

# Walter Hungerford, 1st Baron Hungerford

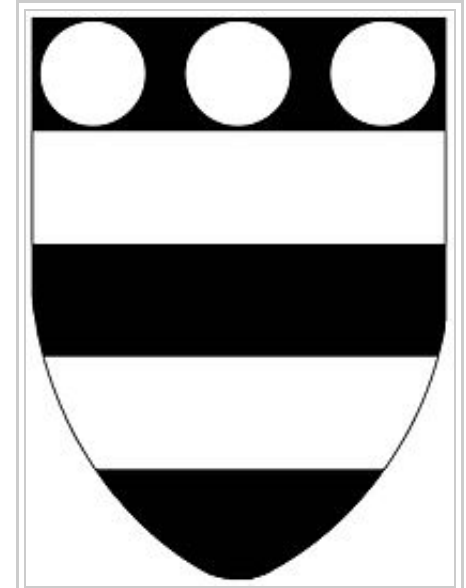
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**Walter Hungerford, 1st Baron Hungerford** KG (1378–1449) was an English knight, landowner, from 1400 to 1414 Member of the House of Commons, of which he became Speaker, then was an Admiral and peer.

He won renown in the Hundred Years War, fighting in many engagements, including the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. He was an English envoy at the Council of Constance in 1415. In 1417 he was made admiral of the fleet. On the death of Henry V he was an executor of Henry's will and a member of Protector Gloucester's council. He attended the conference at Arras in 1435, and was a Member of the House of Lords sitting as Baron Hungerford from January 1436 until his death in 1449. For some years he was Treasurer of England.

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Arms of Hungerford: *Sable, 2 bars argent in chief 3 plates*

## Early life

Son and heir of Sir Thomas Hungerford, by his second wife, Joan, was strongly attached to the Lancastrian cause at the close of Richard II's reign, his father having been steward in John of Gaunt's household. On Henry IV's accession he was granted an annuity of £40 out of the lands of Margaret, duchess of Norfolk, and was knighted.<sup>[1]</sup>

## Public life

In October 1400 he was returned to parliament as knight of the shire (MP) for Wiltshire, and was re-elected for that constituency in 1404, 1407, 1413, and January 1413–14, and represented the county of Somerset in 1409. He acted as speaker in the parliament meeting on 29 January 1413–14, the last parliament in which he sat in the House of Commons.<sup>[2]</sup>

He was appointed Sheriff of Wiltshire for 1405 and Sheriff of Dorset and Somerset for 1414 (during which time he pronounced his own selection as MP for Wiltshire).<sup>[3]</sup>

Hungerford also won renown as a warrior. In 1401 he was with the English army in France, and is said to have worsted the French king in a duel outside Calais. He distinguished himself in battle and tournament, and received substantial reward. In consideration of his services he was granted in 1403 one hundred marks per annum, payable by the town and castle of Marlborough, Wiltshire, and was appointed sheriff of Wiltshire. On 22 July 1414 he was nominated ambassador to treat for a league with Sigismund, king of the Romans,<sup>[4]</sup> and as English envoy attended the council of Constance in that and the following year.<sup>[5]</sup>

In the autumn of 1415 Hungerford accompanied Henry V to France with twenty men-at-arms and sixty horse archers.<sup>[6]</sup> He, rather than the Earl of Westmoreland, as in Shakespeare's 'Henry V,' seems to have been the officer who expressed, on the eve of Agincourt, regret that the English had not ten thousand archers, and drew from the king a famous rebuke.<sup>[7]</sup> He fought bravely at the battle of Agincourt, but the assertion that he took Charles, Duke of Orléans prisoner is not substantiated. He was employed in May 1416 in diplomatic negotiations with ambassadors of Theodoric, archbishop of Cologne<sup>[8]</sup> and in November 1417 with envoys from France.<sup>[9]</sup>

In 1417 he was made admiral of the fleet under John, Duke of Bedford, and was with Henry V in 1418 at the siege of Rouen. In November of the latter year he is designated the steward of the king's household,<sup>[10]</sup> and was granted the barony of Hornet in Normandy. He took part in the peace negotiations of 1419, and on 3 May 1421 was installed knight of the Garter.<sup>[11]</sup>

Hungerford was an executor of Henry V's will, and in 1422 became a member of Protector Gloucester's council. In 1424 he was made steward of the household of the infant king, Henry VI, and on 7 January 1425-6 was summoned to the House of Lords as Baron Hungerford. The summons was continued to him till his death. Hungerford became Treasurer of England in succession to Bishop Stafford, when Bishop Beaufort's resignation of the great seal in March 1426-7 placed Gloucester in supreme power. He acted as carver at Henry VI's coronation in Paris in December 1430,<sup>[12]</sup> but on the change of ministry which followed Henry VI's return from France in February 1431-2, he ceased to be treasurer. He attended the conference at Arras in 1435.<sup>[13]</sup> He died on 9 August 1449, and was buried beside his first wife in Salisbury Cathedral, within the iron chapel erected by himself, which is still extant, although removed from its original position.<sup>[14]</sup>

## Family

Hungerford married firstly Catherine (daughter of Sir Thomas Peverell of Parke and Hamatethy, Cornwall,<sup>[3]</sup> and Margaret Courtenay (1355–1422<sup>[citation needed]</sup>) daughter of Sir Thomas Courtenay (died 1356<sup>[citation needed]</sup>) of Woodhuish, Devon<sup>[3]</sup>) with whom he had three sons and at least one daughter:

- Walter, who was made a prisoner of war in France in 1425, was ransomed by his father for three thousand marks, was in the retinue of the Duke of Bedford in France in 1435, and died without issue.<sup>[15]</sup>
- Robert, by whom he was succeeded.
- Edmund, who was knighted by Henry VI after the Battle of Verneuil on Whit-Sunday 1426,<sup>[16]</sup> and married Margaret, daughter and coheir of Edward Burnell, by whom had two sons:
  - Thomas, ancestor of the Hungerfords of Down Ampney, Gloucestershire, of the Hungerfords of Windrush, Oxfordshire, and the Hungerfords of Black Bourton, Oxfordshire.
  - Edward, ancestor of the Hungerfords of Cadenham, Wiltshire.<sup>[17]</sup>
- Elizabeth, who married Sir Philip Courtenay (1404–1463) of Powderham, grandson of Sir Philip Courtenay (1340–1406) of Powderham.<sup>[citation needed]</sup>

He married secondly Eleanor (died 1 August 1455), daughter of Sir John Berkeley of Beverstone and his second wife, Elizabeth Betteshorne,(and widow successively of John FitzAlan, 13th Earl of Arundel (died 21 April 1421), and Sir Richard Poynings (died 10 June 1429)), with whom he had no children.<sup>[18][19]</sup>

## Benefactions

By his marriages and royal grants Hungerford added largely to the family estates. He was a man of piety, and built chantries at Heytesbury and Chippenham, and made bequests to Salisbury and Bath cathedrals. In 1428 he presented valuable estates to the Free Royal Chapel in the palace of St. Stephen at Westminster. He also built an almshouse for twelve poor men and a woman, and a schoolmaster's residence at Heytesbury. The original building was destroyed in 1765, but the endowment, which was regulated by statutes drawn up by Margaret de Botreaux, wife of Hungerford's son Robert, still continues.<sup>[20]</sup> In his will he left his "best legend of the lives of the saints" to his daughter-in-law, Margaret, and a cup which John of Gaunt had used to John, viscount Beaumont.<sup>[21]</sup>

In 1407 Hungerford donated the advowson of the church in Rushall, Wiltshire (of which he was lord of the manor) to the canons of Longleat Priory, who were struggling to support themselves financially.<sup>[22]</sup>

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258.
- <sup>2</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Manning, *Lives of the Speakers*, p. 55.
- <sup>3</sup> ^ *a b c* Roskell & Kightly 1993.
- <sup>4</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Rymer, *Fædera*, vol. iv. pt. ii. p. 186
- <sup>5</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: cf. his accounts of expenses in *Brit. Mus. Addit. MS.* 24513, f. 68.
- <sup>6</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Nicolas, *Agincourt*, p. 381
- <sup>7</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Nicolas, *Agincourt* pp. 105, 241.
- <sup>8</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Rymer, *Fædera*, vol. iv. pt. ii. p. 158.
- <sup>9</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Rymee, *Fædera*, vol. iv. pt. ii. p. 25.
- <sup>10</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Rymer, *Fædera*, vol. iv. pt. iii. p. 76.
- <sup>11</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Beltz, *Hist. of Garter*, p. clviii.
- <sup>12</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: Waurin, *Chron.*, Rolls Ser.,iv. 11
- <sup>13</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 258 cites: *Wars of Henry VI in France*, Rolls Ser., ed. Stevenson, ii. 431.
- <sup>14</sup> ^ Lee 1891, pp. 258–259.
- <sup>15</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 259
- <sup>16</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 259 cites: Metcalfe, *Book of Knights*, p.1
- <sup>17</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 259.
- <sup>18</sup> ^ Richardson II 2011, p. 428.
- <sup>19</sup> ^ Richardson III 2011, pp. 394-5.
- <sup>20</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 259 cites: Jackson, *Anc. Statutes of Heytesbury Almshouses*, Devizes, 1863.
- <sup>21</sup> ^ Lee 1891, p. 259 cites Nicholas Harris Nicolas's *Testamenta Vetusta*, pp. 257–9
- <sup>22</sup> ^ Pugh & Crittall 1956, p. 302–303.


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pp. 302–303. Retrieved June 2013.

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  - Collinson's Somerset, iii. 354;
  - Hoare's Hungerfordiana, 1823;
  - Maclean's Trigg Minor, i. 358 sq.;
  - Hoare's Mod. Wiltshire, Heytesbury Hundred;
  - Kymer's Fcedera;
  - Stubbs's Const. Hist.;
  - Nicolas's Battle of Agincourt, 1832;
  - Monstrelet's Chroniques, ed. Doiiet d'Arcq (Soc. de l'Hist. de France), 1862, ii. 404, iv. 93, vi. 314;
  - Manning's Lives of the Speakers.

## Further reading

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- Burke, Bernard (1866). *A genealogical history of the dormant, abeyant, forfeited, and extinct peerages of the British empire*, Harrison p. 291 (<http://books.google.co.nz/books?id=1ysWkXKSrpIC&lpg=PA291&ots=K7nMQxJjaL&pg=PA291#v=onepage&f=false>)

| Political offices                      |   |  |
|--|---|--|
| Preceded by<br><b>William Stourton</b> | <b>Speaker of the House of Commons</b><br>1414–1415 | Succeeded by<br><b>Thomas Chaucer</b>            |
| Preceded by<br><b>John Stafford</b>    | <b>Lord High Treasurer</b><br>1426–1432             | Succeeded by<br><b>The Lord Scrope of Masham</b> |

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