

Observations on the Le Stranges

With Some Corrections of Prevalent Genealogical
Errors.

BY

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"What Shakespere Signatures Reveal," etc.,

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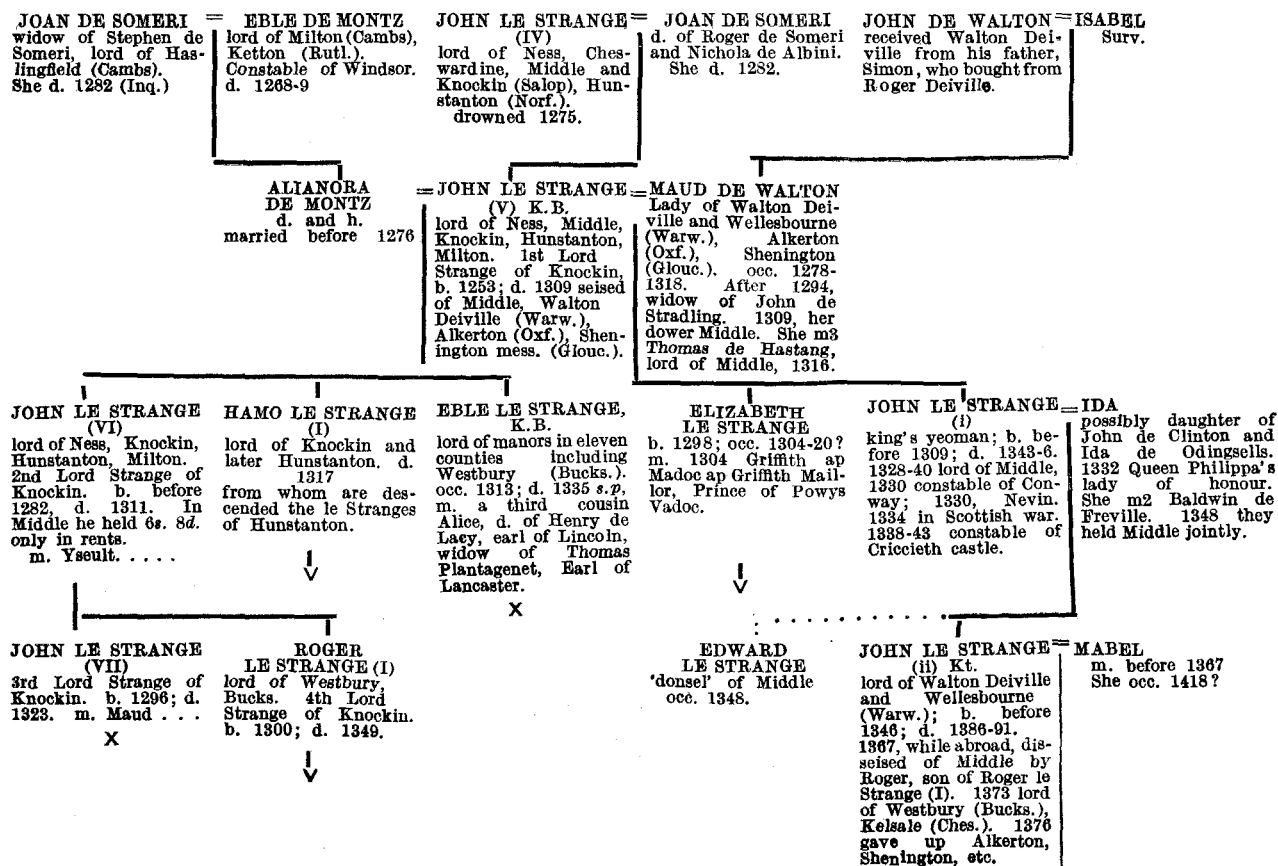
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LE STRANGE OF MIDDLE (SALOP) AND WALTON DEIVILLE (WARW.)



Observations on the Le Stranges

By C. L'ESTRANGE EWEN

The writer spent years collecting data relating to the family of Le Strange and only abandoned the work in 1916 upon the appearance of *Le Strange Records*.¹ Among the documentary evidence thus cast aside were numerous corrections of existing pedigrees and the principal object of the present paper is to draw attention to some of the errors, and, in particular, to the confusion of two Joan Somerys, two half-brothers named John le Strange, two Joan Inghams, and two families of "Le Strange of Walton" (i.e., one of co. Warw. and one of co. Norfolk²), and to show that the former sprang from Le Strange of Knockin, Salop.

In the first place some matters of the early history of more interest than relevance may be glanced at. The ancient armigerous family of Le Strange became established in England soon after the Norman conquest. The existence of families of the name in France in medieval days points to the possibility of the patronymic having originated on the other side of the Channel, and probably in Anjou or Brittany. Passing over a doubtful *Guido cognomine de Lestrange* said to be the 29th bishop of Puy in the year 984,³ the Estraunge or Destraunges entered on the copies of the much discredited Battle Abbey rolls,⁴ and also that Guy said by tradition to be the son of a "Duke of Brittany,"⁵ the first authenticated individual bearing the name is one Bernard le Strange (*Extraneus*) who, according to a

¹The publication of the late Mr. Hamon le Strange of Hunstanton.

²Confused in *Le Strange Records*, 179.

³Jean Chenu, *Arch. et Episc. Gall. Chron. Hist.*, 1621, p. 403.

⁴*Coll. de rebus Britannicis*, ed. Hearne, i, 202. R. Holinshed, *Chron. of England*, 1577, i. 2.

⁵Brit. Mus., Reg. 12, c.xii. The Duke is given ten sons, Roger, Howel, Audoin, Urien, Theobald, Bertram, Amis, Guichard, Gerard and Guy. "Donc repeyrent les dys freres ou lur C chevalers à Bretagne le Menure; mès Gwy, le puysné frere, remist en Engleterre; e conquist par coup d'espée meynes beles terres, e si fust apeleé Gwy le Estraunge, et de ly vindrent tous les grantz seignurs de Engleterre qe out le sournome de Estraunge." This thirteenth-century account of the early genealogy was accepted by Robert Glover, Somerset Herald (who mistranslated *dys* 'two'), and in 1675 published by Dugdale (*Baronage of England*, i, 663). The story was refuted in 1855 by the Rev. R. W. Eyton (*The Antiquities of Shropshire*, ii, 3; iii, 123ff), but is occasionally repeated in modern peerages and other works of reference.

contemporary chronicler, figured at the first crusade (1096-1101).¹

In England the earliest proved progenitor was Siward, ancestor of a family of Le Stranges of Litcham (Norf.).² Knowing that Durand le Strange (*Extraneus*), son of Ralph, son of Siward, had been living about 1160 it is inferable that Siward was contemporary with Bernard, the crusader, and may have flourished in Norfolk at an even earlier date.³ In this country the oldest extant notices of Le Stranges are as witnesses; Rual' to a gift of lands in Kempston (Launditch hundred) by Alan fitz Flaald to the monks of Castleacre Priory (Norf.);⁴ Rivallon (i.e. Rhiwallon) to a gift of the church of Sporle (near Castleacre) by the same Alan to St. Florent Abbey in Anjou⁵; and Rodland to a gift of the church of Kempston by Roger son of Wimer, lord of the honour of Gressenhall and seneschal to William de Warren (II), also to the monks of Castleacre.⁶ The grants are undated, but all probably passed about the same time, the two first mentioned certainly before 1114, after which date nothing more is heard of Alan fitz Flaald. Rual', Rivallon, and Rodland may be one or two individuals.

Gressenhall being situated but five miles from Litcham it is not unlikely that Siward and Roland were kinsmen, certainly for many years their families kept up a friendly association. The descendants of Siward held lands principally in Norfolk under the suzerainty of the Fitz Alans, but never attained to the importance of Roland's posterity, who founded several noble and powerful houses. Roland greatly enhanced his family's fortune by marrying Maud (Matilda), daughter and, in her issue, heiress of Ralph, son of Herluin, the *Domesday Book* tenant of lands in Hunstanton and other places in Norfolk, which came by this marriage to the Le Stranges.⁷ Roland had four sons, namely, John, Guy, Hamo and Ralph.⁸ The first three named went into Shropshire to be enfeoffed in that county by King Henry II. From the eldest son "Johannes cognomento le Strange," lord of Ness and Cheswardine (Salop)

¹Albert d'Aix (Aquensis), *Historia Hierosolymitanae expeditionis*, viii, 40, 42 (Migne, *Pat. Lat.* 166). The writer, himself a crusader, related that Bernard was governor of Longinias in Cilicie (Asia Minor) and in 1101 gave sanctuary there to William, count of Poitou, when pursued by the Mohammedans.

²I have to rely upon a charter noticed by the Rev. Francis Blomefield (*History of Norfolk*, 1805, ix, 456, 458), namely a grant of the hundreds of Launditch and S. Greenhow and lands in Bittering, etc.

³Siward is a common name, but Siward, the grandfather of Durand le Strange, may be Siward who occurs in *Domesday Book* (f. 135b) in Hunstanton (Smethden hundred), and (f. 136b) as holding lands in Bittering (Launditch hundred), both of which places came to the Le Stranges. There is also a Seward witness to the grant of Alan fitz Flaald (Reg. Castleacre, Harl. MS. 2110, f. 20; Facs. in *Le Strange Records*, 6).

⁴Cited above.

⁵Liber Albus, f. 130, per J. H. Round, *Calendar of Documents . . . France*.

⁶Harl. MS. 2110, f. 20. Facs. in *Le Strange Records*, 6.

⁷Cur. Reg. R., 6 Ric. I, m. 3. Harl. MS. 2110, f. 28.

Castleacre and Haghmon cartularies, *Liber rubeus*, etc.

and Hunstanton (Norf.) were descended the three baronial houses of Knockin, Blackmere and Ellesmere, the knights of Warwickshire,¹ the long line of knights and baronets of Hunstanton, and several families of Le Strange in Ireland, India, Africa, and Australia, and doubtless many a minor branch whose origin is unknown. Records of the family may be found in all the counties of England, except perhaps Surrey and the four most northern ones, and they also held much land in Wales and the Marches.

The death of the above John le Strange is noticed under 1178,² his successor being a second John, who died 1233.³ His son and heir, John le Strange (III) having deceased in 1269,⁴ left a son and heir, John the fourth, who was drowned in the Severn in 1275,⁵ to be succeeded by John the fifth,⁶ who died in 1309.⁷ "Johannes Extraneus sextus dominus de Knokyn" only survived his father about eighteen months,⁸ when he was succeeded by the last of the seven successive Johns, who lived until 1323.⁹ Besides the Johns of the main line numerous collaterals bore this popular name, and, in fact, *at one time* in the fourteenth century there were living upwards of *twenty* John le Stranges who have left their names on the rolls, so it is not surprising that genealogists have occasionally tripped up.

The author of *Le Strange Records* has made one individual of John le Strange, king's yeoman (Hoxne), John le Strange, king's yeoman (Middle), and John le Strange, the second baron of Blackmere, with most unfortunate results to his eighth chapter. The following corrections are necessary. p.288 (pedigree); p.305 (training as *valettus regis*); p.306 (illness); p.307 (Conway Castle and vill of Nevin); p.308 (grants re Mudle). Particularly misleading is the statement that "we have seen John le Strange of Blackmere several times designated as the King's valet or yeoman." On p.310 the author throws doubt on the entries on the *Rotuli Scotiae*, 1334 (i. 307a), where the three names occur: *Johannes le Straunge de Knokyn*, *Johannes le Straunge de Whitchurche*, *Johannes le Straunge de Midlee*. The only slip is that the first John should have been Roger, John the brother having died in 1323. Clerks not infrequently summoned a deceased person instead of the living representative. p.311 (Criccieth Castle). *The Complete Peerage* also makes John le Strange (II) of Blackmere, governor of Conway Castle in 1330 (vii, 271) the same error having previously occurred in Dugdale's *Baronage of England* (i, 667). Sir John, then in full seisin of his lands (Cl.R., 1 Edw. III, pt. 1, m.25) had received his first summons to parliament as a baron so he could not have been the valet or yeoman of the name. Du Cange and other authorities are of opinion that the appellation of

¹The proofs of this interesting connection are now published for the first time.

²Pipe Rolls, 22-24 Hen. II. Salopeser'.

³Cl.R., 18 Hen. III, m. 30.

⁴Fin.R., 53 Hen. III, m.10.

⁵*Trans. Shrops. Arch. Soc.* (2 Ser., iii, 68). A useful deed of "Johannes Extraneus quartus" refers to his ancestor Roland Extraneus (H.le S., p. 4).

⁶Inq. p.m. C., 4 Edw. I, 14, 4.

⁷Inq. p.m. C., 3 Edw. II, 16, 6.

⁸Inq. p.m. C., 4 Edw. II, 20, 15.

⁹Inq. p.m. C., 16 Edw. II, 79, 17.

valet was generally given to youths of good family not yet knighted. Dugdale translates *dilectus valettus noster*, 'our beloved esquire.'

Regarding John le Strange (IV), it has been generally and correctly recognised that his wife was Joan, d. and h. of Roger de Someri, and that, as customary, in her widowhood, she might use her maiden name and be known as Lady de Somery, but it has hitherto escaped notice that his son's mother-in-law was also called Lady Joan de Somery. The result is that writers have been regarding the mother and mother-in-law of John (V) as one individual! It adds to the coincidence that both ladies died in their widowhood and in the same year (1282).¹

The following corrections fall to be noted. Blomefield cited, ix. 30. A paragraph should be deleted as it refers to Middleton (now Milton), Cambs., not Middleton, Norf. John de Somery and John, Lord Somery, should read Joan de Somery (*i.e.*, widow of Stephen de Somery). x, 316, 333. Lady Joan (1280) is called wife instead of mother of John le Strange. *Le Strange Records*, 186, 221. For John's mother read Alianora's mother. This one error has led to several others relating to the issue, etc.

John le Strange (V), 1st lord Strange of Knockin, married twice, but no genealogist has given correctly the names of both wives. Both ladies were heiresses, the first, Alianora, daughter of Sir Eble de Montz (Montibus), constable of Windsor Castle, the second, Maud, daughter of John de Walton of Walton Deiville, Warw.

Thomas Blore, the antiquarian of Rutland, in 1811, was the first to mention the De Montibus alliance, but calls the lady, Maud (*History* 228). Blomefield cited (x, 316) and others followed. Later writers, Eyton and Le Strange, made no attempt to discover the parentage of Alianora. Blomefield (ix, 30) makes her daughter of John, Lord Someri. Dods-worth, Bodleian MS, vol. 78, f. 667b ex cartulario Abb. de Barlings (Cott. MS. Faust B 1), Dugdale cited (i. 665), Blomefield (x, 316), Eyton (x, 262), Carthew (part i, 142), Le Strange (186), all make Maud, the second wife, a daughter of Roger Deiville. Dugdale in the *Antiquities of Warwickshire*, 1730, a later work than his *Baronage* (1675) correctly names the lady, but the information has not yet been adopted by the peerages and other genealogical works, which are perpetuating the error (Cokayne, iv, 178; vii, 268, 273).

Evidences supporting the above assertion that Sir John le Strange (V), 1st lord Strange of Knockin, co. Salop, married as first wife, Alianora, d. and h. of Sir Eble de Montz (I) by his wife Joan, widow of Stephen de Somery, and neither Alianore, d. of John de Somery, nor Maud, d. of Sir Eble de Montz.

Milton and Haslingfield, Cambs.

- a 1225 Peter de Beche holds the manor of Middleton (Milton) (C1. R., 9 Hen. III, m.12).
- b 1239 Stephen de Sumery died seven years ago, *sine prole*, his four sisters coheirs and Joan, his wife, surviving (Inq. p.m. C., 31 Hen. III, 5, 3.)
Stephen died seised of the manor of Haslingfield (Orig., 10 Edw. I, ro. 12).
- c 1245 Joan the wife of Godfrey de Crawecunbe (both living) holds Middleton *for life* in dower. (Pat. R., 29 Hen. III, m.7.)

¹Fin. R., 11 Edw. I, m.25; Inq. p.m. C., 11 Edw. I, 29, 6.

- d* temp. Hen. III. Godfrey de Craucumbe held in Haslingfield half a knight's fee of the barony of Stephen de Somery (*Test. Nev.*, 353b, 355b.)
- e* 1252 Eble de Montz was husband of Joan de Somery (*Fin.*, 36 Hen. II, m.16.)
- f* 1256 Joan, the wife of Eble de Montz, was widow of Godfrey de Craucumbe (*Fin.*, 40 Hen. III, m.6.)
- g* 1268-9 Eble de Montz (I) died (*Pat. R.*, 53 Hen. III, m.11.)
- h* 1276 Joan de Somerye acknowledges that she gave to John le Estraunge and Alianora, his wife and her daughter, the manor of Middleton to hold to them and the heirs of the body of Alianora (*Plac. Abb.*, 190b.)
- k* 1282 Joan de Somery¹ dying without issue surviving, the four nephews of Stephen de Somery, her heirs, divide the manor of Haslingfield (*Inq. p.m. C.*, 10 Edw. I, 54, 10.)
- l* 1309 John le Strange (V) at his death held Midilton jointly with Maud, his wife, who survived (*Inq. p.m. C.*, 3 Edw. II, 16, 6.)
- m* 1309 The manor of Middleton is delivered to Maud² (*Cl. R.*, 3 Edw. II, m.19.)
- n* 1322 John le Strange (VII) was kinsman and heir of Eble de Montz. (*Inq. p.m. C.*, 16 Edw. II, 74, 24.)

Giving consideration to these evidences the conclusion is that Stephen de Somery, tenant of Haslingfield, Cambs. (*b*) dying before 1239 without issue (*b*) left Joan (*b*) [probably a lady of the De Beche family since she holds their manor of Milton (*a. c*)] his widow, who retained, as her dower, the manor of Milton (*c*) as also Haslingfield? (*d*). She married, secondly, Godfrey de Craucumbe (*c*), who is associated with both manors (*c. d*) and who left her a widow 1245-52 (*c. e*). She married, thirdly, Sir Eble de Montz (*e. f*), constable of Windsor Castle, and had a daughter, Alianora³ (*h*), who died before 1282 in the lifetime of her mother (*k*). Alianora de Montz, the only child of Lady Joan, received the manor of Milton as a marriage portion on her alliance with Sir John le Strange (V) (*h*). Lady Joan died 1282 (*k*) without heirs of her body surviving and Haslingfield was divided among her first husband's nephews. The manor of Milton remained in the Le Strange family (*l. m*). There is no suggestion that Sir John le Strange (V) married a daughter of John de Somery or Maud, a daughter of Eble de Montz. If Maud, who survived her husband John le Strange, had been of the family of De Montz she and not Stephen de Somery's nephews would have been the heir of Joan de Somery. If the case as stated should not be considered strong enough reference may be made to evidences relating to the manor of Ketton, Rutland (Blore 228). This manor, formerly held by Sir Eble, also came into the Le Strange family, further supporting the theory of a Le Strange—De Montz marriage, as does also the fact that a son of John le Strange (V) was baptised Eble, the first appearance of the name in the family, and moreover

¹Joan de Somery, a widow, retains the surname of her first husband, the general practice.

²Maud's tenure must have been by special arrangement. John le Strange (VI) was of age and heir of the body of Alianora (see below p. 6).

³Alianora may well have been named after Queen Eleanor, she being an executrix of Sir Eble's will.

John le Strange (VII)¹ is called kinsman and heir of Eble de Montz (n), who had died 1268-9 (g).²

Evidences supporting the statement in pedigree that Sir John le Strange (V), 1st lord Strange of Knockin, co. Salop, married as second wife Maud, d. and h. of John de Walton and not Maud, d. of Roger Deville of Walton, co. Warwick, as hitherto recorded.

Walton, etc., Warw.

- p 1277 It appears that Roger de Eyvill being in debt had sold the manor of Wauton, co. Warw., to Simon de Wauton, who granted the same to his son John de Wauton now deceased (Fin., 6 Edw. I, m.28.)
- q 1278 Maud de Wauton is in the wardship of Godfrey Giffard, bishop of Worcester (Hund., f. 85b.)
- r 1284 Maud de Wauton married John de Stretling (Reg. Giff. Bp. of Worc., f. 382a. Dugdale, Warw., 572, 576.)
- s 1285 Matilda, d. and h. of John de Wauton, holds of Thomas, son of Gervase de Wauton, lands in Wauton Deyvyll, Wauton Maudut, Welleburn, Loxley, Bradele and Totebache, and elsewhere in the realm. (Cl. R., 13 Edw. I, m.8d.)
- t 1292- John de Estratlinges of co. Warwick died (Cl. R., 21 Edw. I, 1303 m.10d; 31 Edw. I, m.17.)
- v 1309 John le Strange (V), lord of Knockin, died seised of the manor of Walton Deyville of the inheritance of Maud, his wife (Inq. p.m. C., 3 Edw. II, 16, 6.)
- w 1391 William, son and heir of John le Strange (ii) is "hæres vel assignatus Simonis de Walton." (Reg. Wakefield, Bp. of Worc., f. 80; Dugdale, Warw., 572.)

As stated above, after the death of Alianora de Montz, the manor of Milton remained in the hands of her husband John le Strange (V), who settled it upon himself and second wife Maud,³ an arrangement only to be made with the consent of John VI (son of Alianora), he being the heir by the terms of the grant of Lady Joan de Somery.⁴ The inquisition taken on the death of John le Strange (V) 1309 distinguishes the nature of the tenures. The manors of Walton Deyville, co. Warw., and Shenynghton and Alcrynton, co. Oxf., were held as of the *inheritance* of Maud, his wife (v). The manor of Middleton was held *jointly* with Maud, his wife.

The evidences cited make it patent that Sir Roger Deville⁵ (the wrongly supposed father of Maud), being in debt, sold his lands of Walton, Warw., to Simon de Walton (p), who granted them to his son, and since Maud afterwards *inherited* them, she cannot have been the daughter of Sir Roger. The son of Simon de Walton was John (p), and the latter's daughter and heir, Maud (s), and this is the lady who became second wife of Sir John le Strange (V) (s. v) he being her second husband (r. t). She married thirdly, Sir Thomas de Hastang of co. Warwick.⁶

¹John VII was son of John VI, son of John V, and therefore great-grandson of Sir Eble de Montz.

²A second Eble de Montz died 1317-8, but his kinship, if any, to Eble (I) does not appear.

³Cl. R., 3 Edw. II, m.19.

⁴Plac. Abb., 190b.

⁵The date of his death has not come to hand.

⁶Pat. R., 11 Edw. II, pt. 2, m.25d. Thomas de "Hastynge" and Matilda, his wife.

Having settled the wives of John le Strange (V) we may notice the children of the two marriages and clear up a state of confusion arising from a son by each wife being named John. As recorded above, the eldest son of John (V), by his first wife Alianora de Montz, was John (VI), who died two years after his father. The parentage of his wife Yseult (Isolda) has not been determined, but several genealogists,¹ without citing authority, make her daughter and heir of John de Walton, evidently having confused her with the father's second wife.

John (VI) had two brothers of the full-blood, Hamo, to whom he granted Hunstanton in 1309, and Eble, who married the elderly widow of Thomas Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster (cousin of King Edward II) and had no issue. He also had several sisters whose alliances are as yet somewhat uncertain.

John (V) by his second wife, Maud de Walton, had a daughter Elizabeth, who on 9 July 1304, being then aged six, married Griffith ap Madoc, Prince of Powys Vadoc, whose grandson was the Welsh patriot Owain Glyndwr. No son has been noticed hitherto, but the present analysis proves John le Strange, king's yeoman, lord of Middle, to have been a distinct entity and son of Maud de Walton, and so half-brother to John le Strange (VI) 2nd lord Strange of Knockin, with whom he has been much confused. Evidences relating to the manor of Middle, Salop, clarify the two identities.

Middle manor, Salop.

- 1275 John le Strange (IV) of Knokin died seised (Inq. p.m. C., 4 Edw. I., 14, 4.)
- 1299 John le Strange (V) of Knukyn, by fine granted the manors of Mudle and Ritton to Ralph de Sherleye, who, by a second fine, entailed the manor of Mudle on the said John and Maud, his wife, and *the heirs of their bodies*, with remainder to the right heirs of the said John. (Cl.R., 3 Edw. II, m.19; Eyton, x. 67.)
- 1309 John le Strange (V) died seised (Inq. p.m., above p. 5)
- 1309 Mudle was assigned to Maud, the widow, in dower (Cl.R., 3 Edw. II, mm.17, 19.)
- 1311 John le Strange (VI) died holding an annual rent of 6s. 8d. only in Mudle (Inq. p.m. C., 4 Edw. II, 20, 15.)
- 1316 Thomas de Hastanges, who had married Maud le Strange before 1310 (Cl.R., 3 Edw. II, m.8.) is lord of Mudele (*Feud. Aids.*, iv, 230.)
- 1328-9 By successive royal grants John le Strange, king's yeoman, had free warren and view of frankpledge in *his* manor of Modle (*Chart. R.*, 2 Edw. III, m.5; 3 Edw. III, m.6.)
- 1348 Baldwin de Freville and Ida, his wife, held Muddle (*Feud. Aids.*, iv. 235.)

The king's yeoman holding Middle in 1328 it is manifest that he was not of the main line of the barons of Knockin, the seventh and last successive John having been succeeded by his brother Roger in 1323. Further the *Rotuli Scotiae* 1334^a distinguishes him

¹Nichols, *Collectanea, Topographica et Genealogica*, v. 106; T. C. Banks, *Baronia Anglicana Concentrata*, i, 420; Carthew, part i, 142,

^ai, 307a.

from both the Knockin and Whitchurch (Blackmere) barons. In fact the fines of 1299 are evidence that the king's yeoman can have been no other than "heir of the body" of Maud de Walton, for if he had not been so, Middle would have passed to Elizabeth (living 1320) and her Welsh husband. That John of Middle in 1336 was on friendly terms with his kinsmen appears from his witnessing a grant done at Knockin Castle,¹ but in 1373 litigation resulted inequitably in Middle returning to the elder branch where it remained, notwithstanding an attempt in the following century to recover seisin.

Roger le Strange (I) had two wives, the first being Maud (possibly daughter of Ralph Basset of Blore) and the second Joan, daughter and heir of Sir Oliver de Ingham, lord Ingham. Eyton (x, 263) makes Joan de Ingham the first wife, but that is clearly a mistake, since she survived and married Sir Miles de Stapleton, K.G. The inscription in Ingham Church (Norf.) reads:

Priez pour les almes Monsieur Miles de Stapleton et Dame Johane sa femme, fille de Monsieur Oliver de Ingham . . . fondeurs de ceste maison, q'e Dieu de leur almes eit petie (Cotman, *Norfolk Sepulchral Brasses*.)

Joan de Ingham was born *circa* 1319 (Inq. p.m. C., 18 Edw. III, 74, 8) and therefore could not have been the first wife since Sir Roger's eldest son was born about 1327. Eyton (x, 263) mentions Maud . . . as the second wife of Sir Roger living in 1349, and he has probably confused two ladies of the same name since Sir Roger le Strange, lord of Ellesmere, had also a wife Maud who survived and was certainly living in 1332 and is mentioned in 1345 and 1359 (Pat. R. 19 Edw. III, pt. 1, m. 23; 33 Edw. III, pt. 2, m. 23). Lady Joan was assigned dower in 1349.

It is hoped that these short notes will be appreciated by the future genealogist of the families of Le Strange, and to other pedigree-makers provide a warning of the errors arising from duplication of the names of persons and places and a convincing illustration of the value of tracing the devolution of each property.

¹*Hist. MS. Comm.*, 11th Rept. pt. vii, 142.