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A WESTMINSTER FABRIC ROLL OF 1253.

MR. URBAN,—Among the records deposited in the Public Record Office, one has been lately discovered by Mr. Burtt, entitled “A Roll of Payments of Wages, and of Purchases for the Works at Westminster, 37 Henry III.,” which, by the courtesy of Mr. G. G. Scott^a, I have had the opportunity of examining. It is so perfect a specimen of this class of documents that I venture to hope that the following account of its contents may interest your readers.

It contains the entire accounts of the building works during thirty-two continuous weeks, beginning with the first week after Easter, which in that year, 1253, fell on April 20; consequently the works in question began on Monday, April 28, and the last week of the roll ended with Saturday, December 6. The account for each week is complete in itself, but no day of the month is mentioned, neither are the weeks numbered continuously, although for convenience I shall designate them as if they had been.

The first six weeks are indicated as first, second, &c., after Easter (Ebd' prima post Pasch' . . .) The seventh week was Whitsun week, and was evidently kept as a holiday, but is not mentioned in the roll; the week next following the sixth after Easter, being termed the first after Pentecost, is thus actually the eighth week from the beginning of the account roll. This enumeration continues to the fifteenth week, which is termed the eighth after Pentecost. The sixteenth week begins a new series, termed the first, second, &c., “after the agreement for wages for eight weeks,” (Ebd' prima post pacacione^b stipendior' pro viii^{to} Ebd'.) This enumeration continues through twelve weeks, and carries us to the end of the twenty-seventh week of the roll. The twenty-eighth is termed the first week after the feast of All Saints, and the succeeding the second, third, &c., concluding with the “Ebdomada v^{ta},” or thirty-second week of the whole, which closes the account.

At the head of each week one or more saints' days are sometimes mentioned in a peculiar manner. Thus, to begin, the complete title of the first week is,—

“Ebd' prima post Pasch' continente festum Apostol. Philip' et Jacobi p' die' Jovis quod est d'ni Regis et festu' Inventionis S^ce Crucis p' die Sab' quod est cem'tar'.”

^a See GENT. MAG., June, 1860, p. 584, and July, p. 33.

^b PACATIO . . . pactum, conventio.—*Ducange*.

First week after Easter, containing the feast of the Apostles Philip and James on Thursday, which belongs to the King, and the feast of the Invention of the Cross on Saturday, which belongs to the masons.' The second week is similarly said to "contain the feast of St. John ante portam Latinam on Tuesday, which belongs to the King;" and the third week is "sine festo." Thus throughout the roll feasts occur, sometimes two in a week, but generally only one. Fourteen of the weeks have none. Whatever feasts are mentioned, however, are assigned alternately to the King and to the masons. The only intermission of this rule is in the twenty-seventh week, where the feast of SS. Simon and Jude ought to have been given to the masons, but is assigned to the King, apparently because of the fact stated in the title of the week, that it is the first day of his regnal year ^c.

It may be presumed, therefore, that the feast-days thus assigned to the masons were kept as a holiday, and that they worked on the feasts assigned to the King, who in this roll is the employer of the masons.

I am not aware that this curious custom has been noticed by any previous writer. I have set down in the note below the list of the saints' days selected ^d. It is probable that in other years some other principal saints would have been also included which happen in this year to fall on a Sunday.

Having now discussed the titles to shew the mode of designating the weeks, we may examine the accounts themselves. They are placed, for every week, under two heads, the wages and the purchases, or *emptiones*. The sum of each of these is separately stated, as well as the total. The nature of these payments will be best understood by giving a translation of one week complete; for, generally speaking, the workmen, the materials, and other items recur nearly in the same order in every week. There is a great advantage in this; for as the same terms are repeated, it happens that in some cases they are written more at length than in others, or spelled in a more intelligible manner, and thus the collation of so many examples of the same word greatly assists the interpretation of the unusual or technical expressions.

"Second week after Easter, containing on Tuesday the feast of St. John ante portam Latinam, which belongs to the King":—

^c This is the title of the twenty-seventh week:—"Ebd' xij^a contin' festu' Apostolor, Sim' et Jude quod est dni' Regis anno Regni Henr' xxxvij^o incipiente et festu' o'ium S'oor' p'die Sab' quod est cam't. . . ."

^d List of the feast-days assigned alternately to the King and the masons, and marked R and C accordingly:—"Philip and James, R; Inven. S. Crucis, C; John ad port. Lat., R; Ascension, C; John Bapt., R; Thom. Mart., C; Magdalen, R; James, C; Pet. ad vinc., R; Assumpt., C; Decollatio, R; Nativ. B. M., C; Michael, R; Trans. b. Edw., C; Luke, R; Sim. and Jude, R; Ounn. S'co'm, C; Martin, R; Edmund, C; Katerina, R; Nicholas, C."

^e "Ebd' ij^a post Pasch' contin' festu' bi' Joh'is an' portā Latinā p' diē martis quod est

"To wages of 39 cutters of white stone, 15 marblers, 26 stonelayers, 32 carpenters with John and his partner at St. Albans, two painters with an assistant, 13 polishers, 19 smiths, 14 glaziers with four plumbers, 15^l 10^s 1^d. [This will give an average of 1s. 10d. per week.]

"To wages of 176 inferior workmen with overseers and clerks, and two two-horse carts daily, 9^l 17^s 2^d. [About 9d. a week.]

"Sum of wages, 26^l 7^s 3^d.

"EMPTIONS.—To Master Albericus for arrears of *form-pieces* . . . 66^s; 53 feet of *carpents*, 4^d per foot; 59 feet of *voussoirs with fillets* at 3^d per foot; 1221¹/₄ feet at 3^d per foot; . . . 50 *assises* at 5^d each assise; 42 *chamberands*; 22 feet of *maignans*; 243 feet *cerches*; 9 feet of *bosses*; and seven *steps*, cut by taskwork, 7^l 13^s 1^d.

"Item, for 9 *capitals*, 68 feet of *escus*, 1,591 feet of *cerches*, 54^s 4^d.

"Item, for 25 hundred and a-half quartern of chalk for the vaults, 8^l 7^s 4^d."

"Item, for 22 hundred and 3 quarterns of freestone, 6^l. 16^s. 6^d. To Roger of Reygate for 8 hundred and a quartern of freestone, 58^s. 7¹/₄^d. To Richard the limeburner for 3 hundred of lime, 15^s. To Agnes for two hundred and a half of lime, 12^s. 6^d. To Richard of Eastcheap for 2 dozen hurdles or crates¹ with poles, 9^s. 7^d. To Richard Oggel for 5 dozen hurdles with poles, 12^s. 6^d. To Henry of the bridge for iron nails and whetstones², 19^s. 8^d. To Benedict for carriage, portorage, and weighing of 23 cartloads of lead, 9^s. 4^d. To Richard for *litter*^h, 18^d.

"Sum total of emptions, 27^l. 12^s. 10¹/₄^d.

"Sum total of the week, 53^l. and 1¹/₄^d."

This week may be taken as a fair specimen of the whole. The first part

d'ni Regis in stipend' xxxix. albor' ciss' xv. marm' xxvi. cubitor' xxxij. carpent' cū I. et socio suo ap'd Sēm Alban' Duobz Pictor' cū s'viente xij. poll' xix. fabr. xiiij. vitar' cū iij^o plūbator', xv^l x^s d'. In stipend' clxxvi. op'ar' cū custodibz clericis cū ij. big' diurnis, ix^l xvij^s ij^d.

"Sm^a stipend', xxvi^l vij^s iij^d.

"*Emptiones*. Mag'ro Alb'co p' arreagiis formar' et . . . lxxvj^s, p' liij. ped' de p'pen' p' ped' iij^d, lix. ped' de folsur' cū fil' p' ped' iij^d, m^l cc. et xxj. ped' et d'i p' ped' iij^d . . l. assisib' p' assise v^l, xlij. chamberand', xxij. ped' maignanz, ccxljij. ped' cerches, ix. ped' de boseus, et vij. passibz cissis ad tasch', vij^l xij^s j^d. It' p' ix. capitell', lxvij. ped' de escus, m. v^l iij^l xj. ped' de cerch', liij^s et iij^d. It' p' mm. v^l d'm q'rt' pendent' crete, vijij^s vij^d. It' p' mm. cc. et iij. q'r france petre, vj^l xvj^s vj^d. Rogero de Reygate p' vijij^c q'rt franc' petre, liij^s vij^d ob'. Ricard' Calfon' p' ccc. calc', xv^s. Agnes p' cc. d'm calc', xij^s vj^d. It' Ricard' de Estchep p' ij. duoden' cratiel'ar' cū virgis, ix^s vij^d. Ricard' Oggel p' v. duoden' cratiel'ar' cū virg', xij^s vj^d. Henr' de Ponte p' clavis ferri et gressiis xix^s. vij^d. Bened'co p' vect'ra, portag', et pesg, xxij. char' plumb', ix^s iij^d. Richo' p' litia, xvij^d.

"Sm^a total' emp'conu', xxvij^l xij^s x^d ob'.

"Sm^a total' Ebd', liij^l et d' ob'."

^f In the Westminster Rolls (printed by Smith, Antiq. of Westminster, p. 182, and Brayley and Britton, Hist. of Houses of Parliament, pp. 151, 153), "Hurdles for the scaffolds of St. Stephen's Chapel" occur 4 Ed. III., &c., with beams, and poles, and "leather thongs to tie the said beams and hurdles together." The original Latin is not generally given in these publications, but in one case Smith (or rather Hawkins), p. 184, has "twenty-four hurdles *pro viis super dictam scaffottam*," which explains the use of the hurdles to serve in lieu of the planks we now employ.

^g "Henr' de Ponte p' clavis ferri et gressiis," xixs. But in the previous week we have "Henr' de Ponte p' gresse ad Martella acuenda." Ducange gives "GRESSIUS Silex. gall. grés," (i. e. sandstone or grit). The *gress* for sharpening the *picks* or *stone-hammers* is therefore, not the English word *gress*, as it might appear, but a *whetstone*.

^h "LITERIA, stramentum."—Ducange.

informs us of the number of workmen of each kind that were employed in daily labour; the second part gives the materials and their carriage. The number of white stone cutters was gradually increased from 39 in the first three weeks to 78 in the fifteenth week, and diminished again to thirty-five in the last weeks. The marblers, about 16 in the first eight weeks, were suddenly increased to 49 in the ninth week, who remained at work till the eighteenth week, and then were suddenly reduced to 31, and went on diminishing to seven. The stonelayers vary from 35 to 4. The 32 carpenters working in the first seven weeks are then reduced gradually to nine only. The polishers are about 15, and the smiths 18 throughout; but about fourteen glaziers employed in the first ten weeks are suddenly reduced to 6 for a month, and then to 2 for the remainder of the time. The inferior workmen vary from 220 to 37. The gross amounts are: Stipends, 696*l.* 8*s.* 7*d.*; Emptions, 891*l.* 9*s.* 5½*d.*; giving a total of 1,587*l.* 18*s.* 0½*d.*

From these particulars the nature of the work may be surmised; but, unfortunately, there are very few exact indications of the actual buildings upon which the workmen were employed. The only evidences of this kind that I have detected are the following, numbered to correspond with the weeks in which they occur: (1), tables or planks for the CHAMBERS of the king and queen; (7), panels for the king's bed, and for a table in the scaccarium; (3), 100 tiles provided for the KING'S CHAPEL; (15), task-work at entrance of the CHAPTER-HOUSE, (It., p' tasch' int'it' capituli l. s.). From the 19th to the 26th and 31st weeks, charges occur in nearly every week for nails for the CHURCH AND BELFRY; and in the 25th week Roger the Plumber is paid 10*l.* and 5*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* for task-work at the belfry (*berefriidam*). This was probably the detached belfry of the Abbey church, which is known to have stood on the north side, upon the site of the existing Sessions-house.

Stukeley gave drawings of it in the *Archæologia*, vol. i. p. 39, under the name of the *Sanctuary*, but states that it was still called the *Belfry*. Stow relates that Edward III., about 1347, built to the use of St. Stephen's chapel, in the little sanctuary a "chlocharde" of stone and timber covered with lead, &c. Widmore (*History of Westminster Abbey*, p. 11) found it mentioned for the first time in a charter of Edward I. (1290): "It was then called the bellfrey and continued to be used as such, or at least to go by that name till the present towers of the church were built by Abbot Islip." The roll we are now examining shews that it was in course of construction and apparently covered with lead in 37 Hen. III. The building represented by Stukeley is of stone and in two stories, of a form well adapted to serve as the substructure of a lofty timber-framed tower, similar to that of Salisbury, destroyed by Wyatt, but preserved to us in the drawings of Price. The wooden tower had disappeared long before the time of Stow, and the stone substructure was pulled down in 1750 to make way for a new market-house. It had been for a long while occupied as a cellar for the

Quakers' Tavern in Thieving-lane. The market-house was in turn pulled down about 1770, and the present Guildhall built as nearly as possible upon the site of the old belfry.

In the second week Magister Albericus is paid for task-work of the *form-pieces*, ("pro tascha formarum,") that is, for *window tracery*, probably of the Abbey church, and also 6*l.* 0*s.* 10*d.* in the twenty-fifth. On the back of the roll it is recorded that on Tuesday of the fourth week after Pentecostⁱ, on the morrow of the blessed Thomas the Martyr, Master Albericus with three associates began the task-work of three windows. Also that on the Monday after "ad vincula Sⁱ Petri," (that is to say, in the fifteenth week of the roll,) two parcels of coloured glass, valued at 12*s.* 2*d.* a parcel, and two of white glass at 6*s.* each parcel, were delivered to Master Henry to be employed in the task-work of the windows, charging per foot wrought of coloured glass 8*d.*, and of white glass 4*d.*

Another memorandum records that on Monday, the morrow of St. Bartholomew, (August 25,) the work in the king's quarry began.

Attached to the roll in the sixth week is a letter from Robert de Bremele to Master John de Oxonia^j, informing him that he has despatched a boat-load of marble by William Justice, to whom five marcs and a-half and ten shillings are to be paid for freight. He also promises to send another boat-load before Pentecost, and a third if he can find a vessel to convey it. Similar letters are attached to the second week and to the twenty-second.

The *Emptions* in each week's account include, in the first place, pieces of freestone cut by task-work into various shapes required for doors, windows, arches, vaults, or other portions of the structure, and made ready for setting. These are sometimes separately enumerated by name, as in the second week above, and furnish very curious illustrations of mediæval nomenclature. But in the latter part of the roll such pieces are all entered in the general form, "In diversis modis france petre ad tascham cisse," "to various shapes of free-stone cut by task-work," and similarly for marble. Next occur stones from the quarries, probably in a rough state, or at least only fit for plain walling. These are "Came stone" (Caen stone); "Reygate stone," generally from Roger de Reygate, and sometimes described as free-stone, "franca petra," e.g. (8), "Rog^o de Reygate p' v^o et di f^{nce} pet^e, xxxv^s. ix*d.*;" Grey stone, "petra grisea," (6), "pro ii. navatis grise pet," and chalk for the *pendentia*,—"creta ad pendentia," the latter being the term universally employed in mediæval documents for the vaults that rest upon the ribs. In (24) we have "p' marmore apud Cerne xvij^{li} xix^s." Beside these, other materials for building occur, as (1), "mmcccc. ferri tenacis de glovernia, iiii^{li} xiiij^s," iron from Gloucestershire, and as in the specimen week

ⁱ I.e. the eleventh week of the Roll.

^j John of Oxford occurs in the Westminster Rolls published by Smith, p. 184, 5 Edw. III.

inserted above. In some of these entries we obtain names of trades which are of unusual occurrence. Thus (6), (21), and (12), "Ade *Merenemio* pro bordis et lateis," i.e. Merenemius, a timber merchant, from Meremium. Ricardus *Californarius* the lime-burner (from Calcifurnium or the French Chaufournier) occurs throughout. In (4), (13), (25), Ricardus *Cuparius*^h, or *Cuvarius*, the cooper, from *Cupa* and *Cuva*; in (1), Jacob *Junctor*, the joiner, for tables; and in (7), "Jacobus *Junur* p' panell' ad lectu dⁿⁱ Regis jungendis," &c.

The masons' terms for shaped stones are for the most part the same that I have discussed in my "Architectural Nomenclature¹," in the fifth edition of the "Oxford Glossary," 1850, and elsewhere, but they furnish a variety of spellings which are often instructive. I subjoin a list of those which appear to require explanation. They are arranged in alphabetical order, and the numbers in brackets prefixed to each word indicate the weeks of the roll in which it occurs:—

(1, 3, &c., &c.) *Asselors*, or ashlar stones.

(3) (2). "l. *assisis* p' assise v.d." . . . (5). xxi. *Essisis*,—stones prepared for coursed masonry, from the French *assise*.

(2) (3) (5). "ix. ped de *bossous* . . . xxxiiij. ped de *bossus*,"—the carved stones placed at the intersection of the ribs of vaults, which are still called *bosses*, (vide "Arch. Nom.," p. 43, and "Glossary"). They were sometimes termed keys, or *claves*, of which the present roll has an example in (6), "ii. Clavibus et viij. Capitel."

(4). ". . . xli. *bussell*, p' *bussell* iij^d." (7). "p' xi. '*busch*', xix^e. Will. Jacobo p' cc and q^{rt}n '*busch*', v^e. vij^d. ob." (16). ". . . q^{rt}n *busch*', ix^d." The first entry is in a list of stones shaped by task-work, and I know no other instance of this use of the word.

But in another list of stones (3) we find "xvi. ped et di et di' q^{rt}n. de *grossis rotundis*," which seem, for want of a technical name, to be simply called *great round stones*; and in (2) "xxij. ped *maignons*," which appear to be merely large stones (*magnums*), from the old French *maigno*. It may be supposed in the same way that the "bushel stones" above were round stones, suitable for a column, which were so distinguished for the moment because they happened to be about the size and shape of a bushel measure, (about eighteen inches across and eight inches thick).

The other two examples of the word *bushel* are at the end of the Emp-tions, amongst hurdles, "bokettes," &c., and are probably bushel baskets, or bushel measures of some article not mentioned.

(3). "xi. ped de *Chapem't bows*" occurs but once, with nothing to indicate its meaning.

(2). "xlij. *chamberand*." (3). "cxvj. *cham'and*," also (4) (5). I have found this word repeatedly in the accounts of King's Hall, Cambridge. Thus in 6 Edward IV. in the form *chamberh'nt*, and in 6 Henry VI. as "*xix*. ped

^h This is given by Ducange.

¹ Vide "Publications of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society, vol. i., 1844."

de *chamerants pro magna porta;*” and soon after, “xxiiij. ped de *jambes.*” In 4 Henry V., “*lapid' vocat champys,*” and in 5 Henry V. “. . . *jambys.*” I have also found it in other account rolls, and in my “Nomenclature,” art. 81, have given another form apparently of the same word, namely *chameres*, which I supposed to be *jawmers*, or stones for the *jambes* of doors or windows. The spelling of the above examples appears to shew that this word is the same as the French *chambrans*, the ornamental border or set of moldings about a door, window, or chimney, and in these early examples was used for the molded stones of the *jambes*, if not also for the arch-molds, or at least for the hoodmolds.

(2). “ccxliij. ped *cerches.*” (9). “cclxviiij. ped de *serches.*” *Oserche* and *serche* are old French words for circular arcs, and are used by workmen for convex or curved pieces. In this place they may mean convex stones such as would be employed in building cylindrical piers.

(2). “lxvij. ped de *escous.*” (3) also (9). “iiij^x et x. et di ped' de *scutis.*” (5) “xvij. ped de *escum't.*” These are *skew-stones*, i.e. stones cut with a bevel edge. Similar terms occur frequently in masons' accounts. (Vide *Skew, Skew-table, &c.* in “Arch. Nom.” and “Glossary.”)

(2) (3) (9). “Folsuris cum filo.” (4). “*Rotundis, folsuris cum fillet,*” i.e. *voussoirs* with a filleted molding.

(4) (5) (3). “*Rotundis folsuris,*” i.e. *voussoirs* with round moldings.

(9). “iiii^x.v. *folsuræ chanferete,*” i.e. chamfered *voussoirs*. *Chanfrain* means also channeled or furrowed, and therefore we may include *voussoirs* with moldings under this expression. All these are *voussoirs* for molded arches or ribs, and as they occur in company with “chalk for the vaults and bosses,” (*oreta ad pendentia,*) are intended for their ribs.

(5). *Formells.* (3). *Formellis.* The same as “form-pieces,” namely, the stones cut for tracery. (“Arch. Nom.,” p. 48, and “Glossary.”)

(6). *Lothenges,* stones cut into the form of the heraldic *lozenge*, perhaps for paving.

(8). “It' Roge. de Tr'i pro iiij. *orbilons xxxiiij. sol.*” This word only occurs in this example, and here in small number. We may guess the thing to be a carved boss or bracket of a globular form; or, as *orbile* is the rim of a wheel, they may be stones in a ring form for tracery.

(2) (3). . . . *perpens, parpens,* or through stones.—(Vide *Perpent-stone* in “Glossary.”)

(4). *Scention,* or *scenhon.* This is a word which frequently occurs, with varied spelling, in masonic documents. (Vide *Scutcheon* in “Arch. Nom.,” p. 37, and “Glossary.”) It is always used for stones with an obtuse external angle.

(3). “c. et iiij^x ped. de *tablements,*”—stringcourses. (“Arch. Nom.,” p. 25, and “Glossary,” art. TABLE.)