

The Chancellor's File—Part 3 (Conclusion)

R. C. and P. B. HAIRSINE

C.81/1392/8

[Delivery note:]

Memorandum quod xx die Februarij Anno Regni Regis Ricardi tercij primo istud breve liberatum fuit domino Cancellario Anglie apud Westmonasterium exequendum.

[Memorandum that 20th day February in the first year of the reign of King Richard III this writ was delivered to the Lord Chancellor of England at Westminster for execution.]

By the King

RR

Right Reverend Fadre in God, right trusty and welbeloved, We grete you wele. And where the prebende of Bollenhill in oure Collegiat Chirche of Tamworth by the Resignacion of oure welbeloved Maister Robert Crake is now vacant, We willing the promocioun of oure trusty and welbeloved Master John Geffrey therunto, desire and also wol and charge {you*} that undre oure grete sele being in youre warde ye doo oure lettres patentes of donacion to be made of the said prebende unto the said Master John with alle dueties to the same belonging, and also oure other lettres patentes of notificacion of oure said donacion to be directed to the Reverend Fadre in God the Bisshop of Chestre or elles, the see there vacant, to the moost Reverend Fadre in God Tharchebisshop of Cauntirbury or his Vicary Generall commaunding them by the same tassigne the said Master John a stalle in the quere and place in the chapitre of oure said Collegiat Chirche of Tamworth and alle other thinges herin requisite as in this caas hath been accustomed. And thise oure lettres shalbe youre warrant and sufficient discharge in that behalve. Yeven undre oure signet at oure Palois of Westminster the xvijth day of February, the furst yere of oure reigne.

[On the reverse]

[Addressed:] To the Right Reverend Fadre in God, our right trusty and welbeloved the Bisshop of Lincoln oure Chaunceller of England.

[Note:] To Master Skypton [signed] Jo. Lincoln.

[Parchment: 16 cm × 29 cm]

* hole in parchment

This document has the appearance of a routine appointment of a clerk to a vacant ecclesiastical post. However, in 1973 Dr Tudor-Craig noted that the beneficiary was a shadowy figure who had already engaged the attention of a previous historian.⁷¹ Paul Murray Kendall had earlier noted that the only entry in Harley 433 that can be assigned to the few days before Edward V entered London on 4 May 1483 is an undated note of a warrant sealed at St Albans concerning the presentation of Master John Geoffrey to the living of the parish church of Pembridge, Herefordshire.⁷² The diversion of high level attention to an apparently trivial matter during a royal journey already disturbed by political drama, caused Kendall to speculate that the beneficiary was Edward's favourite tutor or chaplain and the execution of the grant the occasion of his first exercise of kingly patronage. It was perhaps an opportunity for Gloucester and Buckingham to break down any hostility and distrust caused by the arrest of Rivers, Grey and Vaughan.

John Geoffrey did not in fact receive the benefice of Pembridge, for less than a month later Thomas Langton, Bishop elect of St David's, was granted a licence to seek papal permission to hold it 'in commendam' as a means of augmenting the meagre income of the bishopric.⁷³ The present grant was probably intended to compensate Geoffrey for the loss of income.

The College of St Edith, Tamworth is thought to have been established in the twelfth century by the Marmions, Lords of Tamworth, perhaps based on an earlier Saxon royal foundation. It became a royal free chapel as a result of a series of minorities and disputes in the fourteenth century.⁷⁴ As with other royal colleges the dean and five canons were usually pluralists and absentees who were granted office as a means of remuneration for their duties in the royal household and administration. The actual devotional and pastoral duties were usually delegated to resident vicars who received as their stipends the major portion of the collegiate income from tithes and endowments.⁷⁵ The prebends at Tamworth were named after the farms and hamlets in the parish and that granted to John Geoffrey may be identified with Bonehill, an outlying settlement on the Watling Street.

Of John Geoffrey himself little is known but there is scope for further research in less accessible and obvious sources than those consulted here. In 1466 he was granted the benefice of Worthen, Shropshire⁷⁶ and in subsequent years he or a namesake is recorded with others as an executor of wills and feoffee [trustee] in the common property transactions aimed at avoiding the feudal consequence of minorities.⁷⁷ This sort of legal service seems to have been a frequent subsidiary employment and source of income for the clerks of the household and departments of state. By 3 March 1494 Geoffrey was dead according to the presentation of his successor in the prebendary stall of 'Bownhille'.⁷⁸ The Chancery record of this latter presentation provides the only confirmation that Geoffrey actually took up the position for there is no record on the surviving patent rolls for Richard's reign to show that Chancellor Russell did in fact issue the letters patent.

There are two additional features of note in this document. First there is the use of the archaic term 'Bishop of Chester'. The see had been officially named the bishopric of Coventry and Lichfield since about 1230.⁷⁹ This may have been due to thoughtless copying from an old book of precedents. Secondly the annotation on the reverse will be specially remarked as bearing the Chancellor's own

signature. The note is very faint but sufficiently clear to deduce that Russell was directing the warrant to a particular clerk, Richard Skypton, presumably for him to prepare the two letters patent required.⁸⁰ Skypton's name appears quite frequently in the records. Like Geoffrey he held at least one ecclesiastical benefice in absentia⁸¹ and was regularly employed as a feoffee or trustee⁸² and he must have been a fairly senior Chancery clerk for he is named as a witness when on 27 June 1483 after his appointment by the King, the Chancellor first opened the white leather bag containing the Great Seal and used it to seal divers writs.⁸³ He was witness again in July 1485 when the Chancellor handed the seal to Thomas Barowe, Master of the Rolls, to convey it to the King at Nottingham.⁸⁴ In March of the following year he witnessed the delivery of the seal to John Morton⁸⁵ and he continued in office at the Chancery at least until 1495.⁸⁶

C.81/1392/11

By the King

RR

Right Reverend Fadre in God, right trusty and welbeloved, We grete you wele. And for asmoche as We with Goddes help entende in alle goodly haste to have the chirche within oure College of oure Lady and Sainct Nicholas in our Unversite of Cambrige to be buylded, We therefore desire and also wol and charge you that undre oure grete sele being in youre warde ye doo make our lettres of commission to suche persones as by oure trusty and welbeloved clerck and chaplain Maister Waltier Felde, provost of the said College, shal name unto you to take suche and asmany carpenters, masons and other artificers as shalbe thought expedient for the fynysshing of the said chirche. And thise oure lettres shalbe your warrant. Yeven undre oure signet at oure towne of Huntyngdon the xij day of Marche.

[On the reverse]

[Addressed:] To the Right Reverend Fadre in God, our right trusty and welbeloved the Bisshop of Lincolne our Chaunceller of England.

[Paper: originally 19 cm × 30 cm, torn and badly stained on left-hand edge.]

Since Dr Tudor-Craig's remarks on this document in 1973⁸⁷ the present editors have examined it under ultraviolet light at the Public Record Office with the result that the text is now complete. The previously missing words were obscured by staining but were clear of the torn edge. The warrant was sealed at Huntingdon two days after the previous two documents in this file issued from Cambridge, thus establishing another point on the itinerary of Richard and his Queen on their progress northwards to Nottingham.

The foundation stone of King's College was laid on 25 July 1446 by Henry VI whose personal concept it was. It has been established from technical and

documentary evidence that by 1461 the foundations were complete and the five eastern bays brought up on average to about the mid-height of the great windows. One of the northern side-chapels was probably roofed by that date.⁸⁸ The accession of Edward IV resulted in the curtailment of royal payments which had been irregular since 1455 and it was not until 1476 that work was resumed on a small scale with private funds. In 1480 Thomas Rotherham the then Chancellor of England seems to have been responsible for persuading Edward IV to provide £1113 6s 8d in instalments over three years.⁸⁹ Some credit must also go to Walter Field, one of the King's clerks and chaplains, whom he appointed provost of the College⁹⁰ and supervisor of the works, although it is recorded that 100 marks was paid in bribes to two of the King's squires 'to accelerate the grant'.

One result of the long hiatus in construction was that building was resumed under a new team of designers and supervisors who appear to have been responsible for changing the roof vault from lierne pattern to the magnificent fan vaulting to be seen today. Although most, if not all, of the inner stone vaulting was completed in the next century, the design was effectively frozen by the time the shape of the upper lengths of the stone columns were formed in the 1480s in order to support the timber outer roof envelope which was then constructed over the five eastern bays of the chapel. The start of Edward IV's patronage of the building is marked by his commission to Martin Prenteys and John Sturgeon the master and assistant carpenters to 'take carriage by land and water for timber' which the King had obtained from the Abbot of Walden.⁹¹

It is not clear whether the accession of Richard III had any immediate effect on the progress of the work. Walter Field the College provost was certainly in Richard's favour as evidenced by a grant of Edward V which was 'by the advice of the King's uncle, Richard, duke of Gloucester . . .'⁹² His visit in February 1484 obviously prompted the present warrant for a commission to obtain labour and materials. It must be assumed that the letters patent recorded under the date 28 August 1484 are the result of this warrant but the six months delay is somewhat surprising.⁹³ It may be that the commission was not accompanied by immediate finance to implement it or that no difficulty was experienced in obtaining labour at first. It is noticeable that the College did not send a special messenger to London to obtain their letters patent but waited until the Chancellor was at his nearby residence of Bukden where the sealing is recorded to have taken place.

The accounts of John Clyff, the clerk of works, show that during 1484 Richard provided £700 but the source of this money has not yet been traced in the public records as far as the editors are aware. In February 1485 the provost received a warrant for a further £300 out of the revenues of the vacant bishopric of Exeter.⁹⁴ The works accounts also show that in 1484 glass was purchased for the East window and the two adjacent north and south windows, scaffolding was erected and on the 15 August the King's chief plumber and chief glazier arrived to advise. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that the glazing must have been well advanced by August 1485 when work was again curtailed for a further twenty years. It is inconceivable that valuable glazing works should be carried out in a roofless shell and it must therefore be assumed that part of the interior was roofed in timber and closed off with a temporary wall and architectural evidence suggests that the five easternmost bays were so treated.⁹⁵

C.81/1392/23

By the King

RR

Right Reverende Fader in God, right trusty and right welbeloved, We grete you wele. And wol and charge you that under our great seall being in your warde ye doo make oure severall lettres of comission unto our servants William Mathewe and Johan Alysaundre to be oure carte takers for our cariage in all places within this our Royme, the said William as a yoman and the said John as grome of that occupacion, and that ye will see this to be doon. And thise our lettres shalbe your warrant. Yeven undre our signet at our Palays of Westminster the xxviiij day of Fevrier.

[On the reverse]

[Addressed:] To the Right Reverend Fader in God, our right trusty and right welbeloved the Bisshop of Lincoln oure Chaunceller of England.

[Paper: 20 cm × 32 cm. Watermark in the form of a hand with a flower protruding from between the fingers.]

This short letter of commission is printed to illustrate the wide variety of business matters dealt with by the signet office.

It is possible to trace William Mathewe back in Edward IV's reign when in 1470 he was commissioned 'to take carriage for the stuff of the household.'⁹⁶ The appointment was renewed yearly between 1471 and 1477 when he is described as 'William Mathewe yeoman, purveyor of carriage of the household.'⁹⁷ The appointment in Richard's reign includes the name of a hitherto unmentioned groom, John Alysaunder. It should not be imagined, however, that these men were merely carriage drivers, the efficient conveyancing of the baggage of the King's household from place to place on progress must have been a major feat of organisation.

William Mathewe travelled many miles during his fifteen years of service to the Yorkist kings and he would no doubt have had considerable knowledge of the events which took place during that time. It seems likely that he was connected with the town of Worcester since the first letter of commission (1470)⁹⁸ describes him as William Mathewe alias William Worcestre and a pardon for outlawry in which he was the injured party in February 1483 refers to Worcester as being the place where the trespass was done.⁹⁹ It is possible that his name occurs in local records for this town.

C.81/1392/25B

By the King

RR

Right Reverend Fader in God, right trusty and welbeloved, We grete you wele. And where as oure Cousin the King of Scotts by his lettres late sent unto us by his herault Dyngwell amonges othre thinges desireth to have from Us a saufconduyt for tharchebisshop of Seint Andrewes with xl persones in his company on horsbak to passe to Rome for the space of oon yere and also an

othre saufconduyt for suche persones as oure servant berer of thise shal shewe unto you to be commissioners to kepe the diet to be holden upon the bordures in like maner and forme as oure said Cousin hath graunted his lettres of saufconduct unto oure commissioners to be at the same diet the copy wherof We send you herin closed. We desiring the hasty expedyncy of this matiers wol and charge you that undre oure grete seal being in your keping ye in alle goodly hast doo make oure severel lettres patentes of saufconduct in due and effectuell forme aswele for the said Archiebisshop and xl persones in his company on horsbak tendure for a hool yere as also for the commissioners of our said Cousin according to the contynue and effect of his saufconduct passed undre his great seal to oure said commissioners. And that ye will see this to be doon with alle diligence as oure great trust is in you. Assuring you by thise oure lettres signed with oure hand that We at more leysore hereafter shall doo make unto you suche your sufficient warrantes for your discharge in that behalve as ye shall thinke best to be divided. Even undre oure signet at oure Castel of Kenelworth the xxijti day of May.

[On the reverse]

[Addressed:] To the Right Reverend Fadre in God, our right trusty and right welbeloved the Bishop of Lincoln our Chauncellar of England.

[Paper: 22 cm × 31 cm. Watermark in the form of a hand with a flower protruding from between the fingers.]

C.81/1392/25A

[Schedule of names attached to C.81/1392/25B]

RR

Lorde Kenedy

Lorde Lyle

Alexander Hume

David Scot

Master Jon Irlande

Master Alexander Stewart

Sir Gylbert off Jonston

Jon off Murray

RR

[Paper: 18 cm × 8 cm]

The story of the negotiations with Scotland during the reign of Richard III is already unusually well documented with original material to which this present warrant adds a small contribution. After Richard's punitive expedition into Scotland in the summer of 1482, James III had been temporarily deprived of power by the disaffected nobles but appears to have regained control of the government by the following year.¹⁰⁰ On 16 August he dispatched his pursuivant 'Dingwall' to Richard from Edinburgh with a signet letter suggesting an abstinence of war for eight months during which commissioners might meet on the borders or in England to settle disputes and agree a more lasting peace. The letter requested safe-conduct for ambassadors and retinue amounting to eighty

persons. Copies of this letter and King Richard's reply were entered in Harley 433.¹⁰¹ This reply dated 16 September (at York according to the subsequent letter) reads as rather less than cordial, consisting mainly of an acknowledgement and recital of King James' own words and expressing willingness to grant safe-conduct to named ambassadors. James III was not put off but replied on 6 November 'marvelling . . . that it liked not your Cousinage to sende your saufconduit with our Pursuivant. How be it he had in writ the names of the lords and personnes whilk we desired to be put in your saufconduit to thentent above written . . .' Again King James requested an abstinence of war until the following 25 March (1484) and sent his list of commissioners and others to whom he desired Richard's safe-conduct to be given. Richard's reply is dated at London the second day of December¹⁰² eight days after his return from the west country expedition to deal with the Buckingham and Tudor threats. The letter notes that the desired safe-conduct has been passed under the Great Seal and delivered to Dyngwall pursuivant but the abstinence of war could not be agreed because the pursuivant had no proper written authority for this purpose.¹⁰³

There is no evidence that the negotiations developed any further until the 8 March following when Richard authorised a further general safe-conduct by applying his sign manual to a prepared draft again in favour of the Bishop of Aberdeen but this time to be accompanied by William Knollys the Preceptor of Torfekeyn and a retinue of forty.¹⁰⁴ The results of this safe-conduct are not clear but another entry in Harley 433 dated 13 April (1484) indicates further progress in the negotiations. This is a copy of instructions given by Richard to Northumberland herald before the latter set out from Nottingham to meet Scots envoys at Berwick. It gives him power to agree an abstinence of war until Christmas and deliver a safe-conduct for a proper embassy to enter England for full negotiations.¹⁰⁵

There is then a three months' gap in the printed records which coincides with Richard's crushing of Scots incursions both on land and sea as reported by the Croyland chronicler.¹⁰⁶ However it does not appear that diplomacy was suspended during hostilities, for James III's next letter of 21 July refers to recent negotiations in England by his envoys, Robert Lord Lisle and Duncan of Dundas and the receiving in Scotland of Richard's messenger, Edward Gower, a squire and usher of the chamber.¹⁰⁷ In this letter, the Scots king names his commissioners for a full peace conference to be held at Nottingham from 7 September, and for the first time a marriage alliance is mentioned. Richard and his advisers now seem to have been convinced that the Scottish overtures were genuine and a fairly prompt reply was sent from Westminster on 7 August in terms which are noticeably more cordial.¹⁰⁸ This signet letter was accompanied by letters patent of safe-conduct, this time at greater length and specifically referring to the purpose of the embassy.¹⁰⁹ In agreeing to the meeting at Nottingham, Richard had insisted that King James' ambassadors should have full instructions and authority 'to do therein . . . as [if] ye were present in proper person.'¹¹⁰ James complied by sending separate letters of commission for the marriage alliance and for the peace negotiations respectively.¹¹¹ The twelve months of patient negotiations and parallel hostilities were now brought to a climax in an impressive ceremony in the great hall of Nottingham Castle. Two fragments of what appears to be a contemporary diary of the reception and negotiations survive in the British

Library¹¹² and were used by P. M. Kendall to paint a vivid picture of the occasion.¹¹³

The embassy arrived at Nottingham on the afternoon of Saturday, 11 September, were received by the King on 12 September, and the conference concluded on 22 September, having set down their agreements in three important documents all of which survive in the public records. Firstly an indenture was drawn up settling the terms of a truce to last until Michaelmas 1487 to which the eight Scots and fourteen English commissioners added their signatures and seals.¹¹⁴ Secondly a marriage was agreed between James, eldest son of the King of Scots (later James IV) and Lady Anne, niece by his sister of the King of England and daughter of John duke of Suffolk, this to take place when they both attained lawful age.¹¹⁵ The third agreement was for a series of meetings to be held at four places on the border for commissioners to settle the more detailed disputes and problems at local level.¹¹⁶ During the conference, and probably as a practical gesture, Richard granted safe-conduct for certain Scottish merchants and a ship's company to trade in England.¹¹⁷ Immediately afterwards he appointed Lord Dacre as Warden of the West Marches to take charge of the ensuing negotiations on his behalf with power to nominate commissioners and grant safe-conducts.¹¹⁸ Having examined the treaties brought home by his ambassadors, James III sent his charter of ratification from Edinburgh on 21 October.¹¹⁹

During the following six months there is considerable evidence of further diplomatic activity in the form of numerous safe-conducts and commissions which would be tedious to relate here and in any case they give little indication as to what was being discussed or achieved.¹²⁰ However, in May of 1485 there are indications of something more substantial afoot as evidenced by the record of the proceedings of the Scottish parliament meeting on 26 May.¹²¹ It was then resolved the agreements of the previous year were 'expedient' and that the sum of five hundred pounds (Scots) should be raised by immediate taxation for the expenses of another embassy totalling fifty persons to go to York to conclude terms of the royal marriage and alliance. On the same day it was agreed to accept the Archbishop of St Andrews' offer to proceed to Rome at his own expense to offer the King's obedience to the new Pope, Innocent the Eighth, and solicit whatever privileges and patronage could be obtained at the beginning of a new papal reign.

It is clear from the date of present document (C.81/1392/25A,B, 22 May) that both these matters had been put to the English some weeks before¹²² and their reference to Parliament was mainly to obtain money for the expenses. A noticeable detail of questionable significance is that not only did King Richard initial the signet letter in his usual way but he also signed the accompanying schedule listing the names of the proposed Scottish ambassadors at the top and bottom of the list in such a manner that no additional names could be inserted.¹²³

Whether the embassy met with Richard's representatives before Bosworth made it irrelevant is a matter of conjecture that has been discussed elsewhere.¹²⁴

C.81/1392/26

Memorandum quod vicesimo tertio die Junij Anno Regni Regis Ricardi tercij secundo ista billa liberata fuit domino Cancellario Anglie apud Westmonasterium exequenda.

[Memorandum that twenty-third day of June in the second year of the reign of King Richard III this warrant was delivered to the Lord Chancellor of England at Westminster for execution.]

By the King

RR

Right Reverend Fader in God, right trusty and right welbeloved, We grete you wele and wol and charge you that under oure great seal being in youre warde ye doo make in all hast oure lettres of proclamacion severally to be directed unto the shirrifes of every countie within this our Royme according to the tenure hereafter ensueing. For asmuche as the King oure Souverain Lorde hathe certain knowlege that Piers Bisshop of Execestre, Jasper Tidder son of Owen Tidder calling him self Erle of Pembroke, John late Erle of Oxon and Sir Edward Widevile with othre diverse his rebelles and traitors disabled and attaynted by auctoritie of high Courte of Parliament of whom many been knowen for open murdrers, advowters and extorcioners contrarie to the pleasure of God and ayemst all trouthe, honnor and nature have forsaken their naturell cuntrey taking them furst to be undre obeissance of the Duc of Britaigne and to him promised certain thinges which by him and his counseill were thought thinges to gretly unnaturell and abhominable for them to graunte, observe, kepe and performe; and therefore the same utterly refused. The said traitors seing that the said Duc and his Counseillors wold not aide and succor them nor folowe their weyes, prively departed out of his cuntrey into Fraunce ther taking them to be undre thobbeissance of the Kinges auncient ennemye Charles, calling himself King of Fraunce. And to abuse and blynde the Comons of this said Royme the said rebelles and traitoures have chosen to be thaire capitayne oon Henry Tidder son of Edmond Tidder son of Owen Tidder, whiche of his ambicious and insaciabie covetise incrocheth and usurpeth upon him the name and title of Royal estate of this Royalme of Englande whereunto he hath noo manner interest, right, title or color as every man wele knoweth. For he is descended of bastard blode bothe of the fader side and moder side. For the said Owen the grauntfader was a bastard borne and his moder was doughter unto John Duc of Somerset, sonne unto John Erle of Somerset, son unto Dame Kateryn Swynford and of her in double advourtie goten. Whereby it evidently appiereth that noo title can or may be in him whiche fully entendeth to entre this Royme pourposing a conquest. And if he shuld atcheve his false entent and pourpose every mannys lif, livelood and goodes shuld be in his handes, libertie and disposicion; whereby shuld ensue the disheriting and distruccon of all the noble and worshipfull blode of this Royalme for ever. And to the resistance and withstanding whereof every true and naturell Englissheman borne must lay to his hand for his owne suretie and wele. And to the entent that the said Henry Tidder might the rather atcheve his said fals entent and pourpous by the aide, supporte and assistance of the Kinges said auncient enemye of Fraunce hath covenanted and bargayned with him and with all the Counseil of Fraunce to yeve up and relesse in perpetuytie alle the right, title and clayme that the Kinges of England have had and aughte to have to the Corone and Royme of Fraunce togidre with the Duchies of Normandie, Anjeoye and Maygne, Gascoigne and Guyenne, Castelles and Townes of Caleys, Guisnes, Hammes with the Marches apperteignyng to the same and to dessever and exclude the Armes of Fraunce out of the Armes of England for ever. And in more

prove and sheweing of his said porpose of conquest, the same Henry Tidder hath geven aswele to diverse of the Kinges said enemyes as to his said rebelles and traitors, the archebisshoprikes, bisshopriches and othre dignities spirituell, and also the duchies, erledomes, baronyes and othre possessions and enheritaunces of knights, squiers, gentilmen and othre the Kinges true soubgietes within this Royalme and entendeth also to chaunge and subvert the lawes of the same and to enduce and establishe newe lawes and ordenances amonges the Kinges said soubgietes. And over this and besides the alienacions of all the premisses into the possession of the Kinges said auncient enemyes to the grettest augeutisement, shame and rebuke that ever might falle to this lande. The said Henry Tider and othre the Kinges rebelles and traitors aforesaid have entended at their cummyng, if they may be of powair, to doo the moost cruell murdres, slaghthers, robberies and disherisons that ever wer seen in any Cristen Royme. For the whiche and other inestimable daungieres to be eschued and to thentent that the Kinges said rebelles, traitors and enemyes may be utterly put from thair said malicious and fals purpose and sone discomficed if they enforce to lande, the King our Souverain Lord desireth, willeth and commaundeth all and everych of the naturel and true soubgietes of this his Royme to calle the premisses unto their myndes and like good and true Englisshemen to endevoire them self with all thair powairs for the defense of them, thair wives, children, goodes and hereditamentes ayemst the said malicious purposes and conspiracions whiche the said auncient enemyes have made with the Kinges said rebelles and traitours for the fynal distrucion of this lande as is aforesaid. And oure sayd Soverain Lord as a welewilled, diligent and couragious prince wol put his moost royal personne to all labor and payn necessarie in this behalve for the resistance and subduyng of his said ennemyes, rebelles and traitours to the moost comfort, wele and suretie of all his true and feithfull liegemen and soubgietes. And over this our said Souverain Lord willeth and commaundeth all his said soubgietes to be redy in thair moost defensible arraye to doo his highnesse service of werre whan they by open proclamacion or othre wise shalbe commaunded so to doo for the resistance of the Kinges said rebelles, traitours and ennemyes. And thise oure lettres shalbe your sufficient warrant in that behalve. Yeven undre oure signet at oure Castell of Notingham the xxj daye of Juny, the second yere of oure reigne.

[On the reverse]

[Addressed:] To the Right Reverend Fadre in God, our right trusty and right welbeloved the Bisshop of Lincoln our Chaunceller of England.

[Parchment: 26 cm x 49 cm]

Although the above proclamation has been reproduced in several earlier works,¹²⁵ these are mostly out of print and no more fitting document could be chosen to close this series of articles. The persuasive, arrogant, stirring yet poignant text speaks for itself.

It is sufficient to note that there are two versions of the proclamation recorded in Harley 433. The first dated 7 December 1484¹²⁶ is shorter and does not contain the derogatory account of Tudor's pedigree. The second, which omits the name of Thomas Grey, Marquis of Dorset, corresponds to the present signet warrant of which it may be the file copy.¹²⁷ One copy of the ensuing letters patent of proclamation as received by the sheriff of Kent found its way into the Paston letters.¹²⁸ This document is dated at Westminster two days after the signet letter was sealed at Nottingham. There is no record of the proclamation on the surviving Patent Rolls.¹²⁹

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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NOTES AND REFERENCES

71. P. Tudor-Craig, Address to Richard III Society London Branch, *The Ricardian*, No. 43, December 1973, p.3.
72. P. M. Kendall, *Richard III*, London (1955), p.181 and p.465 n.10. B.L. Harleian MS 433, f.3.
73. *Calendar of Patent Rolls, 1476-1485*, HMSO (1901), p.348.
74. *Victoria County History of Staffordshire*, Vol. III, pp.309-315.
75. D. A. Johnson, Dean Bate's Statutes for St. Edith's, Tamworth, Staffordshire, 1442. *Transactions of the South Staffordshire Archaeological and Historical Society*, Vol. X (1968-9), pp.55-62.
76. *Register of John Stanbury*, Canterbury and York Society, Vol. 25 (1919), p.182 (19 Jan. 1466).
77. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1467-77*, (1900), p.158 (18 May 1469) and p.414 (11 Feb. 1474). *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476-1485* (1901), p.257 (11 March 1481). *Calendar Close Rolls, 1476-1485* (1954), entry Nos. 717 (1480), 1158 (1484).
78. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1485-1494* (1914), pp.459, 460.
79. *The Story of Lichfield Cathedral*, Anon., Lichfield, 8th edition (1951), p.2.
80. We are indebted to Miss Margaret Condon for noting the anachronism in the bishop's title and for identifying Chancellor Russell's signature.
81. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476-1485* (1901), p.541.
82. *Cal. Close Rolls, 1476-1485* (1954), entry Nos. 592 (1479), 655 (1479), 1312 (1484), 1314 (1484), 1449 (1485).
83. *Ibid.* entry No. 1170.
84. *Ibid.* entry Nos. 1454, 1457.
85. *Cal. Close Rolls, 1485-1500* (1956), entry No. 67.
86. *Ibid.* entry Nos. 92, 494, 530, 795, 805, 816, 870, 914.
87. P. Tudor-Craig, Address, *op. cit.*, p.3.

88. R. A. Brown, H. M. Colvin and A. J. Taylor, *The History of the King's Works*, Vol. I, *The Middle Ages*, HMSO (1963), pp.269–278. Where not otherwise stated information on King's College Chapel is taken from this work and its sources.
89. Two of the warrants authorising payments survive in the Exchequer records at the Public Record Office. E.404/771/2/34 authorises 200 marks (£133 6s 8d) to be paid to Walter Field immediately (19 November 1481). *Ibid.*/37, dated 26 November 1481, is for £100 to be paid at the feast of St. John the Baptist next (24 June 1482) and a further £100 the following Christmas.
90. H. Malden, *An Account of King's College Chapel in Cambridge*, Cambridge (1769) (reprinted 1973), p.20.
91. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476–1485* (1901), p.203.
92. *Ibid.* p.349.
93. *Ibid.* p.472. The wording here (from the Patent Roll) is more detailed than in the signet warrant: 'Appointment of Robert Brewes, Simon Clerk, Thomas Stoneham, John Sturgeon, Martin Prentice and William Wright to take stone-cutters, smiths, carpenters, masons, glaziers and other workmen, and timber, iron, lead, glass, shingles, tiles, stone, lime and sand and other necessaries, for the works within the royal college of St Mary and St Nicholas, Cambridge, and carriage for the same.'
94. *Harley 433*, f.209b.
95. Malden, *op. cit.*
96. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1467–1477* (1900), p.200.
97. *Ibid.* pp.260, 402, 458, 555. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476–1485* (1901), pp.12, 46.
98. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1467–1477* (1900), p.200.
99. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476–1485* (1901), p.295.
100. M. McKerracher, John Ramsay of Balmain: Tudor Agent? *The Ricardian*, Vol. IV, No. 61 (June 1978) p.2. P. M. Kendall, *op. cit.*, pp.140–144.
101. *Harley 433*, ff.246b, 247, first printed by: J. Gairdner (Ed.), *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the reigns of Richard III and Henry VII*, Vol. I, HMSO (1863) pp.51–53.
102. *Harley 433*, f.248b. (James III's second letter and Richard III's second reply) first printed by: Sir H. Ellis (Ed.), *Original Letters*, 3rd series, Vol. I, London (1846), pp.109–113.
103. A record of a draft of letters patent of safe-conduct dated 29 November signed by the King has been printed by: T. Rymer (Ed.), *Feodera, Conventiones, Litterae etc.*, London (1704–13), Vol. XII, p.207. The safe-conduct is for William (Elphinstone), Bishop (elect) of Aberdeen, David earl of Crawford, George de Carmighell, Bishop elect of Glasgow and eight other ambassadors.
104. Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.218, citing a latin signed bill for the Great Seal from a bundle numbered 101 then in the Tower of London.
105. *Harley 433*, f.238, first printed by Gairdner, *op. cit.*, pp.55–56.
106. H. T. Riley (Ed.), *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Crayland*, London (1854), p.497.
107. James III's letter of 21 July was copied into *Harley 433*, f.263b first printed by Gairdner, *op. cit.* pp.59–61.
108. *Harley 433*, f.264, Gairdner, *op. cit.* pp.61–62.
109. Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.230, citing the record of letters patent entered on the Scots Roll, 2nd year Richard III, membrane 5. The ambassadors are named as: Colin, Earl of Argyle, the Chancellor of Scotland; William, Bishop of Aberdeen; Andrew Stuard, Lord Anendale; Robert, Lord Lisle; Laurence, Lord Oliphant; John of Drummond, Lord Stobhall; Lord Darnell; Master Archibald Whitelaw, secretary; and Duncan Dundas, esquire, councillors, orators and ambassadors of our cousin the King of Scots and two hundred servants.
110. *Harley 433*, f.264.
111. The letters of commission given under the Great Seal of Scotland on 30 and 31 August 1484 were retained in England and they were printed (in the Latin) by Rymer, *op. cit.*, pp.232–234 and subsequently calendared in English by J. Bain (Ed.), *Calendar of documents relating to Scotland*, Vol. IV (1357–1509) HMSO (1888), p.308, Nos. 1501, 1502.
112. *B. L. Cotton MS Vespasian C*, xvi, f.79. *B. L. Cotton MS Caligula B*, v, f.147.
113. Kendall, *op. cit.*, pp.298–300.
114. The indenture for the truce was printed by: Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.235 and calendared in English by Bain, *op. cit.*, p.308, No. 1505.

115. For the marriage treaty see: Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.244 and Bain, *op. cit.*, p.308, No. 1504.
116. For the indenture for further meetings see: Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.246 and Bain, *op. cit.*, p.309, No. 1506.
117. Bain, *op. cit.*, p.308, No. 1503.
118. *Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1476-1485* (1901), pp. 485-486, (not dated in CPR but probably the same as document calendared by Bain, *op. cit.*, p.309, No. 1507).
119. Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.250; Bain, *op. cit.*, p.309, No. 1508.
120. Rymer, *op. cit.*, pp.251, 252, 258, 260, Bain, *op. cit.*, pp.309, 310.
121. T. Thomson and C. Innes (Eds.), *Acts of Parliament of Scotland*, Vol. 2, Record Commissioners, HMSO (1814), p.170.
122. Probably when Sir Richard Ratcliff and Thomas Metcalf entered Scotland under a safe-conduct dated 22 April 1485: see Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.266.
123. The signet letter C.81/1392/25 appears to have resulted in letters patent of safe-conduct for the ambassadors inexplicably backdated to 18 April: according to the record on the Scots Roll see Rymer, *op. cit.*, p.267. The safe-conduct for the Archbishop of St Andrews is more logically dated at Westminster 24 May, two days after the warrant was sealed at Kenilworth.
124. M. McKerracher, *op. cit.*, p.3.
125. Sir H. Ellis (Ed.), *Original Letters*, Series 2, Vol. 1, London (1827), pp.162-166 (taken from a bundle in the Tower of London probably the present document C.81/1392/26. J. C. Giles (Ed.), *The Chronicles of the White Rose of York*, London (1843) (reprinted 1974) pp.279-282. Myers, et al. (Eds.), *English Historical Documents*, Vol. 4 (1327-1485), London (1969) p.210. L. Lyell and F. D. Witrey (Eds.), *Acts of Court of the Mercers Company 1453-1527*, Cambridge (1936), p.180. C. A. Halstead, *Richard III*, Vol. 2, p.563. J. Gairdner (Ed.), *The Paston Letters*, pp.316/320.
126. *Harley 433*, ff.273b, 274.
127. *Ibid.* f.220b.
128. J. Gairdner (Ed.), *The Paston Letters*, *op. cit.*
129. *Cal. Pat. Rolls*, *passim*.