

VIII.

ROGER MORTIMER, SECOND EARL OF MARCH,

One of the Founders.

ROGER
SECOND
EARL
OF
MARCH.

THE grandfather of this knight, Roger Mortimer, first earl of March, remarkable in history for his ambitious and guilty career, and for his ignominious end in November 1330,¹ had several sons; of whom Edmund Mortimer, the eldest, died in 1331, leaving, by Elizabeth, his wife, (one of the daughters of Bartholomew "le riche," and sister and coheir of Giles, successively lords Badlesmere,) Roger Mortimer, his only surviving son, then in his third year.

The family estates having been forfeited by the attainder of the first earl, he obtained, during his minority and through the influence of William Bohun earl of Northampton, who had married his mother, grants from the crown of a part of the inheritance of his ancestors, and particularly the castle of Wigmore, the most ancient of their possessions. His probable adroitness and courage in the jousts at Windsor, which shortly preceded the institution of the Order, (for he had had no opportunity of otherwise distinguishing himself,) acquired for him, at the early age of seventeen, the enviable honour of being one of its Founders; and having, two years afterwards, in 1346, attended the king and the prince of Wales on their brilliant expedition into France,² he is said³ to have received knighthood upon their landing at La Hogue, either from the hands of the sovereign, or those of the young prince immediately after his own investiture with that dignity.

It may be presumed that our knight justified, at the battle of Cressy, the high opinion which had been formed of him; for, towards the close of the same year,⁴ the king thought fit, in consideration of his laudable services, to receive his homage, although still within age, and to grant him livery of the

¹ 29th Nov. according to Knyghton, and 26th Nov. according to the inquisition taken in 28 Ed. 3.

² Rot. Franc. 20 Ed. 3, m. 10; and Froissart (ed. Buchon), vol. ii.

p. 295, where he is, by mistake, called *John*.

³ MS. K. 84, fo. 116^a, in bibl. Bodl. Oxon.

⁴ Claus. 20 Ed. 3, p. 2, m. 21.

remainder of his lands, with the exception of those held in dower by his mother the countess of Northampton.

In 1352 he was again employed in France;¹ and obtained, in 1354, a reversal in parliament of the judgment against his grandfather, upon the ground of the illegality of that sentence, which had been given without oyer of his defence;² and he thereupon assumed the style of earl of March. An inquisition having been taken of the lands of which his ancestor had died seised, they were fully restored to him. In the following year he was appointed warden of the cinque ports and constable of Dover castle, and then attended the king on his expedition into France; and, again, in that of 1359 which terminated in a peace.

Before, however, the peace had been fully concluded, the young earl died at Roveray, in Burgundy, on the 26th February 1359-60, whilst in command of the forces on that station; and his remains, having been brought to England, were interred at Wigmore.

By Philippa, his wife, (daughter of William Montacute the first earl of Salisbury, and sister of one of the Founders,) who died in 1381, he left an only son, Edmund, who became the third earl of March, and intermarried with the lady Philippa Plantagenet, daughter and sole heir of Lionel of Antwerp, duke of Clarence. Their son and heir, Roger Mortimer, the fourth earl, was, in right of his mother Philippa, declared in parliament heir-presumptive to the crown, failing issue of king Richard II. Earl Roger was slain in 1398, whilst exercising the supreme authority as the king's deputy in Ireland; leaving Edmund, the fifth earl of March, his son and heir; and the latter dying without issue in 1424, Anne, his sister, wife of Richard Plantagenet (called of Coningsburgh) earl of Cambridge, became the sole heir-general of the family, and transmitted to the royal house of York those pretensions to the crown which were successfully asserted by her grandson king Edward IV.

ARMS.

Barry of six, Or and Azure; on a chief of the first, two pallets between two base esquierres of the second; over all, an inescoccheon Argent.

¹ Rot. Franc. 26 Ed. 3, m. 7. ² Rot. Parl. 28 Ed. 3, No. 8, et seq.

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