

GRANT OF THE MANOR OF HOLBORN,

TEMP. RIC. II.

WITH SOME NOTES ON THE FAMILY OF THE GRANTOR.

COMMUNICATED BY JAMES CROSBY, ESQ. F.S.A.

I HAVE much pleasure in introducing to the notice of the London and Middlesex Archæological Society a document of considerable interest connected with the descent of a very important portion of that area, for the elucidation of whose history the Society has been established.

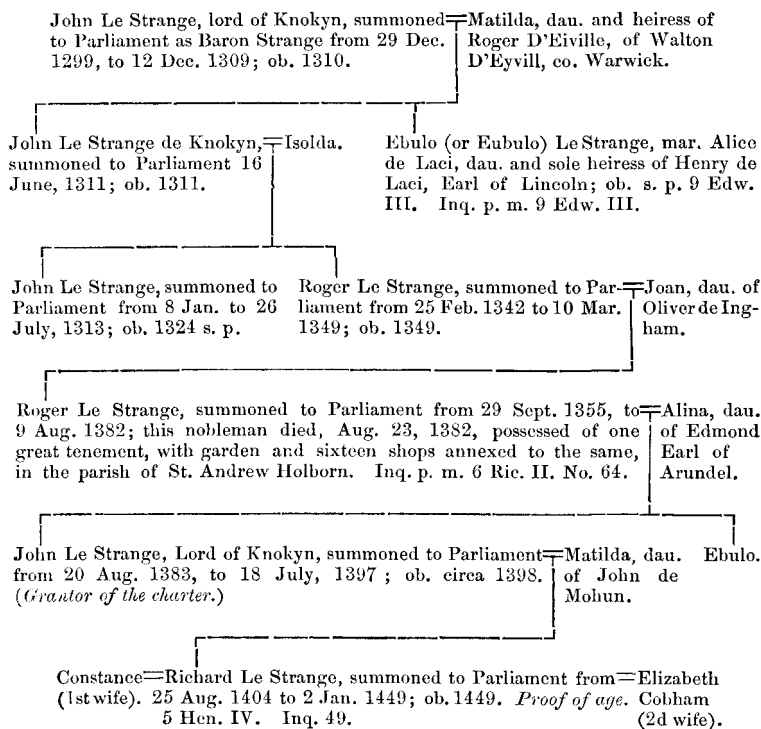
It is a grant of the Manor of Holborn, made on the 8th day of July, in the ninth year of the reign of King Richard II., A.D. 1385, by John Le Straunge, Lord of Knokyn, to Richard Earl of Arundel and Surrey, Alina the mother, and Ebulo, or Eubulo, the brother of the grantor. The original has been lent to me by my friend the Rev. L. B. Larking; and I am sure I may be allowed to add that the Society, as well as myself, is under deep obligation to that gentleman for the courtesy with which the relic has been communicated, and for the permission that it should be copied in fac-simile and published in our Transactions.

The grant is as follows, with the MS. contractions supplied, and the original is exactly represented in the annexed lithograph, by the accurate pen of Mr. Netherclift, Sen.

Noverint universi per presentes—cum nuper ego dominus Johannes Lestraunge dominus de Knokyn concesserim per scriptum meum Ricardo Comiti Arundelie et Surrie, Aline Lestraunge matri mee, et Ebuloni Lestraunge fratri meo clerico, manerium meum de Holburne in suburbe Londonie ad terminum vite corundem. Noveritis me remisisse relaxasse totum jus meum et clamium quod habui in dicto manerio tam in dominico quam in revercione cum omnibus suis pertinenciis pro me et heredibus meis dicto Ricardo Comiti Arundelie, Aline, et Ebuloni, et heredibus predictæ Aline in perpetuum. In cujus rei testimonium huic litere sigillum meum apposui. Datum octavo die Julii, anno regni Regis Ricardi Secundi post conquestum nono.

A seal is appended of red wax, being a shield charged with two lions passant.

I have sketched the following pedigree of the Le Stranges, from John Le Strange, who died A.D. 1310, to John Le Strange, grandson of the grantor of the charter just recited, and have placed a few particulars connected with each of the persons mentioned under their respective names.



In Dugdale there is some confusion in the two lines of Strange—those of Knokyn and those of Blakmere. It will be seen that the one here given agrees exactly with neither, but it may serve as one step towards elucidating the real pedigree and descent of the estates.

As an appendage to the family history, and as affording a very graphic and interesting illustration of the period, I think I cannot

do better than furnish the Society, in conclusion, with a copy of an inquisition taken on Saturday, 16th August, 1404, for proof of the age of Richard, the son of the grantor. By a very slight exercise of the imagination it helps us to a vivid picture of an important ceremony, and brings life-like before us several eminent and illustrious personages; the gift to the unconscious infant of a "sword with silver furniture" by the great and warlike Earl of Arundel, and of the gilt cup by the gentle lady, are alike characteristic. I have thought it best to present this document in a literal English translation. The original is at the Tower, No. 49, among the Inquisitions p. m. of 5 Hen. IV.

"Proof of the age of Richard, the son and heir of John Lestraunge, the son of Roger Lestraunge of Knokyn, deceased, made and taken in the Guildhall, London, on Saturday, the morrow of the Assumption of the blessed Virgin Mary, in the 5th year of the reign of King Henry after the Conquest the fourth, before William Askham, mayor of the City of London, and escheator of our Lord the King in the same city, by virtue of a certain writ of our said Lord the King to the said escheator directed, and to this proof attached, by the oaths of Walter Creekes, Thomas White, John Goldesburgh, Henry Anketill, Nicholas Luffenham, John Gole, William Weston, William Rybode, Roger Hillom, John Staunton, John Wolverlee, and Walter Danham, charged and sworn to make the aforesaid proof. Who say upon their oaths that the aforesaid Richard the son and heir of the aforesaid John Lestraunge, son of Roger Lestraunge of Knokyn, was born at London in the parish of St. Bartholomew the Less, in the ward of Broad Street (Bradstrete), and was baptized in the same church on the first day of August, in the 5th year of the reign of our Lord Richard late King of England after the Conquest the second. And they thus say, that on the first day of August last past the aforesaid Richard was of the age of twenty and two years. And it was further asked of the said sworn witnesses how they were sure of the age of the said Richard, after the lapse of so long a time since the day of the birth of the said Richard. Who thereon being severally examined say—namely, the aforesaid Walter Creekes, of the age of sixty years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledg (*bene scit et cognoscit*) the

age of the said Richard, because he was in the aforesaid church at the time of the baptism of the same Richard, and saw Richard,* at that time Earl of Arundel, the godfather of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, to be there present. And the said Thomas Whyte, of the age of forty and five years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because on the day of the birth of the said Richard, and on the day of the baptism of the same, he saw in the same church that William de Montacute, then Earl of Salisbury, † was the other godfather of the same Richard there: And the aforesaid John Goldesburgh, of the age of forty and six years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the said Richard the son of John, because on the day of the aforesaid birth he came to the aforesaid church in the train of Elizabeth le Despenser, ‡ and he there saw that the aforesaid Elizabeth was the godmother of the said Richard the son of John: And the aforesaid Henry Anketill, of the age of forty and four years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because one Katherine atte Hull, on the day of the birth of the same Richard the son of John, was sojourning in a certain house of the said Henry, which same Katherine then was the woman of Matilda, the mother of the

* Richard Fitz-Alan, K.G. tenth Earl of Arundel, was the nephew of Alina, the mother of the grantor of the charter. This nobleman, one of the greatest warriors of his time, having excited the strong personal enmity of Richard II. was, notwithstanding the valiant services he had rendered that monarch, brought to trial for alleged treason, and condemned to be hanged, drawn, and quartered as a traitor. The sentence was not carried into effect with all its horrible details, but this great noble was beheaded on Tower Hill in 1397, the King himself being present, and Thomas de Mowbray, Earl Marshal (who had married his daughter), is said to have been the executioner; his remains were buried in the church of the Augustine Friars, London. A detailed and interesting account of the trial and condemnation of the Earl is to be found in Stowe's Annals. That historian has, however, borrowed the particulars from an old MS. Chronicle now in the possession of John Speed Davies, Esq. which has been recently published by the Camden Society.

† Second earl, with whose wife is connected the tradition of the origin of the Order of the Garter.

‡ She was the daughter of Edward the second Baron le Despenser, and married (1) John Arundel and (2) Lord Zouch.

aforesaid Richard the son of John, and told him of the aforesaid birth: And the aforesaid Nicholas Luffenham, of the age of fifty years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he saw a certain Nicholas Bleseworth, then the esquire of the aforesaid John the son of Roger, carrying a torch before the said Richard to the aforesaid church, for the aforesaid baptism: And the aforesaid John Cole, of the age of forty and four years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he was present in the aforesaid church on the said day of the aforesaid birth, and saw one Beatrice atte Lee carrying before the said Richard to the aforesaid church a certain vessel (*pelium*) full of water, for the baptism of the said Richard: And the aforesaid William Western, of the age of forty and three years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he himself hath a son, by name Walter, of the same age: And the aforesaid William Rybode, of the age of forty and eight years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because on the day of the aforesaid birth he went to talk with the aforesaid Matilda, and met one John Beresford, then the esquire of the said Matilda, going over towards the aforesaid Elizabeth, to engage her as godmother of the said Richard, and she told him of the aforesaid birth: And the aforesaid Roger Hillom, of the age of sixty years, saith, that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because on the day of the birth and baptism of the same Richard he was present in the aforesaid church and saw the aforesaid Richard having four godfathers and two godmothers, whercat he much marvelled: And the aforesaid John Staunton, of the age of fifty and six years, saith that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he saw the aforesaid Richard, then Earl of Arundel, give to the said Richard the son of John, on the same day, after his aforesaid baptism, a sword with silver furniture: And the aforesaid John Wolverlee, of the age of sixty and ten years, saith that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he was at that

time esquire to the aforesaid William Earl of Salisbury, and carried to the said Richard on that day a silk bed with all its furniture of the gift of the said late Earl after the aforesaid baptism: And the aforesaid Walter Danham, of the age of fifty and two years, saith that he well knoweth of his own knowledge the age of the aforesaid Richard the son of John, because he saw the aforesaid Elizabeth la Despenser, on the aforesaid day of the aforesaid birth, give to the said Richard a cup of silver gilt. In testimony whereof the jurors aforesaid have set to this proof their seals. Given on the day, at the place, and in the year above mentioned."

For the information of our non-professional members, I may be pardoned for stating that this inquisition as to the age of Richard le Strange was made for the purpose of enabling him, on proof of his having attained the age of twenty-one years, to obtain livery of his lands out of the hands of his guardian, to whom, by the feudal system, the wardship both of his body and lands had been granted during his minority.

INQUISITIONES POST MORTEM ET AD QUOD
DAMPNUM FOR LONDON AND MIDDLESEX.

TEMPORE HENRICI VII.

(Preserved at the Rolls' Chapel.)

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