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## SEAL OF THE DEAN AND CHAPTER OF LICHFIELD, BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

The matrix of the accompanying seal\* was purchased by me of a cottager, who picked it up in the high road near the s.e. corner of Cavendish green, and suspended it by a string over the mantel-piece of his cottage, where I first observed it. It is of brass, oval in form, with a loop at the back near the top, by which it was probably suspended from the neck of the official whose duty it was to use it.†

In the lower compartment is the figure of St. Chad, episcopally habited, seated under a tabernacled canopy, holding a crozier in his left hand, and having the fore fingers of the right raised in the act of benediction. If the figure be examined by a microscope the countenance appears to be of a solemn and majestic cast, well adapted for the important undertaking of converting the heathen.

In the upper compartment, also under a triple-headed canopy, but without any tabernacle work, is a representation of the Virgin and child, with a star above a crescent on the left side of the figure. The legend is †-S' DECANI ET CAPL'I ECCL'IE S'C'E MARIE ET S'C'I CEDDE LYCHEFELD' AD CAS; the two last words referring to the circumstance of the church being walled in like a castle. The workmanship of the seal is, I think, of the 12th century.

I sent an impression of the seal to the Dean and Chapter of Lichfield, and was informed in reply that they have no doubt that the seal was anciently the one used by their predecessors, although there is no record of the church having been dedicated to the Virgin Mary, but only to St. Chad. The capitular seal now used is of precisely the same shape and as nearly as possible of the same size. It

\* Engraved from a drawing obligingly presented by the Rev. R. J. Simpson.

† It appears from Pegge's "Curialia," p. 66, on the authority of Brompton's

Chronicle, that the Great Seal of England was carried about the neck of the Vice-Chancellor or Chancellor himself, in the reign of Richard the First.

has not the representation of the Virgin and child, but simply the figure of St. Chad, episcopally habited, with two crosiers at the upper part, and a representation of a church in the lower part. The inscription is SIGILLUM DECANI ET CAPITULI ECCLESIE CATHEDRALIS LICHFIELD. It is silver, and was probably made in the 17th century, but there is no record to fix this date.

It appears from the account of St. Chad, or Ceadd, by the Venerable Bede, that he was one of four Anglo-Saxon brothers, natives of Northumbria, who devoted themselves to the church; and the second, who became a bishop. He was a disciple of Aidan, and like his master, travelled about his diocese on foot, preaching the Gospel everywhere, till Archbishop Theodore commanded him to ride whenever he had a long journey, and enforced his command by himself lifting him on to a horse. St. Chadd died in 673, at Lichfield, bishop of that diocese. St. Chad's-day (March 2) is retained in the English calendar.

*Rectory, Cavendish.*

THOMAS CASTLEY.

