

VESCI - BARONS VESCI

LINEAGE

- AMONGST THE MOST VALIANT OF THE NORMAN NOBILITY IN THE TRAIN OF THE CONQUEROR WERE
- ROBERT DE VESCI, WHO POSSESSED AT THE GENERAL SURVEY THE LORDSHIP OF BADEBROCK, IN NORTHAMPTONSHIRE, WITH DIVERS OTHER ESTATES IN THE COS. WARWICK, LINCOLN, AND LEICESTER; AND
- YVO DE VESCI, ON WHOM KING WILLIAM BESTOWED IN MARRIAGE, AIDA, ONLY DAUGHTER AND HEIRESS OF WILLIAM TYSON, LORD OF ALNWICK, IN NORTHUMBERLAND, AND MALTON, IN YORKSHIRE (WHICH WILLIAM'S FATHER, GILBERT TYSON, FELL AT HASTINGS, FIGHTING UNDER THE ANGO-SAXON BANNER). BY THIS GREAT HEIRESS YVO HAD AN ONLY DAUGHTER AND HEIR,
- BEATRICE DE VESCI, WHO MARRIED ^{*}EUSTACE FITZ JOHN, LORD OF KNARESBOROUGH, IN YORKSHIRE, AND HAD TWO SONS, WILLIAM AND GEOFFREY. THE ELDER SON OF BEATRICE, HAVING INHERITED THE GREAT POSSESSIONS OF HIS MOTHER'S FAMILY, ASSUMED ITS SURNAME, AND BECAME
- WILLIAM DE VESCI. THIS FEUDAL LORD WAS SHERIFF OF NORTHUMBERLAND, FROM THE 3RD TO THE 15TH HENRY II, INCLUSIVE, AND HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY SHERIFF OF LANCAASHIRE. IN THE 12TH OF THE SAME REIGN, UPON LEVYING THE AID FOR MARRYING THE KING'S DAUGHTER, HE CERTIFIED HIS KNIGHT'S FEES, DE VETERI FEOFFAMENTO, TO BE IN NUMBER 20, FOR WHICH HE PAID £17, 13s., AND FOR HIS KNIGHTS FEES, DE NOVO FEOFFAMENTO, £1, 8s, 6d.. IN 1174, HE JOINED RANULPH DE GLANVIL, BARNARD BALIOL, AND ROBERT DE STUTEVIL, IN REPELLING AN INVASION OF THE SCOTS, AND FOUGHT AND WON THE GREAT BATTLE OF ALNWICK, WHEREIN THE KING OF SCOTLAND HIMSELF WAS MADE PRISONER, AFTER HIS WHOLE ARMY HAD BEEN ROUTED. THIS WILLIAM DE VESCI MARRIED BURGA, SISTER OF ROBERT DE ESTOTEVILLE (OR STUTEVILLE), LORD OF KNARESBOROUGH, BY WHOM HE ACQUIRED THE TOWN OF LANGTON, AND HAD 2 SONS. HE WAS SUCCEEDED AT HIS DECEASE IN 1184, BY THE ELDER
- EUSTACE DE VESCI, WHO ATTAINING MAJORITY IN THE 2ND RICHARD I, GAVE 2,300 MARKS FOR LIVERY OF HIS LANDS, WITH LIBERTY TO MARRY WHOM HE PLEASSED. IN THE 14TH KING JOHN, WHEN THE FIRST COMMOTION AROSE AMONGST THE BARONS, THE KING HASTENING TO LONDON, SUMMONED ALL THE SUSPECTED LORDS THITHER, AND FORCED EACH TO GIVE HOSTAGES FOR HIS PEACEABLE BEHAVIOUR, BUT THIS EUSTACE, ONE OF THE MOST SUSPECTED, REFUSED TO ATTEND THE SUMMONS, AND FLED INTO SCOTLAND, WHEN ALL HIS POSSESSIONS IN ENGLAND WERE SEIZED UPON BY THE CROWN, AND A SPECIAL COMMAND ISSUED TO DEMOLISH HIS CASTLE AT ALNWICK. BUT A RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE KING AND HIS TURBULENT NOBLES SOON AFTERWARDS TAKING PLACE THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF THE LEGATE RANDULPH, EUSTACE HAD RESTITUTION OF HIS ESTATES. BUT THIS WAS A DECEITFUL CALM - THE WINDS WERE ONLY STILLED TO RAGE WITH GREATER VIOLENCE - THE BARONIAL CONFLICTS WERE LONG GURST FORTH MORE FURIOUSLY, AND WAS ONLY ALLAYED BY THOSE CONCESSIONS ON THE PART OF THE CROWN, WHICH HAVE IMMORTALIZED THE PLAINS OF RUKNYMEDE. THE CAUSE OF THIS CELEBRATED QUARREL, IN WHICH, THE WAY THE PEOPLE HAD LITTLE OR NO IMMEDIATE INTEREST, WAS DOUBTLESS OF LONG STANDING, AND WAS BASED ON THE ENCROACHMENT OF THE SOVEREIGN

ON THE PRIVILEGES OF THE NOBILITY, BUT THE SPARK THAT IGNITED THE FLAME WAS PERSONAL INJURY; AN AFFRONT INFLICTED BY KING JOHN ON THIS EUSTACE DE VESCI. "HEARING" WRITES SIR WILLIAM DUGDALE, "THAT EUSTACE DE VESCI HAD A VERY BEAUTIFUL WIFE, BUT FAR DISTANT FROM COURT, AND STUDYING HOW TO ACCOMPLISH HIS LICENTIOUS DESIRES TOWARD HER, SITTING AT TABLE WITH HER HUSBAND, AND SEEING A RING OF HIS FINGER HE LAID HOLD ON IT, AND TOLD HIM THAT HE HAD SUCH ANOTHER STONE, WHICH HE RESOLVED TO SET IN GOLD, IN THAT VERY FORM. AND HAVING GOT THE RING, PRESENTLY SENT IT TO HER, IN HER HUSBAND'S NAME; BY THAT TOKEN CONJURING HER, IF EVER SHE EXPECTED TO SEE HIM ALIVE, TO COME SPEEDILY TO HIM. SHE, THEREFORE, UPON SIGHT OF THE RING, GAVE CREDIT TO THE MESSENGER, AND CAME WITH ALL EXPEDITION. BUT SO IT HAPPENED THAT HER HUSBAND CASUALLY RIDING OUT, MET HER ON THE ROAD, AND MARVELLING MUCH TO SEE HER THERE, ASKED WHAT THE MATTER WAS. AND WHEN HE UNDERSTOOD HOW THEY WERE BOTH DECEIVED, RESOLVED TO FIND A COMMON WOMAN, AND PUT HER IN APPAREL TO PERSONATE HIS LADY." THE KING AFTERWARDS BOASTING OF THE FAVOURS HE HAD RECEIVED TO THE INJURED HUSBAND HIMSELF. EUSTACE HAD THE PLEASURE OF UNDECEIVING HIM, "WHEREAT THE KING GREW SO ENRAGED, THAT HE THREATENED TO KILL HIM, EUSTACE THEREFORE, APPREHENDING DANGER, HASTENED INTO THE NORTH, AND IN HIS PASSAGE, WASTED SOME OF THE KING'S HOUSES; DIVERS OF THE NOBLES WHOSE WIVES THE KING HAD VITIATED, ACCOMPANYING HIM. AND BEING GROWN STRONG BY THE CONFLUENCE OF THEIR FRIENDS, AND OTHERS, SEIZED HIS CASTLES, THE LONDONERS ADHERING TO THEM." WHEN JOHN WAS, SUBSEQUENTLY, BROUGHT TO SUBMISSION. EUSTACE DE VESCI WAS ONE OF THE 25 BARONS APPOINTED TO ENFORCE THE OBSERVANCE OF MAGNA CHARTA, BUT HE WAS SLAIN SOON AFTER, ABOUT 1216, BY AN ARROW FROM THE RAMPARTS OF BARNARD CASTLE (BELONGING TO HUGH DE BALIOL), WHICH HE HAD COMMENCED BESIEGING, OR WAS ABOUT TO ATTACK. HE HAD MARRIED MARGARET, NATURAL DAUGHTER OF WILLIAM, KING OF SCOTLAND, AND WAS SUCCEEDED BY HIS SON,

- WILLIAM DE VESCI, WHO, BEING IN MINORITY, WAS PLACED UNDER THE GUARDIANSHIP OF WILLIAM DE LONGESPEE, EARL OF SAUSBURY

*EUSTACE FITZ-JOHN, NEPHEW AND HEIR OF SERIO DE BURGH (OF THE GREAT FAMILY OF BURGH), THE FOUNDER OF KNARESBOROUGH CASTLE IN YORKSHIRE, AND SON OF JOHN, CALLED MONOCULUS, FROM HAVING BUT ONE EYE, IS SAID BY A HISTORIAN OF THE PERIOD IN WHICH HE LIVED, TO HAVE BEEN "ONE OF THE CHIEFEST PEERS OF ENGLAND" AND OF INTIMATE FAMILIARITY WITH KING HENRY I, AS ALSO A PERSON OF GREAT WISDOM AND SINGULAR JUDGMENT IN COUNCILS. HE HAD IMMENSE GRANTS FROM THE CROWN, AND WAS CONSTITUTED GOVERNOR OF THE CASTLE OF BAMBURGH IN NORTHUMBORLAND, TEMP. HENRY I, OF WHICH GOVERNORSHIP, HOWEVER, HE WAS DEPRIVED BY KING STEPHEN; BUT HE SUBSEQUENTLY ENJOYED THE FAVOR OF THAT MONARCH. HE FELL THE ENSUING REIGN, IN 1157, IN AN ENGAGEMENT WITH THE WELSH, "A GREAT AND AGED MAN, AND OF THE CHIEFEST ENGLISH PEERS, MOST EMINENT FOR HIS WEALTH AND WISDOM. HIS 1ST WIFE WAS THE HEIRESS OF VESCI."