

## VII.—THE SOCIAL POSITION AND INFLUENCE OF THE PRIORS OF DURHAM, AS ILLUSTRATED BY THEIR CORRESPONDENCE.

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The Prior of Durham ranked as one of the barons of the Palatinate, whose resources compared very favourably with those of the secular magnates, for the estates of the priory were extensive and wealthy, and the priors won influence and favour by presenting the protégés of powerful neighbours to churches in their gift. The king himself asked that benefices should be provided for royal clerks, and looked upon compliant priors with favour.<sup>1</sup> The Nevilles and the Percies were in friendly contact with him, and met him on equal terms, while lesser gentry of the neighbourhood respected him, and valued his mediation with the bishop. The bishop himself accepted the hospitality of the prior from time to time. The main sources of information as to the social contacts of the prior are the account rolls of the bursar—the most important of the convent's obedientiaries, and, in the second place, the correspondence of the priors. The earliest bursar's account dates from 1298, but the majority of original letters, which were received by the priors, belong to the fifteenth century. Information relating to the attendance of the prior at Parliament and convocation and his service on various royal and papal commissions, though of great interest, has not been indicated as it falls outside the scope of this study, which is concerned with the social contacts of the prior and his influence on local affairs.

<sup>1</sup> *Script. Tres.*, S.S. IX' (1839), p. 76. Graystones, in his account of the dispute with Bishop Anthony Bek, writes, "Multum igitur juuit partem Prioris favor Regis et suorum. Nam familiares clericos Regis fecerat sibi Prior benevolos per prebendes de Hofden."

The account rolls give the names of the prior's stewards from the late thirteenth century to the dissolution of the monastery in 1536. A typical thirteenth century steward is John Shirlock. Owing to breaks in the series of accounts it is not possible to give the precise dates of his period of office. The earliest dated charter, which he issued on his own account, belongs to the year 1280<sup>2</sup> and he is mentioned as steward and received a pension of £5 a year *c.* 1310.<sup>3</sup> He died before 1324, as his widow issued charters that year, which related to the Shirlock estates. The fortunes of the family appear to have been founded by his father, who built up a considerable estate, by purchasing land and granting mortgages,<sup>4</sup> while he held lands, as a tenant of the prior and convent, at Eden and Wolveston.<sup>5</sup> On coming into his inheritance, John Shirlock the younger continued his father's policy.<sup>6</sup> He appears to have won considerable prestige and influence, for he became sheriff,<sup>7</sup> and he must have been a wealthy man, for he lent money to the bursar during the period when he served as steward.<sup>8</sup> As he died without issue, however, the contacts between the Shirlock family and the prior and convent were not maintained in succeeding generations.<sup>9</sup>

As the fourteenth century drew to a close it was becoming the practice to appoint stewards from the most

<sup>2</sup> D. and C. of Durham—3 9 Spec. 20—a lease to William, son of Wilfrid of Wolveston, of land in Wolveston.

<sup>3</sup> D. and C., Bursar's Rolls—1309?, *c.* 1310, 1309-1310.

<sup>4</sup> For instance he gave £5 to Roger, son of Gregory of Wolveston "in his necessity", and received his land when Roger failed to repay the money—3 9 Spec. 21, *c.* 1244. Idonia, widow of Walter Smith of Wolveston, forfeited her land in the same way in return for 4 marcs—3 9 Spec. 23. He also secured land from Wilfrid of Fery—3 9 Spec. 25—and from Robert of Shirburn and Eufemia, his wife, 3 9 Spec. 27. See also *Feod. Prior. Dunelm.*, S.S., 58 (1871), pp. 135*n.*, 136*n.*

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 21, 40.

<sup>6</sup> He received 11½ acres and a rood of meadow from Hugh le Mareschall—1286-7, 3 9 Spec. 26. In 1297, by a final concord with John Riwan, he and his wife were confirmed in possession of a messuage, four tofts, 158 acres and 7 acres of meadow—3 9 Spec. 31, 1 10 Spec. 47.

<sup>7</sup> He is styled sheriff, when acting as witness to a charter—2 9 Spec. 2—*c.* 1300.

<sup>8</sup> The bursar repaid £34 6s. 8d. to John Shirlock in 1310-11—Bursar's Roll.

<sup>9</sup> The Shirlock estates passed to the convent between 1298 and 1346.

distinguished families of the district. Prosperous land-owners, such as John Shirlock, were succeeded by great merchants or scions of the baronial families. Robert Rodes of Newcastle was a great merchant, *juris Anglie peritus*, who had sat in no less than eight Parliaments,<sup>10</sup> Thomas Surteys belonged to one of the most distinguished families of the district, which had produced a long succession of capable administrators,<sup>11</sup> and William Bulmer, who acted as steward from 1496-1531, belonged to one of the oldest baronial families of the Palatinate.<sup>12</sup> His successor, Thomas Neville, was equally distinguished.<sup>13</sup>

Occasionally a magnate, or a man of distinguished family connections, might perform administrative business on behalf of the prior and convent, even though he was not employed in the capacity of steward. For instance, in 1381-2, the bursar saw the Lord Neville and the Archbishop of York several times on business, according to the bursar's accounts. Similarly, in 1396-7, his accounts record that John Killerby went to Raby to speak with Lord Neville, and John Bellasis went to London to consult Lord Neville on business relating to the manor of Heley.<sup>14</sup>

Social, no less than business affairs, brought the prior into contact with noble families. Their servants are regularly mentioned in the bursar's accounts, as they received small gifts whenever they had occasion to come to the priory. In particular, references to the servants of the Nevilles or those of the Earl of Westmorland are extremely frequent. Occasionally a statement is added to explain the errand on which a servant was engaged. For instance, in 1347-8 a servant brought a silver cup to the prior and received a gift.

<sup>10</sup> Steward in 1447—see "Catalogue of Seals", C. H. Hunter Blair, *Archaeologia Aeliana*, 3rd series, XI.

<sup>11</sup> For the pedigree and history of the Surtees family see Brigadier-General H. Conyers Surtees and H. R. Leighton, *Records of the Family of Surtees* (Newcastle, 1925). Thomas was steward 1368-78.

<sup>12</sup> *Script. Tres.*, p. CCCLXXXVI.

<sup>13</sup> *Durham Household Book*, S.S., 18 (1884), pp. 93, 190.

<sup>14</sup> Heley was bought in 1382 by the convent from John of Nevill. These discussions probably related to that transaction—see *Feod.*, p. 183n.

The bishop's servants, too, were frequently rewarded with small sums, while on many occasions the minstrels of Lord Percy or of Lord Neville appeared at the convent and received gifts. Sometimes great personages were entertained by the prior. For example, the prior frequently met the bishop or entertained him at Bear Park, or another of the manors. Such entertainments were not of right but of favour, as the prior was careful to stipulate.<sup>15</sup> The names of the prior's guests are sometimes mentioned in the cellarer's rolls. Thus, in 1333-4 guests included the king and queen, the bishop's justices, assessors for the land of Gylet,<sup>16</sup> and the prior's council, which assembled at Durham and was entertained for a week.<sup>17</sup> In 1446 William Rakett, who is described as *seneschalus hospicii Comitis Westmerland*—steward of the Earl of Westmorland's household—was entertained at the convent.<sup>18</sup> By the exercise of hospitality in this way the prior maintained valuable contacts with great and powerful neighbours, administrators and justices.

On many occasions the prior met the great men of the district at a ceremony or an important social event. For instance, he appears to have attended the funerals of the more important magnates or, if he could not be present in person, he sent a representative. For example, the bursar's roll, c. 1336 mentions the expenses incurred by R. de Whiteword, William of Gysburn and J. of Norton on the day of the funeral of Richard del Parc of Blakiston while in 1380-1 the prior himself attended the burial of Lord de Latimer, spending £4 5s. 7d. on the journey to Guisborough. Again mourning was bought and supplied to the prior's valets on the occasion of Lord Neville's funeral in 1396-7.<sup>19</sup> Marriages and baptisms, too, brought the prior into contact with baronial families. Thus, licence was given to the prior and

<sup>15</sup> *Script. Tres.*, p. CLXXIII.

<sup>16</sup> No explanation of this phrase is given in the published account rolls.

<sup>17</sup> *Acc. Rolls, S.S.*, 99 (1898), pp. 17-26.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 86; cf. p. 87. See *Calendar of Durham Seals*, No. 1149 for John of Gylet—*Arch. Ael.*, 3rd series, XXII, p. 34.

<sup>19</sup> *Acc. Rolls, S.S.*, 103 (1900), p. 600.

convent to marry Lord Neville to the daughter of the Earl of Kent in the church at Brancepath in 1394.<sup>20</sup> and in 1446-7 £7 6s. 8d. was spent on a christening present for the son of the Earl of Westmorland.<sup>21</sup>

The information supplied by the prior's correspondence is more detailed than that contained in the accounts. In particular, the letters indicate the favours which the prior could confer and his influence on political and administrative affairs. For instance, the prior played an important part in the affairs of the Scottish Marches. King James wrote to him in 1429 asking him to favour the Scottish commissioners, who were about to meet the English commissioners to arrange for the conservation of a truce.<sup>22</sup> As early as 1314 the prior and convent took the lead in an attempt to prevent the invasion of the Palatinate by the Scots and the monks entered into a bond to pay 80 marks in order to prevent the district being ravaged.<sup>23</sup>

In the same way, owing to the contacts between the prior and bishop, the gentry of the district sometimes found it advantageous to secure the prior's mediation on their behalf when disputes arose with the bishop. For example, William Eure and William Elmedon wrote a joint letter to the prior, asking that he would arrange a meeting with the bishop, since all their efforts had failed, and a subsequent letter indicates that this was done.<sup>24</sup> Though disputes, sometimes arose between the prior and bishop, relations were usually cordial.<sup>25</sup> The prior valued the favour of the bishop, and, on occasion, requested him to exert his influence on behalf

<sup>20</sup> *Script. Tres.*, p. CLXXV.

<sup>21</sup> *Acc. Rolls*, p. 630. Other references to the baptisms of the children of the Earl of Westmorland occur pp. 630, 708, 709.

<sup>22</sup> D. and C. Mss., Loc. XXV, 101.

<sup>23</sup> *Script. Tres.*, p. CXIII; Raine, *Letters from Northern Registers*, R.S., pp. 232-3.

<sup>24</sup> Loc. XXV, 7 (fifteenth century), 58.

<sup>25</sup> The most bitter contest was that against Anthony Bek in the late thirteenth century. Secondary accounts can be found G. T. Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham*, Harvard Historical Studies, Vol. VIII (New York, London, Bombay, 1900); and R. K. Richardson, *Bishopric of Durham under Anthony Bek, 1283-1311*, *Arch. Ael.*, 3rd series, IX (1913); see also *Gesta Dunelmensia*—Cam. Soc., XIII (1924).

of the convent, or in the prior's own interests,<sup>26</sup> while the bishop, in turn, accepted the favours which the prior could confer on him.<sup>27</sup>

On the other hand occasionally humble and obscure persons wrote to request the prior's assistance and influence. One fifteenth-century letter was sent by a widow, who wrote about a debt of 3s. 4d., which was being claimed by a glasier at Farne. She asserted that her late husband had paid the bill and sought the prior's intervention on her behalf.<sup>28</sup> Most of the letters, however, were from great and powerful personages. Some represent formal requests to the prior to attend public functions or ceremonies. For example, the Archbishop of York wrote to the prior to request that he would be personally present at the Inthronization at York.<sup>29</sup> Others gave items of news, which would interest the prior in cases where he was on friendly terms with a particular family. Thus, a letter of Thomas Preston to the Lord of Horden, recording the pardon of the Earl of Northumberland on a treason charge, has been preserved among the muniments of the priory, and also a letter from the earl himself, which confirms this.<sup>30</sup> Again, during the siege of Cambrai Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, wrote to tell the prior that he was enjoying good health.<sup>31</sup> Some of the prior's correspondents asked particular favours of him. A typical example is the letter of Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, who wished to

<sup>26</sup> See *Durham Annals and Docs. Cent. XIII, S.S.*, 155 (1940)—c. 1289. Prior Hugh informed the bishop that he was very ill, and asked him to further the interests of the convent—no. 165, p. 189. See also no. 158, p. 186. Bishop Richard Bury bequeathed vestments to the convent—*Script. Tres.*, no. CXIV, p. CXXXIII. These are only a few instances of favours and requests conferred upon the prior and convent.

<sup>27</sup> See for instance *Durham Annals and Docs.*—a number of letters indicate that Robert of Holy Island, Bishop of Durham, borrowed money from the monks before 1268—nos. 160-2, pp. 187-8. Even Bishop Bek requested the prior's prayers when he was about to go abroad to make peace between the kings of France and Aragon—*Ibid.*, no. 163, p. 139. Bishop Hatfield also requested prayers—*Script. Tres.*, no. CXXVIII, p. CXLV. See below for requests for benefices for protégés of the bishops.

<sup>28</sup> Loc. XXV, 13—fifteenth century.

<sup>29</sup> Loc. XXV, 54.

<sup>30</sup> Loc. XXV, 44, 146—date 1469.

<sup>31</sup> Loc. XXV, 122.

borrow the prior's horses and chariot in order to attend a meeting for the arrangement of a truce with the Scots. His financial circumstances made him anxious to avoid the expense involved in purchasing the necessary equipage, but, if the prior preferred this, he was prepared to discuss terms.<sup>32</sup> In the same way, the Earl of Northumberland wrote to request that the prior would make a grant of land to Sir John Syndreby, vicar of Ellingham.<sup>33</sup> Though the great offices of the priory, to which laymen were appointed, were usually sold at a high price,<sup>34</sup> sometimes neighbouring magnates attempted to secure such appointments for men in their service, or for persons whom they wished to favour. For example, Lord Montague, Lieutenant of Carlisle, requested that one of his servants should be appointed keeper of Bear Park.<sup>35</sup> Sir John and Thomas Neville wrote to ask that William Hoton be appointed steward in succession to Thomas Langton<sup>36</sup> and Richard, Earl of Salisbury requested that Richard Cowhird be restored to office as forester of Bear Park. John and Thomas Neville also wrote to ask for the office of porter for John Whit, a servant.<sup>37</sup> Occasionally a patron wrote to request that his protégé should be appointed a scholar at Oxford.<sup>38</sup>

As the priory was a safe place for the deposit of muni-ments and valuables the prior often took charge of such things at the request of their owners. Sybil Langton wrote about a silver vessel, deposited by her husband in the

<sup>32</sup> See Appendix I, Loc. XXV, 121. This probably refers to the meeting in 1429, when the truce was renewed until 1431, though, in 1431, there was a further extension of the truce until 1433.

<sup>33</sup> Loc. XXV, 155—Feb. 20th (first half of the fifteenth century).

<sup>34</sup> Entries in the bursar's accounts indicate this—e.g. 1398-9—from William Chaumbre for the office of Marshal of the Hall—£13 6s. 8d.; from John Rodis for an office in the Hall, £16 13s. 4d.; from William Stabularius for an office, £20. 1398-9—from Thomas de Bicheborn for the office of custodian of the napery of the Hall, £20. 1396-7—from Richard de Thickle for an office of Forester of Aycliffe Park, £10.

<sup>35</sup> See Appendix, Loc. XXV, 19—fifteenth century.

<sup>36</sup> Loc. XXV, 47—note also the letter of the Countess of Westmorland to this effect—133. c. 1435.

<sup>37</sup> Loc. XXV, 120, 132.

<sup>38</sup> See Appendix I, Loc. XXV, nos. 16, 128, 163, 168.

monastic chancery, which was to be delivered to her cousin, John Hogton.<sup>39</sup> Henry Beaufort, Cardinal of England, wrote to the prior to request that he should deliver up without delay and difficulty the will of Ralph Neville, late Earl of Westmorland, husband of Joan Beaufort, the writer's sister.<sup>40</sup> The Scrope muniments too had passed into the monastic chancery, and an interesting letter concerning them has survived in which the king ordered that John, Lord Scrope, was to have copies of any of them, if he so desired, but on no account were the originals to be surrendered.<sup>41</sup>

The king wrote to request corrodies for those who had served him.<sup>42</sup> Again, letters of confraternity were granted to great personages or to royal protégés. For instance, in 1261, Prior Hugh and the convent informed Eleanor of Provence, Queen of England, that they had made a grant of confraternity to the deceased empress, while in 1267 the convent informed the Lord Edward that a grant of confraternity had been made to Sir John Vaux. Sir John had been killed in a tournament and his body had been received by the convent at the request of the Lord Edward.<sup>43</sup>

Undoubtedly, however, the majority of letters were requests to the prior to provide for clerks, or occasionally to sanction exchanges between two incumbents. In particular, prebends in the churches of Howden and Hemingbrough were in great demand. The most importunate suitors for favours of this sort were the king, or the regent, the Nevilles and the archbishops of York, who usually concluded their requests with the formula "As I may do you service in tyme

<sup>39</sup> Loc. XXV, 40—fifteenth century.

<sup>40</sup> Loc. XXV, 78—1425.

<sup>41</sup> Appendix I, Loc. XXV, 99—1498.

<sup>42</sup> William Dautre was given a corrody at the royal request—*C.C.R.*, 1313-1318, p. 469; William le Jetour, *C.C.R.*, 1323-7, p. 495; Robert de Driffeld was sent to replace Thomas Kendale, deceased, *C.C.R.*, 1330-3, p. 136; John le Trumpour was sent to replace William de Leschekier, *C.C.R.*, 1330-3, p. 142; Adam Bowman was sent to replace Thomas Kendale, *C.C.R.*, 1337-9, p. 387; Robert de Driffeld was sent to replace Thomas Kendale, *C.C.R.*, 1337-9, p. 387.

<sup>43</sup> *Durham Annals and Docs.*, no. 21, p. 26; *Ibid.*, nos. 23-4, p. 97; note also prayers were requested for the soul of Sir Hugh Burnel in 1286, *Ibid.*, no. 24, p. 97.

comyng", or, "as I may do things als mych to your pleisance in tyme to come". A consideration of all these requests indicates very clearly the extent of the prior's influence and ability to win favour and concessions from the great men of the land by the exercise of his patronage. The influence of this system on the presentations actually made to livings in the gift of the priory would be a very important and instructive study.<sup>44</sup>

## APPENDIX I

Loc. XXV, No. 121. Reuerent ffader in gode and my right tristy frende I grete you of tymes welé alwey desiryng to wete of yo<sup>r</sup> welefair the which I pray gode euer more to be asgude as yhe kan best desire thankyng you right hertly of all kyndenes shewed to me a for this praying you euermore of y<sup>r</sup> gude contynuaunce And for asmuch as me behoues be at yo<sup>r</sup> Estm'chez at yis day of conuencion be twen us and ye Scott w<sup>t</sup> a grete noumbre of men and I as yhitt a young housband and nocht all redy <proveid me><sup>45</sup> stored of all at wer nedefull nor nocht night be lik as I hadd proposed for ye gre costagez and expencez at I han hadd now of late as for ye suyte of my handez I pray you right hertly and as my syngular trist is in you yat yhe will do me this ease at this tyme as to len me yo<sup>a</sup> chariotaor wt yo<sup>a</sup> chariott and ye chariott horses to trauaill wit (me)<sup>46</sup> my harneye to warde ye marchez agayne ye said day and I sall ordeyn yat thei be seen to as reson will also I pray for you as mich as me stondes right grete new of horses at yis tyme and for asmoch as yhe haue son gude co<sup>a</sup> sei & ye which yf it lik you to sell hym I w . . . gif you asmuch for hym as he <ws> worth upon restn p<sup>ra</sup>yng you at y<sup>t</sup> if yhe so will do y<sup>t</sup> yhe will certify me w<sup>t</sup> ye berer herof And if it lik you nocht to sell hym I pray you w<sup>t</sup> all my hert yat the will len me <hym> at yis tyme and I sall gar see at he be wele doon to in ye meyn tyme & at yhe have <hym> saue & suyrh delyuered agayn This nat mat' at I (wrot) write to you 'for at yis tyme I pray you effuetuelly take to hert & help y<sup>t</sup> I myght be spedy' of as my trist is gretely in you And yf there be any thyng at I may do to yo<sup>r</sup> worshipp proffitt & ease & ye <will> make hole knowlaige <y' of> I sall performe itt at my power yat kneweth All mighty gode whome I beseche euermore for his mercie haue you in his gracious keypyng both body and soule at Middelham ye III day of Juyn.

<sup>44</sup> See the list of requests—Appendix II.

<sup>45</sup> < >—interlined.

<sup>46</sup> ( )—cancelled.

An autograph postscript follows—in a large, untidy hand—I pray you as my trewst as in you y<sup>t</sup> yhe will tender thys materes as I may do oght y<sup>t</sup> may lyk you R. Salisbury.

Dorse—To the reuerent fader in gode and my right trusty ffrende the Priour of Duresme.

No. 19. Reuerent fadre in god my right trusti and with all myne herte entierly welbeloued friende I recommand me to you and hertily pray you y<sup>t</sup> may lik you by the assent of your couent to graunt to me the office of Kiper of your park called Beue Parke whan so euer the same office by the decess of John Rakette may office there happyn to be voyde the same graunt to be enestablished to me for a seruant of myn under your couent seall to put to the same office by ye seid graunt by me which I trust shall <be> of such dysposicion and gouernaunce as shall be to yo<sup>r</sup> wele and proufit This it may lyk you to graunt to me withouten excuse or obstacle notwithstanding any graunt made in lyke wist to the lord Neuyll late decessed as my veray singuler and faithfull trust is in you and god kepe you Wretyn at Karlile the XX<sup>te</sup> day of Septembre.

The lorde Montacu  
Lieutenaunt of Karlile

Autograph signature follows—your treu & faythefull Montacu.

#### Requests for the Appointment of Scholars at Oxford

Loc. XXV No. 16

Right worshipfull and ruerent and my full good and worthy maistr' as lawly as I kan I recommaund me to you besechyng you as hertly as I kan to be good lord to Thomas Rudd'son of Aluerton to be an <of> ye felowes in your collegge att Oxenford att ye next voidandaunce yere of any of Aluertonshire ye whyche son is full vertuous and wel lerned in gramer for whame my maistr' Sir James Strangways hath afore yis wreten to you for ye same cause as I haue as a pou' simple persan' prayed <you> full hertely also for him diuers tymes, afore I trust to God yat <ye> wol vouchesaue to be his good lord him and I beseche you with ale my herte <so> to be as my grete trust is ye wol be Wreten att Yafford ye X day January

Your pou' servant Robert Danby

Addressed (dorse) To ye right worshipfull and reuerent and my full good and worthy maistre ye priour of Duresme.

No. 128

Reuerent sir in god and my full trustey frend I gret you wel otymez and forealsmych as I am enformed yat yer are II voydance

fallen of childr' yat suld be sonne of almuse in your college at Oxenforth I pray you right hertly yat at instance of me and of my brothir Sir Thomas Neuile ze wald 'admytte Thomas Marley to ye said college to be founded yer of your almuse as I may do thinge alsmych to your pleisance in tym to come and ye holy trinitee haue you in his keping Writen at Branncepath XIX day of Nouembr'

Rauff Erle of  
Westm'land

Addressed (dorse) To right reuerent Sir in god and my full trusty frend Priour of Durham

No. 163

Henri erle of Northumberland and lord  
of ye honoure of cokirmouthe

Right trusti and welbeloued we grete yow well and For asmcche as Thomas Birkhalkke of Berwik hath a son of his attendyng upon our welbelouid frende ye priour of your monastere ye which his seid fad wold haue forderid bi goode menys to your college at Oxford in suche fourme as our welbelouid Esquier Robt Lambton berer of yeez shal declare unto yow in our behalue To whom we prei you to yeue feith and credence as oure truste is in yow Writen at London ye XXV dai of Juyl

Address (dorse) To our right trusti and welbelouid ffrende dan William Dalton (Dalton was a monk at Durham.)

No. 168

Right reuerent and wurschipfull lord I recomaunde me to your graciouse lordeschip as your aun seruand and man effectually desiryng to here and knawe of your herll weelfare and prosperite the whilk I besek almyghty god forhis mercy to maynten and intend to his plesannce lik at your ereuerent lordeschip there is on Thomas Person the son of William Person of Houeden competently instruct in gram' that gretely desirs to Oxenford to scole to lerne his frendez noght of power to fynd him there gret almonse to helpe him Wherefore I walde besek your saide lordeschip be the way of charite that the saide Thomas myghte be as an discipul and seruitour in youre college at Oxenford as for on of Houedenschire if there be any voyed or else he myght haue the next voydanne at the reuerente of God Whom I besek to haue you in keping Writen at Woddestoke the X day of august.

Be zoure aun  
Rauf Babethorp

The seal remains on the dorse, surrounded by a twist of rush.

No. 99. By the Kyng.

Right dere in god Howe be it yat we nowe late haue commande you by oure writte undre oure grete seal to make liuere unto oure Right trusti and welbeloued John Lord Scroop of such chartours muniment' and euydences as be in youre keypyng the which concerne and belonge to yenheritaunce of the Scroop the which after ye forfanture and deth of Henri lord Scroope his broyer were ladde away from seint Leonard at York and put in diuers places undre diuers mennes keeping at ynsistante of Henrici Lord ffitzhugh yat dede is of the which persones ye beth oon as it is said yat haue the keeping of the said chartours muniment and euydences as in our said writt it is conteigned more at large Yit for certain grete and chariteable maters and causes yat gretey touchen us and moruen us we wol and charge you straitely and upon the faith and ligeaunce yat ye owen unto us that oure said writtè and ye contenne of hem nothwithstanding ye in no manere of wise make lyuere nor deliuere to the said John lord Scroop nother to noon other persone the said chartours muniment' and euydences nor noon of them but kepe yem surely into sure use. And yif it so be yat the said lord Scroop wol desire to haue copies of theym or of eny of yem we wol renne and charge you that of such of the said chartours muniment and euidences as he wol desire to haue copies of that ye make him copies by the ouersight of such a persone as oure right trusti and welgeloued Rauf lord Cromwell oure tresourer of England wold name unto <you> and by the same ouersight deliuere the said copies to ye said John Lord Scroop Yeuen undre oure priue seal at oure castel of Wyndesore ye XXIX day of May.

No endorsement, but fragment of privy seal still adheres to the paper.

#### APPENDIX II

##### The Patronage of Churches in the Fifteenth Century. (Requests to the Prior for the preferment of protégés of the correspondents—from Loc. XXV)

No. 12. John Basing, knight, in favour of Dan<sup>47</sup> John, already recommended by Lord Zouche. This is a request that the Prior of St. Leonard's, Stamford, should be allowed to resign in favour of his brother, Dan John. For the letter of Lord Zouche see no. 135.

No. 21. An unsigned letter (perhaps from the Lord High Chancellor of England) to the Bishop of Durham, in which it is stated that the prior had promised the presentation of four prebends in the church of Howden to the bishop, and was therefore unable to

<sup>47</sup> Dan is an English corruption of the latin *Dominus*, Sir.

present John de Lincoln to a prebend there. The writer requested that, at the king's desire, the said John should be presented.

No. 26. A letter of the chaplains of Howden to Prior John, asking him to present W. Lauerok, chaplain, to a prebend at Saltmarsh, vacant by the resignation of Walter Sprynge.

No. 27. A letter of Robert Babthorpe, to recommend a tenant at Hemingbrough to succeed to the first vicarage of the church of Hemingbrough, vacant by the presentation of Sir John Roclyff to a chantry in Hull.

No. 28. Letter of Robert Babthorpe, to request that Sir Richard Whitef be presented to the vicarage of Eastington, vacant by the death of Sir John Coue.

No. 29. Letter of Robert Babthorpe, to request that the church of Eastington be conferred on a certain honest priest of his, in return for the services, which the said Robert had rendered to the priory.

No. 42. Letter of Richard Buston to John, Prior of Durham, recommending his cousin, Sir John Holgat, to be presented to Holtby, about to be vacated by Sir William Barker.

No. 50. Letter of Henry Bowet, Archbishop of York, to request that a relative of his, Master John Soulsby, be presented to a benefice, vacant by the death of Thomas Key.

No. 52. Letter of John Kempe, Archbishop of York, to request that D. John Haryngton, chaplain, be presented to the vicarage of Eastington in the diocese of York, vacant by the death of Richard Whitelafe.

No. 53. Letter of William Fallan, clerk, to announce his resignation of the prebend of Skelton in the church of Howden and to recommend that Robert Partyngtone of the Exchequer should succeed him.

No. 55. Letter of William, Archbishop of York, to request that Master William Lytherlond be presented to the prebend of Thorpe in the church of Howden. Thomas Bradshaghe, the prebendary there, was ready to resign in favour of the said William.

No. 67. Letter of Robert Neville, Bp. of Salisbury, to request that Magister John Nortone be presented to a prebend at Howden, vacant by the death of Robert Frend.

No. 68. Letter from Robert Neville, Bishop of Durham, to request the next presentation to the church of Brantingham, likely to become vacant by the infirmity of the incumbent. The bishop required this for a clerk, for whom he had previously requested a prebend at Howden, since the said prebend had been required for a clerk of the king.

No. 69. Letter of Bp. Robert Neville, to request that a vacant

prebend in the church of Howden be collated to the steward of his household, Sir Edward Clayton.

No. 71. Letter of Bp. Robert Neville, to request that Sir William Parkynson be admitted to the vicarage of Skipwith, then vacant.

No. 73. Letter of R(oberth Fitz Hugh?), Bp. of London, to Prior John to request, on behalf of the king, that Fulco Bermyngham be presented to the first vacancy in the collegiate church of Howden.

No. 75: Letter of John Stafford, Bp. of Bath and High Chancellor of England, to the Prior of Durham to request that Sir Thomas Belyngeham be presented to the church of Brantingham, as Master Robert de la Hay was willing to resign it in favour of the said Sir Thomas.

No. 76. Letter of John Stafford, Bp. of Bath, to say that the king's clerk, Sir Richard Bekyngham, had obtained the good will and assent of the Archbishop of York towards his presentation to the church of Hemingbrough. The bishop accordingly requested that the prior would bring the matter to a good issue.

No. 77. Letter of John Stafford, Bp. of Bath, to request that Richard Bekyngham be presented to the church of Hemingbrough.

No. 80. Letter of William, Bp. of Salisbury, to request, on behalf of the king, that Sir Henry Hanslay succeed to the next vacant prebend in the church of Howden or Hemingbrough.

No. 81. Letter of John Waltham, Bp. of Salisbury, to request that Henry Bowet, Archdeacon of Lincoln, be presented to the prebend of Barnaby and Asselby in the church of Howden, which William Wyndesore would exchange for Henry's prebend in the church of Chester.

No. 82. Letter of W., Bp. of Norwich and Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, to urge that Sir Henry Hanslape, king's clerk, succeed to the next vacant prebend in the church of Howden or Hemingbrough.

No. 83. Letter of Henry Beaufort, Bp. of Lincoln, and Chancellor of England, to request that M. John Fayt, his clerk, succeed to the first vacant benefice in the patronage of the prior and convent.

No. 88. Letter of Henry VI, requiring that Master Richard Chester D.D. be presented to the first vacant prebend in the church of Howden or Hemingbrough. Under the signet.

No. 89. Mandate from Henry V, that his domestic chaplain, John Selby, be presented to the first vacant prebend at Howden. Under the signet.

No. 91. Mandate of Henry IV, to recommend that John Borell, chaplain of the royal chapel, receive preferment. The king had provided for William Caue, on whose behalf he had previously solicited the prior's patronage. Under the signet.

No. 92. Mandate of Henry (IV?), to express surprise that John Brokholes, one of the keepers of the King's Privy Seal, had not been provided for, and to request the prior's patronage on his behalf. Under the signet.

No. 93. Letter of Henry IV, to say that Henry Bowet, prebendary of Barnaby, had been elected Bp. of Bath and Wells, and to request that Henry Merston be presented to the said prebend. Under the signet.

No. 94. Mandate of Henry IV, that his secretary, William Pilton, clerk, be presented to the first vacant prebend at Howden. Under the signet.

No. 95. Mandate of Henry IV, to recommend that John Yuelith, clerk, be presented to the first vacant benefice in their patronage. Under the signet.

No. 98. Mandate of King Henry VI, to recommend that Robert Langcastyr be presented to the next vacant benefice in the patronage.

No. 100. Mandate of King Henry VIII, to say that Thomas Babethorpe, Master in Arts and Provost of Hemingbrough, was willing to resign in favour of a royal chaplain, Richard Wylson, Prior of Drax. Under the signet.

No. 103. Letter of Katherine, widow of Henry V, to request that Master Marmaduke Lomley, Chancellor of Cambridge, be presented to the first vacant prebend in the church of Hemingbrough, as Master Neuile, to whom it had been promised, was about to succeed to a higher dignity. Under her signet.

No. 104. Letter of Katherine, widow of Henry V, to thank the prior for his promise to promote Master Marmaduke Lomley, Chancellor of Cambridge, to the church of Hemingbrough, about to fall vacant because of the promotion of its incumbent, Master John Rekinghale, confessor of John of Lancaster, the regent, to a higher dignity. Under her signet.

No. 105. Letter of Katherine, widow of Henry V, to request, on behalf of her great aunt, Lucy, Countess of Kent, that Master William Pelleston, doctor of law, be presented to the next competent benefice to fall vacant. Under her signet.

No. 106. Letter of Katherine, widow of Henry V, to request that Sir John Clyfton, her chaplain, be presented to the first suitable benefice to fall vacant. Under her signet.

No. 107. Letter of John of Lancaster, regent, to request that Stephen Lescrope be presented to the first vacant prebend at Hemingbrough. Under the signet.

No. 108. Letter of John of Lancaster, to William Barry, William Washington and John Barton, monks of Durham, to ask them to assist him to secure the presentation of Stephen Lescrope, Arch-

deacon of Richmond, to the first prebend vacant at Hemingbrough. Under the signet.

No. 109. Letter of John of Lancaster, to repeat his request in favour of Stephen Lescrope. Under the signet.

No. 111. Letter of John of Lancaster, to request that Master John Rykinghale D.D. be presented to the first vacant benefice in their patronage. Under the signet.

No. 112. Letter of John of Lancaster, Duke of Bedford, to request that the prior present Thomas Bradshawe, the duke's secretary, to the first vacant prebend in the church of Howden. Under the signet.

No. 113. Letter of John of Lancaster, to request that James Neusome, son of John Neusome, the writer's esquire, be presented to the first vacant prebend at Howden. Under the signet.

No. 116. Letter of John of Lancaster, to request that a pension of 10 marks be granted to his secretary, Thomas Bradshaw, in addition to a prebend in the church of Hemingbrough, as he understood that the value of the prebend was only 20 marks a year. Under the signet.

No. 117. Letter of John of Lancaster, to request that his secretary, Thomas Bradshaw, be promoted to the church of Hemingbrough, as Master John Rikyngdale, the duke's confessor, was willing to resign it in favour of the said Thomas. Under the signet.

No. 119. Letter of Richard Neville, to request that a certain clerk be presented to a prebend at Howden, vacant by the death of Sir Robert Frende.

No. 123. Letter of Joan, Countess of Westmorland, daughter of John of Gaunt and wife of Ralph Neville, to support a request made by the king that the prebend of Skipwith in the church of Howden be given to William Henry, if it fell vacant by the promotion of M. John Catryk to the bishopric of St. David's.

No. 124. Letter of Joan, Countess of Westmorland, to recommend that her son, Robert Neville, succeed to the vacant church of Hemingbrough and that, after him, John Bradshaw, the clerk of John, Duke of Bedford, be presented there.

No. 127. Letter of Joan, Countess of Westmorland, to request that a prebend in the church of Howden, vacant by reason of the death of M. William Doncaster, Dean of Auckland, to be bestowed on Sir John Duffeld.

No. 130. Letter of Thomas, Lord Clifford, to request that his aunt's chaplain, Sir William Lorymer, be presented to a vicarage in the church of Hemingbrough, vacant by the cession of Sir John Herte.

No. 130.\* Letter of the Countess of Cambridge (aunt of Lord Clifford), to the above effect.

No. 134. Letter of Thomas, Lord Clifford, to request that the next presentation to the vicarage of Giggleswick in Craven be given to Sir William Hacforthe, a chaplain of the Earl of Westmorland.

No. 139. Letter of Rauf Eure, to request that his chaplain, William Colynson, be presented to the church of Holtby, which Walter Boyntone intended to resign.

No. 140. Letter of Peter Mulgreve, to request that his clerk, William Wycam, be presented to the church of Holtby.

No. 141. Letter of John, Duke of Lancaster, to thank the prior for presenting his clerk, John Elvet, to the church of Normanton and to request that Nicholas Haukerigg be presented there as the said John was willing to resign in his favour.

No. 142. Letter of Maud of York, Countess of Cambridge, to request that a certain clerk be presented to a vacant vicarage at Hemingbrough.

No. 143. Letter of Alice, Countess of Salisbury, to recommend that her chaplain, Sir Hugh Noone, succeed to the church of Blyborough, vacant by the death of Sir Robert Conyng.

No. 145. Letter of Elianor Percy, Countess of Northumberland, to request that M. John Wilton be presented to the next vacant prebend at Howden.

No. 148. Letter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, to request that his chaplain, Sir William Lowys, be presented to the church of Bossall when it next fell vacant.

No. 150. Letter from T. Percy, to request that a certain priest be presented to the church of Normanton when it next fell vacant.

No. 151. Letter of H. Northumberland, to request that Master Haill, his son's school-master, be presented to a prebend at Howden, vacant by the death of Dr. Kent.

No. 156. Letter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, to request that the prebend at Howden, held by M. John Middiltone, then at the point of death, should be presented to the writer's chaplain, Sir John Barton.

No. 157. Letter of Henry, Earl of Northumberland, to request that Sir John Bartone be presented to a prebend at Howden, vacant by the death of John Selby.

No. 161. Letter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, to remind the prior of a promise to present one of the writer's clerks to the next vacant prebend at Howden.

No. 164. Letter of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, to request that the prior should bestow some preferment on Henry Strother, who was at the Schools at Oxford.

No. 169. Letter of Henry IV, to request that a benefice be conferred on Abel Hesill, Keeper of the Privy Seal. Under the signet.