

VIII. *Remarks on the Commencement of the Reign of King Richard the First, by WILLIAM HARDY, Esq.; Communicated in a Letter from the Rt. Hon. LORD HOLLAND, F.R.S. & S.A., to Sir HENRY ELLIS, K.H. F.R.S. Secretary.*

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Read 15th December, 1836.

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South Street, 13th Dec. 1836.

DEAR SIR HENRY,

THE enclosed Communication was sent to me as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, by Mr. William Hardy, an ingenious and diligent young man, who is one of the clerks in that establishment. As it ascertains a fact (hitherto, I believe, unknown), namely, that the regnal years of Richard the First were calculated, not from his father's death, but from his own coronation, and that before the latter event he had the title of *Dominus Angliæ*, not *Rex Anglorum*; I think it worth the notice of the Society of Antiquaries, and in the absence of Lord Aberdeen send it to you, with a request, that at your convenience you will communicate it to that Society.

I am, dear Sir,

truly yours,

VASSALL HOLLAND.

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Duchy of Lancaster, Dec. 9, 1836.

MY LORD,

IT has been justly remarked that, in fixing with accuracy the commencement of the regnal years of King Richard the First, great impediments are felt from the total absence of any Chancery Rolls, or Records of the enrolment

of Charters and Royal Letters, which have been found to afford such conclusive evidence with respect to the date of the regnal years of his successor King John, and of all subsequent monarchs.

The existence of an original charter preserved amongst the archives of the Duchy of Lancaster, which seems to throw some light upon this subject, is conceived to be a fact that might not be altogether uninteresting to the Society of Antiquaries. I have therefore indulged in the freedom of sending your Lordship a transcript of it, which, if you should consider it worthy the notice of the Society, your Lordship might think proper to be presented at one of their meetings.

It is believed that no similar instance has ever been adduced of a charter granted by an English sovereign, between the demise of his predecessor and his own coronation. This charter affords internal evidence of having been granted by Richard the First nearly a month after his father's death, and therein he styles himself only Lord of England, "Ricardus Dei gratia Dominus Angliæ;" it seems therefore to establish the opinion that Richard's reign did not actually commence before his coronation, and that the regnal years of that monarch were not computed from the death of his father, the period usually assigned to his accession; tending also in some measure to support the theory, of late much contended for, that the interval between the death of one monarch and the coronation of his successor, was in the eleventh and twelfth centuries considered an Interregnum.

King Henry the Second is allowed by all authorities to have died at the castle of Chinon on the 6th of July 1189, when Richard his eldest son succeeded to the inchoate right to the throne of England, though not as it seems to the title of King. He was invested, according to Hoveden, with the Dukedom of Normandy on the 20th of July (the feast of Saint Margaret) following; and on the 13th of August the Duke sailed for England from Barfleur. We are not told how long he remained at Barfleur before he obtained a passage, but there can be little doubt that during his stay there, on that occasion, the present charter was given. Richard, however, was not crowned until the third of September following, and the proof that his regnal year was reckoned from that day, and not from his father's demise, seems justly deducible from the fact that in his public instruments he did not assume the style and title of

King before his coronation, taken in conjunction with another original charter existing amongst the Duchy Archives, which is dated at Marseilles, on the third of August, in the first year of the same monarch's reign. In that charter there is sufficient internal evidence to shew that it was made in the year of our Lord 1190; and consequently, if the accession of Richard was dated from King Henry's demise, the third of August, 1190, would have been in the second and not in the first year of the reign.

Another interesting fact apparent from the charter here transcribed is, that King Richard, the first of our sovereigns who in his charters and public letters wrote in the first person plural, did not use that form until after he had been crowned; as throughout this charter he makes use of the expressions "Ego," and "Meus," as did all the preceding English monarchs, instead of the plural number "Nos," and "Noster," which was adopted by him after his coronation, and followed by every succeeding King.

The purport of the charter is to confirm, unto Gerard de Camville and his wife Nichola, all the right and heritage of the same Nichola in England and in Normandy, together with the custody and the Constablership of Lincoln Castle, to hold as freely and entirely as Robert de Haia and Richard de Haia, or any of the said Nichola's ancestors, held the same. Duke Richard moreover grants to them, hereby, Warreville and Puppeville, with the exception of 300*l.* Anjou of land which he had given out of those manors to Richard de Humeto. Amongst the witnesses are John Earl of Morton, the Duke's brother, and several other noblemen who accompanied him to England, and the charter is given under the hand of William his Chancellor, the famous William Longchamp, whom he afterwards made Bishop of Ely. The seal has unfortunately been torn away from the document, and is now lost.

With many apologies for the liberty I have taken in sending your Lordship these remarks,

I have the honour to remain,

your Lordship's

very obedient and obliged servant,

WILLIAM HARDY.

To the Right Hon. LORD HOLLAND,

&c. &c. &c.

R. di gr̃a dñs Angl̃ 7 Dux Norm̃. 7 Aq̃ř 7 Coñ And. Archiepis. Ep̃is. Abbatib̃. Comitib̃. Baronib̃. Justič. Vič. 7 omnib̃ Baiř 7 fidelib̃ suis salř. Sciatis me concessisse 7 p̃senti carta mea confirmasse Gerardo de Canvilla 7 Nicolae uxori sue 7 hedib̃ eoř totũ jus 7 heditatē quā habe debēt in Anglia 7 in Norm̃ de heditate ipsĩ Nicol̃ cũ custodia 7 constabularia castelli Lincolñ. 7 cũ omnib̃ redditib̃ 7 rectitudinib̃ 7 lib̃tatib̃ quas habe debēt. sič Roř de Haia. 7 Rič de Haia. ṽl aliq̃'s añcessoř ipsĩ Nič ea justī. 7 melĩ. 7 lib̃ius. 7 integrius tenuer̃t. P̃terea concessi eis Puppevitt. 7 Warrevillā. sič jus suũ cũ omnib̃ ptinentiis ad ip̃a maneria ptinentib̃. exceptis CCC. lib̃ratis Ľre And̃ quas dedi de maneriis illis Rič de Humeto. Quare volo 7 firmit̃ p̃cipio qđ j̃a dicti Geř 7 uxor ej̃ 7 hedes eorũ om̃ia p̃dicta habeant 7 teneant. bñ 7 in pace. lib̃e. q̃ete. integre plenarie 7 honorifice. cũ omnib̃ lib̃tatib̃ 7 lib̃is consuetudinib̃ suis. ĩ. Johe fr̃e meo Coñ Moriř. Wiffo de Humeř Constab. Huğ de Gurnai. Henř de Novo burgo. Walket de ferariis. Rađ Taissun. Wiffo de Sčo Johe. Roř de Harecurt. Wiffo de Duia. Huğ Bard Marescallo meo. Data p̃ manũ Wiffo Canceřt mei ařd Barbeřt.

[L. s.]