

ON THE SEALS OF THE BISHOPS OF CARLISLE, AND  
OTHER SEALS BELONGING TO THAT DIOCESE.

By Mrs. HENRY WARE.

The See of Carlisle was founded by Henry I., and there have been fifty-eight Bishops.

After much searching and enquiry and kind help from many friends, I have only succeeded in finding the seals of twenty-eight, and of these only eleven belong to the Pre-Reformation period. The muniment rooms of the Bishop and of the Dean and Chapter have been searched with singularly little success; none of the Pre-Reformation seals come from these quarters; two seals only come from Carlisle at all, these are both Post-Reformation and belong to the Corporation.<sup>1</sup> There are but few Carlisle seals in the Way collection, and not one single Carlisle example is quoted by Mr. St. John Hope in his invaluable paper on "The Seals of English Bishops," (Pro. Soc. Ant. 2nd S. vol. xi, p. 271).

It is to be hoped that in course of time the series may be rendered less incomplete, and I shall gratefully receive any help in this direction. I should like to preface what I have to say by thanking very cordially those who have kindly assisted me, specially I would mention the late Mr. Spencer Percival, Chancellor Ferguson, the Dean of Carlisle, and Canon Greenwell; to the paper of Mr. St. John Hope, mentioned above, I owe a deep debt of gratitude. Mr. Ready has also given me much assistance, besides others who, I hope, will accept my thanks.

There are four kinds of Episcopal seals; *i.e.* seals of dignity, counterseals, private seals or *secreta*, and seals *ad causas*. Mr. St. John Hope gives a fifth variety,

<sup>1</sup> "It is much to be regretted that in a city like Carlisle, which is one of the chief gateways into Scotland, so few documentary memorials should have been preserved. Their destruction however was probably due to that restless people, whose dangerous proximity has invested with such interest the past history of the capital of the Borders." Canon Raine cited in Transactions Cumbd. and West Ant. and Arch. Soc. vol. vii, p. 295.

namely seals made for special purposes, but I think they were not common, and we have no examples of this kind.

The seal of dignity was used for charters and instruments affecting the property of the See, or to authenticate copies of important documents : it was generally a pointed oval, and all in my collection are in this form, though the Rev. A. S. Porter, in his paper on the Seals of the Archbishops of York (Pro. Soc. Ant, 2 S. xiii, p. 45), says that the earliest shape was round. The oval form was probably adopted as the most convenient for a standing figure; and it is somewhat curious that though in our own day episcopal seals have degenerated generally into a shield of arms with a mitre, they still retain their ancient shape.

The Pre-Reformation seal of dignity consisted of a device, surrounded by a legend or inscription. The earliest device was an effigy of the Bishop, vested for the Mass, on a plain back-ground; as time went on this was gradually elaborated, accessories, such as canopies, and heads or figures of saints were added, until (about A.D. 1345) the effigy of the Bishop was reduced to a subordinate position, and the Blessed Virgin and Child occupy the chief place.

This transition is well shewn in the series of engravings which illustrate this paper.

The Post-Reformation seals of dignity are generally far less interesting than the earlier ones. The only two illustrations given of this period are that of Ussher 1641, which seemed to me a curious specimen, and that of the present Bishop, which I have engraved (Plate III, figure A) to show the sphragistic art of to-day.

After 1664 episcopal seals are invariably the arms of the See impaling the Bishop's family arms and surmounted by the mitre.

The counterseal appears to have been used to prevent fraudulent tampering with the seal of dignity, and the *secretum* or *sigillum privatum* was intended for deeds concerning the Bishop's private affairs; but these two seals seem to have been applied somewhat indiscriminately, and it is not always easy to say to which class a seal belongs.

The earlier counterseals were pointed ovals, with subjects or figures (see Plate I, figure 3), and the later ones

were round with saints or shields of arms (see Plate II, figure 10). The legends vary very much.

Seals *ad causas* were, in the earlier times, applied to probates, licenses, and letters of orders. I have only one example of this class, and that is Post-Reformation.

A detailed description of the seals follows, and I have noted any point which seems to call for special remark.

Plate I, figure 1.

Bernard, 2nd Bishop, 1156—1186.

Seal of dignity, rather more than  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Legend, Roman capitals changing into Lombardic:

/BERNARDVS : DEI GRACIA.  
/ARLEOLENSIS : EPISC ////

Device, Figure of the Bishop, vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble, amice, and perhaps stole, all plain. The right hand upraised in benediction, the left holds the crook (a plain single coil) turned inwards, with the fanon hanging from the wrist. A square brooch, which must be the rationale, is on his breast, and if this be so, it is an early instance, as the first rationale quoted by Mr. Hope is in 1189. The field of the seal is plain.

This cast is from a seal attached to a deed in the office of the Duchy of Lancaster, dated 1157.

Plate I, figure 2.

Walter Malclerk, 4th Bishop 1223 to 1246.

Seal of dignity,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Legend. Roman capitals changing into Lombardic.

+ WALTERVS : DEI : GRATIA :  
— KARLEOLENSIS : EPISCOPVS.

The initial cross has a crescent beneath it, and the stops between the words are very small annulets.

Device. Figure of the Bishop vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble, and amice, all plain; the ends of the stole are not seen, and the albe and dalmatic are nearly of the same length. The right hand upraised in benediction, the left holds the crook (a plain single coil), head turned inwards with the fanon hanging from the wrist. The rationale, a somewhat trefoil shaped brooch, is on his breast. The field of the seal is plain, with the exception of a five pointed star on the Bishop's right, and a crescent on his left.

Plate I, figure 3. Counterseal, pointed oval,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches.  
Legend.

\* HEC : SCVLPTVRA : SONAT  
FINIS : NO PVGNA : CORONAT.

Which may be rendered—

Voiceless though this sculpture,  
Still it utters sound ;  
Not till fight is finished  
Is the Victor crowned.

Device. The Bishop kneels before a seated figure of the Blessed Virgin with the Child on her knee. She holds a mitre with *infulæ* over the Bishop's head. There is a suggestion of a trefoil canopy over the figures, and beneath their feet an irregular quatrefoil, apparently blank.

The casts are from a deed among the muniments in the Treasury of Durham Cathedral.

Plate I, figure 4.

Silvester de Everdon, 5th Bishop, 1246—1255.

Seal of dignity, rather more than  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Legend. The same lettering as the preceding.

// ILVESTER D ////  
// SIS EP // COPVS.

Device. Figure of the Bishop vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble and amice, all plain ; the ends of the stole are not visible, and the albe and the dalmatic are nearly of the same length. The right hand is upraised in benediction, and the left holds the crook (a plain single coil), with the head turned inwards, and the fanon hanging from the wrist. The rationale is on his breast, the mitre is full faced. The field of the seal is diapered in lozenge pattern, each lozenge charged with a crescent. There are no accessories, and this seal would seem to be a little behind the fashion,

Plate I, figure 5.

Counterseal, pointed oval, 2 inches.

Legend.

+ TE ROGO VIRGO REDI  
SIS VIGIL ERGO GREGL.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The writer of the motto must have had in his mind Virg. Ecl. iv. 6, "Jam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna." Silvester de Everdon was a lawyer and a man of peace. He became Bishop in 1246. In 1249, a code of Border Laws was established. Can the motto refer to his desire to restore peace on the borders? Compare Ferguson's History of the Diocese of Carlisle, p. 75, with Creighton's Carlisle, (Historic Towns), p. 47.



No. 2.



No. 3.



No. 1.



No. 4.



No. 5.

Which may be rendered—

Come Holy Maid, and hear my prayer,  
The flock to aid, with kindly care.

Device. Two compartments of Gothic tracery: in the upper one the Blessed Virgin and Child; in the lower, a half effigy of the Bishop, vested and mitred, in the posture of adoration; he holds something in his hand which might be a censer or a crook.

The casts of both seals are from deeds in Durham Cathedral, dated 1247.

Plate II, figure 6.

Ralph de Irton, 8th Bishop 1280—1292.

Seal of dignity,  $2\frac{7}{8}$  inches.

Legend, lettering the same as preceding.

// ADVLPVVS : DEI : GRA ///  
KA /// OLENSIS : EPS

Device. Figure of the Bishop vested in albe, stole, dalmatic, chasuble, and amice; the dalmatic has embroidered apparels round the bottom and on the cuffs. The right hand is gloved and has a ring on the middle finger, it is upraised in benediction; the left hand holds the crook, head turned outwards, interrupting the legend, with the fanon hanging from the wrist. The crook is a plain coil ending in a leaf or some small ornament, and rises from a slight knop. The mitre is full-faced and *preciosa*. The face looks like a portrait. In the field of the seal, which is otherwise plain, are the heads of S.S. Peter and Paul in circular panels, a key beneath the former, and a sword beneath the latter. These two apostles had no special connection with Carlisle, and their heads occur in the same way on seals of this period in various dioceses; it is possible that the idea may have been suggested by the papal bulls, which I am told were often adorned with the heads of those two apostles at this period. This cast is from a seal at Durham, to a deed dated 1286.

I have another cast of this seal from the office of the Duchy of Lancaster (the deed is dated 1280); it is much broken; it contains a torso of the Bishop, the head of S. Peter and his key, and three letters (R L E) missing from the other cast.



Plate II, figure 7.

John de Halton, 9th Bishop, 1292—1325.

Seal of dignity,  $2\frac{3}{4}$  inches.

Legend, Rude Lombardic.

S. JOHIS ////  
EPISCOPI. ////

This is the first instance of an inscription in this form, *Sigillum*, &c.: all preceding ones have had the name in the nominative case.

Device. Figure of the Bishop, vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble and amice: the lower part of the figure has perished, but the cuffs of the dalmatic have richly embroidered apparels; the amice is also embroidered. The right hand (apparently gloved) is upraised in benediction. The left hand holds the crook, head turned outwards, the crook is plain, rising from a knop, it has a double coil with one evolute; the fanon hangs from the wrist. The mitre is full-faced and richly jewelled. The rationale, a trefoiled shaped brooch, is on his breast. This is a late example; the last given by Mr. Hope is that of a Bishop of S. David's 1280. The field is diapered with diagonal lattice work, each compartment charged with an annulet. There is a canopy over the Bishop's head, which represents a building, and may be the east end of the Norman Cathedral of Carlisle, which was burnt in 1292.

This cast is from a seal at S. John's College, Cambridge, to a deed dated 1293.

Plate II, figure 8.

John de Kirby, 11th Bishop 1332—1352.

Seal of dignity, 3 inches.

Legend, Roman capitals changing into Lombardic.

SIGILLV // OHANNIS DE KIR ///

All the rest gone.

Mr. Hope's first example of the introduction of the Bishop's surname is the seal of William de Wykeham 1367, so that John de Kirby is a very early example of this fashion.

Device. Under an elaborate crocketed canopy with supporting shafts and pinnacles, a figure of the Bishop standing in an easy attitude, vested in albe, dalmatic and chasuble all plain, and amice embroidered; the openings

up the sides of the dalmatic are well shown. The right hand, with ring on the middle finger, is upraised in benediction, the left hand holds the crook, turned outwards; it rises from a small knop and is crocketed. The mitre is full-faced and jewelled.

The cast is from a seal at Durham to a deed dated 1333.

Plate II, figure 9.

Thomas de Appleby, 13th Bishop 1362—1396.

Seal of dignity, rather more than  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Legend, black letter.

Sigillum ▷ Tho ///  
Episcopi ◁ Carlolens.

The legend is interrupted by two small shields of arms, that to the dexter side of the seal is much worn, but seems to be a quartered coat, France Ancient and England; the other is a chief indented, or three piles issuing out of a chief, the family arms of De Appleby.

Device. Under an elaborate canopy with pinnacles, crockets and buttresses, is the Bishop vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble and amice; the ends of the stole are not visible, and the details are obscured, except that the mitre is full-faced and jewelled. The right hand is raised in benediction, and the left holds the crook, head turned outwards; the fanon hangs from the wrist. In a niche in the upper part of the canopy, are small figures of our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, crowned and enthroned, the Saviour has His right hand raised in benediction, and in His left He holds a sceptre. The Virgin has her hands raised in prayer. This cast is from a seal in the British Museum, to a deed dated 1392.

Plate V. figure D.

Counterseal of Thomas de Appleby,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

The Legend has nearly perished, only the beginning *Ecc* is legible.

Device. The Annunciation to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Two figures under a tabernacle. The angel holds a scroll inscribed *Ave Maria*. In a small niche underneath is what looks like the figure of the Bishop.

This cast is from a deed belonging to the Dean and Chapter of Durham. "*Datum apud manerium nostrum de Rosa xxviii die mensis Marcii Anno Dni Millesimo*



ccc° nonogesimo quinto, et nostræ consecrationis tricesimo secundo."

Plate II, figure 10.

Counterseal, or *secretum*, circular; diameter,  $1\frac{3}{8}$  inches, also said to be that of Thomas de Appleby.

Legend, black letter.

Gloria Deo. Pax hominibus.

Device. An angel with extended wings supports a shield within a geometrical pattern. The pattern is identical with that on the seal of Robert Braybrooke, Bishop of London, 1382-1404, engraved in Proc. Soc. Ant. 2nd S. vol. iv, p. 394, and xi. p. 297.

The shield is a canton and a label of five points.

This cast is from a seal in the Bibliotheque Nationale, Paris. It is said to be that of Thomas de Appleby, but it may be noticed that the Coat of Arms is different from that on his seal of dignity.

Plate III, figure 11.

Marmaduke Lumley, 19th Bishop 1429—1449.

Seal of dignity  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches.

Legend, black letter.

Sig. /////



/// rpt.

Device. Beneath an elaborate canopy our Lord and the Blessed Virgin, crowned and enthroned. He is in the act of blessing, and she has her hands joined in prayer. In a circular headed niche below is the effigy of the Bishop, vested and mitred, with crook. To his right a shield with the arms of the see, a mitre charged on a cross; to his left a shield with his private arms, a fess between three parrots.

This cast is from a seal at King's College, Cambridge, to a deed, dated 1447.

Nicholas Close, 20th Bishop, 1449-1452.

Plate III, figure 12, *secretum* or signet. Oval, approaching to circular, greatest diameter  $\frac{5}{8}$  of an inch.

Legend, Velut  vel 

(Velut rosa, vel lilium.)

This may be an allusion to the passage in Canticles ii, 1, "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys."

Device. Figure of the Blessed Virgin irradiated, the



No. 6.



No. 7.



No. 10.



No. 8.



No. 9.

hands raised in an attitude of devotion. It may be a representation of the Assumption. The cast is from King's College, Cambridge.

Plate III, figure 13.

John Kyte, 29th Bishop 1521—1537.

He was originally Archbishop of Armagh, but exchanged that preferment in 1521, for the titular Archbishopric of Thebes, in Greece, together with the Bishopric of Carlisle.

Seal of dignity,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Legend, bold Roman capitals

S. JOHIS ARCHIEPI TEBANES &  
EPI KARLIONIS.

Device. The Blessed Virgin with the Child in her arms, under a boldly executed arch with pilasters and pediment, in the style of the classical renaissance. Beneath in a smaller arch is the figure of the Bishop, vested in albe, dalmatic, chasuble and amice; the mitre is full-faced with *infulæ*. The hands are joined in the attitude of prayer, and the archiepiscopal cross rests in the left arm. On the Archbishop's right is a diapered shield with plain cross, probably intended for Carlisle; on his left, an impaled shield, viz., an archiepiscopal cross surmounted by a pall, impaling a chevron between three kite's heads for Kyte. This is a beautiful seal, evidently of Italian workmanship.

The cast is from a seal in the Chapter-house at Westminster, and is dated 1520.

The date is perplexing, as Kyte is stated to have been made Bishop in 1521; this and similar discrepancies are explained by Chancellor Ferguson in his *Diocesan History*, in a foot-note on page 232.

"The date of the consecration and of the restitution of the temporalities are sometimes much later than the date of accession—often a year—sometimes two—which occasions much confusion."

Kyte's predecessor certainly died in 1520.

Richard Barnes, 33rd Bishop, 1570—1577.

Plate V, figure E.

Seal *ad causas*, very much broken. The headless figure of the Bishop is seated in a chair of state; beneath his feet is a much broken shield containing his arms, namely, on a bend between two estoiles, a bear statant; a chief charged with three roses. On either

side is a rose. This may be an allusion to Rose Castle, the Bishop's residence. This seal is in the possession of the Corporation of Carlisle, and is attached to the Probate of will of Robert Mulcaster, dated Jan. 27, 1571.<sup>1</sup>

The Chancellor of Carlisle tells me that he has a recollection of seeing among the muniments of the Corporation, a deed sealed by this Bishop, with a seal bearing the simple device of a rose, about an inch or more in diameter. He was however unable to find it on a recent search.

Richard Senhouse, 38th Bishop 1624—1626.

Signet from Netherhall.

The Bishop's paternal coat : viz , party per pale argent, and gules, in the dexter fess a popinjay ; impaled by the arms of the See.

Plate III, figure I4.

James Ussher, 41st Bishop 1641—1656.

Ussher was made Archbishop of Armagh in 1624, and took refuge in England in 1641, in consequence of the Rebellion. He was the intimate friend and spiritual adviser of the Earl of Strafford, whom he attended on the scaffold. He was Chaplain to the King, who, seeing there was little prospect of his being able to return to Ireland, conferred upon him the Bishopric of Carlisle *in commendam*. I have not found his seal as Bishop of Carlisle, but the one at Queen's College, Oxford, as Archbishop of Armagh is so curious that I have included it in the series.

Seal of dignity, 4 inches.

Legend, Roman capitals.

SIGILL. JACOBI VSSHER, ARCH. EPISC. ARMACHANI  
TOTIVS HIBERN. PRIMATIS.

Device. A Bishop (or Archbishop) preaching from a pulpit to a large congregation seated in a church.

Below is the legend.

VAE MIHI SI NON  
EVANGELIZAVERO.

Underneath is a shield per pale : to the dexter, the arms of the Archbishop of Armagh, a pall surmounting an archiepiscopal cross ; to the dexter a chevron ermine between three batons for Ussher.

<sup>1</sup> In 1577, Barnes was translated to Durham. In the Way collection, there is a very similar seal *ad causas* to the one above described, of Barnes as Bishop of Durham.



No. 11.



No. 14.



No. 12.



No. 13.



A

This concludes the series of seals of Bishops of Carlisle, but in the course of my investigations I have come across a few other seals of interest in the Diocese, of which I am able to add engravings.

Plate IV, figure A.

Vicar-General of Carlisle, oval pointed  $2\frac{1}{8}$  inches.

Legend, small black letter.

*Sigillum Vicarii  
Generalis Carloli.*

Device. Beneath a canopy seated and crowned, the Blessed Virgin with her Divine Son. Underneath, in a niche, a kneeling Bishop with crook.

This cast was sent to me by Mr. Ready, and is dated 15th century, but he cannot now remember where the original is to be found.

Plate IV, figure B.

Lanercost Priory, pointed oval, 3 inches.

Legend, Roman capitals changing into Lombardic.

S 'CAPITLI : SCE : MARIE : MAG :  
DALENE : DE : LANRECAST.

Device. Figure of S. Mary Magdalene in bold relief, a palm branch in right hand, and the box of ointment in the left. A six pointed star over the left shoulder, and the field of the seal filled up with flowers.

Date 13th century.

This seal is engraved in Surtees' Durham.

Plate IV, Figure C.

Abbey of Holm-Cultram, pointed oval,  $2\frac{5}{8}$  inches.

Legend, Lombardic.

SIG // //BATIS ET CONV  
ENTUS DE HOLMCOLTRAN.

Device. The Blessed Virgin and Child. Underneath is a shield on which are the three lions of England: this is supported by two Monks, and beneath it is an object which looks like a ram's head. On one side of the B.V.M. is a king crowned, with a sceptre; on the other an Abbot with crook and mitre, The Abbot of Holm-Cultram was mitred.

The date on the back of the cast is 1275—1300.

Plate V, figure F.

Seal of Bishop Barnes' Chancellor.



A circular seal, very much broken, displaying the Bishop's shield of arms (described above). The word *comes* is all that remains of the motto, and the legend has perished entirely. Fortunately there is a perfect specimen (at the Society of Antiquaries), of the seal of this Bishop's Chancellor, after he was translated to Durham.

The Bishop's arms are displayed upon an irradiated rose; two hands issue from a cloud above, one holds the Bible, and the other a birch-rod. The motto upon a ribbon beneath the arms is *Crux Veritatis Comes*; the letters R. B. on either side of the arms stood for Richard Barnes. The legend runs "*Sigillum officii cancell ecclii Reverendi Patris Rici Dunelm Epi.*" From what remains of the Carlisle seal, I think there is little doubt that it was *mutatis mutandis*, the same as the one at Durham,

The cast is from a seal attached to an indenture in the possession of the Corporation of Carlisle, dated March 22, 1574, relating to the "mylne damme head in well-close" which is stated to have damaged the episcopal estates.

Plate V, figure G.

Seal of the Dean and Chapter of Carlisle.

Pointed oval  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches.

Legend.

SIGIL \* DECANI \* ET \* CAP \* ECCL CATH  
..... \* CARLIOL \* 1660.

The words omitted have evidently been purposely erased; on a careful examination the remains of the letters B. VIRG. may be traced, and some slight indications of other letters consistent with the words *BEATAE \* VIRG.* Device, under a renaissance canopy, a nimbed figure of the Blessed Virgin kneels to the right at a faldstool, her hands folded in prayer. Beneath is the shield of arms of the Dean and Chapter. It seems curious that the B. V. M. should figure as the device of the Post-Reformation seal, as the Cathedral, originally dedicated to S. Mary, had been re-founded by Henry VIII, under the name of the Cathedral Church of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. Guy Carleton was Dean when the seal was made; he was afterwards Bishop of Chichester and was called by the mob, an "old Popish rogue"; he may have been responsible for the design of the new seal. I have not found any earlier seal of the Dean and Chapter, and there-



B



C

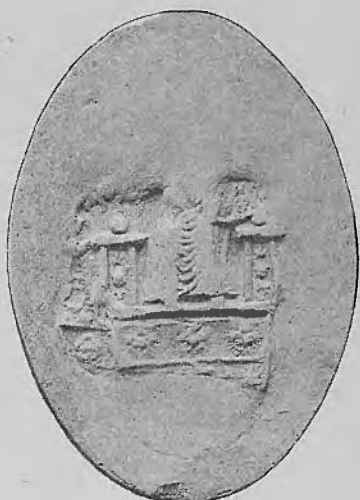


A

Plate IV.



G



E



F



D

fore cannot say whether they always retained the B. V. M. on their seal, or whether the present example was a return, adopted at the Restoration, to something like the old seal of the Priory.<sup>1</sup> The erasure of the words BEATAE VIRG. in the legend may have been the work of some Dean with puritan sympathies; but it is perhaps more likely that their insertion in the first instance was simply caused by a mistake of the engraver.

<sup>1</sup> For description and illustration of the seal of the Priory, see Transactions Cumberland and Westmorland Ant. Soc. vol. 7, p. 380.