

The earl of Warwick did not long survive his restitution; for, having made his will 1st April 1400,¹ he died on the 8th of April 1401, and was buried in the south aisle of the collegiate church of Warwick.

THOMAS
FOURTH
EARL
OF
WARWICK.

According to the extant wardrobe accounts, robes were issued to him yearly from 1374 to 1377, in 1384, and from 1388 to 1390 inclusive. He was, doubtless, deprived of the Order upon conviction for treason, and succeeded by sir Thomas Erpyngham: whether he was again admitted to his stall at Windsor during the short interval between the reversal of his attainder and his death, does not appear. His plate is still affixed to it.

By Margaret his consort, daughter of William lord Ferrers of Groby (who survived him), he had one son, Richard fifth earl of Warwick, also a knight of the Order,² and two daughters,—Catherine who died unmarried in 1378, and Margaret the wife of John lord Dudley.

ARMS.³

Gules, a fess between six cross-crosslets Or.

CREST.

Out of a ducal coronet a swan's head and neck Argent.

LV.

JOHN IV. DUKE OF BRITANNY, COUNT OF MONTFORT, AND EARL OF RICHMOND.

THE attachment of the family of this illustrious knight to the princes of the Norman dynasty, before and after the conquest of England, had been not only feudal, but cemented by frequent alliances in blood. Amongst the spoils with which William rewarded his followers, the extensive district in the north riding of Yorkshire, since called the Honour of Richmond, or Richmondshire, fell to the share of Alan Rufus, or

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¹ Dugd. vol. i. p. 238.

² N^o. C.

³ Plate with this inscription, "le

s^r de Warwyke Thom's," remaining in his stall.

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Fergant, the son of Eudo, second son of Geoffrey, sovereign of Brittany. He married Constance, one of the daughters of the Conqueror; but, as he died without issue, the earldom of Richmond was transferred to his brother Alan Niger; upon whose death it devolved to Stephen the next brother. By the marriage of earl Alan, the son of Stephen, with Bertha, heiress of Brittany,¹ the two lines became united. Conan IV. duke of Brittany and earl of Richmond, the son of Bertha, was father to Constance, who conveyed the duchy to her first husband Geoffrey, the second son of king Henry II, and was mother to the young duke Arthur, the victim of the fears and ambition of his unprincipled uncle king John. Alice, the daughter of Constance, by her third marriage with Guy de Thouars, remaining in ward to the king of France, was by him given in marriage to Peter de Dreux, called Mauclerc, a scion of the royal house, being the great-grandson, in the male line, of Louis VI. Peter accepted the invitation of king John to come to his aid against the barons, and was by him invested with the earldom of Richmond. The family of Dreux was, notwithstanding, in the following reign, disseised of the Honour, in order to enable Henry III. to bestow it upon Peter of Savoy, the uncle of queen Eleanor; but the king having afterwards, by an exchange of lands, obtained re-possession of those of Richmond, conferred, in 1268, the earldom, together with the hand of his second daughter, Beatrice, upon John duke of Brittany, the grandson of Mauclerc.

Arthur II, the son of John and Beatrice, had issue, by his first marriage, two sons, John III, his successor, and Guy count of Penthievre; and, by his second, John count of Montfort. Upon the death of John III. without issue, in 1341, the succession to the duchy of Brittany was contested by Charles de Blois, (nephew, by the sister, of king Philip VI,) in right of his wife Joan countess of Penthievre, only child of Guy of Brittany, and by her uncle John of Montfort; Joan claiming as heir-general, and Montfort as brother of the last duke and heir male of his house.²

¹ Bertha was the daughter of Conan III. count of Brittany, by Maud of England, daughter of king Henry I.

² As the authority of the Salique law had never been recognised in Brittany, the right of succession was undoubtedly in Joan.

About the commencement of this fierce struggle for dominion, which was upheld, on the one side, by the power of France, and by that of England on the other, Joan of Flanders countess of Montfort, gave birth to the subject of this notice; and, upon the death of her husband in 1345,¹ appealed successfully to a large portion of the Breton nobility in behalf of his infant heir, who had been consigned by his father's last will² to the tutelage of Edward III.

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The heroic widow of Montfort passed into England, in order to strengthen the subsisting alliance with its Sovereign; engaging to place in his hands all the strong places in Brittany, then under her power; and, the more effectually to secure the protection of the English monarch, she affianced her son to his daughter Mary; leaving the young count to be educated, or rather to remain as a hostage, at his court.

In 1356, during the imprisonment of Charles de Blois in England, which, with two brief intervals of freedom, consumed in fruitless endeavours to collect the means for his ransom, had endured nine years,³ Montfort, at the age of seventeen, embarked with the duke of Lancaster for Brittany; but, upon intelligence received, before they had quitted the English coast, of the capture of the king of Navarre at Rouen, by king John, they were ordered to steer for Normandy, where a landing was effected in June with four thousand men—a force too inferior to make head against the French army, already very formidable, but soon to be destroyed at Poitiers. In the mean time, one month before that catastrophe, Charles de Blois obtained his liberty, and a safe conduct into Brittany for himself and sixty followers.

Lancaster, desirous of forming a junction with the Black Prince in Poitou, attempted in vain to pass the Loire at the bridge of Cé; and the news reaching him of his brother's decisive victory, he descended the river as far as Rennes, and laid siege to that town. A detachment of French troops, which had been left in Brittany to assist the party opposed to

¹ 26 Sept.—Hist. eccles. et civ. de Bretagne par Morice, tom. i. p. 272.

² Ibid.

³ Charles de Blois was made pri-

soner at the battle of Roche-derrien, 18th June 1347.—*Inscription on the tomb of Guy de Laval in the collegiate church of Vitré.*

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Montfort, occupied the adjacent forest; and, by frequent sallies from thence, rendered the protracted operations of the besiegers wholly unavailing. In March 1357 a truce was concluded at Bordeaux between France and England,¹ in which the heir of the late count of Montfort was included; and Lancaster having, in July, reluctantly raised the siege of Rennes, retired with the young count to his castle of Auray.

By the treaty of Bretigny, in 1360, it was stipulated that the king of France should restore the territory of Montfort to count John upon his homage; and that commissioners should be appointed by the two monarchs for the adjustment of the differences touching the succession to the duchy of Brittany. Montfort thereupon returned to England, and sent envoys to attend the conference at Calais. In the same year he resigned the earldom of Richmond in favour of John of Gant.

The commissioners on the affairs of the duchy met at St. Omers in January 1361-2; when it was proposed to divide the dominions of Brittany between the contending parties; but upon rejection of the offer of that expedient, recourse was again had to arms. After the renewal of the contest, another abortive attempt was made to reconcile the belligerents in a conference at Poitiers held on 24th February 1363-4, in presence of the Black Prince as mediator. The armies of Blois and Montfort met before Auray in the following September. Count John then proposed to accept a moiety of the duchy, in order to prevent the further effusion of blood;² but his adversary, acting, as it is said, under a strict injunction from his consort who had ever been opposed to a partition of her inheritance, was deaf to all overtures for pacification. In the battle, which ensued on Michaelmas-day 1364, Charles de Blois was slain, and Du Guesclin made prisoner.

John of Montfort was thereupon proclaimed duke of Brittany; and, after much negotiation on the subject, did homage

¹ Rymer, vol. vii. p. 3.—The truce preceded the departure of the Black Prince, with king John,

for England in April 1357, and was to endure until Easter 1359.

² Hist. de Bret. par Morice, tom. i. p. 308.

to Charles V. at Paris, on 13th December 1365.¹ But the ties which connected him with England, were too strong to allow him to continue long faithful to his new allegiance. Upon a proposal from Edward to enter into a treaty of alliance, his reply, dated Vannes 21st February 1371-2, purported that he had received from his infancy too many proofs of that monarch's affection and favour not to be ready to bind himself to the interests of England against all her enemies. On the conclusion of a treaty of offensive and defensive alliance, the earldom of Richmond was restored to him, on 19th July 1372.²

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An accidental discovery³ made by the duke of Bourbon of the terms of this treaty, so exasperated the French king that he determined to punish signally his disloyal vassal, and sent a large force to take possession of Brittany. John was compelled to retire into England in April 1373. In the following month⁴ he proceeded with Lancaster to Calais at the head of thirty thousand men, and ravaged Picardy. Having crossed the Somme, and halted several days at Roye in Vermandois, in the hope that the king of France would give them battle, John addressed to him a letter of defiance.⁵ The two dukes then traversed a great part of the kingdom, and arrived at Bordeaux without having gained any essential benefit from their expedition.

In 1374 duke John embarked at Bordeaux and landed on the Breton coast, near Auray, where he resided a short time: but observing that his principal subjects evinced a firm attachment to the French interests, he fortified Auray, Derval, and Brest, the only places which remained to him, and returned to England. On the 18th November in that year, he accompanied the earl of Cambridge into France; landed at St. Mahé with five thousand men; and having carried its castle by assault, put the garrison to the sword. Several

¹ Hist. de Bret. par Morice, tom. i. p. 319.

² Rymer, vol. vi. p. 758.

³ Louis III. duke of Bourbon having caused the duchess of Brittany to be seized on her passage from Rennes to Vannes, ordered her to be liberated after an ex-

mination of her effects, amongst which was discovered a copy of the treaty which her husband had concluded with England. — *Morice*, tom. i. p. 344.

⁴ Froiss. tom. vi. p. 56.

⁵ *Morice*, tom. i. p. 347.

JOHN IV. other places were besieged and taken: but the truce for a
DUKE year, concluded at Bruges in February following between
OF England and France, terminated the military operations of
BRITANNY. the duke of Brittany, who, after a short sojourn at Auray, passed again into England.

Upon the death of the earl of Pembroke, in April 1375, John duke of Brittany was elected into the Order of the Garter, and placed in the second stall on the Prince's side.

The king of France having signified a desire to treat with him for a restoration of the duchy, the duke went over to Flanders in order to confer with the count, his cousin, then at Bruges; but the consequent negotiation was not productive of any satisfactory result.

In 1377 John quitted the court of Flanders; and, proceeding to Gravelines was, by the earl of Salisbury and Guichard d'Angle, conducted to Calais, from whence he shortly afterwards sailed to England; arriving in time to pay the last duties to the remains of king Edward, and to accompany the young king Richard in his solemn entry into London.

Through the mediation of the dukes of Anjou and Burgundy, a reconciliation was effected, in 1381, between the king of France and the duke of Brittany, and the latter re-instated in his dominions. He did not, however, venture to proceed to the performance of his homage without a safe conduct for his suite, consisting of two hundred persons, and similar protections from the dukes of Anjou, Berri, Burgundy, and Bourbon. Before the departure of the duke upon this service, he assembled his states to obtain their advice at so critical a conjuncture. His nobles appeared, upon that occasion, for the first time decorated with the collar of the Order of the Ermine, which he had recently instituted.¹ The homage was rendered, on the 27th September, at Compeigne. After his return into Brittany, the duke, with the permission of the king of France,

¹ The precise date of the institution of the Order of the Ermine is not on record; but it is mentioned, in *Actes de Bretagne, tom. ii. col. 357*, that the knights appeared for the first time in their collars at Nantes in 1381. The order was

doubtless created upon the duke's return in that year from England, and to commemorate his re-instatement in his dominions. Ladies were also admitted into the order and styled "CHEVALERESSES."—*Morice, tom. i. p. 383.*

sent ambassadors to Richard II. to solicit the return of the duchess,¹ the removal of the sequestration of the Honour of Richmond, and the restitution of Brest. Richard referred the envoys to his council, which directed Bazvalen, the principal commissioner, to repair to Byflete, the residence of the duchess, and to prefer, in person, the request of his master. The duchess expressed her willingness to obey and to depart instantly with the permission of her brother the king, and of her mother. Bazvalen visited the princess of Wales at Walingford castle; and, her assent having been obtained, the king consented to the departure of his sister.² With regard, however, to the earldom of Richmond, the chancellor Scrope informed the envoys, that it had been lawfully seized by Richard in consequence of the duke's homage to France; and that Brest had been ceded for Castle Rising in Norfolk; but the rents of that estate having also been sequestered upon the same grounds as those of Richmond, the king ordered the receivers to account for them to the duke of Brittany from the date of the exchange.

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In 1387 a transaction occurred which, however extenuated by a consideration of the lax and unsettled principles of political morality influencing the governments of that age, has cast a deep shade over the character of John of Montfort. History has left us in doubt, whether the desire of recovering his waning influence in England by frustrating an impending invasion of her coasts under the direction of Olivier de Clisson, the constable of France, prompted his unjustifiable conduct towards that distinguished person; or whether it proceeded from a well-founded mistrust of the constable's views in effecting, at precisely that juncture, the release of the duke's formidable rival in the affections of the Bretons. Both motives may have conduced to the outrage: but the last alluded to is the most probable. John de Blois, count of Penthievre, son of Charles de Blois and Joan of Brittany, had been, from his infancy, during a period of thirty years, detained in England as a hostage for the fulfilment of con-

¹ Joan de Holand, the duke's second consort, daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, earl of Kent by Joan, afterwards princess of Wales.

² Morice, tom. i. p. 384.

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ditions under which his late father had obtained his liberty. Richard placed his ransom at the disposition of his favourite the duke of Ireland, who concluded with Clisson an agreement for his freedom. The negotiation had been carried on without communication with the duke of Brittany, who imagined, from the secrecy observed by the parties, that the constable, whose daughter Margaret was the destined wife of Penthièvre, had been actuated by an intention to set up his competitor in the duchy. He permitted himself, therefore, to form the base design of seizing and destroying Clisson. The arrest was accomplished by means the most treacherous. The duke convoked a meeting of the states at Vannes under the pretext of deliberating upon points important to the welfare of his people. Among the magnates who attended, were the constable (a large proprietor in the duchy), the vicomte de Rohan, and the sires De Laval and Beaumanoir. At the close of the sitting, the duke gave a grand dinner to those who had been present. The constable, at parting, engaged the nobles to dine with him on the morrow; when the duke, arriving towards the end of the repast, seated himself at the table, and delighted the guests by his courtesy and apparent cordiality. The dinner over, he invited Clisson, Laval, Beaumanoir, and others, to inspect his castle of the Ermine, which he was building at Vannes, and had nearly completed. They attended him to the castle; where the duke, having conducted them through the apartments, reached at length the keep, accompanied only by Clisson and Laval; and, stopping near the entrance, requested the constable to ascend and afford him his opinion of the strength of the fortifications. Clisson entered alone, the duke being for the moment engaged in conversation with Laval: he was immediately seized, disarmed, dragged into a dungeon, and loaded with chains. Laval, alarmed by the closing of the door, and a remarkable change in the duke's countenance, expressed his hope that no ill was intended to his brother-in-law Clisson. The duke commanded him to mount his horse and depart. Laval having withdrawn himself, Beaumanoir came up; and, inquiring for the constable, encountered the enraged duke, who, amidst violent menaces, ordered

him also into confinement. The duke, who had not limited his resentment to the mere incarceration of Clisson, sent for Bazvalen, who, being highest in his confidence, had charge of the illustrious prisoner. To this minister he gave directions to have the constable put to death, in a secret manner, at midnight. Bazvalen ventured to represent to him the dangerous consequences of such an act, and to intreat at least a delay, in the hope that, upon reflection, a conviction of its manifest impolicy would have induced him to abandon it; but, finding remonstrance ineffectual, at length promised to obey. Nevertheless, in his anxiety to save at once his master's honour and the victim of his hatred and revenge, he imparted to Laval the order which he had received. The latter hastened to expostulate, though unavailingly, with the duke who, dismissing him from his presence, shut himself up in his chamber for the night; satisfied, for the moment, that, ere the next dawn, he should be rid of his greatest enemy. The stillness of the night, however, calmed his fury; and he began to ruminate on the probable effects of his cruelty. He saw already the French and Bretons, incensed with indignation at his treachery, expelling him with ignominy from the duchy; and the English court, whose displeasure he had incurred, refusing aid to him in his distress. He considered, on the other hand, that if Bazvalen should have chanced to suspend the execution of his command, and have spared the life of the constable, he would still have been guilty of a crime which the world could scarcely pardon, whilst his own revenge would remain unsatisfied. At the break of day he summoned Bazvalen, and demanded of him whether he had fulfilled his instructions. Upon receiving an affirmative answer, the duke abandoned himself wholly to grief, announcing by sighs and lamentations the remorse which oppressed him. Bazvalen, convinced of the sincerity of these demonstrations, thought it now time to communicate the fact that, having anticipated a change in his master's sentiments, he had presumed to disobey him; and that his prisoner was still in being. The duke, overwhelmed with joy, embraced his minister, extolling his prudence, and declaring that he had rendered him a most important service.

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BRITANNY. The sequel is, however, far from honourable to his memory; for, not possessing sufficient magnanimity to forego entirely the advantage gained by his perfidy, he extorted from the constable an exorbitant ransom as the price of his liberty.¹

In 1396 the duke of Brittany sent ambassadors to England to solicit the restitution of Brest, which was agreed to upon payment of 120,000 franks in gold; and the town and harbour were surrendered on the 12th June in the following year. In 1398 the duke and duchess visited Richard II. and robes of the Garter were prepared for their attendance at the feast of St. George in that year,² when the king granted to him a general acquittance and restored to him the earldom of Richmond.³

John duke of Brittany died (very probably of the effects of poison) at Nantes, in the night between the 1st and 2nd of November 1399; and his remains were interred in the choir of the cathedral of St. Peter, where a monument was erected to his memory by his relict in 1409, she being then the queen consort of Henry IV.⁴

He married 1. Mary the fourth daughter of king Edward III, by whom, who died in 1363, he had no issue; 2. Joan de Holand, uterine sister of king Richard II, by whom, who died in 1385, he had also no issue; 3. on 11th September 1386, Joan of Navarre, daughter of king Charles le Mauvais, who survived him and became the consort of Henry IV. king of England. By his third marriage the duke of Brittany had several children. The representation of John V, duke of

¹ This singular event is narrated with different circumstances by historians. All agree in the caption of the constable, and the intention of the duke to put him to death. Froissart attributes the alteration of the duke's purpose to the remonstrances of Laval; but Morice, Lobineau, and, in modern times, Anquetil (who may be supposed to have formed his opinion after consulting all the preceding narratives) adopts the recital of Bouchard.

² Comp. Joh's Macclesfield cust. mag. Gard 22 Ric. 2.

³ Cum nuper dedimus car^o fratri n^{ro} Joh'i duci Britannie quendam acquiet. a principio mundi usque diem S. Georgii ult. pret. quo die eidem duci acquiet. suam gen^m tradidimus et ei comitatum suum Richemundie restituimus. T. R. Westm, 24th Dec. 22 Ric. 2, Rym. vol. viii. p. 64.

⁴ See an engraving of the tomb in Hist. de Bretagne, par Morice, fol. Paris 1750, vol. i. p. 426. The figure of the duke is represented in armour with the collar of the Order of the Ermine around his neck, and the Garter about his leg.

Britanny, his eldest son and successor, became vested in the house of Rohan; but the duchy was united to France by the marriage of the duchess Anne (grand-daughter of Richard count d'Etampes, fourth son of our knight) first to Charles VIII, and, secondly, to Louis XII. kings of France.

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ARMS.

Chequé Or and Azure, a bordure Gules powdered with lioncels passant guardant of the first; a canton Ermine.¹

LVI.

SIR THOMAS BANASTRE.

THE antiquity of the family, of which this gallant knight was a distinguished member and ornament, is attested by the public records, particularly those of the duchy of Lancaster, within which palatine jurisdiction it held from an early period ample possessions.² It is in evidence that Robert Banastre came into England with William the Conqueror, and that he obtained the manor of Prestaton in Englefield in Berkshire.³ His son, or grandson, of the same name, removed into Lancashire, and was the progenitor of several branches long settled in that and the adjoining county of Chester.⁴ Robert, the grandson of the second Robert, was one year old at the death of his father, Thurstan Banastre,⁵ in or about 1219,

SIR
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¹ These arms are in the east window of the south aisle of the church of Richmond in Yorkshire. The field is *Dreux*, the canton *Britanny*, and the bordure was doubtless added after the close alliance with *England*.

² The author is indebted for much valuable information respecting this and other families, tenants of the duchy of Lancaster, to the kind and friendly communications of William Hardy, esq. of the duchy office.

³ Rot. Parl. vol. i. p. 2.

⁴ Mon. Angl. vol. i. pp. 201, 986,

where a Richard Banastre attests charters granted by Hugh Lupus and Ranulph Meschines earls of Chester (the former of whom died in 1101, and the latter in 1128) to the monastery of St. Werburg. It appears also, by the same volume, p. 720, that king Henry II. confirmed a donation made by Robert Banastre to the White Monks of Basingwerk in Flintshire.

⁵ Thurstan Banastre fined, in 1213, upon inheriting after his elder brothers, Robert and Warine, Rot. Fin. 15 Joh. m. 7.