heiress of Henry, Earl of Eu, who died in 1183, or, according to Nicolas, 1194. Her two brothers, Ralph and Guy, died in her life-time; the latter in 1185, and the former in 1186. This family held considerable estates in this country, as well as in Normandy. Her mother is called by the French genealogists Matildis de Longueville, but Mr. Stapleton has shown reasons for thinking that she was a daughter of Hamelin, Earl of Surrey, the second husband of the heiress of Warenne, and that she was, consequently, a sister of their son William de Warenne, Earl of Surrey. According to that gentleman Matildis, the mother of Alice, had first married Osbert de Preaux, and by him had three sons, one of whom, named Peter de Preaux, had a daughter Alice, whom this Alice, Countess of Eu, in a charter dated in 1233, described as the daughter of Peter de Preaux her brother; and, as evidence that Matildis was a sister of William de Warenne, he adduces a charter of the Countess witnessed by him, in

which he is called her uncle (*avunculo meo.*)<sup>1</sup> This is corroborated by another document not known to Mr. Stapleton; a letter among the records in the Tower, which was written by William de Warenne to Hubert de Burgh Justiciary of England, who had married his relation, Beatrix de Warenne; and in which he speaks of the arrival of his own niece, his (Hubert's) kinswoman (*neptis nostre et cognate vestre*). A translation of this letter has been published by Mr. Blaauw in the sixth volume of the Sussex Archaeological Collections, pp. 110—111. It is without date, but was probably written in 1219. When the alliances of the two families are examined, it certainly seems more likely that the relationship between the Countess and William de Warenne was one of blood, as suggested by Mr. Stapleton, than one of affinity. On what authority the French writers have supposed her mother to have been a De Longueville, or have attributed to her that surname, we are not able to state.<sup>2</sup> The husband of Alice was Earl of Eu in her right. He was Ralph d'Issoudun, brother of Hugh le Brun, Comte of La Marche, who married Isabella of Angouleme, the widow of King John, having been betrothed to her before her first marriage, but deprived of her by John's power and influence; which led to these two brothers assisting Philip of France to wrest Normandy from John. In 1219 Alice became a widow. Among other estates in England she held the rape and castle of Hastings, which, though seized by John, were restored by him in 1214.<sup>3</sup> But in 9 Hen. III. (1225) an arrangement was made between the king and the Countess Alice respecting them,<sup>4</sup> and in the same year she quitted England, and has been generally supposed to have died in 1227. This Mr. Stapleton has shown to be a mistake; for she appears to have been living as late as 1245, and possibly a year or two later.<sup>5</sup> Her only son, Ralph, called by Dugdale William, succeeded to the earldom of Eu, but, adhering to the king of France, did not obtain the English estates. She also left a daughter, Maude, who married Humphry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and was an ancestress of the subsequent Earls of Hereford of that family.

The seal is attached to a deed among the archives of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, which relates to the patronage of the church of "Helham" (? Elham, Kent). It is not dated, but appears from the contents to have been made in the time of Archbishop Edmund, who filled the see from 1234 to 1242; thus it furnishes additional evidence of the mistake of those writers, who state that the Countess died in 1227. The form and size of the seal are shown by the woodcuts. On the obverse is her effigy in profile, a position not very uncommon in foreign, though rare in English seals of this date, bearing on her left hand a hawk with its jesses pendent, and in her right, which is brought to her waist, is a flower, or possibly a fleur-de-lis. She is habited in a long ungirded robe, with tight sleeves, and on her head is a kind of cap, flat at the top, and secured by a band passing under her chin. The legend is imperfect, but

<sup>1</sup> Pref. Rot. Scac. Norman. ii. pp. ccxxxi, *et. seq.*

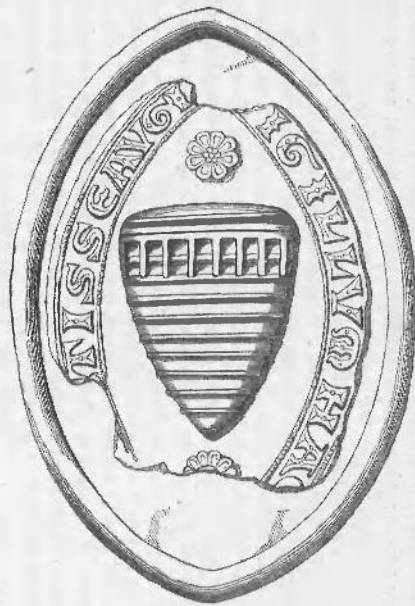
<sup>2</sup> The father of William de Warenne is sometimes called Hamelin Plantagenet, but, having been illegitimate, his surname is uncertain; and it is possible a daughter of his may from some cause have been distinguished by the surname of De

Longueville, though the son assumed that of De Warenne.

<sup>3</sup> Pref. Rot. Scac. Norman. ii. p. ccxxxii. note, and Cal. Rot. Pat., 5 b.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat., 13 b.

<sup>5</sup> Pref. Rot. Scac. Norman. ii., p. ccxxxiv.



Seal of Alice, Countess of Eu.

Date, early in the XIIIth century.

From an impression appended to a document in the Treasury, Canterbury Cathedral.

supplying the missing letters in parentheses, it reads thus : ✠ SIGILLVM HA(ELIDIS C)OMITISSE AVGI. The name Alice is found occasionally in the form of Aelis, and in the passage from the necrology of the abbey of Eu quoted by Mr. Stapleton<sup>6</sup> the expression "Aelidis Comitissæ Augi" occurs. Among the variations in the spelling of this name Vredius furnishes several examples of Aelis and Aelidis. The initial aspirate presents no difficulty. On the reverse is an escutcheon of arms, barry a label of seven points; above it is an eight petalled flower, an *angemme*, or double rose; and below the escutcheon a portion of another. The legend on this side is also imperfect, but supplying the missing letters it reads like that on the obverse. Mr. Stapleton describes a seal of this Countess, attached to a document at Paris dated in 1219 soon after her husband's death, which is also imperfect, but so much of it as remained appears to have agreed with this.<sup>7</sup> It is highly probable, therefore, that the matrix had been in use as her personal seal from the commencement of her widowhood, if not in her husband's life-time. The arms on the shield are not those of Eu, but of Lusignan, the family of the Counts of La Marche, of which house her husband was one of many cadets, and hence the label. The coat undifferenced was barry, *arg.* and *az.* It was subjected to divers brisures. With an orle of martlets it formed the Valence coat in this country, they having been descended from Hugh le Brun by Isabella, widow of king John. Guy de Lusignan, king of Cyprus, another cadet, differenced with a lion ramp *gu.* over all. Others might be mentioned, but they are less known in this country. The simple coat, as bishops in those days did not bear any mark of cadency, occurs in stone on the monument in Winchester cathedral, commemorative of the deposit there of the heart of Athelmar bishop elect of that see, who was a younger brother of William de Valence. The arms of Eu were, according to Vredius, *az.* billetty *or.*, a lion rampant of the last. Whether they were ever borne by the father of Alice is doubtful; we know no example of them so early. They may have been in reality those of Brienne, as the heiress of Eu, a granddaughter of Alice, married Alphonse of Brienne, and Vredius attributes the same coat to Brienne.

It is not uncommon on foreign seals to find ladies figured, holding a fleur-de-lis, or some other flower; nor are roses or flowers resembling them unfrequent on such seals, and examples of fleurs-de-lis and roses on personal seals of the XIIIth century are numerous in this country. The fleur-de-lis was often a conventional form of a flower; and there is much reason to think that this and the rose, and also the *angemme*, as well as the proper lily, are allusive to the Blessed Virgin. The occasional introduction of the fleur-de-lis into the subject of the Annunciation countenances such opinion in regard to that floral device, but this is a topic too extensive to be treated of incidentally.

2. SEAL of MARGARET DE NEVILLE; who was the wife of John de Neville of Essex, and afterwards the third wife of Sir John Giffard of Brimsfield, Gloucestershire; the former died in 1282, the latter in 1299; she lived till the beginning of the reign of Edward III. For the exhibition of an impression of this personal seal with heraldry we are indebted to the Hon. Richard Neville.

It represents the lady habited in a gown and mantle, with a head-dress

<sup>6</sup> Pref. Rot. Scac. Norman. ii. p. ccxxxv.

<sup>7</sup> Ib. p. ccxxxiv. note. The ET there mentioned was most likely a misreading of EL.

of the period, and standing on a dog, between the arms of Giffard of Brimsfield, three lions passant in pale, on her right, and the arms of Neville of Essex, a lion rampant, on her left. The lions of Giffard are also on her gown. The legend is, s' MARGARETE DE NEVYLE. In Mr. Drummond's "British Families," she has the name of De la Warde as her maiden surname; but all endeavours to discover her parentage have been unsuccessful. The heraldry as well as her designation is remarkable, for while she displays the arms of Giffard twice, she uses the patronymic of her first husband. It was to be expected that one of the coats would be found to be her father's, but no Ward or De la Warde of that period appears to have borne a coat at all resembling either of those on this seal. The arms of Neville of Essex, or at least of this branch of the family, were *az.* a lion rampant *or.* Those of her son, Hugh de Neville, are so given in the roll t. Edw. II., and the like formerly existed in some of the windows of Langham Church, Essex, (Morant ii. 245), in which parish the family had a residence and park.



In regard to the lion rampant, it may be remarked there was a Hugh de Neville, sometimes distinguished as "the Forester" by reason of the office of Chief Forester which he held, who is said to have been with Richard Cœur de Lion in Palestine, and to have slain a lion there. However that may have been, he used a seal on which he was represented in a hauberk combating with a lion coward, *i.e.*, having its tail between its legs. The knight, who is without a shield, has seized the beast by the throat, and is about to strike it with his sword. An impression of this seal remains attached to a grant in the Harleian collection of Charters, 112, B. 48, and it is probable that to that story, or this seal, may be ascribed the bearing of the lion rampant by his descendants, for such these Nevilles appear to have been. The legend on the seal is said to have been SIGILLVM HVGONIS DE NEVILLA; but little beside the first of those words now remains on the impression. The seal is circular, about 1½ inches in diameter, but considerably chipped at the edges. The subject of the grant is some land in Weresfeld (now Wethersfield) Essex, where, as well as at Langham and other places in that county, Hugh the Forester acquired property by his marriage in 1199 or 1200<sup>8</sup> with Joan, daughter and sole heiress of Henry de Cornhill, a distinguished citizen of London, and one of the sheriffs in 1189, by his wife, Alice de Courcy, heiress of the Courcys of Devon, who survived him, and married Warine Fitz-Gerald, by whom she also had an only child, a daughter, who became the wife of Baldwin de Redvers, son of William de Redvers, otherwise Vernon, Earl of Devon.<sup>9</sup> John de Neville, the first husband of the above-mentioned Margaret, died seised of property in Essex within the same parishes, as appears by the Cal. Inq., p. m. 10

<sup>8</sup> See Rot. Curie Regis, i., p. 330, and Rot. de Oblatis et Finibus, p. 104.

Antiq. Legibus, p. ii. Henry de Cornhill died in or before 1194, see Rot. Curie Regis, i. p. 14.

<sup>9</sup> Stapleton's Preface to Liber de VOL. XI.

Edw. I. Another example of the seal of Hugh the Forester exists among the archives of the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury. It is attached to a deed undated, whereby he and Joan his wife, described as the daughter and heir of Henry de Cornhill, released to the Prior and Convent of Canterbury all their right in the town (*villa*) of "Walworth" and "Newentone." This seal, is doubtless from the same matrix as that above described, and the portion of the legend remaining is, ✠ SIGIL . . . HVGONIS. D . . . EVILLA ; but it is remarkable, that at the back is a *secretum* or counter seal, on which is an escutcheon charged with party per fess dancetty a bendlet over all, and the following legend, ✠ HVGGO SUB HOC CLIPEO CTAT VT IPE LEO. Over the C in CTAT, and the I in IPE, are marks of abbreviation : the latter word, no doubt, is "*ipse*," and the former most probably "*certat*." To the same deed is also attached the seal of Joan his wife. It is a pointed oval nearly two inches in length ; the device an elegant young female figure in a gown and mantle, looking towards a hawk perched on her left hand ; and the legend ✠ SIGILLVM IOHANNE DE CORVHILL. The substitution of v for n in the last word was most likely a slip of the seal engraver. This seal is appended to another undated deed in the same collection, by which she alone, being there called Johanna de Cornhill, daughter of Henry de Cornhill, made a like release of all her right to the same property in language very similar to that of the before-mentioned deed ; and as several of the witnesses to the two instruments are the same, they were in all probability executed about the same time, the one a little before her marriage, and the other shortly after it. As she appears to have been a ward (*in custodia*) of Hugh de Neville in 1199, and wardship of a female terminated at fourteen, and she married in that year, or in 1200, she would seem to have been little more than fourteen when that seal was engraved. However, as Glanville,<sup>1</sup> writing a few years earlier, speaks of female heirs of full age remaining "in custodia dominorum . . . donec per consilium et dispositionem dominorum maritentur," she may possibly have been somewhat older, though Hugh was not likely to allow her to remain long unmarried, seeing he aspired to her hand. A seal of their son John de Neville, who while a young man succeeded his father, (whose death occurred in 1222) as Chief Forester, may be also noticed. It is attached to a deed among the Barrington muniments of Alan Clayton Lowndes, Esq., relating to that gentleman's estates in Essex, and is remarkable because the device on it is also a knight contending with a lion, but differing from that on the father's seal, as the knight has a shield, and the lion is not coward, but rather in heraldic language rampant, having his fore feet on the knight's shield.<sup>2</sup> This seal is circular, with a diameter of two inches and a quarter. The legend, so far as it remains legible, is ✠ . . . . . NIS DE NEVILLA FILII HV . . NIS. Mathew Paris relates of this John, whom he designates "non ultimus inter Anglie nobiles," that in consequence of misconduct in his office, he incurred the King's displeasure, and was condemned to pay two thousand marks, beside his father's debts which lay heavy on him, and that, falling sick of grief, he died at his manor of Welperefeld (no doubt

<sup>1</sup> Lib. vii. cap. 12.

<sup>2</sup> At this time the lion had not, it should seem, become heraldic in the family. The arms of this John de Neville, as given in the Roll of Arms,

t. Hen. III., are "d'or ung bende de goules croiselles noire," different it will be observed from those on his father's *secretum*.



meaning Wethersfield) in 1246, and was buried at Waltham near his father. His family appear to have regained in some degree the favour of the Sovereign, since we find in 40 Henry III. (1256) the King allowed his son and heir, Hugh de Neville, at the instance of Henry de Mara, to pay, by instalments of fifty marks per annum, certain debts of his father due to the Exchequer.<sup>3</sup> This Hugh and also John his brother nevertheless joined the party of the barons in their war against the King. They were both pardoned in 1266, but Hugh, who had been taken prisoner, lost a considerable portion of his estates in Devon.<sup>4</sup> He died in 1269 without issue, and was succeeded by his brother John,<sup>5</sup> who was the first husband of the above-mentioned Margaret de Neville, and died, as has been stated, in 1282. As she survived till 1327,<sup>6</sup> she must have been young at his death. If he married her while he was a younger son with a slender provision, or even after the decease of his elder brother, but while his estate was still impoverished by payment of his father's debts to the crown, and the consequences of the barons' war, that might account for her parentage being unknown, and the non-appearance of any arms on her seal that can be referred to her father, whose position in life probably had not led to his bearing any armorial insignia. The arms of Robert de la Warde, vary *arg.* and *sa.*, are given in the roll t. Edw. II. Margaret may have been of the same family. He was summoned to Parliament from 28 to 34 of Edward I., and was Steward of the King's Household in 33 Edward I.<sup>7</sup> His earlier history is not known; he may have acquired arms in consequence of his elevation. His daughter is said to have married Margaret's son, Hugh de Neville.<sup>8</sup>

We had, by inference from some of the particulars above noticed, and others which it is unnecessary to detail, appropriated this seal of Margaret de Neville to the lady above-mentioned, when a paper by Mr. Planche in the sixth volume of the Journal of the British Archaeological Association, p. 139, referred us to direct evidence to the same effect, viz., a grant in the British Museum, Add. Charters L.F.C., xxiii, 16, with an imperfect impression of the seal appended. Mr. Planche has given a copy of the deed, and a woodcut of the seal; but as the legend beyond s. MARG is wanting, and the figure materially defective, a woodcut of an entire impression will, we doubt not, be acceptable. The deed, which has a topographical interest also, is in French. As a copy of it is published, it will suffice to state the purport. It is dated the 10th May, 8 Edward II. (1315), which was in the lady's second widowhood, and is between Dame Margaret de Neville of the one part, and Hugh de Neville her son of the other part, and she thereby grants to the said Hugh her "Hostel e Maysouns" with the garden, rents, and all other things appertaining to the said "Hostel" in the city (*vile*) of London, which is called Leaden Hall (*Sale de Plum*) on Cornhill, to hold to the said Hugh for the term of his life, saving to the said Margaret for her life the advowsons of the churches in the said city, which were appertaining to the said "hostel;" and if the said Hugh should die before her, then the said "hostel," &c., should return to her for the term of her life, and after her decease the said "hostel," &c., with the said advowsons should remain to the heirs of the said Hugh for ever. Among the witnesses

<sup>3</sup> Excerpta e Rot. Finium, ii., p. 228.

<sup>4</sup> Stapleton's Pref. to Lib. de Antiq. Leg. lxii. *et seq.*

<sup>5</sup> Excerpta e Rot. Finium ii., p. 498.

<sup>6</sup> Coll. Topog. v. p. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat., 64 b. His seal is attached to the Baron's letter.

<sup>8</sup> Morant, i. 309.

is "Sire Johan Giffard de Bremsfeud," her son by her second husband. Leaden Hall was no doubt the residence of Henry de Cornhill, whose daughter and heiress Hugh de Neville, the Forester, married. Stow, speaking of Leadenhall says, "I read that in the year 1309 it belonged to Sir Hugh Nevill, Knight." This date being earlier than the deed seems to have presented a little difficulty to Mr. Planche, who writes as if he supposed that Margaret de Neville was the absolute owner in fee-simple until she made the grant to her son, though he suggests that, if Stow did not mistake the date, Hugh might be residing there. It is more probable from the history of the family, and also from the tenor of the deed itself, that Hugh was not only residing there in 1309, but had been the proprietor from the time of his father's death, subject to his mother's dower or jointure in it for her life. The object of the deed seems to have been, to give up to him her life estate in all the property except the advowsons, unless he happened to die before her, in which event it was to return to her for her life; and, accordingly, the contingency of Hugh surviving his mother was not provided for, since in that case the property was already his in fee simple. The advowsons referred to were most likely St. Christopher's, St. Bennet Finks, St. Peter's Cornhill, St. Margaret Patens, and St. Olave's extra Turrem: for of them the father of this Hugh died seized. What Stow proceeds to say of the Lady Alice, Hugh's widow, having made a feoffment of Leaden Hall and the advowsons in 1362, is an error so far as she is stated to have been Hugh's widow. She was probably the widow of his son John, who succeeded him and died in 1358. In consequence of the Chief Forester having had one or two contemporaries of the same name there is great obscurity and many contradictions in the books as to the pedigree of this family. Any one who would pursue the subject will do well to consult Mr. Drummond's "British Families,"<sup>9</sup> Mr. Stapleton's Preface to *Liber de Antiq. Legibus*, and also Morant's History of Essex, in addition to the published Records, and the originals of the several Inquisitions post mortem that are mentioned in the printed calendar. On whatever authorities Mr. Drummond and Mr. Stapleton have relied, as to Alice de Courey, the mother of Joan, the wife of Hugh the Chief Forester, there must surely be some mistake in stating that she was the *sister* and heir of the William de Courey, who was a ward in 1201, and whose father was only twenty years old in 1185;<sup>1</sup> for it was hardly possible that the father should have had a daughter who lost her husband in or before 1194, having had by him a daughter that married in 1200. This Alice is more likely to have been the aunt of that William de Courey, and the sister of his father, the William de Courey who married Gundrada de Warenne.

3. SEAL of ELIANOR FERRE. It is of red wax, and appended to an acquittance to "Monsire Edmoun Cheny" for 12*l.* 10*s.*, the rent (*ferme*) of her dower out of the manor of Totele (Tothill, Lincolnshire). The document is dated at Benhale (Benhall, Suffolk), on Tuesday, before the

<sup>9</sup> In this costly work there are woodcuts of all the above-mentioned seals, but they are by no means satisfactory; indeed most of the legends are inaccurately copied. The seal of Margaret above described is at p. 7 misappropriated to a Margaret Neville of Hornby, wife of

Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter, that died in 1413. The others are given under the Nevilles of Essex, p. 32, their proper place.

<sup>1</sup> See Pref. to *Lib. de Antiq. Legibus*, pp. lii. and lxxiii. notes.



feast of St. Faith, 22 Edward III. (1348), and is preserved among the Compton Verney deeds in the possession of Lord Willoughby de Broke. We are indebted to Mr. Evelyn P. Shirley for the communication of this example hitherto, as we believe, undescribed.

We have here the personal seal of a lady, bearing on an escutcheon, flanked by two wyverns, the arms of Ferre, a cross moline over all a baton,<sup>1</sup> dimidiated with, no doubt, her paternal coat, a lion rampant within an orle of trefoils slipped. The legend is \* : SIGILL' : ELIANORE : FERRE : . She was the widow of Guy Ferre, or de Ferre as the name is sometimes written, a son of another Guy Ferre, who in all probability was the brother of Otto, and son of the John Ferre, whom we find mentioned as receiving a handsome gratuity from Henry III., on conveying to him the intelligence of the birth of John the first-born son of Prince Edward in 1266.<sup>2</sup>



The family was most likely from abroad, and perhaps originally Norman ; for the name occurs several times as Fere in D'Anisy's Archives du Calvados, without any apparent connection with England, and there was t. Hen. I., a fief of the Bishop of Bayeux, which was held by William and Durandus Fere. Her parentage has not been discovered, but there is great reason to think she was a foreigner, and that her father's name was Montendre ; for the only coat we have found, corresponding with that on the sinister side of the escutcheon, is attributed by Glover to Mountender, namely, *gu.* a lion rampant within an orle of trefoils slipped *or* ; and according to Seguing the same arms were borne by one of the French families of Montendre. It is true the trefoils are not stated by Seguing to be slipped, but in French heraldry they are usually so borne, and no mention made of the slip in the blazon.

Guy Ferre, the father, and Margery his wife, daughter of Roger, son of Peter Fitz Osborn, according to Morant, had in 14 Edward I., a grant from Edward and his Queen of the Manor of Aythorp Rothing, Essex, for their good service ; and, according to the same authority, this Guy had in 16 Edward I., a grant of the Manor of Netherhall, in Guestingthorpe, Essex.<sup>3</sup> Morant, in regard to his death, must have confounded him with his son Guy, as he states that he died in 16 Edward II. (1322). It is more probable that he died about 22 Edward I. (1294), or possibly a few years later, and was at that time seised, not only of the manors just mentioned, but also of the manor of Benhall and free warren in Kelton (Carlton) and Farnham, Suffolk.<sup>4</sup> In that year, 22 Edward I., Guy, the son, had a confirmation of the manor of Benhall,<sup>5</sup> and according to Hasted, he had obtained in 19 Edward I., a grant for his life of the manor of Chatham, Kent.<sup>6</sup> In 25 Edward I., he or his father was a witness to the delivery of the Great Seal to John de Langton.<sup>7</sup> Soon after this one of them is found to have been the King's Lieutenant in Gascony.<sup>8</sup> In 28 Edward I., Guy, the son, appeared before the king and his council at Westminster, on Thursday before Palm Sunday, and presented to the king

<sup>1</sup> The Roll of arms t. Edw. II. gives those of Sir Guy Ferre under Suffolk as "de goules, a un fer de molin de argent, e un bastoun de azure."

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat. 38 b.

<sup>3</sup> Morant, ii., 467, 307. Cal. Rot. Pat., 53.

<sup>4</sup> Cal. Inq. p.m. i., 121.

<sup>5</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat., 57.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. ii., 66.

<sup>7</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat. 59.

<sup>8</sup> Rot. Parl. i., 154.

a lad (*puer*) named Simon de Bordes, who is said to have been born abroad; and he stated that in case he died without issue, this Simon was his next heir (*heres ejus propinquior liber et legitimus*); and he requested the king to accept him as such, to which the king assented, though somewhat guardedly, by adding, so that it be according to right and the custom of the kingdom (*prout de jure et consuetudine regni fuerit faciendum, &c.*)<sup>8</sup> In 34 Edward I. he probably acquired the manor of Tothill from his uncle Otto Ferre, which appears to have been held of the Barony of Chester.<sup>9</sup> He was appointed steward (*senescallus*) of Aquitaine in 1 Edward II., and in the same year is mentioned as Steward of Gascony.<sup>1</sup> It also appears from Rymer, that he was otherwise much employed abroad in the King's service till 11 Edward II., though occasionally in this country. He had licence to impark a wood at Aythorp Rothing in 4 Edward II.<sup>2</sup> The unfortunate Edward having been compelled to assent to certain ordinances for the removal of Gaveston, and securing a better administration of affairs, this Guy Ferre was in 5 Edward II. associated with the Bishop of Norwich (John Salmon) and divers knights and clerks in a commission, to act on the king's behalf in revising and correcting those ordinances.<sup>3</sup> The name of Guy stands next after that of the Bishop, who was the principal; from which we may conclude he was high in Edward's favour and confidence. In the Cal. Inq., p.m., under 16 Edward II., we find the names of Guy de Ferre and Elianor his wife, as if they had been jointly seised of the manors of Chetham (Chatham), Kent, Godindon (Goddington), Oxon, Boclone (Buckland), Surrey, Tothill, and other estates, Lincolnshire, Rothing Aytrop, and Netherhall, Essex, and Benhall, Badingham, Framlingham, and Ilkeclishall (Ilketshall), Suffolk. On the 27th of March in this year he is stated to have died.<sup>4</sup> Mr. Stapleton gives 4 Edward III., as the year of his death.<sup>5</sup> Possibly his authority was an entry in the Cal. Inq., p.m., under that year, with reference to the manor of Chatham, but that may have been an Inquisition taken a few years after his death relating to that manor only. He died without issue; and in the Cal. Inq., p.m., under 17 Edward II.,<sup>6</sup> we find Simon de la Borde mentioned as nephew (*nepos*) and heir of Guy Ferre, and as having held the manor of Godyngdon; so that it is probable he did not survive his uncle more than about a year. Elianor, we know from the document above mentioned, out-lived her husband many years. There is reason to think that the reversions expectant on his decease, or on the decease of the survivor of himself and his wife, in several of the manors which he held, had been disposed of in his life-time. Whatever may have become of the others, Elianor had dower out of Tothill as we have seen, and she had also an estate for her life in Benhall and in a third part of the manor of Ilketshall. The former of these two manors appears to have been a considerable property. It was held of the honour of Eye. She claimed in respect of it the patronage (*avouerie*) of the Priory of Butley in 8 Edward III.<sup>7</sup> The king had then granted the reversion to his brother John, Earl of Cornwall, who died in 1336. The extent of it, as well as another claim to the reversion, appears in a petition presented to the

<sup>8</sup> Rot. Parl. i., 143 b.

<sup>9</sup> Cal. Inq. p.m. i., 210.

<sup>1</sup> Rymer, ii., 37, 49.

<sup>2</sup> Cal. Rot. Pat. 72.

<sup>3</sup> Rot. Parl. i., 447.


<sup>4</sup> Manning and Bray's Surrey ii., 218.

<sup>5</sup> Pref. Lib. de Antiq. Legibus. cxii. note.

<sup>6</sup> Vol. iv., 434.

<sup>7</sup> Rot. Parl. ii., 85 b.

king by John de Norwich, in 21 Edward III., wherein he alleged that Guy and Elianor had held Benhall in special tail, with remainder to the heirs of Guy; and that the site of the said manor, and twenty-eight messuages, 454 acres of land, 22 acres of meadow, upwards of 200 acres of pasture, 124 acres of wood, 2 mills, 25 knights' fees, and the market (*marche*) of Farnham, were held by them of Monsieur Walter de Norwich,<sup>8</sup> the father of the said John, as of his manor of Dalengeo (Dalinghoo), and that by the death of Guy without an heir he (John) was entitled to the reversion of the premises by escheat; and that Elianor then held them, and the king had granted the reversion to the Earl of Suffolk (Robert de Ufford) to the disinheriting of the petitioner, and he prayed that the grant might be revoked. The answer to the petitioner reminded him, that, as Elianor was yet living, his application was premature.<sup>9</sup> We find the king also granted the reversion of the third part of the manor of Ilkeshall in 11th year of his reign to Elizabeth de Burgh the lady of Clare.<sup>1</sup> Elianor appears to have kept the last-named grantee somewhat inconveniently long in expectancy. At length she died in the 23 Edward III., about a year after this seal had been affixed to the above-mentioned acquittance.

4. SEAL OF LAURENCE DE WATELINGTON, a personal seal with heraldry. The matrix of brass was recently found near Norwich: the precise place has not been ascertained. It is now in the collection of Norfolk seals and signet-rings formed by Mr. Robert Fitch of Norwich. The handle is of the common pyramidal form, terminating in a loop or ring for suspension; a star is deeply cut near the margin, showing the top of the seal, and the direction in which it should be held when an impression was made. The impress is an escutcheon boldly engraved, and charged with the following coat, three chevrons within a bordure engrailed. The small spaces around the escutcheon are filled up with foliated ornaments. The legend is —  s' LAVRECH. D'. WATELINGTON. (See woodcut.) The date may be assigned to the middle of the xvth century. Blomefield mentions two families of this name settled from an early period at Watlington in Norfolk. Sir Robert de Watlington, in the reign of Stephen, held that manor of the Bardolphs, barons of Wirmegay, and it continued in the possession of his descendants until the reign of Edward II. No mention, however, has been found of any person of that family bearing the name of Laurence.<sup>2</sup>



The coat given on this Seal has not been found ascribed to a family of the name of Watlington. The like was borne by a cadet of Clare, as we learn, from the Roll of Arms of the reign of Edward II., where it appears that Sir Nicholas de Clare bore, *Or*, three chevrons *gules*; a bordure indented *sable*. A similar coat was also borne by the de Wateviles

<sup>8</sup> He was successively baron, treasurer, and chief baron of the exchequer.

<sup>9</sup> Rot. Parl. ii., 198. The claim of the crown seems to have prevailed. See Cal. Rot. Pat., 160 b.

<sup>1</sup> Pref. Lib. de Antiq. Legibus, p. cxii. *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> The name occurs, also, in other

counties. In the reign of Edward I. Gonnilda de Watlington held lands in Marlow, Bucks, of Matilda, Countess of Gloucester. Hund. Rolls, vol. ii. p. 354. The manor of Watlingtons, in West Hagbourn, Berks, was held by Edmund Earl of Cornwall, in 1231.

of Essex, who were originally tenants, if not cadets of Clare.<sup>3</sup> The line seems to have ended in an heiress, in the XIVth century. It is possible that the Watlingtons may subsequently have assumed their bearing.

5. The KING'S SEALS FOR PASSES given to labourers and servants, in accordance with the Statute of 12 Richard II., 1388.

In a former page of this volume a representation was given by Mr. Franks of a matrix in the British Museum, being the King's seal for Wangford Hundred in Suffolk.<sup>4</sup> It closely resembles in design that of South Erpingham Hundred in Norfolk, which is likewise preserved in the Museum. By the kindness of Mr. Franks we are enabled to give the accompanying representation of that seal, as also of those of Staplowe Hundred in Cambridgeshire, and of Hurstington Hundred in Huntingdonshire, but described on the seal as of the county of Cambridge, to which it is adjacent. The execution of the two seals last mentioned is comparatively rude, and the letters irregularly formed; the crown, introduced on the seals of Wangford and South Erpingham, is wanting. The matrix of the

seal of Staplowe is in the collection of Mr. Whincopp, at Woodbridge. An impression from that of Hurstington, formerly in the possession of Maurice Johnson, and engraved in the "Reliquiæ Galeanæ," plate III., has been found in the British Museum by Mr. Franks, amongst the MS. notices relating to Sir Hans Sloane's Collections. It is not known whether the matrix still exists. It is said to have been found in an urn at Harlaxton, Lincolnshire, and a correspondence between Maurice Johnson and Sir J. Clerk regarding it may be seen in Nichols' *Bibl. Topog.*, vol. iii. p. 71. The name has been incorrectly supposed to be Armingford, being that of a Hundred in Cambridgeshire. The seal of the Hundred of Walshcroft, Lincolnshire, was added in 1852 to the collection of matrices in the British Museum. The name is written WALCROST, approaching more nearly, as Mr. Franks has observed, to that in Domesday—Walescross, than to the modern form.<sup>5</sup>



Seal of the Hundred of South Erpingham, Norfolk.



Staplowe Hundred.



Hurstington Hundred.

<sup>3</sup> Wright's History of Essex, vol. ii. pp. 41, 82, 84. Sir Robert de Wateville, of Essex, bore, Argent, three chevronels gules, a bordure indented sable. Roll *t. Edw. II.* p. 36.

<sup>4</sup> See page 31, *ante*. This seal is also noticed and a representation given in Mr. Suckling's History of Suffolk, vol. ii. p. 117.

<sup>5</sup> See the Memoir on "National Antiquities in the British Museum," by Mr. Franks, *Archæol. Journal*, vol. x. p. 12. We are indebted to his kindness for the use of the woodcuts which accompany this notice.

The occurrence of seals of this class was incidentally noticed in a former volume of this Journal.<sup>6</sup> We would here renew with gratification the acknowledgment of the courteous assistance of Mr. Cooper, Town-clerk of Cambridge, who pointed out the date of these seals, provided for the purpose of authenticating passes of labourers on quitting their usual place of residence. Two other examples only have hitherto come under our observation. Of one of these, the seal of the Hundred of Edmonton, Middlesex, an impression is amongst the collections of the Society of Antiquaries; the matrix of the other, the seal for the Hundred of Flaxwell, Lincolnshire, has been recently found on the borders of the parish of Fishtoft, near Boston.<sup>7</sup> The inscription is slightly varied from those on the other seals. ✠ SIGILL. COM. LINCOLN. P. s'VIS. (*pro servis*). Across the centre is inscribed FLAXWELL. We are indebted to the Rev. Edward Trollope for an impression. Possibly the hexagonal seal of the Hundred of Flegg, Norfolk, communicated by Mr. Fellows to the Norfolk Archæological Society, may be of the same class, but its design is not in conformity to the statute. In the centre there is a Greek cross, instead of the name of the Hundred, whilst round the verge is—*Sigillu de hundred\* west\* flepe\* Dorf*. (Norfolk Archæology, vol. i., p. 368.)

The class of seals under consideration, although for the most part rude in their execution, may be regarded as of no slight historical interest, in connexion with the position of the lower orders of society, at the period to which they belong. The prevalence of vagabondage towards the close of the reign of Edward III. had caused serious disorder and grievous acts of violence, and these evils increased rapidly on the accession of his youthful successor. Many persons quitted their proper service and abode, on the pretext of seeking to improve their condition, and of these many had become robbers, without any fixed dwelling. The prevalence of pilgrimages had no doubt contributed much to this disorderly state of the lower classes. The determined struggle of the servile classes for freedom in the earlier years of the reign of Richard II., which led to the great rising under Wat Tyler, must be familiar to our readers. The position of the lower orders, the influence of the growth of manufactures, which drew persons from rural districts into towns, tempted not less by the inducement of higher wages, than by the boon of freedom which villeins or serfs acquired by residence of a year and a day in a town—these, and other features of that remarkable crisis in the conditions of the industrial classes in England, have been set forth by Sir George Nicholls, in his recent “History of the English Poor Law.”<sup>8</sup>

It was at this period, at the Parliament held at Cambridge in September, 1388, that the statute was passed, which has frequently been regarded as the origin of our English Poor Law, being, Sir George Nicholls observes, the first enactment in which the impotent poor are directly named as a separate class. Its chief object, however, appears to have been to check the outrages arising from the itinerant habits of the tenants of servile condition, which had become a nuisance to the community and occasioned a scarcity of agricultural labourers. A fixed scale of wages was prescribed by this statute, and all persons quitting their

<sup>6</sup> Notice of Meetings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, Archæol. Journal, vol. vii. p. 106.

<sup>7</sup> See a notice received from Mr. P.

Thompson, Gent. Mag., Jan. 1855, p. 2.

<sup>8</sup> London, 2 vols. 8vo. 1854. See vol. i. pp. 47—60.

service were required to show sufficient cause, and to produce a pass sealed with the king's seal, specially appointed for the purpose, as follows:—

“It is ordained and enacted, that no servant nor labourer, be he man or woman, shall depart at the end of his term out of the Hundred, Rape, or Wapentake, where he is dwelling, to serve or dwell elsewhere, or by colour to go from thence in Pilgrimage, unless he bring a letter patent containing the cause of his going, and the time of his return, if he ought to return, under the king's seal, which for this intent shall be assigned and delivered to the keeping of some good man (*d'ascun prodhomme*, orig.) of the Hundred, Rape, Wapentake, City, or Borough, after the discretion of the Justices of the Peace, to be kept and lawfully to make such letters when it needeth, and not in any other manner, by his own oath; and that about the same seal there shall be written the name of the County, and overthwart the said seal the name of the Hundred, Rape, or Wapentake, City, or Borough.”<sup>9</sup>

It were needless here to give at length the further provisions of this enactment. Any servant or labourer who might be found “*vagerant*” without a sealed letter or pass, was to be placed in the stocks, and to find surety for his return to his service. No person, moreover, might harbour such servant unprovided with a pass, nor for more than a night, even with that testimonial. No person might demand more than a *denier*, or penny, for making, sealing, and delivering a pass of this description.

No doubt can exist as regards the accuracy of Mr. Cooper's explanation of the seals now brought before our readers. Some of them, it will be observed, are more distinctly characterised as “*Le Seal le Roi*,” since the royal crown is placed over the name of the Hundred; whilst all are strictly in accordance with the direction—“*quentour le dit seal soit escript le noun del Countee, et a travers du dit seal le noun del dit hundred, rape, wapentak, citee, ou burgh.*”

Some delay probably occurred in carrying into effect the provisions of the Statute of Cambridge. Mr. Cooper has called our attention to the writ addressed to the Sheriff of Wiltshire, and tested at Westminster, March 10, 14 Ric. II. (1391). Similar writs were, in all probability, addressed to other Sheriffs. After reciting the provisions of the Statute, the writ proceeds as follows:—“*Nos volentes statutum predictum execucioni debite demandari, tibi precipimus, districcius quo possumus injungentes, quod omnibus aliis pretermisissis, et excusacione quacumque cessante, quoddam Sigillum nostrum de Auricalco, pro quolibet Hundredo, Rapa, et Wapentachio Comitatus predicti, fieri et fabricari, et circa dictum Sigillum nomen ejusdem Comitatus, ac ex transverso dicti Sigilli nomen hujusmodi Hundredi, Rape vel Wapentachii, scribi, et Sigillum illud cum sic factum et fabricatum fuerit alicui Justiciariorum nostrorum ad pacem nostram in Comitatu predicto conservandam assignatorum liberari facias, ut ipse hujusmodi sigillum alicui probo homini de dictis Hundredo, Rapa, Wapentachio, Civitate, et Burgo liberare valeat, custodiendum juxta formam Statuti predicti,*” &c.<sup>1</sup>

No seal of this description has hitherto been noticed, bearing the name of any City or Borough. W. S. W. and A. W.

<sup>9</sup> Statutes of the Realm, vol. ii. pp. 55, 56. Stat. 12 Ric. II.

<sup>1</sup> Claus. 14 Ric. II. m. 13, printed in

Rolls of Parliament, Appendix to the reign of Richard II., vol. iii. p. 405, b.