

A LANCASHIRE DOCUMENT  
OF 1651.

*By F. H. Cheetham, F.S.A.*

THE document printed below is among a number of seventeenth-century papers at Scarisbrick Hall, near Ormskirk, the seat of Sir Everard Scarisbrick, Bt., who has allowed it to be transcribed and given permission for its publication.

It is written on a single sheet of paper measuring  $12\frac{1}{2}$  in. by  $7\frac{3}{4}$  in., bearing in the left-hand top corner the embossed seal of the Council of State,<sup>1</sup> and is a warrant, addressed to all officers of the Ports and Customs, to permit Henry Eccleston, of Eccleston, in the parish of Prescot, with two of his servants, to leave England. It is dated from Whitehall 22 July 1651.

It reads as follows :

These are to will and require you to permit and suffer the bearers hereof, Henry Eccleston of Eccleston Esq. with John Clayton and Thomas Lee his servants to transport themselves and necessaryes beyond the Seas they carrying nothing with them prejudiciall to the State, Of w<sup>ch</sup> you are not to faile and for w<sup>ch</sup> this shall be your warrant. Given at the Councill of State at Whitehall this 22<sup>th</sup> of July 1651.

Signed in y<sup>e</sup> Name & by Order of y<sup>e</sup>  
Councill of State Appointed by Authority  
of Par.

JO: BRADSHAWE, Prsd<sup>t</sup>.

To all Customers  
Comptroullers and  
Searchers  
And all other officers  
of the Ports and Customs.

<sup>1</sup> Two shields with the respective emblems of England (cross of St. George) and Ireland (harp), and legend THE SEAL OF THE COVN. OF STATE APPOINTED BY THE AVTHO. OF PARL.

With the exception of the signature the writing is without distinction, but Bradshaw signs in a clear and bold hand.

The Henry Eccleston in whose favour this warrant was given appears to have been Henry, eldest son of the Thomas Eccleston who took an active part in the King's cause, suffered imprisonment, and was killed at Warrington in 1646.<sup>1</sup> His estates were sequestrated by the Parliament, but his two sons Henry and Thomas, then aged nine and three years respectively, were "secured alike from loss of faith and property."<sup>2</sup> If this surmise be correct Henry Eccleston would be about fourteen years of age in 1651, at the time of his leaving England. On coming of age he married Eleanor, daughter of Robert Blundell, of Ince Blundell,<sup>3</sup> and died in 1665, aged twenty-eight.<sup>4</sup>

His only son Thomas became a Jesuit, and the estate consequently passed to his second cousin once removed, John Gorsuch, of Gorsuch Hall, Scarisbrick, whose grandfather Edward Gorsuch (d. 1656) had married Mary, daughter of Henry Eccleston, of Eccleston Hall.<sup>5</sup> John Gorsuch assumed the name of Eccleston, but died *sine prole* in 1742, when the Eccleston estate passed to Basil Thomas Scarisbrick, of Scarisbrick Hall, a cousin of his mother's, who likewise assumed the name of Eccleston. Basil Thomas Eccleston (known latterly as Thomas Eccleston) resided at Eccleston until his death in 1789, but his son Thomas Eccleston (afterwards Scarisbrick), who died in 1809, and his grandson Thomas Scarisbrick (d. 1833) both resided at Scarisbrick Hall, and the latter sold the Eccleston estate in 1812.

John Bradshaw was Lord President of the Council

<sup>1</sup> *V.C.H. Lancs.*, iii, 364, citing Gillow, *Bibliog. Dict. of Eng. Cath.*

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 365. His brother Thomas became a Jesuit in 1668, and was sent to the Lancashire mission. See also Dugdale's Visitation 1664, *Chet. Soc.*, lxxxiv., 101.

<sup>4</sup> *Cath. Record Soc.*, Vol. 6 (1909), p. 111.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

of State from its constitution in February 1648-9 until its dissolution in April 1653, and presided regularly at its meetings. He is best known as the President of the Parliamentary Commission for the trial of Charles I. He was the second surviving son of Henry Bradshaw of Marple, Cheshire, and was born at Wibersley Hall, near Stockport, in 1602. His connections with Cheshire may be recalled. After serving for some years as clerk to an attorney at Congleton, he was called to the bar in 1627, and apparently practised as a provincial barrister. He was mayor of Congleton in 1637, and high steward of the borough some years later, formally resigning the office only in 1656. He moved to London in 1643, and in February 1646-7 was appointed Chief Justice of Chester, a judge in Wales a month later, and in 1649 Attorney-General of Chester and North Wales. From 1643 to 1653 he was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. He died in 1659.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Dict. Nat. Biog.*, vi, 176-81. See also *Trans. Historic Soc.*, xiv, 41 (1861).

