
KNIGHTS BANNERETS.

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THIS Order is certainly honourable, because conferred upon some heroick action performed in the field. *Selden* says, the first account of this dignity of honour is in the reign of Edward the First, in the account of his Wardrobe.

That Knights Bannerets were next to Barons in dignity appears by the statute made in the fifth year of King Richard II. *Stat. 2. Chap. 4.* by which statute, such Bannerets were anciently called by summons to Parliament; they still continue the next degree to the nobility, are allowed to bear Arms with supporters; they take place of Baronets, and anciently had Knights Batchelors and Esquires to serve under them.

King Charles I. did, by his letters patents, ordain that the wives of Bannerets and their heirs male should have the precedency as well after as before the deaths of their husbands, if they should happen to survive, before the wives of all those of whom the Knights Baronets and their heirs male had the precedency, and even before the wives of Knights Baronets*.

Bannerets have no particular badge worn on their Garments, but in England their arms are painted on a banner placed in the paws of the supporters to their arms.

The ceremony of their creation is thus: The King, or his General, at the head of his army, drawn up in order of battle after a victory, under the royal standard displayed, attended by all the officers and nobility present, receives the Knight, led between two Knights,

* Chamberlayne's Present State of Great Britain.

carrying his pennon of arms in his hand, the Heralds walking before him, who proclaim his valiant achievements, for which he has deserved to be made a Knight Banneret, and to display his banner in the field; then the King or the General says to him, *Advances toy Banneret*, and causes the point of his pennon to be rent off; then the new Knight, having the trumpets before him sounding, the nobility and officers bearing him company, is sent back to his tent, where they are all entertained.

The words the Herald says to the King or his General, upon presenting the Knight, are these;

“ May it please your Grace to understand, that this
 “ Gentleman hath shewed himself valiant in the field,
 “ and for so doing deserveth to be advanced to the de-
 “ gree of a Knight Banneret, as worthy from hence-
 “ forth to bear a banner in the war.”

The Heralds that conducted him were to receive for their fees three pounds six shillings and eight pence; and if he was before a Knight Batchelor, then he was to pay to the trumpets twenty shillings.

In the year 1773, at a review of the Royal Navy at Portsmouth, his Majesty was graciously pleased to confer the honour of Knights Banneret, on the following flag officers and commanders under the royal standard, who kneeling, kissed hands upon the occasion; viz. Admirals, Pye and Spry; Captains, Knight, Bickerton, and Vernon.