

B E E S T O N .

IMMEDIATELY adjacent to Bunbury on the north-west, lies Beeston ; diversified in its scenery with water and wood, and every variety of surface, from bold and verdant undulations to the lofty and rugged precipice ; honoured for many centuries with the residence of one of the more considerable families of the county, and still retaining on its rocky eminence the relics of the towers and ramparts, with which it was crowned by the third earl Randle.

Beeston at the Conquest formed part of the possessions of Robert Fitz Hugh, baron of Malpas, under whose successors the Beestons held this manor.

"Isdem Rotbertus tenet Buistane. Ulvoi tenuit & liber homo fuit. Ibi una hida geldabilis. Terra [est] II. carucatæ & dimidia. In dominio est una, cum II. bovaris. Tempore Regis Edwardi valebat x. solidos. Modo v. solidos. Wastam invenit."

The Bunburys, who settled in the adjacent township of Bunbury in the reign of king Stephen, were the common ancestors of the families of Beeston and Bunbury. 33 Hen. III. Henry son of Alexander de Bunbury, and Margery daughter of William de Beeston, his wife, grant their lands in Beeston, most probably in trust, to Richard, son of William de Bonbury. This Henry died seized of a moiety of Beeston, which he held in right of Margery his wife, daughter of William Beeston, as per Inq. p. m. 11 Edw. I.* at which time he had assumed the local name.

David de Beeston occurs in the Cheshire pedigrees as his son and heir, and as father of Henry de Beeston, to whom we must necessarily, on a comparison of dates, assign as wife, Matilda, one of the daughters and co-heirs of sir Piers le Roter of Thornton, who was living at the time of sir John Done's claim in Eyre, respecting the forest of Delamere, 31 Edw. I. but who has been given in the Cheshire pedigrees to Henry Beeston his son.

[This can scarcely be accurate. Sir Piers de Thornton, Matilda's father, being a *minor* in 1301, it is very improbable that she was then living ; and if one of these Henries de Beston had a wife Ellen, stated further on to be alive 9 Edw. II., the probability is that it was Henry son of David. For it is unquestionable that Matilda de Thornton was, by a Henry de Beston, her husband, mother of Thomas de Beston, the son and heir of his parents. This is settled by the Inq. of Philippa, the widow of Sir Piers, taken 13-14 Ric. II., Thomas de Beston being then of age. The only question, therefore, is as to the parentage of this Henry, father of Thomas ; and it may be assumed with almost every degree of confidence, from a correct reading of the evidences, with which all the dates fairly concur, that he was the second but eldest surviving son of the first-named Henry de Beston.

Since this was written an entry has been discovered in the Plea Rolls of a suit for dower of lands in Alpraham, 36 Edw. III. by Arthur de Davenport and Katherine his wife, formerly wife of Thomas de Beston, against Katherine daughter of Thomas de Beston, and Agnes and Alice her sisters. It is impossible that this Thomas could be either the son or father of Thomas son of Henry,

for reasons obvious enough, but it is highly probable, on a review of many facts, that he was the son of David, the uncle of Thomas fitz Henry ; and died leaving three daughters and co-heirs.

The following occur in the Plea Rolls :—

15 Edw. III. Henry de Beeston grants to David his brother, in fee, all his lands and tenements in the towns of Beston and Teverton, with the reversion of the lands and tenements in the said towns held by Agnes his mother.

15 Edw. III. David, son of David de Beston, grants to Richard Brayne, chaplain, all his lands in the towns of Beston and Teverton, which he had of the grant of Henry de Beston ; to hold to the said Richard for life, with remainder to Henry de Beston for life, and afterwards to David his son, and the heirs male of his body, with successive remainders to Henry and William, brothers of the said David, in tail male, the ultimate remainder to the right heirs of the said Henry de Beston for ever.

15 Edw. III. Henry de Beston grants to Margery his daughter all his goods and chattels wheresoever they may be.]



This second Henry de Beeston, whose [qy. mother, *not*] wife, Ellena was living, 9 Edw. II.^b and who seals with a bend and label over all, 34 Edw. III. was father of Thomas de Beeston, son and heir, and of William de Beeston, from whose grand-daughter [Isabel, *not*] Elizabeth, the Astons of Aston inherited their estates in Hulgreve and Tiverton, as by Inquisition p. m. in the 7th year of Hen. V. [See Tiverton, post 277.]

43 Edw. III. Margaret, who was the wife of William de Beston, sued this second Henry de Beston for dower of 60 messuages, 4 watermills, 600 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, 60 acres of wood, and 40 acres of pasture in Beston, Teverton, Takenhale, Tiddleston, and Alperham. See also Buerton near Audlem. Plea Rolls.

18 Ric. II., Feb. 14. Writ de diem clausit extremum on the death of Henry de Beston, 1394.

18-19 Ric. II. Writ of livery to Thomas, son of Henry de Beston and Matilda his wife, on the finding of an Inq. p. m. that the said Henry died seized in his demesne as of fee of land in Huxley ; and in right of his wife Matilda, daughter and one of the heirs of Peter de Thorneton, kn. of a 7th part of two parts of the lands of the said Peter in Kyngesley, Norley, Onston, Stoke, Arwe, and Pikton, held of the earl in cap. by knight's serv., val. 100s. p. a. ; and that the said Thomas was next of kin, and of 30 years of age or more. Recog. Rolls.

1397, Oct. 10. Thomas de Beston was appointed Constable of "Isabell Chastell alias Dame Philippa Chastell," and Janitor of Shrawardyn Chastell for life. And in 1398, April 24, he was appointed Warrener and Park-keeper of Shrawardyn, in the room of Richard, Earl of Arundel.

* Harl. MSS. 2038. 56. 6.

Ibid.

1399, April 26. Thomas de Beston, and his cousin, John of Teverton and Stoke, were grantees of the king's Letters of Protection for a year, on their departure for Ireland on the king's service. They appear to have returned, and to have been opposed to Hen. IV. It is not improbable that both of these members of the Beston family died by violence, perhaps on the same day. For writs de diem clausit extremum on their deaths, are each dated August 3, 1403; and the possessions of both seem to have been seized by the king. But after the Inq. p. m. of Thomas, Margaret his widow had a grant from the earl, Feb. 1, 1403-4, of the wardship of his lands, and the marriage of William, his son and heir, on a fine of 200 marks, and had dower assigned her March 11th. But it was Oct. 18, 1406, before she had livery. Her husband's Inq. was traversed by Ralph de Dutton, who in his Writ de Inquirendo, March 6, 1403-4, asserts that the said Thomas was seized of certain lands in fee

simple, and claims title to the same, ("by colour of a grant to him by king Henry,") "notwithstanding that it had been found by Inq. that the said Thomas was seized of his possessions in fee tail."

10 Hen. IV. Feb. 26. William, son and heir of Thomas de Beston, had his writ of livery of all the possessions of his father.]^a

Inq. p. m. 6 Hen. VI. William, son of Thomas de Beeston, held in demesne, as of fee, the manor of Beeston, from John, son of John de Sutton, baron of the Malpas, val. per annum XX marks; also a seventh part [& medietat' alt'ius septime ptis] of a fourth part of Kingsley fee (viz. of the Thornton share), [also similar shares of all the lands which were of Peter de Thornton, knt.] in Stoke [juxta] Picton, Onston, [Pykton,] Cuddington, Norlegh, Acton, Elton, Pulton Launcelyn, Newton, Arowe, and Chester; also half the manor of Hellesby; and lands in Teverton, Huxlegh,

^a 10 Hen. IV. *Prob. etat.* Willm de Beston fit & heredis Thome de Beston (whose office was taken in the presence of Margarete his mother, &c.).

Johns Donne de Utkynton, etat. 40 annor' says that the said William was of the full age of 21 years & upwards die dñica p̄ ante festum nat' be Marie Virg' p̄ p̄ter'. Requisite qualic' constat &c. says that the same Sunday &c. 11 Ric. II. he was at Bagynton co. Warr' & saw the same William &c. & the birth of the same William was published by the voice of common fame through the whole parish &c.

Henry de Davenport, 39, says the same as to age; & that one Arthur de Davenport father of the same Henry, jacuit in quad' infirmitate apud Coyvntre sicut venit a Lond', viz. on the said day of the birth of the same William at Bagynton jux' Coyvntre, at which time Thomas de Beston the father of the same William, ei narravit de incarnacōe ejusdem Willm, et simili' bene constat ei p̄ inspeccōem cujusdam testamenti p̄ ipm̄ Arthurum tunc videm fact.

Thomas le Bret, 40, says the same; also that on the day of the birth of William, he was at Bagynton exit ibidem with one Willmo Bagot chivaler in s'vico ejusdem Willm Bagot, & saw the same William baptized in the Church of Bagynton & simili' die qd' ip̄ vidit tempus incarnacōis sue sc̄ptum in quod portiferio apud Beston in Coñ Cestr'.

Thomas de Multon, 30,

Thomas de Kelsale, 60,

Johns Starky, 60,

Ric'ns Boor, 30,

Ranulphus Sparke, 40,

Johns de Eton, 40,

Willms de Tattenhale, 60,

Ranulphus de Cotegreve, 60,

Willms de Becheton, 40,

} say same as to age; & that on the day of the birth of same William, they were at Ryton jux' Bagynton, journeying towards London; & that one William Bagot was godfather of the same William, &c.

} say likewise; also that they were at Legh in Coñ Cestr', die dñica p̄ ante festum Nat' dñi p̄ p̄ter', & saw the birth of the same William written in a missal, & the time in a kalendar in the same book, which will appear on inspection, & an examination of Margarete matris ejusdem Willm fit Thome &c.—II.

* * * From the Plea Rolls:—

18 Edw. I. Inq. of John de St. Pierre finding that he held, inter alia, a 4th part of the town of Beeston in demesne, & a moiety of the same town in service. He was joint-lord paramount of the Manor, as one of the heirs of the Barons of Malpas.

11 Edw. III. Roger de Beston & Alice his wife, & Ralph Wyldebor & Margery his wife. Fine of a tenement in Wych Malbank.

3 Ric. II. Thomas son of Henry de Beston, Matthew de Weverham, & others, vouches to warranty of Henry Bruyn and others at the suit of Sir Thomas de Dutton & Philippa his wife, late wife of Peter de Thornton. See Wimbalds Trafford, general Notes.

5 Ric. II. Anilla que fuit ux' Ric' de Bunbury, v. David fit Ric' de Bunbury, jun., for dower of one toft & 3 bovates in Beston.

7 Ric. II. William de Beston & Isabel his wife. See Stoke near Hurleston.

9 Hen. V. Ralph de Beston, & John de Caryngton & Isabel his wife. See Aldford.

From the Recognizance Rolls:—

1328. David de Beston, Ric. del Hogh, senior, & junior, William del Hogh, — Robert de Calvylegh, & Will. Hamelyn, to Sir Thomas de Blaston (or Glaston?) parson of the Church of Barowe.

1335. David de Beston, Will. de Praers, Roger le Bruyn, Griff' de Warrenn', & Will. de Ridlegh, to the Earl, in £10.

1344. Henry de Beston, Nicholas de Bruggehous, — — — recog.

1344-5. Henry de Beston, & Will. de Hampton, sureties for Ralph de Moreton.

1352. Thomas de Beston & Katherine his wife. See Haselwall.

1352. Henry de Beston, grantee of the wardship of the lands & heir of Thomas de Calvylegh. See Calveley.

1356. Henry de Beston & David his son, to the Earl, in £56.

1362-3. David de Beston & William his brother. See Coddington near Malpas.

1367. Sir John de Beston, parson of Alderlegh. See Bebbington.

1389-90, Feb. 26. Writ of livery to Thomas son of Henry de Beston of his share of the possessions of Sir Peter de Thornton on the death of his widow Philippa.

1389. Henry Bruyn, Henry de Beston, William de Beston, & Roger Bruyn to Hugh de Calvylegh, knt. sen. in 110 marks.

1390-1. Henry de Beston, Thomas his son, & others, commissioned to arrest all disturbers of the peace within the Lordship of Frodesham.

1391. Livery to Thomas de Beston of Beston of the King's Lease in 1389 to Sir William Bagot & John Delves of the wardship of Thornton & a moiety of Hellesby during William fitz Richard de Venables' minority. See Thornton.

1394. John de Beston, & Margaret his wife. See Tiverton.

1396-7. Thomas de Beston to Hugh del Hope of Chester draper, in 10 marks to hold the said Hugh indemnified against Andrew de Eccleshale with respect to a silver zone pledged to the said Hugh by the said Andrew.

1397-8. Roger de Beston grantee of the Livery of the Crown, with 6d. a day for life.

1398. Thomas de Beston, esq. grantee for life of an annuity of £20, to be received of the herbage and pannage of the Forest of Mara & Mondrem in the same manner as William Walshale received a like annuity.

1404. Walter Beston, John Boudon, & Geoffrey de Wyberlegh, merchants of Denbigh, were licensed to purchase goods & merchandize in the City of Chester, for the use of the people of Denbigh, "the said goods not to be sold to the rebels."

1408. Roger de Beston, tenant of Sir John Lovel of lands in Le Newehall part of the 6th part of the Barony of Malpas.

1416-17. William Troutbek grantee of the wardship of the lands of William de Beston until the coming of age of Thomas his son & heir.

1434, Aug. 16. Writ de etate probanda on the petition of Thomas son & heir of William son of Thomas de Beston for livery of his inheritance out of the custody of Randle le Maynwaryng. Livery Aug. 24.

1436. Thomas de Beston, Ric. de Prestlond, Rob. de Moldeworth & John de Frodesham, Commissioners to collect a subsidy in the Hundred.

1439-40, Jan. 12. Thomas de Beston found security for his appearance before the King's Council at Westminster, & in Oct. 1440, entered into a recog. with the King, in £500, to keep the peace; & up to 1468-9, had entered into at least half a dozen other, similar, recognizances.—H.

Burwardsley, Alpram, and Bradeleg [juxta Malpas. Ob. die Mart' p̄x post festum S̄i Michis Archi 3 Hen. V.] Thomas de Beeston son and heir, [etat' 2 annor' die Mart' p̄x ante festū Assump̄ōis b̄e Marie Virg' p̄x ante obitū p'd̄ci Wiſſi.]

Inq. p. m. 16 Edw. IV. Thomas Beeston held in demesne, as of fee, the manor of Beeston, (and the mills of Horseley and Colbrooke ?) from sir John Sutton, knight, baron of Malpas, val. VIII. vis. VIII. also part of the Thornton share of Kingsley fee, and the lands of Teverton, Huxley, Burwardsley, and Bradeley in Malpas. [Ob. die dñica p̄x post festū S̄i Luce Evḡeliste ult'.] John Beeston son and heir, [etat' 36 ann.]

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Inq. p. m. 20 Hen. VII. Elizabeth Beeston, [widow, seized, *not*] "held,"^a in [her] demesne, as of [freehold, or] frank tenement, half the manor of Hellesby, and lands in Onston [for her life, by the assignment of Tochet Beeston, que sunt p̄cell medietat man'ij de Hellesby p'dict'. Ob. die Jovis in prima septimava quadragesime ultimo.] Tochet Beeston son and heir [p'fat' Elizabeth and Johis, and etat' 40 annor' (*sic*).]

Inq. p. m. 9 Hen. VIII. Tochet Beeston, esq. held [in tail] the manor of Beeston, [and a watermill therein] from Ed. Sutton, [as] baron of Malpas, value per annum VI. and lands therein, val. XIII. vis. VIII. also [a moiety of] the manor of Hellesby, and lands in Teverton, Stoke juxta Picton, Newton juxta Frodsham, [the hall of] Southley [in Alpram.] Kingsley, Norley, Onston, Picton, and Alpram, val. tot. 32l. 10s. 8d. Obiit XIX Oct. a^o p'd'o. John Beeston son and heir, aged upwards of 40 years.

Inq. p. m. 33 Hen. VIII. Johanna Beeston widow, held half of Hellesby in dower. [Ob. at Beston in Vigilia S̄i Marie Magdalene ultimo.] John Beeston son and heir, [etat. 60 annor'.]

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male of his body) the manor of Beeston, [at the time of his decease] from sir William Brereton of Brereton, knight, [but then of Edward Sutton milit' nup dñi Dudley nup Baron de Malpas,] as of his barony of Malpas, val. per annum XII. XIII. also half the manor of Hellesbie, and lands in Teverton, Newton, Alpram, Onston, Kingsley, and Norley, val. total 27l. Died in September a^o p'd'o. Hugh Beeston, esq. son and heir, aged upwards of 56 years.

Sir George Beeston, to whom this last Inquisition refers, was the veteran whose monument has been already described in the church of Bunbury.^c Distinguished at the siege of Boulogne and the battle of Musselborough, and knighted by Elizabeth for his achievement against the Spanish armada at the age of eighty-nine, he closed his life of honour at the age of one hundred and two years. His son, sir Hugh Beeston, [eventually succeeded to the estates of the family, Hugh, the elder brother of this Hugh, and son and heir of sir George, having died issueless. The Inq. of the latter Hugh was taken as follows:—

Inq. p. m. 15 Jac. I. Hugonis Beeston ar', seized in tail, as heir male of Georgij Beeston milit' defunct' nup pris dict' Hugon' Beeston, of the manor of Beeston, val. p. a. £11 13s., and a moiety of the manor of Hellesbie, both held as aforesaid; also of lands in the townships mentioned in the previous Inqs. Ob. 3 Maij 6 Jac. I. Hugo Beeston, miles, frater et heres p̄pinquior' d̄ei Hugonis Beeston ar' defunct', et filius et heres mascul' de corpe d̄ei Georgij Beeston miles, et etatis tempe cap' hujus Inquisicōnis 60 annor' et amplius.

17 Jac. I. Writ of Livery to Hugoni Beeston militi fratri et heredi Hugonis Beeston ar' defuncti, of all the capite lands of which the said Hugh his brother died seized.

This Sir Hugh Beeston, receiver-general for the crown in Cheshire and North Wales, also [like his father,] surviving to an age far beyond the common life of man, outlived his sons, John and sir George Beeston, and left one daughter and heiress, Margaret, who brought her family estates in marriage to William Whitmore of Leighton, esq.^d the representative of a younger branch of the antient family of Whitmore of Thurstanton.

Bridget, daughter and finally sole heiress of William Whitmore and Margaret Beeston, married to her first husband sir Edward Somerset, Knight of the Bath, eighth son of Edward fourth earl of Somerset,^e and after his death re-married Thomas, second son of Thomas first viscount Savage,^f by whom she had issue Darcie Savage, of Beeston and Leighton, esq. whose daughter and heiress Bridget Savage,^g brought the estates of the Beestons and Whitmores in marriage to sir Thomas Mostyn of Mostyn, baronet, from whom the present [1816] manerial lord of Beeston, sir Thomas Mostyn of Mostyn, bart. is lineally descended. [Sir Thomas Mostyn died without issue in 1831, and this manor and all the estate of the Mostyns in Beeston afterwards passed by sale to the Lord Tollemache, the present proprietor.]^h

^a There is a considerable difference between the two words; and the formula "Seized in his (or her) demesne as of fee (or freehold) of and in" &c. is almost invariably and properly used in all Inqs. The material words of documents in a work of a half-legal character such as this, should always be strictly adhered to.—H.

^b If the inscription on his monument, in Bunbury church, is correct, he would be aged 42 at the date of this Inq. Had his wife been alive at the date of his decease, she would have been 96 years old. According to one Inq. his father was born in 1477; according to another, in 1481. These Inqs. are respectively dated the 9 and 33 Hen. 8.—H.

^c See a further account of him, *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. ii. 163.—H.

^d Collins's *Peerage*, edit. 1812. I. p. 230.

^e *Leycester*, p. 235.

^f *Leycester*, p. 235.

^g *Kimber's Baronetage*, vol. II. 84.

^h Information of James Nicholson, esq. of Thelwall Hall, and Henry Wilbraham, esq. of Lincoln's Inn.—H.

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Bridget, daughter and finally sole heiress of William Whitmore and Margaret Beeston, married to her first husband sir Edward Somerset, Knight of the Bath, eighth son of Edward fourth earl of Somerset,^e and after his death re-married Thomas, second son of Thomas first viscount Savage,^f by whom she had issue Darcie Savage, of Beeston and Leighton, esq. whose daughter and heiress Bridget Savage,^g brought the estates of the Beestons and Whitmores in marriage to sir Thomas Mostyn of Mostyn, baronet, from whom the present [1816] manerial lord of Beeston, sir Thomas Mostyn of Mostyn, bart. is lineally descended. [Sir Thomas Mostyn died without issue in 1831, and this manor and all the estate of the Mostyns in Beeston afterwards passed by sale to the Lord Tollemache, the present proprietor.]^h

^a There is a considerable difference between the two words; and the formula "Seized in his (or her) demesne as of fee (or freehold) of and in" &c. is almost invariably and properly used in all Inqs. The material words of documents in a work of a half-legal character such as this, should always be strictly adhered to.—H.

^b If the inscription on his monument, in Bunbury church, is correct, he would be aged 42 at the date of this Inq. Had his wife been alive at the date of his decease, she would have been 96 years old. According to one Inq. his father was born in 1477; according to another, in 1481. These Inqs. are respectively dated the 9 and 33 Hen. 8.—H.

^c See a further account of him, *Harleian Miscellany*, vol. ii. 163.—H.

^d Collins's Feerage, edit. 1812. I. p. 230.

^e Leicester, p. 235.

^f Kimber's Baronetage, vol. II. 84.

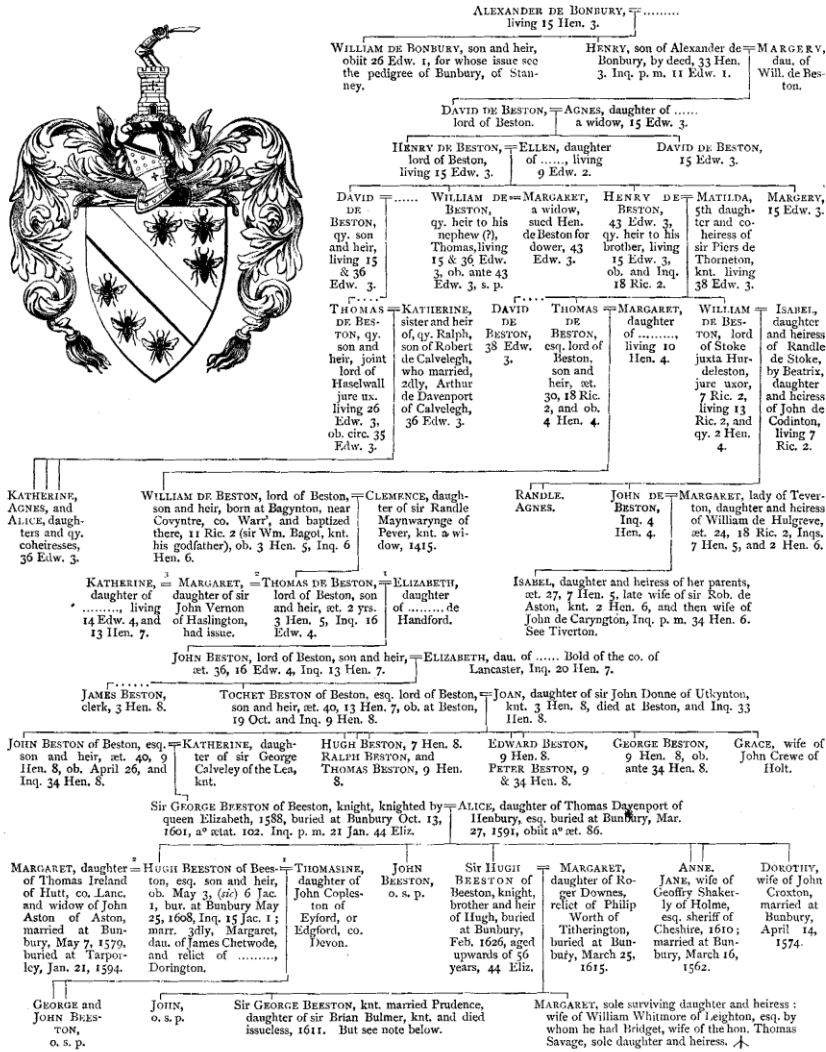
^g Information of James Nicholson, esq. of Thelwall Hall, and Henry Wilbraham, esq. of Lincoln's Inn.—H.

BEESTON OF BEESTON.

From the Visitation of 1580, and Vincent's Cheshire MSS. collated with the Inquisitions p. m. [Plea, and Recog. Rolls,] and Registers of Bunbury.

ARMS. Argent, a bend, Sable, between 6 bees of the second.

CREST. On a wreath, a castle, Or, on a mount Vert issuing therefrom an arm embowed, armed proper, garnished Or, brandishing a sword proper, hilted Or.



P. 145, *Beeston Pedigree*. Since this pedigree was arranged from the best evidences which could then be procured, a contemporary entry in Harl. MSS. 2153, has occurred, and supplies the following corrections.
Hugh Beeston, husband of Margaret Aston, was the same person with Hugh, eldest son of sir George Beeston by Alice Davenport, mentioned in the pedigree. Margaret Aston was his second wife, *widow* of John Aston of Aston; she was daughter of Thomas Ireland of Hutt, co. Lanc. He had also

The present Hall of Beeston has been long occupied by farmers. The antient hall was surrounded by a moat, and suffered severely during the siege of the neighbouring castle, being fired by prince Rupert's^a soldiers, March 19, 1644-5.^b The estate, with the manor of Peckforton,^c were offered for sale about 1745, at the price of 9000l. and in 1756, at the price of 11,000l.; but no purchasers accepted the terms. In 1801, the timber alone on these estates was worth 30,000l. most of which grew on the eminences occupied during the siege.

The village is scattered round the foot of the hill, at the side where it declines to the south-east, and consists of a number of straggling picturesque cottages, chiefly aged, [but no longer] ruinous; and formed with timber, built on each side the road, among orchards, and luxuriant foliage, with a sandy lane winding among them, and the lower line of the fortifications here and there peeping through the trees.

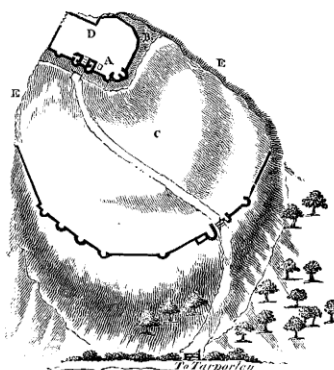
Immediately above the village rises the bold insulated mass of rock, which forms so striking an object to Cheshire, and the adjacent counties. It is perfectly detached, and nearly pentagonal in form, sloping like the Forest and Broxton hills, toward one extremity, and presenting at the other a front of precipitous and overhanging rocks, which are continued at the sides for a short space, and then gradually mix with the slope, with which the rest of the hill declines towards the village.

Such elevations are not of unfrequent occurrence in Scotland; but the castles on their summits have been exposed to considerable inconvenience from the deficiency of water; a want which here was provided against by two wells, dug to the level of Beeston Brook; one of which in Webb's time, although partly filled up, was 275 feet in depth, and the other 240 feet. The importance of the place, as commanding one of the three avenues to Chester, at an early period of history, has been noticed in the introduction to this Hundred, and it is most probable that some kind of fortress was then erected on the summit, for the protection of the pass.

The first line of works commences about half way up the ascent, consisting of a wall flanked with eight towers, at irregular distances, in the style introduced by the crusaders in the 13th century, in imitation of the fortresses of the Holy Land: a perfect specimen of this style is still existing in the walls of Conway, and its resemblance to its original may be traced by reference to elegant delineations of the walls of Constantinople by the pencil of Dallaway.^d These works inclose a court which is entered through a gateway defended by a square tower. The ground rises rapidly, and the sides of the hill commence their precipitous and broken form, immediately above the line of fortifications, which have been therefore only thrown across the hill from side to side, in an irregular semicircle, and have never been continued

at the sides, though so represented in a small plate published in the Vale Royal, and very unnecessarily copied by Boydell in 1747, on a scale which gains it the credit of a more accurate delineation.

The higher ballium contains about a statute acre. The steep approach into the outer court would barely give access to a carriage: the entrance to the inner one never could have admitted it. It is approached by a ruinous platform, on which the drawbridge formerly



A Draw Well.
B Castle Ditch.
C Outer Court.
D Inner Court.
EE Precipitous sides of the rock, where the wall is discontinued.

fell, and is ascended, after crossing the intervening chasm, by a flight of steep steps; the arches from which the portcullis descended are acutely pointed, and on each side is a massy round tower. Several other towers project from the wall, which extends along two entire sides of this court. Few apartments can now be traced, and those only on the first story. On the outside of these two fronts of the higher ballium, is an immense moat, hewn in the solid rock, which mingles at unequal heights with the stones of the ramparts and towers above, so that the whole, both on a distant and near view, seems more like a excrescence from the rock, than the work of human hands, so singularly are the crags and the hewn ashlar intermingled, and the whole mass coated over with lichens, ivy, and evergreens.

One of the wells mentioned by Webb remains in this court. The two sides which are not defended by the moat and towers, are partly enclosed by a low wall, and partly open to the precipice, which in one of the angles terminates in huge crags, jutting frightfully out from the rock, at the height of three hundred and sixty-six feet, as described in a very faithful, though coarse

two other wives: 1st, Thomasine, daughter of John Coplestone, of *Eyford*, co. Devon, by whom George and John, who died s. p.; and 3dly, Margaret, daughter of James Chetwood, relict of Dorington.

The same MS. in opposition to an extract from the Bunbury register sent to the author, states the husband of Dorothy Beeston (daughter of sir George Beeston) to be John Copleton of *Edginton*, co. Devon.

It further states the last sir George to have married Eleanora, daughter of sir Thomas Cave, and transfers his wife, Prudence, daughter of sir Brian Bulmer, to his uncle, John Beeston, mentioned above, who died without issue. The same Eleanora, according to Kimber's *Baronetage*, after the death of sir George Beeston, married sir Thomas Roe of Bullwich, co. Northampton, chancellor of the Garter, and ambassador to Ferdinand III.

The following note in this pedigree explains the premature death of this last sir George Beeston, noticed on the monument in p. 143. "He brok his neck by fall of a horse on hunting with king James, and was brought to Beeston. He and his wife had 200l. yearly for their lives by gift of king James." — *Ormerod's Additions*, Vol. iii. 446.

"There is a tradition that he dined that day with the lady of the house: after dinner he told her, that he was sorry to make so bad a return to her hospitality; advised her to secure any valuable effects she had, for he must order the house to be burned that night, lest it should be garrisoned by the enemy." Pennant's *Chester to London*, p. 9. For a further account of this lady, vide Leighton, Wirral Hundred, and Pennant's *Whiteford and Holywell*, 110.

^a MS. Collections for Bunbury, by the late P. Broster, esq.
VOL. II.

^b Burghall's Diary, p. 942.
^c *Archæologia*, XIV. 232.

manner, in Buck's [annexed] engraving. The view from the summit is very extensive and magnificent; but the most interesting points are the adjacent Broxton hills, and the estuaries of the Dee and the Mersey, down both of which the eye looks in a direct line to the Irish sea.

The erection of this fortress was commenced in 1220, by Randle Blundeville, sixth earl of Chester, "who, after he was come from the Holie Land, began to build the castels of Chartlec and Beeston, and after he also builded the abbeie of Dieu l'encresse, toward the charges susteined about the building of which castels and abbeie, he took toll throughout all his lordships of all such persons as passed by the same, with any cattel, chafire, or merchandize."^a

On the death of John Scot, the last of the local earls, in 1237, 21 Hen. III. the king, previous to the assumption of the earldom into his hands, seized on the castles of Chester and Beeston. The commissioners appointed for this purpose were Hugh le Despenser, Stephen de Segrave, and Henry de Aldithley^b.

In 1256, 40 Hen. III. prince Edward (to whom his father^c had two years previously assigned the principality of Wales) made his first progress into Cheshire, to visit his lands and castles^d; and, entering Chester on the day of St. Kenelm, received the homage of the nobles and gentry of Cheshire and Wales. In this year Fulco de Orreby, justice of Chester, received the charge of the castle of Beeston, with those of Chester, Dissard, Schotewyke, and Vaenor^e.

By the vicissitudes of the struggle with Simon de Montfort, the earldom and its appendages were wrested from prince Edward, by a forced surrender, in 1264, and Beeston was garrisoned by the partizans of that rebellious noble. On the news of prince Edward's escape from Hereford, in 1265, his Cheshire adherents took up arms, and, under the command of James de Audley and Urian de St. Pierre, possessed themselves of this important strong-hold, on behalf of their sovereign. This event took place on the Sunday after the prince's escape; and the battle of Evesham being fought on the 11th of the nones of May following, Edward instantly marched to Beeston, with Humphrey de Bohun, Henry de Hastings, and Guy de Montfort, as captives, where his enemies, Lucas de Taney, justice of Chester, and Simon, abbot of St. Werburgh, surrendered and threw themselves on his mercy, on the vigil of the feast of the Assumption^f.

[The following names of *Constables of the Castle and Janitors* occur in the Recognizance Rolls:—

2 Edw. II. Sunday before the feast of St. Mark the Evangelist. Indenture of delivery of the Castle of Beeston by *John de Serleby* to *John de Modbourl*, with certain garniture and provisions for which he was to answer to the king, for *Sir Robert de Holand*.]

5 Edw. II. Robert de Holand, son of John, son of Ingram de Holand, of Holland, in Lancashire, who was now rising into notice, from his appointment of secretary to Thomas, [earl, *not*]^g duke, of Lancaster, was [qy. re-appointed] governor of Beeston: which appears, as Dugdale says, to be the first office of public trust given to that great family^h.

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According to Stow^k and a MS chronicler^l Richard the Second selected Beeston for the custody of his treasure and jewels, to the immense amount of 200,000 marks, trusting, most probably, to the tried faith of his favourite county, as well as to the strength of the situation. A hundred men at arms were placed in the garrison, but abandoned the place, without a contest, to the duke of Lancaster, on the fear of an assault.

^a Ranulph Higden, quoted by Holinshed, II. 350.

^b Collins's Peerage, vol. I. 348, edit. 1768.

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^d Correction by Wm. Beaumont, esq. of Oxford Hall.—H.

^e Records in the Exchequer of Chester.

^f Leicester, page 154.

^g Dugdale's Baronage, II. 57.

^h Chronicle of St. Werburgh.

ⁱ Baronage, vol. II. p. 73.

^j Annals, 321.

^k Harl. MSS. 2111, 98.

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ⁱ Baronage, vol. II. p. 73.

^j Annals, 321.

^k Harl. MSS. 2111, 98.

In 1460, the principality of Wales and earldom of Chester being granted to Richard duke of York,^a on his being declared heir to king Henry the Sixth, Beeston castle is included in the recital of manors and castles considered as appendages to the earldom.

This is the last notice of Beeston, as a regular fortress; and, in the course of eighty years afterwards, it is described by Leland as shattered and ruinous^b, in the close of his *Genethliacon Eadverdi Principis*, where he alludes to Edward the Sixth as the person foretold, in ancient prophecies, as the restorer of its former consequence:

This restoration of its military importance was destined to be effected under far different auspices. In the troubles of the seventeenth century, when almost every considerable mansion in Cheshire was garrisoned for king or parliament, and subjected to the approaches of regular siege, Beeston was too important a station to be overlooked. Accordingly, on the night of Feb. 21, 1642-3, it was taken possession of by three hundred of the parliament forces, and was put into a state of military repair.

The following passages relating to the further proceedings connected with Beeston Castle are abstracted from the Diary of Edward Burghall, schoolmaster of Bunbury, and afterwards vicar of Acton, an eye-witness of many of the events he describes:

"Dec. 13. A little before day, captain Sandford (a zealous royalist) who came out of Ireland with eight of his firelocks, crept up the steep hill of Beeston castle and got into the upper ward, and took possession there. It must be done by treachery, for the place was most impregnable. Capt. Steel, who kept it for the parliament, was accused and suffered for it; but it was verily thought he had not betrayed it wilfully; but some of his men proving false, he had not courage enough to withstand Sandford, to try it out with him. What made much against Steel was, he took Sandford down into his chamber, where they dined together, and much beer was sent up to Sandford's men; and the castle, after a short parley, was delivered up: Steel and his men having leave to march with their arms and colours, to Nantwich; but, as soon as he was come into the town, the soldiers were so enraged against him, that they would have pulled him in pieces, had he not been immediately clapped in prison^c. There were much wealth and goods in the castle, belonging to gentlemen and neighbours, who had brought it thither for safety, besides ammunition and provisions for half a year at least; all which the enemy got."

The royalists were suffered to maintain the possession of the castle, with little molestation, to the 20th October 1644, when "the council of war at Nantwich,

hearing that the enemy at Beeston were in want of fuel and other necessaries, layed strong siege to it." This siege continued to the 17th March following, when prince Maurice and Prince Rupert came, with a great force, and relieved the castle, and the day after plundered Bunbury parish, and burnt Beeston Hall.

"1645, April. The parliament again placed forces round Beeston castle, where they began to raise a brave mount, with a strong ditch about it, and had placed great buildings thereon, which were scarce finished, but news came that the king and both the princes, with a strong army, were coming towards Chester. The parliament army marched towards Nantwich, leaving the country to the spoils of the forces in Chester and Beeston Castle." The garrison, thus relieved, sallied out on the 4th of June, and assaulted Ridley Hall, but was defeated with loss.

The royal forces being defeated, in September, at Rowton Heath, the siege was resumed: and, on "Nov. 16th, Beeston Castle, that had been besieged almost a year, was delivered up by capt. Valet, the Governor, to sir William Brereton: there were in it 56 soldiers, who by agreement had liberty to depart with their arms, colours flying, and drums beating, with two cart-loads of goods, and to be conveyed to Denbigh: but 20 of the soldiers laid down their arms, and craved liberty to go to their own homes, which was granted. There was neither meat nor drink found in the castle, but only a piece of a turkey-pie, and a live peacock and a peahen."

Early in the next year Beeston Castle was demolished, and the ruins have since been gradually sinking to their present state of extreme, but picturesque decay. The site was alienated from the earldom of Chester in the reign of Elizabeth, and becoming again attached to the manor from which it was originally severed, has descended from the Beestons, through the Whitmores, Savages, and Mostyns, to the present manorial lord, who takes every precaution to preserve the wreck of this venerable fortress from wanton demolition.

[The Lord Tollemache, of Peckforton, eventually became the purchaser of all the Mostyn interest in this castle and manor derived from the late] Sir Thomas Mostyn.^d [Lord Tollemache] is [now, therefore,] the exclusive land-owner of the township, with the exception of about 150 acres, in the hands of three proprietors [1816]. A court leet and court baron are held for the manor.

A mineral spring has been recently discovered in this township, the account of which, subjoined in a note, was laid before the Philosophical Society of Chester by Mr. Whittle, March 8, 1816, together with an analysis of other springs in Spurstow and Peckforton^e.

^a Rot. Pat. V. 380.

^b *Explicit dehinc Fama suas perniciter alas,*

..... ocellos
Sideres figens Bieduni in moenia Castri
Qui locus excelso consurgit vertice rupis,
Unde licet, velut e specula, quoscunque jacentis
Circum monticulos, vallesque videre feraces.
Huc se precipitem celeri dedit illa volata,
Atque tenens arcis fastigia summa superbie
Concussit pennas alacri fervore strepenteis,

^c "Monday, Jan. 28, 1643-4. Steel, late governor of Beeston, was shot to death, in Tinker's Croft, by two soldiers, according to judgment against him. He was put into a coffin, and buried in the church-yard. He confessed all his sins, and prayed a great while, and, to the judgment of charity, died penitently." Burghall's Diary, 931.

^d "It rises about a quarter of a mile from the Horseley spring, and about three from that of Spurstow, from under one of the strata forming the base of Beeston Castle Hill. It is not the surface spring, but pushes up through a very porous red sandstone. There are altogether about ten places where this water rises, in a narrow lane, at the top of which stands a farm-house, and a blacksmith's shop; but the situation is at present so concealed, that a person would experience some difficulty in finding it. When fresh, this water is beautifully clear and pellucid, sparkling with great brightness; its smell is very slight, but it has a strong and sensibly chalybeate taste. When drank in the quantity of half a pint or more, it proved highly refreshing,

Oraque deinde sono tali facunda resolvit;
"Assyrio redeuns Victor Ranulphus ab orbe
Hoc posuit castrum, terrorem gentibus olim
Vicinis, patriaeque suae memorabile vallum.
Nunc licet indignas patiatur fracta ruinas,
Tempus erit quando rursus caput exeret altum,
Vatibus antiquis si fas sit mihi credere vati
Forsan et Eadverdis precium feret omne laboris."
GENETHLIACON EADVERDI. Londini, 1548.

^e Information of the Rev. John Egerton.