

THE ENGLISH HISTORICAL REVIEW

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John Wyclif, Canon of Lincoln

THE manuscript in the Bodleian Library, Lat. Th. d. 10, contains the record of a suit tried at Avignon in 1376. Among the documents that were produced in court was a letter from the chancellor of Oxford, William Wilton, stating that in 'the year 1375, Jan. 14, indict. 14, the 8th year of Pope Gregory XI', a notary appeared before him at Oxford and asserted that a document drawn up by him in 1370, and quoted at length, was authentic. The chancellor's letter is witnessed by 'mag. Ioh. Wiclif, sancte theologie doctore, canonico Lincolnensi, Willelmo Thursforde archidiacono Gloucestrie, mag. Rob. Aylesham, sancte theologie bacallario, mag. Ioh. Balcon' procuratore Universitatis'. This shows that Wyclif was at Oxford on 14 January 1376. It also makes it probable that he obtained a prebend at Lincoln. On 26 December 1373 the pope granted to John Wiclif, 'canon of Lincoln', that when he should obtain the prebend at Lincoln according to the papal reservation, he should be allowed to retain his prebend at Westbury.¹ That one who had not obtained a prebend should be called 'canon' is strange, but it seems to have been a custom at the papal court, and there are several instances. But such a use is unknown in ordinary documents, and if Wyclif is described as 'canon of Lincoln' in the chancellor's letter of 14 January 1376, it can hardly be doubted that he had obtained a prebend at Lincoln by that time. In *De Civili Dominio*, iii. 17,² written probably in 1375, he mentions that after he had received a prebend at Lincoln worth £45 a year, it was taken from him by the pope, on the plea that it had been secretly reserved to a young foreigner; but naturally he would receive the next prebend at Lincoln that became vacant. The list of the canons of Lincoln in Le Neve is so incomplete at this period that it gives no help.

That Wilton was chancellor in January 1376 was already known; but John Balcon', the proctor, has not hitherto been found.

H. E. SALTER.

Merchants' Courts at Winchester

AT Winchester there was a permanent court of piepowder dealing with cases which involved non-burgesses. This is to be distinguished from the temporary court of piepowder held during the time of the St. Giles's fair under the authority of the bishop of Winchester, on the one hand, and the regular city court on

¹ *Cal. of Papal Registers*, iv. 193.

² iii. 334, ed. Loserth, Wyclif Society.