1441.
March 17.
Westminster.

Whereas on the showing of the king’s kinsman, John, earl of Somerset, that of late upon his passage in the king’s service to France among other articles specified in certain indentures of his engagement the king granted that if any inheritances should descend to him during his absence, he should receive the profits thereof, and certain mansions, lands, rents, reversions, services, honours, views of frankpledge, hundreds, franchises, liberties, knights’ fees, advowsons, annuities payable at the Exchequer, possessions and other hereditaments descended to him through the death of Margaret, duchess of Clarence, his mother, and the king on 19 February in his eighteenth year granted to him the keeping thereof with all issues, revenues and profits, and with all arrears, provided that he sued for the same within a year from Easter; and whereas the same John has made petition to the king that at a tender age he was in the service of Henry V in France in the company of the king’s uncle, Thomas, late duke of Clarence, and was taken and detained for eighteen years and more, and for his ransom paid 24,000l., which sum was the highest value of all his lands and hereditaments, whereby he was impoverished, and both he and the hereditaments coming to him by the death of his brother Henry during his captivity were in the keeping of Henry V, and certain charters, writings, muniments and evidences concerning his right of inheritance are in the keeping of the king and his ministers, some stolen and removed, as is said, so that neither he nor any of his council can obtain access to or a copy of them; and further the same John, as soon as he was delivered from captivity, was sent again to France and made no delay, though the said duchess died before his departure; and since the time of suing for delivery is at hand and divers inquisitions to be taken in this behalf have not been taken, he fears that they cannot be taken within the year:—the king grants to the said earl that he may enter into all his possessions in England, Wales and the March of Wales, Ireland and Calais, whereof the said duchess was seised for life, in the king’s hands by her death, the said letters patent of 19 February notwithstanding, and pardons the said earl all intrusions made by him before 8 March last; and grant further to him of all issues of the premises from the death of the duchess, and that he render no account, but be quit thereof for ever.

By K. and dated as above.

April 8.
Westminster.

Vascus Rodericus of Portugal has shown the king that he, when coming of late from Flanders in a ship laden with divers merchandise towards the parts of Portugal, put in at the port of Dartmouth through the roughness of the sea and was there arrested by John Hunte, king’s seneschal at arms, by virtue of letters made to him for service in the transport of an army to the duchy of Aquitaine sent with John Radclyf, knight, then seneschal of the duchy, which arrest Vascus obeyed, until he and the ship with her cargo to the value of 1,000 marks were taken by the king’s enemies in Brittany and brought to Rochell, where he and his fellows were committed to prison and a fine and ransom set upon them; and Vascus acquitted his fellows and became surety for them and remained in prison three years; and afterwards he obtained a loan of the same persons and sued before the king for a year for restitution of the fine, ransom and his goods lost in the king’s service, and borrowed and spent further goods of divers merchants of London to the sum of 200l., for lack whereof he was afterwards arrested and detained for three years and more in the prisons of Neugate and Ludgate:—the king therefore grants to him 800l. payable within three years out of the customs and subsidies in the port of London.

By p.s. and dated as above.

Mandate in pursuance to the customers in the port of London.