

ON THE HISTORY OF THE GREAT SEALS OF ENGLAND, ESPECIALLY THOSE OF EDWARD III.

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IN the elucidation of the history of architectural decoration, seals are particularly useful; more especially with respect to tabernacle-work, with which they are often most profusely decorated, and they exhibit the progress of this class of ornament through all its different stages. Of course this help to history can only be made available when the date of the seal is known: monastic and cathedral seals fail in this respect, they rarely correspond to the original foundation of the establishment to which they belong, and were evidently renewed from time to time, at unrecorded periods, as the art of seal-engraving advanced. Personal seals, such as the seals of kings and bishops, may generally be assigned to the time at which the office in question was undertaken by the individual, and thus their date is fixed, with some few exceptions where two or more were employed by the same person; still the date lies within the limits of the assumption of the office and the death of the official. My immediate object is with the great seals of England. Warton^a shewed their use in elucidating the history of architecture, but without entering into any particulars, and he seems to have had no better authority than the rude woodcuts of Speed, who gives one seal to each monarch, with the exception of Edward III., and some others, to whom he assigns two. This is not the real state of the case, some of the kings adopted their predecessor's seal, either taking the identical matrix with some small alteration, or else copying it. Others had several seals, so that to use the seals for our purpose it is necessary to investigate their history. A principal source of information respecting this is to be found in the dates of the documents to which these seals are appended, and from which the periods during which they were used, are directly ascertainable. Sandford^b has engraved good representations of the seals, and generally gives the date of the documents from which he has taken them. Excellent engravings are also

^a Observations on the Fairy Queen of
Spenser, edit. 1762. vol. ii. p. 184.

^b Genealogical History of the Kings of
England.

to be found in the French work entitled "*Tresor de Numismatique et de Glyptique*," but without the dates of the documents. The most complete account of the English seals is by the French author Wailly^c, who writes from the authority of seals preserved in the French archives, and always gives dates when the document can be dated. Mabillon and the Benedictines in their diplomatic works may also be consulted. Still much remains to be done before the complete knowledge of this branch of the history of art can be attained, and I have therefore drawn up the following sketch, in which, although, I have endeavoured to make some steps in advance, yet my principal object has been rather to solicit through the medium of the *Journal*, information upon the subject, by directing attention to its interest and to its present imperfect state.

Our kings, from Edward the Confessor to John, are represented sitting upon a mere stool with ornamental work about it, but not contributing much to architectural decoration. Henry III., in his second seal, has a back and sides added to his stool, with pinnacles and arcade-work; and the seal of Edward I. is a copy of his father's but of better execution. Edward II. employed the identical matrix, merely engraving two castles at the sides of the throne. The legend already containing the name "*Edwardus*" required no alteration.

But we are indebted to the reign of Edward III. for the most considerable and important contribution to the history of design in seals. During his reign he used, as I shall presently shew, no less than seven seals of different design, and gradually increasing in richness and beauty.

It becomes necessary therefore to assign the exact date to these various designs, and to enquire how it happened that this monarch departed so widely from the practice of his predecessors. And as far as I know, no reason has ever been assigned, neither has the fact itself been correctly stated. Speed engraves two seals only, Sandford says that King Edward made use of three several great seals, which he engraves, and gives the date of the documents from which he copied them. Wailly enumerates six which are preserved in the archives of France, and endeavours to ascertain the periods during which they were used, from the dates of the documents, but as it will appear below not always correctly.

In Rymer's *Fœdera* however there are a multiplicity of

^c *Elements de Paleographie*, Par. 1838.

public documents relating to or alluding to the great seals; some are proclamations of new seals, others are formal recitals of the surrender of the seal by one chancellor and its formal delivery to another, and so on. By means of these I shall shew that Edward III. employed at least seven great seals, and also that he had good reasons for doing so. As the respective documents do not explain the design of the seal in question, that must be picked out from the other sources already mentioned, and a little difficulty sometimes occurs in this respect, but I will first give the history of the successive seals as far as I can make it out from Rymer, and then proceed to identify them with the known impressions. And for the sake of clearness I shall designate the seven seals by the letters A B C D E F G in order, and append these as letters of reference to each seal as it occurs. Although other seals than the great seals of the Chancery are occasionally named in these documents, my sole purpose is with the great seals, and of them only and their history I must be understood to speak in my remarks.

Also the king is usually represented on one side of the seal seated on a throne, and on the other he appears on horseback, but as he is accompanied by no architectural adjunct in the latter case, I have confined myself solely to that side of the seal which represents him seated, and which is termed the reverse.

In the first year and on the fourth day of the reign of Edward III. (namely, Jan. 28, 1327) he gave his great seal (A) to the bishop of Ely as chancellor, and two flowers of the arms of France having been engraved at the under side of the said seal, the bishop caused certain documents to be sealed therewith^d. This sealing was the usual mode of confirming the possession of the great seal, and as such it is always recited in the various passages of Rymer which I shall have occasion to quote, although I shall not think it necessary to repeat it upon every occasion.

The seal here mentioned is in fact the seal of Edward I., to which Edward II. had already added a castle on each side, and

^d Rymer, tom. ii. p. 683. (I quote through-out from the new edition.) "*Sculptis in inferiori parte prædicti sigilli duobus floribus de armis Franciæ.*" This may be translated either at "the lower part" of the seal or "the under side." But as the fleurs-de-lis were really added above the

castles, and therefore at the upper part of the design, it has been pointed out to me that this expression, which must be translated the "under side," shews that the seated figure was considered to be the reverse of the seal, and therefore the horseman the obverse.

which now received the farther addition of a small fleur-de-lis above each castle. An impression, appended to a charter, dated Feb. 27, 1 E. III. (1327), was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries in 1799, by Mr. Samuel Lysons; and Wailly describes another in the archives of France, dated April 11, 1327^e. And as the next paragraph shews that the matrix was broken in October, its history is complete from its first employment by Edward I. to its destruction by Edward III.

In the October of the same year, the king issued a proclamation stating that he had made a new great seal (B) differing both in circumference and in design on both sides from the seal which he had hitherto used, which new seal was to have authority from the 4th of October, the old seal to be broken. Impressions of the new seal in white wax were despatched to the proper authorities, together with the proclamation. It is also recorded that the old seal (A) was broken into small pieces in the king's presence, in his chamber in the castle of Nottingham^f.

This seal (B^s) makes its appearance so soon after the king comes to the throne, that it is clear that his father's seal was merely adopted in the first instance to give time for the formation of this new one, which exhibits considerable advance in style, and a complete difference of design. The king is seated like his predecessors upon a chair, but this chair has four pinnacles, and a high back, which terminates upwards in an ogee arch. On each side is engraved a large and distinct fleur-de-lis. An impression of this seal is annexed to a document dated Roxborough, Scotland, Jan. 16, 1335, according to Sandford, who engraves it, and to another in the archives of France, dated March 30, 1331^h. And I have met with several others, of which the latest is in the treasury of Ely cathedral, dated Oct. 7, 1336.

On the 10th of July, 1338ⁱ, a proclamation was issued setting forth that the king was about to leave the country

^e Archæologia, vol. xiv. p. 271, and pl. xlvii. Wailly, tom. ii. p. 113.

^f "Antiquum sigillum ruptum fuit in minutas pecias." Rymer, p. 718.

^g In the Issue Roll published by Sir Frederick Devon (p. 142.) is a payment of 5*l*. (on June 2, 1332) to "a certain goldsmith of London in money paid to him for making a certain great seal for the chancery of our Lord the King." This must apply to seal B, and shews that the goldsmith had

to wait six years for his money, or at least for part of it, as this might be an instalment as usual. In 1350 there occurs "June 2 to John de Grymstede a goldsmith of London in part payment of 4*l*. paid to him for engraving a certain seal for the Lord the king for Ireland, by order of the council 2*l*." Ibid., p. 154.

^h Sandford, p. 157. Wailly, p. 113.

ⁱ Rymer, p. 1048.

upon certain great and weighty matters, (namely, to prosecute his claim to the throne of France,) and intended to take with him his great seal (B.) And that he had provided another seal (C^k) which was to be used for the rule of the kingdom during his absence, of which he sends impressions¹. There are also formal documents to shew that the new seal was sent by the king, on July 11, to John de Saint Paul, and Thomas de Bamburgh, who then officiated as keepers of the great seal^m; and that they delivered the old seal to the king on the 14th of July, he being then at the port of Orwell, on board the ship "la Cristofre." They afterwards delivered the new seal to the chancellor, the bishop of Londonⁿ.

This seal C, Sandford engraves from an impression dated Windsor, September 20, 1339, and therefore during the king's absence. It is in the same style as the second seal B, with slight differences for distinction sake. The chair has no high back with ogee arch, and instead of one fleur-de-lis on each side, there are three lions. The fleur-de-lis was introduced into the other two seals, in assertion of his right to the throne of France. But the seal C being intended solely for English affairs, the lions of England were employed to distinguish it from the seal B, which he took with him.

Wailly imagines the seal B to have been the third seal, and C to have been the second, but he had no date to guide him in assigning this place to the latter seal, which he knew only from the engraving in the new edition of Rymer. The dates which I have given, combined with the extracts from Rymer, are sufficient to justify my statement, which agrees with Sandford, and is also confirmed by an allusion to the fleur-de-lis, in a letter from Edward to the chancellor of Ireland, dated October, 1327, and accompanying the announcement of the new seal B, already quoted at p. 17 above.

This letter states^o that the king is desirous to make some alteration in the seal then used in Ireland, and therefore commands "*two images of two flowers like those contained in the new seal* (B)," (an impression of which accompanies the letter,) to be added to the Irish seal.

^k In the Issue Roll published by Sir Frederick Devon (p. 145.) we find a payment Aug. 12, 1335, "to Nicholas de Acton, one of the chamberlains of the exchequer, sent by the council with two clerks from York to London to order a certain great seal for the rule of the realm of England

to be newly made." This must apply to seal C, which was therefore made three years before it was published.

¹ Rymer, p. 1049.

^m Ibid. p. 1050.

ⁿ Ibid. p. 1051.

^o Ibid. p. 718.

The new seal B therefore could not have been the lion seal. Nevertheless, in the new edition of Rymer, seal C is marked No. 1. of Edw. III., and seal B, No. 2.

When Edward arrived in Flanders he found his allies backward in assisting him, and was obliged to spend the whole year in negotiations. To remove the scruples of the Flemings about fighting against their liege lord the king of France, he assumed the title of King of France. He had in fact occasionally styled himself King of France from the 7th of October 1337, but it was not until the 25th of January, 1340, the anniversary of his accession, that in dating important public documents, he added the year of his nominal reign over that country to the year of his reign in England^p. A proclamation against his rival, Philip of Valois, dated Gaunt, Feb. 8, 1340, is said to be sealed with a new seal^q (D.)

Edward returned to England on the 21st of February, 1340, and remained there until the 22nd of June, leaving his queen and his son at Antwerp, as hostages to his allies for his return. A proclamation^r dated Harwich, Feb. 21, announces to the English his assumption of the title of King of France, and declares that he has therefore provided two seals, namely, one great seal (D) for the rule of the kingdom, and one small one called the privy seal. Impressions of which for publication accompany the document as usual.

On the first of March^s the king at Westminster delivered to John de Saint Paul the said seal (D,) which is styled^t a certain great seal, newly made, for the government of the kingdom, which the said king had brought with him from foreign parts; and at the same time the aforesaid John de Saint Paul delivered up the other great seal (C) which was made for the government of the kingdom in the king's absence, which seal the king delivered to William de Kildesby, to be kept in the king's wardrobe^u.

On the 28th of April the archbishop of Canterbury was made chancellor, and received the great seal (D) from John de Saint Paul^x. And on the 20th of June, the king being then on board the ship called la Cogge Thomas, at Orwell,

^p Sir Harris Nicolas, *Chronology of History*, p. 299. Henry VII.

^q Rymer, p. 1109.

^r *Ibid.* p. 1115.

^s *Ibid.* p. 1115.

^t "Quoddam magnum sigillum, pro re-

gimine regnorum, terrarum, et dominiorum, ipsius regis, de novo fabricatum, quod idem dominus rex secum à partibus transmarinis ad partes Angliæ detulit."

^u *Ibid.* p. 1116.

^x *Ibid.* p. 1122.

ready to return to Flanders, the archbishop resigned the chancellorship and the great seal (D.) The king took the seal and caused it to be broken, and ordered another seal (E) newly made for the government of the kingdom, to be delivered into the custody of John de Saint Paul, to keep and use until the coming of the bishop of Chichester, whom he had appointed to be the new chancellor^y.

And the said seal was accordingly delivered to the bishop of Chichester on the 12th of July, after the king's departure^z.

The new seal D had but a short existence. It was used, as far as we know, for the first time, on the 8th of February, 1340, and was broken to pieces on the 20th of June.

The impression which corresponds to this history is a coarse, plain, and ill-engraved seal, in which the king's throne is flanked by two towers, and has a clumsy canopy over his head. A shield of France and England quarterly hangs on each side, and the title "*Rex Francie et Anglie*" appears in the legend.

An impression was exhibited to the Society of Antiquaries in 1834^a, annexed to a charter, dated Ipswich, June 8, 1340, which date identifies the design in question with the seal D of the history. Mr. Doubleday has an impression of this seal on sale, and an engraving was made for the French "*Tresor de Numismatique et de Glyptique*." The clumsy design may be accounted for by supposing it to have been made in a hurry, in consequence of Edward's assumption of the title of King of France. It must also have been of foreign workmanship; and its ugliness seems to have condemned it to its rapid destruction.

As to its successor E, "newly made for the government of the kingdom during the king's absence," we must postpone its history until our narrative has given us some farther information. Four seals, A, B, C, D, have been already passed under review, and identified with their respective impressions upon the clear evidence of dates and documents. There remain three seals, E, F, G, whose history is so mixed together, that the historical narrative must be carried to the end of this reign before their respective designs can be examined.

^y "*Rex dictum sigillum . . . frangi fecit et præcepit quod quoddam aliud sigillum pro regimine hujusmodi de novo fabricatum domino Jⁱ. de S^o. Paulo . . . liberaretur*

custodiendum &c. . ." (Rymer, p. 1129.)

^z *Ibid.* p. 1129.

^a *Archæologia*, vol. xxvi. p. 461.

It may be remarked, that in consequence of the king's long absence from England for the prosecution of his designs upon the throne of France, he was driven to the expedient of adopting two great seals, one which was used during his *presence* in England, and which he always took with him to employ abroad; and another which was used during his *absence* from England, and upon his return was always laid up in the treasury or elsewhere, until his next departure. The great seals of his reign are thus divided into two classes, which I shall for the sake of distinction call the seals of presence and the seals of absence; and the designs of each of them were changed several times, as we have partly seen already. Thus after the destruction of his grandfather's matrix A, B the first seal of presence was made. C was the first seal of absence; D, the second seal of presence, made in assertion of his new title, was destroyed when he left the kingdom to return to Flanders; and we now resume the narrative immediately after a second seal of absence, E, has been by him put into the hands of the new chancellor.

On the 30th of November of the same year, 1340, the king returned to England, and the next morning the bishop of Chichester came to him, and delivered up the great seal E, committed to him for the government of the kingdom of England during the king's absence, which seal the king received and gave in charge to William de Kildesby, his keeper of the privy seal, to keep in the mean time. And on the following Saturday, William brought this seal E, and another great seal F, *which the king had brought with him from foreign parts*, and delivered them to the king, who commanded that from henceforth the said seal F, which he had brought from abroad, should be used in the kingdom of England^b.

After this, the king, upon five several occasions during the next twenty years^c, left the kingdom in prosecution of his designs; and, upon his quitting it, a document always occurs in Rymer noting the formal exchange by the chancellor of the great seal made to be used when he is in the kingdom, for that which is made to be used in his absence;

^b "Aliud magnum sigillum dicti domini regis quod idem dominus rex secum a dictis partibus transmarinis detulit . . ."
"Et etiam idem dominus rex præcepit quod dicto sigillo, quod sic de prædictis

partibus transmarinis delatum fuit extunc in regno suo Angliæ uteretur." (Rymer, p. 1141.)

^c Vide p. 25. below.

and another document records the contrary exchange of the seal of absence for the seal of presence on his return^d. Nothing in these documents, however, indicates the making of a new seal; and the last of them, which belongs to the return of the king, ten days after the peace of Bretigny, states that he delivered to the chancellor his great seal (F) which he had taken with him from England to France^e; that the chancellor sealed certain documents with it, (as usual,) and delivered the other great seal (E) used in the king's absence, to the treasurer, to be kept in the treasury^f.

In 1369 the treaty of Bretigny was set aside, and the king resumed the title and arms of King of France^g. A memorandum in Rymer^h sets this forth, and adds, that "the king of England and France caused to be brought to him at Westminster on the 11th of June, all those seals which were kept in his treasury, the circumscription of which had the words 'Edwardus Rex Anglie et Francie,' or 'Francie et Anglie;' that is to say, as well the seals for the rule of the kingdom of England, as those for the benches and for the exchequer, and for the office of the privy sealⁱ. Of these he delivered to the venerable William, bishop of Winchester, his chancellor, two great seals, each in two pieces, one of which (E) contained the words 'Rex Anglie et Francie,' and on the other (F) 'Rex Francie et Anglie.' Also one seal in two pieces was delivered to John Knyvet, chief justice of the King's Bench; one seal in two pieces to Robert de Thorp, chief justice of the Common Bench; a third seal in two pieces to Master William de Askeby, archdeacon of Northampton, chancellor of the exchequer; and another in one piece, made for the office of privy seal, to Peter de Lacy, clerk of the privy seal^k.

^d Thus for example, on the 2nd of July, 1346, when the king was at the Isle of Wight ready for his voyage outwards, John de Offord his chancellor "liberavit magnum sigillum ipsius domini regis pro regimine regni Angliæ dum idem dominus rex infra idem regnum fuerit, deputatum et statim recepit quoddam aliud magnum sigillum regis pro regimine dicti regni Angliæ dum idem dominus rex extra dictum regnum fuerit ordinatum." Rymer, tom. iii. p. 85.

^e "Magnum sigillum suum, pro regimine Angliæ ordinatum, quod secum a dicto regno Angliæ, ad dictas partes Franciæ deferri fecit." (Rymer, tom. iii. p. 494.)

^f Ibid. p. 494.

^g June 3.

^h Rymer, vol. iii. p. 868. June 3, 1369.

ⁱ Although I have confined my remarks to the great seals, yet this document contains so curiously useful an enumeration of all the king's seals, that I have translated it nearly at length.

^k "June 19, 1361. To John de Chycheester, a goldsmith of London, in money paid to him for making two silver seals for the privy seal of the Lord the king, 7l. 18s. 8d." (Devon, Issue Roll, p. 175.) This appears to belong to the seals made after the peace of Bretigny. The only other entry of this class for this reign, except those already given, is in 1356. "Aug. 2. To Will. de Morton, a goldsmith of London,

But that great seal (G) in two pieces, upon which 'Edwardus Rex Anglie, dominus Hibernie et Aquitanie' was inscribed, and *which was made in accordance with the peace (of Bretigny)* for the rule of England, was returned to the treasury, together with the four other seals for the benches, the exchequer, and privy seal office, which bore the same inscription, and which since that peace had always been used."

In 1371 Robert de Thorp was made chancellor, in the place of the bishop of Winchester who is recorded in the usual form¹ to have delivered the great seal (E^m) to the king on the 14th of March, on Monday, and on the succeeding Wednesday the king delivered the said seal to Robert de Thorp. But on the 28th of March "the bishop of Winchester, late chancellor, delivered to the king at Westminster two great seals and two private seals", which the king lately used, and which had remained in the custody of the said bishop. The circumscription of the said seals were as follows; upon one of the great seals, (F), 'Edwardus Dei gratia Rex Francie et Anglie et dominus Hibernie;' and upon the other great seal, (G), 'Edwardus Dei Gratia, Rex Anglie dominus Hibernie et Aquitanie.' Also upon one of the said private seals, 'Secretum Edwardi Regis Francie et Anglie et dominus Hibernie,' and upon the other private seal, 'Secretum Edwardi Regis Anglie et dominus Hibernie et Aquitanie.' Then the king caused the said two great seals to be put into two leather purses sealed with white wax, and the two private seals into two linen bags sealed with red wax, each bearing the signet of the king and the seal of the aforesaid bishop, and delivered the four to his treasurer to be kept in his treasury^o."

On June 29, 1372, Robert de Thorp died, and the great seal was given to John Knyvet^p, and on January 11, 1377, he surrendered it to the bishop of St. David's. Upon the last occasion it is termed "the great seal for the *rule of England*^q." And this is the last document in Rymer on this subject in the

in money paid to him for making a certain seal for the king's use, 3l." (p. 163.); which it is impossible to appropriate.

¹ "Liberavit magnum sigillum ejusdem regis." (Rymer, p. 911.)

^m Why I have inserted E in this place will be explained below.

ⁿ "Duo magna sigilla et duo privata

sigilla quibus idem rex nuper utebatur et quæ in custodia prædicti episcopi, ex commissione regis remanserunt." (Rymer, p. 912.)

^o Rymer, p. 912.

^p Ibid. p. 951.

^q Ibid. p. 1069.

reign of Edward III., with the exception of a short memorandum, which is not to our purpose^r.

The above extracts from Rymer contain the history of the seals E, F, and G, and I have affixed the respective letters to them whenever they appear in the narrative; but the grounds upon which I have thus identified them remains to be explained. Seal G, "*which was made in accordance with the peace of Bretigny*," is the richest and handsomest of them all. It is engraved in Rymer as appended to a document dated July 19, 1362; and is also described by Wailly, and said by him to be employed for sealing a great number of acts relating to the treaty of Bretigny in 1360 and following years, which are preserved in the archives of France^s. Its legend omits the title of France altogether; but differs in the latter half from those of the seals B C, which also omitted France; for B has "Dns Hybernie Dvx Aquitanie," C has "Dominus Hibernie et Dvx Aquitannie," but G has "Dns Hibernie et Acquitannie," omitting "Dvx;" and thus it is shewn that the great seal mentioned in the last page, which was delivered by the bishop of Winchester on the 28th of March, as one that had been laid aside but had been in his custody, was this Bretigny seal G, and not one of the other seals B or C, both of which also omitted France in their legends. It is true that the Bretigny seal was returned to the treasury on the 11th of June 1369, but it seems to have been afterwards taken out for some purpose or other not recorded, and put in possession of the chancellor. The same matrix, however, was again used by Edward III. in the latter years of his reign, with the new legend "Edwardus Dei gracia Rex Francie et Anglie et Dns. Hibernie." I am indebted to the politeness of Sir Frederick Madden for pointing out this fact to me, and for shewing me four impressions of the matrix in this state annexed to Harleian charters in the British Museum, the earliest of which is dated Feb. 18, 1374. As the document just quoted shews that the legend of this seal remained in its original state on March 28, 1371, the change must have been made between these two dates. Edward's immediate successors used the same matrix, with the simple substitution of "Ricardus" and "Henricus" for "Edwardus."

There remain only the seals E and F to be described.

^r Rymer, p. 1077.

^s Wailly, p. 114. Rymer, vol. iii. p. 667.

F is the seal of presence which the king brought with him from abroad on the 30th of November, 1340, and commanded that it should from henceforth be used in the kingdom of England^t. Its history is accurately recorded by Rymer^u, according to whom it regularly accompanied him in his different absences, until he finally returned on the 18th of May, 1360, after the peace of Bretigny; shortly after which it must have been put away to make room for the Bretigny seal, although this fact is not formally recorded. It is the first great seal of England in which tabernacle-work is introduced, and its design is therefore richer than the preceding ones. Sandford engraves an impression from a deed dated Westminster, May 2, 1341, a time when the king was in England. This identifies the impression in question with our seal F, and I have enumerated several other impressions in the Appendix, all of which correspond in the same way to his residence in England. Its legend is, "Edwardus Dei gracia Rex Francie et Anglie et Dominus Hibernie."

As to the seal E, I have not been able to discover any engraving or specimen of it. It was made for a seal of absence, and as such left behind by the king when he departed for Flanders on the 20th of June, 1340. When he returned he brought with him the seal of presence F, and the two continued to be used in their respective functions until they were both superseded by the Bretigny seal.

As E and F were undoubtedly the two great seals which were taken out of the treasury on the 11th of June, 1369, the document above quoted teaches us the curious fact that E had "Rex Anglie et Francie" in its legend, for as we know that F had "Francie et Anglie," E must be the other so named. And this in fact is all we know about the seal, for its design remains to be ascertained.

But a new mode of distinguishing the seals of presence and absence is thus explained, namely, by putting England first in the seal of absence, and France first in the seal of presence.

Moreover, as the document of the 28th of March, 1371^x, shews by the legend, "Francie et Anglie," that seal F was one of those which the king had disused, it follows that the seal E, having "Anglie" first, and which was made for a seal

^t P. 21 above.

^u The exact periods during which the

seals were used are given in the Appendix.

^x P. 23. above.

of absence, was, after the resumption of the title of France in 1369, occasionally^y used as a seal of presence for a few years, until the Bretigny seal, with its new legend, was substituted, as above explained. And perhaps now, instead of distinguishing the seals into seals of presence, which always accompanied the king, and seals of absence, which were used only during his absence, a new rule was tried, (which was afterwards observed by some of his successors^z), namely, that the seals should be divided into those which were appropriated to English affairs, having "England" first in the legend, and those which were used for French affairs, and which had "France" put first in the legend.

Another curious question arises upon this occasion. Did Edward take seal F with him to Flanders from England at the same time that he left E behind, or did he get it made in Flanders? It makes its first appearance in the documents as the new seal which the king had brought with him from abroad. (Nov. 30, 1340). This question is of great interest for the history of art, for the tabernacle-work first appears in this seal; and can only be decided by discovering the seal E. If the latter has tabernacle-work, these two, E and F, of absence and presence, were probably made during his short stay in England; but if E resembles the designs of B and C, we must decide against the fact of the seal F belonging to the arts of our own country. This fact can only be ascertained by the discovery of some document sealed and dated during one of Edward's absences, and bearing the legend which has "Anglie et Francie." As such documents probably exist in the numerous depositories of records, private and public, I venture to request, through the medium of this Journal, that if possible the guardians of these treasures will ascertain the fact, and kindly communicate to me the desired information. A table at the end of this paper contains the dates of Edward's absences and other particulars.

The rich Bretigny seal, however, was probably made in England after his return, for he brought with him the old seal of presence F, and continued to use it for a little while,

^y Occasionally only, for Wailly says that F occurs in a document in the archives of France, dated in 1372, and I have found impressions in Pembroke college dated 1369, 1371, and 1372.

^z This distinction is mentioned by the

Benedictines, in their *Traite de Diplomatique*, t. iv. p. 212, and by Wailly. The previous distinction into seals of presence and absence, seems to have escaped notice hitherto.

probably until the complete ratification of the treaty. Thus time was given for the making of the seal.

I may add, that of these seven seals, Sandford engraves and assigns to Edward three, B, C, and F, only. Wailly describes A, B, C, D, F, and G, and is entirely unconscious of the existence of E, which is easily accounted for, for this seal was wholly confined to English affairs, and is only mentioned, as I have shewn, in Rymer's *Fœdera*, which Wailly apparently did not consult.

I will now endeavour to pursue the history of the succeeding seals.

Richard II. employed the Bretigny seal of his father, merely substituting in the same matrix, "*Ricardus*" for "*Edwardus*." Speed and Sandford in fact engrave this Bretigny seal as the seal of Richard, not being aware of its previous employment by Edward. In the Appendix I have quoted impressions from 4 R. II. to 21 R. II. Wailly, however, says, that Richard employed the two last seals of Edward, namely F and G; and F with "*Ricardus*" in the legend is engraved in the French "*Tresor de Numismatique*," (pl. viii.) Wailly adds that the seal G appears to have been exclusively used for acts dated from Calais. This of course is true only for the French archives, and it may be concluded that G was the seal for English affairs, and F generally for French affairs, although in both legends we find "*Francie*" before "*Anglie*." Rymer has abundant documents concerning the delivery of the seals from one chancellor to another, but they contain no information on this point. There is however a precept from Richard to the chancellor of Ireland in 1 R. II. (1377.) commanding him to change the circumscription of the great seal of his father Edward, and to put "*Ricardus*" in the place of "*Edwardus*."^a A similar order to the Irish chancellor in the first year of Henry IV., commands him to erase "*Ricardus*" and insert "*Henricus*" in the great seal and other seals of that country^b.

The legend of the Bretigny matrix appears therefore in four states; (No. 1.) as it was first engraved in 1360. omitting

^a Rymer, tom. vii. p. 174. The new edition was stopped at the end of Edward III., and I must therefore quote from the old in future. "31 Jan. 4. R. 2. To William Geyton, the king's engraver in the tower of London, for alterations by him made as well on the great seal used in the chancery, as upon the king's seals used in the King's

Bench, Exchequer, and Common Bench at the commencement of the king's reign, 2l. 10s." Devon's Issue Roll, p. 214. This evidently refers to the substitution of one name for the other in the English seals, and is another case of the retardation of the payments.

^b Rymer, tom. viii. p. 114.

France; (No. 2.) with "rex Francie" and "Edwardus;" (No. 3.) with "Ricardus;" (No. 4.) with "Henricus." In this fourth state it is called the seal of Henry IV. by Speed and Sandford. But Henry IV. also made a seal (I) which is the richest and largest of all the medieval seals of England. It is engraved by Speed and Sandford as the seal of Henry V., and therefore needs no minute description. However its distinguishing characteristics are that there are three vertical compartments of *equal* breadth on each side of the central one, and that the arms, which in all the other seals after D inclusive are placed on shields, are in this seal placed on square banners sustained by guards. It has no less than eighteen figures including animals. Its legend contains "Anglie et Francie." Wailly was the first to assign it to Henry IV. on the authority of an impression, dated 1408, in the French archives. And I have found one in the archives of Corpus Christi college, dated 1409, (11 H. IV.,) which confirms this statement. This is the first English seal in which the fleurs-de-lis semée of France are changed for the three fleurs-de-lis; the latter appeared for the first time upon the French seal of Charles V., to which Wailly assigns the date 1364.

The seals of our three Henries (IV. V. VI.) are so mixed together that I must pursue the history of them all in Rymer to the end of Henry VI., before I can explain the whole of their devices.

In the 11 H. IV. one of the usual documents in Rymer recording the delivery of the great seal terms it the golden seal, "Magnum Sigillum Aureum," and the same phrase is used in 5 H. V.^c But in the other similar documents before and after we find only "Magnum Sigillum" as usual. Immediately after the death of Henry V. it is recorded that the chancellor, bishop of Durham, delivered up the great Golden seal of the late king on the 28th of September, 1422, (1 H. VI.) which was finally deposited in the treasury on the 20th of November^d. The bishop of Durham, however, was made chancellor to the new king and received the great seal^e on the 17th

^c Rymer, tom. viii. p. 616; xlix. p. 472. In the *Nouveau Traité de Diplomatie* we are told "that Henry V. took his seals with him to war. In the history of the House of Auvergne it is related that the Seigneur de Haucourt was made prisoner by the king of England in 1415, and having ob-

tained permission to return to France he recovered the seals of the English Chancery, which the English king had lost with many jewels at the battle of Agincourt." Tom. iv. p. 212.

^d Rymer, tom. x. p. 253.

^e *Ibid.*, p. 262.

November^f. Upon his surrendering it in 1424, (2 H. VI.,) it is styled the Silver Seal, "Magnum Sigillum Regis de Argento^g." This "Silver Seal" again changed keepers in 1426^h, when the bishop of London, John Kemp, was made chancellor. But it is also recorded that the treasurer, bishop of Bath and Wells, delivered the Golden great seal to the duke of Bedford, upon the 18th of March, 4 H. VI., (1426,) and that the duke gave it to the chancellor, the bishop of London. This golden seal had been apparently reserved in the treasury since the 20th of November, 1422ⁱ. John Kemp afterwards became archbishop of York, under which latter title he resigned his office on the 25th Feb., 1432, (10 H. VI.,) and delivered "two great seals, that is, one of gold and one of silver^k." These two seals were given to the bishop of Bath, who in the usual form opened the bag containing the *silver seal* and sealed documents therewith. The silver seal therefore was still the one commonly employed for English affairs, and this is confirmed by a memorandum in 1433^l, stating that as the bishop is about to leave England on certain negotiations, the great silver seal, "Magnum Sigillum Regium de Argento," is committed to the charge of the keeper of the rolls to use in his absence.

No fresh information to our purpose occurs until the 32 H. VI., (1454,) when upon the death of the archbishop of Canterbury, late chancellor, a wooden box locked and sealed was

^f As there is some apparent confusion between the two documents just quoted, it may be as well to state their contents more minutely; the first document (Rymer, p. 253.) states that the golden seal of Henry V. was delivered by his late chancellor, the bishop of Durham, on the 28th Sep., and given into the custody of Simon Gaunsted, the keeper of the rolls, who accordingly sealed divers letters patent with it, and kept it until the 20th of November, when he delivered it up, and it was deposited in the treasury. The second document (Rymer, 262.) states that the great seal of Henry VI. had been delivered to Simon Gaunsted on the 28th of September, and by him surrendered to the bishop of Durham, the chancellor, on the 17th of November. There is an apparent ambiguity here, but two seals must be alluded to, although the making of a new one for Henry VI. is not mentioned, the series of documents not being complete. For the golden seal is distinctly said to have been delivered by Simon on the 20th of November, three

days after the great seal of the second document was by him delivered to the new chancellor, so that the latter seal was not the golden one, and was probably the silver seal which the same chancellor delivered up to the king in the following year. In the first parliament of H. VI. the bishop of London, chancellor of the late king in his duchy of Normandy, declares that he had delivered up the two great seals of the said king, namely, the one ordained for the said duchy to the duke of Bedford, and the other similar to his great seal of England to the king himself, at Windsor. "deux Grandes Seals du dit Roi le pierre, un pur le dit Duchee ordeine, et l'autre semblant a son grande Seal d'Engleterre." (Rot. Parl., vol. iv. p. 171.)

^g Ibid. p. 340.

^h Ibid. p. 353.

ⁱ Rot. Parl., vol. iv. p. 299.

^k Rymer, p. 500. "Duo Magna Sigilla ipsius Domini Regis videlicet unum de Auro et aliud de Argento."

^l Ibid. p. 548.

delivered up, which had been in his custody as chancellor at the time of his death. This box contained *three great seals* of the king, to wit, one of gold, and two of silver, which were all given to the new chancellor, the earl of Salisbury. He took out the great seal of silver and sealed documents as usual^m.

The next recorded delivery of the seals, Oct. 11, 35 H. VI., (1456,) describes the three more minutely, as "three royal seals in three leather bags, to wit, one great golden seal, another seal of silver of a large form, and a third seal of silver of a smaller formⁿ," and the new chancellor seals his first document with the aforesaid silver seal of the large form.

Also the chancellor is said to be appointed to the safe custody of all the said seals, and to seal the proper documents therewith for the convenience of the king and of his kingdom, dominions, and people.

Finally, however, on the 25th July, 38 H. VI., 1460, in the bishop's palace at London, the three above-mentioned seals were delivered up to the unhappy king (then in the hands of the duke of York, immediately after the defeat at Northampton) and by him given to the bishop of Exeter, who returned to the king two of them, namely, one of gold, and one of silver, and kept the other, with which he sealed documents as usual^o. And within eight months Edward IV. ascended the throne and Henry VI. took refuge in Scotland, probably taking the seals with him.

It now remains to identify the seals of the above history with the known matrices. A new distinction, however, is presented to us in the material of the seals, for we have a golden seal and silver seals. Henry IV. paid, in the first year of his reign, "to John Edmunds, citizen and goldsmith of London, for the price of 10lbs. weight of silver used in a great seal for the chancery, and for a white seal for the office of privy seal, made by the said John for the king's use, according to the form of a certain pattern remaining in possession of the same John, delivered to him by our lord the king aforesaid, 13*l.* 10*s.*^p" But this king appears to have employed, as already stated, only two great seals, of which one was the old Bretigny matrix with "*Francie et Anglie*," and the other the

^m Rymer, tom. xi. p. 344.

ⁿ "Tria Sigilla Regia in Tribus Bagis de Corio . . . unum videlicet magnum sigillum Aureum, ac aliud sigillum Argenteum de magna forma, et Tertium Sigillum Argen-

teum de minori forma." Rymer, tom. xi. p. 383.

^o Rymer, tom. xi. p. 458.

^p Devon, Issues of the Exch., p. 279, (Aug. 14, 1 H. IV. 1400.)

new large rich seal (I) described in the former page, having "Anglie et Francie." This new seal may therefore be identified with the seal made by John Edmunds, and was a *silver seal*. The *golden seal* must have been the old Bretigny matrix (which he also employed, according to Speed and Sandford). Henry V. is known to have used the same seals as his father, for the great rich seal is given to him alone, by Speed and Sandford, and Wailly tells us that the treaty of Troyes in the French archives is sealed with the seal which I have termed the Bretigny matrix (G, No. 4). By this treaty (May 21, 1420) Henry's style was changed from "Rex Francie" to "heres Regni Francie." The impression annexed to this treaty is so much defaced that Wailly was unable to ascertain whether the legend had been altered to this new style, which is adopted in the treaty itself. But this, however, was not necessarily the case, as the style of a seal and its document frequently differ. Rymer¹ furnishes a precept to the chancellor of the exchequer, commanding this alteration of style to be made in the seals which were in his custody, and therefore it is probable

¹ June 14, 8 H. V. "Mandamus quod . . . de Stilo sigilli nostri, in custodia vestra existentis hunc Dictionem *Francie* deleri & loco ejusdem istas Dictiones *Heres Regni Francie* vel *Heredis Regni Francie* secundum exigentiam Sigilli illius imprimi et insculpi faciat." Rymer, vol. ix. p. 915. Wailly indeed says that after this treaty Henry adopted another and plainer seal with this new style (p. 402), and this he asserts upon the authority of the Benedictines. (Nouveau Traite de Diplomatique, iv. 212.) Their expressions appear to me, however, ambiguous, and principally relating to the coins. For these coins see Ruding, 3rd Ed. p. 267, vol. i. The Benedictine editor, after describing them, merely adds, "Ce que nous disons ici des monnoies de Henri V. peut s'appliquer a ses sceaux." Until an impression of the great seal used from May 21, 8 H. V. to Oct. 21, 1 H. VI., is produced, we cannot tell whether a new matrix was used or an old one altered. I incline to believe that the golden matrix was altered, for then we get a very consistent history, as follows: (1.) The chancellor delivered a golden seal after the death of H. V., which was put away a month after the death of Charles VI. because its legend was wrong. (2.) The silver seal was taken into use, which had an unaltered legend.

It was ordered in the first parliament of

this reign, upon the occasion of the death of Charles VI., that in the seals of the king as well for England as in Ireland, Guyen, and Wales, this new style following shall be engraven, to wit, "Henricus Dei gratia Rex Francie et Anglie et Dn'us Hibernie." And that each of the king's officials who have the said seals in their keeping by virtue of their office, shall forthwith cause them to be altered. (Rot. Par. 1 H. VI. p. 171.) The following entry, from the smallness of the sum paid, may refer to these alterations, and not to the making of the new small silver seal (K) for France. "18 Oct. 2 H. VI. To John Bemess of London, goldsmith, in money paid to his own hands in discharge of 20s. which the present lord the king, with the advice and consent of his council, commanded to be paid to the said John for his labour, costs, and workmanship, in lately riding to the king's castle at Windsor, at his own costs, and there engraving the great seal of the said lord the king with the privy signet; and also for newly engraving an inscription around the king's privy-seal. By writ of privy seal 17." Devon's Issue Roll, p. 382. But the engraving of the new inscription is so distinctly stated in the last item, that the former appear to relate, after all, to the making of a new one. The question can only be settled by the discovery of an impression.

that the same was made in the great seals of England. An impression would settle this question. But this change of style was only employed for about two years, that is, to the death of Charles VI. of France in Oct. 21, 1422, (1 H. VI.,) and therefore impressions must be rare.

Henry VI. was by virtue of this treaty King of France from this death. The seal (K) universally given to him is totally unlike the English seals, and resembles the usual form of the seals of the French kings: its diameter is less, and in lieu of the English mounted figure on the obverse, we find, as in the French seals, a small counter seal as it is called, not quite an inch and a half in diameter. The legend is "*Henricus Dei gracia, Francorum et Anglie Rex.*" Now I have shewn from Rymer and the Rolls of Parliament, that one golden and two silver seals, of which one was a small one, were employed during this reign. The golden seal was kept in the treasury during the four first years. The silver seal was commonly used throughout. The small silver seal only appears after the loss of the French dominions in 1451. On the other hand, documents in the archives of the colleges of Caius and Corpus Christi, dated 3 H. VI.^r are sealed with (I), which I have already shewn to have been a silver seal. Many documents in the University, dated from 15 to 34 H. VI., are sealed with G, No. 4,^s already shewn to be a golden seal; and lastly the seal (K) commonly given to H. VI. is considerably smaller than the others, and must therefore be that designated in Rymer as "the lesser silver seal," which its design and the history indicate to have been appropriated to French affairs as long as the English retained a footing in France. It is true that the silver seal I, seems to have been commonly employed throughout this reign, but as the chancellor also had the custody of the golden one G, after 4 H. VI. there seems to be no reason why he should not have used it. I see no better

^r Other explanations may be proposed. For example, if the so called "Golden seal" be supposed of silver gilt, the seal (I) made of John Edmunds' silver may have been the golden seal, and then G, No. 4. will become the silver seal. This is perhaps more consistent with the evidences, for the historical documents shew that the silver seal was used throughout the reign of H. VI., and the dated impressions, that G. No. 4 was used. More examples, and

the identification of the "*heres Francie*" seal will settle this difficulty. I have some doubts whether the impressions of (I) quoted above as in 3 H. VI., do not really belong to 3 H. V. The difference of material, of gold and silver, seems to have been only a contrivance by which readily to distinguish the two great seals from each other.

^s Sandford, p. 286, quotes another impression, 23 H. VI.

mode of reconciling the historical statement, that a silver seal was used throughout the reign, and a golden one also given to the chancellor in the fourth year; with the evidence of dated impressions which shew that (I) was used in the third year, and (G) in the eighteenth and following year; than by supposing that I was the "silver seal" and that G was the "golden seal," and was occasionally used for English affairs in lieu of the silver one.

The remaining reigns will not detain us long, for Rymer contains no more information to the purpose.

Edward IV. began his reign with a new seal (H) made of gold, "*Magnum Sigillum de Auro factum*," his predecessor having carried off the old ones. This seal is an imitation of the Bretigny matrix, and is the same in the arrangement of the figures and shields. But the turrets of the canopies, instead of resting each on a trefoil arch, spring from three arches of equal height, and are each in two stories. Also the side guards have canopies in lieu of pent-houses. The legend has "*Anglie et Francie*." It is the only seal which Speed engraves for this king; and an impression dated 8 E. IV. in the treasury of Caius College, shews that it was used in the first part of his reign. Mr. Doubleday has also a cast of another seal (GG) of this monarch, which is a copy, in inferior workmanship, of the Bretigny No. 2, with the same legend, and differs only in some of the tracery of the panelling, and in having three fleurs-de-lis in the French arms. A specimen of this, dated 1 E. IV. is in Pembroke college. As the legend has "*Francie et Anglie*," this and H may have been a pair of seals made at the beginning of his reign.

Another pair of seals, of an entirely new design, are also due to Edward IV. The first (L) is much plainer than the preceding ones; it is divided into three broad compartments for the king and his shields, and two narrow ones at the edges for the guards as usual. The guards have no canopies, and the shield compartments, in lieu of a canopy, have only an ogee arch supporting a roof, with lead lines marked upon it, which indeed enables us at once to recognise this seal. The king has a projecting canopy. The legend has "*Anglie et Francie*."

Speed gave this seal to Edward V. Sandford^u shewed it to belong to Edward IV., upon the authority of a dated ex-

^t Rymer, tom. xi. p. 473.

^u Sandford, p. 381.

ample in 22 E. IV. In Caius College I find three others, in the 15th, 17th, and 21st of the same reign. Edward V. however, seems to have also used it as well as Richard III., who merely substituted his name in the matrix for Edward's*.

The remaining seal (M) of Edward IV. is of coarser execution, but resembles the former (L) in its general arrangement. The guards have an ogee arch over them; the roofs of the shield compartments are replaced by an arrangement of ogee panelling; slight panels are introduced at the back of the king, and the legend has "Francie et Anglie."

This seal is engraved in the French "Tresor de Numismatique," and is unnoticed by our English writers. Wailly, who assigns two seals "at least," to Edward IV., describes them as those which I have designated by H and M, but quotes no documents.

The last seems to have been used for the affairs of France, and as the dated examples of L all lie in the latter part of Edward's reign, it appears that it was used after his resumption of the throne in 1471 (11 E. IV.) Did he lose his first seals by his hasty flight in the previous year, and get L made on the continent to bring back with him? Again I repeat, dated examples can only answer this question.

There exists a small seal (N) which is engraved in the French "Tresor de Numismatique," and is by the editors assigned to Henry VI., but by Wailly, who describes it, to Henry VII., no dated impression being quoted. Its diameter is small, being the same as that of the small silver seal (K) of Henry VI., and like that it has the small French counter seal, instead of the horseman of our obverse. Its design is imitated from the L and M of Edward IV., but the lateral guards are removed, leaving no figures upon the seal except the king and his lions. Thus the eighteen figures of Henry the Fourth's great seal (I) have dwindled down to three; the back ground of the seal is diapered or powdered with fleurs-de-lis on the left half where the arms of France alone occupy the shield, and with roses on the right half, where France and England quarterly are on the shield. The canopies and their turrets are in a heavy late style, and the legend has "Francie et Anglie."

* Sandford's engraving of Richard's seal introduces roses only in the shield compartments, instead of the alternate sun and rose of Edward. But from the authority

of casts by Mr. Doubleday, of the two seals in question, they appear both to have had the alternate sun and rose. (Vide Sandford, pp. 353, 354.)

Henry VII. made a copy of Edward's seal (M) so close, that it requires a comparison of the two impressions to detect the difference; however, Edward's has the "rose en soleil," beneath his footstool, and Henry VIIth's a rose on its stalk. The former legend has "frâcie et anglie," and the words are separated by fleurs-de-lis. The latter has "anglie et francie," the words being also separated by common colons. Henry the VIIIth used the same matrix, adding according to Wailly (p. 116.) a great fleur-de-lis before the horse's head on the right side of the obverse, and different dated specimens exist in the French archives up to 15 Apr. 1533. (24 H. VIII.) Impressions in the archives of Caius College and Catharine Hall, shew that a lion was also added on the left side. After the title of Defender of the Faith was conferred on him in 1521, he adopted a seal of a new and handsome design, which is described but not engraved by Sandford, (p. 449,) but of which a figure occurs in the "Tresor de Numismatique."

Lastly, the title of "Head of the Church," conferred on him in 1534, and that of "King of Ireland" in 1541, produced a seal which is remarkable for being designed in the style of Francis I., thus for the first time abandoning the pointed style of architecture. But as my object is solely to illustrate the latter, I may here close my remarks.

I am perfectly aware that in the above conjectural history, for it deserves no better name, I have sometimes been compelled to make assertions upon slight grounds. But be it remembered, I do not profess to write a complete history, but merely by directing attention to the interest of the subject, to shew how much remains to be ascertained.

The safest data upon which to proceed are the dated impressions of the seals. Let me conclude, therefore, by requesting, that those members of the Association who have access to collections of documents, whether college or cathedral treasuries, private or public libraries, or depositories of title deeds, will kindly forward lists of their medieval great seals, only mentioning the type of each seal, and the date of its document, to the editors of the Journal, or better perhaps to myself individually, and thus in a short time such a mass of evidence will be brought to bear upon the subject, that the ambiguities will disappear.

The principal points for investigation are—the design of Edward IIIrd's seal (E.)—the seal of Henry V., which bore the

style "heres Francie."—the periods of Edward IVth's seals—the periods and complete identification of the gold and silver seals of Henry VI.

I will conclude with an Appendix containing tabular lists of the different matrices, which have formed the subject of the above paper.

In the following table of the matrices I have not attempted to describe the several designs minutely, but merely to point out their distinctive characteristics. Every matrix has a different letter of the alphabet given to it, as in the paper. When the legend only has been altered, or some addition made to the design, the same letter is employed for the matrix in its several states, which are termed No. 1, No. 2. A mere copy is indicated by doubling the letter of the original, as MM copied from M. I have also given references to engravings, but the casts of the great seals, which Mr. Doubleday has on sale, are much more useful for identifying the seals than engravings. Dates and lists of impressions, as far as I at present know, or have seen them, are added for each. The first seal of Edward III., however, is so well known in all its states, that I have not inserted it. It was originally copied by Edward I. from the second seal of Henry III., which he adopted in A.D. 1259; and as this design remained in use till 1327, without following the changes of architectural style during that period, it will not assist our present purpose. B, the second seal of Edward III., is the first architectural seal, and with this, therefore, my table begins. The legends are very useful for identifying the seals, and their minute variations and abbreviations are therefore carefully preserved. The original date and duration of each matrix, when known, is added to its distinctive letter. The works referred to are as follows, and the abbreviated reference is appended to each in a parenthesis:—Speed's History of Great Britaine. 1650. (Sp.)—Sandford's Genealogical History of the Kings of England. 1677. (San.)—Tresor de Numismatique et de Glyptique, Sceaux des Rois et Reines d' Angleterre, et de France. *Par.* 1834-5. (Tres.)—Wailly, Elements de Paléographie. (references are all to the second vol.) *Par.* 1838. (Wa.)—Knight's Pictorial History of England. 1837-9. (P. H.)—Rymer's Fœdera, new edition. (Rym.)—Devon. F. Issues of the Exchequer. 1837. (Devon's Issue Roll).—Under the head of *impressions* I have referred to the seals preserved in the Archives that I have been kindly permitted to inspect.

TABLE I.

*A List of the several Matrices of the Great Seals of England,
from Edward III. to Henry VIII. inclusive.*

B. Published Oct. 4, 1 E. III. (1327), taken to Flanders, July 14, 1338 (Diam. $4\frac{3}{16}$ in.)

King's throne, has four pinnacles and an ogee arch over head ; a fleur-de-lis on each side.

EDWARDUS DEI GRACIA REX ANGLIE DNS HYBERNIE DUX AQUITANIE.

Engravings. Sp. 577. San. 123. Rym. iii. 1. Tres. vi. 1.

Impressions. 1 E. III. 4 E. III. 8 E. III. (Brit. Mus.) 7 E. III. (Durham). 8 E. III. (Sandford). 5 E. III. (Wailly). 9 E. III. 10 E. III. (Ely).

C. Published July 10, 12 E. III. (1338), as a seal of absence. Used to Feb. 21, 1340. (Diam. $4\frac{3}{16}$ in.)

King's throne, with four pinnacles, no arch, three lions on each side.

+ EDWARDUS : DEI : GRACIA : REX : ANGLIE : DOMINUS : HIBERNIE : ET :
DUX AQUITANNIE.

Engravings. San. 122. Rym. ii. 683. Tres. vi. 2.

Impressions. Sep. 20, 13 E. III. (Sandford, 157).

D. From Feb. 8, 14 E. III. (1340). Published in England Feb. 21, 1340. Broken Jun. 20, 1340. (Diam. $4\frac{3}{16}$ in.)

King on throne, flanked by two towers, and having a triple canopy over his head, supported by four slender pillars ; the whole of the most clumsy design ; the lions hitherto under his feet now sit one on each side, and are very large : a shield of arms of France and England quarterly is suspended from each tower by a rude hook and loop.

EDWARDUS : DEI : GRACIA : REX : FRANCIE : ET : ANGLIE : DNS :
HYBERNIE : ET : DUX : AQUITANIE.

Engravings. Tres. (Sceaux de France) ix.

Impressions. Ipswich, June 8, 14 E. III. (Lancaster Duchy. Archæologia, xxvi. p. 461.)

E. Used alternately with F, as follows.

Design unknown.

EDWARDUS DEI GRACIA REX ANGLIE ET FRANCIE ET DOMINUS HIBERNIE.

F. Used in England as follows, alternately with E and G. (Diam. $4\frac{3}{16}$ in.) (June 22, 14 E. III.) E (Dec. 1, 14 E. III.) F (Oct. 4, 16 E. III.) E (Mar. 4, 17 E. III.) F (July 3, 19 E. III.) E (July 30, 19 E. III.) F (July 2, 20 E. III.) E (Oct. 15, 21 E. III.) F (Oct. 29, 22 E. III.) E (Nov. 17, 22 E. III.) F (Oct. 14, 33 E. III.) E (May 19, 34 E. III.) F for

a short time, then G to (June 3, 43 E. III.) E and F (47 E. III.?) then G No. 2 to end of the reign^y.

King on throne, rich triple canopy over his head, and seven compartments of tracery panelling behind, lions on each side and a shield quartering France and England suspended under a pointed arch.

.+: : EDWARDUS : DEI : GRACIA : REX : FRANCIE | ET : ANGLIE : ET :
DOMINUS : HIBERNIE : :

N.B. The vertical line that divides this and the following legends in the middle, marks the place where the ornamental corbel cuts the legend of the actual seal.

Engravings. Sp. 584. San. 124. Rym. iii. 597. Tres. vii. 1.

Impressions. 15 E. III. (Sandford, 157). May 20, 20 E. III. (Durham). Feb. 14, 22 E. III. (Brit. Mus.) Jan. 28, 22 E. III. (Caius Coll.) 25 E. III. (Wailly, 113). 26 E. III. (Caius). 28 E. III. 29 E. III. (C.C.C.^z) also 32, 43, 45 and 46 E. III. (Pembroke) and many others.

F. No. 2. Apparently by Richard II. for French affairs.

RICARDUS, &C.

Engraving. Tres. viii. 1.

Impressions. None quoted.

G. The Bretigny matrix, used from about May 20, 34 E. III. (1360) to June 3, 43 E. III. (1369). (Diam. $4\frac{1}{10}$ in.)

Tabernacle-work divides the seal into three large compartments and four narrow compartments alternately; king in the centre on throne, with lions seated on each side, a large corbel below, St. George and the Virgin Mary on each side of him in the narrow compartments, then the shields of arms as before suspended in the large compartments, and lastly two warriors or guards in the small outside compartments.

Edwardus : Dei : Gracia : Rex : An | glie : Dns : Hibernie : et : Aquitannie :

Engravings. Rymer, iii. 667.

Impressions. 34 E. III. (Wailly, 114). 36 E. III. (Rymer, ii. 667). 38 E. III. (C.C.C.) 42 E. III. (Ely). 45 E. III. alluded to (Rymer, 951).

G. No. 2. From about 47 E. III. to end of his reign.

† Edwardus : Dei : Gracia : Rex : f | rancie : et : Anglie : et : Dns : Hibernie

Impressions. Feb. 18, 48 E. III. 48 E. III. 49 E. III. 51 E. III. (Harleian charters, Br. Mus.). 49 E. III. (Durham). 47 E. III. (C.C.C.)

G. No. 3. Reign of Richard II.

† Ricardus : &c. . . .

Engravings. Sp. 603. San. 190. Tres. vii. 2. P. H. i. 781.

^y The pages of Rymer that furnish the authority for the above dates are vol. ii. 139, 177, 452, 494, 868.
1129, 1141, 1212, 1220; vol. iii. 50, 53, 85, * i. e. Corpus Christi College.

Impressions. 4 R. II. (C.C.C.) 16 R. II. 17 R. II. (Caius Coll.) 21 R. II. (Ely).

G. No. 4. Altered from the last by H. IV. Used to the end of H. VI. (1461).

† Henricus : &c. . . .

Engravings. Sp. 623. San. 238. Tres. viii. 3. P. H. ii. 5.

Impressions. 2 H. IV. (Pembroke). Treaty of Troyes, May 21, 8 H. V. (Wailly, 402). July 29, 23 H. VI. (Sandford, 286). 18 H. VI. 27 H. VI. 34 H. VI. (C.C.C.) Also 15, 18, 24, 25 and 30, H. VI. (Pembroke).

GG. A copy of the above, by Edward IV. Arms of France have three fleurs-de-lis.

Edwardus : Dei : Gracia : Rex : f | rancie : et : Anglie : et : Dns : Hibernie

Engravings. None. (Mr. Doubleday has a cast.)

Impressions. July 29, 1 E. IV. (Pembroke).

H. (A golden seal) from Mar. 10, 1 E. IV. (1461) to 10 E. IV. (1470)? Diam. $4\frac{3}{16}$.

An imitation of the Bretigny seal G. High turrets in two stories substituted for the canopies resting each on a trefoil arch, which characterize the original. The guards at the side also have turreted canopies in lieu of pent-houses. The turrets of the shield compartments rise into the annulus of the legend, and thus contract it.

Edwardus : Dei : Gra : Rex : An | glie : & : francie : & : Dns : Hibernie

Engravings. Sp. 686. Tres. x. 2. P. H. ii. 99.

Impressions. 4 E. IV. (Pembroke). 8 E. IV. (Caius Coll.)

I. From 1 H. IV. (1399) to about 3 H. VI. (1425⁺)? Diam. $4\frac{8}{16}$ in.

Large rich seal full of figures. Arms on banners instead of shields, as in all the other seals.

Henricus § Dei § gra § Rex § Anglie | § et § francie § et § Dns § Hibernie

Engravings. Sp. 635. San. 239. Tres. ix. Wa. pl. T. P. H. ii. 24.

Impressions. A.D. 1408. 9-10 H. IV. (Wailly, 373). 11 H. IV. (C.C.C.) 12 H. IV. (Pembroke). 3 H. V. or VI. (Caius and C.C.C.)

J. From the treaty of Troyes, May 21, 8 H. V. (1420) to the death of Charles VI. Oct. 21, 1 H. VI. (1422.) Design unknown.

Henricus. Dei gracia Rex Anglie heres Regni francie et Dns Hibernie

K. (The lesser silver great seal). Employed probably in France from 1 H. VI. to 29 H. VI. (Diam. $3\frac{5}{16}$ in., counter seal $1\frac{1}{16}$)

Seal in imitation of the royal seal of France.

× HENRICUS. : DEI : GRACIA | FRANCORUM ET ANGLIE : REX.

Engravings. Sp. 662. San. 240. Tres. (Sceaux de France xi. 3.) P. H. ii. 53.

Impressions. None quoted.

L. From 11 E. IV. 1471? to end of the reign of E. V. (Diam. $4\frac{3}{10}$ in.)
+ EDWARDUS * DEI * GRACIA * REX * ANGLIE | ET * FRANCIE * ET * DOMINUS * HIBERNIE

Characterized by the lead roofs of the houses over the shields, words of the legend separated by roses.

Engravings. Sp. 705. San. 353. Tres. xii. 1. P. H. ii. 117.

Impressions. 22 E. IV. (Sandford). 15 E. IV. 17 E. IV. 21 E. IV. (Caius). 20 E. IV. (Pembroke.)

L. No. 2. Reign of Richard III.

RICARDUS * &c. . . .

Engravings. Sp. 722. San. 354. Tres. xii. 2. P. H. 123.

Impressions. None quoted.

M. Reign of Edward IV., probably for French affairs. (Diam. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in.)

+ EDWARDUS † DEI † GRA † REX † FRANCIE † ET † ANGLIE † ET † DOMINUS † HIBERNIE :

Similar to the last in general arrangement. But the lead roofs are replaced by flat high tracery-work. This is the only seal in which the lions are placed in the shield compartments. The words of the legend are separated by fleurs-de-lis, and this seal, as well as the last, is surrounded by a deep rising border studded with small roses.

Engraving. Tres. xi. 1.

Impressions. None quoted.

MM. Reign of Henry VII. (Diam. $4\frac{1}{10}$ in.)

Copied from the last, but the words of the legend are separated by common colons, and the legend has "Anglie et Francie." Below, the rose on a branch is substituted for the rose en soleil.

HENRICUS : DEI : GRA : REX : ANGLIE : | : & : FRANCIE : & : DOMINUS : HIBERNIE :

Engravings. Sp. 739. San. 426. Tres. xiii. 1. P. H. ii. 281.

Impressions. 17 H. VII. (Caius.)

MM. No. 2. From 1 H. VIII. to about 24 H. VIII. (1532.)

On the obverse side a lion is added on the left side, and a fleur-de-lis on the right.

Impressions. 15 Ap. 24. H. VIII. (Wa. 116). 1 H. VIII. (Caius and Pembroke). 4 H. VIII. (Cath. Hall and Pembroke).

N. Probably by Henry VII. in France. (Diam. $3\frac{8}{10}$ in., counter-seal $1\frac{1}{10}$ in.)

HENRICUS : DEI : GRACIE : REX : | FRANCIE ET ANGLIE ET DAS HIBE

Engraving. Tres. x. 1.

Impressions. None quoted.

O. From 13 H. VIII. or 23 H. VIII. to about 33 H. VIII. (Diam. $4\frac{8}{10}$ in.)

Lateral shields within garters. Legend words separated by alternate roses and fleurs-de-lis.

HENRICVS † OCTAV' * DEI † GRA * ANGLIE † ET * FRANCIE † REX * FIDEI †
DEFENSOR * ET † DOMIN * HIBERNIE

Engraving. Tres. xiii. 2.

Impressions. Feb. 27, 23 H. VIII. (Cath. Hall.) 24 H. VIII. (Wa. 116.)
26 H. VIII. (C.C.C.) 29 H. VIII. (Caius Coll.)

P. From about 33 H. VIII. (1341) to the end of his reign. (Diam. 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ in.)

Pointed architecture abandoned for the first time in the great seals.

HENRIC' OCTAVS · DEI · GRATIA · ANGLIE · FRANCIE · ET · HIBERNIE ·
REX · FIDEI · DEFESOR · ET · I · TERA · ECCLESIE · AGLICANE · ET ·
HIBERNICE SVPREMVCAPVT

Engravings. Sp. 765. San. 427. Tres. xiv. 1. P. H. 319.

TABLE II.

Matrices used by the succeeding Kings.

Kings.	Legend.			When first used.
	Anglie alone.	Francie et Anglie.	Anglie et Francie.	
Edward III.	B .....	.....	.....	Oct. 4, 1 E. III. (1327.)
	C .....	.....	.....	July 10, 12 E. III. (1338.)
		D .....	.....	Feb. 8, 14 E. III. (1340.)
			E	June 22, 14 E. III. (1340.)
		F .....	.....	Dec. 1, 14 E. III. (1340.)
	G .....	.....	.....	May, 34 E. III. (1360.)
		G. No. 2. ....	.....	46 E. III.
Richard II.		G. No. 3 F. No. 2.		
Henry IV.		G. No. 4.	I	1 H. IV. (1399.)
Henry V.		G. No. 4.	I	{ After May 21, 8 H. V. (1420.) Legend, "heres. Francie."
			J	
Henry VI.		G. No. 4. K	I?	1 H. VI. (1422.)
Edward IV.		H	GG	1 E. IV. to 10 E. 4? (1470.)
		L	M	11 E. IV. to end of reign.
Richard III.		L. No. 2.		
Henry VII.		MM	N	1 H. VII. (1485.)
Henry VIII.			N	
	O .....	.....	.....	13 or 23 H. VIII. (1532.)
	P .....	.....	.....	33 H. VIII. (1541.)