

PLATE I.—THE SO-CALLED MONUMENT OF LADY DE LISLE (DIED 1464),
IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF WFLLS.

HISTORICAL TRADITIONS AT WELLS, 1464, 1470, 1497.¹

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I.

Traditions, aided by scanty notices in our records, connect Wells indistinctly with historical personages and events in the latter half of the fifteenth century.

Hume said in his day, "No part of English history since the Conquest is so obscure, so uncertain, so little authentic or consistent as that of the Wars between the two Roses."

Much light has been thrown upon that period since Hume wrote, yet even the public records lately published give us imperfect knowledge of the times of Henry the Sixth and Edward the Fourth, and there is still some difficulty in tracing the sequence of important public events at that time.

I propose to examine the traditions at Wells relating to:—

- (a) the monument of Lady de Lisle and the connection of the de Lisle family with Wells in 1464.
- (b) the visit of Edward IV. to Wells in 1470.
- (c) the visit of Henry VII. to Wells in 1497.

THE DE LISLE MONUMENT AND FAMILY IN WELLS, 1464.

In the south transept of the church of Wells there is a monument bearing an inscription on a brass tablet, to the memory of Joanna, Viscountess de Lisle, dated July 15th, 1464.

It consists of a canopy with triple cusped cinquefoiled arch. At the back is a reredos with three niches as for crucifix or images, and tabernacle work above. In architecture and colouring it is like the monument of William de Marchia which is next to it against the

¹ Read at the Bristol Meeting of the Institute, 21st July, 1904.

southern wall. It has been placed in the recess in the thickness of the wall under the easternmost of the three south transept windows, but it is too large for the recess and projects into the transept.

An engraving in Gough's *Sepulchralia*, Vol. II, part 3, p. 368, represents the monument as it stood in his time (1796) with canopy only, and blank wall within plastered over. He thus describes it in the text,

"Next Bishop Marchia's monument in Wells Cathedral is another arched one, for Joanna, Viscountess Lisle, once inscribed,

" 'Hic jacet Joanna Vicecomitissa de Lisle una filiarum et haeredum Thomæ Chedder Armigeri, quae fuit uxor Iohannis Vicecomitis de Lisle, filii et haeredis Ioannis Comitis Salopiae, et Margaretae uxoris ejus, unius filiarum et haeredum Richardi Comitis Warwici et Elizabethæ uxoris ejus, filiae et haeredis Thomae de Berkeley, militis, domini de Berkeley, quae obiit xv^{mo}. die mensis Julii anno dni. MCCCCLXIII.' "

There is a tradition preserved in the Church and found in a guide book of 1825² that this monument, "walled up with the broken pieces of the statues belonging to it, was opened by the Dean and Chapter in 1809, when three beautiful tabernacles, highly adorned with sculptures, were presented to public view."

It has seemed doubtful whether the tablet containing this inscription is rightly affixed and also whether this monument is now standing in the place for which it was designed. For the existence of a reredos with niches for images and altar slab, leads to the supposition that this was the canopy of a chantry altar like that of Bishop Bekinton's chapel, and that it stood in some other place in the church in which the altar would have been set eastward, not as now against a southern wall. Yet Leland travelling in Somerset, 1540-1542, names a tomb with this inscription "in the transept of the church of Wells."³

At the visit of the Royal Archaeological Institute to

¹ The inscription is the same as that on the present brass tablet, except that the date is MCCCCLXIII (1464) not as it now appears MCCCCLXIII (1463). The last down stroke has been par-

tially worn off the edge of the tablet. Collinson gives the date 1464.

² Davis, *Guide*, p. 83, 1825.

³ *Som. Arch. Proc.*, Vol. XXXIII, p. 108.

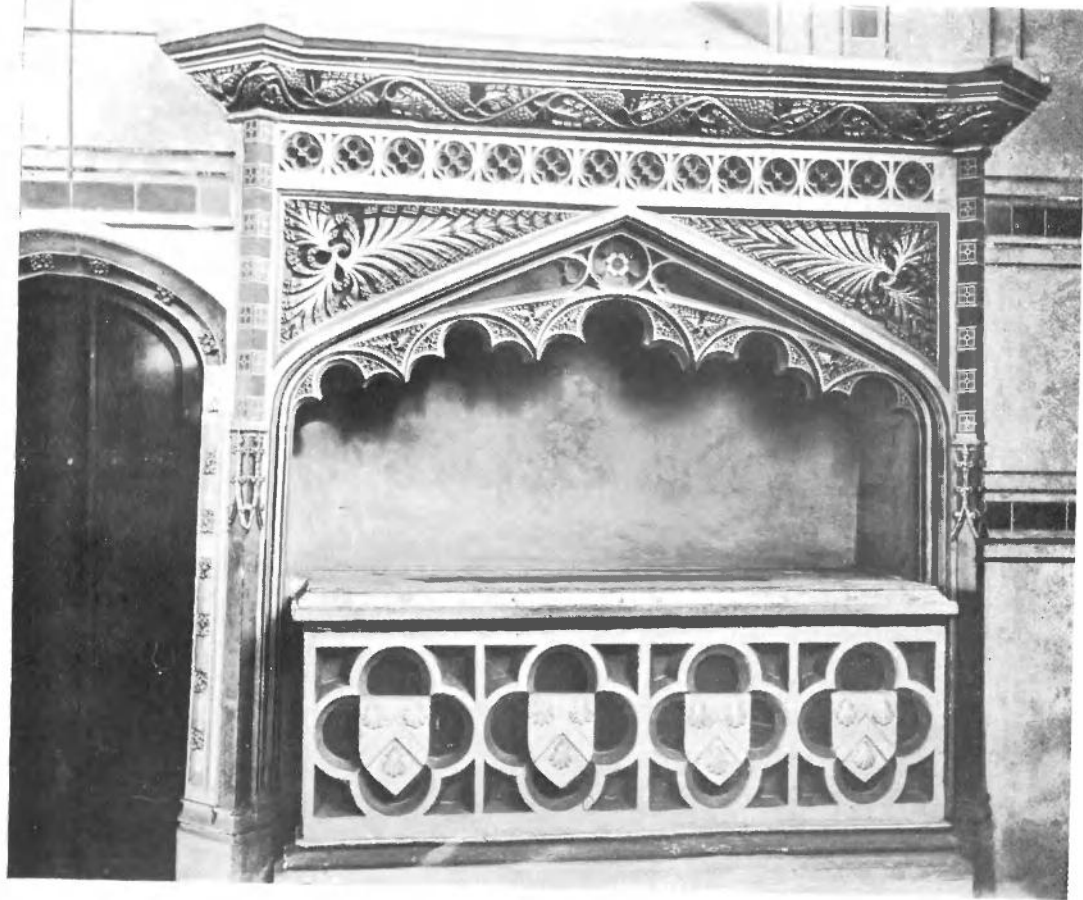


PLATE II.—TOMB OF THOMAS DE CHEDDRE (DIED 1442), IN CHEDDAR CHURCH.

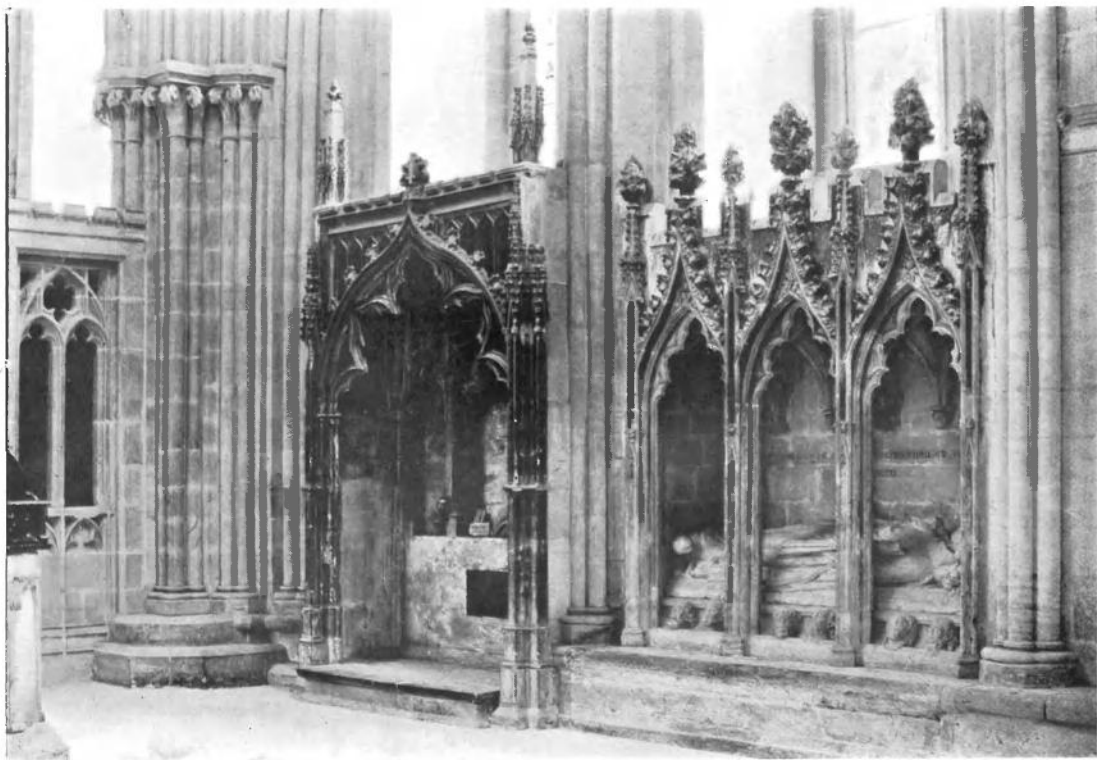


PLATE III.—THE MONUMENT OF BISHOP WILLIAM DE MARCHIA, DIED 1302, AND THE MONUMENT (SO CALLED)
OF LADY DE LISLE, DIED 1464, IN THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH OF WELLS.

Wells in August, 1904, Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, describing the tomb of William de Marchia in the south transept, made the very probable suggestion that "the fine canopy now immediately to the east of the tomb, and labelled as the monument of Lady de Lisle, was intended to be the canopy of the altar of the chantry of Bishop William to stand at the head of the tomb, and he based this suggestion not only on its likeness in relative position to the later canopy of Bishop Bekington's altar, but on account of its nearness in architectural date to the tomb of Bishop William, which it adjoins."

But even if this inscription is wrongly affixed, yet it rightly describes, according to Dugdale's *Baronage*, the family history of a member of the de Lisle family closely connected with Somerset, and with some of the leading personages in the civil and military history of these times.

Joan, Viscountess de Lisle, was one of two daughters of Thomas de Chedder, a Somerset landlord of ancient descent and of large possessions in the county, and also a leading person in the civil and commercial life of Bristol.

This Thomas was the last heir male of the family, and at his death in 1442 he held eighty-four messuages in Bristol, together with the manor of Chedder, and other estates in Somerset, Gloucester, Dorset, Devon, and Cornwall.¹

Joan and Isabel his daughters were his heirs. Joan was married first to Robert Stafford, secondly to John Talbot, Viscount de Lisle. Isabel was the wife of Sir John Cradock, *alias* Newton, of Court de Wyke in Yatton.

John Talbot, 1st Viscount de Lisle, second husband of Joan, was connected with the noble families of—Talbot, Earl of Shrewsbury, Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, Berkeley, Lord of Berkeley, and Neville, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury.

He was "young John Talbot" of Shakespeare's "Henry the Sixth," son of Talbot, 1st Earl of Shrewsbury, "Whose life was England's glory, Gallia's wonder,"

¹ Cal. Inq., P. M., Henry VI., No. 55. Plate II, the monument of Thomas de Chedder, who died in 1442, in Chedder Church, would be more the style of a monument of the date of 1464.

Plate I, the so-called de Lisle monument in Wells, is more like Plate 3, that of William de Marchia who died in 1302, p. 161.

in the wars with France under Henry V. and VI. Created Earl of Shrewsbury 20 Henry VI., 1442, he died 31 Henry VI. 1453. His monument is at Whitchurch, Shropshire.

Father and son are the subject of the pathetic scene in Shakespeare's "Henry VI.," Part I, Act IV, Scene V, when, before the battle of Chatillon, each strove to persuade the other to retire and to save his life, and both refusing, died with their faces to the foe, and in their death they were not divided. In answer to the father's urgent entreaty "Young John" replies—

"No more can I be severed from your side
Than can yourself yourself in twain divide ;
Stay—go—do what you will—the like do I ;
For live I will not, if my father die."

TALBOT: "Then here I take my leave of thee, fair son,
Born to eclipse thy life this afternoon.
Come—side by side together live, and die."

The mother of Viscount de Lisle was Margaret, daughter of Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, the great and good earl, Regent of France, 1437, to whom at his death Henry V. committed his son as guardian and tutor. He died 1439, and his tomb in the Beauchamp chapel at Warwick is one of the grandest sepulchral monuments of that or any other age in England.

Richard Beauchamp, his grandfather, had married Elizabeth, daughter of Thomas, 5th Lord Berkeley, who had married into the de Lisle family, a daughter of Warine de Lisle. He was admiral in Henry V.'s wars, and famous for his exploit in destroying the French fleet in Milford Haven in 1403. He died 1417. The brasses of Lord Berkeley and his wife in Wotton-under-Edge church are grand specimens of brass effigies.

John Talbot, distinguished as he was by such noble ancestry, was also cousin and contemporary of the powerful noble, Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury and Warwick, "the King-Maker," who had married as his second wife Anne, the daughter of Richard Beauchamp, and inherited with her the title and estates of the Earldom of Warwick.

He had been employed under and with his father in France, and in the government of Ireland, and was

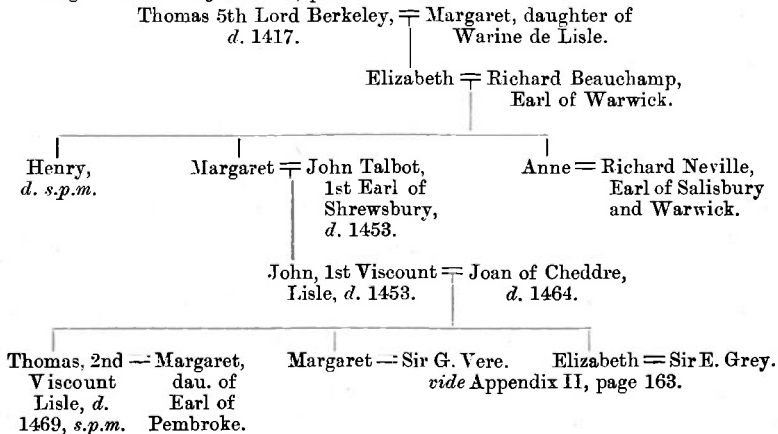
created Viscount de Lisle in 1451, two years before his death in the same battle with his father in 1453.¹

He left one son, Thomas, born 1450, and two daughters, Elizabeth and Margaret.

We should expect that there would have been a monument suitable to the greatness of a family with such historical antecedents, and which had handed down in stately monuments the record of their achievements to succeeding generations. But as we follow the history of the family we see there may be reason why we find no monument to the Talbot branch. Joan, Viscountess de Lisle, survived her husband eleven years, and died in 1464, and these years coincide nearly with the fall of the fortunes of the de Lisle family. She herself seems to have passed out of note before her death, and the guardianship of her son Thomas after his father's death was committed to the grandmother, Margaret of Beauchamp, Countess of Shrewsbury, until her death in 1468, with 20 marks per annum allowed for his maintenance during minority.

Lady Joan lived and died at Wotton-under-Edge, where was a manor belonging to her husband through his connection with the Berkeleys, and where part of a manor house called "Lisle House" still remains near the church. Yet she had great possessions according to the *Inquisitio post mortem* in 1468.²

¹ Dugdale's *Baronage*, Vol. I, p. 331.



² *Inquisitio P.M.*, 7 Edward IV., 1468, *vide* Appendix I, page 161.

Her son Thomas, 2nd Viscount de Lisle, aged nineteen at his grandmother's death, married in that same year Margaret, daughter of William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, and very soon after, in 1469-70, was killed in a family quarrel with the Lord Berkeley about the Berkeley estates, at Nibley Green, near Wotton-under-Edge. He died without issue and the Viscounty became extinct. The rest of the estates passed to his two sisters co-heiresses, one, Margaret, married to Sir George Vere, who died without male issue in 1475; the other, Elizabeth, who survived, married to Sir Edward Grey.

The barony was revived in the person of Sir Edward Grey, also created Viscount de Lisle in 1483, but again became extinct at his death.

The estates then passed to his daughter Elizabeth Grey, married first to Edmund Dudley, minister of Henry VII., beheaded by Henry VIII. in 1510, founder of the Dudley family, which became famous in the person of the Duke of Northumberland and his daughter the unfortunate Lady Jane Grey. Elizabeth was married secondly in 1511 to Arthur Plantagenet, natural son of Edward IV., by the Lady Elizabeth Lucy (as was said). He was raised from obscurity by the favour of Henry VIII. and placed in different offices, at last made Governor of Calais, but on some suspicion of treason he was imprisoned in the Tower, and, though ultimately acquitted, he died there in 1541.

So the life and death of the Lady Joan of Chedder, wife of John Talbot, Viscount de Lisle, was the middle period between the greatness and fall of the de Lisle family. It may be that in the failure of male heirs and the somewhat ignoble end of the de Lisle family in the distracted period at the close of the century, any family monument on the de Lisle side was neglected, and that whatever was done was the work of the Chedder family, who had been so greatly ennobled by the connection.

Probably the Lady Joan's monument must be sought elsewhere than under the canopy where the brass tablet has been placed, which is a work of the fourteenth century, and more than a hundred years older than the lady's death. There is in the Church of Wells one such monu-

ment which may be surmised to mark the burial place, and to be the memorial of such a personage, and of her connections. A large slab of Purbeck stone above 12 feet in length, of the weight of 10 tons, is laid on the floor of the north transept under the tower. On it is the matrix of a brass effigy of a lady with head-dress and drapery of the fifteenth century, under a rich and lofty canopy, with four shields, two at the head and two at the feet, but the brass has been torn off, and there are no remaining signs of an inscription or means of identification. This stone was lately moved by order of the Dean and Chapter, and underneath was found a stone vault, carefully covered with stones. This was opened and a decayed wooden coffin was found within, but the sides of the coffin had fallen in and were so decomposed as to form with other remains, a formless layer of dust. Mr. W. H. St. John Hope, who was present and made the examination, reported that "the bones, strange to say, had so entirely perished that not even the skull remained, and the only evidence of the coffin having once held a human body was a quantity of light coloured hair where the head had lain. The grave had certainly never before been disturbed. After the examination the stones were replaced and the grave filled up and the marble slab relaid in its old place."

It may still be surmised, though we have no certain evidence from the tomb itself in support, that this gravestone of a lady of rank, rifled of its brass, is the gravestone of the Lady Joan, Viscountess de Lisle, and heiress of Thomas de Chedder.

APPENDIX I.

CALEND. INQUISITIONUM POST MORTEM, 7 EDWARD IV., No. 42, 1468.

Johanna quae fuit uxor Johannis Talbot vice comitis Lisle una filiarum et haeredum Thomae Chedder.

Acton Ilger	} VIII Mess' ibidem	} Glouc'.
Iren Acton		
Rougeworth		
Lancastr' ducat' membr'		

Lympesham maner'		
Turnoke maner'		
Makkesmyll molend'		
Wynscombe mess' molend' terr', etc.		
Baundwill terr'		
Hythe infra paroch' de Chedder et advoc' capelle ibm,		
Axbridge burgag', etc.		
Were	}	
Estfoldten		
Alverton	}	terr' vocat' Cobesardes, etc.
Est Brent		
Chedder maner'		
Auelle maner'		
Dunster honor' membr'		
Stampford juxta Baunewelle maner'		
Thornfagon maner'		
Dunster honor membr'		
Norton Beachamp maner' juxta Worspring		
Kewestoke	}	Somerset.
Worspring		
Bowre	}	divers' terr' etc.
Rolliston		
Newlond		
Churchill		
Newton		
Worle 4 ^{ta} pars manerii		
Uphill 3 acr' terr' et advoc' eccl		
Locking terr' et ibidem		
Childecompton	}	maner' redd' exeunt'
Henton Bluet		
Littleton	}	mess' molend' etc.
Welle		
North Corye		
Est Corye		
Taunton duo mess'		
Bridgwater octo mess'		
Kardesbury tria mess'		
Cherde 4 mess'		
Bristol plurima mess'		
et tenement' ibidem		

APPENDIX II.

PATENT ROLLS. JULY 14th, 1469. WESTMINSTER.

Licence for Thomas, Viscount Lyle, to enter freely into possessions (enumerated) of which John Talbot, Viscount Lyle his father, and Joan his wife, and Margaret, late Countess of Shrewsbury his grandmother, or any other ancestor of his was seised and which should descend to him.

King by privy seal.

1471, Nov. 4. Some manors granted to his widow. Grant for life to Margaret, late the wife of Thomas Talbot, Viscount Lisle, of lordship and manor of Painswyk, co. Gloucester, and the manor of Norton Beauchamp and Lymphsham, co. Somerset, parcel of the manors and lands of the said Viscount to hold in dower with knight's fees, etc.

1475, March 13, Westminster. Licence to Edward Grey, kt., Lord of Lisle, and Elizabeth his wife, sister and heiress of Margaret Vere, late wife of George Vere, kt., to enter freely into all estates which shall descend to Elizabeth, on death of Margaret, or of Thomas Talbot, late Viscount Lisle her brother, whose heiress she is.

II.

VISIT OF EDWARD IV. TO WELLS IN 1470.

By the de Lisle monument of the date 1464, Wells is indirectly connected with the Warwick family, and with the history of the years in which Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick and Salisbury, "the King-maker," was one of the leading personages in the national conflict of the Red and White Roses.

But another link between Wells and the history of this time is supplied by a record of the year 1470, the time of the final struggle between Edward IV. and Warwick.

The causes and sequences in the stages of this struggle succeed one another with sensational rapidity like the shifting scenes in a Shakesperian drama; they are not easy to arrange in order, from the scanty notices of the chronicles of the time. *One* additional record not hitherto brought to light, from the muniments in the library of the Dean and Chapter of Wells, may have a value in the arrangement of events and the delineation of characters in the progress of this conflict.

The alienation between the two men, once friends and allies, had been caused by resentment, on Warwick's part, at the rival influence of the Woodville party, and, as seems probable, by Edward's licentious outrage on the honour of a member of his family.¹ Edward on his side had reasonable ground of offence at Warwick's encouragement of the disloyalty of his

¹ 'As is commonly reported,' so Polydore Vergil. History, Bk. XXIV, and the Chronicles of Elizabeth's time.

brother George, Duke of Clarence, and at the marriage of Clarence with Warwick's daughter Isabel, contrary to his will. Their feelings were disguised for some time under semblance of friendship and loyalty, with deep dissimulation on both sides.

The marriage of Isabel of Warwick to George, Duke of Clarence, had been carried out at Calais about mid-summer 1469. Warwick and Clarence then came over to England, on invitation by letter from Edward. In the letter to Warwick (as given in the Paston letters) Edward said, "We ne trust that ye shulde be of any such disposicion towards us as the rumour here renneth, consederyng the trust and affeccion we bere in you." "At Notynghan the ix day of July." The words show that the relations between them were then strained.¹

Notwithstanding, Clarence and Warwick accompanied Edward to the suppression of the Northern insurrection under Robin of Redesdale, which they had secretly encouraged. The King's army was surprised at the battle of Edgecote, and Edward found himself in the hands of Warwick, whose immense estates and powerful alliances gave him the position of a rival chief at the head of his army of retainers in the midland counties. During the months of August and September Edward appears to have been as a prisoner in honourable treatment at Warwick Castle and Middleham, while Warwick at that time was acting with him as Chief Justice in Wales and Western parts, by appointment dated August 17th. In time, terms seem to have been made for Edward's release. He was free at York on September 29th, and in London again in October, where he made a triumphal entry, and issued a general pardon from Westminster, at Christmas time. At this time the Paston Letters report that "Warwick and Clarence are spoken of by the King as his best friends, but his household men hold other language, so that what shall hastily fall I cannot say."²

It is significant that during these latter months

¹ Paston Letters, II, p. 360, Letter 615.

² Paston Letters, II, p. 390, Letter 632.

Edward was conferring special offices of trust on Richard his young brother Duke of Gloucester, the rival of Clarence, and on October 17th he was made Constable of England, and November 20th Chief Justice of Wales, in place of Warwick.

So ended 1469, in outward friendliness but in mutual distrust and dissimulation.

The year 1470 opened with another outbreak in Lincolnshire under Sir Richard Welles, which after futile negotiations with the rebels, was promptly and cruelly suppressed by Edward in March.

On March 7th, Warwick and Clarence were again attending Edward at Waltham,¹ and entrusted with the calling out of levies of the counties of Warwick and Worcester against the rebels. But they were suspected, and later on they were found to be implicated in the rebellion by confession of leaders taken prisoners at the battle of Losecoat field near Stamford, and Edward denounced them at York, as traitors, on March 26th.

Warwick and Clarence, surprised in their plans, and disappointed in the support they had expected from Lord Stanley, Warwick's brother-in-law, in the west, broke up their forces. They disappeared in flight to the south. All that is told as to their movements is vague and discordant, except that they were making south to the coast.

Mr. Gairdner, the latest writer, says, "The Duke of Clarence and the Earl of Warwick fled into Lancashire, from whence they passed by sea to Southampton, hoping there to have secured a ship."

Hume says less precisely, "They were obliged to disband the army and to fly into Devonshire, where they embarked and made sail towards Calais."²

An earlier historian, Polydore Vergil,³ writing in Henry VIII.'s reign, says that Warwick with the Duke of Clarence "departed to Exceaster" (Exeter).

We have more certain knowledge of the King's

¹ Paston *Letters*, II, p. 394-5, letters 637-638.

² Hume, Vol. II, p. 423.

³ Polydore Vergil, Bk. 24, p. 128. Camden Soc.

movements after the suppression of the rebellion, from the Patent Rolls.¹

On evidence of the complicity of Warwick and Clarence with the Lincolnshire revolt, Edward had proclaimed them as traitors at York; but, Lingard² says, giving his authorities, "he exhorted them to return to their duty within a certain term, assuring them that he would accept their justification with pleasure, and that if they could not, he would still remember that they were allied to him by blood, and had been his friends." He went from York to Nottingham, March 31; he is at Coventry, April 3-4, and then by hasty march southward, he is at Banbury April 6; at Cirencester April 7; at Wells, April 11, and at Exeter April 15-17.

We have no information from the Patent Rolls of what Edward was doing at either of these places until he came to Wells. But at Wells an unexpected and curious light is thrown upon the movements and relations of the two parties who are both making their progress to the south coast, apparently as enemies to one another. A short entry in an account roll of the Eschaetor of the church of Wells for the year from Michaelmas, 1469, to Michaelmas, 1470, contains a notice of the presence of both parties at Wells. This is the entry in the roll, from which it appears that among the yearly offerings in 1470 are entered, 10s. from the King, and 5s. each from the Duke of Clarence, the Lady Isabel and the Earl of Warwick.

Comptus Iohannis Huchyn eschaetoris ecclesiæ cathedralis Wellensis a festo Michaelis Archangeli anno domini Millesimo CCCC^{mo} sexagesimo nono usque ad idem festum extunc proximum sequens videlicet anno domini MCCCC^{mo} septuagesimo per unum annum integrum.

Recepciones }
Oblationum } de oblacione in nundinis S^{ci} Kalixti nichil hoc anno—
et de xx^d de oblacionibus in nundinis S^{ci} Andreae.
et de ijs^s iii^jd de pixide S^{ci} Andreae hoc anno.

¹ This is the itinerary of the king in the spring of 1470, according to the Patent Rolls:—

March	7	....	Waltham.
"	13, 14	....	Stamford.
"	16, 17	....	Newark.
"	23-27	....	York.
"	31	....	Nottingham.
April		....	Coventry.

April	6	....	Banbury.
"	7	....	Cirencester.
"	11	....	Wells.
"	15-17	....	Exeter.
"	25, 30	....	Salisbury.
May	1-7	....	Southampton.
"	9, 10	....	Salisbury.
"	11	....	Westminster.

² Lingard V, 271.

et de pixide Willⁱ de Marchia nichil hoc anno.
 et de ij^s iij^d ob. de oblac. in die parasceues.
 et de vj^d de oblac. in die pasche.
 et de x^s de oblac. illustriss. regis Edwardi.
 et de v^s oblac. illustriss. principis ducis Clarencie.
 et de v^s de oblac. domine Clarencie.
 et de v^s de oblac. comitis de Warwyke in capella domini decani.
 et de j^s iij^d de oblac. mortuorum hoc anno.

This record of the visit of these notable personages to Wells at the very crisis of their fortunes, at the parting of their ways, is an interesting and valuable piece of history which has never seen the light beyond our muniment room.

The Patent Rolls mark Wells as a station on the way to Exeter in the itinerary of the King, who is presumably in pursuit of Warwick and Clarence, then his mortal enemies, whom he has denounced as traitors about two weeks before. But lo! here at Wells the mortal foes are met in peace, as a family party making peace offerings as at a shrine, presumably for some common religious object.

It is like the meeting of Saul and David in the cave, having an amicable conversation, and then separating to carry on their warlike devices against one another for their mutual destruction.

Many questions arise.

How had they met? Had Edward in his hasty march pursued and overtaken Warwick? Had the positions of last year been reversed and Warwick and Clarence become the prisoners of Edward, conducted by him southward as hostages to check any rising of his friends, of whom there were many in Somerset, as the Beauchamps, De Lisles, and the Courtenays in Devon, whose arrest Edward had ordered from Newark on March 16, 17, as if anticipating a rising in Devonshire.

Easter Day in that year 1470 came on April 22nd, so that April 11th, or Wednesday in the week before Holy Week, was the time of Edward's visit.

It does not seem possible to explain this record otherwise than in the plain meaning of the words—that on April 11, according to the Patent Roll, Edward IV. was at Wells on his way to Exeter, that the company of his brother George Duke of Clarence, of the Lady Isabel

his wife, and of the Earl of Warwick her father, were with the King at Wells, and that each left certain gifts of money for some object as offerings in the church ("oblaciones") which were entered among the receipts in the Eschaetor's account for the year 1469-1470, and were passed over to the common fund among other receipts during the year.

The amounts of the offerings were large, 10s. and 5s. proportionate to their high estate, say £12, a goodly gift for a King, £6 from each of the other personages, gifts perhaps towards the fabric fund, or, at the shrine of our Lady, to obtain intercession in coming danger, more especially as there was one pressing cause for family anxiety during this hurried flight, which would appeal to each member of this party in spite of political hostility, viz., the danger to the Lady of Clarence, who was now so near the time of childbirth that within a few days afterwards she was delivered of a son on shipboard off Calais.

Could this be the last act of dissimulation? a show of reconciliation between the two men who were not to look one another in the face again until the field of Barnet, fatal to one, on the Easter morning of the next year?

It is to be observed that Warwick's offering was made in "the chapel of the Dean," "in capella Domini Decani," as if Warwick was not under the same roof with the King. It may have been that Edward and his retinue were lodged at the Palace. The Palace, which had four years before (1466) passed at death from the provident care of Bishop Bekynton, with 100 marcs left in his will for repairs, to his successor Bishop Stillington, would have been fit lodging or camping ground for any King, and the Bishop, Lord Privy Seal, private agent in dark passages of the inner life of Edward, though not resident, would have promptly opened its gates.

Warwick may have found more convenient, but less sumptuous quarters in the Deanery, not yet rebuilt in magnificence by its next occupant Dean Gunthorp. The dean at the time was one William Wytham, of whom little is known, and Warwick's offering might have been made either in the oratory of the dean's house, or in the court of the dean's official, which was in the "Lady Chapel near the Cloister," where Bishop Stillington was about to

build a new memorial chapel over the foundations of this old chapel.

All these conjectures are suggested by this scrap of manuscript in the accounts of John Hutchin, Eschaetor of the church of Wells in the year 1470, now among the chapter records. This incidental contemporaneous evidence remains to be accounted for in some way.

But it must be said that these suppositions based upon the Wells document are at variance with the traditions at Exeter of Edward's visit which followed.

According to the Corporation Records of the city of Exeter, Isabel Duchess of Clarence had come to Exeter with a considerable force, while Warwick and Clarence were with the King in the North.

"The Duchess was great with child and lodged in the Bishop's Palace, but the lords were in other houses within the Close among the Canons, and here stayed themselves."¹

"After the battle of Edgecourt² Warwick and Clarence did flee unto this city and made their entry unto the same the 3rd day of April, 1470, and lay in the Bishop's palace for a few days until they had caused to be provided ships at Dartmouth for their passage over unto Calais. The King being advertised which way his enemies were gone, followed and pursued them and came to the city the 14th day of April, 1470, in his company divers great lords with a number of knights and gentlemen. But they all came too late, for the Duke and the Earl were both departed and gone to the seas before their coming wherefore the King after that he had rested and reposed himself here three days departed and returned to London."³

From Dr. Oliver's notes to Hooker, and "municipal gleanings," kindly supplied by the Town Clerk of Exeter,³ we learn that Edward was received by the Mayor and citizens, the keys of the city were given up and a purse of 100 marks was presented, and he was conducted to the Cathedral; the next day, Palm Sunday, he made a stately procession round St. Peter's Cemetery. On Tuesday following, he departed, giving thanks to the Mayor for his entertainment, and leaving them his sword, as a present to the city.

The Patent Rolls record Edward's presence at

¹ *The antique description and account of the City of Exeter*, by John Vowel, al. Hoker, gent., 1603.

² This must be a mistake for Losecoat

Field, near Stamford, fought in 1470—Edgecourt in 1469.

³ *History of Exeter*, by Rev. George Oliver, 1821.

Exeter, April 15-17th, but add that there he called out the levies of eight southern counties against the Duke of Clarence, and then went on to Salisbury.

At Salisbury on April 25th he issued a Commission to seize all castles and possessions of Clarence and Warwick and 60 others in Kent and Middlesex and London. On April 30th another Commission is issued to the Mayor of Southampton and others to take ships in the port of Southampton for the conduct of the armed force by which the King is preparing to resist the rebels and foreign enemies.

At Southampton he remains a week from April 30th to May 7th, conferring Warwick's offices on his own friends, making grants, giving pardons, and then returns to Salisbury.

There are notices in the Salisbury Chapter Act Book for 1470 that on May 5th Bishop Beauchamp summoned the Canons, Vicars Choral, and Chaplains, to appear before him in the Chapter House, and informed them that they were to expect the King on his return from Southampton, and bade them take great pains in the performance of the services, and to avoid making a noise in lifting and putting down their stall seats, etc., under pain of severe punishment.

Another entry of 10th May records his presence at Salisbury, where he held a Council, at which Richard of Gloucester, the Earl of Worcester the Lord High Constable, and Lord Audley were present.

The Patent Rolls represent him as being next at Westminster, May 11th.

But he must have returned soon to Salisbury, for on May 24th there is record that on May 24th, King Edward with the Bishop of Durham and Carlisle and the Earl of Worcester were admitted to the Brotherhood of the Chapter, and there is an account of the ceremonial which makes it certain that the King was admitted in person and not by proxy.¹

On June 2nd, he is at Westminster, issues commissions to Richard, Duke of Gloucester, to put the southern counties in defence against Clarence and Warwick.

¹ Machin's Register, f. xix and lxxxii. I am indebted to A. R. Malden, Esq., for this information.

Meanwhile, Warwick with Clarence and the Lady of Clarence have broken away from Edward and taken ship at Dartmouth for Calais. At Calais, by the treachery to Warwick of the governor, they are refused admittance, notwithstanding Lady Isabel's extremity, and at last they take refuge at Harfleur at the mouth of the Seine. They are welcomed by Louis of France, and Warwick now in irreconcilable hostility to Edward and foreswearing all his former life, is reconciled to Queen Margaret, and takes up her cause and pledges himself to the restoration of Henry.

On September 13th he lands again at Dartmouth, from whence he had taken ship to France, and such is the strength of his personal following in the western counties and through the southern part of the kingdom, that he makes a triumphal march, like Napoleon's return from Elba, to London. On October 3rd Edward flies the kingdom: on October 20th, Henry is restored and proclaimed King, and from October to April, 1471, all proclamations run in the name of King Henry, and there is complete reversal of all ministerial appointments.

In six months' time the wheel has swung round again. Edward has returned, and by the treason of Clarence, the battle of Barnet, April 14th, and the death of Warwick—by the battle of Tewkesbury, May 4th, and the death of young Edward of Lancaster, Edward of York is secured on his blood-stained throne for ten years to come.

III.

VISIT OF HENRY VII. TO WELLS, SEPTEMBER 30TH, 1497.

Twenty-seven years had passed since the passage of Edward IV. through Wells in pursuit of Warwick and his brother Clarence, when another royal visitor, Henry VII., passed through, to crush the insurrection of Perkin Warbeck, the impostor who pretended to be the son of Edward IV.

The tradition still lingers in Wells that the house of the Dean was partly rebuilt and set in order for the reception of the King on this occasion, by Dean Gunthorp.

The tradition is produced in Chyle's manuscript history, written about 1683, and now printed in Reynolds' *Wells Cathedral*, 1881. Chyle said, "Whether for his own convenience or for grandure, or as the common received account, to entertaine King Henry, he (Gunthorp) built that excellent stone apartment next the garden."

It is sufficient to note that the visit of Henry was sudden and unexpected, to show that this tradition is baseless; and it is inconsistent with the history. A sketch of the circumstances which caused and followed the visit of Henry VII. to Wells and of the men of the time at Wells, is a sequel to the passages in the national history and in the local history of the fifteenth century previously described.

Much had passed in the interval since the last royal visit.

Edward IV. had died April, 1483. During the last twelve years of his reign the land had rest from civil war. The Lancastrian party seemed crushed by the slaughter at Barnet and Tewkesbury. But the court was disturbed by the dissension of the rival brothers Clarence and Gloucester, and the growing ambition of Gloucester. He had obtained the highest offices in the kingdom under Edward. By his marriage with Anne, the younger daughter of the Earl of Warwick, he inherited her portion of the forfeited estates.

But he had soon quarrelled with Clarence and secured for himself the greater part of the Warwick possessions; and then he swept him out of his path by procuring his attainder on charges of treason, and his murder in prison in 1475. Immediately on the death of Edward in 1483, he made his spring upon the throne by taking possession. as Protector, of the persons of the young princes, and cutting off the leaders of the Woodville party and the counsellors of the late King. Not hesitating at the defamation of his mother, and the charge of the invalidity of his brother Edward's marriage with the Lady Woodville, he made use of the scandal to assert his sole birthright to the Crown. Ultimately, by the support of the Duke of Buckingham and an obsequious Parliament, he seized upon the throne as Richard the Third, three months after Edward's death.

As Richard had waded through blood to the throne, he now took measures to secure it by the murder of his nephews, the last of the Yorkist house. But his short and turbulent reign of two years and six weeks was mainly occupied in defence against the invasion of the Earl of Richmond, the representative of the Lancastrian party. Betrayed by Buckingham and his own followers, he met his death at the battle of Bosworth Field, and his crown was placed upon the head of the Earl of Richmond as Henry VII.

With Henry VII. began a period of orderly government at home, only distracted at times by war with foreign enemies, France and Scotland, and by the futile attempts of impostors, as Lambert Simnel and Perkin Warbeck, agents of foreign enemies, trading upon local disaffection caused by the heavy taxation by which Henry supported his foreign wars, and brought the country under a sounder financial system.

It was on his march in 1497 to crush the rising of Perkin Warbeck that the visit of Henry VII. to Wells took place. That pretender, a Fleming, son of poor parents at Tournay, who claimed to be the younger of the two sons of Edward murdered in the Tower, had been fostered, instructed, supported and employed by the enemies of the King, in France, in Scotland and Ireland, and at home, for several years. Now in September, 1497, he made a last determined attempt to invade England by landing in Cornwall, where an insurrection on account of the heavy taxation had been put down three months before. He landed at Whitsand Bay, and was joined by a number of the country people, with whom he marched up the country and laid siege to Exeter, September 17th. Upon the approach of the Earl of Devonshire and a force under the gentlemen of the county, he went on to Taunton, where he mustered about 6,000 or 7,000 men on September 20th. But there his craven spirit failed him; he had played out his game. To the dismay of his deluded followers he fled away in the night with a body of sixty horsemen, and rode on to the New Forest and to the sanctuary of Beaulieu Abbey. From there he sent a message of surrender to the King. The King, then on his way to the Scottish war, had summoned his military

tenants to meet at Woodstock on September 24th. On the news of the pretender's advance and submission, he marched to the west through Malmesbury to Bath. On September 30th he passed on to Wells, and was received by Bishop Oliver King, the mayor and burgesses, with some local state. Sunday, October 1st, he spent in Wells, lodged in the Deanery at his own charges. On that Sunday a *Te Deum* was sung at St. Paul's Cathedral for the suppression of the rebellion, and no doubt also in the Cathedral Church at Wells.

On the next day, October 2nd, Henry passed on to Glastonbury, where he was royally lodged by Abbot Beere. On Tuesday, October 3rd, he was at Bridgwater, and on Wednesday, October 4th, at Taunton, where Warbeck was brought as a prisoner before him. There he made confession of his imposture and was assured of life, and ordered to follow in the King's train.¹

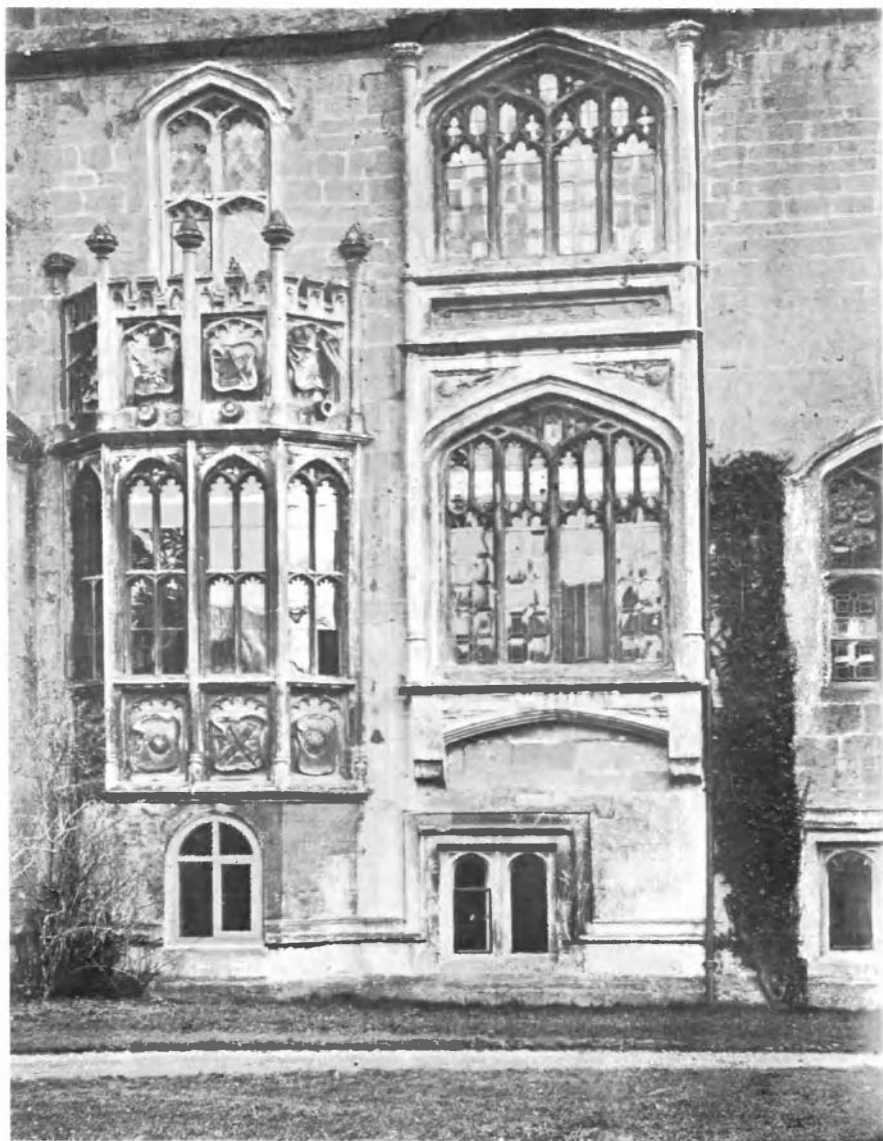
Henry left Taunton on October 6th for Exeter, where he stayed three weeks. Warbeck was kept in confinement, but Henry treated with courtesy and kindness the pretender's wife, and sent her to the Queen at Sheen, and pardoned many of his followers, who were brought to him in the Cathedral close with halters round their necks.

From Exeter he passed through Salisbury to London, taking Warbeck with him. At London the pretender was treated with derision by the people, but with respect and scant restraint of liberty in the King's court, until attempting to make his escape more than once he was imprisoned in the Tower, and ultimately, on supposed implication in a plot, he was executed.

Besides the connection with the national history, this visit of Henry in 1497 has a local interest, by the insight it gives into the political feeling of our city and county at the time. There seems evidence that there was strong Yorkist feeling in Wells and Somerset.

The Cathedral had been for the last thirty years under the influence of a Bishop and a Dean who had held high state offices under Edward IV. and Richard III.

¹ See *Som. Archaeol. Proc.*, XII, p. 37; XXV, p. 64; and Gairdner's *Appendix to the life of Richard III.*, which contains Perkin Warbeck's confession, p. 384.



GARDEN FRONT OF DEAN GUNTHORP'S WORK, ON THE NORTH SIDE OF THE DEANERY, WELLS,
circa 1480.

John Gunthorp, Archdeacon of Essex, elected Dean of Wells in 1472, died within three months of Henry's visit to Wells in January, 1498. He was one of the chief scholars of the time—student of Greek under Guarino at Ferrara—a collector of books. One fine specimen from his library is still with us at Wells, an early edition of Pliny's *Natural History*, printed by Jenson at Venice, 1472, the year of his appointment as Dean. He had been high in favour and in office under Edward IV., King's Almoner and Queen's Secretary, and was one of the court appointed to accompany the King in his expedition to France in 1475.¹

In the first Privy Council of Richard III., June 27th, 1483, the two local names appear of Robert Stillington, Bishop of Bath and Wells, and John Gunthorp, Dean, Keeper of the Privy Seal,² with a salary of 20s. a day, or £365 a year (equal to £7,000), by a charge on the customs of the ports of Sandwich, Poole, Southampton, Bristol, Bridgwater.

With these state offices he combined also the duties of Dean of the King's free chapel of St. Peter's in the Tower of London.³

His fabric work at the deanery contains in its stones the evidence that it was done during the reign of Edward IV., and before 1483. There he had carved on the panels of the large bay window of the hall on the garden front, the badge of the reigning sovereign, his patron Edward IV., the rose *en soleil*, together with the rebus on his own name, the gun or mortar of the time.

Gunthorp though a Yorkist had received a pardon from Henry on his accession, and had even been employed by the king in diplomatic services,⁴ yet there is

¹ Rymer's *Foedera*, XI, p. 847.

² Rymer's *Foedera*, XII, 189; July 6, 1483. XII, 194.

³ Patent Rolls. 1483, February 28, Westminster.

Establishment of the chapel of the household as a foundation in the King's free chapel of St. Peter's within the Tower of London, of a dean and three canons, of whom one shall be sub-dean, another treasurer, and the third precentor, to be governed by ordinances made by the king; appointment of Master John Gunthorpe, clerk,

as dean; Nicholas Hewys, clerk, as sub-dean; Richard Surlond as treasurer, and John Chirche as precentor; and incorporation of them by the name of "the dean and canons of the royal free chapel of the household." Licence given to acquire in Mortmain lands, etc., and to have these letters patent of the King without fees.

⁴ He is named as one of the ambassadors to treat with Maximilian, King of the Romans, in 1486, and again with Ferdinand of Castilla in 1488. Materials for the history of Henry VII.—R.S.

no evidence that he was present to meet the King on this occasion. It is probable that the dean, now advanced in years, was not equal to the fatigue of receiving the King, and had retired to his rectory at Ditcheat. Certainly the Wardrobe accounts show that the King was lodged at his own charges in the deanery. His expenses were higher at Wells than at Glastonbury, where he was entertained, or Bridgwater, where he was lodged in his own castle.

Nor would the Palace have been a fit or agreeable lodging for Henry at this time. The bishop who had succeeded Bekinton in 1466, was Robert Stillington, a keen and unscrupulous politician during all the time of the Yorkist rule—high in office under Edward and Richard, twice Chancellor under Edward IV.,¹ the sole witness and depositary of the state secret of Edward's alleged precontract of marriage,² before his marriage with Elizabeth Woodville, and so the instrument of Richard in throwing doubt upon the legitimacy of Edward's children as heirs to the throne. Accomplice of Richard in his intrigues for the crown, he stood by his side at his coronation, and afterwards was his agent in the attempt to obtain possession of the person of Henry, when Earl of Richmond, in Brittany. So he had little reason to expect any mercy when Henry had defeated Richard. After the battle of Bosworth, he was one of the first to be imprisoned at York, but was pardoned in the same year. Notwithstanding that he kept up his partisan attacks by support given to the cause of the pretenders, he was treated by Henry with great leniency, and visited with no greater punishment than confinement in Windsor Castle during the remainder of his life, to 1491. While he was busy with State affairs, the Palace had been unoccupied during his lifetime, though he left his mark on the Church of Wells, in the memorial Chapel built by him,³ on the foundations of the ancient Lady chapel *juxta claustrum*, finished by his successor Bishop Fox, which Henry might have seen in all its glory in

¹ Rymer, *Foedera*, XI, 651-764; XII, 66.

² Gairdner, *Richard III.*, p. 116.

³ See *Som. Archaeol. Proc.*, Vol. XI, for articles on "Bp. Stillington," by Dean of Wells; and "Stillington documents," by C. M. Church; "Stillington Chapel," by E. Buckle.

1497. Neither Bishop Fox, promoted to Durham after two years, nor Bishop Oliver King, both Secretaries of State under Henry, occupied the Palace. Bishop Oliver King made Bath his episcopal residence and there began the restoration of the Abbey, and the Palace remained unoccupied until Bishop Clerk's time, 1523-1540.

Though Henry's passage through Wells and the county was short, it was well marked in general recollection by the severity of the fines levied on town and county, wherever there were suspicions of disaffection to the Government. They show the political unrest at the time in these western counties under the strong government of Henry. He dealt leniently, but firmly, with the chief offenders, but he made the counties and towns to contribute to his exchequer by fines, and to feel that they could not lightly encourage any revolt against his authority. "Rebellion was expiated for the most part not with bloodshed but with money. Offences were dealt with as debts to the Crown, and by this means the King's treasure was augmented, the royal authority was strengthened, and the people were interested to support him. Each new disturbance only created fresh taxation."¹

In 1498 he issued a commission to Robert Shirborn, Archdeacon of Taunton, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, Sir Amias Paulet and others to deal with those who had been guilty of contempt in favouring and assisting the Cornish rebels and a certain pretender "*cuidam idolo vel simulacro Petro Warbec Flandriae nato,*" in the counties of Somerset, Dorset, Wilts and Hants.

The first names that appear are John, Abbot of S. Saviour's, Athelney, 100 marks; Hen. Abbot of St. Mary Clyffi, 40*l.*; Will. Abbot of St. Mary Forde, 60*l.*; W. Abbot of St. Peter and St. Paul, Muchelney, 60*l.*; Sir John Speke, of Whitlakynton, Kt., 200*l.* This list is signed by the Commissioners; and the total 426*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*, is attested by words in Shirburn's hand.

After this come the names of boroughs and hundreds—among which is the borough of Wells, 313*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.*: 62 names are on the list of those fined, thus distributed;

¹ Gairdner's *Preface to Henry VII.*, Letters, R.S., p. xxviii.

High Street, 40 names; Wetelane, 7; Southovyrs, 4; Towker Street, 3; St. Cuthberts Street, 2; Chamberleyn Street, 5; Gropelane, 1. The Mayor Nicolas Trappe, who had received Henry, was one of those fined.

The Borough of Taunton was fined £441 6s. 8d., the hundred of Taunton £250, the hundred of Glastonbury £428. Certain leading personages in the county are implicated, Sir Hugh Luttrell, £200; John Sydenham of Brympton, 40 marks; Alex. Sydenham of Huntworthy, 40 marks. The total number of names on the roll of the county is about 3,400, the total amount of fines £8,810 16s. 8d.

Mr. Gairdner says, "these fines were levied with a tempered judgment, were payable by instalments, and were not all paid in until 1506, after a second commission for inquiry in Somerset had been issued in 1500, to the same commissioners."¹

This royal visit to Wells closes the mediaeval history of Wells.

The stately monumental tomb of Dean Gunthorp lies in the chapel of St. Katharine, off the south aisle of the church.²

He had been the builder of the north front of the house of the dean. It is not so certainly known when the conversion of the southern front took place.

Forty years after Gunthorp's death the noble house which he had built up was occupied by the most powerful subject of the realm at the time, the mean instrument of his unscrupulous master, Thomas Cromwell, Lord Privy Seal, Vicar-General, Earl of Essex, who from 1537 to his death in 1540 was Dean of Wells.

¹ Fines levied on Warbeck adherents. Appendix B, XVII, p. 335: to letters of Richard III. and Henry VII. (Rolls Series) with Preface, by J. Gairdner.

² The armorial bearings upon the tomb of Dean Gunthorp are thus described by Jewers, *Wells Cathedral Heraldry*, p. 75:—

On the front are five shields:

i. A saltire betw. on the dexter two keys erect and addorsed the bows interlaced, and on the sinister a sword erect (the Deanery).

ii. Quarterly: 1 and 4, Gu. a chev. betw. three petards or hand grenades arg., within a bord. eng. or (Gunthorp);

2 and 3 Arg., a chev. betw. three lions' heads erased, sa. (Allerton).

iii. (. . .) a chev. erm. betw. three cross-crosslets (. . .) (. . .).

iv. Gu. on a bend componee arg. and az., three leopards' heads or, betw. two lions' heads erased of the second, all within a bord., as the bend. (Fereby or Feryby of Lincolnshire.)

v. The initials I.G. for John Gunthorp.

The first and fourth coats in the second shield appear to be the family arms of the Dean and appear quartered in the same way at the Deanery. There is a very slight trace of colouring on these shields.



THE TOMB OF JOHN GUNTHORP, DEAN OF WELLS, 1472-1498.

Here he was resident at times, and directed his measures for the suppression and fall of Glastonbury, the last and greatest of the monastic houses. From the Deanery he will have crossed over to the Palace of the Bishop, to hold his court and make it the scene of the mock trial and condemnation of one of the best, as the last of the abbots, Richard Whiting; and while still Dean of Wells, when his master turned his face from him, he passed to his own attainder and to the scaffold.

After him succeeded the times of surrender and spoliation, of Deanery, Archdeaconry, and Palace, and then of squalid bargaining between courtiers and bishop for the spoils of the possessions of bishop and dean, for which Cromwell had prepared the way.

After Dean Fitzwilliam's surrender in 1547, the deanship was reconstituted by Act of Parliament in the next year, and the Protector Somerset took possession of the deanery from January, 1547, to December, 1550.

In July, 1548, in the second year of Edward VI., Bishop Barlow sold to the Protector Somerset the manor of Wells with the park, the Hundred, and all franchises. On December 20th, 1550, in the fourth Edward VI., he sold the Palace to Somerset, taking in part payment the deanery, which became the bishop's residence until his resignation, March 13th, 1554.

The Palace lapsed to the Crown by the Duke of Somerset's attainder in the fifth year of Edward's reign, and became the prey of the Court spoilers, until Palace and deanery were restored to the Church by Bishop Bourne under Queen Mary.

There are three periods when this south front may have taken its present form.

From January, 1548, to December, 1550, the deanery was the property of the Protector, the Duke of Somerset. During this period the duke may have added the south front, with the intention of making the deanery the mansion of his great estate.

Again, in December, 1550, after the sale of the Palace by Bishop Barlow, the deanery was occupied as the bishop's residence until Barlow's resignation, March 13, 1554. It was then restored to the dean by Bishop Bourne under Queen Mary.

Again, after another hundred years and the overthrow of Church and State, 1642, it was the scene of the imprisonment of the Dean bearing the honoured name of Raleigh, brother of Sir Walter, and of his death by the hand of his gaoler. The deanery was put up to sale at a valuation of £200, but was let by the Commissioners to Cornelius Burgess, the so-called "minister of the late Cathedral," until the Restoration, when it reverted to Dean Creighton. On his appointment to the bishopric in 1670, it was occupied by his successor, Dean Bathurst, the learned and artistic President of Trinity College, Oxford, one of the founders of the Royal Society, the friend of Sir Christopher Wren, to whom is attributed some of the work on the south front and the woodwork panelling of the southern drawing room. This may have been a third period of partial reconstruction. Creighton and Bathurst, the first deans after the Restoration, were men of learning and of literary culture, worthy progenitors of the many distinguished men who during the last two hundred years have occupied in succession the stately mansion which Dean Gunthorp adorned, and where King Henry VII. lodged in the latter years of the fifteenth century.

Stet fortuna domus et avi numerentur avorum.