



An Account of the Seal of the last Treasurer of the Augustine Monastery at Canterbury, in a Letter to the Reverend WM. TURNER, by JAMES GOMME, Esquire, of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire.

THE following is an account of a seal in my possession, which belonged to the last Treasurer of the Augustine Monastery at Canterbury.

The legend is **S' THESAURARIE: MON: SCI: AUGUSTINI: CANTUARIE:** In English—"The seal of the Treasurer of the Monastery of St. Augustine at Canterbury."

In the upper compartment is the prior in the act of blessing. He has a mitre on his head as presiding over a monastery, whose superior was entitled to wear one; these sat in the House of Peers as possessing baronies, but their number does not appear so fixed as the prelates.

The crozier is turned inward to distinguish him from a bishop. Below are the arms of the priory (the same now used by the Deans

of Canterbury); but to identify in whose priorate the seal was made, and no doubt to prevent future forgeries, the letter G. is placed in the centre of the cross.

The large keys in saltier are allusive to the office of treasurer; the two figures which stand on the bottom of the keys are two monks, with musical scrolls in their hands, from which they appear to be singing. The small dots about the field of the seal are only ornaments, and to fill up. The three stars on the top and on the sides of the shield of arms, probably have some precise meaning relating to the prior, or may be parts of his own paternal armorial bearing.

The date of the seal may be nearly fixed from the following account: Thomas Goldstone was prior for twenty-four years, eight months and ten days, says his epitaph; he died Sept. 16, 1517. He was highly trusted and employed by King Henry VII. It might have been supposed the seal of the treasurer in his time; but it was most probably cut in the priorature of his successor,

Thomas Goldwell, D. D. of Canterbury College, Oxford. This respectable man was the last prior. After presiding here twenty-three years, he witnessed the dissolution of the monastery, signed the surrender, and probably with this seal. He received a small pension and died in privacy. A stall in the cathedral of Canterbury, adjoining the priory, was offered, but he refused it.

We must give the seal in the time of Goldwell instead of Goldstone, for this reason: it must naturally be supposed, that in every priorature, there would be a new seal for the treasurer of the monastery, and that when the new seal was delivered, the old one was surrendered and broken, to prevent its being used. At the dissolution, the seal could be of no possible use: it was, therefore, either flung aside as useless, or Dr. Goldwell kept it in the hopes of the religious houses being restored.

JAMES GOMME.

High Wycombe, 24th Jan. 1815.

