

E were then existing, it was either taken abroad by the king or deposited in the Treasury.

TABLE OF PERIODS IN WHICH SEAL E WAS CERTAINLY IN USE.

	A.D.	A.R.		A.D.	A.R.
From June 22 to Dec. 1	1340	14	From July 2 . . .	1346	20
From Oct. 4 . . .	1342	16	to Oct. 15 . . .	1347	21
to March 4 . . .	1343	17	From Oct. 29 to Nov. 17	1348	22
From July 3 to July 30	1345	19	From Oct. 14 . . .	1359	33
			to May 19 . . .	1360	34

* * * When the subject of this unpublished great seal of Edward III. was brought before the monthly meeting of the Institute in London, it attracted the attention of W. S. Walford, Esq., who felt that he was obliged to differ from me in some of the conclusions to which, after a careful perusal of the documents relating to it in Rymer, I had arrived. My only object being the elucidation of facts, I requested him to write a statement of his view of the matter, which he readily and courteously consented to do. As that gentleman's knowledge of the subject entitles his opinion to every possible respect, I expressed a wish that he would allow his remarks to be published, and, by his kind permission, they are here submitted to the readers of the Journal. I also desire to take this opportunity of acknowledging my obligations to him for some valuable assistance in my own investigations.

W. H. G.

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS ON THE SAME SUBJECT,

BY W. S. WALFORD, ESQ.

IN investigating the claims of the newly discovered great seal of King Edward III., to be the missing seal E, the memorandum in Rymer, (iii., p. 868,) of what took place respecting the seals on the 11th June, 1369, is certainly an important document, unless the incompleteness of the second paragraph must be regarded as destructive of its credit. Since the examination of the record itself has verified the printed copy, it is evident some words were accidentally omitted by the clerk who entered the memorandum on the roll; and the correction of it by any higher authority is now hopeless. Still, after a careful study of the entire document as it stands, I can but credit it so far as to believe that two great seals were at that time taken out of the treasury, and that their legends differed as there stated. The version of it by Professor Willis does not indicate any defect or obscurity in the original. He, I presume, was content to give what he considered its

import ; for he could not have overlooked that the sentence was incomplete. *Rex in cancellaria sua*, was one of the modes of designating the Court of Chancery, and did not imply the actual presence of the king ; and I would suggest that the omitted words should have followed the word *consignand'* at the end of the second paragraph, which should have terminated thus—“*consignandi gratia brevia et alia de cursu cancellariæ sibi accepit*,” or with words to the like effect. If such words be supplied, the whole becomes intelligible and consistent ; and the general purport of it as regards the seals is, that the Chancellor, sitting officially, caused all the seals in the treasury with either “*Anglie et Francie*,” or “*Francie et Anglie*” upon them to be brought to him ; whereof he took two great seals, with the legends specified, and delivered other seals to the chiefs of the courts of K.B., C.P., and Exchequer, and another to the Clerk of the Privy Seal : and the seals which had been in use since the Peace of Bretigny he sent back to the treasury. The division of the memorandum into paragraphs in the printed copy has added somewhat to the obscurity of it. However, the view I take of the matter does not require any words to be supplied ; for I think, defective as the document is, it suffices to show that two great seals were then taken out of the treasury with “*Anglie et Francie*” and “*Francie et Anglie*” upon them respectively, whatever may have been done with them ; and my only object, in suggesting words to complete the sense, is to point out where the omission occurs, and how little need be supplied.

After carefully perusing Professor Willis's paper, and the various documents in Rymer which I could find bearing on the subject, and the additional information for which we are indebted to Mr. Gunner, a view of the question, whether the newly discovered seal be E or not, occurred to me, consistent, I think, with all the evidence ; and this I will now proceed to state, distinguishing the Winchester seal as W for facility of reference.

My hypothesis, or I hope I may say inference from all the evidence, is, that between the 20th of June, 1340, and the Peace of Bretigny in May, 1360 (the period during which Professor Willis has assumed there was but one great seal of absence used, viz. E), *either* there were two great seals of absence, viz., W, till October, 1347, and probably later, and afterwards E ; *or* there was only one great seal of absence, viz., originally W ; but which between 1347 and 1360 was converted into E by the inscription being altered from “*Francie et Anglie*” into “*Anglie et Francie*.” For the fact of W having been a seal of absence in 1347, Mr. Gunner has proved beyond question ; and that sometime before May, 1360, there was a great seal of absence with the inscription, “*Anglie et Francie*,” is, I think, also proved, though less conclusively, by the document in Rymer, (iii., p. 868,) seeing that F was certainly a seal of presence.

Of these two alternatives the latter, viz., that there was only one seal (*i. e.* matrix), the inscription of which was altered between 1347 and 1360, seems to me the more probable for the following reasons:—1. Such alterations were not uncommon, as Professor Willis's paper shows, and an alteration would satisfy all that the evidence requires to make it consistent. 2. If it were found expedient to make the difference between F and W more manifest, an alteration like that supposed was well adapted for the purpose. 3. There is no account of any *new* great seal having been made or delivered to the Chancellor during the period. I at first thought the

payment of 3*l.* to W. Moreton in 1356, for making a certain seal for the king's use (Prof. Willis's paper, p. 23, note) might have been for a new great seal; but the sum is perhaps too small, and, supposing it an instalment, I apprehend a great seal would not have been so designated. 4. An alteration of the inscription only was less likely to be noticed in any document than the making of a new seal; and as the payment for it would be trifling, it may have formed part of some item in which it was not specified. I find no good reason to think that such an alteration would lead to a transposition of the arms, so as to place those of England before those of France. 5. In August, 1372, the king went abroad again (Rymer, iii., p. 962), and from his return in October, 1347, till that time, there is no indication of the destruction or loss of any great seal, or of the coexistence of two great seals of absence; and the memorandum on that occasion (which was after G had been made, and before it was altered,) goes very far to show that there were then three great seals, viz., E, F, and G, and no more; and that W and E are to be referred to the same matrix, with different legends. For as the king, whose absence was shorter than he had reason to expect, no doubt took with him one great seal, and most likely F, the seal which was given up by the Chancellor and deposited in the treasury must, I conceive, have been E; and the seal delivered to him for use in the king's absence we know was G. Had E and W been distinct matrices, there would have been *four* seals, and either E or W would in all probability have been left with the Chancellor rather than G, which was singularly inappropriate, since the word "Francie" was not upon it. This will more clearly appear on referring to the memorandum, which is given by Mr. Gunner, p. 254, n. 3.

Whether the seal delivered to Thorpe, Chancellor, on the 26th March, 1371, was E or F, is not clear; for supposing W and E were two distinct matrices, then W may have been the great seal with "Francie et Anglie" upon it, which was delivered up to the king on the 28th March, 1371, and F the seal which had been committed to Thorpe on the 26th of the same month. But the reasons above advanced to show that W and E were one matrix, incline me to coincide with Professor Willis in thinking that E was delivered to Thorpe, and not F; and this anomaly, as it appears, may seem less if we advert to another circumstance not a little singular. In the often mentioned document in Rymer, (iii., p. 868,) we find on the 11th June, 1369, two great seals were taken by or delivered to the Chancellor when we should have expected he would have had only one, and that F. Now as the king did not then contemplate leaving England, I would suggest, by way of explanation of this, that one seal was intended for English, and the other for foreign affairs, which were then likely to require its use; a practice probably then commencing in consequence of the improbability of the king having to go abroad again;¹ and that as F was the seal known abroad, it was best adapted for foreign affairs, and thus E would become a seal for the rule of England even when the king was present. That some change in the use of the seals had taken place is, I think, shown by

¹ Edward was then barely fifty-seven, but he had no reason to anticipate the reverse of fortune which rapidly ensued. The Black Prince was in the zenith of his glory, and though his health was impaired by his Spanish campaign, little, if

any, apprehension was entertained of the malady proving incurable; and his brothers John and Edmund, influenced by his example, had shown no want of ability in military affairs.

the necessity there was of substituting G for E in August, 1372; when, owing to the king having to go abroad again, an emergency arose in regard to them for which he was not prepared. Such alteration in the employment of the seals may explain why E was delivered to Thorpe, and also why F (together with the great seal G, and two privy seals,) had been in the hands of and was retained by the late Chancellor for awhile "ex commissione Regis," and was then redelivered to the king; and it was committed by him to the treasury probably because there was then no immediate occasion for it. However if F only were used for foreign affairs, it was not confined to them; for Professor Willis (p. 26, note) mentions impressions of it at Pembroke College, under the dates of 1369, 1371, and 1372, as if both E and F may have been used, though perhaps not indiscriminately, for English affairs; but there is nothing to lead us to think that any other than F was used for foreign affairs from June, 1369, till G was altered. I am fully aware that, taken by themselves, these Pembroke impressions are *prima facie* evidence of F having been the great seal delivered to Thorpe on the 20th March, 1371; and I regret Professor Willis has not mentioned the exact dates, and the nature of the instruments to which they are appended; for the use of F on those occasions might have been capable of explanation. In 1372, the year in which Thorpe died, Wailly says that F occurs to a document in the French archives, so that it had been taken out of the treasury again if it had been deposited there in March, 1371. That document may possibly have been one sent by the king when he went abroad in August, 1372. These are the circumstances which make me feel not altogether satisfied as to which seal was delivered to Thorpe on the 26th March, 1371. Whether that seal were E or F is, according to my view of the subject, unimportant, except as regards the inquiry whether W and E represent two matrices or one; for if F were delivered to Thorpe at that time, W and E must in all probability have been two matrices; while on the other hand, if they represent one matrix in different states, that matrix, with the E legend on it, was, we may with equal confidence conclude, the seal delivered to Thorpe, because the legend on one of the two great seals retained by the late Chancellor was like that of W and F; while the legend on the other shows it to have been G, which, on some occasion and for some purpose not easily explained, had been placed in his hands.

According to the conclusion at which I have arrived, the seal E, with "Anglie et Francie" upon it, did not come into use before the 29th October, 1348, if so early; and the chances of an impression being discovered are less than they have hitherto appeared; though it is by no means to be despaired of, as it seems to have been in use for three years after June, 1369.

Since the foregoing observations were written, another impression of the undescribed seal of Edward III., to which they relate, has been noticed amongst the muniments of the city of Bristol, which were displayed for the gratification of the members of the Institute, at the recent meeting of the society. The charter, to which it is appended, bears date A.D. 1347, in the absence of Edward from the realm, during the long siege of Calais, and whilst Lionel, Duke of Clarence, was Guardian of England. It concludes as follows; — "Teste Leonello filio nostro carissimo, Custode Anglie, apud Redynges, vicesimo quarto die Aprilis, Anno regni nostri Anglie xxj., Francie octavo". The seal is partly imperfect.