

The following Communications were read :—

I.

ON TWO ORIGINAL SEALS OF JAMES, FIRST LORD HAMILTON, ONE ATTACHED TO A DOCUMENT DATED IN 1457, THE OTHER TO AN ORIGINAL TRUCE BETWEEN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND ON SEPTEMBER 28, 1473. By JOSEPH BAIN, F.S.A. Scot.

Many years ago I was much interested on finding in one of Mr Riddell's controversial works¹ a description of what he styled a remarkable original seal of James, Lord Hamilton, appended to his bond of manrent to George, Earl of Angus. The point especially noticed was the display of family alliances on banners instead of quarterings. The right-hand banner, showing the nearest alliance, displayed the arms of Douglas of Dalkeith, of which family his grandmother was a daughter—the left-hand banner those of Galbraith, from which family a remoter ancestress came. I concluded that Mr Riddell was describing the actual seal, and possibly it may have been so. But a year or two since I chanced to look into the *Historical and Genealogical Memoirs of the House of Hamilton*, by John Anderson, Surgeon (1825), a work to which Mr Riddell was a contributor, and there (on p. 409), saw what I have no doubt is a representation of the seal in question, its date being given as in 1457. The illustration is a very poor one, and the artist must have carried out some of the details from his own imagination. The shield is couché, charged with three very pointed and wavy cinquefoils. Over the left corner is a helmet, and what seems a tree issuing from it. Two animals support the crest, each holding a banner staff between its forelegs. It is difficult to say what these animals are. They are collared, and might be deer, the usual supporters of the Hamiltons, but for their tails, which are long, and thrust between their hind-legs, ending in an upward curl and tuft. The right-hand banner shows two stars of six points on a chief—for Douglas of Dalkeith; and the left-hand one three bears' heads—for Galbraith of Baldernock.

¹ Reply to Dr Hamilton of Bardowie (1827).

There are also two curved objects rising from each supporter's head, crossing the stem of the tree, which may be intended to represent saws. But the drawing is so rude it is impossible to say with confidence what these are. I cannot think the lithograph gives a proper idea of the seal in question. It seems much too large, being 4 inches in diameter.

I had got thus far in these remarks, when it occurred to me to consult Mr Fraser's new book, the *History of the Douglasses*. There the matter is cleared up. In vol. iii. p. 434, he gives an abstract of the bond of manrent by James, Lord Hamilton, to "a high and mighty lord," George, Earl of Angus, Lord Douglas, warden of the East and Middle Marches of Scotland, saving his allegiance to the king, and his "band of service" to Queen Mary [of Gueldres]. Granted at Tantallon on 23rd May 1457. Mr Fraser thus describes the seal appended—"In fair preservation. It contains a shield couché, bearing three cinquefoils: supporters, two antelopes gorged, and carrying pennons; the dexter pennon displaying two stars on a chief, and the sinister three *boars'* heads langued and tusked. Crest, on a helmet an oak tree fruited. Legend, 'Sigillum Jacobi Domini de Hamyltowne.'" [Original Bond in Hamilton Charter Chest.]

So much then for this first seal. But a year ago I came upon the second, which differs in several respects. It seems to me unique, for I have as yet found no notice of it in any heraldic work. It is the fourth in order, appended to a truce with England, at Alnwick on 28th September 1473, along with those of the Bishop of Brechin and other Scotch ambassadors, including a very fine one of Lord Hamilton's son-in-law, David, Earl of Crawford. It is much damaged at the upper part, but the shield, helmet, and supporters are distinct. The shield is couché, charged with three *mulletts* pierced, two and one, charged with ermine spots. The supporters are two wolves, each holding a banner staff in its forepaws and jaws. The banners and their charges are obliterated. A helmet (barred) and wreath is over the left-hand corner of the shield. The stem of a tree is quite distinct above, with indications of foliage and something like a transverse saw. But this part of the seal is much defaced. I have never met with an original seal of the first Lord

Hamilton before, and nowhere have I seen or heard of any Hamilton seal with *mullets* ermine. I think there is no doubt these are the charges of this seal, and it is unquestionably Lord Hamilton's. Though the legend is broken, it is partly legible—" [SIGILLV]M JACOBI DOMINI D' HAM[ILTON]." The size is $1\frac{3}{4}$ inches across the part where it is entire.

It is strange that the artist who drew the seal of 1457, so clearly described by Mr Fraser, should have made such a botch of his work. The supporting antelopes are absolute nondescripts in his sketch. As to the later seal, one would like to know if there was any reason for the alterations by Lord Hamilton. The age was prolific in ornamental and fancy seal engraving, as shown by the fine collection of Douglas seals in Mr Fraser's work. One of the finest is the seal of James, ninth and last Earl of Douglas, of which there is also a good example of 1453 in the Record Office, appended to a treaty with England. It is unique among the Douglas seals in giving, like the Hamilton seal, two banners held by the supporters, but with four quarterings each.

Those two Hamilton seals are interesting in regard to the now well-known crest—the oak tree and saw. In that of 1457, as described by Mr Fraser, we have the oak tree. In that of 1473 the tree unquestionably again appears, with (probably) the addition of the frame saw. Mr Seton (*Heraldry*, p. 219) mentions the tree and frame saw crest, borne by the second Earl of Arran in 1549, in such a manner as to convey the idea that this was the earliest instance then known. For he points out that the crest of Sir John Hamilton of Cadzow, in 1388, was a boar's head and neck. Thus there is now, on the evidence of the two seals under notice, an antiquity of a hundred years more for the tree, and possibly for the saw. As crests were so often changed, this is a long period for one to hold its place in the family escutcheon, from 1457 to the present day.