

Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk

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Margaret, in her own right **Countess of Norfolk**

(sometimes surnamed Brotherton or Marshal;^[1] c. 1320–24 March 1399), was the daughter and eventual sole heir of Thomas of Brotherton, eldest son of Edward I, by his second marriage. In 1338 she succeeded to the earldom of Norfolk and the office of Earl Marshal.

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Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk

Spouse(s) John Segrave, 4th Baron Segrave
Sir Walter Mauny

Issue

John de Segrave
John de Segrave (again)
Elizabeth de Segrave
Margaret de Segrave
Thomas Mauny
Anne Mauny
Isabel Mauny

Father Thomas of Brotherton

Mother Alice Hales

Born c.1320

Died 24 March 1399

Buried Grey Friars, London

Family

Margaret (b. about 1320), was the daughter of Thomas of Brotherton and Alice de Hales (d. in or before 1330). Her paternal grandparents were Edward I and Margaret (1279?–1318), daughter of Philippe III of France (d.1285).^[2] Her maternal grandparents were Roger de Hales of Hales Hall in Loddon, Roughton, Norfolk and Alice.^{[3][4]} She had a brother and sister:

- Edward of Norfolk, who married Beatrice de Mortimer, daughter of Roger de Mortimer, 1st Earl of March, but died without issue before 9 August 1334.^[5]
- Alice of Norfolk, who married Sir Edward de Montagu.^[6]

Life

In 1335 aged 15 (the typical age of marriage for maidens of that era), she was married to John Segrave, 4th Baron Segrave, and proceeded to have four children - two sons and two daughters - by him. In 1350, she sought a divorce on the ground that they had been contracted in marriage (in other words betrothed) before she was of marriageable age, and that she had never consented to cohabit with him. She made known her intention of traveling to the continent in order to plead personally with the Pope for a divorce. King Edward III prohibited her from leaving England, but she set off incognito anyway, having taken care to obtain a safe conduct from the King of France.

The following year (1351) Edward III charged her with having crossed the English Channel in contravention of his prohibition.^[7] The inquisition, regarding this incident, shows that Margaret unlawfully crossed the Channel and met with a servant of her future husband, Sir Walter de Mauny, who broke his lantern with his foot so she could pass unnoticed and acted as her guardian during her sojourn in France. This incident and the involvement of her future husband's retainer may indicate the real motivation for Margaret seeking a divorce.

The divorce case was ultimately heard by the Pope's auditor, the Dean of St. Hilary's at Poitiers. However, Margaret's first husband died in 1353, before the divorce could be finalized. Shortly thereafter, and just before 30 May 1354, she married Sir Walter de Mauny without the King's licence. They were married 18 years, and had three children before he died at London on 8 or 13 January 1372.^[8]

On 29 September 1397, Margaret was created Duchess of Norfolk for life.^[8] She died 24 March 1399, and was buried in the choir of Grey Friars in the City of London.^[8]

The executors of her will are reported to be John Sibley & Walter fitz Piers, who in 1399 were reported to be attempting to recover money due to her estate.^[9]

Marriages and issue

Margaret married firstly, about 1335,^[4] John Segrave, 4th Baron Segrave, by whom she had two sons and two daughters:^[10]

- John de Segrave, who died young.^[10]
- John de Segrave (d. before 1 April 1353), second of that name, who was contracted to marry Blanche of Lancaster, younger daughter and coheiress of Henry of Grosmont, 1st Duke of Lancaster. However the contract was later declared void^[11] and Blanche later married John of Gaunt. About 1349, a double marriage was solemnized in which John Segrave married Blanche Mowbray, while John's sister, Elizabeth Segrave, married Blanche Mowbray's brother, John de Mowbray, 4th Baron Mowbray, Pope Clement VI having granted dispensations for the marriages at the request of Lancaster, in order to prevent 'disputes between the parents', who were neighbours.^{[12][13][11]}
- Elizabeth de Segrave, 5th Baroness Segrave, who married John de Mowbray, 4th Baron Mowbray.^[11]
- Margaret de Segrave, who died young, before 1353.^[11]

Shortly before 30 May 1354, Margaret married secondly, and without the King's licence, Sir Walter Mauny,^[14] by whom she had a son and two daughters:^[11]

- Thomas Mauny, who was drowned in a well at Deptford at the age of ten.^[11]
- Anne Mauny, who married John Hastings, 2nd Earl of Pembroke.^[11]
- Isabel Mauny, who was living in 1358, but died without issue before 30 November 1371.^[11]

Distinction

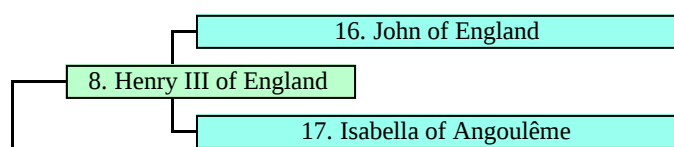
As her brother had died without issue, she succeeded to the earldom of Norfolk and the office of Earl Marshal at her father's death in 1338. To date, she is the only woman to have held the latter office.

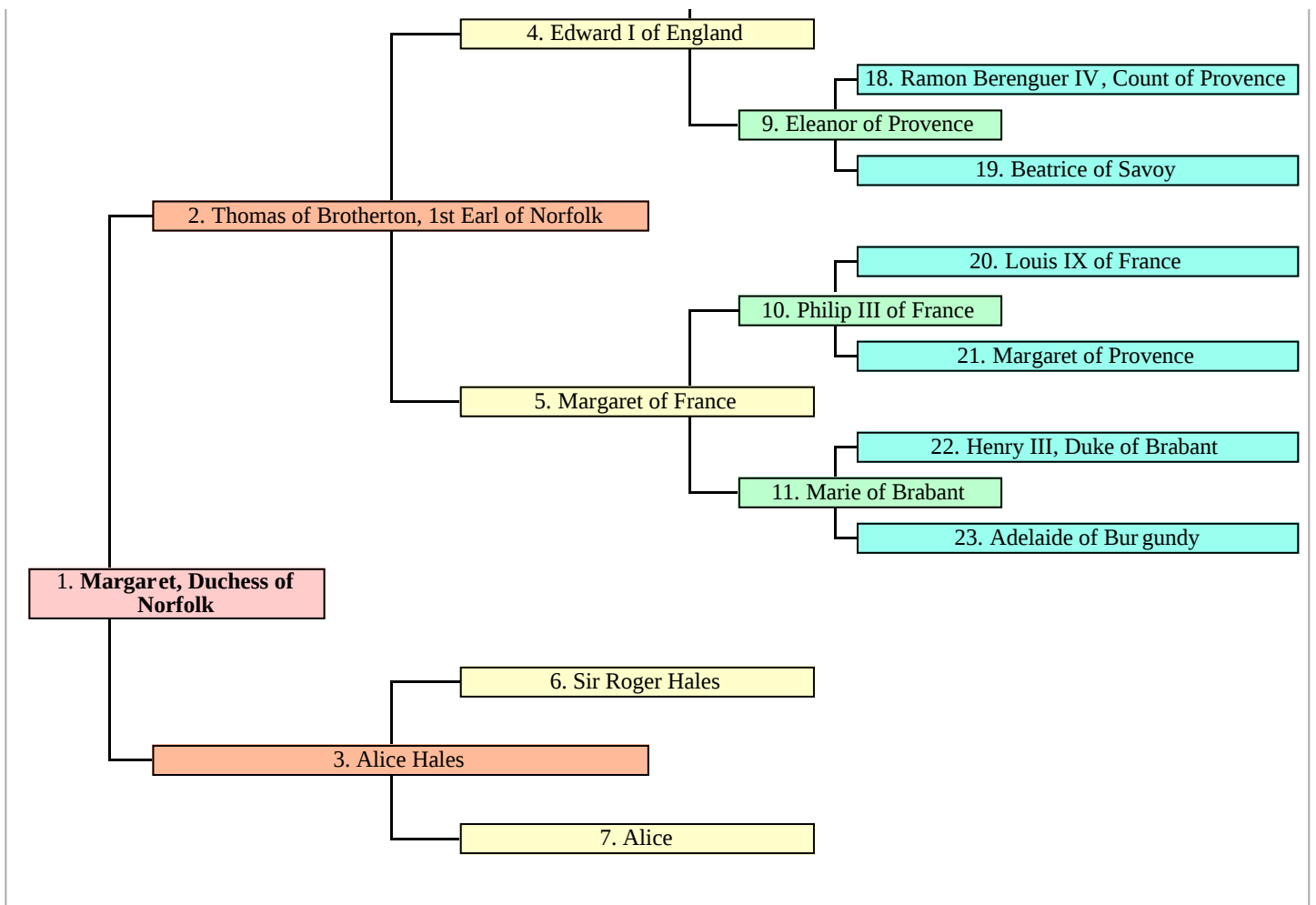
Fictional representations

Margaret is a character in Georgette Heyer's last novel *My Lord John*, where she is portrayed sympathetically as a kindly though outwardly formidable old lady.

Ancestry

Ancestors of Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk





Notes

1. "Brotherton [Marshal], Margaret". *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online ed.). Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/ref:odnb/53070(<https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/53070>) (Subscription or UK public library membership (<https://global.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/freeodnb/libraries/>) required.)
2. Waugh 2004.
3. Richardson II 2011, p. 631.
4. Archer II 2004
5. Richardson II 2011, p. 634.
6. Richardson II 2011, pp. 634-5.
7. Richardson II 2011, pp. 637-8.
8. Richardson II 2011, p. 638.
9. Plea Rolls of the Court of Common Pleas. National Archives; CP 40/555; http://aalt.lawuh.edu/H4/CP40no555/bCP40no555dorses/IMG_0329.htm first entry
10. Richardson II 2011, p. 639.
11. Richardson II 2011, p. 640.
12. Cokayne 1936, p. 384.
13. Archer I 2004
14. Sumption 2004

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Margaret, Duchess of Norfolk House of Plantagenet Born: c. 1320 Died: 24 March 1399		
Political offices		
Preceded by Earl of Norfolk	Earl Marshal 1338–1377	Succeeded by Earl of Northumberland
Peerage of England		
Preceded by Thomas Plantagenet of Brotherton	Countess of Norfolk <i>suo jure</i> 3rd creation 1338–1399	Succeeded by Thomas Mowbray

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