

MSS. in the Public Record Office

RELATING TO NORFOLK.

COMMUNICATED BY

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To the inexperienced topographer or genealogist, the immense bulk of our national records is the greatest hindrance to their use. Bewildered by the extent of the field before him, he knows not where to begin, and—*crede experto*—loses no little time before he learns how to apply his labour successfully. Of course, no printed directions can ever supersede the necessity of gaining practical knowledge by personal experience; but I venture to hope that the few following memoranda, honestly copied from my note book, into which they were jotted from time to time for my own use, may be of service to some yet younger archæologist than myself.

The documents relating to Norfolk preserved in the Public Record Office may be broadly divided into three classes, viz., those, complete in themselves, which relate exclusively to Norfolk; those which form separate skins of rolls relating to the whole country; and those which, like the last, relate to the whole country, but, unlike them, are not divided into shires, but contain entries relating to all counties jumbled up together.

I. Of the first class, I should think the earliest are the *Ministers' Accounts of the Lands of Roger Bigod, Earl of Norfolk*, which are mostly the stewards' accounts of his different lands, giving the receipts from rent, &c., and all manner of deductions, as wages, purchases of cattle, &c. They extend from the reign of Henry the Third to that of Edward the Second, consist of 613 rolls or packets containing one skin or more each, and relate (*i.a.*) to the following Norfolk localities—

Acle	Forneset	Saham
Attleborough	Halvergate	Stocton
Berton	Haneworth	Southfield
Brisingham	Herdwick	Tudenham
Burghe	Hoo	Walsham
Caster	Lodne	Walton
Dichingham	Lopham	Weston
Ersham		

There are many *Court Rolls*, or portions of court rolls, once belonging to the Augmentation Office, the references to which will be found in an index on shelf 5 of division J of the New Search Room. Among them are some relating to the manors of

Attelburgh	Ingworth	Stoke Ferry
Bayfield	Kellyng	Swanyngton
Blakeney	Marham	Thawrston
Bodham	Ringstede	Walsoke
Byntre	Salthouse	Walpole
Clay jux. Swafham	Sandpette in Branktre	Walsyngham
Crekk	Sharyngton	Watlington cum Watcomb
Haverlond	Sharnton	Wodhall in Helgeye
Honyngham		

Many of these (*e.g.* Kellyng and Sharyngton) are of a very early date, but there are no complete series.

Of documents of which a series exists, the *Fees of Fines* are perhaps as early as any. A longer account of them than I could give here will be found in the Introduction to the Notes of them about to be published by this Society.

The *Subsidy Rolls*, which were records of the Exchequer, date, for Norfolk, from the 30th Edward I., for the end of whose reign there are six rolls (numbered $\frac{149}{1}$ to $\frac{149}{5}$.)

There is no subsidy roll for Norfolk for the reign of Edward II., but for the 1st Edward III. there is a splendid roll ($\frac{149}{7}$), which, though now imperfect, still contains seventy-two long skins, written on both sides in double columns, giving the names of, on a moderate estimate, 37,000 persons, with the sums at which they were rated, arranged under the villages and towns where they resided.

This roll positively forms a Post-office Directory of the period, and though so long is well worth searching. A still finer one exists for 6 Edward III. ($\frac{149}{9}$), extending over eighty-one membranes, and from this date the Subsidy Rolls are as plentiful as they are valuable.

The *Coram Rege* (Crown Pleas), *Quo Warranto*, *Assize*, *Coroners*, and *Gaol Delivery*, *Rolls*,¹ which are generally taken as one class, and to which the references run consecutively in order of date, form also another extremely valuable series.

The Crown Pleas contain, besides inquiries relating to crown property, all manner of entries relating to criminal matters, as presentments of illegal rescues, sudden deaths, murders, duels, false money, &c., &c., and afford most curious pictures of the inner life of our county in bygone times.

Here, for example, are found particulars of the great riot on Tombland between the monks and citizens, with the names of those hung for participation in it.

The earliest for Norfolk are three rolls of Crown Pleas for 34 Henry III., (1250) containing respectively 26, 35, and 1 membranes. In all there would seem to be some 125 rolls, (containing an immense number of skins) exclusively relating to our county.

The names of most of the other rolls of this class sufficiently

¹ All these rolls belong to the Crown side of the Queen's Bench.

explain their contents. The Gaol Delivery Rolls, so called because the criminals were delivered over to the jurors to receive their fate from their hands, usually begin by stating the fact of the prisoner's capture, and then give the reasons for it, (something in the same way as in our present indictments,) and the record of the prisoner putting himself upon the country, and conclude with the verdict, and sentence if he were guilty. Among them are very many amusing and interesting entries, two instances of which will suffice.

In the roll for 1 Edward II. is the trial of John de Trows and Alice his wife, who were arrested by William Gilbert and John Starling, constables of North Wold, for a suspicion they had against them, "p eo qd vixerunt in magnis ⁊ voluptuosis expū ultra facultatē bonoꝝ suoꝝ." But the clerk and the jury seemed to think this suspicion not sufficient, for the entry concludes "et qz causa captōis n̄lla est, Et etiam jur⁹ sup hoc examinati dicūt qd in n̄llo male godunt⁹ Id̄ p̄de Johes ⁊ Alic̄ eant quieti."

In the 6th Edward II. John the son of Peter, of East Lexham, is charged with killing John Ballok. It seems the latter had stolen two pieces of bacon from Emma, the wife of William Rooks, in East Lexham, who had raised a hue and cry (hutesium) after him, whereupon he fled and was pursued by Fitz Peter into the open field (campo) of the same town, where he turned on his pursuer with a drawn sword and insulted him; upon which Fitz Peter hit him over the head with a hatchet, and, as the roll concisely puts it, the said John Ballok "statim objit." Fitz Peter being acquitted for what we should call justifiable homicide.

The very important evidence that the thousands of thousands of entries, similar to the above, give on the domestic life and habits of our ancestors, at a period when history is nearly silent about them, cannot be overvalued.

Among the *Miscellaneous Records of the Chancery* are many relating to our county, e. g.—

- 2nd Rep. of Dep. Keeper of Public Records, p. 57. } Roll of names of those assigned to protect the sea and maritime parts of (i. a.) Norfolk, and of the names of the knights of the shires (4 memb.)
- „ 61. Inquisitions de prisus taken at Lynne, &c., 3 Edward II. (3 memb.)
- „ 61. Names of those having a knight's fee who were not knights in 6 Edward II.
- „ 65. Certificates of number of ships in Norfolk and Suffolk (4 memb.)
- 3rd Rep., p. 189. Roll of names of knights who held in capite in Norfolk and Suffolk in 45 Edward III.

Petition of the Bishop of Norwich to the King, and roll of the names of ecclesiastics in his diocese who have not paid the subsidy in 46 Edward III. (2 memb.)

- „ 191. Certificates of guilds taken 12 Ric. II., two bundles containing 137 and 263 membranes, very many of which relate to Norfolk.

A paper on these very interesting records will be found at p. 105 of this volume.

- „ 192. Knights' fees of the Duke of Norfolk, 1 Henry IV. (22 memb.)
- „ 193. Names of the creditors of John Duke of Norfolk in 10 Henry VI. (5 memb.)
- „ 202. A few proofs of age; about half-a-dozen relating to Norfolk.

Another species of Chancery Records are the *Chancery Records in Filaciis*, comprising royal and other letters, petitions, &c., which have been not unaptly termed the State Papers of early history.

Of these very valuable documents, excellent calendars will be found at pp. 140 et seq. of 4th Rep. ; pp. 61 et seq. of 5th Rep. ; pp. 88 et seq. of 6th Rep. ; and pp. 239 et seq. of 7th Rep. The following letters refer to Norfolk :—

No. 5, Burnhamthorp ; 15, 85, Clenchwarton ; 122, 248, Robert Fitz Walter, a Crusader ; 395, Church of Sydeston ; 506, 507, Elyngham ; 557, St. Benet's at Holme ; 736, Intwood ; 746, Yarmouth ; 1092, Dispute between Tanners and Shoemakers of Norwich ; 1174, 1180, 1240, Abbot of Creke ; 1487, 1570, Fulwood ; 1731, Folesham and Norton ; 1745-6, Lynn ; 1750, 1784, Wyrham and Crimplesham ; and 2292, complaint against men of Blakeney for despoiling a Fleming of his ship and goods.

Among other miscellaneous documents connected with Norfolk are *Lists of Popish Recusants* in Norwich, which are mentioned in the 5th Report, p. 122 ; *Lists of forfeited Estates*, temp. George I. (p. 97 of same Report) ; a map of *Mushold*, temp. Elizabeth (p. 16 of 3rd Rep.) ; and a Survey of the lands of Thomas Duke of Norfolk, and Philip Earl of Arundel, in Norfolk, Suffolk, and the City of Norwich.

In the *Baga de Secretis*, which is a collection of documents relating to the most important State Trials, are the papers concerning the Trial of the Earl of Surrey, Kett's Rebellion, the forcible entry of King's Lynn by Sir Robert Dudley, and the Trial of the Duke of Norfolk.

Relating to Conventual and Collegiate Establishments,² there are three series of records, the first being the *Acknowledgments of Royal Supremacy*, taken in 1534. The acknow-

² Among the Miscellanea is the *Account of a Steward of an Abbey* (Brancaster and elsewhere in Norfolk) vide p. 245 of 9th Report.

I have a note, I know not whence, that there are books of charters and confirmations of grants to several religious houses in Norfolk in the Bishop of Ely's library.

Among the Exchequer Records are several bundles of papers relating to Bromholme Abbey and Crabhouse Priory, and some Account Rolls, Accounts of Household Expenses, and a Compotus of the Abbot of Wymondham Abbey.

ledgments relating to the following Norfolk Monasteries, &c., still exist.

Attleburgh	Ingham	Rushworth
Beeston	Norwich, Cathedral	Thetford
Buckenham	„ St. Giles and St.	Thomeston
Cokesford	„ Mary Hosp.	Waburn
Hempton	„ St. John Baptist	Westacre
Hicklinge	„ Chapel in the Field	Wymondham
Holme	Pentney	

The second are the *Deeds of Surrender*, of which there remain those relating to—

Heryngby College	Norwich, St. Mary in the Field College
Lynn, Augustine Friars	Rushworth College
„ Black Friars	Shouldham
„ Grey Friars	Thetford, Augustine Friars
„ White Friars	„ Black Friars
„ St. John the Baptist Hospital	„ Priory
Norwich Cathedral	Walsoken, Guild of St. Trinity
„ St. Giles' Hospital	Westacre

But to the topographer perhaps the third class, viz., the *Particulars for Grants*, are more interesting than the other two. They are dated in the reigns of Henry the Eighth and Elizabeth, and consist of particulars of monastic estates surrendered at the dissolution of the monasteries, in many cases comprising descriptions of the sites of abbies and monasteries themselves.

An excellent calendar of these, but unluckily arranged under the names of those persons who were the proposed purchasers of the property in question, and not under the localities themselves, will be found at pp. 148 et seq. of the 9th Rep., and pp. 223 et seq. of the 10th Rep.

Two classes of documents relating to the struggle between the King and the Commonwealth, are of especial use, one to the topographer, the other to the genealogist.

The first is the *Parliamentary Surveys* taken between 1649 and 1653, which relate to sales ordered in 1649 of the honors, manors, and lands belonging to King Charles I., his

Queen, and Prince, and of the fee-farm rents formerly payable to the Crown and the Duchies of Lancaster and Cornwall.

The inventory of such as relate to Norfolk will be found at pp. 59 et seq., and p. 81 of 8th Rep. It takes up one hundred and seventy-five pages of the calendar, and is arranged alphabetically in places.

The second is the *Royalist Composition Papers*, of which there are many volumes, containing statements of the estates, ages, families, &c., of royalists, and petitions for the release, &c., of their property.

There are two series of excellent modern Indices Nominum to both.

The certificates of sales and the inventories of *Church Goods* taken in the reign of Edward the Sixth³ are, I need hardly say, of the greatest importance to the local antiquary, for, apart from the interesting accounts which the inventories of 6 Edward VI. give of the Church furniture and ornaments, the certificates taken in the first year of the same reign in nearly every case give details, often of the highest interest, of repairs or alterations done to the parish church with the money provided by the sale of Church plate.

As the Church Goods of Norfolk have already formed the subject of four communications in this Society's Original Papers, I need not here enlarge on them.

Among other ecclesiastical documents are Indices of *Institutions* to benefices, extending from 1615 to 1816, all embracing Norfolk, which give the names of the patrons, and of the clergy presented, with the date of their institutions; Extracts from the *King's Books*, to which there are three volumes of Indices (pp. 25 to 67 of vol. 3 relating to Norfolk); The *Liber Decimarum*, which was compiled in 1719, and which contains at pp. 1 to 51 of vol. I. a list of benefices in Norfolk, showing

³ Vide 7th Rep., pp. 322 et seq., and 9th Rep., p. 240.

“the true value of small livings not exceeding £50 per annum, as they were lately returned into Her Majesty’s Court of Exchequer in order to their discharge from payment of first-fruits and tenths,” is arranged in deaneries, the left page of each folio containing benefices which were charged, and the right page those which were discharged from first-fruits and tenths; *Books of Compositions for Tithes*, of which there are very good modern lists, giving in parallel columns the parishes in which and the names of the persons by whom compositions for tithes were made, and the date. Though not alphabetical, they are easy to search, and extend from 1536 to 1659, and are very productive of information, genealogical and otherwise; and *Tithe Suits* enrolled in the Exchequer of Pleas (vide 2nd Rep., p. 250. There are nine Norfolk Suits.)

Relating to general history there is an immense number of documents concerning Norfolk, bound up in the many thousand volumes of our *Domestic State Papers*.

Calendars of these State Papers have been already published, embracing the years between 1509 and 1518, 1547 and 1590, 1603 and 1635, 1660 and 1667; and many others are in active preparation. From these Calendars the Norfolk documents can easily be selected.

Of the varied and valuable information to be obtained from them, a few extracts taken haphazard from my note book will give the best idea.

Dom. S. P. Eliz., vol. 73, p. 15, is a letter from Sir Thomas Woodhouse and Henry Woodhouse, Esq., to Cecil, dated 3 May, 1571, reporting how they have stayed for the Queen’s service every ship above thirty tons and every mariner then remaining in Norfolk and Suffolk, viz., 145 ships, thirty-six whereof were in port, the rest on their voyage to Ireland and elsewhere, and 2268 mariners, whereof about 600 were at home. The names of the mariners

(twenty-two pp.) are given, arranged under the ports to which they belonged.

Do. Elizth., vol. 75, p. 15, is a petition from the inhabitants of Yarmouth and the coast against the pirates. It states that the petitioners are "greatly hindered and utterly spoiled by pirates that are of late greatly increased on the North Seas, whereby no merchants or fishermen trafficking or fishing in those seas or on our coasts shall escape their hands," not only to the utter undoing of them, their poor wives and children, but sometimes "throwen over the bourde," threatened to be hanged and nailed under hatches, &c. The petitioners pray for two small ships of war to be sent for their protection.

Dom. S. P. Eliz., vol. 77, No. 58, is a copy of the "Norwiche Booke of Orders for the Straungers," dated 20 April, 1571, containing fourteen quarto pages replete with interest concerning the "Duche and Wallowne nations," who "shall kepe none open shops," neither expose "their wares in open show to sell, but shall have a lattyce of a yerde depe before their windows;" shall "only sell to their own countrymen," and shall "not buy sheep skins without licences," &c.

Do. Eliz., vol. 78, No. 10, is a declaration and certificate of the strangers and aliens in the borough and liberty of Great Yarmouth, and No. 13 of the same volume is the like of Lynn.

Do. Eliz., vol. 77, No. 55, is a Bill for the establishment of seven banks in the cities of London, York, Norwich, &c., which might lend on pledges at 6 per cent.

Do. James I., vol. 7, p. 20, tells us how the plague was brought from Edinburgh to Yarmouth by a Scotch bark in 1604. Page 32 in the same volume relates to a case of witchcraft in Norfolk, and in the next vol. (8) is the manumission of a Norfolk bondsman.

Do. Charles I., vol. 96, No. 46, lets us into the particulars of one of the grievances which made our county adhere so

stanchly to the Commonwealth during the Civil War. It is a very curious letter from the Mayor of Norwich (dated 19 March, 1627) protesting against the quartering of five companies of Irish soldiers in Norwich, on the poverty and distress of which city, and the discontented condition of the multitude of its poor people, and the general decay of its trade and manufacture, he pitifully enlarges, as also on the peril of the city, which he states consisted for the most part of reeded houses.

He bitterly complains of the outrages and disorders of these soldiers and their officers, who choose the market days to march about the city, "utterly terrifying the country people, and with uncivill language spoken threaten to assault me the maior, and encourage the soldiers to kill the sheriff;" also that they use stabbing knives, and will not be lodged at the best inns in Norwich.

There are also many papers relating to the musters and trainbands, which throw great light on the preparations made in our county in the reign of Elizabeth to resist the Spanish Armada. Most of these I have extracted and am preparing for publication.

Of the *Inquisitions Post Mortem*, well known to the merest tyro in genealogy, two series exist, viz., those of the Chancery and the Exchequer.

Extremely incorrect calendars, nominally of all the inquisitions from Henry III. to Richard III., have been published in four volumes folio, but give only the names of the deceased, and not their heirs.

Two volumes, however, entitled *Calendarium Genealogicum*, were published last year, embracing the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., which give the heirs of the deceased; and these will, I hope, be continued throughout the whole series.

A Calendar of the Inquisitions Post Mortem for the reigns

Henry VII., Henry VIII., Edward VI., and Elizabeth, will be found in the second Appendix to the 10th Report. To so much of this calendar as relates to Norfolk and Suffolk I have compiled an Index Nominum, which I hope to publish in the *East Anglian*.

II. Of Domesday Book, the earliest specimen of my second class, which may be said to be made up of it, of the *Liber Niger* and *Liber Ruber Scaccarii* and of the Pipe Rolls, I need say nothing.

The *Liber Niger Scaccarii*, which was compiled about 1166-7 on the occasion of the marriage of the king's daughter, contains in the Norfolk division of it the returns of

The Bishop of Norwich	William de Albini	Walter de Bec
The Honor of St. Edmund	William de Wormegai	Robert Fitz Walter
The Abbot of Holme	William de Kolechereche	and
Hugh de Bigod	Hubert de Rye	Odo de Dammartin

who were then the great owners of lands in capite in Norfolk, and who certified how many knights' fees they held of the king, and the names of the knights who held of them in sub-infeudation. It was printed in extenso by Hearne in the first volume of his *Miscellanea* (London, 1771.)

The *Red Book of the Exchequer* gives the names of tenants per baroniam, temp. Henry II., and large collections, chiefly made by Alexander de Swereford, from the Pipe Rolls of Scutages levied between 2 Henry II. and 13 John: it has never been printed.

The *Pipe Rolls* are perhaps, all things considered, the most interesting series of records extant, being in effect the budgets and balance sheets of the ancient Chancellors of the Exchequer. They comprise yearly accounts of all the taxes collected in the different counties of England, of fines, reliefs, escuages, &c., paid by the tenants in capite (whereby the descents of their estates can easily be traced), of sums paid to the king for having justice, &c., and on the other hand, all

manner of deductions are made for monies paid for the king's use and by his order, for building castles and prisons, and in charity, &c.

For each year there is a great brown roll, broad, long, and unwieldy, containing, as a general rule, as many skins as counties, though sometimes, when the year's matter more than fills both sides of the skin, there is what is called a residuum carried over to some other partly vacant skin.

These rolls⁴ are mostly in good preservation, and the writing is clear and regular, but the words are abbreviated in the most extraordinary way. The series from Richard I. is tolerably perfect. Several, viz., those for 31 Henry I., 2, 3, and 4 Henry II., 1 Richard I., and 3 John, have been printed.

The following notes will give some idea of the topographical and other information to be gleaned from them.

- 14 Hen. II. Et p munitiōe castelli de Norwiċ x^{li} p br^o B.
 15 „ Et in opat eccle de Hulmo x^{li} p br^o B.
 17 „ Et p ccc 7 xx Baconib; aussis in ex^ocitu
 Hybnie xxvj^{li} 7 xvj^s 7 vj^d.
 Et p facient pontib; 7 cleir^o 7 in alio apparatu
 Navii vj^{li} 7 v^s 7 v^d.
 Et p manumot 7 apparatu eaꝝ xiv^s iv^d.
 Et p 1 Bovana 1 m̄ et p 1 navicula ad oves
 adaq^andas v^s 7 iij^d.
 32 „ Josce Barlibred Judæus Turnet Jud; de
 Nordwic redd̄ com̄p de mm marċ p h̄nda
 Residentia . . . in Anglia p ê benevolentia
 Regis. In th̄ro cc m.
 20 „ Philip de Hastingġ xx^{li} ad tenend̄ milites in
 cast̄ de Norwic^o p p̄cept Com̄ Willi q̄
 Fland̄r fuēr ad Bungheia et ā Framingeh
 p b̄r B.

⁴ There are duplicates of these rolls, called "Chancellor's Rolls," from 11 Henry II. which have been sent to the British Museum.

III. On my third class of documents, which consists of the records of the three Common Law Courts and of the Court of Chancery, I must touch but very briefly.

Those belonging to the Court of Common Pleas (formerly called the "Common Bench") have a peculiar interest to the topographer from the fact of that court originally having an exclusive jurisdiction over real property. To this court belong the Feet of Fines, already mentioned, as do the "*De Banco Rolls*,"⁵ which contain the pleadings and judgments in actions relating to lands, often giving long descents, heirships, &c. Since the 25th Elizabeth they have been divided into two separate classes—the *Placita Communia* and *Placita Terræ*.

Unluckily, the entries as they came in were written down one after the other, without the slightest arrangement either in counties or names, and the bulk of the rolls is so immense that it is vain for anyone to hope to search them without sacrificing a lifetime.

Some idea of the mass of the material may be had from the fact that there are 151 rolls, containing 102,566 membranes or skins, of the *Placita Communia* alone for the single reign of Henry VIII.; and references to skin 251 of the *De Banco Rolls* of Hilary Term, 5 Edward III., and to skin 600 of Michaelmas Term, 22 and 23 Elizabeth, lie before me as I write.

Selections, perhaps I should rather say specimens, of these rolls have been printed under the title "*Abbreviatio Placitorum*," extending between the reigns of Richard I. and Edward II.

Before quitting the records of the Court of Common Pleas, I may mention that there are calendars or lists of *Deeds enrolled* in that court from the 20th Henry VII. An Index to those relating to Norfolk, from 1504 to 1629, I printed in the *East Anglian*, vol. ii., p. 251.

⁵ On the older of these rolls many charters are enrolled in extenso.

Of the Rolls belonging to the "Crown side" of the Queen's Bench I have already spoken. Those relating to ordinary actions belong to the "Plea side."⁶

From the *Judgment Rolls of the Exchequer of Pleas* there are twenty MS. volumes of very valuable extracts extending from 1293 to 1820, to which there is a good Index.

Belonging to the later equitable jurisdiction of this court there are immense numbers of bills, answers, requisitions, and depositions (vide 20th Rep. p. 24.)

The *Originalia Rolls* of the Exchequer contain entries of all such grants from the Crown enrolled on the patent and other rolls as reserved any rent or service to the Crown. Abstracts of these rolls for the reigns of Henry III. to Edward III. are printed under the title, "Rotulorum Originalium in Curia Scaccarii Abbreviatio."

The *Testa de Nevill*, a record of this Court, does not form a series or part of a series, but consists of returns made in the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., of knights' fees, &c., and has been printed at length.

The *Hundred Rolls*, another record of the Exchequer, consisting of Inquisitions taken under a Commission dated 1274, may be broadly stated to be the results of Inquisitions into all rights of manor, warren, chase, fishery, toll, market, &c., claimed at the date of the Commission, which was issued to put an end to various extortions and tyrannies which had then sprung up. These rolls have been printed in extenso.

A sequel to these Hundred Rolls were the *Placita de Quo Warranto*, temp. Edward I., II., and III., which were the trials ordered to test the justice of the claims mentioned in the Hundred Rolls.

⁶ I may here mention that from the early part of the reign of Henry VIII. there are what are called Doggett (q. d. Docket) Rolls belonging to each of the three Courts containing short entries of the Pleadings, Judgments, &c., which are infinitely easier to search than the bulky Judgment Rolls themselves. These Doggett Rolls were afterwards turned into Books, the Doggett Books of the Exchequer, which are complete from 1st Elizabeth, being the earliest.

Space will hardly allow me to do more than mention the different records of the Chancery.⁷

The *Close Rolls*, containing mandates, letters, and writs, sent in the King's name in the form of "closed" letters—whence their name; the *Patent Rolls*, letters patent of a more public character; the *Fine Rolls*—upon which the writs of diem clausit, of seizin on heirs doing their fealty or homage for the lands of the deceased, of dower, and of license for widows to remarry, are generally enrolled—are of the greatest value, often giving information not to be found in the Inquisitions Post Mortem; and the *Charter Rolls*, enrolments of all manner of Royal grants, are among the most important of the Rolls.

On the great value and interest of the documents relating to the *Suits in Chancery*, which have been preserved from the fourteenth century to the present time, I will not trust myself to dilate, lest it should be thought that I, as a lawyer, were but indulging in a lawyer's generic love of an equity suit. I may, however, mention with feelings of regretful admiration, that the bare calendar of them for the reign of Elizabeth only, takes up three folio volumes closely printed.

Among other Indices relating to these suits are the "Bill Books," which are perfect from the reign of Elizabeth, in which the Christian and surnames of all parties and a short account of the Bill are given, each volume being divided into counties, and the Indexes to the "Bills and Answers," "Depositions," and "Decrees," all of which date from the same period.

With these Chancery Suits, hoping that I have not wearied my readers, I must now end these notes, anomalous though it may seem to the non-legal reader, to connect an ending with proceedings traditionally infinite.

⁷ I have already referred to the "Miscellaneous Chancery Records," and the "Chancery Records in Filaciis."