

VI.—FOUR UNPUBLISHED LETTERS OF DR.
RICHARD NEILE, BISHOP OF DURHAM.

By J. C. HODGSON, M.A., a vice-president.

[Read 27 November, 1918.]

Richard Neile was born in King street, Westminster, in the month of March 1561-2, being the son of Paul Neile, described as a tallow-chandler. He received his education at the grammar school founded by queen Elizabeth within and upon the dissolved monastery of Westminster, and at St. John's college, Cambridge, where he was maintained at the charges of the wife of lord treasurer Burleigh; receiving his degrees of B.A., 1584, M.A., 1587, B.D., 1595, D.D. 1600. From Cambridge he ascended a longer ladder of ecclesiastical preferment than perhaps any other ecclesiastic of the Church of England since the Reformation. His preferments so far as can be ascertained were as follows:—chaplain to lord Burleigh and to the earl of Salisbury; vicar of Cheshunt, Hertfordshire, 1590; rector of Toddington, Bedfordshire, 1598; treasurer of Chichester, 5 July, 1598; canon of Chichester, 1604; master of the Savoy, 1605; dean of Westminster, 25 November, 1605; rector of Southfleet, Kent, 1608; bishop of Rochester, 2 July, 1608; bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, 12 October, 1610; rector of Clifton Camville, Staffordshire, 1612; bishop of Lincoln, 17 January, 1613-4; bishop of Durham, 30 June, 1617; bishop of Winchester, 10 December, 1627; rector of Droxford, 1628; vicar of Hambledon, 1629; rector of Bishops Waltham, 1631; archbishop of York, 28 Feby., 1631-2. He was also Clerk of the Closet to James I and Charles I, a member of the detested courts of High Commission and Star

Chamber. He was a conspicuous example of the unblushing time-serving prelates who may be likened to the prophets of king Ahab, for the servility which helped the first and second Stuart kings on the path which led to ruin. He exposed himself, in 1614, to the censure of the House of Commons, to which body he made an apology with tears. A story about him preserved by Waller, the poet, though well known, will bear repetition. " 'My lords,' said king James to bp. Neile and bp. Andrewes of Winchester, as they stood behind his chair at dinner, 'may not I take my subjects' money when I want it without all this formality in parliament?' 'God forbid, sire, but you should,' said bp. Neile, 'you are the breath of our nostrils.' Bp. Andrewes replied that he 'had no skill in parliamentary cases,' but on being pressed, said 'Then sir, I think it lawful for you to take my brother Neile's money for he offers it.' "

Bishop Neile is credited with much address, a marked capacity for business and with sound common sense. Dying in the city of York on the 31st October, 1640, he was buried in the minster.¹

Although the following letters, transcribed from the originals in the late Dr. Greenwell's collections,² contain nothing of historical importance they throw a favourable light on the bishop's character to which history has perhaps done less than justice. 'Though he were unsatisfied in getting,' he seems to have been just and punctilious in the discharge of his pecuniary obligations. He charges his agents 'to be verie carefull' for his 'credit and honestye in giving satisfaction and payment' to tradesmen and others. He affirms his hope and confidence that he 'came honestlie out of the country not indebted to anie.' He states

¹ Cf. *Dictionary of National Biography*; Le Neve, *Fasti*; Stanley, *Memorials of Westminster*, p. 424; *Westminster Abbey Registers*, ed. Chester; Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*.

² The letters were known to Dr. James Raine who quotes them in his historical account of *Auckland Castle*, p. 74.

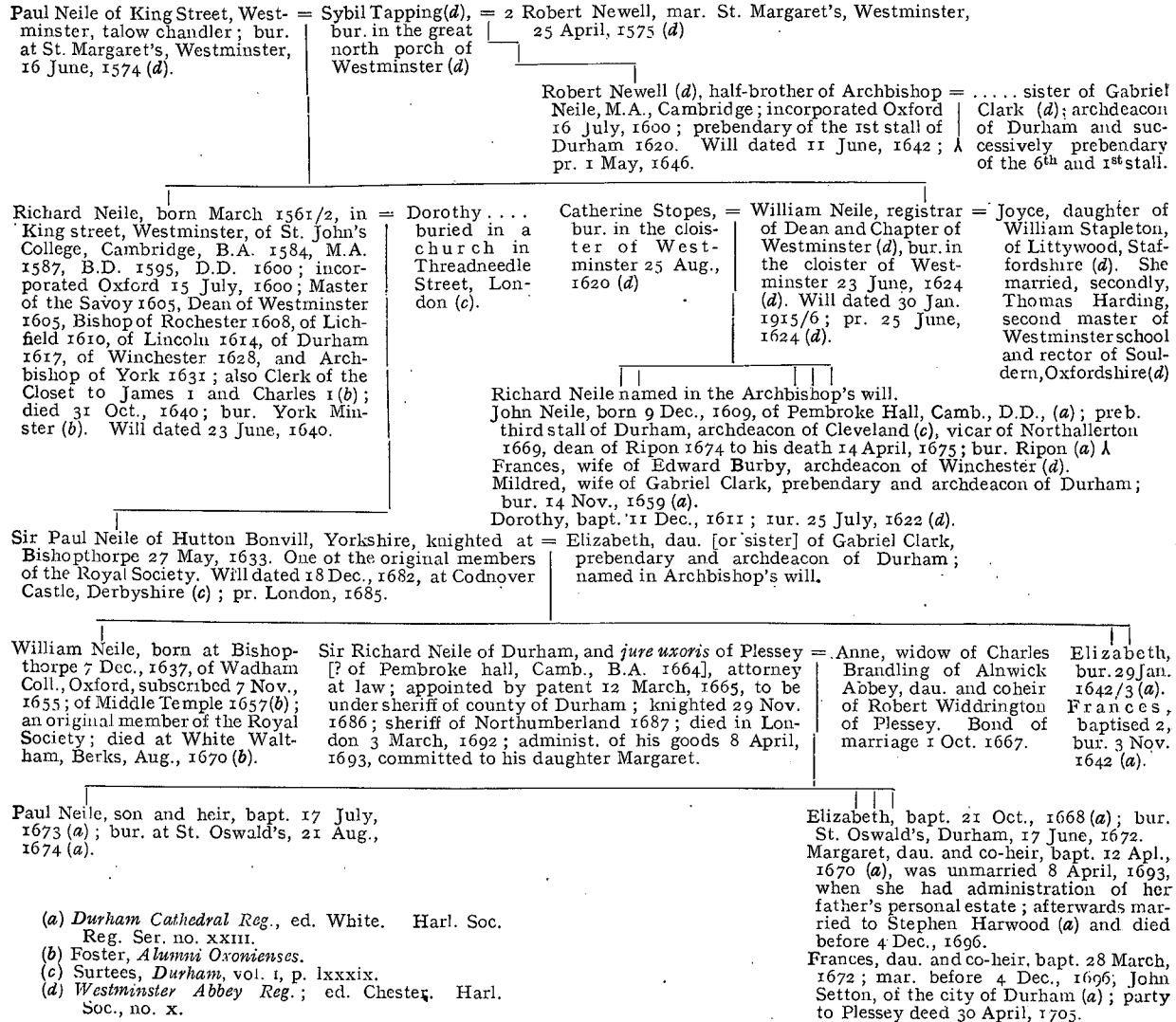
that he made it 'a conscience of due and timelie payment of the laborers hire'; and he urges full consideration of the needs of his poorer tenants.

Archbishop Neile left an only surviving son, Sir Paul Neile of Hutton Bonville, a Yorkshire landowner, and an original member of the Royal Society. Having the misfortune to slay Thomas Howton, a London carman, he was found guilty of manslaughter, his goods becoming forfeit to the Crown. In the month of January, 1635, he received, under the Privy Seal, pardon of the one and a release of the other.³ Sir Paul Neile, who was knighted at Bishopthorpe, 27 May, 1633, married Elizabeth, daughter or sister of his kinsman, Dr. Gabriel Clarke, prebendary of Durham, by whom he had with other issue two sons William and Richard. William Neile, elder son of Sir Paul Neile, born at Bishopthorpe, 7 December, 1637, was educated at Wadham college, Oxford, where he displayed great mathematical genius and made a name for himself by an exact rectification of the cubical parabola. He was elected a member of the Royal Society in January, 1663. He died in 1670, leaving the reputation of 'such a powerful genius to mathematical learning, that had he not been cut off in the prime of his years, in all probability he would have equalled, if not excelled, the celebrated men of that profession.'⁴ Sir Richard Neile, second but only surviving son of Sir Paul Neile, was appointed under-sheriff of the county of Durham by patent 12 March, 1665, and was knighted 29 November, 1686. Having married Anne, widow of Charles Brandling of Alnwick abbey, daughter and heir of Robert Widdrington of Plessey, he became seated in Northumberland and was high sheriff in 1687. He died in 1692, *s.p.m.*, leaving two daughters and co-heirs of whom little is known.

³ *Arch. Ael.*, 2 ser., xxiv, p. 200.

⁴ Hearne, quoted in a memoir of William Neile, *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol xl, p. 173.

PEDIGREE OF NEILE.



- (a) *Durham Cathedral Reg.*, ed. White. Harl. Soc. Reg. Ser. no. xxiii.
- (b) Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses*.
- (c) Surtees, *Durham*, vol. 1, p. lxxxix.
- (d) *Westminster Abbey Reg.*; ed. Chester. Harl. Soc., no. x.

THE LETTERS.

Mr Wright⁵ and Mr Comyn,⁶ I put yow together, having noe leisure to write severallie. I came, I thanke God safelie, to Durham-house, on Sunday night the 28th of October. My wagon came also well hether on Tuesday; and the carrier with my hangings came to Durham-house upon Allhallow-day; onlie I heare not of our sea cariages as yet, but I hope to heare of them in a few daies, in regard that (God be thanked) there hath been noe stormie weather since the tyme that they put forth from Newcastle.

I have not since my coming hether heard anie thing of anie, either concerning Sir Wm. Reads⁷ liverie, or from Mr. Robinson, for whom Mr Martin dealt with mee, or of anie other business wherof yow gave mee instructions; onlie Mr. Collingwood is come hether, whom I wished to repaire to Mr. Wandesford to see if Richardson had attempted anie thing in the Court of Wards about Lawson's lunacie, but I heare nothing of him.

I have not yet seene Mr. Justice Hutton⁸ since my coming hether. In regard that my coach horses had so ill a journey of it, in my coming upp, I was willing to spare them too or three daies, which hath made mee forbear goeing abroad.

I presume so much of your care and remembrance of those things which wee ordered before my coming forth, that I shall not neede to iterate any

⁵ In 1615 Hugh Wright, being then mayor of the city of Durham, entered his pedigree at St. George's Visitation, and obtained a confirmation of arms *ermine a fess counter compamy argent and azure between three griffins' heads erased, of the third*. He was buried 4 June, 1654. *cf.* pedigree of Wright: Surtees, *Durham*, vol. iv, p. 153.

⁶ Timothy Comyn, Receiver-General of bishops Howson and Neile, was the eldest son of Simon Comyn, Registrar of the Dean and Chapter, who entered his pedigree at St. George's Visitation of Durham in 1615, and was allowed the arms *azure a chevron erminois between three garbs or*. Timothy Comyn was buried at Durham cathedral 19 March, 1639-40. His third son Francis Comyn, the eldest son of his second marriage, entered his pedigree at Dugdale's Visitation of Yorkshire, 28 August, 1665. *Cf.* *Dugdale's Visitation of Yorkshire with Additions* by J. W. Clay, vol. ii, p. 446.

⁷ Probably Sir William Read 11 of Fenham in Islandshire, who was buried 16 May, 1616, in the church of Holy Island. His family held Dean and Chapter lands in Holy Island. *Cf.* Raine, *North Durham*, pp. 179.

⁸ Sir Richard Hutton of Jesus College, Oxford and son of Anthony Hutton of Hutton, near Penrith, was admitted to Gray's Inn, 26 October, 1580, being already a member of Staple's Inn, serjeant at law, 1603, recorder of York 1608, recorder of Ripon 1610, knighted 13 April, 1617, puisne judge of common bench same year. He died 26 February, 1638-9 with the character of 'a grave, learned, pious and prudent judge of great courage and practice in all proceedings.' *Cf.* *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vol. xxviii, p. 359.

of them in writing; onlie this, I pray yow as mony cometh in that it may be laid up safelie, and sent upp in due tyme. Whereof I presume Mr. Wright will take the care and charge, for that I expect his coming up, at or before the beginning of Candlemas terme. And withall I pray yow to be verie carefull of my credit and honestye in giving satisfaction and payment for such billes of worke at Awckland, as John Lockey⁹ shall bring in, either for himselfe or others that shall appeare to yow to be honestlie done, Dr. Cradocke¹⁰ being acquainted therewith, and alloweing thereof. I pray yow to doo the like with Richard Hester or anie others upon their just demands; but I trust I came honestlie out of the country not indebted to anie. And if it shall appeare unto yow that there is anie other opinion in the towne or country, I pray yow to cause the parties that complaine, to require satisfaction of Dr. Cradock to whom I have made allowance of all things, to the uttermost farthing, as I am sure yow Mr. Comyn doth knowe. And whatsoever you heare by way of complaint in this kinde, I pray yow to make it knowne to Dr. Cradocke, that hee may justifie himselfe against such complaints, for I am tender of his credit, as of myne owne; and whatsoever yow doo in this kinde, I pray yow doo it, both of yow, lovinglie and freindlie, with signification to him, that I have commanded yow not to conceale such things from him.

I have written to Dr. Cradock for the collecting of the subsidie due to his Majestie for the clergie the first of November, which I presume, as it shall come in he will desire to have it locked up in the standerd, that it may be sent up to me, when other moneis of myne shall be sent, whereof I pray yow to be verie carefull, both of the layeing of it upp, and the safe conveyeing of it upp hether.

I had forgotten in my letters to Dr. Cradock to advertise him that the hangings, carpets, etc., which Henry Crawforth, the carier, now brought upp, shall serve my turne by Gods grace for this winter, and that I shall not neede to have anie more sent up at this tyme; onlie I pray yow desire

⁹ John Lockey one of the bishop's officers at Auckland was still living 9 June 1628, when he is represented as being in possession of a house within the precincts of the palace. Cf. Raine, *Auckland Castle*, p. 77.

¹⁰ Dr. John Cradock, Spiritual Chancellor of Durham and prebendary of the fifth stall; also vicar of Woodhorn where he died 28 December, 1627, and was there buried. Mrs. Cradock was Margaret, widow of . . . Robinson and daughter of William Bateman of Wensleydale. Cf. *Durham Cathedral Registers*, ed. White, Harl Soc. Reg. Ser., vol. xxiii, p. 86 n.

him to informe me hereafter how John Taylor keepeth the house, and imployeth himselfe in the ayryng of my stuffe and well looking to it. I had an intention to have sent downe 100 elles of canvas for him to have lined and bordered and barred some of the hangings withall ; but I thinke it will be as cheape bought at Newcastle as here, which if Dr. Cradock and M^{res} Cradock thinke requisite, may be there bought ; or otherwise I may send it from hence hereafter when the horses bring up monie. I pray yow say so much to Dr. Cradock. I pray Mr. Wright and yow to use all good meanes for the seizinge of the wards Porter and Newton and the disposing of them as I directed. Porter to Dr. Birkhead,¹¹ and Newton to Mr. Wright. If Hugh Wright look for newes, I leave it to my Lord elect of St. Davids¹² to requite him for his learned Latin letter. Otherwise it may be ther is more newes at Durham then at Durham-house. And such as is here and perhaps more then I knowe, thes bearers may relate. *Sic Nos Dvo.* And I rest

Your loving Frend

R. Dunelm :

Durham-house,

3^o Novemb: 1621.

[*Endorsed*] To my verie loving Frendes | Mr. Hugh Wright and |
Mr. Tymothy Comyn and | either of them at Durham | be thes
with speed delivered.

[*Seal destroyed*]

[*Endorsed.*] My Lord's letter of the 3 of Nov: 1621, received the
9 of Nov: 1621.

Mr. Comyn. I received your letters of the 4th of December, by which yow advertise me of liverie and seizin taken by yow to my use, of the lands belonging to Barnard Castle Hospitall¹³; but in that yow say nothing of the like livery and seizin taken upon the other lease in Gainsford [*sic*]. I pray yow to advise with Mr. Smith, whether that liverie and seizin of that be not also necessarie ; in regard it standeth upon three lives, tho'

¹¹ Dr. Daniel Birkhead, otherwise Birkett, successively prebendary of the sixth stall (1619) and of the tenth stall (1620); vicar of Eggescliffe (1610) of Winston (1620); was buried in the cathedral 27 November, 1624.

¹² Dr. William Laud was elected bishop of St. Davids, 10 November, 1621.

¹³ Some scanty notices of Barnard Castle Hospital which was endowed *inter alia* with rents payable out of Ovington and the mills of Bywell, may be found in Surtees, *Durham*, vol. iv, p. 80.

the lease bee for four score years, if such and such live so long. And if Mr. Smith thinke it necessarie to have liverie and seizin, I pray yow desire Mr. Chancellour Cradock that it may be done. And whatsoever the value of these leases may bee I wish (as yow doo) that I had my money in my purse, and he had his leases againe ; which in regard of Dr. Cradock's promises to me, I did thinke would have beene done before this tyne.

As for those two tenants of Shotton and Midridge, let them alone. I will not now accept of those their compositions, though they would lay downe readie money.

I am sorrie to heare that my rents come in so skantlie, but I presume yow and Mr. Wright and Dr. Cradocke will looke to such tenants as incurr forfeitures for non-payment.

As touching billes paid to Lockey, I wish workemen should be truelie paid, for I make a conscience of due and timelie payment of the laborers hire. But I doo not well remember what I appointed Jo: Lockey to doo, that would amounte to xxvj^{li} xij^s viij^d and viij^{li} xij^s viij^d, in regard that I paid him at Richmond v^{li} of his agreement with me for the east window of Awckland chappell. I presume the billes will shew for what it is, and the worke done being to that some, I am very well contented that it be duely paid.

As for the cariages, I presume yow will well consider of them. Yow know the particuler alloweances which I have made to Dr. Cradocke, in his accompts of cariages for the yeares 1620 and 1621, viz^t 1620, 75^{li} 10^s 4^d *préter que* out of rents ; and for the yeare 1621, 44^{li} 4^s 6^d *préter que* out of rents to be allowed. And besides this 18^{li} 16^s 11^d to Chester, Counden and Escomb mencioned in your letters. If the poore tenants have truelie earned it, Gof forbidd that I should detract their payment, and I presume yow and Dr. Cradocke doo not forgett how that I referred the examination of all the particylars of this and the like nature concerning workes, to him and yow, at some convenient leisure, which I presume yow and hee will performe, and that I shall understand from yow what yow finde ; which I desire to be done, not as distrusting the accompts, but wishing that done that may best stand for his discharge and my satisfaction ; which would be best done by having a perfect booke made, and your exaninate to it ; which Mr. Chancellour Cradock remembreth I long since desired to be done, to be left amongst the records of the Chancery for my successours to see how carefull I have beene, and with

how great charge to make the howses of the Bishopricke usefull ; and it may be my executors after me may have necessarie use of such a booke.

Touching Barnard the glasse painter of Wetherby, I doubt hee expected to have had some directions from me for his worke, which it may bee he hath omitted for that he hath not heard from mee, which in truth I have not hether to had leisure to thinke of. And as touching the gunpowder which yow say Dr. Cradock saith he hath provided to the valew of xxj^{li} I feare me I shall be deceived if I relie upon that his provision, for that Hugh Wright writeth to me that he and yow went to Newcastle to seeke for powder, and found not there so much as one barrell to be had ; inso-much that Hugh Wright adviseth me to make my provision here at London; and yet it seemeth strange that Diggens did certifie me, as he did, that it was there to be had ; unlesse in the interim it hath beene sould away because I sent not for it in tyme. In anie case lett me knowe if any be provided or not, that I may take care to be otherwise provided with all speed if it bee not there to be had.

I hope by this tyme yow have received the greatest part of the rents, and that I shall in convenient time receive such monies as are received, according to my former directions ; whereof I pray yow not to faile me. In truth my disbursements since my coming hether have been such as had I not received 700^{li} since my coming hether I should have been by this time at a verie low ebb, and scarslie have had wherewithall to pay my servants wages at Christmas.

I hope Dr. Cradock hath received by this time the best part of my rent for Stockton demesnes for the last yeare, which will add something to our store, and I hope some other reckonings and paiments doe come in ; and every thing doth helpe.

So with my commendacions to your selfe and our frendes *Nos Deo* and I rest

Your very loving Frend,

R. Dunelm :

From Durham-house
20^o Decmb. 1621.

[*Not addressed or sealed*].

[*Endorsed*] My Lord's letter of the 20 of Decemb : 1621, and received [*sic*]

Mr. Comyn. I shall not need to write much in regard that Hugh Wright will remember most of the businesses that are to be done ; only

I would pray yow to lay about yow, for all such rents and reckonings as are in arrere and in supers, as much as you can, to gett mony into your hands to supply necessary occasions. It seemeth Mr. Rotson hath not paid the mony which he undertooke to pay at St. Andrew day, nor cometh to his accompt with yow as hee promised. I pray yow call roundly upon him, and all others and lett them know that it will be a great unkindenesse to mee this yeare to keepe any mony of myne from mee. And among other things I pray yow call upon the accompts for the greene wax out of the Exchequer here, wherof yow remember ther was difference between Mr. Wright and the undersheriffe.

; I heare that Dr. Cradock hath left the castle and that ther is no body ther but Wm. Porter and the porter. I know not what order ther is for their dietts. It may be inconvenient perhaps to have be [*sic*] abroad in the evenings. I pray yow therefor conferr with Dr. Cradock how things are, and if there be cause lett order be taken for them to have meat and drinke at the Castle, rather then any inconvenience of the safetie therof may bee by occasion of their being abroad; or otherwise if need be I can cause Gab : Clarke¹⁴ and his wife to live there.

I would resolutely have Mr. Justice Hutton entertained at the Castle when he cometh, which he proposeth Godwilling, on the 9th of Aprill. If Dr. Cradock doo not presently take order to make provision against his coming and that he will be at the Castle to intertaine him, I pray yow send to Gabr : Clarke¹⁴ and between him and yow take present order to have beere brued, and other provisions made, that when he cometh he may be lodged and dietted at the Castle.

; Other things I leave to Mr. Wrights memory; and my commendacions to your selfe and all our frendes. I committ yow to God, and rest

Your very loving Frend,

Durham-house.

R. Dunelm :

18 Feb^r 1621.

[*Addressed*] To my verie lovinge Frend | Mr. Timothy | Comyn at
Durham | deliver.

[*Endorsed*] My Lord's letters.

¹⁴ Dr. Gabriel Clarke, of Christ Church, Oxford; matriculated 21 February, 1605-6, aged 17; B.A. 1609; M.A., 1612; incorporated Cambridge 1616; B.D. from Pembroke Hall 1630, canon of Lincoln 1615, rector of Middleton Stoney, Oxford 1616; Archdeacon of Northumberland 1619, Archdeacon of Durham and rector of Elwick 1620, prebendary of the sixth stall 1623, master of Greatham hospital 1624, prebendary of

Mr. Wright and Mr. Comyn. Yow knew before my coming last from Durham that I assigned 100^{li} to be paid by xx^{li} monethly, begining in November, by Mr. Smith¹⁵ to Barywicke¹⁶ wherof Mr. Smith by his letters assured mee that he had and would performe it without all faile, and I am verie confident hee would doo what hee promised. And in Dr. Cradock's last letters to mee of the 20th of March hee hath assured mee that Mr. Smith had then paid the last xx^{li} of his hundred, and that he himselfe had alsoe paid that moneth by my late direction 20^{li}. So as there should be then paid 100^{li} by Mr. Smith and 20^{li} by Dr. Cradocke, *in toto* 120^{li}. Now Sir William Bowyer¹⁷ by his letters to me of the first of this month certifieth me but of 60^{li} received, and Sir Robt. Jackson,¹⁸ who brought his letters, affirmeth that there was but 60^{li} paid at his coming from Barwick the first of Aprill. I have given Dr. Cradock notice hereof by Mr. Wigham, I pray yow to speake with Dr. Cradock of it and désire them to certifie me at what times and by whom and to whom the monies were paid, and certifie me thereof.

the first stall 1638. He was deprived of his preferment during the Commonwealth but was re-instated at the Restoration. He was buried between the fourth and fifth pillars of the south aisle of the nave of the cathedral, 12 May, 1662. His wife was Mildred, daughter of William Neile, and niece of the bishop, *cf. Durham Cathedral Registers*, ed. White, p. 95.

¹⁵ This sum evidently represented in whole or in part the bishops of Durham's assessment or contribution for the building of the bridge at Berwick, for part of which bridge he was responsible as it connects Tweedmouth in Islandshire with Berwick; *cf. Scott, History of Berwick*, p. 415.

¹⁶ William Smith, son of Thomas Smith of Barton, Yorkshire, admitted to Gray's Inn, 3 June, 1589, practised in Durham as a barrister. He entered his pedigree at St. George's Visitation of Durham in 1615 and obtained a grant of arms *argent on a bend azure three lozenges erminois between two unicorns' heads erased azure armed and maned or*. He resided in the North Bailey *pius ac prudens* and dying on the 16 of December, 1631, aged 63, was buried at the cathedral. By his wife Mary, daughter of Lionel Heron of Chipchase, he left issue. *Durham Cathedral Register*, ed. White, p. 88.

¹⁷ Sir William Bowyer, knighted at Warwick or Coventry on the 4 or 5 September, 1617, may be identified with the person of that name who *circa* 1604 was a captain in the garrison of Berwick-upon-Tweed and mayor of the borough for 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623 and 1625; *cf. Scott, History of Berwick*, pp. 191, 192, 329, 479.

¹⁸ Sir Robert Jackson, a wealthy burgess of Berwick was knighted 13 May, 1617. He took a leading part in connexion with the rebuilding of Berwick bridge, the belated accounts for which he did not present to the Exchequer before the 20 July, 1637; *cf. Scott, History of Berwick*, pp. 415-416.

I have also by my former letters directed Dr. Cradock to pay them, after that Mr. Smithe's mony was all paid, 40^{li} monethly which Dr. Cradock giveth me assurance shall without faile be duely paid, and whatsoever els shallbee by Sir William Bowyer required; but in my last letters by Mr. Wigham I have directed that they be paid after the rate of 20^{li} weekly or 80^{li} monethly, for that the time of the yeare requireth that that worke be resolutely and seriously sett uppon. Towards the payment wherof I presume Dr. Cradock hath received the greatest part of the tenth of the Dioces, and hath also to receive the greater parte of the rent of Stockton demesnes for the yeare past, and what els may be come in to me of payments and arrerages, yow and he better know then I.

I pray yow to confer with Dr. Cradock, and see what mony there is certaine to make good thes payments after the rate of 100^{li} the month, for Aprill, May and June, and certifie me therof, but I must not faile in these payments whatsoever I doo otherwise. And I pray yow tell Dr. Cradock that he may not by anie meanes dispose of anie part of the king's benevolence money in thes payments or any other, but that it be kept whole together and sent without faile in the beginning of Easter terme, according to his promise.

So with my very heartie commendacions to yow both I committ yow to God; and rest

Your very loving frend,

R. Dunelm :

From Durham-house

11 Aprilis, 1622.

I wish there were a brewing of beare at Awckland in regard of my purpose of lieing there, Godwilling, some parte of this sommer, and I wish it should be well hopt for keeping it the better from sowing, but the brewer must be charged to looke well to the sweetness of his caske, for ther is never a yeare but I loose much beare by the mustiness of his caskes.

R. Dunelm :

[*Addressed*] To my worshippfull good Friends | Mr. Hugh Wright and | Mr. Timothy Comyn at | their houses in Durham. | deliver.

[*Seale destroyed*]