

LXXVI.

SIR NICHOLAS SARNESFELD.

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FELD.

WE have not discovered the precise origin or immediate connections of this knight, who was probably a scion of an ancient stock at Sarnesfield, near Weobley, in Herefordshire, frequently noticed in our public records. Nor is it at present known to what circumstances sir Nicholas Sarnesfeld, or Scharnesfeld, owed his introduction to the Black Prince and his royal son; but that he stood high in the favour of both is evident; since he was of the retinue,¹ and a witness to the will,² of the former; and was appointed by the latter a knight of his chamber, bore his standard, and was honoured by him with the Garter. As the office of the king's standard-bearer was at that period granted only to persons of acknowledged valour, great strength of body, and long experience in the battle-field, we may presume the possession of those qualities to have been the foundation of his distinction.

The first mention, which we find of him in the reign of Richard II, is in 1381, when, after the insurrection of the commons had been quelled, he was sent to Edinburgh to recall the duke of Lancaster.³ In the year following, being standard-bearer as well as knight of the chamber, he was the chief commissioner with sir Bernard van Zeiles, also a knight of the king's chamber, and Richard Rouhale, doctor of laws, to negotiate an alliance with Wenceslaus, king of the Romans and of Bohemia and future emperor, and especially against Charles, occupier of the kingdom of France, Louis count of Valois, his brother, Louis duke of Anjou, John duke of Berri, and Philip duke of Burgundy; as also against John, sometime calling himself king of Castile and Leon, and Robert

¹ Letters of protection to pass with Edward prince of Wales beyond sea, dated 18th August 1359. Rymer, (new edition) vol. iii. p^e 1, fo. 443.

² Nichols' Royal Wills, p. 76.

³ Froissart, tom. viii. p. 70, where the chronicler calls him "le sire Nicole Carneffel."

called king of Scotland.¹ On the 14th September 1385 he obtained a grant of the manors of Tewenton, Tintagell, and Moresk, in Cornwall, for the term of his life, in lieu of a pension of 100*l.*, which the king had settled on him on his first unfurling the royal banner at that Sovereign's entrance into Scotland.² Towards the close of the year 1386 he was elected into the Order of the Garter, and placed in the second stall on the Sovereign's side, vacant by the death of Hugh earl of Stafford;³ and robes were issued to him for the feasts of St. George in the two succeeding years.⁴ In 1389 he was present, as a privy councillor, at the deliberations of the king in council at Windsor on the 20th of August,⁵ at Clarendon on the 13th September,⁶ and at Westminster on the 15th of October.⁷ In January following he and sir John Clanvowe, knights of the chamber, were appointed to notify to sir William le Scrope (afterwards earl of Wiltshire and K. G.) the award of the king in council that the jewel, which Scrope was to offer at the shrine of St. Cuthbert at Durham, as a penance for certain transgressions and misprisions committed against Walter bishop of that see, should not be of less value than 500*l.*⁸

The date of this knight's death has not been ascertained; but it probably happened about the end of the year 1394; as, on the 7th of April following, sir Simon Felbrigge (afterwards K. G.) was appointed standard-bearer in his room.⁹

It is not known whether sir Nicholas Sarnesfeld left any issue by his wife Margaret, whose family name does not appear, and who was living in 1431.¹⁰

ARMS—Azure, an eagle displayed Or, ducally crowned Argent.

¹ Rot. Franc. 6 Ric. 2, m. 28; Aug. 16. Rymer, vol. vii. p. 365.

² Pat. 9 Ric. 2, p. 1, m. 36; Rymer, vol. vii. p. 477. See also Vinc. No. 29, fo. 33, and No. 6, p. 253, in Coll. Armor.

³ Windsor tables.

⁴ See pp. 250, 251.

⁵ Cotton. MSS. Calig. D III. fo. 154.

⁶ Ibid. Cleop. F III. 105^b.

⁷ Ibid. fo. 3.

⁸ Pat. 13 Ric. 2, p. 2, m. 18; Jan. 24. Rymer, vol. vii. p. 655.

⁹ Pat. 18 Ric. 2, p. 2, m. 17; April 7.

¹⁰ In 1429 Margaret, widow of sir Nicholas Scharnesfeld, chevalier, presented her petition to Henry VI, setting forth that Richard II. had by letters patent granted to her late husband and herself, upon their marriage, the manor and burgh of Helston in Kerier, in

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