of political opponents; but his connexion in 1699 with the notorious Captain William Kidd, to the cost of whose expedition Somers had given £1000, afforded an opportunity; the vote of censure, however, proposed upon him in the House of Commons for giving Kidd a commission under the great seal was rejected by 199 to 131. The attack was renewed shortly on the ground of his having accepted grants of Crown property to the amount of £1600 a year, but was again defeated. On the subject of the Irish forfeitures a third attack was made in 1700, a motion being brought forward to request the king to remove Somers from his counsels and presence for ever; but this again was rejected by a large majority. In consequence, however, of the incessant agitation William now requested Somers to resign; this he refused to do, but gave up the seals to William’s mes­senger. In 1701 he was impeached by the Commons on account of the part he had taken in the negotiations relating to the Partition Treaty in 1698, and defended himself most ably before the house, answering the charges seriatim. The im­peachment was voted and sent up to the Lords, but was there dismissed. On the death of the king Somers retired almost entirely into private life. He was president of the Royal Society from 1699 to 1704. He was, however, active in 1702 in opposing the Occasional Conformity Bill, and in 1706 was one of the managers of the union with Scotland. In the same year he carried a bill regulating and improving the proceedings of the law courts. He was made president of the council in 1708 upon the return of the Whigs to power, and retained the office until their downfall in 1710. He died on the 26th of April 1716. Somers was never married, but left two sisters, of whom the eldest, Mary, married Charles Cocks, whose grandson, Sir Charles Cocks, bart., became the second Lord Somers in 1784, the title subsequently descending in this line.

For a contemporary character of Somers Addison’s paper in the *Freeholder* for the 14th of May 1716 should be referred to; and there is in Macaulay’s *History* (iv. 53) an eloquent and worthy tribute to his stainless character and comprehensive learning. A catalogue of his publications will be found in Walpole’s *Royal and Noble Authors.* (O. A.)

**SOMERSET, EARLS AND DUKES OF.** In the 11th century Somerset and Dorset were under the jurisdiction of one sheriff, and for a considerable period titles derived from each of these shires were borne by the same person. (See Dorset, Earls, MARqUESSES AND DUKES OF.)

The earldom of Somerset in the Beaufort family dated from 1397, in which year it was granted by Richard II. to John Beaufort (c. 1373-1410), the eldest of the three illegitimate, but afterwards legitimated, sons of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, by Catherine, wife of Sir Hugh Swynford, and daughter of Sir Payne Roelt. He was followed in the earldom successively by his three sons: Henry, who died unmarried in 1418; John (1404- 1444), who in 1443 was created earl of Kendal and duke of Somerset, both of which titles became extinct at his death; and Edmund, who was created earl of Dorset in 1441, marquess of Dorset in 1443; and duke of Somerset in 1448. (See Somerset, Edmund Beaufort, Duke of.) On the execution of Edmund’s son Henτy, 5th earl and 2nd duke of Somerset, by the Yorkists in 1464, his titles were forfeited by act of parliament; but his brother Edmund was from that date styled duke of Somerset by the Lancastrian party till his death in May 1471, when the house of Beaufort became extinct. (See Beaufort.) In 1499 Henry VII. nominated his infant son Edmund to the dukedom of Somerset at his baptism, but the child, who died within a few months, was probably never formally created a peer; the title, conjoined with the dukedom of Richmond, was, however, borne by Henry Fitzroy, illegitimate son of Henry VIII., from 1525 till his death without heirs in 1536.

Edward Seymour, duke of Somerset *(q.v.),* known as the Protector, was the first of the line of dukes to which the holder of the title at the present day belongs, having been created Viscount Beauchamp of Hache, Co. Somerset, in 1536; earl of Hertford in 1537; and in 1547 Baron Seymour and duke of Somerset. His honours, which were entailed on the issue of his second in priority to that of his first marriage, being forfeited by attainder in 1552, Robert Carr became earl of Somerset *(q.v.)* in 1613, but died without male issue in 1645, when his title became extinct. A curious incident in the history of this title was the grant by Charles I. in 1644 of a commission to Edward Somerset, son of Henry, 1st marquess of Worcester, empowering him to fill up certain blank patents of peerage with a promise of the title of duke of Somerset for himself. After the Restoration this instrument was cancelled in consequence of a resolution of the House of Lords declaring it to be "in prejudice to the peers ”; and the grantee, who had meantime succeeded to the marquessate of Worcester, surrendered his claim to the dukedom of Somerset in September 1660. In the same month the duke­dom of Somerset and barony of Seymour were restored to William Seymour (1588-1660), great-grandson of the Protector, who in 1621 inherited the titles of earl of Hertford and Baron Beau­champ which had been granted to his grandfather Edward Seymour in 1559, and who, in 1640, had himself been created marquess of Hertford. This nobleman, who in early life had incurred the displeasure of James I. by marrying the king’s cousin, Lady Arabella Stuart, and had been imprisoned in the Tower for the offence, had later an exceptional claim on the gratitude of the royal house of Stewart, for he fought with distinc­tion on the royalist side in the civil war, and was one of four lords (the others being the duke of Richmond, and the earls of Lindsey and Southampton) who petitioned the Commons to be allowed to assume responsibility for the actions of Charles I. and to suffer death in his place. He died in November 1660, a few weeks after his restoration to the dukedom, and, having outlived his three eldest sons, was succeeded by his grandson William, 3rd duke of Somerset (c. 1651-1671). As the latter died unmarried, his sister Elizabeth brought to her husband, Thomas Bruce, 2nd earl of Ailesbury, the great estates of Tottenham Park and Savernake Forest in Wiltshire; while the Somerset title devolved on John Seymour (c. 1628-1675), the 2nd duke’s fifth and youngest son. At the death of the latter without issue in April 1675 the marquessate of Hertford became extinct, and his cousin Francis Seymour (1658-1678) became 5th duke of Somerset. This nobleman was the eldest surviving son of Charles Seymour, 2nd Baron Seymour of Trowbridge, whose father Sir Francis Seymour (c. 1590-1664), a younger brother of the 2nd duke of Somerset, was created a baron in 1641.

Charles Seymour, 6th duke of Somerset (1662-1748), succeeded his brother Francis, the 5th duke, when the latter was shot in 1678 at the age of twenty, by a Genoese gentleman named Horatio Botti, whose wife Somerset was said to have insulted at Lerici. Charles, who thus inherited the barony of Seymour of Trowbridge along with the dukedom of Somerset, was educated at Trinity College, Cambridge; and in 1682 he married a great heiress, Elizabeth, daughter of Joceline Percy, earl of Northumberland, who brought him immense estates, including Alnwick Castle, Petworth, Syon House and North­umberland House in London. (See Northumberland, Earls and Dukes of.) In 1683 Somerset received an appointment in the king’s household, and two years later a colonelcy of dragoons; but at the revolution he bore arms for the prince of Orange. Having befriended Princess Anne in 1692, he became a great favourite with her after her accession to the throne, receiving the post of master of the horse in 1702. Finding him­self neglected by Marlborough, he made friends with the Tories, and succeeded in retaining the queen’s confidence, while his wife replaced the duchess of Marlborough as mistress of the robes in 1711. In the memorable crisis when Anne was at the point of death, Somerset acted with Argyll, Shrewsbury and other Whig nobles who, by insisting on their right to be present in the privy council, secured the Hanoverian succession to the Crown. He retained the office of master of the horse under George I. till 1716, when he was dismissed and retired into private life; he died at Petworth on the 2nd of December 1748. The duke’s first wife having died in 1722, he married secondly, in 1726, Charlotte, daughter of the 2nd earl of Nottingham. He was a remarkably handsome man, and inordinately fond of taking a