

Colchester's first charter (1189).—Many years ago I searched for and found on the pipe-roll the record of the payment for this charter by the burgesses of Colchester, which took place when Richard I. was on his way to the Crusade. I published this little discovery, at the time, in the antiquarian notes of the *Essex Standard*.

The Pipe Roll Society has now issued to its members the roll of 2 Richard I. These rolls were compiled at Michaelmas yearly and covered the income and the outgoings of the preceding twelvemonth, that is to say, October, 1189—October, 1190.³ The actual words of the entry are : "The men of Colchester owe 60 marcs [*i.e.* 40*l.*] for their town's liberties," (*pro libertatibus ville sue*). The charter is dated, at Dover, within that twelvemonth, that is to say, 6 December 1189.⁴ Two days earlier (4 December) St. Botolph's priory, Colchester, had received from the king a long charter; and, earlier still (25 November), a charter had been granted, when the king was at Canterbury, to the great Benedictine house of St. John's abbey, Colchester. At Canterbury also the king had granted, on 2 December, another charter relating to Essex, namely that by which a manor in Little Hallingbury (*alias* Hallingbury Nevill), was given to Hugh de Nevill, to be held by knight-service.⁵

³ Pipe Roll Society's publications (New Series), vol. i., p. III (bottom of page).

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 21, *note*.

⁵ See my note on this charter in vol. x. of our *Transactions*.

Richard was then on his way to the coast, and was raising money by the sale of charters, privileges and offices, towards the cost of his crusade.¹

We gather from the Pipe Roll of the following year that the burgesses had not paid any part of the above 40*l.* at the time, but that a portion of that sum was expended locally on work at the castle.

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¹ The priory of Wix had received a charter on 28 November, and Beeleigh abbey on 7 December.