HUNT OFFICIALS—continued

YEOMAN was a title prefixed to many of the King's huntsmen and their subordinates; it indicated in the 14th and 15th centuries one who rendered personal service to a superior, an attendant. It was the equivalent for the Latin valectus or valettus or vadletus, and the French valet. There were King's yeomen "venatores," yeomen berners, yeomen fewterers, and as already mentioned, yeomen of the bow, &c. In the royal household there were yeomen of the chamber, and yeomen of the kitchen and many others. Sir Thomas Smyth writing in the 16th century says: "I call him a yeoman whom our laws do call legalem hominem, a worde familiar in writs and enquestes, which is a freeman born English, and may dispend of his own free land in yerely reuenue to the summe of XLs sterling" (De Rep. Angl. p. 30, ed. 1584). An excellent account of the history and derivation of the name of yeoman, is given by Croft, in the glossary of his edition of "The Boke named the Gouenour." He says, after reading statutes 23 Hen. vi., and 10 Henry VI. one may conclude that a yeoman may be fairly described as a forty shilling freeholder. The word valecti was translated yeomen in 1567 and that these valecti owed their origin to the feudal system and were persons from whom service could be exacted by a superior appears from the way they are mentioned in the early law books. Croft mentions that the earliest statute in which he had found yeomen mentioned was in 1363, 37 Edward III., cap. 9, in a statute regulating and forbidding "gentz de meistere dartifice et doffice appele Yomen" of wearing cloth of more than a certain value. In the reign of Richard II. a statute was passed which enacted: "Que vadletz appellez Yomen ne null autre de meindre estat qesquier" shall use the livery of any lord. This shows that their status was less than that of an esquire.

Chaucer's well-known picture in the Canterbury Tales of a yeoman forester or hunter riding in attendance on the knight and his son, he being the only servant the knight has thought fit to take on the pilgrimage with him, is the best description we have of a yeoman hunter or forester of the days of Henry IV.:

"A Yemen he hadde and seruantz namo At that time for hym liste ride so. And he was clad in coote and hood of greene A sheef of pecok arwes bright and keene Under his belt he bar ful thriftily Wel koude he dresse his takel yemanly His arwes drowped not with fetheres lowe And in his hand he bar a myghty bowe A not heed hadde he with a broun visage Of wodecraft koude he wel al the vsage Vp on his arm he bar a grey bracer And by his syde a swerd and a Bokeler And on that oother syde a gay daggere Harneysed wel, and sharpe as poynt of spere A Cristofre on his breast of silver sheene An horne he bar the bawdryk was of greene A fforster was he soothly as I gesse." (Ed. Furnival, vol. i. 101-117, Hengwrt MS.)

EXPENSES. The salaries of the royal officers and servants of the hunting establishments seem to have remained practically stationary from the beginning of the 13th to the end of the 15th century, the Pipe, Issue, Close and Patent Rolls of the Kings showing constant payments of the same sums to those who succeeded each other in the same posts. But the money paid represented by no means the whole of the benefits accruing from some of the posts connected with the royal venery. Allowance was made for clothes and boots, and when at court lodging and food was provided for all, and there were various fees belonging to the huntsman and his subordinates, the right of claiming the skin and parts of the venison killed being not the least. When the hunting establishments were moved about from one county to another, orders were sent to the sheriffs of the counties in question by the King commanding them to pay the wages of his huntsmen and also the money for the keep of their hounds, which sums would be reimbursed to them from the Royal Exchequer (Close Rolls, 14, 15 John; 4 Henry III.). We find, however, besides these temporary outlays for the King's venery some of the counties were laid under a permanent contribution for the support of the huntsmen and hounds. In the latter half of the 15th century certain manors in Surrey and Sussex had to bear part of the expense of the staghounds (Jesse, ii. 133), and the Brocas at Little Weldon were also paid from the issues of Surrey and Sussex (Rolls of Parl. 27 Henry v1. 1449). We find the sheriffs of these counties objecting to paying these sums, and the Brocas petitioning for the same, and stating these fees and wages, they and their "auncestres have been paid of the issues and profitz of the Countees of Surre and Sussex, by the Sherif for tyme ther being by virtue of a Warante under your privy seal yerely to him made and direct, from the time of your noble progenitour Kyng Edward the thirde unto the yeres past." The Sheriffs in question complained that they had so many other annuities, &c., to pay under letters patent from the King, that they had nothing left for the payment of those granted under the privy seal (Rolls of Parl. 27 Henry VI. 1449).

In answer to one of these seemingly constant refusals of the sheriffs to pay these charges for the buckhounds we find Ralph Pexsall, master in Henry VIII.'s time, in making his claim against the Sheriffs for payment of £50 os.  $8\frac{1}{2}d$ . due to him, alleging that "the sheriffs of those counties have had an allowance of that sum yearly from the exchequer from time immemorial" (Exchequer of Pleas. Judgement Roll, Hilary II., Henry VIII. 23, quoted Burrows, p. 470).

Burrows says (Queen's Hounds, p. 15): "To the value of the manor of Little Weldon or Hunter's manor there was added from the middle of the 14th to the end of the 17th century a supplementary salary for the master, amounting on the average to £50 a year." This sum represents the yearly wages of the master berners,

HUNT OFFICIALS—continued

fewterers and money for the keep of some of the hounds, which the Borhuntes claimed as having by right of his wife inherited from the Lovels (1316), and seems to have been paid to John Lovel's predecessors and therefore this salary must have been paid before this, at any rate previous to the 14th century, although it is possible that it was first charged on the revenues of Surrey and Sussex in the time of Edward III.

We see Edward III. being mentioned in above as providing that the issues of these counties should pay the wages of these buckhounds, and this King seems to also have decreed that other parts of his hunting establishment should be paid for by other counties. We find at the close of the century that the sheriffs of Essex and Hertford were to pay the expenses of the King's otter-hounds in a like manner, with the statement that this had been allowed "in the Great Roll 48 Edward III." in the account of John Filliol, late sheriff of those counties, with other profits (Pat. Rolls, Edward IV., 18th July, 1461).

In the time of Henry II. some land near Ailesbury and the office of otter hunter were held by service of finding straw for the King's bed and straw or grass for decking his chamber; thrice a year straw should he come in winter, grass if he should come in summer, and of rendering two geese in the latter case, and three eels in the former case, that is six geese or nine eels a year if he comes thrice a year. And this tenure was confirmed in favour of Richard FitzRobert of Ailesbury in I Richard II. (1378). But this does not exclude the possibility of these otter-hunters by tenure receiving their salaries as indicated from the counties of Essex and Hertford. In respect to Foxhunters we find none specifically mentioned in Henry Iv.'s reign, although we do in that of earlier Kings. Perhaps the many grants of licences which were given to squires, knights and the clergy, &c., to hunt the fox, badger and hare during the reigns of Edward I., II. and III., and later by Richard II. rendered it less necessary for the later Kings to have such a large kennel for the extermination of this "vermin," and at that time foxhounds, as we know, were not kept for royal sport.

Besides the salaries we have already shown that an allowance was made for clothes or livery, which seems to have varied from 40s. paid to the master of buckhounds to 13s. 4d. and 10s. per annum for huntsmen and berners, with a further allowance of 4s. 8d. per annum for the latter's shoes. There were also probably in England such poor varlets as we find attached to the French kennels in ancient days, who slept in the kennels with the hounds and who received no money, but had their food found. Sometimes cloth was given to the hunt servants for their clothes, whether in addition to their allowance for the same or not we do not know (Ward. Acc. 14-15 Ed. 1.; Q. R. Ward. Acc., Henry IV.; Noirmont, i. 395).

FEES. It is not easy to decide on the value of the fees or exact nature of all the fees received by those appointed to the various offices; one comes so often across the tantalising statement in grants to the Masters of Hounds, or huntsmen, foresters and parkers that they shall receive "the accustomed fees and profits" without any definition of the same (p. 102). But one of the principal fees of those in the hunting establishment was part of the game killed which they received according to their degree and according to the share they had taken in the hunting.

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Numerous, and often contradictory, rules governed the distribution of the slain game among the officials, and it is evident that the Master of Game to whom fell the difficult task of deciding all contending claims (p. III) must have often had cause to consider it an unenviable one. Different rules obtained when the deer had been hunted by strength of hounds from those that were observed on the occasion of a drive such as is described in chapter 36 of our text. The game killed by the hand of the King, Queen or any princes of the blood, was not governed by the usual rules, and could not be disposed of according to the wishes of the Master of Game (p. 111).

The distribution of the various portions of the game, although left to the good pleasure of the Master of Game (p. 111), was conducted according to custom, certain fees being claimed by right by the huntsmen and others. The following is a short summary of these dues according to our

To the Master of the Hert Hounds: the skins of all deer killed by the herthounds.

To the Master of Harriers: all folly, i.e., anything beneath hart and buck.

To the hunters or huntsmen, the necks of all

He who undoes the deer (generally the Master or chief huntsman) received one shoulder and the

The Yeomen of office received the skin of the deer1 which had been used at the curée where the reward was put on it or used to cover it, as the case might be.

Every bow could claim the skin of any deer he had hit from his stand or post if the deer was obtained before sunset.

The fewterers could claim the skin of any beast their hounds pulled down (pp. 111, 112).

The Foresters and Parkers received a shoulder. In Turbervile we find some more details which, we may conclude, held good in England, as in his chapter on the English way of breaking up the deer he does not say there was any difference made in the distribution of the fees to what was customary in France.

The chief huntsman received the knots or nuts taken from under the numbles which were called cynque or quatre.

The huntsman who harboured the deer got the right shoulder.

<sup>1</sup> In Henry III.'s reign a deerskin was worth 6d. (Pub. Rec. 49 Henry III.).