COMPLETE PEERAGE CORRECTION: HENRY, EARL OF LANCASTER'S MARRIAGE TO ALIX DE JOINVILLE[1]

by Douglas Richardson[2]

ABSTRACT

This article adds to our series of updates and corrections to *The Complete Peerage.* Douglas Richardson provides evidence that Alix de Joinville was married to John of Lancaster, seigneur of Beaufort, rather than to John's elder brother, Henry, Earl of Lancaster, as claimed by the *Complete Peerage.*

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The *Complete Peerage (CP)* (Cokayne, 1929) gives an excellent account of the life of Henry of Lancaster, Kt, Earl of Lancaster and Leicester (died 1345), a grandson of King Henry III of England. Earl Henry was an important man in his time period. Describing his character, the *Dictionary of National Biography* says of Henry that he was "*courteous and kind-hearted, of sound judgement, religious, and apparently of high principle*" (Lee, 1908). He is chiefly noted as the person who arrested his cousin, King Edward II, in 1326, which arrest eventually led to King Edward II's untimely death the following year, though not at Earl Henry's hands.

CP provides two marriages for Henry of Lancaster, one to Maud de Chaworth, the other to Alix de Joinville. It is the second marriage which interests us here. Regarding this marriage, *CP* states the following:

He married, 2ndly, as her 2nd husband, Alix, who in 1307 was widow of Jean, Sieur d'Arcies sub Aube et de Chacenay, and da[ughter] of John de Joinville, Seneschal of Champagne, historian of St. Louis, by his 2nd wife, Alix de Risnel, da[ughter] and h[eiress] of Gautier, Seigneur de Risnel.

CP cites two sources for this marriage, one of them being Anselme (1726-33) which is available online on the helpful gallica website (http://gallica.bnf.fr/). Pere Anselme, as cited by *CP*, states the following regarding the marriage of Alix de Joinville and Henry of Lancaster.

Alix de Joinville, mariée (1) par traité pallé à Joinville le jour de l'Invention de Sainte Croix 1300. à Jean seigneur d'Arcies sur Aube et de Chacenay; (2) avant 1316 à Henry d'Angleterre comte de Lancastre, seigneur de Montmouth, de Beaufort et de Nogent. Le dimanche aprés la S. Martin d'hyver 1316, se qualifiant dame de Beaufort, elle promit faire hommage de sa terre de Chacenay à l'évêque de Langres, si c'étoit la coutume de Champagne[3].

As we can see, Pere Anselme makes no qualification regarding Alix de Joinville's marriage to Henry of Lancaster, which he places as having taken place before 1316.

In truth, Alix de Joinville actually married, before July 1312, Henry of Lancaster's younger brother, John of Lancaster, seigneur of Beaufort (present day Montmorency,

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3 Cartulaire de Langres, p.189.

Aube, *arrond. d'*Arcis-sur-Aube, *canton de* Chavanges) and Nogent-l'Artaud (Aisne, *arrond. de* Château-Thierry, *canton de* Charly). Little is known of his life. John of Lancaster was born before May 1286. He was living in July 1312, and reportedly died in France in 1317 (Fowler, 1969). He evidently had no issue. For information on his seal and coat of arms, see Humphrey-Smith & Heenan (1962).

The evidence that John of Lancaster's wife was Alix de Joinville is found in Delaborde (1894). This work can be found on line on the gallica website cited above. On page 409, the following document is presented:

No. 733 Date: July 1312

Jean de Lancastre, seigneur de Beaufort, et sa femme Alix de Joinville font à l'abbaye de la Chapelle-aux-Planches une fondation de quatre messes par semaine [4].

The Joinville book presents several other documents relating to Alix de Joinville which shows that she was living as late as 31 March 1336. In the documents which date after 1312, Alix is styled simply as *dame de Beaufort*, never as Countess of Lancaster.

As for John of Lancaster's land holdings, following his death, the castles of Beaufort and Nogent l'Artaud fell by inheritance to his brother, Henry of Lancaster, who in 1329 granted 100 marks annually to his treasurer, Geoffrey de Riclesmade, from the goods he possessed at Beaufort, Soulaines, Bargencourt, and Nogent-l'Artaud (Viard, 1899). In 1365, John of Gaunt (husband of Earl Henry's granddaughter and heiress, Blanche of Lancaster) leased Beaufort and Nogent to John Wyn for ten years at a yearly rent of £100 sterling.

Further details of John of Lancaster and his wife, Alix de Joinville, will be found in my forthcoming book, *Plantagenet Ancestry*, which I anticipate will be available for shipping sometime in April 2004. Please contact me at my e-mail address if interested in obtaining a copy of the book.

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[4] Arch. de la Haute-Marne, La Chapelle-aux-Planches, folio 27 r.