

1911 Encyclopædia Britannica, Volume 23 — Richmond and Derby, Margaret, Countess of



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RICHMOND AND DERBY, MARGARET, COUNTESS OF (1443–1509), mother of the English king, Henry VII., and foundress of St John’s and Christ’s colleges at Cambridge, was the daughter and heiress of John Beaufort, duke of Somerset, and was born on the 31st of May 1443. In 1455 she married Edmund Tudor, earl of Richmond, who died in the following year; she then took for her husband Henry (d. 1482), son of Humphrey Stafford, duke of Buckingham, and later Thomas Stanley, afterwards earl of Derby. She was in constant communication with her son, the future king, during his exile in Brittany, and with her husband, Lord Stanley, aided him to gain the crown in 1485. The countess was very pious and charitable, and under the influence of her confessor, John Fisher, afterwards bishop of Rochester, she founded the Lady Margaret professorships of divinity at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. She completed the foundation of Christ’s College, Cambridge, and after her death, in accordance with her wishes, much of her wealth was devoted to building and endowing St John’s College in the same university. She survived her son, whose title to the English throne was derived through her, and died on the 29th of June 1509. The countess translated some devotional books into English, and Fisher said of her, “All England for her death had cause of weeping.”

See C. H. Cooper, *Memoir of Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (1874).

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