

XIV.

THOMAS HOLAND, EARL OF KENT,

One of the Founders.

THE members of this prosperous family, of whom, in the course of three generations, there were seven knights of the Order, derived no particular lustre from ancestry. Sir Robert Holand, the father of the subject of the present notice, was the first of a gentle but inconsiderable stock, settled at Holand, in Lancashire, who acquired any celebrity. He had served in the wars of Edward I. in Scotland; but owed his rise and advancement to his situation of Secretary to the mighty and unfortunate Thomas Plantagenet earl of Lancaster, through whose power and influence he obtained divers valuable grants in Derbyshire, as well as the government of Beeston castle, in Cheshire, from Edward II. Under the same auspices, probably, he was further enriched by his marriage with Maud, one of the daughters and coheirs of Alan lord La Zouche, of Ashby; and, soon after that event, summoned to parliament amongst the barons of the realm. Having attained this eminence, he ill requited the generosity which had conducted him to it; and deserted, if not betrayed, his illustrious patron, in the hour of peril. Certain adherents of the fallen and popular prince seized the unfaithful servant in a wood near Henley, in Oxfordshire, and struck off his head.

Sir Thomas Holand, the second son of this Robert lord Holand and Maud la Zouche, was engaged in 1340 in the expedition into Flanders,¹ and sent, in 1342, with sir John d'Arvelle to Bayonne, to defend the Gascon frontier against the French.² In 1343 he was again on service in France;³ and, in the following year, had the honour of being chosen one of the Founders of the Garter. In 1346 he attended the king into Normandy in the immediate retinue of the earl of Warwick; and, at the taking of Caen, the count

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¹ Rot. Aleman. 14 Ed. 3, m. 4.

² Froissart, vol. ii. p. 129.

³ Rot. Franc. 17 Ed. 3, m. 13.

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d'Eu and Guisnes, constable of France, and the count de Tancarville, surrendered themselves to him as prisoners.¹ At Cressy, he was one of the principal commanders in the van under the prince of Wales; and he afterwards served at the siege of Calais in 1346-7.

It was about this time, or shortly before the expedition, that he intermarried with the lady Joan Plantagenet, granddaughter of Edward I, and sister and sole heir of John earl of Kent: but it appears that, during his absence on foreign service, his consort contracted another matrimonial engagement with William Montacute second earl of Salisbury, (of whose household our knight had been seneschal,) which, however, was annulled in 1349; her previous marriage with Holand having been proved to the satisfaction of the papal commissioners.²

He shared the naval triumph over the Spanish fleet near Ecluse in 1350.³ In 1353, the king, with the assent of Sir Thomas Holand and the lady Joan his wife, assigned as dower to Elizabeth, the widow of John late earl of Kent, numerous manors;⁴ and, in the same year, our knight had summons to parliament; and writs were in successive years directed to him until 1357. In March 1354 he was constituted the king's lieutenant and captain in Brittany and the parts of Poitou adjacent to the duchy. He passed the ensuing winter and great part of the following year on that high service; in which he was succeeded by Henry duke of Lancaster.

In 1358 he and his lady went into Normandy, where, in the next year, he obtained the custody of the castle and fort of St. Sauveur-le-Vicomte, and of all the castles late of Geoffrey de Harcourt, including Barfleur. Shortly afterwards he was appointed, jointly with Philip of Navarre, the king's lieute-

¹ Froiss. vol. ii. pp. 316. 318. The chronicler mentions, on this occasion, that sir Thomas Holand had only *one eye*. Whether he had in truth such defect, or had, in performance of some vow, covered the eye, in conformity to a chivalrous custom of that period, (Vœu du Héron in Sainte-Palaye, ed. 1781, tome iii. 17,) is not known. The above distinguished prisoners

were purchased by the king from sir Thomas for 80,000 florins *de scuto* (Ashm. p. 697).

² See antea, p. 37.

³ Froiss. vol. iii. p. 9.

⁴ Claus. 27 Ed. 3, m. 25. The quit-rent reserved in this grant of dower was 600 pounds of horse-hair, "*pro springaldis et aliis ingenis nostris in Turri Lond. faciend.*"

nant and captain in Normandy; and, in 1360, that office was vested in him solely.

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In the last-mentioned year he assumed the style of earl of Kent, in right of his wife; and on the 20th November was summoned to parliament by that title.

But, in the following month, 28th December 1360, he died in Normandy; having had issue, by the lady Joan (shortly afterwards princess of Wales), two sons, both knights of the Order, viz. Thomas second earl of Kent, and John earl of Huntingdon and duke of Exeter. He had also two daughters: Joan, the second consort of John IV. duke of Brittany, K.G.; and Maud, married first to Hugh lord Courtenay; secondly, to Waleran count de St. Paul.

This Founder is now represented by the heirs general of his five grand-daughters:—1. Eleanor, who married, first, Roger Mortimer earl of March; secondly, Edward Cherleton lord Powys. 2. Joan, married first to Edmund of Langley; secondly, William lord Willoughby; thirdly, Henry lord Scrope; and fourthly, sir Henry Bromflete. 3. Margaret, married first to John earl of Somerset; secondly, Thomas duke of Clarence. 4. Eleanor, the younger, who married Thomas Montacute earl of Salisbury; and 5. Elizabeth, who married John lord Nevil.

ARMS.

Azure, semé of fleur-de-lis, a lion rampant, Argent.

XV.

JOHN LORD GREY DE ROTHERFELD.

One of the Founders.

ASHMOLE has mistaken the possessor, at the period of the foundation, of the eighth stall on the Sovereign's side, conceiving him to have been John lord Grey de Codnore, who lived until the 16th year of Richard II; whilst the stall of the Founder had become vacant before 1360, and is proved to

JOHN
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