

EXTRACT

FROM THE

Books of the Corporation of Norwich,

RELATIVE TO

THE INJURIES DONE TO THE CITY BY SIR THOMAS TUDENHAM AND OTHERS;
 THE OFFENCE GIVEN TO ALICE, COUNTESS OF SUFFOLK; AND THE
 REAL HISTORY OF GLADMAN'S INSURRECTION.

COMMUNICATED

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THE feuds and dissensions which agitated the city of Norwich at and about the period of the following paper, form rather a conspicuous feature in its annals, as narrated by the Historian of the County. They appear mainly to have originated, either in quarrels among the citizens themselves, or in differences with the prior and monks, or in struggles with the sovereign; the latter not uncommonly terminating in the city being temporarily deprived of its liberties. The following document, evidently drawn up by the Mayor and Commonalty, with a view of obtaining redress after they had been prosecuted and convicted of a variety of alleged offences, may be regarded, it is hoped, as of interest; containing, as it does, a full and detailed narrative of facts, which Blomefield was necessarily prevented by the limits of his work from doing more than allude to.

The document itself does not bear his mark, but it must evidently have passed through his hands; as the greater part of that portion of its contents which relates to the Countess of Suffolk and to John Gladman, will be found in his pages (*History of Norfolk*, II., p. 111) in the selfsame words. The

conduct of the latter, which cannot but appear to the more sober eyes of the present generation as mere folly, was, in those more excited days, dignified by the high-sounding name of *Gladman's Insurrection*. The version of it that was circulated by the enemies of the Corporation, is given in the same volume three pages previously, in connection with an apparently serious riot, in which "the Mayor and Commonalty, with three thousand other citizens and persons unknown," assaulted the Priory of the Cathedral. Their gathering-word was, "Let us burn the Priory, and kill the Prior and Monks." Nor were these altogether unmeaning expressions; for during several days they continued the blockade, and had even recourse to mines and fire; nor did they desist till they had forced the friars to deliver to them "a certain evidence, sealed with the seal of the city," by virtue of which the Chapter laid claim to a variety of privileges, which the townsmen were naturally anxious to abolish.

Of this outrage the annexed statement was manifestly a consequence. Its heading is given by Blomefield verbatim; but what he states to be its tenor widely differs from what is here presented to the Society, who, it is therefore hoped, may find it not unworthy of being preserved in their volumes, as to a certain degree illustrative of the early history of the capital of Icenia.

These be the extorcions, opp̄ssons, meyn테인ances, p̄juryes, inbraceryes, and wrongs, don to the Meir, Aldermen, and Cōialte of the Cite of Norwich, and to other singuler p̄sones of the same Cite, by Sr Thomas Tudenk̄m, Knyght, John̄ Heydon, and others.

First, the said meir and comonalte compleyn of that, that, where ye said Cite of Norwich was an aunycyent Cite and

of old tyme had baillifs & a cōinalte corpat in hem self, of tyme that no mynde is of, and wher Kyng Herry the fourth aftir the conquest, the xxviiij day of January, the v zeer of his reyne, amongs many othir p̄vilegs and libties, graunted to the baillifs than and the comonalte of the said Cite, their heires and successours for eū, that the said Cite and all the grounde w^t ynne the same Cite and w^t inne the libte of the same Cite, w^t subarbes and hameletts and p̄cincte of the same, and all the grounde in the circuite of the same Cite w^t in the libte of the same Cite of Norwich,—the castell and the shireho^s except, which shuld be conteyned and comphendyd w^t in the corps of the Counte of Norff.,—shuld be disseved from the same shire and utfly thereof exempt, as well be lond as be water; & that the said Cite of Norwich, subarbes and hamletts of the same, and all the grounde, p̄cincte, and circuite, except the said castell and shireho^s, shuld ben a counte by the self, dysseurid from the Counte of Norff., which p̄cincte and circuite extendith hymself by all the touns, hameletts, &c., “ut rei veritas est,”—nev̄thesse the said John Heydon, maliciously disposid, causid certeyn p̄sentments to be made agayn the meir and comonalte of the said Cite, of that, that the said late meir and cōinalte shuld haf inroched to theym the hameletts and touns forsaid, &c.; And the said John Heydon, that tyme beyng recorder & of ye special counsail & trust of the same Cite, confederid w^t the priour of the church of the trinite of Norwich, and w^t oute ony knowing of the said meir and cōialte, aperid to the said p̄sentments, and of his untrouth himself put into the Kyng’s courte pleggs for the seid meir & cōinalte, and made fyne for theym, in such some w^t the Kyng, agayn reson and trouthe, wher they wolde and myghte by the law a travešed the said presentment; to that ende and intent that the same meir and cōinalte shuld, by that untrue fyne makynge, be barrid and stoppid at ony tyme to plede the said hameletts & circuites to be p̄cell of their forsaid Cite, or in

any wise contr̄y to the mat̄ conteyned in ye p̄sentment. And of the said fyne the said Heydon was one of the pleggs, w^t out warrant of the said meir and cōinalte; as in a copy of the said p̄sentments, and of the said fyne made, it is pleynly conteyned. And to that intent, that this vntrouth thus done shuld be longe hidde & vnknow to the seid meir & cōinalte, the said John Heydon of his ymaginacōn causid the said fynes of xxviiij^{li} affixed vpon the said meir and cōinalte & vpon othr psones for the said acrochement supposid, with disseyte for to be paid in secrete manē, the said meir and cōalte not knowyne.

It̄m. Where it was so that Alice, Dutchesse, that tyme Countesse, of Suff.,* late in hire psonē cam to the said Cite, disguysed lyke an huswife of the countre, and the said S^r Thomas Tuden̄m and two other psons went w^t her also disguysed: and thei, to take their disportes, went out of the said Cite on an evyn agayn nyght, so disguysed, towards a Wode, clepid Laken̄m Wode, to take the ayer, and disporte theymsel̄ beholdyng the said Cite, one Thomas Ailmer of Norwich, a disour, which hath the diches of the said Cite in keypyng, estemyng in his conceyte that the said Duchesse and S^r Thomas hadden ben othr psones, met w^t theym, and opposid theym of their goyng oute in that wise, and fell at variaunce w^t the said S^r Thomas, so that they faught; wherby the said Duchesse was sore affrayed; by cause wherof the

* This lady was grand-daughter to Chaucer, the poet, and wife of William de la Pole, who succeeded to the Earldom of Suffolk upon the death of his brother Michael, A. D. 1415, the second year of the reign of King Henry V. He was by Henry VI. created Marquis in 1444, and in 1448 Duke of Suffolk. Consequently, what is here related of Alice ("then Countess") must have occurred between the years 1415 and 1444, and probably in 1418, the sixth year of Henry the Fifth; though the writer, from apparently a *lapsus calami*, attributes it to the same year of Henry the Fourth, whose name he has written plainly in words at length. The mistake is the more accountable; as he states that she was Duchess at the time he wrote, and the MS. is far from being a satisfactory one, being full of erasures and interlineations.

said Duchesse and S^r Thomas token a displesir agayn the said Cite, notwithstanding that the meir of the same Cite, that tyme beyng, arestid the said Thomas Ailmer, and helde hym in p̄son more than xxx weks, w^t oute baile or meynp̄se, for makyng the said affray; to that intent, therby, bothe to chastise the same Aylmer for makyng the said affray, and to apese the displesir of the said Duchesse and S^r Thomas. And also the said meir arestid and imp̄soned all o^thr psones which the said Duchess or S^r Thomas coude vnderstand that in ony wise gaf ony fav^r or comfort to the said Thomas Ailmer in makyng the said affrey to the said Duchesse. Which punyshment thus don notw^tstandyng, the said Duchesse and S^r Thomas apesed not their displesir therby. And it is so o^v more, that where John Heydon late was recorder of the said City, takyng of the said meir and citeseyns a resonable fee, as to the recorder ther is acustomed, he, so beyng recorder, inflacid hymself w^t the pryour of Norwich that tyme beyng, in travers w^t the said meir and cōinalte, and disco^ved the prevyte of the evidence of the said Cite to the said pryour, because wherof the meir and comons of the said Cite dischargid the said Heydon of the said condi^çon of recorder; because of which the same Heydon toke also a displesir agayn the said Cite. By malice of which displesires of the said Duchesse, S^r Thomas Tuden^hm, and John Heydon, ye Duke of Suff., yen Erle, in his p̄sone, upon many suggestions be ye said Tuden^hm & Heydon to hym made, that the meir, aldermen, & comonō forsaid shuld have misgo^vned the said Cite, laboured and made to be take oute of the chauncery a co^mission of oyer det^mynner. And therypon, at a sessions holden at Thetford the thursday next aft^r the fest of Seynt Mathy thappostle, the zeer, &c., the said S^r Tho^ms and John Heydon, fyndyng in their conceyt no maⁿ ma^t of trouthe wherof they myght cause the said meir and comonalte ther to be indited, ymagyned thus as insueth: first they sperde an Inquest ther

take in a chaumbre at on Spilmer's hous. In which chaumbre the said T. logged, and so kept thayme sperd.

And wher that it was so that on John Gladmā of Norwich, which was eū and at this oure is, a man of sad disposiçon and true and fethful to God and to the King, of disporte as is and eū hath ben accustomed in ony Cite or Burgh thugh al this reame, on fastyngong tuesday made a disporte w^t his neighborghs, havng his hors trappid with tyneseyle & other wyse dysgysy[̃] things, crowned as Kyng of Kristmese, in token that all merthe shulde ende with ye tweluemonthes of ye yer: afore hym (went) eche moneth dysgysid aff̃ ye seson yōf; and Lenten, cladde in white with rede herrings' skinnis, and his hors trapped with oyster shelles aff̃ him, in token y^t sadnesse and abstinence of merth shulde folowe, and an holy tyme; and so rōde in diṽse stretes of ye Cite, w^t oth̃r peple w^t hym disgysed, makyng merth and disporte and pleyes. The said S^r Thomas and Johā Heydon, amongs many oth̃r ful straunge and untrue p̃sentments, made by p̃jury at the seid Inquest, caused the said meir & comonalte & the said John Gladman to ben indited of that, that thei shuld an ymagined to a made a comon rysyng, and a coroune the said John Gladman as kyng, w^t coron, ceptre, & diademe (wher thei neū ment it) ne neū such thyng ymagined, as in the said p̃sentment it shewith more pleyn; and by that p̃sentment, w^t many oth̃r horrible articles theryn comp̃sed, so made by p̃jury, thei causid the fraunchise of the said Cite to be seasid into the Kyng's handes to the harmes & costs of the seid meir & cōñlte of x m fi.

