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Edited by Hubert Hall
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The Red Book of the Exchequer

VOLUME 1

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Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town,
Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City

Published in the United States of America by Cambridge University Press, New York

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108053242

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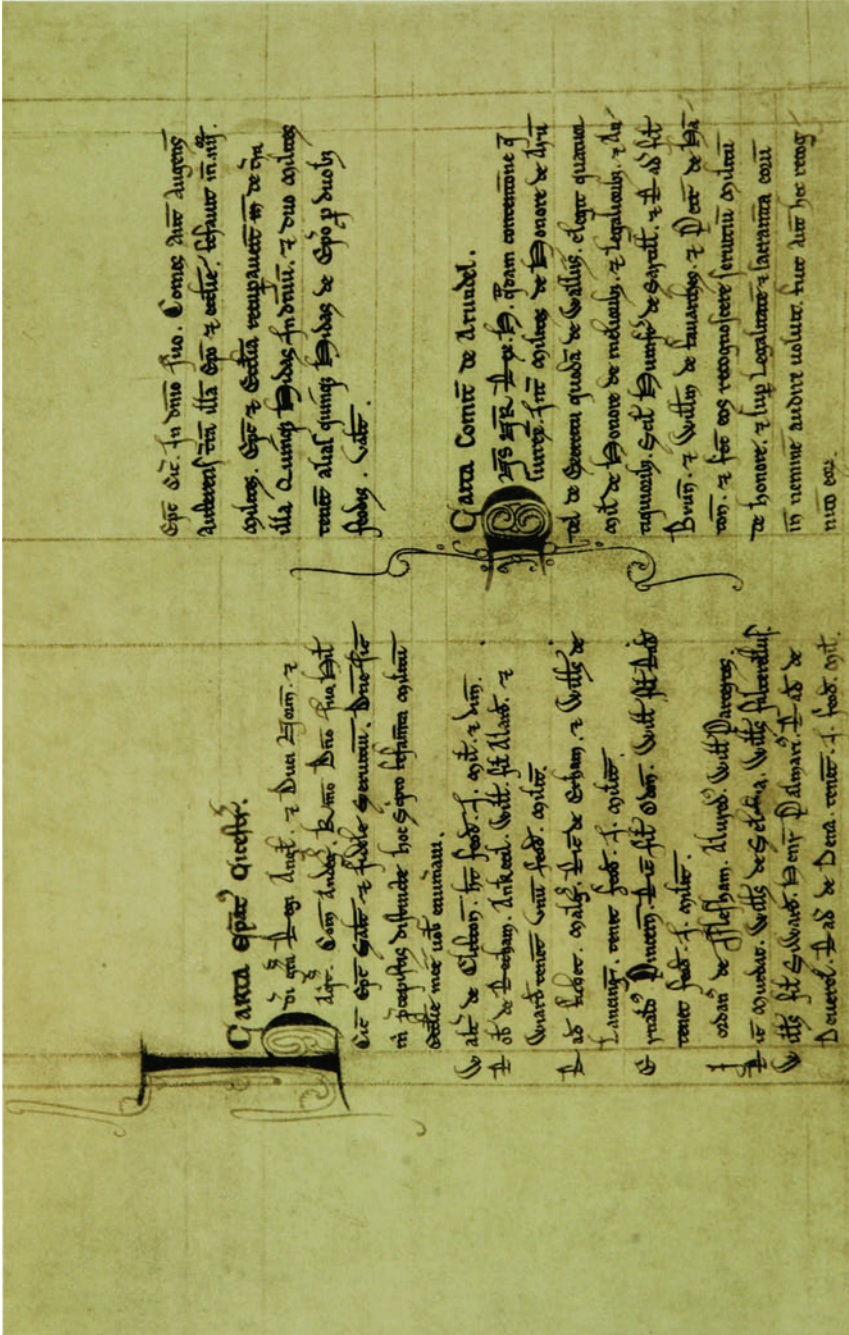
This edition first published 1896
This digitally printed version 2012

ISBN 978-1-108-05324-2 Paperback

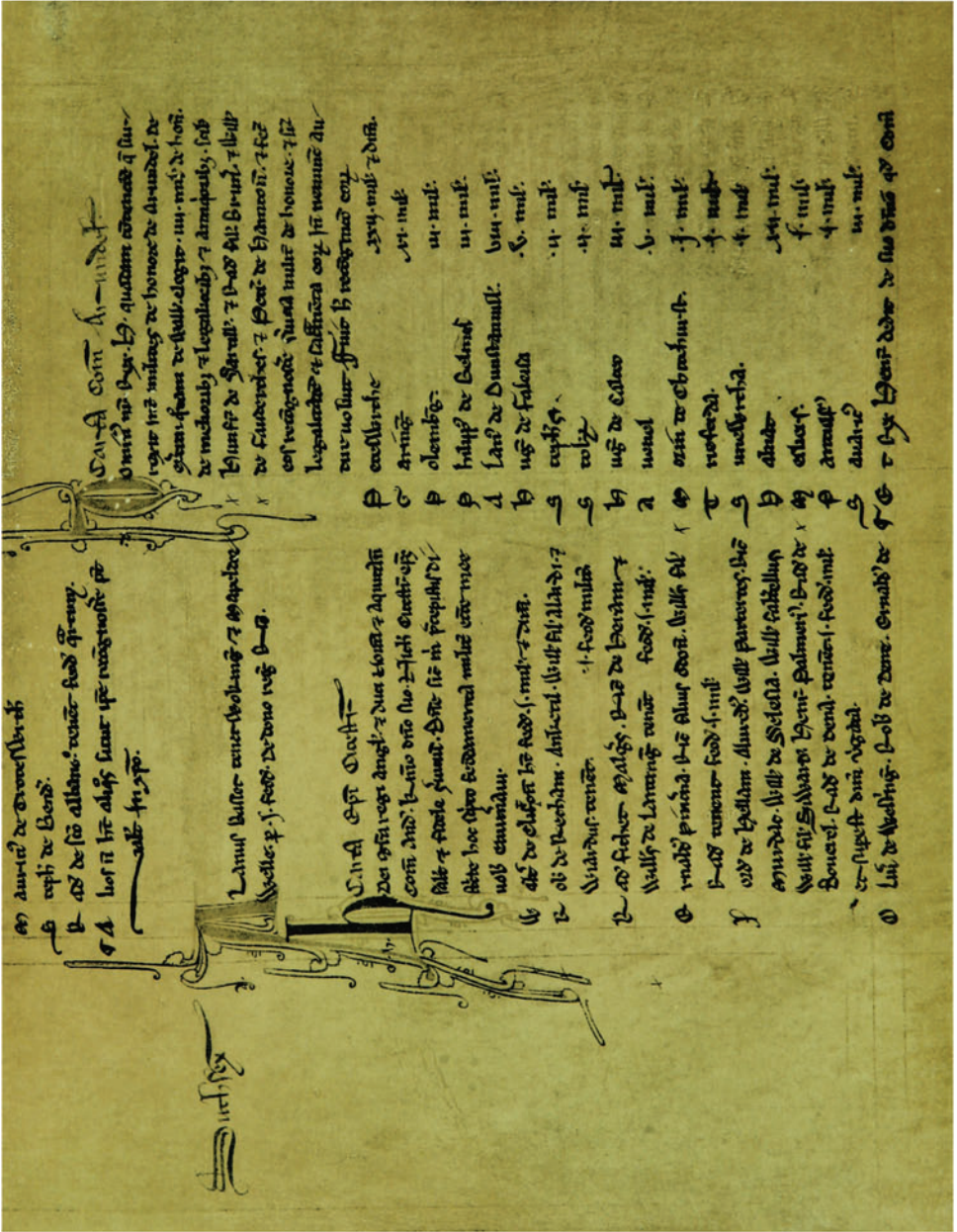
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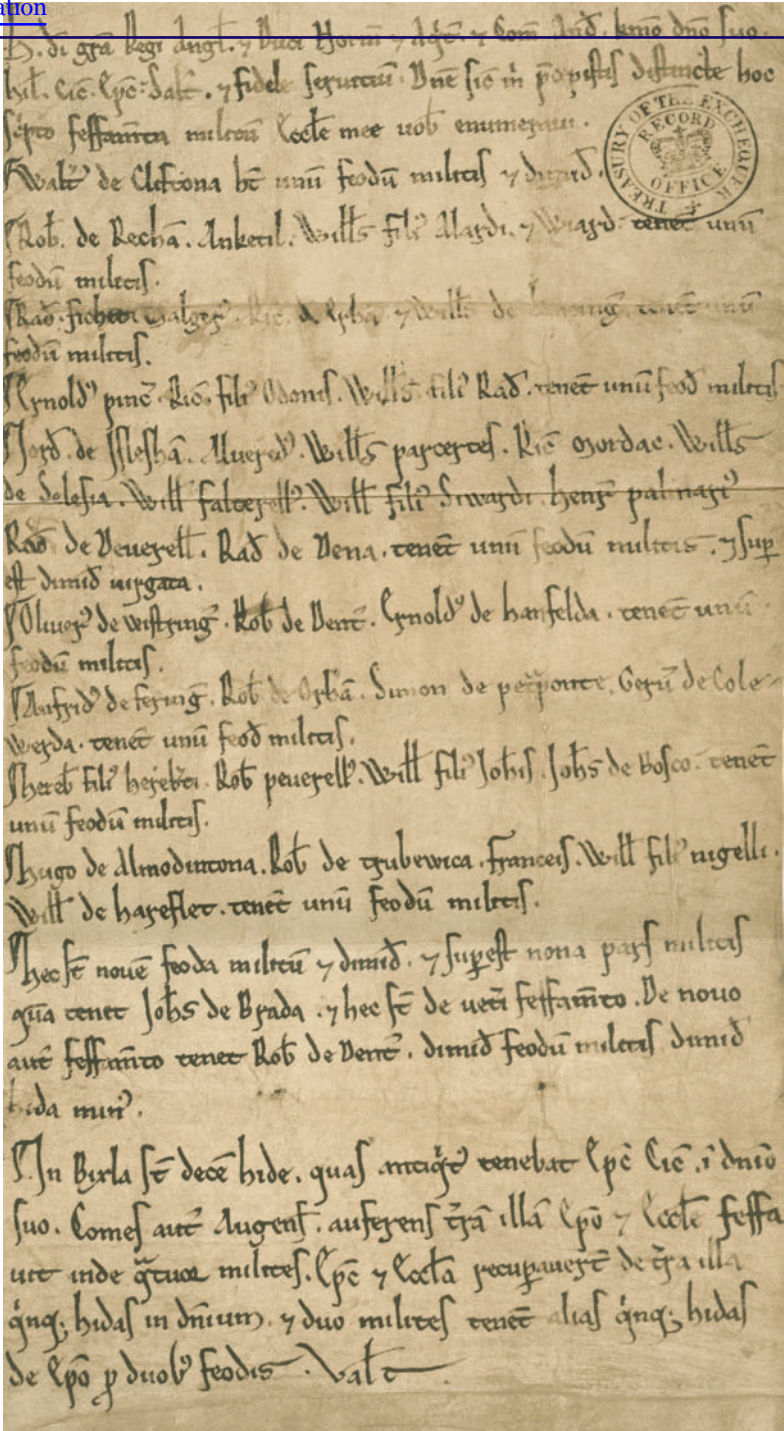


TRANSCRIPT OF THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER'S CHARTER. (From the Black Book of the Exchequer, fo. 13b.)



TRANSCRIPT OF THE BISHOP OF CHICHESTER'S CHARTER. (From the Red Book of the Exchequer, fo. 84d.)

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ORIGINAL CHARTER OF HILARY, BISHOP OF CHICHESTER, [1166].

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THE

RED BOOK OF THE EXCHEQUER.

PART I.

EDITED BY

HUBERT HALL, F.S.A.,

OF THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE.

PUBLISHED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF HER MAJESTY'S
TREASURY, UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

LONDON :
PRINTED FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
And to be purchased, either directly or through any Bookseller, from
EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, EAST HARDING STREET, FLEET STREET, E.C.; or
JOHN MENZIES & CO., 12, HANOVER STREET, EDINBURGH; and
90, WEST NILE STREET, GLASGOW; or
HODGES, FIGGIS, & CO., LIMITED, 104, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN.

1896.

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PREFACE.

I.

THE Red Book of the Exchequer belongs to the class of Entry Books usually termed Precedent Books, but more correctly Registers, or Books of Remembrance. The practice of compiling such works of reference seems to have obtained from a very early date. In the first place, we find a number of official compilations of the very highest value emanating from the clerical staff of the Curia and Exchequer, and designed ostensibly in the interests of the Crown. At one time or another, almost every department of the State has had its Precedent Book, but none can boast of such a collection of historic Registers as that which is still preserved amongst the Records of the Court of Exchequer, including Domesday Book, and a number of kindred Feodaries which are of secondary importance only to the great Anglo-Norman Register itself—the Red Book, the Black Book, *Testa de Nevill*, the Book of Aids, Kirby's Quest, the *Libri Munimentorum*, and many more whose titles are household words to the student of our national Records.

Place of
the Red
Book
amongst
official
Registers.

The Chancery, which made a speciality of stately rolls, as fairly written and nearly as accessible through the consecutive arrangement of their membranes as any entry book, had seldom occasion to resort to a form of Registration which was indispensable for the financial system of the Exchequer. The Common Law Courts, too, were on the whole content with the abbreviated and ill-arranged, yet wonderfully terse and graphic Records, which, like all "headed" rolls, were not calculated to facilitate a speedy reference to

precedents. Registers there were in plenty, containing law collections with Note Books and Reports, but these were rather the result of private industry than of official zeal, and the statutes and public charters of the realm have chiefly been preserved to us in the Chronicles and Memorials of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

Later
 official
 Registers.

Passing from the Middle Ages to the Law Courts and departments of the modern State, we find the fashion for compiling Entry Books fitfully observed down to the close of the seventeenth century. The ancient Courts of Law were distinguished by the increasing copiousness of contemporary Records, and the collection of modern precedents was continued by many hands. Statesmen and officials busied themselves with the task of transcribing mediæval Remembrance Books and treatises, and the vast number of such transcripts (the Red Book itself being, perhaps, the most favoured of any exemplar) scattered throughout the chief manuscript collections of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries bears witness to their industry and discernment. Meanwhile a new Court, that of the Augmentations, undertook, and actually carried out within a few years of the middle of the sixteenth century, the compilation of the most complete and serviceable series of Precedent Books ever attempted before or since. The clerks of the Royal Household were engaged from the reign of Edward IV. upon another great series, which is even yet resorted to by the Lord Chamberlain's Department as an official guide to all ceremonies of State. The Admiralty still possessed its famous Black Book, while from the Restoration the War Office had founded a series of Entry Books which has proved invaluable to the student of military antiquities. Lastly, a number of official Precedent Books of a very miscellaneous character had been compiled by the industrious zeal of successive Secretaries of State, from Lord Burghley to Sir Joseph Williamson.

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The example of the Crown in the making of official Precedent Books was closely followed by those classes of the subjects who had special need of such appliances for the preservation of their individual or corporate interests. Of these the Church was naturally the earliest, the most assiduous, and the most skilful compiler of the choicest evidences of her possessions. Every monastery possessed its Register or Cartulary, the character and historical value of which are too well known to need any description, while the Registers of several Cathedral Churches and Colleges which have survived are at least equally important. At a necessarily later date another splendid series of Registers begins, such as still exist in the proud possession of many a lay corporation, thanks to the half-forgotten offices of some civic Swereford of the fourteenth century.

Analogy
of eccle-
siastical
Registers,

municipal
Registers,

Besides these Entry Books of clerical and lay corporations, a few great bishops and nobles had instituted a very perfect system of registration of their charters and judicial acts, as familiar examples of which may be cited Bishop Kellawe's Register and the Cowcher Books of the Duchy of Lancaster.

and
baronial
Registers.

It is evident, therefore, that the Red Book of the Exchequer was only one of a great class of Registers, designed with the common intention of preserving certain important documents, as well as of displaying them to the best advantage for the purpose of convenient reference. It is merely due to the feudal survivorship of the Crown that so many of the best-known examples of this class were swept from their shelves in the monastic aumbry or the baronial wardrobe, to keep company with Feodaries and Remembrance Books in the iron-bound chests of the King's Treasury at Westminster.

Motives
for their
compila-
tion.

We may not only assume a common motive for the compilation of these Registers, but we may go further and specify the common nature of their contents, which

Typical
contents.

will be found in typical cases to comprise some or all of the following subjects—Charters, Statutes of the Realm, *Placita*, or other public acts, with private Deeds and Ordinances, Correspondence, Chronicles or Annals, religious, physical or legal Treatises, Topographies, Genealogies or Successions, Surveys and Accounts, Precedents and *Facetice*.

The Red Book itself contains some examples of all the above subjects, and we also find that a considerable portion of its contents recurs in independent Registers as a proof of a common origin and purpose.

It is necessary thus at the outset to indicate the probable relationship of the Red Book of the Exchequer with a large and widely-distributed class of muniments in order to realize adequately its generic position amongst Records, which, although generally recognised, has not hitherto been definitely stated.¹ Fortunately, the nature and contents of many of the kindred Registers in official or private custody are so well known that the analysis of the Exchequer MS. given in the Table of Contents will enable the reader to verify at leisure the several points of resemblance which have been alluded to here.

Red, Black, and White Books not to be classified according to their colour.

Another means of classification, which is perhaps more popular, though in reality merely superficial, is to be found in the resemblance of the titles applied to this and other Registers. The Red Book of the Irish Exchequer is still preserved in the Dublin Record Office.² There was formerly a Red Book amongst the muniments of the Corporation of London,³ and one of the ancient Precedent Books of the church of Wells⁴

¹ Since these lines were written, a clear definition of this class of Records has been given by Mr. Scargill-Bird in his valuable Hand-book to the Public Records.

² Report on Public Records, Ireland, p. 159.

³ *Monument. Gildhall*, I. xvii.

⁴ Hist. MSS. Comn. Report, 1885, Appx. 3.

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bore the same title, and the Red Book of Hergest, containing the text of the Bruts is well known. There was even in the fourteenth century at least one other Red Book in official custody, for we find in a contemporary Record the note that a recent eclipse of the sun has been duly entered in "Rubeo Libro vocato Chronicles."¹ Before the close of the sixteenth century provincial Red Books abounded, as, for instance, the Red Book of Jesus College, Oxford,² the Red Book of Bath,³ the Red Book of Derby,⁴ and the lost Red Books of Gloucester⁵ and Nottingham.⁶ It is scarcely necessary to observe that the colour of the leather binding of such Registers is no indication whatever as to the nature of their contents, precisely similar compilations being indifferently known as Red Books, Black Books, or White Books.⁷ Thus, besides the well-known Black Books of the Exchequer at Westminster and Dublin, two other volumes bearing this title were included among the lost Registers of the Guildhall, whose White Book still survives as a thoroughly typical Precedent Book. Similarly, there was a Black Book of St David's, a Black Book of the Church of Holy Trinity at Dublin,⁸ the Black Book of Limerick,⁹ the Black Book of Lincoln,¹⁰ and the Black and White Books of Wells,¹¹ the White Books of York and Southwell,¹² and the Table Books of the Cinque Ports.¹³

¹ Inq., 34 Edw. III., No. 99.

² *Archæologia*, xiv. 218.

³ *Collectan. Top. et Gen.*, I. 403.

⁴ Leofric Missal (Clar. Press).

⁵ Hist. MSS. Comn., xii., Appx. 9.

⁶ Nottingham Corporation Records, iv. 171, *et seq.*

⁷ An exception may perhaps be made in the case of the Black Book of the Proctors in Oxford.

⁸ Report on Public Records, Ireland, p. 307.

⁹ Facsimil. of Irish MSS., III. xix.

¹⁰ Hist. MSS. Comn., xii. Report, Appx. ix.

¹¹ Hist. MSS. Comn. 1885, Part 3.

¹² Hist. MSS. Comn., xii., Appx. 9.

¹³ Hist. MSS. Comn., iv. 428 and v. 488, 568.

The above examples have been chosen to illustrate the widely different nature of certain Registers bearing a similar title, but it may be further pointed out that the very titles of several of these volumes have become inappropriate with the lapse of centuries. The Red Book of the Exchequer is now rather black than red, and the contemporary Black Book of the same Court has, like the White Book of St. Edmunds,¹ acquired a roseate covering, while the well known verses on a fly-leaf of the Guildhall White Book point to a similar transformation as early as the reign of Elizabeth.² Finally, the two famous volumes known as the Liber A. and Liber B., though once red in colour, are now of precisely the same hue as the Red Book of the Exchequer itself.³

The Red Book as a Feodary,

The Red Book of the Exchequer in relation to this class is to be regarded as representing the interests of the royal Exchequer. As a Feodary, this Register accurately determined the liabilities of the tenants in respect of military service or Scutage, or indeed any further assessment wherein the knight's fee served as the unit of taxation. From a narrower view, the officials of the Exchequer were personally concerned in the smooth and expeditious collection of these feudal assessments. Moreover, it was always an object with them to show that whoever else might be liable, they at least were not by virtue of their office, for which purpose it was desirable that the exemptions noted in

¹ MS. Harl., 1005.

² It is a rather curious coincidence that the famous Register E. of the French Chancery, still preserved, which was compiled in the second quarter of the xiiith century by an official churchman of distinction, was also known as a Red Book, or rather as the "Registrum

Rubeum." This also contained lists of knights' fees.

³ Memorandum that on the 19th Jan., 14 Henry VI., the Treasurer, &c., delivered to the keeper of the Privy Seal, "duos libros corio rubio" "coopertos, vocatos Libros de Re-
"membrance" (*Liber Memorandum*, fo. 79 d).

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the Ancient Charters and Pipe Rolls should be perpetuated in a handy-book of reference.¹

As a Cartulary the Red Book of the Exchequer was a most serviceable Register of Surrenders to the Crown, Exchanges, or other Quit-claims, the practical use of which has been positively demonstrated by the labour incurred during the preparation of the Table of Contents to the present Edition, in the identification of the originals or inrolments of the several charters transcribed here. Again, from an official point of view, the terms of many of these instruments involved a very nice adjustment of certain annual charges in the Sheriffs' Accounts—matters which might easily be lost sight of unless the unmatured instruments were “posted,” so to speak, in the Office of the Receipt.

As an Entry Book of State Papers, Statutes, and other Public Acts, this book has long been famous for its choice collection of historical documents, and for its authoritative text. Most of these will be found, as might have been expected, to deal with questions of fiscal interest: Papal Bulls on the subject of first-fruits and tenths; correspondence of the Emperor Frederick II., associated in the minds of Exchequer officials with a recent Marriage Aid; correspondence with the French King, involving a question of homage and of the finances of Gascony; conventions with Flanders, based upon supplies of men and money, and negotiations with Scotland connected with an historical obligation. The Statutes and Ordinances entered here are chiefly such as relate to the government or reformation of the Exchequer, while even if the more ancient and interesting of the remaining Public Acts do not directly concern the business of this Court, they were such—the laws of Henry I. and

¹ *Dialogus de Scaccario*, i. 11.

the Anglo-Norman Charters of liberties, for example—as invited the studious attention of every official of the Curia, which owed its own origin to the resultant definition of the constitution.

and as a
Precedent
Book of
the Ex-
chequer.

As an Entry Book of Departmental Precedents and *Memoranda*, the Red Book of the Exchequer deserves the highest praise. The Officers of State were sworn upon the oaths entered in its pages down to our own times. Forms of writs, directions for renewing tallies, every kind of information that might prove useful to future generations of chamberlains and clerks, to the just measure of a hundredweight of office wax, was scattered over its fly-leaves, blank folios, and spacious margins, in addition to the classical treatise upon the system of the Court, and the remarkable writs of Protection that were intended to illustrate its doctrine of Exchequer privilege.

Curiosities
of the MS.

It was only fair that, with this strict attention to official business, a little worldly gossip should have crept in to lighten the perusal of interminable columns of knights' fees and precedents. This irrelevant matter is, however, very slight: A description of Babylon and a few other excerpts from some monastic register; an account of the coronation of Eleanor of Provence, in which, moreover, the professional subject of Serjeanties was introduced; a few royal genealogies and a calendar of regnal years, useful for official ready-reckoning; and a solitary distich with a moral tendency, while even the dignified Black Book of the same Court could count a hundred poetic essays, besides the relief of various pen-and-ink sketches.

Its autho-
rity as a
book of
Evidence.

It will be evident from the above outline of its contents that the Red Book of the Exchequer was undoubtedly a compilation of the greatest value and utility to the officers of the Court, and it may also be gathered from several contemporary notices that its authority was at least highly respected by the

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Courts of Law and frequently invoked by other departments of the State.

The notices in question, which might easily be multiplied, are chiefly of inrolments ordered or found to be made in this book, or of appeals to its authority in cases before the Courts.¹

It is evident from the recurrence of the entry, "scrutato Libro Rubeo," that this Register had come to be acknowledged as an authority on questions concerning the tenure of lands, in which it might even be exemplified in the same way as Domesday Book itself. Herein, however, an important reservation was made by the King's Justices, to the effect that such Registers might be received "pro evidentiis sed non pro recordo"² and that, as to the Red Book itself, "il n'est mie de Record cy."³

From these and certain later notices it would seem that the Red Book of the Exchequer was preserved in the custody of the Treasurer and Barons, or more immediately in that of the King's Remembrancer, as a precedent book of the Court from a very early period, perhaps from the year 1246.⁴ In the reign of Henry VI. this Register, with other important Exchequer Records, was ordered by the Crown to be transcribed.⁵ This transcript does not appear to have survived, but there is evidence of considerable attention having been bestowed

The Red Book in official Custody.

¹ Ancient Deeds, A. 350, 355, 1875.

Pat., 12 Edw. III., Pt. I., m. 17.

Plac. Parl., 28 Edw. III., Appx., p. 666.

Inq. P. M., 30 Edw. III., No. 46.

Tower Misc. Rolls, No. 268.

Rot. Parl., II. 263 b.

Year Book, 43 Edw. III., p. 21.

Liber Custumarum, II. 2, 471.

L. T. R. Memor. Hil., 9 Ric. II., rot. 1a.

Pat., 8 Ric. II., Pt. I.

Mich. Com., 2 Edw. II., rot. 42a.

Pasch. Com., 34 Edw. I., rot. 33a.

² See the caution posted at the beginning of the MSS. of the *Testa de Nevill*.

³ Year Book, 47 Edw. III., p. 21.

⁴ *i.e.* the year of Swereford's death. The practice of bequeathing such compilations for departmental use was not uncommon.

⁵ MS. Cotton, Vesp. C. 14, fo. 508.

upon the original in the course of the next century in the shape of the addition of most of the forms of oaths and the Tables of Contents, while, as previously mentioned, it was during this same period that numerous transcripts were made of the better known portion of its contents.

From the end of the seventeenth century down to the date of its transfer¹ into the custody of the Master of the Rolls, references to the Red Book of the Exchequer abound in the works of antiquaries and genealogists.² We learn further that the Book was still in the custody of the King's Remembrancer, having been always preserved in an iron chest within that office.³

II.

Integrity
of the
existing
Red Book.

The subject of the official custody of the MS. raises a question of the gravest importance in connection with its integrity, in view of certain early references to transcripts of documents which are no longer, in their original form, at least, included amongst its contents. A few years ago, Mr. L. Owen Pike, the learned editor of the "Year Books," drew attention to a remarkable instance in which a document, which is stated in two contemporary Records to have been enrolled in the Red Book in the 11th year of Edward III., is only represented in the existing volume by a copy entered out of place in the reign of Henry VI., and for other reasons obviously intended to replace the earlier entry.⁴

Case of an
Exchequer
Record in-
terpolated.

The discovery in question was the result of Mr. Pike's verification of a reference made by Sir Edward Coke to certain proceedings in the case of a Writ of

¹ 17 May 1870.

² *e.g.*, Dugdale, Madox, Le Neve,
Hearne, Hunter, Eyton, &c.

³ Communicated by R. Hankins,

Esq., of the Queen's Remembrancer's Office.

⁴ Year Book, 14 Edw. III. (Rolls),
pp. xx-xxv.

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Error in the 14th year of Edward III., entered at fo. 322 d of the Red Book. This entry, however, proves to be a fifteenth century copy of a Record enrolled in the Memoranda of the 11th year of Edward III., reference to which again exhibits the following conclusive note :—“ Et memorandum quod breve præscriptum et aliud breve de quo fit mentio superius, sunt inter Communia de hoc anno xj^o; et cætera contenta in dicta certificatione annota[n]tur modo specialiori in Rubro libro de Scaccario, et in Recordis et processibus habitis coram Baronibus ad placita ibidem.”¹

There can be no doubt as to the date of the substituted entry in the Red Book, since apart from the character of the hand and position at the end of the volume, the expression, “ Edwardi tertii nuper regis Angliæ ” is decisive, and there existed moreover a strong motive in the reign of Henry VI. for restoring the missing entry. It must also be regarded as a fatal objection to a theory which has been strongly advanced in defence of the integrity of the MS.² that the expression “ annotatur ” is one of those most frequently used to denote an official enrolment, and that it actually occurs in the cross-reference from the later Red Book entry to the Memoranda.³ Therefore the phrase was not loosely used, as has been suggested, by way of reference to the *Dialogus*, or the writs of Protection entered in an earlier part of the Red Book. Besides this, the second writ referred to can actually be identified in another part of the Memoranda Roll, and therefore is not the “ cætera contenta,” as has also been suggested. Clearly the meaning is that the proceedings in the Exchequer, as forming the body of the Record, were entered contemporaneously with an

¹ Q. R. and L. T. R. Memoranda, Hil. Communia, 11 Edw. III.

² *Athenæum*, 10 Nov. 1888.

³ “ Consimile Recordum annotatur in Memorandis hujus Scaccarii,” &c.

official preamble in the Red Book, in the same way as the "Ordinances of the Exchequer,"¹ and several other Statutes and Records, "more especially" for the information of the Treasurer and Barons.

Second case of the *formule* of mediæval oaths omitted.

It is well known that during the last three centuries of the preservation of the MS. in the custody of the Queen's Remembrancer, frequent reference was made to a certain portion of its contents for the purpose of administering various oaths of office according to the prescribed *formulæ*. The greater number of these oaths being entered in a sixteenth century hand on the fly-leaves of the Book, this view of its official use, although perhaps more familiar than any other, has generally been regarded as a matter of purely modern interest. It is, however, an interesting fact that a certain Red Book was from a very early period recognized as the formular for the oaths of allegiance of the magnates of England; and that it was apparently preserved in this connection, amongst the most sacred relics of the King's private Treasury. But this is not all that we thus unexpectedly learn concerning an eventful episode in the life-history of this belated Red Book. We are able to trace its progress with the King from Westminster to Scotland during the last ten years of the reign of the first Edward, carefully packed in one of the Wardrobe chests, between the folds of the State cloths of gold, or at other times lying wedged between the skull of one of the Eleven Martyr Virgins of Cologne and the fingers of Edward the Confessor, in the very *penetralia* of the Treasury of the Chamber.

It was in a Wardrobe Account² of the 31st year of Edward I. that the Editor first found a notice of an Exchequer MS. in the above unusual surroundings, the

¹ Table of Contents, Nos. 258-261. These are entered *sub pede sigilli*, as to the significance of which see Cooper on the Records, s. v. "Red Book of the Exchequer."
² Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe 32.

Account in question being an inventory of the Treasury of the Wardrobe taken at Westminster, in which the contents of the several chests are described, and amongst others those of a "small leather coffer" filled with cloths of gold and samite, amongst which we find "Liber Rubeus qui vocatur textus super quem Mag-nates Angliæ solebant jurare."¹ The clue to the further discovery that this portion, at least, of the Wardrobe Treasury was not stationary at Westminster was found in the mention of a gold cup given to Edward by his second Queen as a New Year's Gift on the first of January, in the 30th year, and delivered into the Wardrobe at Linlithgow. It was evident, then, that some part of this treasure had recently travelled from Scotland, and a careful examination of the remaining Accounts of the reign revealed the following remarkable circumstances:—

A very minute inventory of the contents of the Wardrobe at Westminster in the early part of the 24th year establishes the fact that no Exchequer MSS. were at that time preserved there.² We find, however, that the chest in which this Red Book of Oaths was preserved in the 31st year, had been despatched from Berwick to London on the 17th September of the 24th year in company with the Scotch regalia taken at Edinburgh and a chest, "in quo continentur scripta magnatum et aliorum Regni Scotiæ de fidelitatibus suis et homagiis post guerram Scotiæ anno xxiv^{to}."³ These chests seem to have remained at Westminster between the 24th and the 28th years, for an inventory, taken there in November of the 27th year, mentions the

¹ That this is an official and not merely a literary title is shown by the description given in these same Accounts to the stone "Super quam reges Scotiæ solebant coronari."

² Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe 2^g.

³ Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe 2^g. These were doubtless the original engagements, of which a certain number still survive. They have been printed by Sir F. Palgrave in "Scotch Documents."

“*Liber Rubeus super quem magnates solent jurare.*”¹ Another inventory taken in April of the 28th year states that a portion of the contents of the Wardrobe at Westminster had been “trussed” for a journey to Scotland. The MS. is again mentioned in this account,² and it seems almost certain that it followed the Court to Linlithgow, whence it was despatched to Westminster some time after January of the 30th year, and was deposited once more, as we have seen, in the Wardrobe Treasury with other regalia and relics.

This was in November of the 31st year, and it was at some date during the next six months that the famous robbery of the Treasury took place, that is to say, of the Wardrobe Treasury situated in the vaults of the Chapter House.³ It is possible, therefore, that this Red Book was amongst the contents of the chests rifled by the robbers, and that it was contemptuously tossed aside when the jewelled shrine of the Cross of St. Neots presented itself as a more tempting spoil,⁴ for, at least, it does not appear in the inventory of the treasure recovered.⁵ Finally we meet with a notice of this Book once more on the road to Scotland, which on this occasion it was not destined to reach. In the inventory of Edward I.’s effects, taken immediately after his death at Burgh-on-the-Sands, we find the same Red Book in company with the heterogeneous volumes which had throughout shared its travels—the Book of Chronicles, the Book of Romance, the works of devotion, the two unknown Registers with silver-gilt plates,⁶ together with the

¹ Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe $\frac{2}{13}$.

² Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe $\frac{3}{13}$.

³ Antiquities and Curiosities of the Exchequer, p. 28.

⁴ Pike, History of Crime, I. 198–202. T. of R. Misc. $\frac{2}{2}$.

⁵ Q. R. Misc. Wardrobe $\frac{2}{13}$.

⁶ As throwing some light upon the preservation of some of these seemingly trivial works in the Royal Treasury, an entry in the Issue Roll, Mich., 39 Edw. III. may be quoted, which records the purchase of 1 Bible, 3 books of

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Cross of St. Neots, and the panoply of political relics. Even the young Queen's gift of five years back was there, with the inevitable trunk of the cloths of gold.¹

Two questions naturally arise from a consideration of the above remarkable occurrences. In the first place we may ask was this possibly the Red Book of the Exchequer? It will be observed that the volume mentioned in these accounts was best known in connection with the ceremony of receiving the oaths of fealty of the English barons, and the inference might be drawn that Edward I., whose characteristic diplomacy in his feudal relations with his troublesome neighbours of Scotland and Wales and his own outspoken barons took, like that of Louis XI. of France, the form of exacting oaths of fealty upon certain sacred emblems, carried an official formular about with him for this purpose, in company with the Cross of St. Neots, the Black Rod of Scotland, and the other relics which were undoubtedly used on these occasions.² In this case the book would supply the forms of oaths as

romance, 1 Juvenal, and 1 Portiforium from the goods of Henry de Tatton, "because it was certified to the King that the same related to the solemnity of the Feasts, and were of great value." The plated books here referred to may possibly have been the same as are stated to have been stripped by order of the Council, and melted down in the reign of Edward VI. (Audit O., Declared Accounts, Bdle. 1533, Roll I.)

¹ The atmosphere of the charnel-house which pervaded the official and diplomatic life of the Court is quite depressing, even to a modern student of the Household Accounts of this reign. During the last ten years especially, the King could not

move without a whole assortment of coffers and shrines filled with relics and a museum of choice curiosities, such as a vial of dragon's blood, a griffin's horn, &c. Amidst these melancholy surroundings we are not surprised to find a Wardrobe clerk embellishing his account with the following sorrowful ejaculation.—"Ego dixi in dimidio dierum meorum, Vadam ad portas Inferi."

² Wardrobe Account, 28 Ed. I. (Soc. of Antiquaries), p. xxx. In the Close Roll, 34 Edw. I., m. 3 d., a description is given of the oath taken by James, Seneschal of Scotland, on the Host and on the cross of St. Neotts and the Black Rod of Scotland in the King's presence.

well as the emblems of and verses from the Evangelists, upon which, and not upon the New Testament itself, the oaths were taken; but it is quite clear that neither the *formulae* in question nor the emblems, which we may suppose to have resembled those depicted in the contemporary Black Book of the Exchequer, are to be found in the modern Red Book of that Court,¹ although existing fragments point to the entry of such oaths as early as the thirteenth century.²

There is, again another possible explanation of this incident; that the King was engaged during this period in collecting materials for a statement of his case in respect of the overlordship of Scotland, and that the most authoritative collection of precedents in point was preserved in this Register.³ It is possible, therefore, that the latter may also be identified with the Red Book of Fees which was delivered on the 20 Jan. 1301, under the Seal of the Exchequer to the Keeper of the Queen's Gold, to be carried to the Parliament at Lincoln.⁴ Now it was in this Parliament that the English Baronage issued the famous manifesto in which, after full deliberation and inquiry, they denied the right of the Pope to interfere in the Scotch dispute,

¹ The form of oath taken by the Scotch King and his barons will be found in Palgrave's "Scotch Documents," and in the proceedings printed in the *Fœdera*, I. 762-84. We know further that the chamberlain attended on this and similar occasions (Close Roll, 21 Edw. I., m. 8d.), and this officer was the legal custodian of the Red Book and other Exchequer Records.

² In addition to these original *formulae*, which seem to have been recovered, stitched in, and transcribed at the close of the xvth century, we know that a *formula*

for the Chancellor's oath must have been used at the Exchequer, for an interesting direction for administering the same is given in the Q. R. Memor. Roll, Easter, 35 Edw. I., rot. 38.

³ See below, pp. xxviii, xxx.

⁴ Q. R. Memor., 29 Edw. I., Rot. 31 d., a reference for which the editor is indebted to the kindness of Mr. John A. C. Vincent. Several Memoranda of this Parliament were preserved in the Exchequer in Bishop Stapleton's time (Kal. fo. 173).

reiterating the several points on which the King had relied ten years previously, based upon the documents which were found enrolled in this book.

That Edward was quite equal to the responsibility of removing a Record from official custody is proved by his action in the case of certain Chancery Rolls at this very date, the chest in which they were contained being broken open by the King's orders, and the Rolls forwarded to Scotland. The Exchequer officials, however, seem to have been allowed the cost of a new lock and key.¹

The second question that arises in connection with this possible disposition of the Red Book in the King's Wardrobe² is, how did the officers of the Exchequer fare whilst deprived of their highly-prized Register? During the greater part of the period the Exchequer was resident at York, having been transferred thither in the 26th year. From the detailed description which exists of the mode of transfer on this and a subsequent occasion in the next reign, we gather that the entire contents of the Treasury, including the Records and Tallies, were conveyed with enormous labour to the northern capital.³ It is conclusively proved by another Wardrobe account of the 35th year⁴ that the Red Book mentioned above was received by the King from Walter de Langton, the Treasurer, and the theory that this MS.

¹ Close Roll, 20 Edw. I., m. 13 d.

² Although no one who was acquainted with the peculiar functions exercised by the Wardrobe during this reign or with the dispersal of the contents of the central Treasury would be surprised at the above incident, it may be advisable to point to one undoubted instance of an Exchequer Register being lodged in the former department during this period. This was the *Liber*

Feodorum or *Testa de Nevill*, and the reference is to the Pells Memoranda Roll, Mich. 30 Edw. I.

³ Chronicles of Edw. I. and II. (Rolls), I. 286. Cf. Q. R. Memor. Brev. Pasch., 26 Edw. I., and Q. R. Memor. Commun. Hil., 15 Edw. II., which gives the best account of the proceedings of such a transfer.

⁴ Q. R. Wardrobe 33.

was either the Red Book of the Exchequer, or the entry book of the *formulae* of official oaths which it formerly contained, receives further confirmation from the omission of several intended entries, an omission supplied by stitching the originals in their proper places.¹ We are especially struck with the omission of such documents as the "Confirmatio Cartarum" and the "Articuli super cartas" in the 25th year, and that of the "Statute of Carlisle" in the 35th year. It is even possible that the fine copies of these documents, still preserved among the originals of the Exchequer Miscellanea are the actual exemplars from which the entries should have been made had the Red Book been available at the time.²

Third case
of the
order of
Richard I.'s
coronation
omitted.

A third instance of palpable omission is furnished by a passage in the History of Matthew Paris. At the conclusion of the description of Richard I.'s coronation in the "Historia Anglorum" the following remarkable note is appended by the author:— "Officia prelatorum et magnatum quæ ab antiquo jure et consuetudine in regum coronationibus sibi vindicant et facere debent, in rotulis Scaccarii poterunt reperiri."³ This note is partly written over an erasure, but in the *Abbreviatio* by the same author the following note is embodied in the text:—"Et quia exigit plenitudo historiæ officia quorundam magnatum qui (*sic*) in coronationibus habent implere, de antiqua consuetudine, lectorem hujus libelli abbreviati ad historiam transmitto prolixiorum, quæ in consuetudinibus Scaccarii poterit reperiri."⁴ As there exists at the present day no Exchequer roll or custumal in which an account of the services rendered at the Coronation of Richard I. is entered, it

¹ In one case the original thus inserted bears the contemporary note "Scribatur hoc primo in Libro Rubro."

² T. of R. Misc. 2¹/₂a, 5²/₈, 6²/₈. See

Bishop Stapleton's Calendar, fo. 150, in support of this view.

³ *Hist. Anglor.* (Rolls), II. 8.

⁴ *Ibid.* III., 209.