As far back as the year 1800, a Committee of the House of Commons recommended that Indexes and Calendars should be made to the Public Records, and thirty-six years afterwards another Committee of the House of Commons reiterated that recommendation in more forcible words; but it was not until the incorporation of the State Paper Office with the Public Record Office that the Master of the Rolls found himself in a position to take the necessary steps for carrying out the wishes of the House of Commons.

On 7 December 1855, he stated to the Lords of the Treasury that although "the Records, State Papers, and Documents in his charge constitute the most complete and perfect series of their kind in the civilized world," and although "they are of the greatest value in a historical and constitutional point of view, yet they are comparatively useless to the public, from the want of proper Calendars and Indexes."

Their Lordships assented to the necessity of having Calendars prepared and printed, and empowered the Master of the Rolls to take such steps as might be necessary for this purpose.

The following Works have been already published in this Series:

CALENDARUM GENERALEGICUM; for the Reigns of Henry III. and Edward I. Edited by Charles Roberts, Secretary of the Public Record Office. 2 Vols. 1865.

This is a work of great value for elucidating the early history of our nobility and landed gentry.


DESCRIPTIVE CATALOGUE OF ANCIENT DEEDS, preserved in the Public Record Office. Vol. I. 1890.


