

SOME ACCOUNT OF THE BUSINESS OF ALDERMAN
EDWARD BACKWELL, GOLDSMITH AND BANKER
IN THE 17TH CENTURY.

BY F. G. HILTON PRICE, F.S.A.

In giving a sketch of the business of this goldsmith and banker, I regret to find that very little is known of his antecedents, further than that he was descended from an ancient family of the name, who were settled at Backwell in Somersetshire. The first information we can glean of him is that he was a goldsmith of high repute keeping running cashes in Lombard Street early in the days of the Commonwealth; how much earlier his business existed we are at present unable to state.

His shop was at the south end of Exchange Alley, next Lombard Street, and after the Great Fire we have more authentic evidence of its position. From a deed of sale, a copy of which I have been favoured with by Mr. T. C. Noble, who possesses the original, it is there stated that Alderman Backwell's house was known by the name and sign of the "Unicorne," being situated upon the north side of Lombard Street

between y^e Grasshopper, the bank of Messrs. Martin and Co., and a house then known as the "Whitehorse," on the west side of it, which is now probably No. 70. This house was, in 1702, in the occupation of James St. John, and was shortly afterwards in the possession of Messrs. Knight and Jackson, bankers. This tenement backed upon Garraway's coffee-house on the north. Before proceeding with my account, it may interest many to know the particulars of the house as narrated in the deed before cited: viz.—

That messuage or tenement with the appurtenances situate and being in Lombard Street, in the Parish of St. Mary Woolnoth, London, commonly known or called by the name or sign of the Unicorne, now or late in the tenure or occupation of Henry Lambe or his assigns, abutting on a messuage now in the possession of Andrew Stone called y^e Grasshopper on the East, another messuage late in the possession of James St. John called y^e Whitehorse on the West, upon Lombard Street aforesaid on the South, and upon part of Garraway's Coffee-house on the North. Which messuage or tenement mentioned to contain these several rooms following (that is to say) a cellar on the first story, a shop and back shop, and with drawing-room on the second story, a dining-room, a little parlor and kitchen on the third story, two chambers on the fourth story, four garret chambers on the fifth story, and a little room or turrett upon the leads over the same, &c.

It would appear from the foregoing account that the premises in the basement of the house were used as the strong rooms, and that the shop was on the ground floor, for such is the interpretation I am inclined to put upon the meaning of the term—first story. It is so far evident that all the lower part of the house was used for business purposes, otherwise

we should not find the kitchen on the second story.

This house was no doubt considered to be very extensive and perfect as a house of business. The Alderman made some very important alterations at the back of his bank in 1663—which we gather from the following entry in Pepys' diary on the 3rd July in that year:—

Thence to the Change, and meeting Sir J. Minnes there, he and I walked to look upon Backwell's design of making another alley from his shop through over against the Exchange door, which will be very noble and quite put down the other two.

Granger gives the following character of Backwell:—

He was a banker of great ability, industry, integrity, and very extensive credit. With such qualifications he, in a trading nation, would, in the natural event of things, have made a fortune, except in such an age as that of Charles the Second, when the laws were overborne by perfidy, violence, and rapacity; or in an age when bankers become gamesters, instead of merchant adventurers; when they affect to live like princes, and are with their miserable creditors drawn into the prevailing vortex of luxury. Backwell carried on his business in the same shop which was afterwards occupied by Child.

As to the character of Alderman Backwell I will not offer any comments, further than to substantiate what is above written—as from Pepys's Diary the same impression is given of him—but I entirely deny that he ever occupied the “same shop which was afterwards occupied by Child,” as it is well known the Alderman carried on his trade at the Unicorn in Lombard Street,

and Child at the Marygold in Fleet Street, at the same time. Child's daughter married one of Backwell's sons, and took over many of his customers upon his failing, together with his ledgers, which may be the reason of the assertion.

In a letter of Horace Walpole to George Montagu, Esq., December 14th, 1769, he says:—

If you retain any connections with Northampton I should be much obliged to you if you would procure from thence a print of Alderman Backwell. It is valuable for nothing but its rarity, and is not to be met with but there. I would give eight or ten shillings rather than not have it.

This letter proves, that, among most other matters, Walpole was interested in Backwell; he might have been aware that some of his ancestors kept account with him.

I give a copy of a print of one of these portraits in the beginning of this paper.

Edward Backwell was elected Alderman of the Ward of Bishopsgate on the 31st January, 1657. Very little is known of him in the civic capacity of Alderman, as during those troublous times men were frequently elected and did not serve for political or other reasons.

The first mention of Backwell that I have met with was in the extracts from the State papers, which are quoted by Mr. H. W. Henfrey in his excellent work "Numismata Cromwelliana." I make a few excerpts from that work as bearing upon the subject, and going far to prove that Mr. Backwell was in high position and reputation as a banker in the year 1656. In some

of the State Papers his name appears jointly occasionally with Sir Thomas Viner, another very eminent goldsmith. I do not consider they were in partnership together, but simply that they undertook large contracts for the Commonwealth jointly. In another place I have given a description of Sir Thomas Viner and of his son, Sir Robert, who was also a celebrated Lord Mayor.

From "Numismata Cromwelliana":—

The Council's intentions of using bullion from Portugal, and of coining it in the Tower, were altered by subsequent orders. It was next purposed to make use of bullion supplied by Edward Backwell, a goldsmith and banker of London, as we learn from another order of the Council:—

Thursday, 11th September, 1656, a.m.—Whereas it was ordered on the 19th day of Aug^t. last, y^t a quantity of Portugall money to the value of two thousand pounds sterl^s should be coyned in his Highness' Mint, at y^e Tower, by Peter Blondeau; Ordered, That, instead thereof, two thousand pounds of y^e bullion that is to (be) brought in by Mr. Backwell be coyned by the sayd Mr. Blondeau.—(Page 384, Entry Book, No. 105.)

Ordered, That for accomodateing Mr. Peter Blondeau in coyning two thousand pounds, p^t of the Bullion that shalbe brought into the Mynt by Mr. Edward Backwell, the Wardens of the Mynt, at the Tower, doe putt the sayd Peter Blondeau in poss'ion of that house in the Tower, whercin M^{sieur} Briott did form'ly worke; And that the sayd M^{sieur} Blondeau be authorized to make use of such Forges, Toolcs, and Utensills, as are already in the s'd House, and of such other Toolcs and Instrum^{ts} in the Tower as are necessary or usefull for his Coyning of y^e sayd money; and Mr. Symon, y^e Graver of his Highness Mynt and Seales, is authorized and required to prepare the Dice, wth such stamps and Inscriptiõns as shalbe thought fitting."—(Page 385, Entry Book, No. 105.)

In Feb. 1656—the Two thousand pounds value of Spanish money, w^{ch} lately came from Portsmouth, & for w^{ch} S^r Thomas Vynor and Mr. Backwell have contracted wth the State, be deliv'ed to Mr. Peter Blondeau for coinage into the milled money with Cromwell's head.

The Protector and his Council made a contract with Sir Thomas Viner and Edward Backwell, goldsmiths of London, by which the whole of the Spanish prize bullion was disposed of to these merchants at fixed rates. On the 31st October Viner and Backwell made this agreement, and they state, in a Petition of the 6th January, 1656-7, that before the latter date they had paid £130,000 into the Exchequer on account of this bullion.

The greater part of the silver was melted and assayed at the expense of the contractors, Viner and Backwell, who afterwards had it coined into English money at the Tower Mint, also at their own charge; but a small portion was exported. For the accommodation of a large sum paid into the Exchequer immediately on the arrival of the bullion, the Government allowed the contractors a profit of one farthing an ounce on the silver, besides allowance for waste in the melting, &c. See Henfrey's Numismata Cromwelliana.

The usual rate of interest charged by Alderman Backwell in the days of the Commonwealth was 6 per cent., but this varied much from time to time, as at the present day, as occasionally it is shown that he only charged at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and at others as much as 7 and even 10 per cent. was debited for money. As an example the following is taken from one of his ledgers.

for interest of Mr. ffrost's 100 lb. from 4th
 March, 1657, to the 04th March, 1658 006 : 00 : 00

It would appear that a banker's business at this period was not restricted to goldsmithry and money, for in 1658, in the account of one Vincent Delabar, he is credited by "charges and provision of 356 elephants' teeth as per your bill" *ib.* 074 : 10 : 06.

This astute alderman was paymaster and treasurer of the Dunkirk garrison, in fact, all the money expended in that town was supplied by Backwell by order of the Exchequer, and he likewise had through his hands the onerous and profitable affair of receiving the money for the sale of that town to the French.

During the period of the Protectorate he was usually paid by Exchequer tallies, but in February 1659, a very unusual mode of receiving payment is recorded in his books, viz., "Of the Committee of Parliament by old plate, 1529 : ii : 03."

It will be seen from the following bills which I give *in extenso* that the ordinary price of silver in Oliver Cromwell's time was 5*s.* 6*d.* and 5*s.* 7*d.* per ounce.

The heading of the first bill I opine to be a mistake, as there does not appear to have been a Viscount Faulconbridge; it is probably intended for Thomas Belaysye, 2nd Viscount Fauconberg, who married secondly 18th Nov., 1657, at Hampton Court, Mary, daughter of the Protector Cromwell. His lordship was made one of the Council of State, and sent the next year, by his father-in-law, with a complimentary message to the Court of Versailles. This was the only employment Lord Fauconberg had under the usurper;

for, as Lord Clarendon relates, “his domestic delights were lessened every day; he plainly discovered that his son’s, Fauconberg, heart was set upon an interest destructive to his; and grew to hate perfectly.”

Del ^d . to y ^e Right Hono ^{ble} . y ^e Lord Viscount falconbridge, viz.:				
1658.		lb.	s.	d.
Dec. 14.—A doz. of Sweete meat spoons,	5oz. 7dwt., at 5s. 1d. p. oz. & 14d.			
	a p ^r . for y ^e making	-	-	002 01 03
Mar. 9.—2 Eare rings of gold		-	-	000 05 06
1659.				
Mar. 30.—A doz. of frute Dishes weg. 491 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz.	at 5s. 8d. p. oz.	-	-	139 06 07
	For graving 12 Arms w th Crownetts			
	verie large	-	-	001 04 00
Aprill 11.—A doz. of Trencher plates, the big st	w ^d 215 : 14 at 5 : 6 p. oz.	-	-	059 06 03
	6 lesser Trencher plates 97 oz. 3 dwt.			
	at 5s. 6d. per oz.	-	-	026 14 03
	A peper box & musterd pott & spoones wey. 17 oz. 01 dwt. 12 grs.			
	at 5s. 2d. p. oz. & 26 fashon	-	-	005 14 03
	A Suger box, 45 oz. 17 dwt. 12 grs.			
	at 5s. 7d. p. oz.	-	-	012 16 00
	2 Poringers, 21 : 09 at 5s. 7d. p. oz.			005 19 09
	3 Tumblers, 27 : 18 at 5s. 7d. p. oz.			007 15 09
	A Fish ure, 36 : 14 at 5s. 6d. p. oz.			010 01 10
	A Cann, 39 : 13 : 12 at 5s. 4d. p. oz.			010 11 07
	for boyling & burnishing 4 bottles & mending one bottle	-	-	000 08 00
	for graving 32 Armes w th Crownetts & palmes at 18d. A peece	-	-	002 08 00
		<u>£284 13 00</u>		

Lord Jones, D^r. to E. Backwell.

1658.		lb.	s.	d.
Sep. 5.—In gold	- - - -	040	00	00
1658.				
Jan. 20.—one fruit Dish 27 oz. at 5s. 6d.	-	007	08	06
for boyleing and burnishing a fruit dish and Caudle Cup and cover	-	000	01	00
Jan. 25.—ffour fruit Dishes 126 oz. 2 dwt. at 5s. 6d.	- - - -	034	12	06
feb. 18.—A deep bason—44.18 oz. at 5s. 6d.	-	012	07	00
for graueing 12 Armes	- - -	000	09	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		094	18	00
Rec ^d . a possett pott 55 oz. 04 dwt. at 5s. 1d.	- - - -	014	00	07
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		£080	17	05
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

1656.

Ditto D^r. viz.:

Sept. 5.—for Exr. of 40 lb. in gold	- -	003	00	00
for Int. of 1000 lb. May '57 to January	- - -	037	00	00
for Int. of 40 lb. for 2½ years	-	006	00	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		£046	00	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

1658.—His Hignes Richard Lord Protector

D^r. to Edward Backwell.

ffor the loane of plate to entertaine the ffrench Ambassador	- - -	004	00	00
ffor a Trencher salt cost	- - -	000	10	00
ffor 6 meat forkes to Mr. Kinros	-	002	08	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		£006	18	00
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

Barrington, Esq^r., Auditor to his Highnes,
D^r. to Edward Backwell.

1657.	lb.	s.	d.
March 25.—ffor 15 lb. in gold - - -	015	00	00
25.—Paid Mr. Christopher Lovett -	050	00	00
ffor a paire of rare chast flagons, 74 oz. 07 dwts. at 5s. 6d. -	020	08	11
	<u>085</u>	<u>08</u>	<u>11</u>

An accompt of moneyes due from the State to Edward Backwell, not comprehended in the Dunkirke Accompt, viz^t.:—

1657.	lb.	s.	d.
March 09.—ffor 2 chaines of gold, one for the Envoy of the Prince Palatine of the Rhine, and the other to the Resident of Portugall - - -	202	15	00
1658.			
May 26.—ffor 59 watermen's badges -	347	06	00
June 24.—ffor a warrant upon Mr. ffrost from Oliver Lord Protector for 16 loads of hay and 230 spars with freight and other expenses d'd the ffort of Mardike 104lb. of w ^{ch} hath been paid 50lb. to rest	054	00	00
September 1.— Paid Mr. Dunbar for a jewell given y ^e Envoy from the ffrench King - - -	350	00	00
ffor interest of this to the ix th of March, 1659, from y ^e 6 th of July, 1658, y ^e time y ^e money was disburst - - -	035	03	00
October 09.—ffor a warrant upon Mr. ffrost from Richard Lord Protector			

	lbs.	s.	d.
for 3 Load of hay and 40 cobs of pease did the fort of Markike the sume of - - -	037	10	00
ffor the ffashion of 1,000 lb. in Plate ix th March, 1659 -	090	00	00
	<u>iii6 : 14 : 05</u>		

In the foregoing account there is an entry under date of September for a jewell to the French Envoy. It may be a matter of interest to give verbatim the words of the Privy Seale to Edward Backwell for that jewel. It is as follows:—

Richard, by y^e Grace of God Lord Protector of the Comonwealth of England, Scotland & Ereland and y^e Dominions & Territoryes thereunto belonging, to the Com^{rs} of our Treãry and other the Officers and Ministers of our Exchequer att Westm^r to whom our L^{tes} shall apperteyne and to eury of them greeting. According to the advice of our privy Counsell expressed in their order of the second of September in this last yeare of our Lord God one thousand six hundred fifty eight, Our will and pleasure is, and wee hereby command you that out of such our Treasure as is or shall be remain^s in the receipt of our said Excheq^r you forthwith pay or cause to bee paid unto Edward Backwell, citizen and goldsmith of our Citty of London, or his assignes the sume of three hundred and fifty pounds of Lawfull mony of England in sattisfaction of three hundred forty-five pounds by him disbursed on the sixth of July last past for a Jewell given by our most dear and entirely beloved father Oliver, late Lord Protector, of glorious memory, upon envoye unto him sent with a letter from his Maj^{tie} the french King signifieng the surrender for Dunkirke, and five pounds for his paines, of the said Edward Backwell, together with the Jewell for the said three hundred forty & five pounds, untill the said three hundred & fifty pounds shall be paid and y^t without accompt impressed or other charge

to bee therefore sett upon him, and for soe doeing this o^r L^{tes} or the enrollem^t thereof shall be your sufficient warrant & discharge in this behalfe. Given under our privy seale at our pallace at Westm^r the one and twentieth day of September in the yeare of our Lord one thousand six hundred fifty-eight.

Between the 28th April 1659 and the 28th March 1660 Backwell received from the Exchequer the sum of £43,067 5s. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. for the maintenance of the garrison of Dunkirk; on the 7th May, 1660, his account was audited by the public auditor of the Exchequer, and found correct.

I will now append a copy of a Privy Seale to Alderman Backwell for £3,230 he sent to Dunkirk by order of the Protector Richard Cromwell.

RICHARD, by the Grace of God Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and the Dominions and Territoryes thereunto belonging, to the Com^{rs} of our Treasury and others of the Officers and Ministers of our Exchequer at Westm^r to whom these our L^{tes} shall appertaine and to euery of them greeting. By the advice of our Privy Counsell expressed in their order of the 26 Aprill in the present yeare of our Lord 1659, Our will and pleasure is and wee hereby require and command you, that out of our Treassure as is all shall be remaining (*sic*) in the receipt of your said Exchequer you forthwith sattsify and pay or cause to be paid unto Edward Backwell, Cittizen and Goldsmith of London, or his assignees, the su^me of three thousand two hundred and thirty pounds of lawfull mony of England, in sattsification of the mony by him transmitted to Dunkirk for the supply of o^r garrison there with four hundred pounds by the week for eight months by o^r command, and y^t the said su^me bee soe paid unto him as wee have commanded without accompt imprest or other charge, to be

therefore sett upon him, and for soe doing these our Lres or the Inrollments thereof shall bee yo^r warrants.

Given under o^r Privy Seale at o^r pallace of Westm^r the 25 Aprill, 1659.

Inrolled the 3rd May, 1659.

Inrolled in the Office of the Rolls
the 14 May, 1659.

Judging from the accounts in the old ledgers now in possession of Messrs. Child and Co., Edward Backwell was a goldsmith and banker in a large way of business, and amongst the large number of his customers were those of the Commonwealth of England, the King, the Queen Mother, the Duke of York, the Duchess of Orleans, the Prince Rupert, Prince of Orange, the Earl of Clarendon, Earl of Sandwich, Countess of Castlemaine, Samuel Pepys, The Farmers of the Customs, Excise, Royal Mint, several City Companies, the East India Company, all the other goldsmiths and bankers, large merchants, nobility and gentry—many of which were simply deposit accounts, upon which interest was given at fourteen days' notice, one month's notice, &c. The account of the East India Company was a large one; prior to the year 1670 it appears to have been kept under the name of Michael Dunkin, but in this year the account is headed "East India Company."

This account appears to have been credited by sums of money paid in by merchants, such as Michael Dunkin, G. Rodriquez, John Houblon of Threadneedle Street, Fransia, Peter Barr of Austin Friars, Da Costa, Alderman Bathurst and Co., Claude Hayes of Fenchurch Street, Vanderputt, Alderman

Allington, Frederick and Co. of Old Jewry, &c.; and various bankers, such as G. Snell, Thomas Row, Thomas Kirwood, Sir Robert Vyner, Hinton and Co., &c., &c., paid in their shares of ventures to the East Indies.

The debits were for the most part to the merchants and goldsmiths, and to captains of vessels who undertook the enterprises, and for gold and silver bullion.

To give an idea of the receipts, from March, 1670, to 1671, they amounted to £237,900. During the months of September, October, November, and December in 1670, they amounted to £190,258 5s. 8d., of which sum £175,000 remained in Backwell's hands until the March following, when that sum and more (which had been paid in) was laid out in the purchase of bullion.

The East India Company was in the habit of making the following yearly gifts to Backwell:—

25	pounds	of	pepper.
2	„		nutmegs.
1	„		mace.
1	„		cloves.
1	„		cinnamon.

All the leading goldsmiths keeping running cashes had an account with Backwell, and, from the nature of the accounts I have had the opportunity of examining, I should consider they were for the purposes of clearing.

Shortly after the Restoration Alderman Backwell was accused of fraud, as in the Record Office we find a petition from John Peart and Philip Bell, stating that on the proclamation of August, 1660, they sued

John and Edward Backwell before the Commissioners in the Savoy, for defrauding and concealing vast sums from his Majesty ; but the latter, to prevent proceedings, imprisoned Peart upon a false plea of debt, and offered Bell £300 to forbear to assist him, whereby the said frauds were pardoned. They, therefore, beg an order that the said Backwells pay them for the six years' prosecution (to December, 1666), and self-defence. Peart, it was alleged, could prove that £40,000 a-year of the Crown lands were detained and unlawfully concealed.

This was probably a false accusation, as nothing further was known of it.

A considerable amount of information is culled from the diary of Samuel Pepys, Secretary to the Admiralty, who had a great deal of business with Backwell from time to time, occasionally upon his own account in the way of purchasing plate, &c., but more generally upon behalf of his chief, the Earl of Sandwich, upon public affairs of the Navy, and upon his Lordship's private exigencies.

The first instance of his visiting the Alderman was on the 23rd June, 1660, when he writes, "With him (Chetwind) to London, changing all my Dutch money at Backwell's for English." On the 4th July following, he again "visited Mr. Backwell, the goldsmith, where I took my Lord's £100 in plate for Mr. Secretary Nicholas, and my own piece of plate, being a state dish and cup in chased work for Mr. Coventry, cost me above £19."

Pepys appears to have frequently made presents to various people who served him a good turn—it was

the fashion then to bribe. On the 24th Dec. he writes, "I went and chose a paire of candlesticks to be made ready for me at Alderman Backwell's." On the 27th he called again and found them done. He did not appear to be content with them, for on the 29th Dec. we find the following in his diary:—

Thence to Alderman Backwell's and took a brave state-plate and cup in lieu of the candlesticks that I had the other day, and carried them by coach to my Lords, and left them there.

The next notice of the Alderman in Pepys's Diary is on the 15th April, 1661, when he went to Alderman Backwell's and drew out £200, and laid it up at home. This sum was a little short of half his fortune at that time. It was not at all an uncommon thing for Pepys to get nervous and withdraw his balances from Backwell's, Colvill's, or Stoke's.

In February, 1663, Pepys

Called at Alderman Backwell's, and there changed Mr. Falconer's State cup, that he did give us the other day, for a fair tankard. The cup weighed with the fashion £5 16s., and another little cup that Joyce Norton did give us, 17s., both £6 13s., for which we had a tankard, which came to £6 10s., at 5s. 7d. per oz., and 3s. in money.

10th June, 1661.—By and by, out with Mr. Shepley, Walden, Parliament man for Huntingdon, Rolt, Mackworth, and Ald. Backwell, to a house hard by, to drink Lambeth ale.

12th June.—Having been again to Lambeth to have his morning draught, *went to Whitehall, where I met my Lord, who told me he must have £300 laid out in cloth, to give in Barbary, as presents among the Turkes.*

So on the 13th he went to Alderman Backwell's before he or his servants were up, so went home

again and put on his grey cloth suit and faced white coate, made of one of his wife's pettycoates, the first time he had it on, and so in a riding garbe back again, and spoke with Mr. Shaw at the Alderman's, who offers £300 if my Lord Sandwich pleases to buy this cloth with. So he returned to the wardrobe and got an order from Mr. Creed to imprest so much upon him to be paid by Alderman Backwell. On the 15th he took the £300 home with him from Ald. Backwell's.

A warrant was issued from Southampton House on 5th November, 1661, stating that tallies were struck upon the moiety of excise for the sum of £19,700 in September last, directing that sum to be paid over to Sir John Shaw, Knight, and Edward Backwell, Esq., Treasurer and Paymaster of Dunkirk, to be by them remitted for the supply of the garrison there.

Another privy seal was issued 21st October, 1661, in their favour for £26,156 for the pay of the garrison of Dunkirk. A few days later a similar privy seal was issued for £3,500 for one month's pay of Her Majesty's troops at Mardike. At this time it was thought necessary to increase the strength of the garrison of Dunkirk, and a warrant was issued to Sir Robert Pye to the effect that it should consist of 4,400 soldiers, besides officers, and six troops of horse, consisting of 300 troopers besides officers, the monthly charge whereof together with the pay of the Governor and trained officers, shall be £8,718 13s. 4d. per month of twenty-eight days, which money was to be paid monthly into the hands of Sir John Shaw and Edward Backwell, the Treasurer and Paymaster, to be remitted to the Governor of Dunkirk.

In December, 1661, Backwell was ordered by royal warrant to pay £2,888 4s. for the pay of the Irish Regiment of foot then in Flanders, consisting of ten companies, each company not exceeding fifty men, besides officers, under the command of Lord Taafe at Mardike.

It was found necessary to remit foreign specie to Dunkirk for the use of the garrison, so in April, 1662, we find a royal warrant was issued commanding the officers of the Customs to permit Sir John Shaw and Alderman Backwell to transport such foreign coins as might be necessary free of custom charges.

The sale of Dunkirk was greatly condemned by people of all ranks, but as it was a great expense to maintain, and the Exchequer was usually empty, and in case of a war it was feared by Clarendon that they could not hold it, he therefore advised the King to dispose of it to the French. We have already seen what the cost of its maintenance was. Hume states that the English demanded £900,000 for it, but that it was eventually disposed of for £400,000. This sum can hardly be reconciled with a royal warrant, directing Alderman Backwell to repair to France to receive 2,500,000 livres for the sale of Dunkirk, besides 2,000,000 livres to be paid in Paris, thus making 4,500,000 livres in all, equivalent in our money, taking the livre at the value of a franc, to £180,000.

It is quite possible that Vyner or some other goldsmith had instructions to receive a like sum from the French king, or that the livre was worth more than 10*d.*, as Temple, who was Vyner's head man, told

Pepys that £350,000 sterling of the Harp and Cross money was coined out of the French money, the proceeds of the sale of Dunkirk. He further stated that the king did pawn the French money for £350,000.

As the warrant giving directions to Alderman Backwell for the receipt of the Dunkirk money is of an interesting nature, I give it in full:—

CHARLES R.

Whereas by a Treaty betweene us and our good Brother the Most Christian Kinge wee are to receive two millions of livres, which is to be counted at Paris and from thence carryed to the sea side to be shipped for England in some of our ships for our use, and whereas by the same Treaty Three millions of livres more were to be paid in Two yeares by severall payments, w^{ch} now by a contract made with Mouns. Hering, marchant (and warranted by the Count Destrades) is reduced unto the sume of Two millions & five hundred thousand livres to be paid at Paris and one hundred and fifty-four thousand livres at London w^{ch} is already sermed (?) herewth sume is received in lieu of the whole Three millions of livres in regard of y^e Recompense & compensation for the advance thereof and of the carriage to the sea side; These are to require & authorize you our Trusty & welbeloved Edw^d Backwell Esq^r to repaire to Paris and by vertue of these credentialls to apply yo^rself unto the said Mouns. Hering (who was acquainted with this your Employment whilst he was here at London, that by him you may be introduced to the officers of his said most Xtian Maj^{tye} as the person authorized and appointed by us) whereunto this is to give you a full Comission to see both the Two Millions payable by his Most Christian Maj^{ty} and the two Millions and five hundred thousand livres payable by the said Sieur Herin to be justly and truly told and counted, and put up into such a state and condition as may make it fitt for carriage, and then to attend it untill it be shipped

in the Ships w^{ch} wee shall appoint for the transport thereof at such Port as our Dearest Brother the Duke of York will give you notice of, and in the execution of this service you are to use all care, dilligence, and circumspection that these moneys you receive be good, true, and current money both as to weight and goodness, which is expected from you even at your owne hazard. And therefore you have hereby command and Liberty to refuse any money you doubt, or in case it be pressed upon you as good then for your own security to make any tryll thereof you thinke best by cuttinge the same or otherwise. And herein you are to make all speed you can, possibly, and to advertise our Heigh Trēar of England what you finde may conduce to this service Soe that by and by that the answers & returnes that shall be made unto yo^u bringe noe delay upon this important Service w^{ch} is intrusted unto yo^u upon the great confidence wee have of yu^r experience judgment and good affection yo^u have to our service. And as a p^{er}son thus qualified & thus intrusted wee desire all, All the Ministers and officers of his s^t most Xtian Maj^{ty} to look upon yo^u & to give yo^r credit accordingly And we require all our owne officers & serv^{ts} to give yo^u all assistance. Given at o^r Court at Whitehall the 20th of Oct^r 1662 in the fourteenth yeare of o^r Raigne. By his Maj^{ties} Co^{ms}d,

WM. MORRISE.

Count Destrades took possession of the town in the name of Louis XIV. on the 29th November, 1662.

On the 14th September, 1667, the King granted Alderman Backwell as a free gift the sum of fifteen hundred pounds as he was put to considerable expense and inconvenience in taking his family and servants to France, when he had to receive the sum of 4,500,000 livres from the Ministers of his dear brother the French King for the sale of the town of Dunkirk. It appears strange that this payment was delayed until five years after the sale, but I presume it was some

years before all the money was received and coined into English money.

The King requiring £20,000 on the 6th December, 1662, for the use of the Navy, Alderman Backwell was desired to make that loan to his Majesty upon the security of so many boxes of Dunkirk money in his name at the Royal Mint within the Tower of London, and to hold them until the loan could be paid off. A privy seal was issued on 6th December, 1662, by the Lord Treasurer to the officers of the Mint, authorising them to deliver the said boxes to Backwell.

It was at this date that the milled coinage was introduced and carried out by Blondeau, who was sent for from Paris to coin the French money by the mill and press, which Backwell found afterwards so deadly inconvenient for telling.

The following is the warrant issued by the Lords of the Treasury to the master and worker of the Mint to coin the French money by the new and improved process:—

Whereas wee have by his Maj^{ties} command and directions appointed Aldⁿ Edward Backwell to deliver forthwith unto you one hundred chests of his Maj^{ties} moneyes lately received by him in France, and at present for better security lodged in his Maj^{ties} office of Receipt in the Mint, under your care and inspection, which said chests are to contayne five hundred thousand crowns of silver in number : Wee did therefore think fitt to acquaint you therewith that you might make due preparations for the coininge, tellinge, and weighinge of the s^d five hundred thousand ffrench crownes wherein you are carefully and to the best of yo^r art and knowledge to examine them as to counterfeits, the said Ald. Backwell being to answer and to make good all

such unto his Maj^{tie}, you are for his satisfacōn to cause all the s^d crownes (such only excepted as shall appear to be counterfeit) to be melted downe into clean Ingots, to weigh them and to assay them in the presence of the s^d Ald. Backwell or such other pson or psons as he shall depute and intrust therein. And accordingly, yo^u are to give him a receipt w^{ch} shall be a sufficient discharge unto him for the same and likewise to let you know his Maj^{ties} express will and command is that you loose noe tyme in the despatch of this affaire. Now, in the coininge of the silver by the Mill and Press as soon as it can be reduced into Standard and made fitt for coyne, and in case you shall not be provided with a sufficient number of iron pots, ingot molds, counter corners, and other necessaries for the first meltinge, yo^u are to cause them immediatly to be made and to bring the wast and all charges in the s^d mint upon Att^t unto his Maj^{ty} that an allowance may be made thereof out of the s^d silver when it shall be converted into current money, and the Controller of the Mint and the Surveyor of the meltings are desired to be assisting unto the Masters herein.

S. SOUTHAMPTON,
ASHBY.

Southampton House, 12th Xemb., 1662.

To Sir Ralph Freeman, Knt., and
H. Slingsby, Esq., Master and
Worker of his Maj^{ties} Mint wth in
the Tower of London

Then follows a certificate signed by the Master and Deputy Master of the Royal Mint, stating that a certain amount of bullion had been brought in by Backwell and coined into current money of England.

These are to certify that there hath been brought into his Majestie's Mint within the Tower of London, and entered there in the name of Edwd. Backwell, Esq., from 13th May, 1662, in Standard Gold Bullion, (196^{lbs} 3^{oz} 7^{dwt}s 9^{grs}) One hundred fourscore and sixteene pounds weight, three ounces, seven penny-weight and nine grains, w^{ch} makes in money by Tale accordinge to his Maj^{ties} Proclamation Eight thousand ffive hundred fourscore and

four pounds two pence (8584 : 2). And likewise there hath beene brought into his Maj^{ties} mint, and entered there in the name of the s^d Edwd. Backwell, Esq., from the tenth day of June, 1662, unto the 16 of January following, in Standard Silver Bullion, Tenn thousand ffive hundred fforty and eight pounds weight, which maketh in money by Tale Thirty-two thousand six hundred and ninety and eight pounds sixteene shillings. The Total of both beinge fforty one thousand two hundred eighty two pounds sixteen shillings and two pence (£41,282 16s. 2d). Dated 23rd Jan. 1663.

H. SLINGSBY.

JA. HOARE.

From His Maj^{ties} Office of Receipt in the
Mint within the Tower of London.

Let this certificate be entered with the Farmers of His Maj^{ties}
Excise and Ald. Backwell's bonds thereupon.

South'ton house, 4th Feb. 1662. T. SOUTHAMPTON.

We find by a certificate signed by the Comptrollers of the Royal Mint that 140,000 French crowns which were received from Dunkirk and deposited in the name of Edward Backwell were melted down and yielded £30,577 11s. 10d. sterling.

In Samuel Pepys's account in one of Alderman Backwell's ledgers for 1664 is the following entry, which, strange to say, does not appear in his Diary.

27 Oct. 1 gilt flagon wey 66 oz. at 6s. 4d. per oz. £20 18s.

17 Nov. ditto 65 oz. 14 dwt. at 6s. 4d. per oz.
£20 16s. 2d.

On the 26th October of that year he makes the following remark:—

By and by I out of doors to look after the flaggon, to get it ready to carry to Woolwich. By and by the flaggon finished at the burnishers, and home, and there fitted myself, and took a hackney coach I hired, it being a very cold and foule day, to Woolwich. . . . At Woolwich, I there up to the King and Duke, and they liked the plate well.

This must refer to the flaggon he purchased at Back-

well's, and which was charged to his account the next day.

The money for the purchase of these flagons was placed to his credit by Mr. Fenn on 11th January, 1664.

11th July, 1665.—To the evening 'Change, and there hear all the town full that Alderman Backwell did go with £50,000 to Ostend, it being delivered to us.

But Pepys doubted the truth of this. On the 21st Pepys wanted £10,000 on his tallies, but A. Backwell was at sea, so he went to Colville's and Viner's. The next day he found the rumour was true; the alderman had gone over to Ostend, and that it was in our possession. But he remarks,

It is strange to see how poor Alderman Backwell is like to be put to it in his absence, Mr. Shaw, his right hand, being ill. And the alderman's absence gives doubts to people, and I perceive they are in great straits for money, besides what Sir G. Carteret told me fourteen days ago.

On 26th July poor Robin Shaw at Backwell's died, and Backwell himself now in Flanders. The king himself asked about Shaw, and being told he was dead, said he was very sorry for it. Backwell returned from Flanders early in Dec^r 1665. Feb. 1, 1665-6 to Backwell's to set all my reckonings straight there, which I did, and took up all my notes.

I have not been able to ascertain who Mrs. Backwell was, but she was a pretty woman, as recorded by Pepys in his diary, as under date 29th May, 1662. He states, that on his way in Lombard Streete, Alderman Backwell called out of window to him, where he went and saluted his lady, a very pretty woman. In another place he speaks of her as being a fine lady, and in another, a fine woman of the country, which latter term may imply that she was a country woman.

Pepys, seeing her in church, beckoned her to come

into his pew, which she did, and he again remarked that she was a noble fine woman and a good one, and one he should like his wife to be acquainted with; but, when they did call upon them in Lombard Street, he was disappointed at finding her a proud vain glorious woman, very fond of talking of her riches and expenses, and the number of servants they kept.

In these days there was no cessation of business. Banks were not open for restricted periods from 9 to 4 as now, but the banker of that time apparently never lost the opportunity of transacting his business. This I gather from the following entry in Pepys's diary of the 5th June, 1662. He was dining at home when he was "summoned by note from Mr. Moore to Alderman Backwell's to see some thousands of my lord's crusados weighed, and we find that 3000 come to about £530 or 40 generally. In the evening with Mr. Moore to Backwell's with another 1200 crusados, and saw them weighed, and so home and to bed."

On the 23rd November, 1663, Pepys was with Backwell talking of the new money; which he believes will never be counterfeited: "but it is so deadly inconvenient for telling; it is so thick, and the edges are made to turn up." This is a proof that the new milled money was not in great favour when it was first introduced; but I should say that we now should prefer telling it to the miserably thin hammered money of the previous reigns. The Alderman's counter must have been very imperfect, as in his account for 22nd November, 1670, the following entry occurs: "By money in the counter cracks, 13s. 6d."

Alderman Backwell appears to have been a tolerably

successful farmer, judging from his transactions recorded in his farm accounts in his ledgers; he appears to have had a farm at Crestloe, near Aylesbury. I make a few extracts which will tend to furnish some interesting and valuable comparisons between the prices paid for cattle in 1664 and in 1882. Oxen ranged from £8 to £9 each, and sheep about 25s. each. There are also some interesting items as to the value of hides, tallow, &c. :—

1664	£	s.	d.
Oct. 8.—By mony for head, &c. for the 60 oxen d'd this day - - -	6	0	0
6.—By 60 oxen weighing 329 st. : 3 : 13, at 22 <i>d.</i> delivered Mr. Ganden -	362	17	0
6.—By the tallow of 60 oxen, wey. 672 st. 3 qrs. neat at 2 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> - - -	89	13	0
Nov. 4.—By 70 runts, wey. 257 st. : 16 lb. @ 22 <i>s.</i> d'd Denn Ganden, Esq. -	282	17	2
4.—By the tallow of ditto runts, to Mr. Mould, wey. 394 st. 3 li. at 2 <i>s.</i> 8 <i>d.</i> -	52	11	8
14.—By mony for 70 small hides - - -	58	10	0
26.—By mony for 70 hides - - -	75	17	0
Decem. 16.—By the sale of 20 sheep in Smithfield	28	0	0
Novem. 25.—By 276 Tongues to Den Ganden, Esq.	6	18	0
Janu ^a . 6.—By 30 sheepe, at 29 <i>s.</i> 3 <i>d.</i> p pds. -	43	17	6
17.—By 16 hides £24 : whereout 6 <i>d.</i> spent	23	19	6
23.—By mony for Offal - - -	0	7	0
20.—By Mr. Sam. Harbert for the sale of 50 Crestloe sheep - - -	64	15	0
6.—By Den Ganden his D ^t in fol. 384, for 33½ oxen, wey. 179 st. : — : 10 -	196	19	11
10.—By ditto's D ^t there, for 319 tongues at 6 <i>d.</i> p tongue - - -	7	19	6
Mar. 10.—By Mr. Sa. Harberts D ^t for 60 sheep he sold this day in Smithfield -	86	15	0

1664.		£	s.	d.
	By Adam Henly in full for Rent of Bushfield untill Michaelmas, 1664 -	10	0	0
	By the sale of 5 Cowes, and a Bull, 1 bald Coach-horse, 2 Ewes, & 4 Sheepe Skins - - - -	42	0	10
	More by the sale of 1 Cow, 3 Calves, and the remainder of money ret ^d of Tho. Greene for 2 beasts formerly sold him - - - -	8	4	0

1664

Jan. 19.—	For 113 Oxen bought at Bandbury y ^e 13 ^o prost with all charges - -	690	0	10
	For 10 Oxen at £8 p pds, deliured p Mr. W ^m Mayne, Sen ^r . in Novemb. last - - - -	80	0	0
	For a gray horse, of Mr. W ^m Mayne, Sen ^r - - - -	14	0	0
	For 7 Oxen, deliured p Mr. W ^m Mayne, Jun ^r in Janu ^y at 10 p pds.	70	0	0

The Stock at Crestloe, the 25th of March, 1665, viz. :—

	£	s.	£	s.
113 Oxen, valued at - - -	740	0		
7 Steers or Irish Reynts & 8 Cowes -	68	0		
423 Sheepe, and 21 Lambes - - -	495	0		
Corne valued at - - - -	16	0		
148 Todd of Wooll at 21s. p Todd -	155	8		
	<hr/>		1474	8

16 Horses, 2 Mares, & a Colt not valued.

He had considerable landed property in the county of Bucks. Creslow was, and is still, a famous pasture for grazing, and not far from it is a village called Whitchurch, situated near to the town of Aylesbury. The following is an account of the annual income of

that manor, which he purchased between 1661 and 1663 :—

WITCHURCH.

The purchase of the Manour of Whitchurch, in the County of Bucks, consisting of a faire manour house built with timber, with a great Demessne copihold, Rents and Services, Court Leet, Court Baron and the pfitts thereof as followeth :—

	£	s.	d.
The manor house built w th Two Lodges in the forecourt, a mault house, Barnes out-houses, a garden and orchard, w th a close walled Kempson ? adjoyninge to y ^e house, per ann.	25	0	0
The Royalty and cobby hold Rents, Services ? heryots w th other and usuall pfitts, at p ann.	40	0	0
23 Acres of Arrable in my own hands, and 20½ Acres of Lea ground at 15s. per acre	-	32	0 0
22 Acres of meddow mowed every year lyinge in the common medows, at 20s. per acre	-	22	0 0
A Cottage w th 2 bease comon belonginge to it, at per ann. - - - -	-	2	0 0
The Water Mill and Windmill, at per ann.	-	20	0 0
Leases of Land late expired and neer expireinge being no pt. of the Land before mentioned, lett to pticular men as followeth :—			
Robt. Streemes, at per ann. - - - -	-	35	2 0
Tho. Miller - - - -	-	7	5 0
Tho. Ingram - - - -	-	21	10 0
Tho. Ricket - - - -	-	3	12 0
Wid. Gony - - - -	-	3	0 0
P. Heath - - - -	-	2	18 0
Tho. Topinge- - - -	-	3	10 0
H. Nichols - - - -	-	3	5 0
Tho. Hilsdon - - - -	-	6	2 6
		<u>£227</u>	<u>4 6</u>

Date circa 1661-63.

At this date a very singular term occurs in the accounts of various goldsmiths and merchants, viz. : By money in Ranconter or Ranconten, and on the debtor side of the ledger to money in Ranconten, so much; in many instances the amounts "in Ranconten" agreed, the debtor side with the creditor side, of the account; this leaves me to surmise that it implied "per contra," but of this I am not at all certain.

In November, 1663, Pepys went to Backwell's, where Sir William Rider came by appointment, to consult about insuring a hempe ship from Archangel. This is an early mention of insurance, but from entries I have noticed in Backwell's ledgers this was by no means an uncommon occurrence.

It is doubtful whether Sir William Rider was a goldsmith or a merchant. I have met with many transactions for iron bought or sold, as well as accounts which correspond with those that Backwell kept with undoubted goldsmiths.

On the 26th May, 1665, Pepys and Creed went to

Backwells to try him about supplying us with money, which he denied at first and last also, saving that he spoke a little fairer at the end than before.

On the 6th July, 1665, he records :—

Alderman Backwell is ordered abroad upon some private score with a great sum of money; wherein I was instrumental the other day in shipping away. It seems some of his creditors have taken notice of it, and he was like to be broke yesterday in his absence; Sir G. Carteret telling me that the king and the kingdom must as good as fall with that great man at this time; and that he was forced to get £4,000 himself to Backwell's people's

occasions, or he must have broke ; but he committed this to me as a great secret.

There is evidence supplied in the ledgers of Alderman Backwell that he gave interest for money on deposit, he himself employing it in the Exchequer and in various adventures for which he obtained higher rates.

In 1665 the following rates were allowed :—

Money at call, sometimes $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., and sometimes at 4 per cent.:

At 10 days' notice	4 per cent.
„ 14 „	5 „
„ 20 „	6 „

In 1666 he allowed as much as 5 per cent. for money at demand, and 6 per cent. for fourteen days.

Backwell's house was burnt down in the Great Fire of 1666. In order to prove in what high estimation this man was held by the king, I furnish herewith an order derived from the State Papers in the Record Office (Entry Book, No. 23, Domestic Series, Charles II., p. 228), which reads as follows :—

Whereas, it have humbly been represented unto us, in favour of Aldⁿ Backwell, that by the late calamity of the fire hapened in our City of London he is become destitute of a house or fitt abode for y^e management of his affaires. And we, taking into our Princely consideraçon the greatest importance it is of, as well to y^e publicke, as more immediately to our owne service, to have him accomodated with a convenient place for y^e despatch and carrying on his buisnesse, wee have thought it fitt hereby to signify our pleasure to y^u, and very effectually to recommend it to y^u, to accomodate y^e s^d Aldⁿ Backwell wth s^d lodgings in Gresham Colledge, as are in y^r power and possession, it being in

order to our owne service and y^e better conveniency of our affaires in his handes, in w^{ch} if y^e shall happen to be questioned or interrupted, our pleasure is that you forthwith give notice thereof to one of our Principal Sect^{ys} of State, to the end wee may give further orders therein. And, &c., Sept. y^e 10, 1666.

By his Mat^{ies} command,

To our trusty and well-beloved

ARLINGTON.

D^r Jonathan Goddard.

On the 30th December, 1668, the Great Fire Commissioners certified that Edward Backwell was to rebuild the premises destroyed in the fire: "All that were shopp at the south end of the new alley, called Exchange Alley, next Lombard Street, in the parish of St. Mary Woolnoth," having a frontage of twenty-six feet to Lombard Street, thirty-six feet in the rear, and a depth of sixty feet. The lease was enlarged by an additional term of forty years, and the rent was fixed at £70. The lease of the premises was formerly held by Charles Everard, goldsmith, in 1662; next by John Wasson, goldsmith; and in August, 1666, by Joseph Hornby, who transferred it to Backwell.

Backwell subscribed towards rebuilding the church of St. Mary Woolnoth; in his account for April, 1670, he paid Alderman Crispe £75, being the rest of the money he gave towards the rebuilding of the church.

In the year prior to this notice being issued, the bankers had troublous times, which we can glean from what Pepys records in his diary under date 13th June, 1667, in which he mentions a "run" upon Backwells:—

They are so called upon for money that they will be all broke, hundreds coming to them for money: and they answer him, "it is payable at 20 days:—when the days are out, we will pay you:" and those that are not so they make tell over their money and make their bags false, on purpose to give cause to retell it and so spend time. I cannot have my 200 pieces of gold again for silver, all being bought up last night that were to be had, and sold for 24s. and 25s. a piece. So I must keep the silver by me, which sometimes I think to fling into the house of office, and then again know not how I shall come by it, if we be made to leave the office.

14 Nov. 1667.—After dinner, he and I (Creed) & my wife and girl, the latter two to their tailors and he & I to the Committee of the Treasury, where I had a hearing, but can get but £6000 for the pay of the Garrison, out of about £16,000: and this Alderman Backwell gets remitted there and I am glad of it.

The alderman up to this time had been doing a very lucrative business, as is instanced by his accounts, and likewise from the following statement in Pepys's Diary, under date 3rd May, 1668:—

After I came home to Alderman Backwell's about business, and there talked a while with him and his wife, a fine woman of the country, and how they had bought an estate at Buckeworth, within four miles of Brampton.

This is a parish in Huntingdonshire. After the great fire he appears to have purchased considerable property in Lombard Street (as is instanced by Pepys in his Diary under date 12th April, 1669). The alderman then showed Pepys the models of the houses he was going to build in Cornhill and in Lombard Street, but he hath purchased so much there that it looks like a little town, and must have cost him a great deal of money.

TANGIER.

1st July, 1668.—Pepys went to Whitehall to a Committee of Tangier, “and there vexed with the importunity and clamours of Alderman Backwell, for my acquittance for money by him supplied to the garrison, before I have any order for paying it.”

It is very interesting to find upon referring to one of the alderman’s letter-books that there were two orders given by the Commissioners of the Affairs of Tangier on the 1st July, 1668, one to Samuel Pepys, Esq., the Treasurer for the Affaires of Tangier, for the payment of £10,000 to Alderman Backwell, and the other to the Lieutenant-Governor of Tangier for the payment of £113 to Backwell.

They read as follows :

BY HIS MA^{ties} COMMISS^{rs} FOR Y^e AFFAIRES OF
TANGER.

Whereas it appears that Aldⁿ Edward Backwell hath in compliance wth his late undertaking unto y^e Lords Comiss^{rs} of the Treasury paid unto Coll. Henry Norwood, Lieut. Governor of Tangier, the Summe of Tenn thousand pounds sterling, by fortie foure thousand and foure hundred fortie piecies of eight and a halfe, being computed att four shillings sixpence each, towards defraying y^e pay and services of that Garrison: It is therefore ordered that you pay and deliver over unto Alderman Backwell, in Tallyes orders or assignmen^{ts}, the summe of Ten thousand pounds sterling for his reimbursement, and also satisfyeing him y^e usual interest allowed upon Tallyes, comending y^t computation from y^e time that Coll. Norwood shall certifie that y^e same hath beene paid him, and place this sum as an imprest on Coll. Norwood y^e acco^t of pay, takeing in from Alderman Backwell such bills, letters or other writings that he hath under y^e hand of Collonell Norwood, as may be usefull to vouch that

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receipt; and for soe doing this shall be your warrants. Dated att
Whitehall y^e first of July, 1668.

ARLINGTON.

ALBEMARLE.
JO. BERKLEY.
WM. COVENTRYE.
THO. POUHEY.

To Samuell Pepys, Esq., Treasurer
for y^e Affaires of Tanger.
By command of y^e
Lords Comiss^{rs}.
To Creed.

S^r Alderman Backwell having represented unto us that Cap-
taine Thomas Porter late Captⁿ of one of y^e Tanger Companyes,
owes him y^e somme of one hundred and thirteene pounds for
mony lent upon y^e securities of an assignment that proves inef-
fectuall for his reimbursement upon y^e espetiall reasons alledged
herein, we have thought fitt that such money as hath growne due
att Tanger unto the said Porter for Captaines pay for the time
he was mustered be reserved and imployed for satisfieing this
debt, and that upon vouching the debt unto you, & producing
y^e writeing by which it is claymed or an authentique copy
thereof under a public notaries hand, you cause y^e said debt to
be paid to whom Aldⁿ Backwell shall appoint as farre as his pay
will reach to doe it, taking into y^r hands a fitting discharge con-
cerning the same, We remaine

Yo^r very loueing friends to servc yo^u

Whitehall, 1st July, 1668:

ARLINGTON.

ALBEMARLE

To his Ma^{ties} Lieut. Gouvernor
of Tanger or in his absence
to y^e Comaunder-in-cheef
upon y^e place.
these.

JO: BERKLEY.
WM. COUNTRYE
THO. POUHEY.

From the foregoing documents it will be seen that
Alderman Backwell obtained what he considered his
due. The Thomas Povy who signed the document

was formerly treasurer to the Tangier Commissioners, but disposed of his office to Pepys in consideration of his receiving half the profit.

This Tangier affair appears to have been a large business to conduct, and one fraught with profit to the Banker.

On the 23rd September, 1668, the Commissioners again sat at Whitehall to consider about borrowing a sum of £10,000 of Alderman Backwell for Tangier. Again on the 25th September, Pepys writes: "So with the Duke of York and some others to his closet, and Alderman Backwell about a Committee of Tangier, and there did agree upon a price for pieces of eight at 4s. 6d." I find that the weight of the bags containing 2000 pieces of eight, varied from 443½ ounces to 445 ounces.

Backwell brought out several large loans for the King. I have seen a privy seale dated August 25th, 1669, directing the Commissioners of the Treasury to pay to Alderman Backwell the sum of £4,650 16s. 8d. as interest upon the various sums lent by him to the Exchequer, amounting in the aggregate to £157,683 4s. 10d., for which he was paid at the rate of 6 per cent. per annum up to the 24th June, 1669, which sum includes a gratuity of two-thirds of the interest for his good services in the seasonable supply of the money. On another privy seale dated 14th September, 1667, the King gave him a free gift of £8,000, on consideration of his having advanced the sum of £286,042 into the Exchequer; this was over and above the usual 6 per cent. per annum. The Privy Seal records that this sum was given, as he was

forced to admit larger sums of other men's money into the Bank, upon which he had to give interest greater than he otherwise would.

In 1671 the King was greatly distressed for money, and, despairing of obtaining it from the House of Commons, he called a Council of his Ministers, and stated that he wanted £1,500,000, and that he would give the white staff, that is to say, the Lord Treasurer's place, to anyone who could devise the means. Lord Ashley told Sir Thomas Clifford how it could be done, which he elicited through plying him with wine. Sir Thomas Clifford took the hint, and immediately going into the presence of the King, and falling on his knees, demanded the White Staff. "Odds fish!" cried his Majesty, "I will be as good as my word, if you can find the money." Clifford then informed the King that the goldsmiths had nearly the sum required in the Exchequer, which money he could seize by closing it. A Privy Council was called on the 2nd January, 1672, and the Exchequer was closed, whereby the goldsmiths lost the sum of £1,328,526, and Sir Thomas Clifford was made Lord High Treasurer and a Peer. Of this sum Edward Backwell had as much as £295,994 16s. 6d. in the Exchequer at the time, in lieu of which some years afterwards, on 16th April, 1677, the King granted him an annuity of £17,759 13s. 8d. The original bond for the payment of the money to the goldsmiths, bearing Charles the Second's autograph, is in the possession of Charles Tyringham Praed, Esq., the banker, a descendant of the Backwells.

This was a great blow and nearly ruined him; still he carried on his business for some time.

The following note I observed in one of his books, signed by Sir Robert Howard, Auditor of his Majesty's Customs:—

The summe of One hundred & eleaven thousand three hundred forty-three pounds thirteene shillings sixpence and noe more hath been paid at y^e receipt of his Ma^{ties} Exchequer in part of £140,000 directed by his Ma^{ties} Lr^{es} patents of the 23 July, 1674, to be paid to y^e Goldsmiths for interest.

RO. HOWARD.

6 July, 1676.

Backwell retained the office of Comptroller of His Majesty's Customs at the Port of London at a salary of £250 per annum until 1674—there are several copies of the warrants for the payment of the half year's salary, signed by Lord Danby.

He was employed by the King on several occasions after 1672 to go abroad to receive sums of money &c. There is a copy of a warrant dated 6th April, 1674, ordering him to go to the States-General of the United Provinces to receive under power of attorney 200,000 frattacoones, being the first fourth part of 800,000 frattacoones, covenanted and agreed to be paid unto us according to the tenth article of the treaty concluded between us and the States-General on the $\frac{9}{19}$ day of February last past. The following is a copy of his passport:—

CHARLES R.

Charles by the Grace of God King of England, Scotland, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, &c., To all Admiralls, Vice Admiralls, Captaines of our Shippes at Sea, Gouvernors, Comanders, Souldiers, Majors, Sheriffs, Justices of the Peace,

Bailiffs, Constables, Customers, Comptrollers, Searchers, and all whom it may concerne, Greeting. Whereas we have thought fitt to employ the bearer, our trusty and well-beloved Edward Backwell, Esq., in our especial service to y^e States Generall of the United Provinces, These are to will and Require you (as we do allsoe hereby pray and desire all Kings, Princes, States and Commonwealths, their subjects and officers, Our neighbours and Allyes) to permitt and suffer the said Edward Backwell freely and quietly to imbarque himselfe, servants, goods and necessareyes in any port within this our kingdome, and thence to passe into Holland and any other parts beyond the Seas, and to returne againe without any lett, hindrance or molestation whatsoever, and that you be further ayding and assisting to him or them in any occation wherein he or they may require your helpe or furtherance. Given at our Court at Newmarket the 6th day of Aprill, 1674, in the six and twentieth yeare of our Reigne.

By his Maj^{ties} Comand,

H. COUNTRY.

There are likewise several copies of warrants and privy seals for interest upon sums of money advanced by him to his Majesty upon different occasions.

Copy of the form of the Quarterly Acquittance.

xix^d die Junii, 1677.

Rec^d by virtue of his Ma^{ties} letters Patents under the great scale of England bearing date the xxxth day of Aprill 1677 of the officers of the Tally Court One Tally leauvied upon his Ma^{ties} Revenue of Excise containing the sune of four thousand four hundred thirty-nine pounds eighteen shillings a five pence due unto me for one quarter of a yeare ended at Lady day last. Upon the yearely rent or sune of Seauenteene thousand Seauen hundred fifty-nine pounds thirteene shillings and eight-pence granted me in satisfaction of the debt of £295,994 . 16 . 6 due from his Ma^{tie} I say rec^d the sune of iiij.iiij.xxxix. xviijs. vd.

E. B.

Soon after the closing of the Exchequer it would appear that Charles Duncombe, one of his clerks or apprentices, to whom I have seen cheques addressed by Backwell, and signed "from your master, Edward Backwell," set up business on his account as a goldsmith, and in the Directory of 1677 we find him in partnership with Richard Kent at the Grasshopper in Lombard Street; in the same Directory we find that John Ballard, probably another of his clerks, was at the Unicorn, lately occupied by Backwell. He could not have been quite ruined, although he was probably forced to stop payment, but of that we have no record. He held several appointments under the Crown up to 1676, and then retired to Holland, where he died in 1679. His landed property was not disposed of, as it descended to his sons; and is still held by the representatives of the family. He was probably able to satisfy the claims of his creditors by paying them interest, which he received out of the Exchequer, as is seen by different privy seals in his favour for large sums from time to time.

On the 12th November, 1697, there was an agreement made between John and Richard Backwell on the one part, and Sir Edward Turner and five other creditors of Edward Backwell (father of the said John and Richard), deceased, of the other part, by which the said J. and R. Backwell covenanted, within six months after the commission of bankruptcy awarded against Edward Backwell had been superseded, to pay £21 10s. per cent. (in ready money) of each principal creditor's debt, and to assign over to them out of the said Edward Backwell's patent for per-

petual interest at 6 per cent. per annum on the hereditary revenue of excise the remaining £78 10s. of the principal, together with interest, &c., to the 14th June, 1682. Another agreement dated March 16th, 1697-8, secured the latter payment of the said interest.
