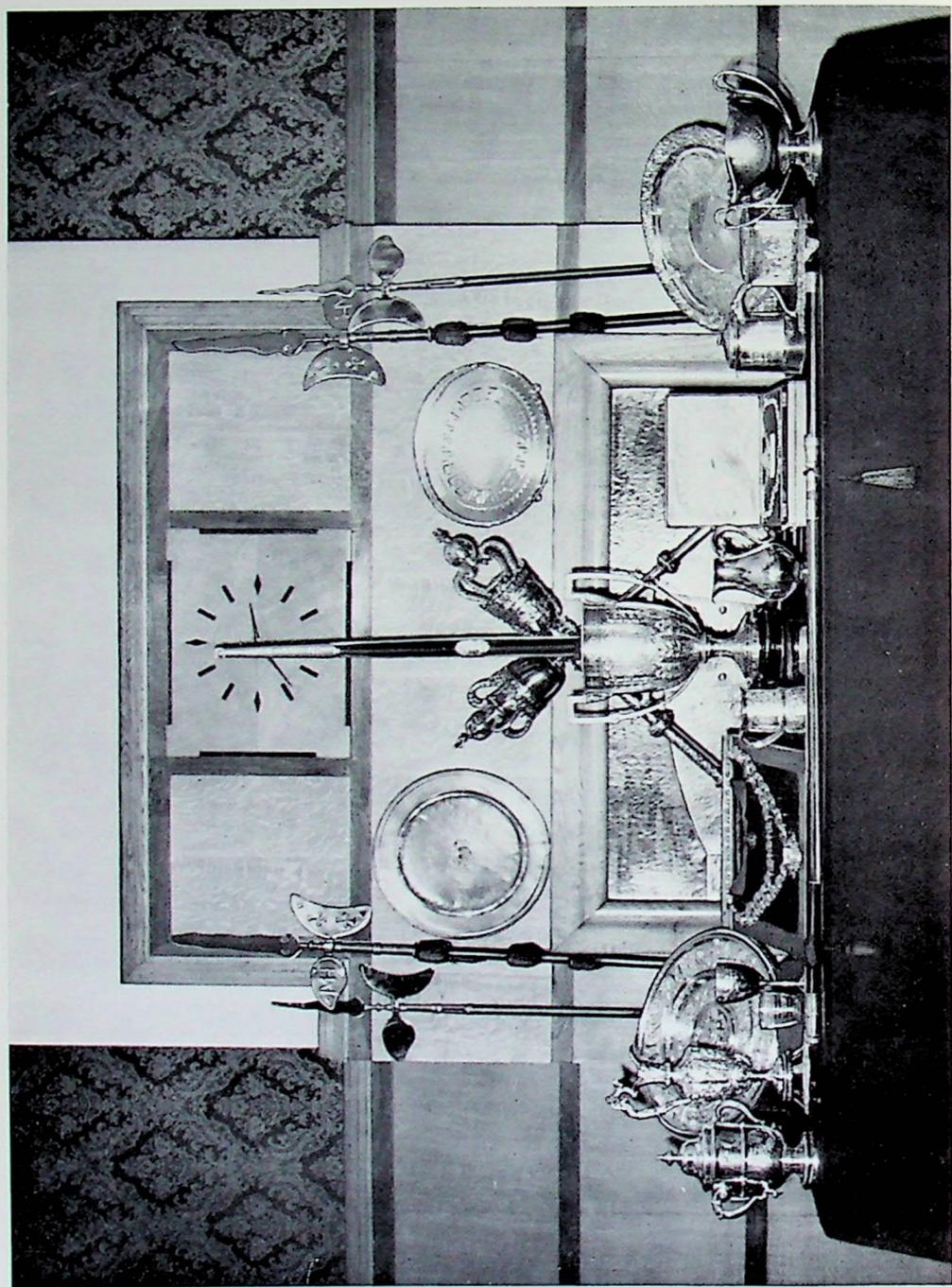




WIGAN CORPORATION  
REGALIA  
1246 - 1965

FOURTH EDITION - 1965



# WIGAN CORPORATION REGALIA

A COMPLETE DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF  
THE INSIGNIA, PLATE, AND SEALS OF THE  
CORPORATION OF WIGAN TOGETHER WITH  
AN OUTLINE OF ITS MUNICIPAL HISTORY.

Fourth Edition  
revised and enlarged

Wigan Printing Co. Ltd.,  
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# WIGAN CORPORATION REGALIA

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## INTRODUCTORY HISTORICAL OUTLINE

Wigan is usually referred to as being, anciently "a borough by prescription," which means that before it definitely received a charter it exercised borough privileges consistent with the time. There is little doubt that Wigan was such a borough in Saxon times. According to a visitation report dated 1613, in the College of Heralds (a certified copy of which is in the Public Library), Wigan was first made a borough by royal ordinance by King Henry, in the year 1100. This probably means that Wigan resumed its early borough privileges under the general coronation charter of Henry I, in which he restored the privileges suspended by his father, William the Conqueror. In confirmation of this there exists in the Warrington Museum a Wigan town seal of the 12th century—perhaps the earliest town seal in existence. A replica of this seal is in our own Public Library collection. The device upon it appears to be a Towered Gateway surmounted by a Crowned Head, identical in outline with the head of Henry I on the silver coins of his reign. In any case Wigan was granted a charter by Henry III in 1246, making the town a "free borough for ever," and including the privileges of administering justice and of freedom from county jury service.

These facts confirm Wigan's claim to be the oldest borough in Lancashire (\*) and one of the oldest in England—certainly amongst the first ten.

Along with Lancaster, Liverpool, and Preston, Wigan was one of the four Lancashire boroughs included in the first grant of the Parliamentary franchise to the towns, as distinct from the counties, by Edward II, and sent two members to the Parliament of 1295.

\* See discussion of this point in the Appendix.

On the setting up of the Quarter Sessions Courts in the middle of the 14th century, Wigan assumed a prescriptive right under its Charter to its own Court, and exercised its privileges from an early date; for, though no actual records are extant, from the 16th century substantial references occur, showing it to have been held as early as the 1550's (\*). The first definite appointment of a Recorder by the Corporation that can be traced is that of William Bradshaigh, who was in office in 1570, and probably appointed about 1562.

The offices of Mayor and Town Clerk are first mentioned in the charter of Edward III granted in 1350, giving the Corporation the right to use the Royal Seal of Recognizances. It is obvious that both offices were already in existence. Nevertheless, the name of the first Mayor which has so far been traced is Adam de Pemberton, who is stated on rather doubtful authority to have been Mayor in 1282. There is, however, sound authority for William Ashton, who was elected in 1366. The name of the first Town Clerk which has yet been traced is Henry de Ince, who was confirmed in his appointment by Royal Letters patent in 1350.

## CHARTERS

As already stated, a charter making Wigan "a free borough for ever," was granted to the citizens by Henry III in 1246, through the good offices of the then Rector and Lord of the Manor, the celebrated John Mansel, the Keeper of the Seal and the King's Chief Minister. This charter was confirmed by successive sovereigns down to the Local Government Act of 1835, the chief of these charters being :—

Edward II,	1314
Edward III,	1350
Richard II,	1378
Henry IV,	1400
Henry V,	1413
Elizabeth,	1585
Charles II,	1662
James II,	1685

those of Edward II (1314), Elizabeth (\*\*), Charles II and James II, being extant and preserved in the Public Library. In the Charter of Charles II Wigan is designated "an ancient borough," and is granted "as a special

\*A dispute between Sir Richard Molyneux and the Liverpool Corporation was heard in the Wigan Court of Quarter Sessions on 13th January, 1555/6, as is recorded in the "Liverpool Town Books."

\*\*Preserved in a copy on paper dated 1618; original probably surrendered in 1661, and may be in the Record Office.

token of Our favour" for its "loyalty to Us" the right to carry a sword before the Mayor (\*). Sir Roger Bradshaigh was the Charter Mayor (1661-62). The sword, which is still part of the Corporation Regalia and in general use, was presented by the King. It has the arms of the King on one side and the arms of Bradshaigh on the other. This Charter of Charles II remained the governing charter of the town down to the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, together with the charter of James II (1685) which supplemented and greatly extended the privileges. In particular James's charter granted the Mayor of Wigan the unusual privilege of being ex-officio a Justice of the Peace for the County as well as the Borough for the year of his office as Mayor, and the year following. Certain provisions of James's charter, however, were abandoned after the Revolution of 1689.

### ARCHIVES

Owing to the destruction occasioned by the great Civil War, during which Wigan was "seven several times plundered" few Corporation documents before 1650 are preserved. Nevertheless, a substantial number of records survive from as early a date as 1618. From 1660 to date the series of records is almost complete. They comprise the Court Leet Rolls, Common Council Books, the Year Books of the Mayor's Court of King's Pleas, the Quarter Sessions Rolls, Oaths Books, Freeman's Roll, and a number of short period records, such as Spiritual Court Citations, Coroner's Inquisitions, Ley Assessments, etc.

Among numerous family archives preserved in the Public Library is the original "Orders" promulgated by the Earl of Derby when he made Wigan the Royalist Headquarters for the North-West on the outbreak of the Civil War in 1642. The document is signed in the Earl's autograph.

### INSIGNIA

The Corporation plate and insignia consists of two Maces, a greater and a lesser; the state sword already mentioned; six halberds; a Mayor's chain and badge; a Mayoress's gold chain with diamond studded pendant; a Mayor's staff of office; a Mayor's silver-mounted stick (used by the Deputy Mayor); three salvers; a salver and jug set; a tankard; a brass punch ladle; two loving cups; a ewer; a toasting goblet; a Wigan pewter dish; two freeman's caskets, an ornamental casket; a silver rose-bowl; a Mayor's robe; Corporate and Mayoral Seals, and an ancient muniments chest.

\*Thus we have charter authority for the town's epithet of "Ancient and Loyal."



The GREATER MACE, 3 feet 8 inches in length, is of silver gilt. The head is crested with a coronet of crosses and fleur-de-lis, with intermediate balls, from which rise four curved members richly decorated with oak leaves in relief; these, bending over towards the centre, support a plate or pedestal, on which rest the orb and crown. On the top of the mace are the Royal Arms, etc., with the four usual Royal badges, each between the letters C.R.

The shaft is chased with a running pattern of oak foliage, etc. Below the mace head are four scroll-work brackets. On the foot-knop are the donor's arms and the device of the borough, and, in a cartouche, the Donor's initials (A.H. —Alex Holt)



with the date of his death (1657). Around the plain margin above this is the following inscription:—

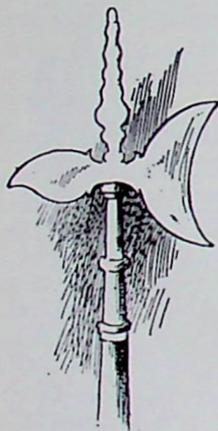
“Rex Carolus II, etc. The gift of Alexander Holt, Esq., late of London, Goldsmith and Alderman of the same City, and likewise of this Ancient Corporation of Wigan, who departed this life Anno Domini, 1657.”

The mace was made after the Commonwealth pattern some time before 1657, and altered at the Restoration by substituting a Royal coronet, badges, etc., for the Commonwealth emblems. According to Mr. J. V. Kitts, the Assistant Librarian of the House of Lords' Library, and an authority on the subject, the Wigan mace preserves several of the distinctive features of the Commonwealth mace of the House of Commons, contemptuously referred to by Cromwell as "this bauble"; the head especially showing clearly "the nature of the Cromwellian arches". See illustration. This suggests that the mace was made and given to the Corporation prior to 1653, though no actual record of the gift has been discovered.

The LESSER MACE, of copper gilt, is 3 feet 6 inches long, of the same general form as the larger silver one. It is of somewhat similar design, the head and shaft being quite plain and devoid of inscription. This mace, also, appears to have been made during the Commonwealth and converted at the Restoration into an emblem of Royal authority. It is possibly the older of the two, though they may be of equal date. The use of the mace as an emblem of mayoral authority is very ancient, several provincial boroughs being known to possess them in the 14th century. The custom of two maces is almost equally old. Like the two pieces of the seal of recognizances (the major known as the "King's seal" and the minor, as the "clerk's seal") they represented the dual authority of the King and the Corporation. Totnes in Devonshire is known to have possessed two maces in 1448, and in 1431 the Mayor of Totnes in a letter to the Chancellor, requested that three men should be summoned for taking from him "the King's Mase." The description is significant. According to the ancient custom in Totnes, the larger mace was kept in the Guildhall, and the smaller at the Mayor's residence, so that he should never be without the emblem of his authority (see Notes and Queries, Vol. 152, p. 246). Another authority explains that the smaller mace was carried by the Sergeant when performing duties on behalf of the Mayor, whilst the greater mace was carried before the Mayor as a token of the Royal authority vested in him. It may be assumed that Wigan possessed maces before the Commonwealth, if so they were probably melted down or lost during the Civil Wars, when the town was "seven times plundered." In any case the need for emblems of mayoral authority became urgent during the commonwealth, when new civil obligations were imposed on mayors, especially in regard to the institution of civil marriage.

The STATE SWORD (already mentioned) is 4 feet 4 inches long, and has a two-edged blade and a pommel of gilt metal. The

scabbard is of red velvet with metal and gilt mountings. Around the centre is a silver band bearing on one side the Royal Arms (of Charles II) and on the other the arms of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, first baronet. Sir Roger was twice Mayor of the borough, first as Charter-Mayor 1661-2 when, as already stated, the privilege of a state sword was granted as a special mark of royal favour, and again in 1681-2. Sir Roger was M.P. for the County from 1660 to 1679 and died in 1684. The sword was the gift of the King. It is still carried before the Mayor on all ceremonial occasions.



Of the six HALBERDS two, of steel, are ancient. They are 7 feet 9 ins., long, of good metal, the pick blades being pierced with the letters H.M. or M.H. in monogram. Their origin is unknown, but they are certainly earlier than 1600 and it is interesting to note that only two mayors are known before 1600 whose names fit the monogram. Hugh del Marsh, mayor 1417 and 1420, and Humphrey Mather, mayor 1598. The 15th century is more generally favoured. The other four are of brass, 7 feet long, the more ancient pair, of unknown history, being certainly not earlier than the second half of the 17th century. The other two are recent, being acquired in 1922, the year in which the borough obtained a grant of a new coat-of-arms. The pick blades are inscribed :

County Borough of Wigan, 11th  
and 12th year of the Reign of King  
George V. Francis James Pagett,  
Mayor, William Henry Tyrer,  
Town Clerk.

The MAYORAL GOLD CHAIN and BADGE, by Parker and Stone, of London, was presented to the Corporation in 1873. It originally consisted of 25 links, coupled together by smaller ones. It now has 39 major links disposed in two rows, a new link being added each year down to 1923. The length and weight (29 fine ounces of the chain rendered further additions undesirable. The badge bears on an oval the old Seal of the Borough and on the back is the inscription :—

"Borough of Wigan. Badge and chain given by the members of the Town Council and other subscribers on the occasion of the visit of the Prince and Princess of Wales, June 3rd and 4th, 1873, for the use of the Mayor and his successors for ever.— Nathaniel Eckersley, Mayor."

The MAYORESS'S GOLD CHAIN was presented to the Corporation by the Chief Officials of the Borough in 1935, to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of H.M. King George V. There are 36 major and 36 minor links, which are replicas in smaller size of those in the Mayor's Chain. The Central Pendant is the beautiful oval shaped medallion in high relief, studded with diamonds, which was formerly attached to the Mayor's undress collar-ribbon. But the device in the centre of this Pendant is changed from the old Corporation Seal (showing the Moot Hall), to the present Borough Arms. This Pendant was originally "presented to Alderman James Smith during his Mayoralty by a few fellow townsmen, 1890," as is recorded by an inscription behind the Pendant. The Chain and Pendant weigh just under 8 ounces. In the case is a tablet of silver gilt inscribed with the names of all the Chief Officials (17) making the gift, and recording that

"This Chain was presented during the Mayoralty of Councillor D. Rourke, J.P., to the Town Council of Wigan by the Chief Officials of the Corporation for the use of the Mayoress and Deputy Mayor to mark the Silver Jubilee of His Majesty King George V."

The MAYOR'S STAFF OF OFFICE, 5 feet 4 inches long, of *Lignum Vitae*, mounted in silver, bears the inscription, "a gift to the Majors of Wigan by A.B." As a mayor's staff the length is unusual, and it is more likely to have been given to the Mayor as a staff of office for the town Beadle. It probably dates from 1675 and owes its existence to the appointment of a Beadle at the Michaelmas Leet in 1674. The record of this appointment reads:—

"Wee order that there be a Beadle within this Burrough for this yeare and that there be a person hired by the present Balifes who shall have one ley through for his paines and a New Coate a Badge and a Staff at the discretion of Mr. Maior."

In the following March Adam Bancks was sworn a Burgess, and it is just possible that he celebrated his election by presenting the staff to the Mayor and his successors.

The MAYOR'S STICK is a Malacca cane 3 feet 1 inch long, with a silver head, inscribed, "The gift of Sir Roger Bradshaigh, Bart, to Gilbert Ford, Esq., Mayor of Wigan, and to his successors, 1702."

This is used by the Deputy Mayor as an emblem of office on all ceremonial occasions.

The 17th century WIGAN PEWTER DISH was presented to the Corporation by the Chief Officials of the Borough to commemorate the Coronation of Their Majesties King George VI and Queen Elizabeth on 12th May, 1937. It is a large dish or salver measuring 18 inches in diameter (the bogue  $13\frac{1}{2}$  in.) with a reeded edge decoration, and weighs 6 lbs. 10 oz. It bears the "touch mark" of Adam Bancks, consisting of two shields bearing a hawk (?) and the initials A.B., together with the Crowned Tudor Rose; the marks are repeated. It was made in Wigan about 1687. This Adam Bancks is the same person who is assumed to have presented the Mayor's Staff to the Corporation in March 1675, as recorded above. Adam Bancks who was a noted pewterer, was elected a Burgess in March 1675; he became an Alderman and was elected Mayor in 1704; he was Warden of the Wigan Pewterers' Company in 1671, 1676, and 1683, and Master of the Company in 1687, the approximate date of the Dish. The Dish is appropriately engraved with an excellent representation of the present Borough Arms in the centre, and a representation of the 17th century Borough Seal above; around the rim is the following inscription :

"This piece of old Wigan Pewter, made (about 1687) by Alderman Adam Bancks (Mayor in 1704) was presented to the Wigan Corporation by the Chief Officials to commemorate the Coronation of King George VI and his Consort Queen Elizabeth on 12th May, 1937."

The SILVER EWER is a plain jug-shaped vessel, inscribed :—

"The gift of Robert Mawdesley, 1631. Renewed 1680, by Sir R[og]er Bradshaigh. And again by James Hodson, Esq. For the use of the Mayor of Wigan and his successors."

It stands  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches in height and weight 28 ounces. On the base is the London assay mark for 1626 /7. The several renovations implied in the additional inscriptions are not apparent. James Hodson was Mayor 1784, 1786, and 1789.



The TANKARD is of silver. It is 8 inches high and  $6\frac{1}{4}$  inches across the lid and weighs 40 ounces; there is a whistle in the base of the handle. On the front appears the ancient seal device of the Moot-hall within the shield, and the following inscription :—



“To the Mayor, Bayliffes, and Burgesses of the said Burrough of Wigan, in the County Palatine of Lancaster, the gift of severall Brine Salt Makers in the County Palatine of Chester. To remain within the said Burrough for ever, in custody of the Mayor for the time being and his successors, in memory of Peter Shakerley, Esq., one of the representatives in Parliament for the said Burrough.

John Markland, Esq., Mayor.  
George Kenyon, Esq., Recorder.

William Baldwin, }  
James Roberts, } Bayliffes, Anno 1699.”

An amazing incident in the history of the tankard is recorded in a letter from Thomas Bankes of Winstanley, the then Mayor of Wigan, to Sir Roger Bradshaigh, a Member of Parliament for the Borough and a former Mayor. The letter is dated 1739 and is preserved at Haigh Hall :

“ . . . On the 5 Novem. last a day we annually meet in the new hall\* there broake out, after I and many others were gone a quarrell between Dr. Markland and Bayliff Hooton arising from the sd Doctor and Wm. Woods who were Bayliffs together not settling their acctts.; which ended in Blows given by Doctor by the greater of the Town's Tankards on Hootons head, with which blows it was much brused, this occasioned Mr. E. Holt to strike with a Stick smartly the Doctor. I have took an opportunity to send for the Dr. and he acknowledged his Error (both being in Drink) and promised to pay the charge of repairing the Tankard, concerning the reparation of it I shall hear next fryday. There was as I am informed privately much blood spilt in the quarrell yet I hope there (their) angre will extend no farther than can be allay'd by their friends . . . ”

\*"The New Town Hall" built in the Market Place in 1720 at the expense of the Earl of Barrymore and Sir Roger Bradshaigh, the then newly elected representatives of the Borough in Parliament.

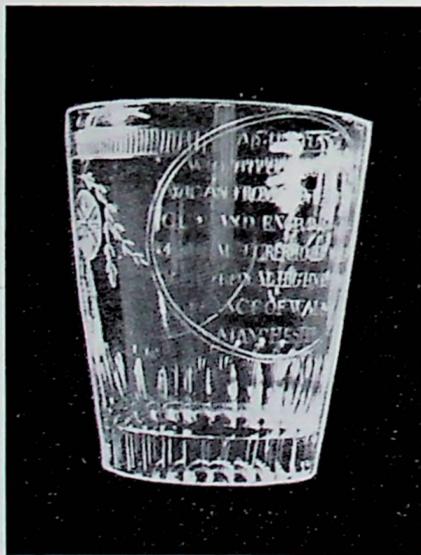
None of the smaller tankards, the existence of which in 1739 is implied in the above letter, has survived.

A Cut-Glass GOBLETT or TUMBLER. A toasting glass of late 18th century date with inscriptions on each side within large circles linked together by festoons of (laurel?) leaves entwreathing two compass cards. The lettering "strokes" of the "Toast" inscription represent ears of barley. Shallow fluting round the base.

The principal inscription reads :

A GIFT TO THE WORTHY CORPORATION OF  
WIGAN FROM JOHN UNSWORTH, CUT AND EN-  
GRAV'D GLASS MANUFACTURER TO HIS MAJESTY  
AND HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS THE PRINCE OF WALES,  
MANCHESTER."

On the opposite side is the traditional toast "PROSPERATION TO THE CORPORATION."



The record of the presentation has not survived, but as the style of the decoration suggests late 18th century (a view supported by Mr. W. B. Honey, Keeper of the Department of Ceramics in the Victoria and Albert Museum) it was probably presented to mark the occasion of the donor's election as a Burgess of Wigan, a John Unsworth being elected on 4th October, 1800.

Missing from the Corporation plate for many years it was recovered by purchase in October 1939. Height  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches, diameter at the top  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches tapering to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches at the base, weight 11 ounces.

The RICHARD POTTER SALVER is a silver circular tray standing on three legs, and is an object of great beauty. It has a raised rim of irregular outline carrying a moulded design in high relief. The surface is almost entirely covered with a moulded design (in flat relief) of flowers and arabesques. It measures ten inches in diameter and weighs  $16\frac{1}{2}$  ounces. It bears the London hall mark for 1831. The salver was presented to the Corporation by an anonymous donor in July 1937. There are four inscriptions on it: the first and primary one is in the centre and is as follows:

“Presented by Richard Potter to Josh. Acton, Esq., as a token of respect for his gratuitous exertions in supporting the Petition to the House of Commons in Feby., 1831 for the purpose of opening the Borough of Wigan.”

The occasion of this petition was the interesting Parliamentary election of 1831. Wigan was a “closed borough” the franchise being restricted to the traditional small body of burgesses, numbering at that time less than 200. On two previous occasions endeavours had been made to widen or “open” the franchise to the citizens generally, in 1640 and 1660. In 1830 a very determined effort was made, some 600 citizens signing a petition to Richard Potter of Manchester to contest the seat as a “People’s candidate,” James Hardman of Bolton consenting to become the second candidate. The “official” candidates for the ensuing (1831) election were J. H. Kearsley and Ralph Thicknesse. A town’s meeting was held and the Mayor explained the position, but agreed to accept votes for the People’s Candidates. When the voting was complete the Mayor read the document conveying the decision of Parliament in the 1660 election, and although Potter and Hardman received an overwhelming number of the votes cast he declared Kearsley and Thicknesse elected. He recommended Potter to appeal against his decision by a petition to Parliament. The immediate passing of the Reform Act rendered

the petition abortive, but it was for his efforts in connection with this petition that Potter presented the Salver to Acton. Richard Potter was elected M.P. for Wigan in the following year (1832) and Joseph Acton became M.P. for Wigan in 1854. Round the upper half of the face of the Salver is the second inscription which reads :

“Presented to Reece Bevan, Esq., in remembrance of the late Joseph Acton, Esq., 1863.”

Reece Bevan was Mayor of Wigan in 1856 :

The third inscription on the lower half reads :

“Bequeathed to Rachel Bethel by her affectionate Uncle Reece Bevan, Esq., April 25, 1869.”

The fourth inscription (on the back) records the presentation of the salver to the Corporation, as follows :

“This Silver Salver was discovered at Bideford, Devon, and returned to the Borough of Wigan in 1937. J.T.S. Donor.

The MAYHEW LOVING CUP is a large two-handled silver goblet, capable of holding two gallons, and richly decorated. On one side is the old Borough device, and round the lip is inscribed :

“This Loving Cup was presented to the Mayor and Corporation by the Mayoress (Mrs. Walter Mayhew) in recognition of their kindness to herself, and of the good feeling which has existed between her husband and the other Members of the Town Council during the two years of his Mayorality, 1876 to 1878.”

The NEVILLE LOVING CUP is a two-handled vessel somewhat smaller than the foregoing, and of recent origin. The Neville arms and the old Wigan seal are engraved on opposite sides. The inscription reads :

“To the Mayor, Aldermen, and Burgesses of the Loyal and Ancient County Borough of Wigan, in remembrance of the gallant sacrifices by Wigan men and women of life and limb, of health and happiness, of labour and livelihood, on and over and under land and sea, abroad and at home, and in gratitude for the many and affectionate kindnesses received at the hands and lips of Wiganers, whether for him or agin him. Consecrated to the lips that love Wigan meeting now and hereafter upon its rim, this Loving Cup is presented 9th November, 1918, by Reginald James Neville Neville, M.P.”

The WOODCOCK SALVER is a circular one of silver, richly decorated in an embossed floral design, with raised curved-over rim of oak-leaves and acorns in strong relief, and four moulded feet. 21 inches in diameter, weighs 110 ounces. The central inscription reads :

“To John Woodcock, Esquire, Mayor of Wigan. Presented in testimony of his honourable, firm, and impartial conduct, as Presiding and Chief Returning Officer at the contested election in the year 1832, by Ralph Thicknesse and Richard Potter, who were the chosen representatives of that Borough in the first reformed Parliament.”

and is continued round the base of the bouge :

“And is given in the year 1859, by the said John Woodcock, to his brother Henry Woodcock, then Mayor of the said Borough of Wigan, for his use and for the use of his successors in the said Office of Mayor for ever.”

The OVAL SALVER or TRAY of silver has a vertical fretwork-rim with a wavy perimeter varying in height from  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inches to  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inches. The flat surface, raised on four “knob” feet, has a chased key-pattern design with the old moot-hall seal engraved in the centre. There is no inscription. It bears the Sheffield assay marks for 1779/80, measures 17 by 14 inches, and weighs 64 ounces.

The MASKELL PEACE SILVER SALVER with CENTRE-PIECE and JUG is a beautiful piece of work elaborately embossed and engraved, with gilt and enamel ornamentation.

The Salver (90 ounces), 21 inches in diameter, has a broad flat rim embossed with classical human and animal figures; whilst the sunken portion has a border of embossed griffons and arabesques, and a raised centre displaying the old moot-hall seal in high relief set in colour enamels. The inscription round the bouge reads :

“Presented to Maskell William Peace by the Corporation of Wigan in recognition of his able and valuable services as Town Clerk to the Borough for a period of more than eighteen years From September 26th 1866 to March 31st 1885. Henry Park, Mayor.

Below the bouge is engraved the names of the Borough Officials of the day :

Ralph Darlington, Town Clerk. Thomas Heald, Clerk of the Peace. Thomas R. Ellis, Justices Clerk. William T. Wanklyn,

Borough Treasurer. John J. Charnock, Deputy Town Clerk. William Bolton, Borough Engineer. Frederick T. Webb, Chief Constable. J. G. Hawkins, Gas Manager. H. T. Folkard, Librarian. W. C. Barnish, Medical Officer. Ralph Betley, Public Analyst. John Yates, Collector.

On the raised centre round the seal (in enamel) are the names of the Mayor, Aldermen, and the Recorder; and on the outer edge of the rim the names of the Councillors are engraved. In a series of cartouches on the centre flat is a further inscription :—

Charter of Incorporation. First granted to the Borough of Wigan. By Henry III. A.D. 1246.

The Jug or Ewer (58 ounces) 16 inches high, is all of heavily embossed silver with gilt ornamentation and interior. Around the body are six panels containing symbolical classical figures. The stand is a light frame of silver gilt (14 ounces) 2 inches high and 6½ inches across the base.

Brass PUNCH LADLE Bowl, 5½ inches in diameter and 2½ inches in depth, inscribed "Geo. Kenyon, Esq., Mayor, 1768. Jas. Higham (and) Robert Morris, Bailiffs." (Handle missing).

OBLONG CASKET of silvered copper. Richly ornamented in high relief with five scenes from "Don Quixote." On the under side of the lid the old town seal device is engraved. Donor and date unknown, but early nineteenth century.

The HEALD CUP is a sporting trophy in silvered copper, chased on foot and bowl, wine-glass shape, standing eight inches high; diameter of the bowl 3¾ inches, depth 4¼ inches. Bowl decorated with embossed ornaments is inscribed :—

"Christ College Boat Club. Scratch Fours : **Bow** J. R. Husband; E. Bryceson, G. H. Voss; **Stk.** F. W. Hewitt; **Cox** J. C. Heald. Oct. Term 1877."

John Claypole Heald, M.A., (1858-1939) was the son of Alderman Thomas Heald, Mayor of Wigan 1866-8. Presented by Alderman Thomas Ramsden, 1939.

The ROSE-BOWL is a large two-handled silver vessel without ornament, circular, with dentelate edge, and of the usual pedestal design. Diameter 10 inches, height from foot to top of handle 8½ inches, with a 3 inch ebony pedestal. On one side is engraved the Borough Arms, with the inscription :—

"County Borough of Wigan. Presented to the Mayor, Councillor James Cavey, J.P., on the occasion of the opening of the New Extensions at the Electricity Works, 1st May, 1924."

On the opposite side is the further inscription :—

“And presented by the same James Cavey, Mayor, 1923-24, to Thomas Holland, Mayor 1924-25, for his use, and to his successors for their use for ever.”

THE JAMES SMITH CASKET, oblong in form, is of silver, with the heraldic decorations in gilt enamels. Elaborately decorated in relief, it has a domed lid, bearing a mural coronet, indicative of the Office of Mayor, rising from the centre of which is a flat perforate enamelled monogram “J.S.” enclosed in a laurel wreath (gilt). In the front panel of the lid is a view of Mab’s Cross; and in the reverse panel the Royal Arms, together with the emblem of the Rose, Shamrock, and Thistle, are beautifully rendered in repousse. In the end panels are the arms of Henry III and Charles II, who granted the principal borough charters to Wigan. The body of the casket bears in the front centre panel the contemporary seal of the Borough, elaborately wrought so as to bring out in high relief every detail of the ancient town-hall. On either side of the centre-piece are (right) the Arms of the County Palatine of Lancaster, and (left) the seal of the Wigan Statute Merchant (1350) in coloured enamels. In the end panels are, on one side, the cotton plant, shuttle, and machinery, and, on the other side, illustrations of coal mining. The reverse of the casket is adorned in repousse with Lancaster roses and the monogram J.S. in a laurel wreath. The whole is mounted on a plinth of oak and blue velvet, and enclosed in a morocco covered case. The Casket, containing a Scroll bestowing the freedom of the Borough, was presented to Alderman James Smith (1834-1896) on March 4th, 1891\*, and was returned as a gift to the Corporation of Wigan by his surviving descendents on February 2nd, 1934.

\*The date on the Scroll is 30th October, 1890, it having been the original intention to bestow the Freedom on Ald. Smith’s relinquishment of the Office of Mayor (1889-90); actually the ceremony took place on March 4th, 1891, on which date the record appears in the Council Minutes.

The RICHARDS FREEMAN CASKET is of silver gilt presented in 1908 to Alderman Robert Richards (1831-1912) on his being made a Freeman of the Borough. It is designed in the somewhat flamboyant style of the period. The sides are recessed by sloping and terminate in six hammered feet, the corners being enriched by curved supports. The long sides are richly panelled, one displaying views of “the Waterworks Reservoir,” and “the Old Pemberton Waterworks,” the other a miniature of Alderman Richards in court costume, and a view of the Parish Church; on ornate raised shields

in the centre are a bust of the late Queen Victoria in oxidised silver, and the monogram of the recipient in gold over blue enamel. The ends have enamels superimposed with the date 1908, in monogram, and the letter W, representing Wigan. The whole is surrounded by sprays of Oak and Rowan (or "Wiggin tree"). The lid of the casket is domed and fluted, and crowned with a modelled representation of the Old Borough Seal (Moot Hall) supported by four massive silver-gilt arched brackets. The illuminated scroll is placed within. The whole is placed upon an oak and velvet plinth, bearing a plate with the following inscription:—

"This casket was present to Mr. Alderman Richards by the Corporation of Wigan on his being admitted a Freeman of the Borough, November 1908. Sam Wood, Mayor. Harold Jevons, Town Clerk."

This casket was bequeathed by Alderman Richards to his eldest surviving son, Dr. Robert Richards of Oldham, and by him to his daughter Violet Richards, who subsequently gave it to her uncle Mr. Tom Richards, the last surviving son of Alderman Richards. Mr. Tom Richards, with the consent of his family, presented the casket to the Corporation, in the custody of the Library Committee, on November 24th, 1941, in memory of his father.

The MAYOR'S ROBE, formerly of purple cloth, made for the purpose trimmed with black and silk velvet and sable fur, was altered in 1887-8 to scarlet silk. The Mayor's cocked hat is of black silk plush, with gold bullion band, trimmed with black watered silk.

The OAK MUNIMENTS CHEST dates from 1695, and is 5 feet 6 inches long at the base, with the lid over-lapping two inches at each side; the height in front is 3 feet and at the back 3 feet 6 inches—the hinged lid being a sloping one; from back to front it is 2 feet 8 inches, and stands on four inch legs. Of somewhat massive appearance, it is decorated in two rows of plain panelling, the front having an upper row of three longitudinal panels and a lower row of four square panels; the ends have one upper longitudinal panel and two lower ones. It is fastened by five heavy hasplocks. On a copper plate let into the lid is the following inscription:

"Given by Peter Shakerley, Esq., Major (sic) of the Corporation of Wigan, for the preservation and safe keeping of the Charter, Common Seale, and Records thereof.

Anno Dom. 1695."

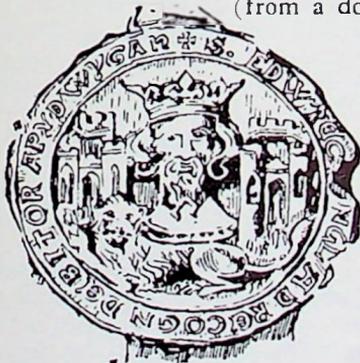
The Corporation had already decided to purchase a Chest as is revealed by a minute (C.L.R. 73) dated Nov. 8th, 1694, when it was ordered that the "Bailiffs procure a chest for the better preservation

of the town charter and seal and other records, the chest to have five locks and keys to be kept by the Mayor, Town Clerk, and three Aldermen, William Danyell, Ralph Markland, and James Scott." Alderman Shakerley commemorated his Mayoralty by defraying the cost and presenting a new seal as related below. Nevertheless, it seems that although the chest was provided the Town Clerk could not be persuaded to make use of it, for four years later (October 18th, 1699) he was peremptorily ordered to surrender the charter and seal. At the same time new keepers of the keys were appointed. The Minute reads: "The Town Clerk be ordered to deliver all charters and documents relating to the town to the Mayor within a fortnight so that they might be placed in the Chest in the Town Hall. The said chest having five locks and keys, one to be kept by the Mayor, the others by the Recorder, the senior Justice of the Peace, the senior Alderman, and the Town Clerk."

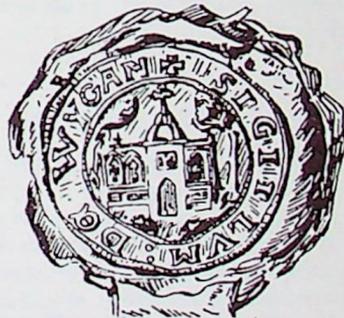
#### TOWN SEALS.

The oldest known seal of the town of Wigan is one which appears to date from the 12th century, of which a replica is exhibited in the Public Reference Library. It is very small, being less than an inch in diameter, and the device upon it consists of a towered gateway surmounted by a king's head. The town seal of the 14th and 15th centuries was a little larger, and is known as being used as the counterpart of the king's seal of recognizances. Several specimens exist, and a facsimile can be seen in the Public Reference Library. It is circular, about 1½ inches in diameter, and has for device a church-like building with a centre spire or belfry, between two "wiggins" or ash trees. The inscription is "sigillum de Wigan."

Wigan Statute Merchant Seal or Seal of Recognizances.  
(from a document of 1455).



The major piece or  
"King's Seal."



The Common Seal of Wigan, or  
"Clerk's piece."

The town seal of the 16th century is a pointed oval about 2 inches long, bearing for a device a building with many lanceolate windows, a cross at each end of the roof, and a belfry with a bell hanging therein. Below, standing apparently on a platform, is a cross "flory." The legend appears to be "Sigillum Burgencium de Wigan." A new silver seal was presented to the town by Peter Shakerley in 1695, and remained in use till late in the 19th century. It is a modification of the earlier one, but the Church-like building has become a Moot Hall. The original seal is exhibited in the Public Reference Library. The original drawing for the seal, signed Thos Peet, has recently been presented to the Library Committee by the Earl of Crawford.

Late in the 19th century a new press wafer seal was introduced, of similar design, though somewhat degenerate in detail; and in 1922 a new press seal was obtained bearing the new coat of arms. The Wigan version of the King's seal of recognizances, the use of which was granted to Wigan in the Charter of Edward III (1350), is distinctive in that the monarch thereon portrayed is Edward III, and not, as is usual, Edward II, a fact established by the beard.

## BOROUGH ARMS

Before 1922, Wigan had no officially registered coat of arms, and heralds and others declined to recognize the device on the common seal, though of admitted antiquity, as a substitute. In 1922, therefore, a grant of arms was obtained largely founded on the ancient seals, and doing full justice to the town's historic importance. On a red shield is displayed a three-towered Norman castle in silver surmounted by a king's crown in gold; above the shield is the usual helmet and mantling, whilst a Plantaganet king's head and guarding lion form the crest; lions rampant holding branches of the "wiggin" (or mountain ash) tree act as supporters. The motto adopted is "Ancient and Loyal."

## APPENDIX

### CHARTER DATES OF LANCASHIRE BOROUGHES

Liverpool might claim the honour of being the oldest borough in Lancashire in view of the fact that by the charter of Henry III in 1229 it was created a "free borough for ever" and granted privileges on a large scale, including freedom from county suit, and wapentake, the privilege of infanganthef, sac and soc, freedom of toll and stallage, and a Guild Merchant, etc., etc.; but the town did not exist before 1206, when it was "planted" by King John, before which the district was practically uninhabited.

On the other hand both Lancaster and Preston, according to the Charter Rolls, received charters from King John in 1199, and for this reason the order of precedence of the Lancashire boroughs is generally given as Lancaster, Preston, Liverpool, and Wigan.

Lancaster's first charter of 1193, though granted by John (afterwards King) was really a seignorial charter. When John ascended the throne in 1199 he confirmed the important privileges granted by this charter, though the judicial privileges were not enlarged. The first royal charter granting Lancaster privileges similar to Liverpool and Wigan, and including a Guild Merchant, is one of 1337 by Edward III.

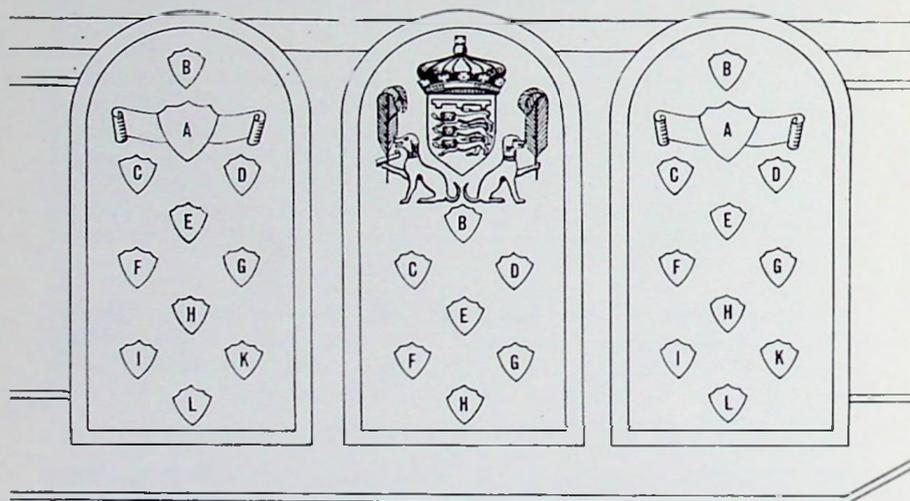
Preston's early charters, even when confirmed by the King, did not give judicial independence or freedom from county suit, or right of infangantheaf, etc. Indeed, the town was several times fined before 1205 for exercising such privileges, and in 1292, on a suit instituted by King Edward I against the citizens for exercising "borough" privileges, they were declared not to possess such privileges. The citizens produced their charters to proclaim their rights to certain seignorial liberties and to hold fairs, etc., but admitted that their claim to liberty of gallows and infangantheaf (i.e., judicial authority) was only derived from "ancient custom." Moreover the first recorded Guild Merchant dates from 1329. What was thought to be a Henry II charter was, in 1910, found to be an exemplification by Edward III in 1344 of a charter of confirmation granted by Henry III to Newcastle-under-Lyme in 1234. The first Charter to Preston granting privileges comparable with those of Wigan and Liverpool is 1328.

Other boroughs in Lancashire also possess early seignorial charters making them "boroughs," including Salford, 1230; Manchester, 1301; Clitheroe, 1177; Chorley, c. 1250; Warrington, 1233, etc., etc., but of course, in all these cases the right to administer justice is reserved to the King.

Wigan, therefore, by virtue of its charter of 1246 from King Henry III, coupled with its antiquity, has a fair claim to be accounted the oldest borough in Lancashire in the sense that it was created a "free borough," i.e., judicially free, a privilege which the other boroughs cannot claim, except Liverpool. Liverpool's charter priority of 18 years, however, is more than balanced by the fact that no town whatever existed before 1200, whereas Wigan was an ancient prescriptive borough centuries before this date.

THE COATS OF ARMS  
DISPLAYED IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER  
OF THE TOWN HALL

SOUTH EAST WALL



# SOUTH-EAST WALL

## ARMS IN THE WINDOWS

### DEXTER LIGHT

- A Statue Merchant Seal of Wigan, A.D. 1455.
- B Henry Woodcock, Esq., J.P.
- C Humphrey J. Walmesley, Esq., J.P. (of Westwood).
- D Charles Scarisbrick, Esq., (of Southport).
- E W. E. Murray Tomlinson, Esq., M.P.
- F Richard Walmesley, Esq., J.P. (of Bath).
- G Charles Clifton Dicconson, Esq., (of Wrightington).
- H Herbert Woodcock, Esq., J.P.
- I Roger Leigh, Esq., J.P.
- K Mrs. Eleanor Starkie Letterewe Bankes (of Winstanley).
- L The Hon. Edward Kenyon, J.P.

### CENTRE LIGHT

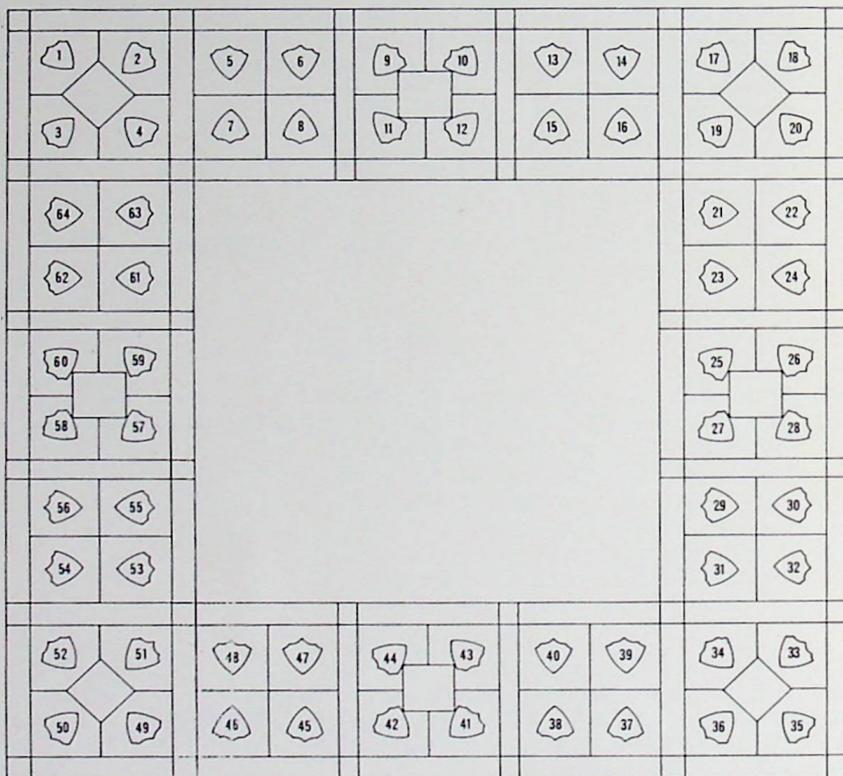
- A Arms of the County Palatine of Lancaster.
- B The Hon. and Rev. Canon George Thomas Orlando Bridgeman.
- C The Right Hon. the Earl of Derby.
- D The Right Hon. the Earl of Lathom.
- E The Right Hon. the Earl of Crawford.
- F Thomas Taylor, Esq., J.P.
- G Francis Sharp Powell, Esq., M.P.
- H Captain Henry Ashton Case-Walker.

### SINISTER LIGHT

- A Seal of the County Borough Council of Wigan.
- B Col. Henry Blundell-Hollinshead Blundell, C.B., M.P.
- C Alderman Richard Atherton flarington, J.P.
- D Alderman Walter Mayhew.
- E James Henry Johnson, Esq.
- F Thomas Heald, Esq., (Clerk of the Peace).
- G Alderman William Crompton, J.P.
- H William Court Gully, Esq., Q.C., M.P. (Recorder).
- I Alderman Henry Park, J.P.
- K William Rogers, Esq., J.P.
- L Birkenhead Glegg, Esq.

# CEILING

NORTH EAST WALL



SOUTH WEST WALL

## ARMS PLACED UPON THE CEILING

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1 Walmesley of Ince<br/>                 2 Gerard of Ince<br/>                 3 Bryn of Brynn and Ince<br/>                 4 Ince of Ince<br/>                 5 Worsley of Worsley Mesnes<br/>                 6 Atherton of Atherton<br/>                 7 Chisnall of Arley Hall<br/>                 8 Bannister of Wigan<br/>                 9 Egerton, Lord of the Manor of Norley<br/>                 10 Langton of Low Hall<br/>                 11 Molyneux of Hawkley Hall<br/>                 12 Leigh of Lyme, formerly Lord of the Manor of Norley<br/>                 13 Culcheth of Culcheth<br/>                 14 Abraham of Abram<br/>                 15 Tyldesley of Tyldesley<br/>                 16 Hindley of Hindley<br/>                 17 Norreys of Blackrod, the last of whom married at Bradshaigh<br/>                 18 Lindsay of Haigh<br/>                 19 The same<br/>                 20 Bradshaigh of Haigh<br/>                 21 Wilkins<br/>                 22 (Mitre)<br/>                 23 Pearson<br/>                 24 Bridgeman<br/>                 25 Holt-Leigh of Hindley Hall<br/>                 26 (Helmet)<br/>                 27 (Helmet)<br/>                 28 Holt of Ince<br/>                 29 Cartwright<br/>                 30 Hall<br/>                 31 Stratford<br/>                 32 (Mitre)<br/>                 33 Holland of Up Holland</p> | <p>34 Bootle, Lord of the Manor of Up Holland<br/>                 35 Derby, formerly Lord of the Manor of Up Holland<br/>                 36 Wilbraham, as succeeding Bootle<br/>                 37 Linacre, Rector of Wigan<br/>                 38 Markland of the Meadows<br/>                 39 Kenyon of Swinley<br/>                 40 Brown of Brinsop<br/>                 41 Dicconson of Wroughtington<br/>                 42 Gerard of Brynn<br/>                 43 Walmesley of Westwood<br/>                 44 Clifton, as succeeding Dicconson<br/>                 45 Ashurst of Ashurst<br/>                 46 Dalton of Bispham<br/>                 47 Lathom of Parbold<br/>                 48 Bispham of Billinge<br/>                 49 Bankes of Winstanley<br/>                 50 Billinge of Billinge<br/>                 51 Holmes of Winstanley<br/>                 52 Winstanley of Winstanley<br/>                 53 Prescott of Dalton<br/>                 54 Orrell of Orrell<br/>                 55 Clayton of Adlington<br/>                 56 Ratcliffe of Standish<br/>                 57 Standish of Standish<br/>                 58 Worthington of Worthington<br/>                 59 Anderton of Euxton and Ince<br/>                 60 Langtree of Langtree<br/>                 61 Pennington, Recorder of Wigan<br/>                 62 Dukinfield of Hindley<br/>                 63 Thicknesse of Beech Hill, Wigan<br/>                 64 Woodcock of Wigan</p> |
|--|--|