

"The glory of children are their Fathers."
Proverbs XVII. 6.

The Beaumonts in History

A.D. 850 - 1850

by

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"Pur remembrer des ancessours
Li fez è li diz è li mours

.....
Li felonies des felons
È li barnages des barons" (1)

Le Roman de Rou
L.I., Wace, 1100-1184.

(1) To commemorate the deeds, the sayings, and manners of our ancestors and to tell of the evil acts of felons and the feats of arms of the barons.



From a photograph by Lafayette

E. T. BEAUMONT, J.P.

THE BEAUMONTS IN HISTORY.

INTRODUCTORY.

"Speak boldly and speak truly."

WIT WITHOUT MONEY, IV. 4. ISABELLA,
Beaumont and Fletcher.

"This booke contains the names of mortall men
But thear's a booke with characters of golde
Not writ with incke, with pensill or with pen
Wheare Godes elect for euer are inolde
The booke of life, wheare labor thou to bee
Beefore this booke hath once registered thee".

REGISTER OF S. PETER'S,
Cornhill, London, E.C. 1538.

It has been well said that "family history is a subject of surpassing interest, now that men have come to know that genealogy is a branch of science which, if rationally pursued will be productive of important knowledge. It is ceasing to be degraded by being a mere slave to those who possess rank and title." THE ATHENAEUM September 29th, 1888, p. 413.

Grosart writes (Poems, Sir John Beaumont, Fuller's Worthies Library, XVIII) - "It is much to be wished that living Beaumonts would do for their family history what has been done so admirably for the Lindsays by Lord Lindsay, and for the Manchesters by the Duke of Manchester."

In fear and trembling and realizing fully the numerous difficulties ahead, we have taken up this work, craving the indulgence of friends for the errors which are sure to have crept in, for the path of the genealogist is always strewn with thorns and beset by pitfalls.

We undertake these pains however not so much for the present generation, as for the future; many things which were known to our grandsires are now forgotten and our successors will search in vain for details with which we are probably familiar. For the sake then of coming generations, it seems desirable to commit to print such facts as can be obtained from the living, combining therewith much interesting and valuable information discovered amongst ancient records.

Some, no doubt, will not value our efforts, for however much we fight against the thought, we fear there is much

truth in the lines taken from Sherwood's PEDIGREE REGISTER (September 1909, p. 300) which says

"'Tis sad to think, that when our course is run,
 Inherited our work may be by one
 Who, caring not for pedigrees a jot,
 Sells to the local butterman the lot.
 He to wrap butter, candles, cheese doth take
 Each priceless sheet, which p'r'aps took years to make
 Then greasy, stinking, torn, our work at last
 In fire, or dustbin, ruthlessly is cast."

We however believe that information respecting our progenitors interests us to some degree, our knowledge may be of the slightest, depending on our personal remembrance, or it may be, that we possess the fuller information which can only be acquired by patient and diligent research.

During the last seven hundred years there have been two main families of Beaumonts - the Carlton Towers and the Whitley branches; these two parent stems undoubtedly sprang from the same Norman ancestry, whilst numerous and important off-shoots have come from each.

In every great crisis in English history from the days of the Norman Conquest up to the Great War of 1914-1918, the family has always been in the forefront as leaders of men; Irish and Teuton, Welsh and Scotch, French and Spaniard, Turk and Indian, savage and barbarian have in turn been compelled to own its prowess; and on many a battle field its members have freely made the supreme sacrifice for God, King and Country.

Carlyle tells us that (VII. 329) "The Crusades which took their rise in religion appealed to these men, (the Normans) it was the boundless invisible world that was laid bare in their imaginations, and in its burning light the visible shrunk as a scroll". In each of the seven Crusades the Beaumonts are found doing their part, at least one being slain and another died when returning therefrom. Three fell on the fatal Towton Field, the battle which stabilised the Yorkist régime; another at Edgehill, 1642 and others were killed at the Sieges of Paris, 1436, Gloucester and Leeds 1643; one was drowned at sea with Prince William in 1120, Admiral Basil Beaumont was lost on the Goodwin Sands in 1703 in that terrible storm which swept away the Eddystone Lighthouse, whilst another was blown up in The Downs on H.M.S. Carlisle, 1740, all hands being drowned. Many have been captured in battle, imprisoned and their estates sequestered, as the result of the various English Civil Wars.

From the days of Henry I, when the first great charter of English liberties was granted, right down to modern times the Beaumonts have held seats in Parliament, first as Barons, and then as statesmen elected by the constituencies. They have served their country as Bishops, Judges, Ambassadors, Privy Councillors, Admirals and Generals, and also as heads of Colleges and Schools. They have produced men of science, Patrons of art Poets and a Dramatist of no mean order. They have founded, built and endowed, Abbeys, Priors, Churches, Almshouses and Schools, and built bridges and made roads at their own expense. They have been generous with their property and have bequeathed money to feed, clothe and warm the poor.

Through marriage they are descended from and were progenitors of various royal families. The ancient Kings of Naples and Sicily, Castile and Leon, and Jerusalem were their sires. The fleur de lys in their coat of arms bespeaks their descent from the Royal House of France. The lion thereon is derived from John of Brienne, King of Jerusalem. They took wives from and gave their daughters in marriage to the Royal Houses of England and Scotland. Henry IV was a great grandson of Sir Henry de Beaumont, first Baron and Earl of Buchan - see p. 65 - Henry V and VI had therefore Beaumont blood in their veins. Sir Henry was also through his grand daughter Blanche, a progenitor of the present Royal House of Spain and of the ex-King of Portugal; whilst William the Lyon of Scotland married Ermingarda, daughter of Viscount Richard de Beaumont - (see p. 60) - the latter thereby became the mother of a line of Scottish kings, which died out in the fourth generation in the person of "The Maid of Norway."