

(WILL OF LANDS.)

My lands, &c., in the counties of Hertford and Berkshire and elsewhere. To Elizabeth my wife my lands and tenements in Cheshunt, co. Herts, and my close at Staunfordes Hill called Presfelde, with remaynder to Jamys Blakman my godsonne, otherwise called Jamys Abbott, with remainder to John Blakman my brother's son and his heirs. My lands, &c. in the par. of Undevor and elsewhere in Berks, and my lands, &c. in Eton, co. Bucks, called Brocasts, lands to the foresaid John Blakman and that by the oversight of the foresaid Robert Forster and of — Fenwick, gentilman dwellyng at Colbroke. To my said wife Elizabeth my tent. in Throsshyn lane in Walth'm holy Crosse. [No witnesses.]

Proved at Lamehith, 17 April, 1477. (28, Wattys.)

GEO. F. TUDOR SHERWOOD.

99, Angell Road,
Brixton, S.W.

Letters of the First (English) Prince of Wales to Berkshire Ecclesiastics.

By Mr. Nathaniel Hone.

A very unique Roll at the Public Record Office contains some hundreds of transcripts of letters of the first (English) Prince of Wales (afterwards Edward II.) in year 1304-5, when the Prince was in his twentieth year. Many of these letters are dated from Windsor Park, White Waltham, and Weregrave. The following are translations of a few relating to the County of Berks* :—

TO THE LORD ABBOT OF READING.

Edward, &c. To our beloved in God the Lord Abbot of Reading greeting. Whereas we have heard that you have lately caused to be assessed by your men Our well beloved Adam de Poletier and other Burgesses of Reading, by reason of the tallage that the Lord the King our Father is making of his demesnes,

* Two series of these letters in the original Anglo-French appeared in the *Antiquary*, September and November, 1894.

which burgesses have never been taxed by you, nor by your predecessors, nor by your men, but by those whom the King of England assigned for that purpose as they say, we pray you affectionately that you will put this taxation in respite for one month, after the date of this letter, for love of us, if you can do so without the damage and prejudice of your Church, so that the said Burgesses may be advised and counselled to do towards you as is right and reasonable. Given under [our seal] at Langley the x day of June.

TO THE LORD ABBOT OF READING.

To his beloved in God the Abbot of Reading and the Convent, &c. Health and good love. Whereas our beloved John Lalemaner, Keeper of one of our chargers, has injured his hand, and we have heard that there is a good surgeon at your house, we pray you to receive him to stay in your house until his hand shall be healed, and that in the meantime you will provide him with sustenance, and cause the said surgeon to take good care of him for love of us. And we shall be especially bound to thank you. Given under our seal. [Park de Windsor, 6 Sept.]

TO THE LORD PRIOR OF HURLEY.

To the Prior of Hurley and the Convent, &c. Greeting, &c. You will call to mind the frequent requests that we have made to you before this time for our beloved clerk John de Bohun, that you would vouchsafe to him the Church of Warfield which is vacant and is in your gift, and you have answered us by your letters that your house is charged with x^{li} annual pension towards a clerk whom you have presented to the said Church, in discharge of your said house. And whereas we have heard that the said clerk whom you have presented is not sufficient, wherefore the bishop of the diocese will not induct him to the said church, and that you must present another to it, we pray you specially and from our heart that you will vouchsafe the said church to our said clerk at this time, out of charity and for love of us. And we shall be especially bound to you if you will send us word back, &c. So that we may know how you esteem us, and our progenitors. Given at Wyndsor Park the ix. day of September.

Three other letters to the same Prior appear on the Roll, couched in very similar terms, asking preferment in the Church of Warfield for John de Bohun.

One other letter may be noticed, referring to a corrody addressed,

TO THE LORD ABBOT OF ABYNDON.

Edward, &c., to his beloved in God the Abbot of Abyndon and the Convent of the same place, greeting and good wishes. Whereas, at the request of our Lord the King our father, you have granted to our beloved servant Master Simon our Ken* to receive x. marks per annum of your house as we have heard, we pray you especially that besides these you will give to him your habit.† For we understand and well know that he will and shall be well deserving. Given under, &c. At Windsor Park the v. day of Sept.

* sic. "Simoni nēe Ken": possibly an office, but perhaps intended to imply kinship.

† vos robes.



Notes.



WANTAGE.—At a meeting of the Numismatic Society, on October 18th, the President, Sir J. Evans, exhibited a gold coin of Cunobeline, found near Wantage this year.

CAVERSHAM.—This village has found a most able historian in Mr. W. Wing, who delivered a valuable and interesting lecture on "Old Caversham," in the National Schoolroom. The lecture has been fully reported in the *Reading Mercury*, and is full of valuable matter which has been amassed by very careful and persevering research.

HURLEY.—AN OLD TILE.—While a grave was being dug in the new burying yard close to the site of the old Monastery, in a spot not before used for burial, on Monday, December 10th, an oblong paving tile was shovelled out from a depth of several feet below the surface, upon which vine leaves and their stalks are filled in with a substance of a light green hue. There is a glaze all over the face, as bright and glistening as though the veneer had only been placed on the tile's surface yesterday. The date of the mould in which this brick was made was of the thirteenth century, although the actual moulding of the tile itself may not have been until the fourteenth century, as the moulds were preserved.—F. T. WETHERED, Hurley Vicarage.

HURLEY FLOODS.—The newspapers during the week ended November 24th have discussed Thames floods in former years. *Apropos* I send you a reference made to floods at Hurley many hundred years ago. There is a document in Latin (referred to in the *Liber Niger Quaternus* at Westminster), dated June A.D. 1391, in the 15th year of King Richard II., which in English runs—I translate it—as follows:—"At that time the Prior and Convent of Hurley besought the Lord King that out of Reverence due to Lady Edith, sister of the sainted King Edward the Confessor, their buried [in Hurley Church] and inasmuch as the said place is distressed in many ways—that is to say, by flooding of the river Thames (*de inundatione fluminis Tamesis*), because of houses laid in ruins [by the floods] and the deaths of the inhabitants, and in consideration of the expense of housing the survivors in the Monastery, and inasmuch as they [the Monastery] are but poorly endowed—that it might please the said Lord King to appropriate to them the Church of Warfield in the Sarum diocese, of which they are and have ever been the patrons." Warfield, Berks, with the rest of our county, was in the diocese of Sarum (Salisbury) until 1836, when it became part of the Oxford diocese. The extraordinary interest of this document, which itself is more than 500 years old and which refers to a time *then* historical (!) is apparent.—F. T. WETHERED, Hurley Vicarage.

A MEMORABLE FLOOD 221 YEARS AGO.—A curious note in the Parish Register of St. Mary's, Reading, states:—"In the year of the Lord, 1673, there was so great a flood of water on the 18th and 19th days of January, that the like could not be remembered by any man here living."

AMERICAN GENEALOGY.—We have received an interesting pamphlet from Mr. V. C. Samborn, of Illinois, U.S.A., relating to the pedigrees of several American families who can trace their descent from Berkshire ancestors. We hope to deal with this subject at length at a future time.

THE ENGLISH DIALECT DICTIONARY.—The editor of this important work, Dr. Joseph Wright, desires some additional help from his fellow-countrymen in order to enable him to make the material as complete as possible. Any contributions of dialect words, however small, will be thankfully received. Anyone who has any time to spare can render most important assistance.

OLD ENGLISH CUSTOMS.—I should be greatly obliged if any readers will kindly send me notes of old customs *still existing*, e.g., Mumming, Maying, Manor Court observances, strange Charities, &c., &c.—EDITOR.

THE BISHOPRIC OF RAMSBURY.—I write under correction, but I do not think Mr. Kershaw is right when he tells us, as he does in the October *Quarterly Journal*, that the See of Ramsbury was only a small one within the larger See of Sarum. While the Bishopric of Ramsbury existed there was no Bishopric of Sarum. In the year 909, the date of the Papal Commination of Formosus, there were but two Wessex Bishoprics, Sherborne and Winchester; in consequence of the Pope's letter the See of Ramsbury, amongst others, was constituted. Herman, the last Bishop of Ramsbury, united it in 1058 to the See of Sherborne, and in 1075 the seat of the Bishopric was transferred to Sarum in obedience to a decree of the Council of London. The foundation Charter of the Cathedral of Old Sarum is dated 1091, and Herman was its first Bishop. The See of Ramsbury comprised, generally speaking, the counties of Berks and Wilts, and from 1058, when the diocese became merged in Sherborne, the county of Dorset in addition. With regard to a minor detail, could any Bishop of Ramsbury have been correctly styled "*Episcopus Sunningensis*"? I imagined this to be an error of Florence of Worcester. Athelstan, the first consecrated to the See, and his successors called themselves, I believe, "*Episcopi Corvinensis Ecclesiae*"—Bishops of Ravensbury. The estate at Sonning seems to have been a kind of summer residence, and, so far as I have been able to learn, could give no ecclesiastical title to its owners.—HENRIETTA M. BATSON, Welford, Berks.