

XXI.—ON A LEADEN SEAL OF HENRY IV., FOUND AT
CATCHBURN, NEAR MORPETH.

BY WM. WOODMAN, V.P.

READ ON WEDNESDAY, THE 30TH OF JULY, 1884.



[HALF THE DIAMETER OF THE ORIGINAL.]

THE leaden seal of which a cast is sent with this was found a few years ago in ploughing a field at Catchburn, near Morpeth, and preserved by the accident of its having been found useful as a paper weight.

The inscription is "*Sigillum dñi henrici dei gra reg anglie & francie & dñi hibernie de terra sua ultra tweda.*" It is the seal of the fourth Henry, the first of that name who styled himself Rex Francie.

After the battle of Hallidon Hill, in 1333, Berwick was surrendered to Edward III., and has subsequently, with little exception, been annexed to the English crown. Burton in "*History of Scotland,*" Vol. III., 12, says, "The English government, after Scotland was lost, retained

the official staff which Edward I. had designed for the administration of the country. It was huddled together within Berwick as a centre, and was in readiness to expand over such districts of southern Scotland as England acquired from time to time—was ready to spread over the whole country when the proper time should come. The active field for this body, however, was contracted by degrees, and at last was confined to the town and liberties of Berwick, which were then honoured by the possession of a Lord Chancellor, a Lord Chamberlain, and other high officers; while the district had its own Domesday Book and other records adapted to a sovereignty on the model of the kingdom of England." This seal is, therefore, the seal of the Chancery of Berwick, designated "the King of England's lands beyond the Tweed"—words capable of wide expansion. Until the reign of George II., general Acts of Parliament were not applicable to Berwick, unless specially included as "our town of Berwick-upon-Tweed." The town and liberties have an area of 5,606.

Facsimiles of seals were sent to the Clerks of Court. Bigland on Registers, page 82. And this is probably one of such.

I am told the Corporation of Berwick-upon-Tweed until recently used this Royal seal as that of the municipality.