

CHAPTER V.

*Missing Rectors—Pympton—Fulshaigh—The Bankes of Winstanley—Upholland—
Monasteries—First M.P.'s and their Payments—Clyderhou—Wycliffe's Opinion of
Parsons—Charter Restored—Clyderhou's Father.*

FROM the combined information derived from the lists of rectors which I have seen, the first three are John de Mansel, who was rector before 1249, when he granted his parish charter; Adam de Waleton, rector in 1292, when he was tried at Lancaster, and lost the borough charter; and then Robert de Clyderhou, who was instituted to the living on 22nd September, 1303. It is very evident that, during that period, there must have been other rectors; and I now submit to the reader two names more, with my reasons for presuming that they were rectors in that period. Frederick Peake, Esq., of London, has, amongst other charters belonging to the Standish family, one from William, the son of William de Standish, to — Pympton, chaplain of Wigan, in which William de Standish is a witness. The charter is dated 28th Edward I., that is, ten years after the disgrace of De Waleton. There was only one church in Wigan, and that All Saints', with which Pympton must have been connected, and, although he is only here called chaplain, he may, nevertheless, have been rector. Although the rectors often absented themselves for very long periods, I believe he was neither a mere *locum tenens* nor a priest after the order of the modern curate. Had he held any subordinate ecclesiastical position he would not have been recognised by such a high family as that of the Standishes, especially in the matter of an important charter. The Standishes were one of the most wealthy and aristocratic families of the neighbourhood at this period, and held many possessions in the borough of Wigan itself. I consider therefore that Pympton may not unreasonably be placed as rector in 1299. Moreover, I think that from these same charters a second missing link is obtained. In the fourteenth century there were, independent of the *pro tem.* rector, Henry de Chaddesden, eight rectors of Wigan; so that each held the living on an average of less than thirteen years, and the likelihood is that between De Mansel and De Clyderhou there were at least three

rectors. Although curates of modern times, simply because they wear the broadcloth, generally have their choice of the best marriageable ladies of their district, it was not so in olden times, when they were poor and without prospects, and when heroes or men of family alone were chosen as husbands. In 1309, not a clergyman, but a clergyman's son, Henry, son of Richard Fulshaigh, married Mabel, daughter of Jordan de Standish. This Richard Fulshaigh had been clergyman of Wigan, and bestowed extensive estates on the young couple and their heirs, reserving only his town (Wigan) house of Bremlegh and adjacent gardens. To this matrimonial agreement Henry Waleys, rector of the church of Standish, was a witness. A clergyman of such wealth, influence, and social position could scarcely have been less than the rector himself. Against this statement must, however, be placed the fact that De Clyderhou was made rector six years before, yet it is not improbable that this Richard Fulshaigh may have resigned. Five rectors certainly did resign the living, and he may have done so too. This would make the first five rectors of Wigan to be Mansel, Waletton, Pympton, Fulshaigh, and Clyderhou. Amongst these Standish charters it may be here mentioned there is another of 3rd Edward II., from William of Wigan to William, the son of Jordan de Standish, of all his estates, real and personal, in Wigan, as well as one by which William, son of Jordan de Standish, father of the above-named Mabel, enfeoffs William, the son of Nicholas of Wigan, and Matilda, his wife, in all the lands, &c., which had been conveyed to him by Richard de Ince, and Alice, his wife. According to the usual custom these charters were published by affixing copies of them on the Parish Church doors. All claims and rights to these estates were relinquished by Edmund Fulshaigh, the son of Henry and Mabel, by a specially published charter in 1358. The witnesses to the deed, or charter, were Gilbert de Ince, Richard de Huyton, William de Bradshaigh, William de Assheton, Henry de Pemberton, and others, all of which names are still preserved in Wigan and the neighbouring townships. To this charter is attached "a small seal of red wax, very perfect, and from a very beautifully-cut matrix. It bears a ram's head, and the inscription round it appears to be as follows, but the letters are very small and not very clear:—SI. SALLIDONIS. LE. CHOFEARE." (Local Gleanings.) Nearly all the charters of the Standish family were drawn up and dated at Wigan, which shows that attorneys then, as now, were an important and prosperous class in the borough.

The marriage ceremony at this time, and until the reign of Edward VI., did not take place before the altar, as now, but in the porch of the church, or before the church door—a custom common to rich and poor. There, too, christening and funeral ceremonies took place, and it was considered the only place where a marriage dower could be lawfully assigned. Selden says, in his *Uxor Hebraica*, Opera III., p.

680, "Neque alibi quam in facie ecclesie et ad ostium ecclesie, atque ante desponsationem in initio contractus (ut juris consultus nostri veteres aiunt) sic fundi dos legitime assignari potuit." The ceremony gone through at the porch was really the same as that of the present day before the altar, only the language was somewhat more quaint and expressive. According to this custom was the marriage, *ad ostium ecclesie*, in the 13th year of Edward I. (1285), of Henry Fulshaigh to Mabel Standish at Wigan Parish Church. In connection with this custom Chaucer says, in his "Wife of Bath :"—

"She was a worthy woman all her life;
Husbands at the church door had she five."

The Bankes of Winstanley and the Woodcocks of Wigan are the local descendants of Robert de Holland, who, about 1300, built Upholland Church, in the Wigan parish, and dedicated it to St. Thomas (Thomas à Becket) beside his castle. The latter has entirely disappeared, and only insignificant ruins of the former remain. This church was made into a priory of Benedictine monks, and largely endowed with estates in Holland, Orrell, &c. The priory was established because of the disagreements of the canons and the neglect of public worship. There were originally twelve monks, but at the time of the sequestrations of church possessions in the reign of Henry VIII. there were in the establishment five ecclesiastics and twenty-six servants, and the valuation, according to the reliable Dugdale, was £61 3s. 4d. per annum. The priory was sold in 1546 to John Holcroft for £344 12s. In 1307 De Holland received special permission to fortify his castle, but most of his estates were afterwards confiscated; an attempt was made to recover them by force, and in 1377 the family is recorded to be again in peaceable possession of all. Upholland was the property of Stenrulf, the Saxon, and was afterwards given to De Grealet, baron of Manchester; it was then owned by the Hollands, and in 1717 was sold to the Ashurst family by Lady Ashburnham; finally it was purchased from Ashurst by Sir Thomas Bootle, whose descendant, the Earl of Lathom, now owns it.

Monasteries and abbeys were raised all over the country. Rich laymen founded chantries as private gates to heaven, and many monasteries and abbeys were founded by ambitious priests merely as commercial speculations, much as people now-a-days build limited liability palatial hotels. Of course, many were the fruits of honest religious zeal, although their monks and abbots were zealous because zeal re-paid them. The working bees of these hives—the monks—often did the work of the most degraded menials, but the heads were kings and queens that revelled in extravagant luxuriousness. Their solemn countenances before the duped public became jovial within the walls, and licentious pleasure beamed in their rubicund faces. Their larders, cellars, and coffers were well filled. The miseries of this life were unseen at their private boards. Still, whether monasteries were commercial or celestial speculations,

they did much good, for they suited the tastes, creeds, and necessities of the age. No matter how good or great the work meant to benefit the public may be, it will fall useless to the ground if unsuitable to the age. Many reforms might be enacted in all governments, and the necessity for them may be observed by far-seeing men, but he would be a bad politician and a failure who attempted to introduce them before the country was in a fit state to receive them. Many persons of finely-cultivated tastes now deplore the depravities of the British stage; but the managers are not to blame, for they but cater to the public taste, and they, the best judges, declare that to represent the high-class drama is but to court insolvency, which they cannot reasonably be expected to do to please even the refined minority. So, too, however great or numerous the failings of the monastic system may have been, or however much now deplored, they were the necessities of the age. They appropriated the rich benefices of the age, which, although dens of corruption and shows of deception, were nevertheless the Unions—*houses of religious correction*, seminaries of learning, and colleges of art and science. Young men were there trained in the doctrines and art of mediæval superstitions and religion; and devotees made pilgrimages to them with their Peter's pence and first-fruits, and were treated in return to a peep at some weeping, or eye-rolling, saints, and the benediction of the Pope's vicar. By some strange perversion human nature can think of sanguinary battles as glorious victories, and so the tastes of the monastic period declared these to be noble institutions and the abode of virtue, pious prayer, and nothing more, until times and customs changed and the reaction set in, when they were believed to be all that was villainous and unholy.

Patriotism in uncivilised countries or inferior powers develops itself into military actions. Selfishness is a deeply-grounded principle of human nature, yet no true man seeks his individual interest with greater zeal than he shows for the maintenance or accumulation of his country's glory and greatness. In the early stages of civilisation, before the national intellect has been developed, physical force must determine the position of a country, and every man's force is absorbed by the national body which is directed to defence or defiance. Every man feels that his power is a necessary unit in the support of his country, so he proudly does his duty. In an advanced state of civilisation, however, physical force gives place to the matured intellectual capabilities of the nation, and patriotic, become intellectual, conflicts, so that distinguished statesmen are as much the heroes of modern history as field-marshal were of the ancient. Nothing makes a man more patriotic than giving him a share, however small, in the government of his country. Human nature is gratified by the responsibility of being trusted with honour, and one who has any share in making a law will be certain to maintain it. Thus every enfranchised Englishman,

as a part of the English government, is patriotic to a degree. If to be so insignificant a unit of the Constitution be an honour, how much more so must it be to be the representative of a constituency or the leader of a party? It is an honour from which none are restricted, at which many aim, yet which few attain. It is an expensive social luxury, full of dignity and importance. The Constitution has been the slowly-developed work of Englishmen, and every man is proud to represent it in the House. Charter after charter of dearly-purchased liberty has been granted, and the king compelled to vow, "We will sell to no man, we will deny or delay to no man, either justice or right."—(Magna Charta).

There were great constitutional changes in the reign of Edward I., chiefly in that the sovereign could not levy any tax without the consent of Parliament, which, of course, the Commons took great advantage of by refusing to vote supplies until the king granted their wish. Many rich and influential towns were for the first time requested to send up representatives whom the borough or county represented had to pay. In 1295 Wigan was one of these one hundred and twenty towns. The writ was addressed to the sheriff of the county, and ran thus:—"Because we desire to have a conference and treaty with the earls, barons, and other great men of our kingdom, to provide remedies against the dangers the same kingdom is in at this time, therefore we have commanded them, that they be with us at Westminster on the next Sunday after the feast of St. Martin, in winter next coming, to treat, ordain, and do, so as those dangers may be prevented. We command and firmly enjoin thee that, without delay, thou dost cause to be chosen, and to come to us at the time and place aforesaid, two knights of the counties aforesaid; and of every city, two citizens; and of every burgh, two burgesses, of the most discreet and fit for business: so as the said knights may have sufficient power for themselves and the community of the county aforesaid; and the said citizens and burgesses may have the same power, separately for themselves and the community of cities and burghs, then to do in the premises what shall be ordained by the common council, so that for defect of such power the business aforesaid may not remain undone, and have then the names of the knights, citizens, and burgesses, and this writ. Witness the king at Canterbury, the third of October."—(Oldfield's Hist. House of Com., I., 177). This mandate of the king calling for burghal representatives was really a royal stratagem, meant to please the people with feelings of self-importance, so that in their moments of self-adulation the representatives themselves, chosen from the leading towns, might support measures for taxing their own constituencies as good precedents of loyal feeling, for the king had already failed to draw sufficient money from them. The four ancient boroughs—Lancaster, Preston, Wigan, and Liverpool—were the only towns in the county called upon to return members, and William Teinterer and Henry

le Bocher were returned for Wigan at the wages of two shillings a day, which they were paid on their return, after showing their briefs (as a proof that they had done their duty), given by Sir John de Kirkeby at the king's command. The feelings of the importance of being represented in Parliament grew feeble as the expense increased, and the benefits derived decreased with the growing exactions of tyrannical kings. So indifferent and callous had the people become that the sheriff called on the town to send two members to Parliament, but neither did the burgesses show any alacrity in their choice, nor were willing candidates easily found. To merchants it was a loss of time, which to them was money, and by few was it then considered an honour, whilst the burghers considered it a profitless luxury which they most grudgingly paid for, and sought by all means to evade. Every year the members became fewer and fewer, and some burghs even bought themselves from their enforced privilege. So burdensome was it to some towns, and so anxious were they to be rid of it, that during a hundred years, from the reign of Edward I. to that of Henry VI., the sheriffs of Lancashire actually refused to return the names of any of the boroughs, because "of their poverty," or, as one replied, "There is no city in the county of Lancaster;" and, doubtless, the burgesses of Wigan were thankful to their sheriffs. Whether they were or not, it is certain that no representative was returned for Wigan after Simon Payer and John le Merser were returned in 1306, until, in 1547 Alexander Barlow and Giles Carus were returned for the then prosperous borough.

With the advance of civilisation grows the desire for intellectual cultivation. Those who are not themselves gifted with tact or talent sufficient to beget distinction strive to cling as closely as possible to some rising genius of the age, so that they may thus be thrown at least into the brilliance of reflected glory, or that their names may descend, like those of many artists, in the skirts of the garments of the great. Displays of physical strength were long the only source of lasting glory, and consequently great men were oftener found in the field than in intellectual circles. Parliament was supplied from amongst the undemonstrative and unambitious, who, intellectually advanced beyond their age, longed for what others considered ephemeral ideas or a political millenium. Money-making burgesses could not afford to give up their mercantile chances for thankless parliamentary drudgery, and men of ambition saw glory only in the coat of mail. But the introduction of printing changed all this, and produced a revolution in men's motives and careers, and then intellectual guides were more honoured than field-marshal. The Senate House became the centre of a natural political system, which had its satellites of genius, with their intellectual planets and fixed stars that became visible only by their borrowed light. The infantile giant Press reflected the light of wit, humour, and wisdom until the interest of the whole country was

attracted, and many pressed to get into the very centre of light with the hope of being an honour to their country and a credit to themselves. The most insignificant borough in the kingdom was a gateway to the political arena. The wicket-gates had grown rusty on their despised hinges, but then there was a rush to get through, and thousands wished to enter where only one could pass. Political princes purchased boroughs and passed their sons or friends into the magic circle. There were bulls and bears on the political 'change. Prices were high, because the eager candidates were many. For 240 years Wigan despised its privilege, returned no member to Parliament; and yet, in the eighteenth century, the Duke of Portland paid £20,000 to become patron of the borough. The Wigan burgesses had the power of creating life burgesses, just as the Government have the power of creating life peers to extend their influence in the House of Lords.

This simply meant the demand of a higher price from the opposed candidate. Boroughs were bought and sold, like advowsons, and, although illegal, the purchase was winked at by the law, encouraged by ministers, and maintained by custom. Men of no local influence often sat for the borough simply because the purse-strings were controlled by the patron. Money put the member in at one election, and a higher bidder threw him out at the next. Votes were the birthright of the burgesses, and they expected parliamentary annuities for them. Men of the highest distinction and capability have sat for Wigan—viscounts, earls, barons, knights, and distinguished citizens. Soldiers, sailors, and civilians, high in their respective orders, have represented it. Its members have specially been distinguished for legal knowledge and attainments. Ministers of the crown and judges of the kingdom have served it. There were many fierce struggles and keen competitions in the old days of the hustings, when opposition was not confined to pugnacious menaces and violent speeches. Every force was brought to bear on the elections by both parties. Law was disrespected for the time by the candidate for the Legislature, and the electors were a law unto themselves. Degenerate custom, riding in the chariots of bribery and corruption, was the undisputed rule of the campaign.

The name of the son of the first M.P. for Wigan occurs as one of the principals in the following Culcheth deed, showing that he held property in Scholes:—Monday after the Feast of the Assumption, 3rd Edward II. (22nd August, 1309), Henry Fitz William le Teinterer grants to Gilbert de Culcheth a loft in Wigan, lying in Scholes, to hold of the lord of the town of Wigan and his successors. The witnesses to the deeds are Richard de Ines, Adam de Bradshaigh, John Gilybrond, John de la Croye, John de Byrkened, William Bussel, John Fitz Hugh le Merienar, William Fitz Wala and Hugh, *the Clerk*. The five following Culcheth deeds of this period are also of local interest:—

XXXIX.—At Hyndelegh, Friday after the Epiphany, 1320. *William fitz Thomas de la Hyndelegh* grants to *John le . . .* his uncle, and the heirs of his body, land and buildings in Hyndelegh, which the grantor had from his father *Thomas*, who hold them of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem.—Witnesses: *Gilbert de Culcheth, Richard de Ines, Richard del Stanistreet, Henry Lowe, William Tinctore.*

XL.—Sunday after the Feast of St. Dunstan, the Archbishop 16th Ed. II. (1322). *Adam fitz Margery de Hyndelegha* grants to *William fitz Thomas le Duk* and *Margery* (the daughter of *John*, the son of *Henry*, the son of *Sylbe*), wife of the said *William*, and the heirs of their bodies, all the lands he had by the feoffment of the said *William* in Hyndelegha; remainder to the heirs of the body of *William*, remainder to the said *John fitz Henry fitz Sylbe* in fee.—Witnesses: *Richard le Ines, Gilbert de Culcheth, Adam de Bradshaigh, Richard del Stanistreet, Hugh de Thursekar, Hugh*, the clerk.

XLI.—Friday after St. Nicholas' Day, 1322. *Richard fitz Adam fitz Richard*, being full of age, demises to *Gilbert de Ockelechaghe* a piece of land in Hyndley, the same which *Hawota*, the Miller's widow, held. To hold for nine years.—Witnesses: *Richard de Ines, William de Assceton [Ashton], Richard de Stanystrate, Hugh le Jew, William Tinctore, Hugh*, the clerk.

XLII.—Wyndhul. Friday next after St. Mark's Day, 1324. *Robert de Hyndelegh* grants to *Geoffrey de Urmeston* and *Margery*, Robert's daughter, and the heirs of their bodies lawfully issuing all his lands in Winstanley, Eccleston, and Glest, called Blakhil, &c.—Witnesses: *Gilbert de Sothecworth* (then sheriff), *Gilbert de Haydok, Adam de Kenyan, Richard de Ines, Richard de Wulstan, Henry de Athirton, William fitz Richard de Urmeston, Hugh*, the clerk.

XLIII.—Friday in the week of Pentecost, 18th Ed. II., 1324. *Margery*, who was the wife of *William fitz Thomas le Duk*, of Hindley, in her pure widowhood, gives to *John fitz Henry*, her father, all the lands and buildings which she and her husband had by the feoffment of *Adam fitz Margery de Hyndeleghe* in Hindley.—Witnesses: *Richard de Ines, Gilbert de Culchith, Adam de Bradshaigh, Richard de Stanistrete, Hugh de Thursekar, Hugh le Jew, Hugh*, the clerk.

The priests were the only men of any learning of the age, and therefore there was a demand for their services in secular employments, from which the emoluments were often very considerable, and it is not to be wondered at that Wycliffe had good occasion to remark, "Our priests be so busy about worldly occupations that they seem to be better bailiffs or reeves than godly priests of Jesus Christ." Henry, Earl of Leicester, whose rebellion Clyderhou secretly, and by public preaching, fostered and furthered, had in his gift several important legal and lay appointments, and by his means the rector of Wigan, his adherent Clyderhou, was appointed a Clerk in Chancery, which office he held for thirty years, by which he was much enriched. But success brings success and wealth accumulates wealth, and so we find the already successful and wealthy lord of Wigan receiving other lucrative appointments. He was the king's escheator for that part of England lying between the river Trent and London, and seemingly for the North of England at the same time, for, although no one was allowed to hold his escheatorship for more than one year, several mandates are found requiring Robert de Clyderhou to act both north and south of the Trent. These commands directed him as king's escheator to take into the king's hand as escheats the manors, estates, lands, and occasionally the goods and chattels of persons therein named. He is last named as "escheator beyond Trent" in the ninth year of Edward II. (1316), when he was appointed to the living of Gargrave. He was

appointed to the abbey and convent of Sawley, 23rd September, 1316, but if that was not simply as *locum tenens* he must have been again promoted, as he was in less than a year (April 22nd, 1317) succeeded by Sir Adam de Armysn.

By way of corroborating Wycliffe's statement, it may be related that William de Blackburn had taken possession of certain lands belonging to Robert de Clyderhou, consisting of eight acres of land and three *rodes* of meadow, with appurtenances, in Dutton; but Robert was a clerk in the king's court at Lancaster, and knew something of law and the acuteness of lawyers, so he managed to recover these lands in 1301-2. Having been successful in recovering the *seizin* of one property, he made bold to lay legal claim to another, then held by William, son of Nicholas de Mitton, and consisting of one messuage, of 10 acres of land, half an acre of meadow, and fourpence of rent, with appurtenances, in Acton (Aighton); and in this also he was successful.—(Ab. Rot. Orig., vol. I, p. 124, Rot. 17). In 1312 he received a grant of free warren of Salisbury. In 1313-14, amongst the Great Fines, there is an entry to the effect that "Robert de Cliderhou, parson of the Church of Wigan, made fine with the king for five marks (£3 6s. 8d.) to have confirmation of a certain charter."—(Ibid, p. 207, b. Rot. 19). In 1329-30, by charter, there was granted to him a market and fair at Wigan.—(Cal. Rot. Charter, p. 161 b). In 1330-31 he made a fine in 20 marks (£13 6s. 8d.) to have license for assigning his manor of Bayley to the abbot and monks of Cockersand.—(Ab. Rot. Orig., vol. II, p. 47 b, Great Fines). From the rolls of Reddisseisins (1333-4), and within a year of his death, he, in the court of the king at Clyderhou recovered his *seizin* against Adam, son of Hugh de Clyderhou, and John, son of Hugh de Clayton, of 36 acres of land, six acres of wood, six acres of meadow, and the eighth part of a mill, with appurtenances, in Clyderhou and Dynkdeleye.—(Ib., p. 82, b Rot. 33).

While the brave, warlike, and sagacious Edward I. was lying on his death-bed at Burgh-in-Sands, near Carlisle, in 1307, his soldiers were still practising the art of war, often in friendly, though mortal, combats. But the work of the assassin was as common as the display of the gallantry of the knight. Whilst Robert de Clyderhou, with a regiment of the king's soldiers, was stationed at Bayley, he was assaulted by the force and arms of three brothers—Ralph, William, and Geoffrey de Bradehull, and was killed. The same Robert is supposed to have been the father of the celebrated Wigan parson and treason-priest by proxy. The three brothers were tried at Westminster, found guilty, and fined £200.—(*Placitorum Abbreviatio*, p. 300, b.) On the site at Bayley, where his father fell, Robert de Clyderhou founded a chantry, which was only demolished in 1830 to give place to improvements.

In 1292, for the maladministration of justice by the burgesses and De Waleton, the lord of the manor, Wigan lost its liberties, but on the representations of John

Bryn the prohibition was withdrawn and the rights again fully restored to Robert de Clyderhou in 1314. It was a year of disaster and distress to the whole nation. The battle of Bannockburn was lost, the miseries of famine were working havoc among the rich and poor, barons were unable to maintain their retainers, who, reduced to the saddest straits of distress and despair, became robbers and highwaymen. They pillaged the rich, and the honest poor were compelled to live on the meanest food, for every town was reduced by the dreadful siege of famine until herbs, horses, and dogs were considered savoury food by those fortunate enough to find them. The exchequer of the king was empty, and money was wanted to carry on war and supply the wants of a riotous sovereign. The whole country was discontented, and Edward was compelled to seek the favour of his subjects, and, therefore, granted liberties to several opulent towns. This state of affairs, coupled with the intercession of Bryn, was the means of restoring to Wigan its original charter for five marks. The mayor was immediately called upon to provide the king with money upon the security of his private domains and eight per cent. interest, although the legal interest for loans then was 45 per cent. Amongst the witnesses to this charter were the Earl of Hereford, who was afterwards slain while attempting to cross the river after the battle of Boroughbridge, and Hugh le Despenser, the obnoxious favourite of the king. For twenty-one years had the borough rights been suspended, and the burgesses held at the king's mercy. Twenty-one years of political disgrace! Twenty-one years of anxious daily wonderment as to what should really happen! Surely the keenness of the reproach and the anxiety of burghal despair had worn away. The town has since then frequently longed for, and, at the same time, feared a Royal Commission. In the heat of political disappointment petitions have been presented by disappointed parties, who, in their calmer moments, have looked tremulously at the foreboding results. Guilty bribers have trembled at the very thought of exposure and their unhappy connection with stern and resolute law, while innocent voters have mourned over the prospective loss of the borough franchise. Five times have petitions been made from Wigan. From 1292 to 1314 Wigan first suffered for its political pollution, and no doubt the confirmation and ratification of the Royal Charter in 1314 was hailed with as great delight as the authenticated news of "No Commission" in 1882 was to modern bribers whose consciences had been pent up in anxious despair.

My original intention was not to give a full copy of the charter of the 7th Edward II. (1314), as the greater part of it merely recites, verbatim, the whole of the first charter, and only confirms the same. It is the same with every one of the first six charters; each one recites every one previously granted, and adds a little more, and thus a copy of the sixth charter contains six charters. The

original parchment is in the Town Clerk's Office in a good state of preservation, but only a small portion of the seal now adheres to the attached cord. As, however, exceedingly few persons have seen the charter, I here place a copy of it and its translation before the public:—

7th EDWARDI II.

“Edwardus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ et Dux Aquitaniæ Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Inspecimus Cartam quam celebris memoriæ Dominus. Henricus quondam Rex Angliæ Avus noster fecit Johanni Mansel dudum Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygan in hæc Verba: Henricus Dei gratia Rex Angliæ Dominus Hiberniæ Dux Normanniæ Aquitaniæ et Comes d'Andes Archiepiscopis Episcopis Abbatibus Prioribus Comitibus Baronibus Justiciariis Vicecomitibus Præpositis Ministris et omnibus Ballivis et Fidelibus suis Salutem: Sciatis nos concessisse et hac Carta nostra confirmasse et nobis et Hæredibus nostris dilecto et fideli nostro Johanni Mansel Parsonæ Ecclesiæ de Wygain quod Villa sua de Wygayn Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod Burgenses ejusdem Burgi habeant Gildam Mercatoriam cum Hansa et aliis libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus Et quod nullus qui non sit de Gilda illa Mercandisam aliquam in predicto Burgo faciat nisi de voluntate eorundem Burgensium Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod habeant Soke et Sak et Thol, et Theam, et Attachiammentum infra Burgum predictum es Infangenthes et Urfangenthes, et quod quieti sint per totam Terram nostram et per omnes portus Marit de Thelonio Lestagio Passagio Pontagio et Stallagio Et quod nullam Secutionem Comitatum seu Wapentachiorum faciant de Tenuris suis quas tenent infra Burgum predictum—Concessimus etiam eisdem Burgensibus et eorum Hæredibus quod quicumque Mercatores petierint Burgum predictum cum Mercandis suis de quocunque loco fuerint sive extranei sive alii qui de pace nostra fuerint vel de Licentia nostra in terram nostram venerint salvo et secure ad predictum Burgum veniant cum Mercandis suis et salvo ibidem morentur et salvo inde recedant faciendo inde rectas et debitas Consuetudines Prohibemus etiam ne quis prædictis Burgensibus injuriam vel dampnum seu molestiam faciat super forisfacturam nostram decem Librarum.—QUARE volumus et firmiter præcipimus pro nobis et Hæredibus nostris quod prædicta Villa de Wygayn liber Burgus sit imperpetuum et quod prædicti Burgenses habeant prædictam Gildam mercatoriam cum Hansa et cum aliis Libertatibus et liberis Consuetudinibus ad Gildam illam pertinentibus et quod habeant omnes alias libertates et liberas Consuetudines et Quietantias sicut prædictum est:—Hujus Testibus Ricardo Comite Cornubiense fratre nostro, Rogero de Pygot Comite Norfolcense, Petro de Saband, Willhelmo de Ferrariis, Radulpho Fit Nichol, Willhelmo de Cantilupo, Johanne de Plessset, Paulino Peyner, Roberto de Mustengros, Bartholomæo Peche et aliis. Datum per Manum nostram apud Wodestok vicesimo sexto die Augusti Anno Regni nostri tricesimo: Nos autem Concessionem Confirmationem et Prohibitionem prædictas ratas habentes et gratas eas pro nobis et hæredibus nostris quantum in nobis est, dilecto Clerico nostro Roberto de Clyderhou nunc Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ et Successoribus suis Parsonis ejusdem Ecclesiæ et Burgensibus Burgi prædicti Concedimus et confirmamus sicut Carta prædicta rationabiliter testatur et prout prædictus Robertus et Prædecessores sui Parsonæ Ecclesiæ prædictæ ac Burgenses prædicti et eorum Antecessors libertatibus prædictis a tempore Confectionis Cartæ prædictæ huc usque uti sunt rationabiliter et gavisal.—Hujus Testibus Gilberto de Clare Comite Gloucester et Hereford, Humfrido de Bohun Comite Hereford et Essex, Adamaro de Valencia Comite Pembrock, Hugone le Despencer Edmundo de Malolacu Senescallo Hospitii nostri et aliis. Data per Manum nostram apud Novum Monasterium Septimo Die Junii Anno Regni nostri Septimo.—GULLING.”

7TH EDWARD II.—(1314).

"Edward, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitain. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers, and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects Greeting: We have inspected the charter which the Lord Henry of renowned memory, formerly King of England, our grandfather, made to John Mansel, late parson of the Church of Wigan, in these words: Henry, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy Acquitain, and Count of Angers. To all archbishops, bishops, abbots, priors, earls, barons, justices, sheriffs, chief ministers, and bailiffs, and his faithful subjects Greeting. Know ye that we have granted and by this our charter confirmed for us and our heirs to our beloved and faithful John Mansel, parson of the Church of Wigan, that his Vill of Wigan may be a borough for ever, and that the burgesses of the same borough may have a Guild Merchant, with a treasury and other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that no one who is not of that Guild may make any merchandise in the aforesaid borough, unless of the will of the same burgesses. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs that they may have soke and sak and thol and theam and attachment within the said borough and infangenthef and utfangenthef, and that they may be free throughout our whole land and through all the ports of the sea from toll, custom, passage, pontage, and stallage, and that they may make no suit of the Counties or Wapentakes concerning their tenures which they hold within the borough aforesaid. We have also granted to the same burgesses and their heirs, that whatsoever traders shall come to the borough aforesaid with their merchandises, of whatsoever place they shall be, foreigners or others, who shall be of our peace or of our leave shall come into our land, may come safely and securely to the aforesaid borough with their merchandises and safely there may stay and safely from thence may return by doing there the right and due customs; we do also prohibit that no one may do injury or damage or molestation unto the aforesaid burgesses upon our forfeiture of £10. Wherefore we do will and firmly command for us and our heirs that the aforesaid Vill of Wigan be a borough for ever, and that the aforesaid burgesses may have the aforesaid Guild Merchant, with the Hanaper and with the other liberties and free customs to that Guild belonging, and that they may have all other liberties and free customs and quittances as is aforesaid. Witnesses hereto, Richard Earl of Cornwall, our brother, Roger le Pygot Earl of Norfolk, Peter de Saband, William de Ferrers, Ralph Fit Nichol, William de Cantilupo, John de Plesset, Paul Peyner, Robert de Mustengros, Bartholemy Peche, and others. Given by our hand at Woodstock the 28th day of August, in the 30th year of our reign. And we holding the grant, confirmation, and prohibition aforesaid ratified and in good part do grant and confirm for us and our heirs as much as in us is unto our beloved clerk, Robert de Clyderhou, now the parson of the church aforesaid, and his successors, parsons of the same church, and the burgesses of the borough aforesaid, like as the charter aforesaid reasonably testifies; and as the aforesaid Robert and his predecessors, parsons of the church aforesaid, and the burgessors aforesaid and their ancestors, have hitherto reasonably used and enjoyed the liberties aforesaid, from the time of making the charter aforesaid. Witnesses, Gilbert de Clare Earl of Gloucester and Hereford, Humphrey de Bohun Earl of Hereford and Essex, Adamaro de Valentia Earl of Pembroke, Hugh le Despencer, Edmund de Malo Lacu, steward of our household, and others. Given by our hand at the New Monastery the 7th day of June, in the 7th year of our reign.—GULLING."

John Gerard received Ince as the dowry of his wife, Ellen, daughter of Richard de Ynce, in 1399. Eight of the family were colonels in the royal army during the Great Rebellion. Ann, daughter and heiress of Thomas Gerard, who died in 1673, married John Gerard, son of Sir William Gerard, the third baronet, but died without issue. The manor of Ince was obtained by purchase by Colonel Richard Gerard, son of the second baronet. It was again sold by William Gerard, Esq., to Alexander,

sixth Earl of Balcarres, but the hall passed in marriage with Mary, sister and co-heiress of William Gerrard, to John Walmesley, Esq.

Abram, originally Adburgham, was held by Richard de Adburgham, by gift of Henry II., in fee farm, and Isabella, daughter and co-heiress of John Abram, of Abram.