

III.

HENRY PLANTAGENET EARL OF DERBY—
DUKE OF LANCASTER,**One of the Founders.**

THIS heroic prince, called "of Gresmont," a castle in Monmouthshire, the place of his birth, was the only son of Henry earl of Lancaster and Leicester, and great-grandson of king Henry III. His mother was Maud de Cadurcis, or Chaworth; and his grandmother, Blanche of Artois, grand-daughter of Louis VIII. of France, and relict of Henry of Champagne, king of Navarre. Born early in the fourteenth century,¹ in the eventful scenes of which he was destined to bear an active and prominent part, we find him, in 1329, in the magnificent train of Edward III, when that monarch, after a previous formal demand of the crown of France as his right of inheritance, deemed it politically expedient to do homage to king Philip VI. at Amiens, for the duchy of Guienne and county of Ponthieu.² His first military essay appears to have been in the Scottish expedition in 1336, in which he manifested proofs of valour and martial skill, which obtained for him in the following year, as "Henry de Lancaster, Banneret," the appointment of captain-general of the king's forces in Scotland, with extraordinary powers.³ On the 16th March 1336-7 he was, his father being then alive, created earl of Derby.⁴ The attempt of the conquest of France having been resolved by the English cabinet, and D'Artevelle's insurrection having suggested the attack from the side of Flanders, the earl and sir Walter Manny received, in May 1337, orders from the king to proceed to the Flemish coast, where they arrived with 500 men-at-arms and 2,000 archers, and disembarked near Cadsand on the eve of St. Martin. The town was taken, and more than

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¹ Claus. 27 Edw. 1, m. 5, by which it appears that his father's marriage took place about 1298.

² Froissart, i. 135 (ed. Buchon), where he is called earl of Derby by

anticipation, and his filiation is incorrectly given.

³ Rot. Sec. 10 Ed. 3, m. 28; and Claus. 11 Ed. 3, p. 1, m. 22.

⁴ Cart. 11 Ed. 3, m. 25, No. 50.

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3,000 Flemings slain; and the victors returned with their prisoners (amongst whom was the celebrated Guy, illegitimate brother of Louis count of Flanders) to England. Froissart relates that the earl of Derby, being amongst the first assailants, and pressing onwards to make good his landing, was struck to the ground, but rescued from his perilous situation by the promptitude and bravery of Manny.¹

In July 1338 the earl attended the king on his first expedition into France; and, in October of the following year, held a principal command in the king's own division of the army, which was drawn up in battle array, but without any other result, near Vironfosse. The affairs of the king requiring soon afterwards his presence in England, he left with the duke of Brabant, as hostages for his return, the earls of Derby and Salisbury. As, however, the earls of Northampton and Suffolk were afterwards sent over to join the hostages, it is probable that Derby was relieved from that service; he being mentioned at the head of the noble persons in the memorable naval battle off Sluys, directed by the king in person, on Midsummer day 1340, the day on which the king had covenanted to return into Flanders.² Upon the truce concluded with the French in the same year, the earl was nominated one of the commissioners.³ In October 1341 he was appointed the king's lieutenant in the north parts of England and in Scotland; and, being at Christmas at Roxburgh (the king keeping that feast at Melrose), he is said to have tilted with and wounded sir William Douglas.⁴ In 1342 he accompanied Edward on his expedition into Brittany, having in his retinue five bannerets, fifty knights, with a proportional number of esquires and archers;⁵ and, during the siege of Vannes, was constituted one of the commissioners to conclude a truce for three years.⁶ In 1343 he marched into Scotland, in order to raise the siege of Lochmaben;⁷ and, in the same year, was joined in embassy with the earl of Salisbury to adjust certain differences between the king's subjects at Bayonne and those

¹ Froissart, i. 196.

² Ibid. i. 339.

³ Wals. p. 149.

⁴ Knyghton, 2580, No. 30.

⁵ Rot. Franc. 16 Ed. 3, m. 20;
23 Claus. de eod. p. 2.

⁶ Holinshed, p. 3, 264.

⁷ Wals. p. 150.

of Alphonsus king of Castile.¹ He was also, in that year, one of the commissioners sent to Rome to treat, in the presence of the pope, for a peace with Philip of Valois, and concerning the king's claim to the French crown.² On St. George's day 1344 he was chosen one of the founders of the Order of the Garter; and it is recorded to his honour by Froissart, that, when shortly before the feast, the king, on receiving intelligence of the execution of Clisson and other adherents of the English party, by order of Philip, would have retaliated, in his anger, on his prisoner sire Hervé de Leon, the monarch was dissuaded from so ungenerous an act by the remonstrance of the earl of Derby, and even induced to release Leon for a ransom adequate to his rank.³ In June following the earl was despatched with a considerable army into Aquitaine:⁴ and then commenced a series of exploits and victories which have more particularly contributed to immortalise his name, and are narrated in detail by contemporary historians.

His father dying at Leicester in 1345, (where his funeral obsequies were attended by the king and queen in person,) during the absence of our hero from England, he succeeded to the earldom of Lancaster and Leicester, and very ample possessions; but that event did not suspend his gallant exertions in behalf of his sovereign. The king, however, being desirous that so distinguished and prudent a chief should be more immediately near to his own person for the direction of his martial and other affairs, he was recalled for this purpose, and returned into England in January 1346-7.⁵ The earl of Lancaster was directed on the 14th May 1347⁶ to join the king, with the forces under his command, before Calais. Upon the arrival of Philip before that place with the design of raising the siege, Edward directed the earl to maintain possession of the bridge of Nieulay; and, that passage being secured with singular judgment and valour, the enemy was prevented by the interjacent marshes from approaching the town.

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¹ Wals. p. 150.

² Rot. Franc. 17 Ed. 3, m. 12.

³ Froissart, ii. 175.

⁴ Ibid. 184.

⁵ Robert of Avesbury.

⁶ Rot. Franc. 21 Ed. 3, p. 1, m. 10.

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A remarkable trait of the chivalrous customs of the times occurred during the siege. A dispute having arisen between John, son and heir of sir John de Warbelton, and Theobald, the son of sir Theobald Russell (whose family had assumed the surname of Gorges), concerning the right to the arms "Lozengé or and azure," the king, amidst the more pressing matters which then engaged his attention, referred the case for decision to the earl of Lancaster, Derby, and Leicester, steward of England, William de Clinton, earl of Huntingdon, Reginald de Cobham, Walter de Manny, William Lovel, and Stephen de Cosinton, by whom an award was made in favour of Warbelton, for reasons stated in an instrument under their hands and seals, dated in camp before Calais on St. Margaret's eve, 21 Edward III, 19th July 1347.¹

The earl was subsequently joined in several commissions to treat with France; and, on the 25th Sept. 1348, was constituted the king's lieutenant as well in the parts of Flanders and Calais, as elsewhere in France.²

On the 20th August 1349, the dignity of earl of Lincoln was added to his other honours;³ and, about the same time, his commission was renewed as captain-general and king's lieutenant in Aquitaine.⁴

By patent dated 6th March 1351-2, he was created duke of Lancaster;⁵ and he soon afterwards obtained a licence to join the expedition against the Lithuanian pagans.⁶ Previously to his departure for Prussia, William of Bavaria, called the duke of Zealand and Holland, came into England, and was married to Maud the duke's eldest daughter with great pomp, in presence of the king and queen, in the royal chapel at Westminster. Duke Henry probably accompanied the princely pair to the continent; for it is related by Knyghton,⁷ that the

¹ Dugdale quotes the original as then in Coll. Armor.

² Rot. Franc. 22 Ed. 3, m. 1.

³ Cart. 22 Ed. 3, m. 3.

⁴ Rot. Vasc. 23 Ed. 3, m. 3.

⁵ Pat. 25 Ed. 3, p. 1, m. 18.

⁶ Ibid. m. 6.

⁷ H. Knyghton, 2603-5. Dugdale adds (upon what authority does not appear) that the arrest took place, and that 300 crowns of gold

were extorted from him by way of ransom. The duke of Brunswick was probably Otto, of the Göttingen branch, son of Ernest Crassus. Otto had the sobriquets "Malus et Armipotens," the former being applied to him on account of his cross and wayward temper. He was born in 1303, succeeded his father in 1379, and died at the age of ninety-one.

duke of Lancaster was, on reaching Cologne, apprised by a certain knight that Otto duke of Brunswick had been directed by the king of France to arrest him on this his journey. He, however, was not deterred by this information from pursuing his course; but learning with concern, before his arrival in Prussia, that a truce for several years had been concluded between the Christians and the infidels, he returned to Cologne; and there, on Friday after Easter [1352], in the cathedral church of St. Peter, in presence of the margrave of Juliers and many other knights and esquires, complained of the conduct of the duke of Brunswick towards him, a stranger knight, engaged on so sacred a peregrination; adding, that if the duke had any desire to meddle with him, he should find him ready to perform a soldier's part. The narrative then recites the letter of challenge which the duke of Brunswick, in consequence, addressed to him on his return into England. In this document the accusation of duke Henry is declared to be false, and he is invited to prove it, *corps à corps*, in the castle of Guisnes, at St. Omer, or wherever else the king of France should think fit to appoint. It appears that king Edward, by patent dated at Westminster 23rd August 1352,¹ alluding to the cause of quarrel, granted licence to the duke of Lancaster, although inconveniently to the royal interests, to accept the challenge, and to pass for that purpose beyond sea, with one earl and sixty knights and esquires, their horses and accoutrements. The duke, accordingly, landing at Calais, proceeded with his suite towards Guisnes. On approaching that place he was met by the marshal of France, John de Clermont, with a large train, on the quindena of the Nativity, and conducted with great honour to Hesdin, from whence the lord James de Bourbon attended him to Paris, where he was most nobly received by John king of France and the duke's kinsman the king of Navarre. A day was thereupon fixed for the duel, not without many previous ineffectual endeavours to reconcile the parties. On entering the lists, the countenance of the duke of Brunswick is said to have suddenly become pallid, and his arm so enfeebled that he

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¹ Pat. 26 Ed. 3, p. 2, m. 8, copied by Rymer.

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could not wield his sword; and, upon a renewed interposition, he apologised for his letter, and submitted himself to the arbitration of the king of France, who, at a grand banquet, terminated the difference between the dukes.¹ King John thereupon entertained the duke of Lancaster most courteously, and showed and offered him many rich presents, amongst which, however, he would only accept a thorn out of the Saviour's crown, which he deposited, as a most precious relic, in the collegiate church of our Lady at Leicester. He then repaired to king Edward, who was celebrating Christmas at St. Albar's.

The duke was subsequently engaged in numerous brilliant enterprises in the wars in France; and, lastly, attended the king into that kingdom in 1360; and as he had proved, throughout his long career, his wisdom and valour as a great commander, so did he also manifest his desire for peace whenever it could be accomplished upon terms honourable to his sovereign and country. This disposition was particularly evinced at the conclusion of the treaty of Bretigny, when, though the king was very unwilling to accept the terms offered by the French, he was finally moved so to do by the persuasive arguments of the duke. It was also upon his motion that the truce made at Rennes between Charles of Blois and the count of Montfort, which was to expire on the 1st of May, was enlarged to Midsummer following, in the hope of a final peace.²

He married Isabel daughter of Henry lord Beaumont, by whom he had two daughters, his heirs, viz. Maud, (aged 22 at the time of his death,) who had been, first, the betrothed wife of Ralph, son of Ralph earl of Stafford; and, at the age of six years, his widow. She married, secondly, in 1352, as above stated, William V. duke of Bavaria, count of Holland, Zealand, &c.; but died soon after her marriage, without issue. The second and only surviving daughter and heir of duke

¹ The witnesses of the transaction are recorded to have been—the king of Navarre, Giles his brother, the count of Ponthieu, the count of Flanders, the count of Tancarville, the earl of Salisbury,

the lord de Clermont, the lord Louis of Navarre, Louis de Harcourt, John de Chastelyn, Walter his son, and many others.

² Ashmole, p. 684.

Henry was Blanche (aged 14 at the death of her father,) who became the consort of John of Gant, afterwards duke of Lancaster.

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The duke made his will in his castle at Leicester on the 15th March 1360-1;¹ and, dying of the pestilence on the 24th of the same month, was interred in the collegiate church of the Newarke in that town, on the north side of the high altar, in pursuance of the directions of his will.²

He occupied, in St. George's chapel, the second stall on the Sovereign's side, next to that of the royal founder.

ARMS.

The arms of England, differenced by "a label of three points azure, each charged with three fleurs de lis, or."

IV.

THOMAS BEAUCHAMP, THIRD EARL OF
WARWICK,

One of the Founders.

THIS eminent person, the son of Guy earl of Warwick, by Alice, sister and heir of Robert lord Tony baron of Flamsted, passed an active life in the service of his country; having been, from an early period of it, constantly intrusted with high and confidential employments. His father dying in 1315,³ when the subject of this memoir was in his infancy, the custody and tuition of his person were first committed to the king's favourite, Hugh le Despenser; but, upon the accession of Edward III, Warwick castle and his other extensive possessions were granted to Roger lord Mortimer, afterwards earl of March, until he should attain his majority.⁴ Before that event, however, he was armed by the king; and, as a

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¹ Islip, 122; Lambeth lib. The will was proved at Leicester, 3 kal. April 1361, and, in London, 7 ides of May following.

² See an interesting account of the Newarke, &c. with memoirs of

the house of Lancaster, by John Stockdale Hardy, Esq. registrar of the archdeaonry of Leicester, 1836.

³ Esc. 9 Ed. 2, No. 71.

⁴ Rot. Fin. 1 Ed. 3, m. 23.