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LANGUAGE: French

SUMMARY

Christmas 1331

The newly appointed Seneschal of Doccombe {*i.e. Henry of Lappeflode*} is informed that a deputation from the tenants of the manor has been at Canterbury making complaints of him. The prior, who evidently does not know whether he ought to believe the tenants or the bailiff, finds it expedient to trust the latter.

TRANSLATION

Letter sent to H[enry] de Lappeflode, our bailiff of Doccombe about the taxation of our tenants there.

'Greeting and health of body and soul [to you]. Know that one John Stakombe came to us at Canterbury on this last Christmas Eve, and brought us a letter sent by all our tenants at Doccombe, in which letter there was contained, that you, since Michaelmas and since you were here with us at Canterbury, have taxed them afresh to the amount of fifty shillings, by causing them to enter into a recognizance with us relating to the palfrey furnished to us on our entering upon our office; and he has also informed us by word of mouth, that you taxed them before Michaelmas to the extent of a hundred shillings, of which hundred shillings, as he says, fifty shillings have to be paid to the King, and the other fifty to us, from the taxation of their movable chattels ; out of which fifty shillings (if you remember) we remitted ten shillings,

provided that they paid the remainder at next Easter, and if they did not then this remission was to be void.

And whereas it seems to us that the said tenants desire craftily to deceive us by these secret petitions (for he was aware that you know nothing of their letter), this moves us to seek to be farther informed if he were telling the truth or not concerning the fifty shillings, which, as he says, the King is to have.

Nevertheless if they give you sufficient security for the payment of all the amount aforesaid before next Easter, which have been charged upon them by you, then leave them in peace, and remit the ten shillings; but if not, cause the whole of the money to be gathered without showing farther favour; for they are asking for a respite for the whole sum until Michaelmas next.

And let us know what is done about this business by the first person who comes this way. Adieu, etc.'