

= Guy de Beauchamp , 10th Earl of Warwick =

Guy de Beauchamp , 10th Earl of Warwick (c . 1272 ? 12 August 1315) was an English magnate , and one of the principal opponents of King Edward II and his favourite Piers Gaveston . Guy de Beauchamp was the son of William de Beauchamp , the first Beauchamp earl of Warwick , and succeeded his father in 1298 . He distinguished himself at the Battle of Falkirk and subsequently , as a capable servant of the crown under King Edward I. After the succession of Edward II in 1307 , however , he soon fell out with the new king and the king 's favourite Piers Gaveston . Warwick was one of the main architects behind the Ordinances of 1311 , that limited the powers of the king and banished Gaveston into exile .

When Gaveston returned to England in 1312 ? contrary to the rulings of the Ordinances ? he was taken into custody by the Aymer de Valence , 2nd Earl of Pembroke . Warwick abducted Gaveston and , together with the Thomas , 2nd Earl of Lancaster , had him executed . The act garnered sympathy and support for the king , but Warwick and Lancaster nevertheless managed to negotiate a royal pardon for their actions . After the disastrous defeat at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314 , King Edward 's authority was once more weakened , and the rebellious barons took over control of government . For Warwick the triumph was brief ; he died the next year .

Guy de Beauchamp is today remembered primarily for his part in the killing of Gaveston , but by his contemporaries he was considered a man of exceptionally good judgement and learning . He owned what was for his time a large collection of books , and his advice was often sought by many of the other earls . Next to Lancaster , he was the wealthiest peer in the nation , and after his death his lands and title were inherited by his son , Thomas de Beauchamp , 11th Earl of Warwick .

= = Family background = =

Guy de Beauchamp was the first son and heir of William de Beauchamp , 9th Earl of Warwick , (c . 1238 ? 1298) . His mother was Maud FitzJohn , daughter of John fitz Geoffrey , who was Justiciar of Ireland and a member of the council of fifteen that imposed the Provisions of Oxford on King Henry III . William was the nephew of William Maudit , 8th Earl of Warwick , and when his uncle died without issue in 1268 , he became the first Beauchamp earl of Warwick . In 1271 or 1272 his first son was born , and in reference to the new family title , William named his son after the legendary hero Guy of Warwick . William de Beauchamp was a capable military commander , who played an important part in the Welsh and Scottish wars of King Edward I.

A marriage between Guy and Isabel de Clare , daughter of Gilbert de Clare , 6th Earl of Hertford , was contemplated , or possibly even took place and then annulled . It was not until early 1309 that Guy married Alice de Toeni , a wealthy Hertfordshire heiress . By this time Guy had already succeeded as Earl of Warwick , after his father 's death in 1298 . By Alice , Guy had two sons , including his heir and successor , Thomas , and five daughters :

Maud de Beauchamp (died 1366) ; married Geoffrey de Say , 2nd Lord Say , by whom she had issue .

Isabella de Beauchamp ; married John Clinton .

Emma de Beauchamp ; married Rowland Odingsells .

Thomas de Beauchamp , 11th Earl of Warwick (14 February 1313 / 1314 ? 13 November 1369) , married Katherine Mortimer , by whom he had fifteen children .

Lucia de Beauchamp ; married Robert de Napton .

John de Beauchamp , Lord Beauchamp KG (1315 ? 2 December 1360) ; carried the royal standard at the Battle of Crecy .

Elizabeth de Beauchamp (c . 1316 ? 1359) ; married in 1328 Thomas Astley , 3rd Lord Astley , by whom she had a son , William Astley , 4th Lord Astley .

= = Service to Edward I = =

Edward I knighted Guy de Beauchamp at Easter 1296 . Warwick 's career of public service started

with the Falkirk campaign in 1298 . Here he distinguished himself , and received a reward of Scottish lands worth 1000 marks a year . At this point his father was already dead , but it was not until 5 September that Guy did homage to the king for his lands , and became Earl of Warwick and hereditary High Sheriff of Worcestershire for life . He continued in the king 's service in Scotland and elsewhere . In 1299 he was present at the king 's wedding to Margaret of France at Canterbury , and in 1300 he took part in the Siege of Caerlaverock . The next year he was a signatory to a letter to the Pope , rejecting Rome 's authority over the Scottish question , and also participated in negotiations with the French over the release of the Scottish King John Balliol . He was present at the Siege of Stirling in 1304 , serving under Edward , the Prince of Wales . In March 1307 he made preparations to accompany Prince Edward to France , but this journey never took place .

Early in 1307 , Edward I made his last grant to Warwick , when he gave him John Balliol 's forfeited lordship of Barnard Castle in County Durham . On 7 July that year , near Burgh by Sands in Cumberland , Warwick was present when King Edward died . Together with Thomas , Earl of Lancaster , and Henry de Lacy , Earl of Lincoln , he carried the ceremonial swords at the coronation of King Edward II on 25 February 1308 .

= = Conflict with Edward II = =

Before his death , the old king had exiled Prince Edward 's favourite Piers Gaveston , and Warwick was among those charged with preventing Gaveston 's return . The new king , however , not only recalled his favourite , but soon also gave him the title of earl of Cornwall . Warwick was the only one of the leading earls who did not seal the charter , and from the start took on an antagonistic attitude to Edward II . Gaveston was a relative upstart in the English aristocracy , and made himself unpopular among the established nobility by his arrogance and his undue influence on the king . He gave mocking nicknames to the leading men of the realm , and called Warwick the " Black Dog of Arden " .

Gaveston was once more forced into exile , but Edward recalled him in less than a year . The king had spent the intervening time gathering support , and at the time , the only one to resist the return of Gaveston was Warwick . With time , however , opposition to the king grew . Another source of contention was Edward abandoning his father 's Scottish campaigns , a policy that opened the Border region up to devastating raids from the Scots . This affected Warwick greatly , with his extensive landed interest in the north . Tensions grew to the point where the king in 1310 had to ban Warwick and others from arriving at parliament in arms . They still did , and at the parliament of March 1310 , the king was forced to accept the appointment of a commission to draft a set of ordinances towards reform the royal government .

The leaders of these so @-@ called Lords Ordainers were Robert Winchelsey , Archbishop of Canterbury , on the side of the clergy , and Warwick , Lincoln and Lancaster among the earls . Henry de Lacy , Earl of Lincoln , was the most experienced of the earls , and took on a modifying role in the group . Thomas of Lancaster , who was Lincoln 's son @-@ in @-@ law and heir , was the king 's cousin and the wealthiest nobleman in the realm , but at this point he took a less active part in the reform movement . Warwick is described by some sources as the leader of the Ordainers ; he was certainly the most aggressive . The set of Ordinances they drafted put heavy restrictions on the king 's financial freedom , and his right to appoint his own ministers . It also ? once more ? ordered Gaveston to be exiled , to return only at the risk of excommunication .

= = Gaveston 's death = =

Gaveston 's third and final exile was of even shorter duration , and after two months he was reunited with Edward in England . Archbishop Winchelsey responded by excommunicating Gaveston , as the Ordinances had stipulated . Lancaster , who had by this time inherited his father @-@ in @-@ law Lincoln , had taken over leadership of the baronial opposition . A number of the barons set out in pursuit of Gaveston while the king left for York . Gaveston ensconced himself at Scarborough Castle , and on 19 May 1312 agreed on a surrender to Aymer de Valence , Earl of

Pembroke , as long as his security would be guaranteed .

Pembroke lodged his prisoner in Deddington in Oxfordshire . On 10 June , while Pembroke was away , Warwick forcibly carried away Gaveston to Warwick Castle . Here , in the presence of Warwick , Lancaster and other magnates , Gaveston was sentenced to death at an improvised court . On 19 June he was taken to a place called Blacklow Hill ? on Lancaster 's lands ? and decapitated . According to the *Annales Londonienses* chronicle , four shoemakers brought the corpse back to Warwick , but he refused to accept it , and ordered them to take it back to where they found it . Gaveston 's body was eventually taken to Oxford by some Dominican friars , and in 1315 , King Edward finally had it buried at Kings Langley .

The brutality and questionable legality of the earls ' act helped garner sympathy for the king in the political community . Pembroke was particularly offended , as he had been made to break his promise of safety to Gaveston , and his chivalric honour had been damaged . From this point on Pembroke sided firmly with King Edward in the political conflict . The king himself swore vengeance on his enemies , but found himself unable to move against them immediately , partly because they were in possession of a number of highly valuable royal jewels taken from Gaveston . A settlement was reached in October , whereby the rebellious barons and their retainers received a pardon . The king nevertheless emerged strengthened from the events , while Warwick and Lancaster were largely marginalised . This all changed in 1314 , when the king decided to stage his first major campaign against the Scots . Warwick and Lancaster refused to participate in the campaign , which ended in a humiliating English defeat at the Battle of Bannockburn on 24 June . This led to another political bouleversement , and Edward was forced to reconfirm the Ordinances , and submit to the leadership of the rebellious barons .

= = Death and historical assessment = =

In mid @-@ July Warwick had to withdraw from government to his estates , due to illness . Political leadership was soon left almost entirely to Lancaster , when Warwick died on 12 August 1315 . The chronicler Thomas Walsingham reported rumours that the king had him poisoned . He was buried at Bordesley Abbey in Worcestershire , an establishment to which his family had served as benefactors . In value , his possessions were second only to those of the earl of Lancaster among the nobility of England . His lands , though primarily centred on Warwickshire and Worcestershire , were spread out over nineteen counties as well as Scotland and the Welsh Marches . His heir was his oldest son , whom he had named Thomas after the earl of Lancaster . Thomas , born probably on 14 February 1314 , did not succeed to his father 's title until 1326 , as Thomas de Beauchamp , 11th Earl of Warwick . In the meanwhile his possessions went into the king 's hand , who donated his hunting dogs to the earl of Pembroke . A younger son , named John , also became a peer , as John de Beauchamp , 1st Baron Beauchamp . Like his older brother , he distinguished himself in the French wars , and was a founding member of the Order of the Garter .

Guy de Beauchamp is probably best remembered by posterity for his opposition to King Edward II , and for his part in the death of Gaveston . To contemporaries , however , he was considered a man of considerable learning and wisdom . His library , of which he donated 42 books to Bordesley Abbey during his lifetime , was extensive . It contained several saints ' lives as well as romances about Alexander and King Arthur . As mentioned , Edward I entrusted the supervision of his son with Warwick . Likewise , when the earl of Lincoln died in 1311 , he supposedly instructed his son @-@ in @-@ law Thomas of Lancaster to heed the advice of Warwick , " the wisest of the peers " . Chronicles also praised Warwick 's wisdom ; the *Vita Edwardi Secundi* said that " Other earls did many things only after taking his opinion : in wisdom and council he had no peer " . Later historians have reflected this view , in the 19th century William Stubbs called Warwick " a discriminating and highly literate man , the wisdom of whom shone forth through the whole kingdom " . He was politically and economically well connected by traditional ties of kinship and marriage .

Warwick 's death came at an inconvenient time ; Thomas of Lancaster proved unequal to the task of governing the nation , and further years of conflict and instability followed . Nevertheless , the problems of Edward II 's reign were deep , and in the words of Michael Hicks : " one must doubt

whether even Warwick could have brought unity as one chronicler supposed " .