

When the usurper Bolingbroke beheaded the unfortunate Earl at Bristol, and, like Jehu, sent his head with those of Sir John Bushy and Sir Henry Greene to London, to strike terror into the citizens, whereby he paved his way to the throne, he seized the Earl's estate. (11) Now it must be recollected that in those days a title without estates was an absurdity; a peerage *meant* estates as well as a title; though the patent of nobility was of course by no means necessarily connected with estates. An Earldom without estates to support it would have been a burden too grievous to be borne, insomuch that in the reign of Edward IV. there was an act to relieve a poor duke of his burdensome dignity. The "reliefs" and other feudal burdens of earls in that age were extremely heavy. What wonder is it then if the rightful Earls of Wiltes did not care to claim the dignity? We all know that even in the present day, when a title is far from necessarily involving landed property, there are peers and baronets who do not care to "assume the title." The second Lord Tenterden was generally known as Mr. Abbott, and we have heard that the present Lord Fairfax, who is a medical man in Maryland, "drops" his title. It is perfectly intelligible that the Scropes in the fifteenth century should have done the same. Again, all the proceedings in the last Parliament of Richard II., at which the Earldom of Wiltes had been created, were annulled by Henry IV., and it was natural to *suppose* that the grants of peerages made by Richard in that Parliament were annulled. The original copy of the grant had, no doubt, been destroyed by the Earl's enemies at the time of his execution, and it was only discovered in recent times. Hence considerable ignorance as to their rights on the part of the Scropes in the generations succeeding the first Earl is easily accounted for, as well as an unwillingness to assert their claims, even supposing they knew them, as long as the Lancastrian dynasty was in power. (12) The lineal heirs-male of the first Lord Scrope of Bolton terminated in 1625 with the death, without legitimate