

4-

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Cambridge Antiquarian Society,

OCTOBER 1926—JULY 1927

WITH
Communications
MADE TO THE SOCIETY

VOLUME XXIX



Cambridge:
DEIGHTON, BELL & CO., LTD.; BOWES & BOWES.
LONDON: G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.
1928

Price Twelve Shillings and Sixpence net.

**CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY
PROCEEDINGS AND COMMUNICATIONS**

NOTE

The Volumes are now marked with the **earlier serial number** only. The “New Series” number and the “Communications” number are discontinued.

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
Cambridge Antiquarian Society
WITH
COMMUNICATIONS
MADE TO THE SOCIETY

VOL. XXIX



1926—1927

CAMBRIDGE:

PRINTED FOR THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY.

SOLD BY DEIGHTON, BELL & CO., LTD.; AND BOWES & BOWES.
LONDON: G. BELL AND SONS, LTD.

1928

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN

CONTENTS

| | PAGE |
|--|-----------|
| Report of the Council for 1926 | 1 |
| Summary of Accounts for 1926 | 6 |
| <i>Ordinary Meetings with Communications:</i> | |
| The Sturbridge Chapel, Cambridge, its History and Architecture. CHESTER H. JONES | 9 |
| The Development of Bronze Age Art in Hungary. V. GORDON CHILDE, B.Litt.Oxon. | 9 |
| Melbourn Church, and its Architectural Problem. A. H. LLOYD, F.S.A. | 10 |
| Petra and Palmyra, the Desert Cities. Prof. BURKITT, D.D., F.B.A. | 10 |
| Some XVIII-Century Alterations to Ickleton Church. L. COBBETT, M.D., F.R.C.S. | 11 |
| A XVI-Century Dole-Gate from Denny Abbey. E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. | 11 |
| Some Recent Discoveries at Girton Church. Rev. T. C. SPURGIN, M.A. | 11 |
| Medals of the Italian Renaissance. G. F. HILL, F.B.A. | 11 |
| A Little-known Art Found in Rock-Shelters of Southern Spain. M. C. BURKITT, M.A., F.S.A. | 12 |
| <i>Eighty-Seventh Annual General Meeting:</i> | |
| <i>Adoption of Annual Report and Summary of Accounts</i> | <i>12</i> |
| <i>Election of New Officers and Members of Council for 1927-28</i> | <i>12</i> |
| One hundred Pictures of Cambridgeshire for the Photographic Record. W. M. PALMER, M.D., F.S.A. | 12 |
| Advertisements in XVII-Century Newspapers. Miss E. S. FEGAN | 12 |
| Notes on some Recent Acquisitions to the Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology. Miss MAUREEN O'REILLY | 13 |
| Croydon Church, Cambridgeshire. L. COBBETT, M.D., F.R.C.S., F. J. ALLEN, M.D., and A. H. LLOYD, F.S.A. | 13 |
| The Origin of the Domestic Clock, and its Characteristic Forms. EDWARD MORLEY | 13 |
| Further Excavations carried out during the present season at Burwell and Little Wilbraham. T. C. LETHBRIDGE, B.A., F.S.A. | 15 |
| New Officers for 1927-28 | 16 |
| Complete List of Officers for 1927-28 | 17 |

| <i>Printed Papers:</i> | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Cambridge and the Gunpowder Plot, 1605. E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. | 18 |
| The King's Government, as administered by the Greater Abbots of East Anglia. HELEN M. CAM, M.A.Lond. | 25 |
| Melbourn Church. A. H. LLOYD, F.S.A. | 50 |
| Petra and Palmyra. Prof. F. C. BURKITT, D.D., F.B.A. | 67 |
| A 16th-Century Dole-Gate from Denny Abbey. E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. | 72 |
| Advertising in the 17th Century. ETHEL S. FEGAN. | 76 |
| The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Burwell, Cambs. T. C. LETHBRIDGE, F.S.A. | 84 |
| Excavations in the Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Little Wilbraham. T. C. LETHBRIDGE, B.A., F.S.A., and H. G. CARTER | 95 |
| Archaeological Notes | 105 |
| Report of the Cambridgeshire Photographic Record Committee | 116 |
| Index | 125 |

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Melbourn Church, Cambridgeshire:

| | PAGE |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Exterior from South | facing 50 |
| The Font | „ 50 |
| Ground Plan | 51 |
| North wall of Chancel | facing 52 |
| South wall of Chancel | „ 52 |
| Nave, looking East | „ 53 |
| South Chapel, from Nave | „ 55 |
| „ „ from South Aisle | „ 55 |
| West Window | „ 55 |
| North Aisle, looking East | „ 56 |
| Nave, looking West | „ 61 |

Petra and Palmyra:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Sketch Maps, Palmyra and Petra | facing 69 |
|--|-----------|

Denny Abbey:

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Dole-gate from the Abbey | facing 72 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|

Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Burwell:

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Plan of Excavations, 1927 | between 84 and 85 |
| Grave 42, plan of contents | 85 |
| „ „ Associated objects | facing 86 |
| „ „ Bronze Work-box, (1) photograph, (2) drawing | between 88 and 90 |
| Other graves, silver-plated bronze “girdle-hanger,” Bronze pin, Bronze fitting, Iron scabbard (?) fitting, Iron sax, Iron knife | facing 90 |

Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Little Wilbraham:

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Grave 10, Associated objects | 95 |
| Plan of Excavations | facing 96 |
| Pots from Excavations | „ 98 |
| Gilt mount, Bone pin, Bronze ring, Bronze brooch, Purple and yellow bead, Bone comb | „ 98 |
| Grave 3, Associated objects | „ 102 |

THE KING'S GOVERNMENT, AS ADMINISTERED
BY THE GREATER ABBOTS OF EAST ANGLIA.

By HELEN M. CAM, M.A.Lond.

(Read 8 March, 1926.)

We are all familiar with the idea of the England of the Middle Ages as a land of private jurisdictions, of specially privileged tracts of land, of franchises and palatinates. Professor Pollard has clinched the contrast of mediæval and modern ways of thought in his epigram, echoed by Maurice Hewlett: "Magna Carta was a charter not of liberty but of liberties." The champions of law were not claiming a liberty in which all had an equal share, but each man's own liberty, warranted by a charter, upheld in the courts:

Liberty for a man to hang
His villein on his own park trees,
Freedom to make freedom a thing
Not to be hop'd for!

liberty of gallows, of wreck, of pillory and tumbril, of view of frankpledge, of the assize of bread and ale.

It is with certain local examples of such liberties or franchises that we are now concerned; but whilst the privilege and the power attaching to them should not be minimized, there is another aspect of the liberty which has, I think, been rather disregarded by modern writers. We are so accustomed to look on feudalism as antagonistic to the royal power, as a force making for decentralization and lawlessness, as the irreconcilable enemy of good government, that we have failed to grasp the fact that the magnates, secular and lay, in whose hands these great powers lay, were charged also with a heavy responsibility. This responsibility was not merely moral but legal. The liberty was held, as the judges hold their offices, so long as it was well administered; for defect of good order and justice the king could, and not

seldom did, take it into his own hands. A particularly explicit statement of this conception occurs in 1302, in connexion with the great palatinate franchise of the Bishop of Durham. Certain royal messengers carrying writs into the palatinate had been attacked and imprisoned, and the bishop had taken no steps to punish them; his liberty was, therefore, taken into the king's hands:

Because the bishop, since he holds the said liberty, is so far the king's minister for upholding and carrying out in the king's name and in due manner what belongs to the royal authority within the same liberty; so that he ought to do justice to all and singular there, and duly submit to the lord king's mandates, although by the king's grant he receives the profits and issues thence arising. For the royal authority extends throughout the whole realm, both within the liberties and without¹.

This judgment clearly and briefly defines the two aspects of the liberty or franchise. The king has granted to its holder certain valuable rights and powers, defined by charter or custom, and further defined by successive judgments given in his courts. By virtue of this grant the lord of the liberty does certain things which elsewhere are done by the king or his officials, and keeps for himself profits of various kinds which elsewhere go to the king's exchequer. But in so far as these rights and duties are governmental, not proprietary, public, not private, the franchise-holder is the viceroy or agent of the king—responsible to the king, and liable to forfeiture, like any other government official, for maladministration as, for instance, the abbot of Crowland permanently forfeited his right to have a gaol because of his repeated unjust detention of prisoners²; and as the private and public functions are closely intertwined, he will, in case of such forfeiture, in all likelihood lose, for the time being, certain other profits which have no logical connexion with his franchise, but are his fair dues as a landlord. In examining some features of the greater ecclesiastical liberties of East Anglia, I shall ignore the whole field of their holders' activities as landlords, in so far as it is possible to keep these distinct, and regard them solely as viceroys—administrators of the king's government.

¹ Placitorum Abbreviatio, 257.

² Year Books, 20 Edward IV, Trin. Term.

The ecclesiastical franchises in this fertile corner of England were extensive. There was first the great Peterborough liberty—the eight hundreds of Oundle, in northern Northamptonshire: then Thorney Abbey's one hundred of Normancross in Hunts; Ramsey Abbey's two hundreds of Hurstingstone, Hunts, and Clackclose, Norfolk; Ely's two hundreds in the marshes of North Cambridgeshire, five and a half hundreds of Wicklow in South-East Suffolk, and hundred of Mitford in Norfolk; and, lastly, the eight and a half hundreds of Bury St Edmunds in West Suffolk. The liberties of Bury and Ely will be the main subjects of discussion, with some reference to Peterborough and only a few to Ramsey, about which there is a good deal already in print.

Of all these liberties, Thorney is the only one that originates this side of the Norman Conquest. It is highly probable that as administrative districts some of them have a very ancient origin. Bede, in his *Ecclesiastical History*, speaks of a district belonging to Oundle, and though the Peterborough charters attributed to Edgar are forgeries, there seems no reason to doubt that the district known as the eight hundreds of Oundle in the 12th century, of which to-day the soke of Peterborough is the sole remaining fragment, was bestowed on the abbey in the 10th century, when it was refounded by Bishop Aethelwold. The Isle of Ely, again, is probably very ancient. Bede speaks of it as a province with a defined area, and the *Liber Eliensis* says that it was the dowry of Etheldreda, and the region over which her first husband was ealdorman. As her dowry, it naturally became the endowment of the house she founded, and when that was refounded for monks by Aethelwold and Edgar, it was natural that both lands within the Isle and royal rights over the Isle should be bestowed on it. Edgar, however, granted to St Etheldreda the soke not only of the two hundreds in the marshes but also the five and a half hundreds of Wicklow in Suffolk¹, a compact block of territory of which Woodbridge is nowadays the natural administrative centre. Wicklow has been identified by Mr Redstone of Woodbridge as a hill in the parish of Hacheston, but this identification is not certain. The *Liber Eliensis* in a

¹ *Liber Eliensis*, II, 5.

later passage¹ speaks of this as the six hundreds belonging to Southborne—presumably Sudborn near Oreford; but in the Middle Ages it was most frequently known simply as the liberty of St Etheldred. By 1066 St Etheldred also had the soke of the hundred and a half of Mitford in Norfolk: very probably this is the gift mentioned in the *Liber Eliensis*², when Aethelwold obtained from Edgar Dyrham with all that pertained to it, since Domesday describes the soke of Mitford hundred as being annexed to the manor of East Dereham³.

The liberty of Bury St Edmunds has, as such, a later origin: it was bestowed upon the saint by Edward the Confessor. But here also we seem to trace an older unit. The eight and a half hundreds annexed to the royal vill of Bedricsworth, where the saint's body lay, had been the dowry of Cnut's wife Emma, as the Isle of Ely had been that of St Etheldreda: and it came into the hands of the crown on her forfeiture, and was granted out again by her son⁴. Of this donation the following story was told by the monks in the 15th century, according to a manuscript in the University Library. Edward the Confessor came to Bury township on the feast of St Edmund, and Abbot Baldwin took him round the monastery. When they came to the refectory, it chanced that the king found the young monks at their midday meal eating barley bread. "My lord abbot," said the king, "wherefore are these young kinsmen of mine feeding on barley bread?" "The possessions of the monastery," replied the abbot, "do not suffice for them to have wheaten bread." Then said the king, "Ask what you will of me, and I will give it, that so they may be better fed, and may take their part in the divine service with greater alacrity and vigour." So the abbot, having taken advice, asked of the king the manor of Mildenhall and the eight and a half hundreds with all their liberties, as the king himself held them, and the king, having heard him, replied, "Unwisely have you demanded for yourself and your successors a great and continual labour—*grandem et continuum laborem*. I would more willingly have given you three or four manors. Nevertheless,

¹ *Liber Eliensis*, II, 41.

² *Ibid.* II, 40.

³ Dd. II, 214.

⁴ *E.H.R.* XXIV, 418.

for the reverence I bear my kinsman the saint, I will freely grant your request," and thus by divers charters sealed with his seal he bestowed upon Saint Edmund, as fully and freely as he held it himself, the aforesaid manor and the eight and a half hundreds which are now called the liberty of St Edmund¹.

The liberty of Ramsey Abbey also owes its origin to Edward the Confessor, who granted the monks the soke over Clackclose hundred, which Domesday shows them enjoying. To this Hurstingstone hundred in Huntingdonshire was added by Henry I. The hundred of Normancross was granted to Thorney Abbey by William II².

Not only are these districts older, as local government units, than the monasteries which administered them, they survived the monasteries' own dissolution. According to Kelly's *Directory* for Cambridgeshire, "Cambridgeshire includes two shires or jurisdictions—the shire proper, and Ely." The Isle of Ely is not only a parliamentary constituency, it has its own county council and its own coroner. A hundred years ago it was even more notable. Down to 1836 the Bishop of Ely still nominated a Chief Justice for the Isle, who could hear and determine all criminal and civil pleas in the island. Under King Charles II, as under King John four hundred and fifty years earlier, the bishop could claim his franchise and get cases transferred from the king's court at Westminster to his own court at Ely. The bishop's chaplain, writing in 1812, says that this is no longer usual, and that residents in the Isle do frequently sue in the king's court at Westminster, and that cases are taken out of the bishop's court into the king's without the bishop's protesting. Yet he does not seem to consider the survival an abuse.

"This jurisdiction, being considered as a matter of gain, is not worth having," he says, "yet as it gives the see of Ely some peculiar powers and privileges, no bishop would be willing to part with it. But with respect to the inhabitants of the Isle this Franchise is a matter of great convenience; since they have justice administered as it were at their very doors, in all pleas of the Crown; and in most civil cases they need not, unless they

¹ C.U.L. ms. Ff. 2, 29, fol. 65.

² C.U.L. Add. ms. 3021 (Red Book of Thorney), fol. 19.

think fit, have recourse to any other place for justice but the Bishop's court of Pleas belonging to this jurisdiction."¹

The liberties of St Edmund and St Etheldreda have also left a permanent stamp upon Suffolk local government. To this day the county is divided into "the geldable" and "the franchises"; there is a session for St Edmund's at Bury, and for St Etheldreda's at Woodbridge, and there is a separate grand jury for St Edmund's².

Most remarkable of all is the survival of the soke of Peterborough, though it has lost six of the original eight hundreds. Like Ely, it is a separate administrative county, with its own county council, coroner, chief constable and police. What is more, it has its own separate Commission of Gaol Delivery. Though there is no longer a liberty gaol, as there was up to 1877, the justices of the liberty, selected as required from time to time from the bench of J.P.'s, have power to try all felonies and inflict capital punishment. It is the only county franchise which still retains the power to punish by death, though once at least in this century the right has been waived³.

These modern survivals are not of purely antiquarian interest. They throw a light backwards on to the history of the whole system of franchise government; for unless they had served their purpose efficiently and met the needs of the countryside at least as adequately as other methods of local government, these liberties would not have survived the dissolution of the monasteries, and been continued in existence by "that majestie lord who broke the bonds of Rome," and who showed by his whole policy, and in especial by his "Act for recontinuing Liberties in the Crown,"⁴ that he had no intention of tolerating lesser *imperia in imperio*.

A document of the latter part of the 15th century reflects a similar view of the relationship of monarch and liberty. There is in the Bodleian Library a most interesting statement drawn up by the Abbot of Bury St Edmunds as to the

¹ James Bentham, *Cathedral Church of Ely* (1812), Appendix, p. 25.

² Kelly's *Directory of Suffolk* (1925), p. 2.

³ In 1903; see Gaches, *Liberty of Peterborough*.

⁴ 27 Hen. VIII, c. 24.

duties of his chief steward or seneschal, to which I shall have to refer later. Having laid down various rules, as to the enforcement of the king's law and the execution of the king's writs by the steward, he says: "What time this rule was kept, it was noted and holden the most notable franchise of good rule in the land." Here you have the proper pride of the viceroy, not the jealousy of the landlord.

Let us turn now to consider the actual machinery of government, through which this "great and continuous labour" of doing the king's work was carried on. The key to the situation, we shall find, is, in each liberty, this same high steward or seneschal. The fullest details as to his office and functions are to be found in the records of St Edmunds. If in the days when Jocelin of Brakelond wrote about Abbot Samson, the abbot was still himself actively exercising his public functions, by the 13th century the steward had taken all this work off the abbot's shoulders. To quote the Bodleian document again, The abbot of Bury gave out of his revenues certain manors to a steward, to support the rights of his church and his franchise, so that he and his brethren might quietly praise and serve God...If any misdoers should rebel, the steward should deal with them as right and law would, so that the abbot should in no wise be troubled nor vexed with such foreign matters.¹

The stewardship was hereditary in the family of Hastings, who traced their descent from a certain Ralph to whom it was said to have been granted by William the Conqueror. From the time of Henry I down to the present day the descent of the office is clearly traceable: in the latter part of the 14th century it passed by the female line to the Grays of Ruthin, later to the Howards, and is now in the hands of the Herveys, the present Marquis of Bristol holding the title. The office was a serjeanty, by which certain manors were held; but, as a matter of fact, pretty early in the Middle Ages the hereditary steward delegated the actual work to a sub-steward and only retained the responsibility himself. These under-stewards are very generally called stewards in government documents, such as the Hundred Rolls of 1275. They had to take an oath to the abbot, and once at least,

¹ Bodl., Suffolk Charters, 134.

as we shall see, the abbot removed an under-steward for incompetence without waiting for the hereditary steward to act. It must have been strenuous work, to which a nobleman would be unable to devote his time, for it was roughly equivalent to the work of a sheriff, and sheriffs were very busy people. The steward was the connecting link between the crown and the liberty in matters of administration, jurisdiction and finance. The scope of his functions is very clearly defined in a document which occurs in three at least of the Bury registers, and probably belongs to the reign of Edward I. "Note that the office of steward extends to the keeping of the liberty which belongs to the crown, and to executing the King's writs: but he is not to intermeddle with the manors except by the special command of the abbot."¹ That is to say, he has no concern with the estates, only with the governmental work of the abbey. His pivotal position is well illustrated by a story of the reign of Edward I. Somewhere about 1290 the Abbot of St Edmunds appointed Robert de Verdun as under-steward at the nomination of Sir John Hastings. In 1293 two sudden deaths occurred in the liberty; a boy of 12 years was found drowned in Livermere, and a man at Melford lighting a church lamp was crushed by the fall of the heavy weight that kept it up. The relatives of the dead persons sought for the coroner to hold the inquests, but he was not to be found, nor was the steward. Robert of Verdun was in fact taking a holiday; he had gone off to distant parts without asking the abbot's leave, and left his bailiwick unkept. Thus there was no one to compel the coroner to do his duty: the job would have fallen to the sheriff elsewhere, but the sheriff could not intervene in the liberty without special orders. The desperate relatives came to the abbot and begged a remedy, as they dared not bury the bodies without the coroner's inquest, though the whole neighbourhood was suffering from the stench. The abbot at once deprived Robert of his office and appointed a new under-steward, to the great indignation of Sir John Hastings².

¹ Pinchbeck Register, fol. 152. This register has been recently printed (privately) by Lord Francis Hervey.

² Pinchbeck Register, fol. 199.

The steward, then, had to see that all the officials of the liberty did their duty—coroner, hundred bailiffs, clerks, constables, bedels and the whole crowd of officials who were supposed to enforce the king's law in Western Suffolk.

He had also judicial duties; he held the "great court" at Bury, which corresponded to the shire court in the rest of the country; the central court for all the eight and a half hundreds, held at the beginning of Edward I's reign at Catteshill, to the east of the town, and later at Henhow, just outside the town, probably on the tract now known as Shirehouse heath. Besides this, again like the sheriff, he went round the different hundreds holding tourns twice a year, at which the view of frankpledge was held and the articles of the tourn inquired into by the hundred juries, and greater and lesser criminal offences presented. On such occasions he handed over to the bailiffs of the hundreds estreats or lists of the fines and amercements imposed at these courts, for the bailiffs to collect and pay over to him.

His fiscal duties had two aspects—those looking to the king and those looking to the abbot. He was responsible for levying all fines, amercements and dues owed to the king, whether payments for writs, fines imposed by the justices in eyre, or customary payments. Some of these dues had, by the terms of the abbot's charters, been transferred by the king to him; the steward would have to collect them and pay them to the abbot. Others, not so granted by charter, he would have to pay in at the king's exchequer. To quote the 15th century statement again:

The steward should yearly make clear accounts in the King's Exchequer for all manner things appertaining to the said Franchise, and collect all debts of the green wax and in the said Exchequer make livery thereof, and acquit the abbot of all things whereof account ought of custom to be made in the Exchequer; and he should answer to the Abbot of all green wax that by point of charter should grow to him within the said franchise.

The steward might also have to represent the abbot in other places as well as the exchequer; at the shire court held at Ipswich for the rest of the county, and in the king's courts at Westminster, or before the travelling justices. This will naturally arise out of his duty of upholding the rights

and privileges of the abbot and the liberty: and the perquisites allowed him are calculated with a view to such activities. Ordinarily he is allowed four horses, of the abbot's providing and feeding, and board and lodging for himself, a clerk, a serjeant and three grooms, extended by a later agreement to nine men and eight horses. If he has to go to London or Ipswich on the abbot's business, the abbot pays his expenses. He is also allowed four gallons of ale a day, half of the kind the abbot drinks, and half of smaller ale. He may turn out his horse to graze in St Edmund's meadows. In winter he is allowed six candles, in summer four, of the same quality that the prior is allowed; if he is lucky enough to get better ones, it is by grace and not right. He has grants at Christmas, Easter, and St Edmund's day; $4\frac{1}{2}d.$ each time in the earlier record, 2s., 1s., and 1s. in the later¹.

But more important than any of these perquisites were those arising from his duty of executing the king's writs in the liberty. The Abbot of Bury St Edmunds had the return of writs, as had the Abbots of Ramsey, Ely and Peterborough; and this franchise was exercised by the seneschal, to the exclusion, as he asserted in 1293, of the abbot himself. It is worth being fairly precise on this point, as one often hears it asserted of these great and ancient liberties that "The king's writ did not run in them." What exactly took place if a resident of West Suffolk wished to go to law with his neighbour over a piece of land, and sued out the king's writ, say, of Novel Disseisin? In the Bodleian Library² there is a roll of memoranda by a sheriff of Suffolk in the reign of Edward III, in some such form as the following: "Received such and such a writ—passed it on to the steward of St Edmunds—who either has reported that he has done what was commanded him, or has done nothing about it." Examples of writs, so transmitted, are extant for various liberties; for instance, those of the Abbot of St Albans and the Bishop of Lincoln; they are addressed by the sheriff to the steward or bailiff of the liberty and run something like this: "We have received the command of the king in these words: [and the writ is

¹ Pinchbeck Register, fol. 151 b; C.U.L. ms. Ff. 2. 33, fol. 142.

² Suffolk Rolls, 4.

quoted verbatim] wherefore we command you to execute this writ and report to us what you have done in the matter." If the steward failed to take action, and the sheriff reported as much, the litigant would get another writ of *ne omittas propter libertatem*, by virtue of which the sheriff could enter the liberty and execute the writ himself. The liberty of return of writs, that is, the right to prevent the sheriff and his staff from executing them in the franchise, was conditional on the franchise holder's seeing that the king's work was properly done by his own officials.

In the chronicle of Peterborough we have a rebuke addressed to the sheriff for unjustifiable interference. It is worth noting as illustrating the relation of two different lords of liberties, as well as the working of franchisal government. In 1279 the sheriff of Northants had quite regularly passed on to the bailiffs of the soke of Peterborough a writ for replevying the beasts of the Abbot of Ramsey, which the Abbot of Peterborough had distrained for arrears of rent, etc., but the sheriff having, on paper, handed on the matter to the officials of the liberty, then proceeded to come into the soke to replevy the beasts himself, alleging that the abbot's hundred courts could not hear a plea in which the abbot himself was a party. The abbot promptly obtained a letter from the king, ordering the sheriff to respect the liberties of Peterborough and to cease from interference¹. Another case, of the year 1284, illustrates the normal working of the franchise. The abbot and one of his hundred bailiffs were summoned for forcibly taking three beasts of John de Vere's. The abbot replied that he had the return of writs in his liberty, and that his bailiff of the hundred of Huxlow had taken the beasts on a mandate from the sheriff that he should distrain him for 20s. which John owed the king's chancery for three writs obtained from the chancery. The case turned on whether the place where the distress was taken was in the abbot's liberty or no; as it was, he won the case.²

This case illustrates very well the importance of the writ system in extending the king's control over the liberties. It

¹ *Chron. Petroburgense* (Camden Soc.), p. 33.

² *Ibid.* pp. 69-70.

was the universal spread of royal justice that opened a breach in the walls of a liberty, and transformed its lord from a semi-independent magnate into a "minister of the king." As we shall see, it was a valuable privilege; but it also involved heavy responsibilities, and above all, it fitted the lord's liberties into a national scheme of administration. In a large part of their activities they were simply acting as royal agents. If the king's writ could not run without their endorsement and co-operation, it was very much to their interest that it should be passed on and executed as speedily as possible; for if not they risked first the invasion of their liberty by the sheriff, and finally, if they were obstinately neglectful, the forfeiture of the liberty itself, for not upholding the king's law and enforcing his mandates.

It was to their pecuniary advantage, also, that the writs should be executed. There were perquisites and pickings to be had out of this business, especially if it led, as it did in the majority of cases, to a distraint—a taking of beasts. To compel attendance in court, payment of a debt, or rendering of a service, the normal initial proceeding was to distraint the cattle of the recalcitrant party, or, if they were poor, their coats, their pots or their pans. For each beast so impounded, the litigant paid a fixed rate—primarily for its food—for each day that the beast was in the lord's close or the sheriff's pound. The steward of St Edmunds "has all the oxen which have to be distrained under the king's writs or pleas arising within the liberty¹"; and this was probably the most valuable of all his perquisites.

The records of Peterborough, Ely and Ramsey are not so numerous as those of St Edmunds, of which this University Library has a fine selection. There seems here no trace of a hereditary stewardship, though Ely has a hereditary constable. But though we do not know so much about their stewards, they appear to be doing much the same work. We see the steward of Peterborough in 1275 at the county court of Northants (as St Edmunds' steward went to Ipswich county) claiming the jurisdiction of the abbot in a case of assault and murder. Twenty-nine men of the liberty were

¹ C.U.L. MS. Ff. 2. 33. fol. 142.

appealed by the widow in the county court, and in spite of the resistance of the sheriff, the steward, Robert of Sheffield, succeeded in getting them transferred to the gaol of the liberty. The case went up to the king's council, which upheld the charter of the abbot, and ordered the trial to be held at Peterborough¹.

Again, a succession of Ely stewards come before us. When, in 1299, the justices in eyre move on from Cambridge Castle to Ely, just as at Cambridge they demand a list of all the sheriffs who have exercised office since their last visit, so at Ely they demand and get a list of all the stewards who have held office at Ely, and so done sheriff's work, since 1286. Of the six persons named, two were also sheriffs of Cambridgeshire, one before, the other after their stewardship—Robert Hereward and William of Sutton.

From the creation of the bishopric in the reign of Henry I the administration of the Suffolk and Cambridgeshire liberties of Ely was separated: the bishop was lord of the Isle, the prior and monks of the five and a half hundreds of Wicklow. There were therefore two stewards: the steward of the Isle, and the steward or chief bailiff of the five and a half hundreds, who resided at Melton, where the ancient gaol of the liberty still stands. The liberty gaol at Ely now serves, like Cambridge gaol, as a record office.

The steward of Ramsey² again, like those of Ely, Peterborough and St Edmunds, represents his abbot when necessary in the king's courts, and holds the tourns (or leets as they are called in Norfolk and Cambridgeshire) like the sheriff, in the hundreds and manors, thus travelling round the liberty and supervising the work of the lesser officials. Here again we have evidence that these stewards were of the same class as that from which the sheriffs were drawn; in one case (Walter of Stukely) the same man serves in turn as steward of Ramsey and sheriff of Cambridgeshire and Hunts, and in several cases the same family names occur in both lists.

¹ *Chron. Petroburgense*, p. 22.

² A list of Ramsey stewards is given in Ault, *Private Jurisdiction*, pp. 145-6.

Of the other officials whose competence extended over the whole of the liberty, the most important was the coroner. We have already heard of a coroner of St Edmunds neglecting his duty in the reign of Edward I, and lest it should be thought that liberties were more liable to suffer in this way than districts under direct royal control, I may mention, by the way, that precisely parallel charges had been made in Devon a little earlier, against the coroner for refusing to hold inquests, and against the sheriff for failing to make him do so, the Devonshire county gentry complaining bitterly of the public nuisance. Each of these great liberties had its own coroner who kept the pleas of the crown, so that no profits arising from crimes or sudden deaths should be lost to the government. It was a responsible position, and the coroner of St Edmunds might well be expected to be a man of some standing. By a lucky chance, we have the will of a man who served both as coroner and clerk to the steward of the liberty, and is mentioned frequently—and generally to his discredit—in the Hundred Rolls of 1274–5. This man, Henry of Helhoughton, took bribes to let people off serving on inquests; he instigated the accusation of innocent men, he arrested men who had not been regularly indicted and kept them in prison till they paid to be released, and took fees for holding his inquests, which he should have held gratis. His will, dated 19 June, 1274¹, reveals the fact that if a clerk, he was married, for he leaves legacies to his widow, to three sons and two daughters and to their nurse, Agnes de Lansese; that although supposed to be an upholder of the law, he encroached upon the king's highway both at Risby, where he held land, and at Helhoughton; that if a layman, he could read, for he left "one of my books called a codex" to a nephew; that he held land in Bury St Edmunds and in two other villages besides Helhoughton, where his court or manor house was and where he had a chaplain of his own. His little gifts to friends and servants are numerous, and suggest a kindly man. His legacies to the poor, to chaplains of churches, to Dominicans, Franciscans, and the monks of St Edmund, and his provision for his funeral masses would suggest the devout son of the church

¹ Bodl. Suffolk Charters, 75.

—but that the first two items of the will rather lead one to suspect a guilty conscience, or, perhaps, a very businesslike otherworldliness. “I leave half a mark to repair the parish church of St James, because of the tithes I have forgotten or failed to pay. I leave my charger and armour to the shrine of St Edmund, for all my trespasses done against the blessed Edmund and his church.” The villagers of West Suffolk might complain that Henry had unjustly extorted money from them; what lay heavy on his conscience when he came to die was not so much what he had taken, but what he had kept—those perquisites of royal government which had long ago been bestowed by one king and saint upon another king and saint.

We have considered the administration of the liberty as a whole: mainly in the light of the St Edmunds evidence; we have now to turn to the parts. If the unit of estate management (with which we are not concerned) was the manor, the unit of royal administration was the hundred, whose bailiff, with his assistants, carried out the steward's commands on the spot. There is a wealth of material for illustrating hundredal administration; I shall draw mainly on the Ely material, since both 13th century court rolls and 14th century bailiffs' accounts are extant for the hundreds of this liberty.

The hundred bailiff was, as a rule, appointed by the steward: a hereditary bailiff is mentioned for one of the St Edmunds hundreds by Jocelin of Brakelond, but the post is no longer hereditary in the 13th century. He entered into a bond for good conduct with the abbey. In one of the Bury Registers at the British Museum there are copies of the indentures for the seventh year of Henry VI for the hundreds of St Edmunds, which are let out for terms varying from one to five years¹. The bailiff is to hold hundreds, leets and tourns; to certify inquests to St Edmund; to levy the fines and amercements owing both to St Edmund's Court and to the Exchequer, and to render account for them to the abbot, the steward and the coroner; to keep the rolls on parchment and hand them over at the end of his term;

¹ Add. MS. 14848 (Registrum Curteys), fol. 53.

and to hear pleas of contracts, etc., up to 39s. 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The annual sum payable ranges from £6. 13s. 4d. for Risbridge hundred to £35 for the double hundred of Blackburn. The formula addressed to the good folk of the hundred adds that the bailiff has full power to distrain and do all things necessary for carrying out these duties¹.

These indentures give you the outline of the hundred bailiff's function. He is the executive, judicial and fiscal subordinate of the steward of the liberty. He carries out the orders contained in the writs; in many if not all cases, he holds the three-weekly hundred courts; and he collects both "the king's debts," under the mandates sealed with the green wax of the exchequer; the fines and amercements arising out of the pleas of the great court of St Edmunds, the intrinsic shire; those arising out of the tourns held in his hundred twice a year by the steward; and those arising out of the courts that he himself holds. He also collects the ancient customary dues, payable generally twice a year, that go by the name of sheriff's aid, hundred scot, assised rents, hundredor's aid, cert-money, head penny, or whatever the local name for them may be². We have a good survey of the fiscal side of his activities, to take these first, in some of the accounts for the Ely hundreds of Mitford in the 14th century³.

In 1379 Richard of Welby, Bailiff of Mitford hundred, Roland Lucas his sub-bailiff for half the year, and Nicholas Payn his sub-bailiff for the other half-year, render account to Thomas Arundel, Bishop of Ely.

| | |
|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Receipts:</i> Arrears from previous year | £19. 3. 10. |
| Sheriff's aid | 22/8 |
| Cert-money payable at view of frankpledge from 18 villages | 22/5 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Perquisites of the leet in 14 villages | £7. 9. 0. |
| Perquisites of 17 hundred courts | 49/6 |
| Perquisites of fairs and markets | 60/1 |
| Total receipts, including arrears from last year | £39. 14. 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ |
| Fines and amercements arising in the king's courts | 31/5. |

¹ Add. MS. 14848, fol. 321 b (18 Henry VI).

² See N. Neilson, "Customary Rents," in Vinogradoff, *Oxford Studies*, II, 2, pp. 119 ff.

³ Bodl. Norfolk Rolls, 99.

Outgoings: Richard Welby's fee 100/-
 Parchment for keeping court rolls of hundreds and
 leets, and for return of writs 2/-
 Balance due £34. 12. 0½.
 of which £4 is allowed to Nicholas Payn and
 £6. 2. 5. to R. Lucas.
 Total due is £24. 9. 7½.

In the diocesan registry at Ely there are some accounts for the hundred of Wisbeach in the years 1489–90, but they are almost certainly incomplete, as they make no reference to hundred courts, leets or customary payments. They are simply accounts of the fines and amercements arising from the sessions of the Justices of the Peace at Ely at Easter and in August. 5*s.* 10*d.* is due, and 8*s.* 4*d.* is remitted because it cannot be collected.

Thomas Ketyll, bailiff of Wisbeach, accounts firstly for
 100/- of arrears from the previous year.
 17/6 for fines and amercements arising from the
 sessions of the Justices of the Peace of
 the Isle of Ely, held at Ely on Wednesday
 before Palm Sunday.
 37/4 for similar fines from the sessions of St.
 Peter's ad Vincula.
 Total due 154/10. Paid down 46/- (? 46/6).
 Fines remitted 8/4.
 Still owing 100/-.

The appearance of the justice of the peace is significant of the supersession in the 14th and 15th centuries of the sheriff and shire court and, to some extent, the hundred bailiff and hundred court for the purposes of local government by the new "maid of all work," the J.P., who was to do for the Tudor kings what the sheriff had done for the Angevin kings.

This leads us to consider the judicial work of the hundred bailiff. The Ely records are good evidence of the dwindling importance of the courts held by the hundred bailiff. At Ely there is an incomplete series of court rolls for the hundred of Wisbeach belonging to the years 1302–7. There is also a series for the hundred of Wichford for the year 1366–7 which, though complete, is very bald and uninteresting. The vast majority of cases are cases of debt, and the number at

each court is very much smaller than at the earlier date. In the intervening sixty years the J.P. has come into existence, and his sessions are stealing the petty criminal jurisdiction of the hundred.

Certain facts, however, emerge. At both dates the hundred courts are held on a fixed day of the week—Tuesday at Wichford, Thursday at Wisbeach, at regular three-week intervals, except in the New Year, where there is a four-weeks' interval. I think some sort of Christmas holiday for court-holders was general. Thus you get your full tale of seventeen courts in the year. At the Martinmas court of Wichford a long string of persons who owe suit pay a lump sum down to be released from attendance for the next twelve months. Among those owing suit to the hundred of Wisbeach may be noted two women—one the Prioress of Eton and one a lay-woman.

If the Wichford Rolls of Edward III's reign are uninteresting, the Wisbeach rolls give a very fair notion of the kind of business conducted every three weeks by a hundred bailiff in the reign of Edward I. For further light we can also refer to the court rolls of the Ramsey hundred of Clackclose. I do this the more willingly, as the latest historian of Ramsey, Dr Ault of Boston, doubts whether the hundred court of Clackclose ever met. There is in the Record Office solid reason—fourteen membranes of court rolls—for believing that it met and did business in the years 1282–4¹. It is to this roll we owe a charming vignette of medieval piety, for it was at the court held at Downham Market on 12 February, 1284, that Avelina Perlet sued Robert Hall of Boughton for attacking her by force and arms upon the king's highway between Wereham and Boughton upon Easter Sunday, 1282, and robbing her of a missal worth 20s., a manual worth 2 marks, and two rolls of songs worth 6*d*. We should like to know if the songs were carols or the more secular songs of some village choral to which Avelina was proceeding, her spiritual duties performed—but all we learn is that she won her case and recovered the value of the stolen goods, plus damages².

¹ P.R.O. Court Rolls, 192/67.

² Court Rolls, 192/68, m. 2.

This is a plea of detention of chattels, another example of which may be cited from a Wisbeach roll of 1302. Two men of Leverington agreed at Michaelmas to lay out £8 jointly, repayable at Christmas, for trading purposes, and one having put down £4 and only received 40s. back, sued the other for the remaining 39s. 11*d.* It will be remembered that the statute of Gloucester of 1278 was interpreted to prohibit any plea involving 40s. or upwards being heard in a shire or hundred court. The plaintiff lost his case.

Cases of trespass occur frequently in the Wisbeach rolls. Joan Pelham complains that Stephen Malebraunche fell upon her one Sunday at Leverington, with various other men unknown, beat her, ill-treated her, drew blood from her and finally flung her on to a fire. Richard Baxter complains that Peter of Domerham assaulted him at Wisbeach, violently entering his house, and frightening his wife so that he lost her services for a week. Damages were assessed at 18*d.* He also accuses him of public defamation, by calling him "false man," whereby he lost a bargain involving five quarters of wheat. Seemingly he lost this plea. More unusual is the complaint of John, the son of Geoffrey Gerard. Thomas of Rotherwick, a man of Tydd, to whom John had entrusted a hound, had, contrary to the custom of the country, neither tied her up nor shut her up at the breeding season, and by mismating with all manner of strange dogs the breed of her offspring had been spoiled, for which he claims 6s. 8*d.* damages. Thomas asserts that such tying-up is the custom of boroughs and towns, not of country villages like Tydd, and demands a jury. Unfortunately the verdict of the jury is not enrolled.

Pleas of debt and of contract are very common, as, for instance, when Richard Dunham buys two quarters of wheat for 10s. at the end of February, undertaking to pay on the Good Friday following, but pays nothing until July. His creditor claims 6s. 8*d.* for the intervening four months. Or again, John Aleyn leases 26 acres to William of St Ives for a rent of 22s. for the whole year, to be paid at Michaelmas and Easter, and William pays nothing; or again, when a woman claims 2s. 3*d.* due to her for minding a cow—two

years' pay in arrears. She secures 1s. 10*d.* On 10 June, 1305, Richard Baker is accused of enticing William Pepper away from the service of Thomas Fisher, to whom William was bound from Michaelmas to Easter. The jury finds for Fisher, who gets 40*d.* damages.

Two or three times we are reminded of the great world outside the Isle. There is an interesting case arising out of *Quia Emptores*. John Aleyn takes the beasts of Richard Baker by way of claiming the service owed from his tenement—6*d.* a year and two suits to his court. John Aleyn's tenant had formerly been Roger Batere, who enfeoffed Baker to hold of the chief lord of the fee according to the statute, and as Baker refused to render the services to John Aleyn he was distrained. Baker says that Aleyn has already admitted that Batere held the land by those services, and Batere is still alive, so that he is asserting that he has two tenants of the same tenement. It would seem that Baker refused to accept the working of the new statute.

Another point of contact with the governmental policy of Edward I is to be noted in a case at the court held on 16 February, 1306. Walter Tolmer complains that John Nunne had accused him unjustly, bringing a "malicious bill" before the justices of Trailbaston sitting at Ely in June, 1305, asserting that he had burgled John's house. The jury had found him innocent, but as a consequence of his journey to and from Ely to answer this frivolous charge he had lost a horse worth 20*s.* Apparently Walter got his damages. The reference is interesting both as showing the universal use of a nickname first invented in the previous year, and also as alluding to the procedure by bill—the individual petition as contrasted with the presentment of an accusing jury, a procedure discussed at length by Dr Bolland, and shown recently by Dr Jacob to be at least as old as 1259. It will be noted also that the justices of Trailbaston, like the justices in eyre, sat in the Island itself.

Edward I's name itself is heard in the court on 10 June, 1305, when Hamo de Walton brings a writ of right addressed by the king to the bishop. "Do right to Hamo concerning this piece of land, for unless you do, the sheriff of Cambridge

shall." So the command goes out that all free tenants are to attend the next court. The average agreement about suit to a private hundred court included the condition that the suitor should attend the court twice a year and on such other occasions as a thief is to be judged, or the king's writ to be pleaded, due summons having been given. This is a case in point.

Another aspect of hundredal jurisdiction is illustrated by the appearance from time to time on the record of the Prior of Ely, who "claims his court" in cases where one of the parties is his man or lives on his manor. It would appear from the entries of the affeerors at the end of each court day that he claimed rather the money profits arising out of the case than the actual jurisdiction: for sums are sometimes noted as being due to the prior, whilst most are described as being due to the bishop.

Besides evidence as to the kind of cases that came up before the hundred bailiff every three weeks, we have some light on the actual conduct of the business. There are no cases, such as Miss Levett has found at St Albans, of litigants or suitors losing their temper and using violent and unruly language. We do hear, however, of "a great altercation" between the Prior of Ely and Thomas Doreward as to which of the two should have jurisdiction over Stephen Hamund. We find the suitors of the court holding a discussion as to whether William Cavendish is to be allowed to claim 38s. 6d. from William Okey, who sold him a piece of land 16 perches short of the supposed extent. They decide that Okey need not pay, though he has agreed to do so. In another case they refuse to allow a woman to wage her law to prove that she did not come by night and steal the seal of another woman. In another case the plea is postponed for lack of sufficient number of suitors. Clearly the suitors were still the judges, even if the hundred bailiff presided and kept the rolls. They have other duties. One suitor is amerced a shilling for refusing to collect the fines and amercements of the court in Leverington when he had been elected for the purpose. It would seem that the affeerors chosen at each court, according to Magna Carta, to assess the amount of the amercements imposed, were also bound to collect them in the different

villages of the hundred—Elm, Tydd, Newton, Leverington, Well and Wisbeach. The total due for each village is given separately at the foot of each roll, along with the names of the affeerors.

A note at the foot of one roll commands the execution of all the orders enrolled on the record of the last court but one, unless they have been ticked off. The execution of the precepts and mandates arising from the holding of the courts will form a large part of the responsibilities of the hundred bailiff, and it is to this side of his activities that we must now turn, having considered his fiscal and judicial duties.

We have already acquired a pretty good idea of what these executive functions are—levying debts and amercements, impanelling juries, attaching people to be present at the court, distraining them by their chattels if they fail to come. To do this work the bailiff has assistants; summoners to summon people to the courts whenever special attendance is required (a tenant of Ramsey Abbey held his land at Wimbotsham by the service of summoning men to the hundred court of Clackclose); collectors chosen in court to collect the fines and amercements of each court day; sub-bailiffs to help with the records and accounts; bedels to attach and distrain men. The Wisbeach hundred court rolls indicate that there was a bedel in each village of the Isle of Ely; he is constantly acting as pledge for the appearance of people in court. The number of the staff varied with the hundred.

The hundred bailiff, as we have seen, is appointed by the lord of the liberty or his steward, and enters into a bond with him for good conduct. But he is also the *ballivus juratus* solemnly sworn, probably in the hundred court, to serve the king's interests; when the justices in eyre come round he has to give an account to them of his bailiwick¹; and to the men of the hundred, when he is doing the king's work, he is "the king's bailiff." A case on the Wisbeach roll emphasises the higher loyalty. Reginald fitzWalter, the king's bailiff, was commanded by the constable of Wisbeach, on behalf of the king, to attach John Lowyn, chaplain, and six other men who had beat and wounded John Digby, so that

¹ Ass. R. 70. m. 7d.

his life was despaired of. John Digby, now fit to appear in court, accused Reginald of entertaining and countenancing these malefactors, and allowing them to escape unharmed from his bailiwick, contrary to his oath and in contempt of the king. Reginald admits that he did take supper with these malefactors, and was in their company for half a day, but only against his will. They took him by force and compelled him to stay with them so that he could not fulfil his office on behalf of the king without being instantly slain. He begs for a jury, as does John Digby; and the jury find that Reginald acted under compulsion and was innocent of supporting these common malefactors.

Again and again it is made evident that the bailiffs in these liberties are doing the king's work. In the Suffolk liberty of Ely, the men of the Earl Marshal are charged with resisting the bailiffs of the prior when they try to take distresses by command of the king in Carlford hundred, in order to levy the king's debts there¹. The bailiff of Thredling hundred appeals to the king in 1302 for punishment of six men who assaulted him at Debenham when he was trying to attach three others for trespass². In 1276 the king appoints justices of Oyer and Terminer to ascertain what malefactors and disturbers of the peace attacked and ill-treated three bailiffs of the Bishop of Ely while holding his view of frankpledge at Walpole and Walsoken³. At both ends, then, from the point of view of the villagers and from the point of view of the king himself, the officials of the liberty are doing the king's work as well as the abbot's work.

The co-operation, no less than the profit-sharing of the crown and the franchise-holder, is well illustrated at the visitation of the justices in eyre. They sit in the liberty, whether of Ramsey, Peterborough, Ely or St Edmunds; they call to account the steward and the bailiffs of the separate hundreds; they inspect the rolls of the coroners of the liberty, they inquire into all manner of crimes and trespasses committed within the liberty by the king's ministers and by

¹ *Rot. Hund.* II, 189.

² *Cal. Pat. R.* p. 85.

³ *Ass. R.* 1228, m. 49d.

others since the last eyre. But they are not infringing the liberty, safeguarded by charter. They may condemn the thief to be hanged, but they do not wish to deprive the abbot of his liberty of the gallows. Richard Canting, found guilty of theft in the Eyre of Northampton in 1280, "was delivered by the justices to the bailiffs of the abbot of Peterborough to be hanged, and as it was evening, and they could not take him to the gallows at Collingham, they borrowed the king's gallows and he was hanged there, but his chattels went to the lord abbot¹." So when the justices left the county, they delivered to the abbot a list of all the fines and amercements imposed, and the chattels of thieves, fugitives and outlaws, presented in the eyre, forfeit by right to the king, but granted by charter to the abbot².

The very terms in which the lords of liberties claimed their privileges were the measure of their responsibilities. Richard I had granted to the abbot of Peterborough in the eight hundreds "whatever the sheriff has in the king's hundreds³" and the abbot in 1230 claimed by colour of this charter "whatever pertains to the sheriffdom⁴." Even in the 12th century, much more in the 13th and following centuries, the sheriff was liable to find himself in difficulties, and ultimately in the Fleet prison, if he failed to obey orders from headquarters. So with the stewards and bailiffs of these great liberties; if they had the powers they took the risks of the sheriff. In the exchequer, before the justices in eyre—nay, even at the hands of their rival, the sheriff of the shire, they were liable to be called to account for the non-collection of royal debts, for the non-enforcement of royal justice, for the non-execution of royal writs. The very wording of the writ of right itself, as Maitland pointed out long ago, made the lord of a private court a royal agent. The matter cannot be more briefly put than it is by the lord of a liberty, himself claiming his privileges in the eyre of Northampton in 1330. "Robert of Ferrers, my predecessor," he says, "had the aforesaid

¹ *Chron. Petroburgense*, p. 41.

² *Ibid.* pp. 119-24.

³ *Ibid.* p. 125.

⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 11-12.

hundred, pleas of *vee de naam*, execution of the lord King's writs and thus consequently was the lord King's servant—*minister domini regis*¹." If it has not been possible to sketch more than a rough outline of the administration of these ancient ecclesiastical liberties, reason has at least, I hope, been given for recognising their lords as the king's ministers—cogs in that magnificent machine built up by the practical genius of our Norman and Angevin kings.

¹ *Plac. Quo Waranto*, p. 581.

CONTENTS
OF PROCEEDINGS,
VOL. XXIX, 1926-27.

| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| Report of Council for 1926 | 1 |
| Summary of Accounts for 1926 | 6 |
| Ordinary Meetings with Communications | 9 |
| Eighty-Seventh Annual Meeting | 12 |
| New Officers for 1927-28 | 16 |
| Complete List of Officers for 1927-28 | 17 |
| <i>Printed Papers:</i> | |
| Cambridge and the Gunpowder Plot, 1605. E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. | 18 |
| The King's Government, as administered by the Greater Abbots of East Anglia. HELEN M. CAM, M.A.Lond. | 25 |
| Melbourn Church. A. H. LLOYD, F.S.A. | 50 |
| Petra and Palmyra. Prof. F. C. BURKITT, D.D., F.B.A. | 67 |
| A 16th Century Dole-Gate from Denny Abbey. E. A. B. BARNARD, F.S.A., F.R.Hist.S. | 72 |
| Advertising in the 17th Century. ETHEL S. FEGAN | 76 |
| The Anglo-Saxon Cemetery, Burwell, Cambs. T. C. LETHBRIDGE, F.S.A. | 84 |
| Excavations in the Anglo-Saxon Cemetery at Little Wilbraham. T. C. LETHBRIDGE, B.A., F.S.A., and H. G. CARTER | 95 |
| Archaeological Notes | 105 |
| Report of the Cambridgeshire Photographic Record Committee | 116 |
| Index | 125 |