

I.

NOTICE OF AN ORIGINAL PRIVY SEAL DOCUMENT RELATING TO
THE INVASION OF SCOTLAND BY KING HENRY THE SEVENTH,
IN THE YEAR M.CCCC.XCVII. By DAVID LAING, Esq., For. Sec. S.A.
Scot. (PLATE XXXV.)

The original document now exhibited I obtained a few weeks ago from a London sale of Autographs. It is a Privy Seal with the King's sign manual, dated at Westminster the 1st of December. Upon examining it to ascertain its object and precise date, it was easy to perceive that it must have been the year 1496, and that it was connected with the history of Perkyn Warbeck. In itself it may be of no special historical importance; yet, as a curious paper of its kind, illustrating an episode of Scottish history, it seems worthy of a brief notice in the Society's Proceedings.

The success of Henry of Lancaster, Earl of Richmond, on the field of Bosworth, August 22, 1485, placed him on the throne of England as King Henry the Seventh; and in January following, his marriage with the Lady Elizabeth, eldest daughter of Edward the Fourth, formed a union of the two families of Lancaster and York, and terminated the intestine wars of the Red and White Roses. Among the various conspiracies against Henry's title, by adherents of the York faction, the most troublesome was that of Perkyn Warbeck, described as "a bold and comely youth," who (whatever may have been her motives) was encouraged by Margaret Duchess of Burgundy, and sister of Edward the Fourth, to personate Richard, Duke of York, who was murdered in the

Tower of London, along with his elder brother, Edward the Fifth, in June 1483. In this way Perkyn claimed to be son and lawful heir of King Edward the Fourth. His history, however, is well known, and I shall only refer to him in connexion with the affairs of Scotland.

It happened that King James the Fourth was induced, partly by the Duchess of Burgundy, to espouse the claims of Warbeck, who came to Scotland in the month of November 1495. He was received as *Prince of England*, and obtained, what was a large sum in those days, a monthly allowance of L.112, for his support, and was also permitted to contract a marriage with Lady Katherine Gordon, daughter of Alexander, Earl of Huntly, who was nearly related to the Royal family.

In the following year, 1496, the young Scottish King, who always exhibited a noble spirit of chivalry, partly misled by an ill-founded notion that the English people were ready to welcome this pretended Duke of York when he appeared amongst them, raised a considerable force and marched into Northumberland. This was in September 1496, the proclamation being issued in the name of "Richard Duke of York, true inheriter of the crown of England." It has been printed in various historical works, including Lord Bacon's "Life and Reign of Henry the Seventh." He says:—

"But Perkyn's proclamation did little edifie with the people of England; neither was he the better welcome for the company he came in. Wherefore the King of Scotland, seeing none came in to Perkin, nor none stirred anywhere in his favour, turned his enterprise into a rode [raid]; and wasted and destroyed the country of Northumberland with fire and sword. But hearing that there were forces coming against him, and not willing that they should find his men heavy and laden with booty, he returned into Scotland with great spoils, deferring further prosecution till another time."

This inroad, and the devastations that were committed by the Scottish troops, could not be overlooked; and until a Parliament should be summoned, the King was authorised by his "great Council" to borrow a sum of L.40,000 to meet the expenses, in addition to what he himself had already "advanced from his own coffers." Of this subsidy, the city of London contributed L.4000; but apparently it was chiefly to be raised by borrowing from wealthy citizens, in different counties, sums limited to

L.20 each. The following document is one of these, in a general form of requisition, the names of the counties and persons here printed in italics left blank, and supplied in a different hand :—

BY THE KING.

TRUSTY and welbeloued We great yow wele/ And for the Revenging of the great crueltie and dishonour that the King of Scottis hath doon vnto vs, oure Reame, and subgiettis of the same as oure Commissioners in *our Countie of Oxenford* where ye be inhabited shall shewe vnto yow at lengthe/ We lately in oure great Counsaill of Lordis Spirituall and Temporall of Jugis Sergeantis in our lawe/ and of others summe headwisemen of every Cite and good Towne of this our lande, haue at thair instauncis and by thair aduisis, determynd vs to make by see and by land two Armees Roiall for a substanciall Werre to be contynued vpon the Scottis vnto:suyche tyme as we shall Invade the Reame of Scotland in our owne persone/ And shall haue with Goddis grace revenged thair great outragis doon vnto vs oure Reame and subgiettis forsaide/ so and in suyche wise as we trust the same our subgiettis shall lyve in rest and peax for many yeres to come/ The Lordis and others of our saide great Counsaill considering wele that the saide substanciall werre can not be born but by great sommes of redy money haue prested vnto vs every one of them for his part great sommes of money contented besidis that we of our self haue avauced in redy [money] of our owne cofers. Yet nathesse fourty M. li. [40,000] poundis more, as our saide Counsaill hath cast it/ must of necessite be borowed and avauced in redy money of others oure lovyng subgiettis for the furniture of this matter/ And bycause as we here ye be a man of good substaunce, we desire and pray you to make lone vnto vs of the summe of

twenty poundis Wherof ye shalbe vndoubtedly and assuredly repaied in our receite at the Feast of Saynt Andrew next comyng withowte eny maner your cost or charge for the same. This money must be brought to oure receite and there resceyvid by the tellers of the same On thys side the Feast of Candilmasse next comyng withoute any further traite or delaye of whome ye shall tak owte a bill of Mutuum for your just and true repayment thereof. It shalbe in your libertie aftir ye shall ons goon through with oure saide Commissioners to whome we pray you to yeve full and fast credence in this caas/ whether ye will come and bryng the same your selfe or ellis sende some trusty frende or servant of youres to deliuer it before the said Candilmasse at our saide receite and to bring to yow the said bille of Mutuum Or ellis of trust your saide lone to be deliuered to our saide Commissioners and they to bryng the saide bille of Mutuum for your indempnite in that behalfe. This is a thing of so great weight and importaunce as may not be fayled/ And therefore fayle ye not herof for your saide part eftsones We pray yow as ye tendre the good and honour of vs and of this our Reame/ and as ye tendre also the wele and suertie of your selfe. Yeven vnder our Signet at our Paleis of Westminster the first day of Decembre.

Thys Man ys agreid to pay x li. but not xx li. and therefore we Commysseoners remyt hym over to the Consell—how be yt the report of the neightburs he ys sufficient to pay the holle xx li.

(*Indorsed*)—To our trusty and welbelouyd subiette John Wylmote of our towne of Chyslyngton. Oxon.

Mr Spedding, in his valuable edition of Lord Bacon's Works (vol. vi. p. 174), gives the chief portion of a similar privy seal addressed to a gentleman in the county of Hereford, for the like sum of L.20, preserved among the Cottonian MSS. (Titus, B. v. f. 145.)¹ He also says:—

“Among the records preserved in the Rolls-house are to be found

¹ A few weeks later, passing through London, I took the opportunity of examining this document in the British Museum, and found that it corresponded exactly with the above, excepting of course the name of the person addressed, and of the

two more of these privy seals (see B. v. i. Nos. 32, 33), as well as an account of all the sums borrowed (see B. v. 20); amounting in all to L.57,388, 10s. 2d. This latter document is inaccurately described on the cover as an account of the *Benevolence*, A° H. 7. 12°. It should have been called *Loan*.

“I have not been able (Mr S. adds) to ascertain the exact period at which the Scotch incursion took place, but it seems probable that this hurried borrowing of money (partly for immediate use and partly perhaps as a collectoral security for the promised Parliamentary grant) followed immediately upon it, while the alarm and resentment were fresh.”

As to the date, there can be no doubt that it was September 1496.

In the Privy purse expenses of Henry the Seventh, one item connected with this episode in his history is:—

1496. December 5.—Delivered by the King's command-
ment, and sent into the North for
the wages of the King's armye there, L.3000

On hearing that the Scots had already retired, the English King for this time countermanded the progress of his troops; but in order to quiet the complaints of his northern subjects, he summoned a Parliament to meet at Westminster on the 16th January [1496-7]. Lord Bacon, in reference to their proceedings, says:—

“The winter following, being the twelfth year of his reign, the King called again his Parliament; where he did much exaggerate both the malice and the cruel predatory war lately made by the King of Scotland. That that King, being in amity with him, and no ways provok'd, should so burn in hatred towards him as to drink of the lees and dregs of Perkin's intoxication, who was everywhere else detected and discarded; and that when he perceived it was out of his reach to do the King any hurt, he had turned his arms upon unarmed and unprovided people, to

county, nor is there any postscript pleading poverty. At the same time, having occasion to refer to the Harleian MSS., No. 6986, I found another, with the king's sign manual, to the same effect for L.20, addressed to Thomas Bosvian and James Carew of Cornwall. In the Museum printed Catalogue this paper is erroneously entered as in the reign of King Henry VIII. From the number of copies that must have been issued, various others are likely to be still in existence.

spoil only and depopulate, contrary to the laws both of war and peace: concluding, that he could neither with honour, nor with the safety of his people, to whom he did owe protection, let pass these wrongs unrevenged. The Parliament understood him well, and gave him a subsidy, limited to the sum of one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, besides two fifteens; for his wars were always to him as a mine of treasure, of a strange kind of ore—iron at the top and gold and silver at the bottom. At this Parliament (for that there had been so much time spent in making laws the year before, and for that it was called purposely in respect of the Scottish war) there were no laws made to be remembered.”

Other payments by Henry VII. occur in his privy purse expenses :—

1497. March.—Delivered and sent by the King's command- ment to York, Durham, and Newcastle,	L.4000
May.—Delivered and sent by the King's command- ment to Berwick,	6300
July 1.—Delivered and sent by the King's command- ment northward to the King's men,	12,000

The result of these preparations was, that Henry in July 1497, sent his forces, under command of the Earl of Surrey (his own presence elsewhere being more urgently required), to take suitable revenge of the previous inroad of the Scots. His proposal to deliver up Perkyn Warbeck was scornfully rejected by James, in his usual spirit of gallantry; but as he had done all or more than could have been expected in his behalf, he thought it was necessary to dismiss the pretended Prince, but in an honourable manner, by furnishing him with the means of transport from this kingdom, that he might pursue elsewhere his adventures.

This result is so clearly stated by Lord Bacon, that I cannot do better than again to quote his words (vol. vi. p. 187):—

“But the King of Scotland, though he would not formally retract his judgment of Perkin, wherein he had engaged himself so far; yet in his private opinion, upon often speech with the Englishmen and divers other advertisements, began to suspect him for a counterfeit; wherefore in a noble fashion, he called him unto him, and recounted the benefits and favours that he had done him in making him his ally, and in provoking a mighty and opulent King by an offensive war in his quarrel, for the

space of two years together ; nay more, that he had refused an honourable peace, whereof he had a fair offer if he would have delivered him ; and that to keep his promise with him, he had deeply offended both his nobles and people, whom he might not hold in any long discontent ; and therefore required him to think of his own fortunes, and to choose out some fitter place for his exile ; telling him withal that he could not say but the English had forsaken him before the Scottish ; for that upon two several trials, none had declared themselves on his side ; but nevertheless he would make good what he said to him at his first receiving, which was that he should not repent him for putting himself into his hands ; for that he would not cast him off, but help him with shipping and means to transport him where he should desire."

Perkyn Warbeck accordingly sailed for Ireland from the West Coast in September 1497, thus terminating his connexion with Scotland. It is not necessary, therefore, to trace his further progress until the termination of his career, which took place on a gibbet at Tyburn, November 25, 1499.

Lady Katherine Gordon accompanied her husband, having adhered to Warbeck in all his reverses. In October 1497, after having landed in Cornwall, he had made a fruitless attempt to besiege Exeter ; and in his flight, " King Henry sent the Lord Dawbeney with 500 horsemen after Perken to apprehend him so that many of his captaines were taken. Also divers horsemen rode to Saint Michael's mount, and there took the Lady Gordon, wife to Perken, and brought her to the king. At whose beautie and amiable countenance, the king much marvelled, and sent her to London to the queene. The common people submitted themselves to the king's mercy."¹ " The name of the ' White Rose,' (says Lord Bacon), which had been given to her husband's false title, was continued in common speech to her true beautie." She received a pension from Henry VII. ; and various payments were afterwards made to her. She married, secondly, Sir Matthew Cradock (the ancestor of the Earls of Pembroke) ; and, with her second husband, was buried in the church of Swansea.²

Not long after Warbeck had left Scotland, the English King, who was inclined to peace, concluded a Treaty with this country, which led to the happy union of "the Thistle and the Rose," by the marriage of James

¹ Stow's Chronicle of England, p. 480. Lond. 1631. folio.

² Sir Harris Nicholas in *Excerpta Historica*.

IV. and Margaret, daughter of Henry VII., in May 1503. This indeed was followed in the course of that century by most lamentable invasions, bloodshed, and the ruinous destruction as well of religious houses as of towns and fortified places; but at length terminating in the Union of the Crowns in 1603; and, a century later, in the Union of the two Kingdoms, an event that has proved of such inestimable advantage for the welfare and prosperity of both Nations.

No genuine portrait of Warbeck is known. That of Henry the Seventh, which accompanies this paper, is an exact facsimile of the old engraving by John Payne, prefixed to the original edition of "The Historie of the Raigne of King Henry VII.," by Lord Bacon. Lond. 1622. folio.



KING HENRY THE SEVENTH.