

THE DUCHESES OF YORK.



HE dukedom of York has always been a royal title. It has been conferred eight several times before its revival in the person of Prince George of Wales, but only once has it passed from father to son and onward in a line of hereditary succession. This is because the bearer of the title has always stood so near the throne that it has sooner or later become merged in a higher dignity. It is partly from this cause that, although the present Duke of York is the twelfth who has borne the title, there have been only eight actual Duchesses of York. For although both Henry VIII. and Charles I. bore the title for a time, the former had become Prince of Wales before he married Katherine of Arragon, while Charles was King of England when he married Henrietta Maria. Edward IV., too, who was Duke of York for two or three months between his father's death and his assumption of the crown, did not marry Elizabeth Woodville until he had been some years king. And when we strike out of our list also two Dukes of York who never married we find our subject reduced to a comparatively small compass.

It is the great house of York, the solitary instance of hereditary succession mentioned above, which supplies most of the subjects of our sketch. Its founder was Edmund of Langley, fifth son of Edward III., known in earlier life as Earl of Cambridge, but created Duke of York by his uncle Richard II., in 1385. The first Duchess of York is an interesting character. She was a princess in her own right, and her earlier history forms the subject of one of Froissart's romantic pages. Pedro, the Cruel, King of Castille, by his marriage with Maria Padilla had three daughters, Beatrice, Constance, and Isabel, who on the murder of their father at Montiel were taken for safety to Bayonne. Beatrice became a nun, but her younger sisters remained "dysconsolate and in great trouble, that it was great pite."

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, was at this time keeping court at Bordeaux, and it was represented to him that as he was a widower, and these disconsolate damsels were heiresses to the Spanish crown, he could not do better than marry one of them. Nothing loth, the duke despatched four knights to bring the princesses to Bordeaux. The knights sped so well that the princesses consented to accompany them, and when he heard of their coming the duke, with his brother Edmund, Earl of Cambridge, rode out to meet them. They met at Rochefort, and there and then the duke married Constance, the elder princess. Great feasting and rejoicing marked the ceremony and the return of the duke and his bride to Bordeaux. In the autumn of 1371 the duke, with his wife and her sister and a great train, came over to England. Sixty ships conveyed them to Southampton, whence they rode to Windsor. In the early spring of 1372 Edmund of Langley married the younger sister Isabel.

The Duke of Lancaster's marriage was avowedly a political one, for he laid claim to the crown of Castille in right of his wife,* and prepared to justify his claim by arms. That of Edmund and Isabel may have had less of a political character. They had three children, Edward, Richard, born at Conisborough about

1376, and one daughter Constance, who was married at a very tender age to Thomas Le Despencer, and had a stormy and troubled life before her. In 1381 the Earl went to Portugal to assist the King of Portugal against the King of Castille, and Isabel and her eldest son accompanied him, leaving the younger children in England. They reached Lisbon with a train of noblemen, men-at-arms, and archers, and a marriage was shortly agreed upon between the earl's son and the king's daughter Beatrice. The expedition, however, proved a failure. John of Gaunt, owing to troubles at home, was unable to bring over the further help that had been promised. The King of Portugal, throwing the blame on him, made peace with Castille, and Edmund and Isabel came home in 1382, bringing their boy with them. Isabel made her will in December of the same year by authority and special licence of her husband. From its terms and from other slight indications it has been thought with some probability that she had become a convert to Lollardism. John of Gaunt, her brother-in-law, was the political upholder of Wycliffe. The king's mother, Joan, Princess of Wales, and his queen, Anne of Bohemia, with both of whom Isabel was on intimate terms, were devoted Wycliffites, and she appointed as her executors Sir Lewis Clifford and Sir Richard Sturry, two of the most prominent Lollards of the time. She desired that her body might be buried wheresoever her husband and the king might appoint. A hundred trentals and a hundred sauters were to be said for her soul on the day of her death, and four priests, or at least one, were to sing for her by the space of four years. She gave several specific legacies: to the king her heart of pearls, to the Duke of Lancaster a tablet of jasper which "the King of Armonie" gave her, to her daughter a fret of pearls. She gave her crown to her eldest son, to remain to his heirs, and the rest of her goods she bequeathed to the king on trust that he should allow her younger son Richard, who was his godson, five hundred marks a year during his life. Isabel became Duchess of York in 1385. Several pardons granted at her request tend to show a gracious disposition. She died, a comparatively young woman, in the spring of 1393, "very penitent," according to the monkish chronicles, and was buried in the Priory church of King's Langley, where it is probable that her husband himself raised during the later years of his life the stately tomb, which is still to be seen, shorn of much of its ancient beauty, in Langley parish church. By his will made seven years after Isabel's death he desired that his body should be buried at Langley, "pres de ma tresame Isabele, jadyz ma compaigne qe Dieux assoille."

Isabel's jewels sold for £666 13s. 4d., but the king paid the annuity to her son Richard up to the end of his reign, out of the great respect he bore to her.

The Duke of York did not long remain a widower. In the autumn of the year in which Isabel died he married his second wife, Joan of Holland, daughter of Thomas, second Earl of Kent, and granddaughter, by her first marriage, of Joan, Princess of Wales. Not much is known of the second Duchess of York personally; but the impression left by what little we can glean is of a less amiable character than her predecessor. Left a young widow without children in 1402, she soon married William, Lord Willoughby d'Eresby. On his death she took for her third husband Henry, Lord Scrope of Upsal, who perished with her stepson, Richard of Conisborough, in 1415 for complicity in the Southampton plot. Next year we find her married a fourth time to Henry de Vesey, Lord Bromflete, who survived

her. She died in 1434, leaving no children by any of her marriages.

It will be seen that Shakespeare's Duchess of York in *King Richard II.* is an unhistorical figure. As mother of Aumerle,* she should be Isabel of Castille; but Isabel had died before the tragedy of Richard's reign was consummated. Joan of Holland, when she married York, seems to have been a mere child.

Edward of Rutland succeeded to his father's title as second Duke of York, and his wife is therefore the third duchess. She was Philippa de Mohun, second daughter and co-heir of John, Lord Mohun of Dunster, the owner of great estates in Somerset, Devon, and Dorset. Her mother was Joan, daughter of Bartholomew de Burghersh, a noted Lollard. Her sisters were respectively Countess of Salisbury, and Lady Strange of Knocking. Philippa, like the second duchess, was a much-married lady. The dates are perplexing, but it would seem she had been married twice before her marriage to the Duke of York: first to Walter, Lord Fitzwalter, secondly to Sir John Golofré, Ambassador to France. The duke and duchess had no children. The duke, a weak, unreliable man, but not devoid of personal bravery, was killed at Agincourt. He had spent much money in founding a great college at Fotheringay, planned originally by his father, on whom and the Duchess Isabel the castle and manor had been settled (51 Edward III.), and his body was brought over from France and buried in the choir of the church. By his will made a few months before, he bequeathed certain beds with their furniture, and certain silver pots and basins to "ma tresame compaignee Philippe," and he directed that in all masses and prayers to be made for him mention should be of King Richard II., King Henry IV., Edmund Duke of York his father, the Lady Isabel his mother, and all other persons departed this life, for whom he was in conscience obliged to pray, that God would have mercy on them.

Duchess Philippa, left with a great dowry issuing out of estates in Northamptonshire, Yorkshire, Wiltshire, Essex, and the Isle of Wight in right of her third marriage, besides manors and estates in Somerset, Devon, and Norfolk, is said to have married John Vesey as her fourth husband. She made her will at Carisbrook Castle, St. Gregory's Day, 1430, describing herself as "Phelip Duchesse de York et Dame de Pysle de wyght," and dying in 1431 was buried in accordance with her express desire in "the conventual church of Westminster," in the chapel of St. Nicholas, to the altar of which she left a chalice of silver and a vestment. Her monument, with its full-length effigy in long robe, wimple and veil, considerably defaced, may still be seen there, bearing on the lower part of it the arms of Fitzwalter, Mohun, York, and Burghersh.†

The second Duke of York died without

* Edward Earl of Rutland, the eldest son of Edmund and Isabel, was created Duke of Albarnele (Aumale or Aumerle) in 1397, and deprived of that title in 1399.

† Philippa's will contains a number of minute directions as to the conveyance of her body to Westminster, the Requiem masses to be said on the way and at its reception, when twenty-four poor men clothed in short gowns with hoods of black were each to bear a torch and receive 20d. in money. Her servants were to be provided with mourning. She leaves numerous small sums to religious houses, her husband's college of Fotheringay amongst them, *pur prier pur ma alme*. To "mon filz Wauter, Seigneur Fitz Wauter" (apparently her grandson) she gives, amongst other things, a chased gold cup of curious workmanship. Other small bequests, apparently to members of her household, fill the remainder of her will; and she leaves the residue of her estate to be distributed by her executors in four parts and applied at their discretion for the saying of masses, the relief of prisoners, the sustenance of the poor, and the amendment of evil lives.

* The Duke and Duchess of Lancaster assumed the style of King and Queen of Castille and Leon at Hertford, March 1st, 1372, which was probably about the date of the marriage of Edmund and Isabel.

issue; but his brother, Richard of Conisborough, by his marriage with Anne Mortimer, daughter of the Earl of March, had left a son, Richard of Cambridge, who at three years old succeeded to his uncle's title. The young duke was the ward of Ralph Neville, Earl of Westmoreland and his countess, and he married Cicely Neville, his guardian's youngest daughter. Of the Duchess Cicely materials exist for a portrait at fuller length than is the case with her predecessors. She is a typical great lady of mediæval times, and her life extends over nearly the whole of the fifteenth century. Her mother, Joan Beaufort, was a daughter of John of Gaunt, and by descent and by her brothers and sisters, twenty in number, she was allied to all the greatest families in the kingdom. It was the Neville alliance that gave her husband the strength and support which enabled him to put forward his claim to the crown. She was with her husband in France during his appointment as Lieutenant-General, and three of her children were born at Rouen. Later she accompanied him to Ireland. A famous beauty, popularly known in the north as the "Rose of Raby," her beauty was only exceeded by her pride. At Baynard's castle, bestowed on York by Henry VI. after the death of the Duke of Gloucester, and still more at the duke's own ancestral castle of Fotheringay, where she had her throne-room, she maintained all the state of a queen. Had her husband survived the battle of Wakefield, she would in all probability have been queen of England. But that fatal field deprived her not only of her husband, but also of her young son, the Earl of Rutland, and her brother, the Earl of Salisbury. Though she had lost a crown for herself, the next year saw her the mother of a king. Edward IV. treated her with unvarying respect; but his marriage with Elizabeth Woodville was a grievous blow to her ambition. She overcame her hostility, however, so far as to stand godmother to his eldest daughter, the Princess Elizabeth, the other godmother being the queen's mother, the Duchess of Bedford. The rising of Warwick her nephew, the murder of her son Clarence, the fate of her grandchildren the sons of Edward IV., the crimes which marked the short reign of her son Richard, terminating in the tragedy of Bosworth Field, make up a category of ills exceeding in number and magnitude the ordinary share of trouble falling to mortal lot. But she outlived her losses as she had outlived the calumnies which, like most great ladies of her time, she had not escaped in earlier life, and her later days, spent in retirement at her castle of Berkhamstead, present a stately and dignified picture, not unworthy of a great though stormy career. As early as 1480 she and her sister, the Duchess of Buckingham, had together professed themselves religious. Henry VII. did not interfere with the duchess's estates, and his marriage with her granddaughter, the Princess Elizabeth of York, gave her the prospect of seeing her direct line perpetuated on the throne.

It is worth while considering for a moment the record which has been preserved of her life at Berkhamstead.* She rose at seven, and after hearing matins and low mass in her chamber and taking "something to recreate nature," she went to service in her chapel. Dinner was served between eleven and twelve, during which she heard "a lecture of holy matter." After dinner she gave audience for an hour, slept a quarter of an hour, and then continued in prayer "unto the first peale of evensong: then she drinketh wyne or ale at her

pleasure. Forthwith her chaplyne is ready to saye with her both evensonges: and after the last peale she goeth to the chappell and heareth evensonge by note." Supper was served at five, during which those in her presence had the pleasure of hearing her "recyte the lecture that was had at dinner."

"After supper she disposeth herself to be famyliare with her gentlewomen to the secac'on of honest myrthe: and one houre before her goeing to bed she taketh a cupp of wyne, and after that goeth to her pryvie closette and taketh her leave of God for all night, makinge ende of her prayers for that daye, and by eighte of the clocke is in bedde."

All her household had their set portions, and those who were sick or infirm had stated allowances. Roast and boiled meats were served on most days, but on fast-days salt and fresh fish, and on Saturdays "at dynner salt fyshe, one fresh fishe and butter: at supper salt fishe and eggis."

Payment for provisions was made weekly and monthly. The wages of the household were paid half-yearly, and four times a year proclamation was made "about Berkhamsted in market townes to understand whether the purveyors, cators and other make true paymente of my ladyes money or not: and also to understande by the same whether my ladyes servants make true payment for theyre owne debts or not: and if any defaulte be founde a remedy to be had forthwith for a recompense."

Cicely made her will 1st of April 1495. She directed her body to be buried beside that of her "most entirely best beloved lord and husband" in his tomb at Fotheringay, whither his remains had been removed by Edward IV. with great ceremony six years after the battle of Wakefield. Her bequests have a touch of the stateliness which characterises her throughout. To the college of Fotheringay she gave "a square canopie of crymeson clothe of gold" with various vestments and books doubtless from her private chapel: to her eldest daughter her largest bed of baudekyn with a counterpoint of the same: to her daughter of Suffolk her chair with the covering, all her cushions, horses, and harnesses for the same, with all her palfreys: to her son-in-law the Duke of Suffolk a cloth of estate.

She died the same year. When her remains were reinterred by order of Queen Elizabeth many years after in the chancel of the present church of Fotheringay she "had about her neck hanging in a silken riband a pardon from Rome which, penned in a very fine Roman hand, was as fair and fresh to be read as if it had been written but yesterday."

From the Duchess Cicely we turn to the pathetic figure of a child bride. Richard the second son of Edward IV. was created Duke of York 28th May, 1474. Three years later on the 1st January, 1477, when only five years old, he was married to Anne Mowbray, a child younger than himself, the sole heiress of John Mowbray, Duke of Norfolk. An account of the stately ceremony of the wedding affords us our only glimpse of the fifth Duchess of York. The bride was led into St. Stephen's chapel by the Earl of Lincoln and Earl Rivers, attended by many ladies and gentlewomen. There the king and queen, the prince, the Duchess Cicely, and the princesses awaited her coming. After the Pope's dispensation had been read, the king gave away the bride, the Duke of Gloucester casting gold and silver amongst the common people, and after spices and wine "as appertaineth to matrimonial feasts" the Duke of Gloucester (ill-omened choice) and the Duke of Buckingham conducted the bride from the chapel. The marriage feast was prepared in St. Edward's chamber, where, judged by the light of later years, a strange company of guests assembled. For not only was Gloucester there with the Woodvilles and the young princes his destined victims, but Henry

of Richmond, his successor, and the princess Elizabeth, who as Richmond's wife was to unite the red and white roses.

The marriage which secured the great Norfolk inheritance completed, the young Duchess doubtless returned to the care of her mother. Six years later the gates of the Tower closed for ever on the boy bridegroom. Anne also died young and rests in a nameless grave in the chapel of St. Erasmus in Westminster Abbey.

From Anne Mowbray we pass to comparatively modern history, for the next Duchess of York was Anne Hyde, the daughter of Clarendon and the mother of Queen Mary and Queen Anne. Privately married in the year of the restoration to the king's second brother James, whom she had met four years before in Paris when maid of honour to his sister the Princess of Orange, her marriage was made public very shortly afterwards, and she kept her court as Duchess of York (a circle said to be more select than that of the queen) for eleven years. We need not dwell on her history. She lives in the pages of Pepys and his contemporaries, and on the canvas of Lely, a woman of natural ability and tact, but haughty and unpopular. Received into the Romish church in August 1670, she died in March of the following year, and is the third Duchess of York buried in Westminster Abbey. The history of Mary Beatrice of Modena the second wife of James belongs to that of the Queens of England. Married in her fifteenth year to a bridegroom of forty, she landed in England two and a half years after Anne Hyde's death, being met by the Duke at Dover. As Duchess of York she accompanied her husband to Holland, and twice to Scotland, where she kept court all one winter in Holyrood. She became Queen of England at twenty-seven, and her subsequent history and misfortunes are outside the scope of our subject.

The last Duchess of York, like the first, was a princess in her own right. She was Frederica Charlotte Ulrica Catherine, Princess-Royal of Prussia, eldest daughter of Frederick William II. Frederick Augustus, Duke of York, second son of George III., had met her during his visits to Berlin, and fallen in love with her. The marriage was celebrated at Berlin, 29th September, 1791, with all the pomp which attends such ceremonies at the Prussian court, the traditional torch-dance as usual concluding the festivities of the day. The duke was twenty-eight, his bride four years younger. "I believe and hope," wrote Lord Malmesbury, "she will make him happy and please in England. She is far from handsome, but lively, sensible, and very tractable; and if one-tenth part of the attachment they now show for each other remains, it will be very sufficient to make an excellent menage."

On the 21st November following the duke and duchess landed at Dover. They arrived the following day in London, and on Sunday the 23rd at nine in the evening they were remarried by the Archbishop of Canterbury in the great saloon of Buckingham Palace in presence of the king and queen and all the royal family. The Prince of Wales in a chocolate-coloured dress suit gave away the bride, who was dressed in white satin with tassels and fringes of gold and a number of diamonds. She wore feathers in her head-dress with three brilliant pins, presented to her by the king. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Clarence went home with the duke and duchess afterwards to "an elegant supper" at York House. Next day there was a great drawing-room at which the duchess was presented. The duke and duchess drove from York House in their coach, and the duchess was received by Lady Sydney, Lady Mary Howe and Lady Caroline Waldegrave, who "led her into the drawing-room, and presented her to their majesties and

* "A compendious recytacion compiled of the order, rules, and constructione of the house of the Right Excellent Princesse Cecile, late mother unto the Right Noble Prince King Edward the Fourth."—*Ordnances of the Royal Household*, published by the Society of Antiquaries.

the princesses. The ceremony over, the nobility paid their respects to the illustrious stranger." Lord Malmesbury's hopes were not fulfilled, and six years later the duchess retired to *Oatlands Park*, Weybridge, where she spent the rest of her life in seclusion, devoting herself to works of charity and to the care of numerous pets, for whom she developed

a very strong affection. She died in 1820 in her fifty-fourth year, after a long and painful illness, and was buried at Weybridge. The duke and the other princes attended the funeral with all due ceremony, after which, we are informed by the *Annual Register*, "the duke returned immediately to town to dinner."

In taking leave of our subject we may per-

haps be allowed to express a hope that the ninth duchess of York, the lineal descendant, like her bridegroom, of Cicely Neville and Isabel of Castille, not less richly endowed by nature than any of her predecessors, and beginning her new life under such fair auspices, may have a fairer and happier future before her than any of theirs.

R. W. R.

AUSTRIAN EMBROIDERY.

IT is not often that it is possible from a very small outlay to evolve a really artistic drawing-room ornament; but when this is the case we are glad to call our readers' attention to the fact and point out to them how the work can be accomplished.

For some years the Austrian squares shown in our illustrations have been sold on the Continent, and largely used there for decorative purposes; but until they found their way into London and provincial shops they were useless to describe as work within the reach of English ladies, but as at the present time they are frequently to be met with, the difficulty of procuring them is over. These squares must not be confounded with the coarse Brittany handkerchiefs that have been used for many years as a foundation for imitation Indian embroidery. The latter, though forming admirable Oriental designs, are so glaring as to colour, and so coarse as to texture, that it is necessary to entirely conceal the material with close satin stitch embroidery. This embroidery is certainly very handsome, but takes so long a time to execute that not many of us in the present whirl of existence have the leisure to spend so much on fancy work.

The Austrian squares are made of a thin fine linen, and are in size from thirty to thirty-two inches. Their designs are printed upon them, and either have a pure white background surrounded with a deep border of crimson, blue, or yellow, or the design is laid upon black, scarlet, or citron yellow foundations.

The designs are of every colour and in great variety, and they are so beautifully executed and coloured, and shaded with such justness and appreciation of nature that they resemble painting more than printing, and do not require to be concealed. What they do require is a certain amount of handwork expended on them to bring them into greater relief and to take from them the appearance of flatness.

The designs include very many different kinds of flowers arranged as wreaths, birds of all kinds of plumage, butterflies, single feathers thrown carelessly over the background, and various figure subjects. Of these we have selected three for illustration and embroidery, merely remarking that very little idea of the delicacy of their colouring can be learnt from an engraving. Fig. 1 is a design of a wreath of flowers including pink roses with buds and sprays, yellow roses and their leaves, one spray of pale lavender-tinted lilac, a bunch of softly-tinted chrysanthemums, and a goldfinch with nest. The background colours for this pattern are either citron yellow or black, the former being the most artistic, the latter lasting clean the longest. To embroider this design, it is necessary to work the brown wings and tail of the bird to match the painted copy with shades of brown silk. All the body of the bird should be left untouched, with the exception of a few prominent yellow markings or feathers; these should be followed out with yellow silk, the bird's eye touched in with black silk, its beak outlined, and a few dark

markings covered where shown near the beak. The feet and claws require outlining with fine black silk, but not filling in. All the correct colours are given in the painting, and really very little embroidery is required, so much of the design being left uncovered. For the nest, work the branch of the lilac it rests upon as a solid mass, outline the shape of the eggs, fill in the dark piece inside the nest and give a few prominent grass sprays an outline, but leave most of them untouched. Work in the veins of all prominent and large leaves of the lilac, rose, and chrysanthemums, and work in solid, matching the pattern as to colour, the larger stems of roses and lilacs. For the bunch of lilac, work in solid with white silk the few flowers that are painted white on the design, leaving untouched all the lilac-coloured flowers, and outlining here and there some of the background sprays. To embroider the roses, mark out their centres with crimson silk, and loosely satin-stitch over here and there one of the most prominent of their leaves, and outline the dark parts of a turned back leaf, the under sides of any rose turned away, and the most prominent leaves of the buds and half-opened roses. Repeat the same description of marking out prominent objects, *i.e.*, light and dark leaves when embroidering over the chrysanthemums. It is impossible to give quite accurate directions for working every flower, as so much must be left to individual taste; but a few leaves worked as directed will speedily show the embroiderer the best parts to leave untouched, and the parts that require being made prominent by being embroidered. This square is used for a table-cloth or cushion; when made up as a table-cloth it requires a frill of silk or lace matching its ground colour.

Fig. 2 is given as an illustration of the Austrian squares that are enriched with borders, and whose centre design is either that of detached feathers, butterflies of every colour and shape, or birds. The groundwork is white, the border of red or yellow two inches in width. The feathers are those of the peacock, the ostrich, the parrot, the humming-bird, and many other bright-plumaged tropical birds. The natural colours of these feathers are wonderfully depicted, with the exception of that of the ostrich, which is sometimes coloured blue, or red, or grey. To embroider this square, either crewel wools or coloured silks are used. If crewels are used and the colours pretty well covered, the cloth will wash. If silks are employed and much of the design left untouched, the square will bear cleaning but not washing. To colour the peacock feather shown in the illustration, leave the centre of the eye of the feather (which is a deep blue) untouched, but work in chestnut and citron yellow shades the feathers beyond it; leave the white outer rim untouched, but from it work all the filaments that surround this line and form the edges, those filaments that are at the top of the feather work with yellow green shades, those filaments at the base with shades of cinnamon reds. The feather next to the peacocks with a blunt straight edge is shaded from the shaft to the straight edge white, pale yellow, a bright blue and black with white



FIG. 1.