

The History of the Manor of Lackham - Volume 1

The Bluets

a baronial family and their historical connections 1066 - 1400



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and

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(online edition)

Updated: 27 August 2013

The Authors

Tony Pratt and Karen Repko have been researching the history of the Lackham estate, and its owners, for over a decade - initially independently and latterly jointly. In that time Tony has produced several works on various aspects of the estate and the families connected with it. An increasing interest in the medieval period led to the current work. It started life as a re-write of the Bluet section for the next (fourth) edition of the major history *The Manor of Lackham* but took on a life and direction of its own, as these things usually do. The work before you is the result of many years of trans-Atlantic collaboration; what would we do without email?

Tony came to the English county of Wiltshire over 25 years ago. He has been associated with the Lackham estate near Lacock since 1990, where he did his PGCE teaching practice in the Horticultural department of what is now Wiltshire College, Lackham. He was a lecturer in horticulture at the start of this association and is now a member of the Gardens Staff using, rather than teaching, his gardening skills. He started investigating the history of the Lackham estate after completing a research M.Phil in 1997, having become accustomed to having no spare time. This has resulted in three editions so far of the main history of the estate, and several other smaller publications, as well as the only current history of the Wiltshire village of Alderton! He tries to keep busy, often giving talks within and outside the College on the history of the estate. He spends a lot of time bothering the staff at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre and is very happy they have moved to Chippenham and are open on Saturdays. He is currently trying to improve his Latin, which gives him something else to do and keeps him out of the hair of his long-suffering partner, Lynne Thomson.

Karen lives in Ohio, in the United States of America. Karen retired from a career as a Quality Engineer in 2001, a career which was largely responsible for her devotion to detail and her enjoyment in doing research. Even before she retired, she devoted large amounts of time and effort to researching her extensive family tree, and places the responsibility for this devotion on her maternal grandmother, who was a Montagu. Karen spent many wistful afternoons listening to tales of knights and lords of the manor from the tales that had been passed down in the Montagu family told by her grandmother. She is an excellent genealogist, and has travelled extensively to use national research

libraries in both the USA and, during a recent visit, in England - when she was also able to visit some of her ancestral homes, including Lackham. She is a descendant of Sir Ralph Bluet via her descent from Admiral John Montagu, RN, whose family also owned the estate. It was while she was researching her Lackham Montagu, Baynard and Bluet forebears that she and Tony first worked together. In almost seven years of association, Tony and Karen discussed the Bluets extensively, but they were backburnered for more pressing research. Finally the Bluet information and citations took on a life of their own, and the history of this family had to be told. Karen's world wide connections with other genealogists, and her ability to see both the flaws and the strengths of an argument, have been invaluable in the present study. She was previously very involved with the local Historical Society of Lorain Co., Ohio and the Local research department of the Elyria Library's Medieval Resource Department. Due to poor health her researches are now largely web and correspondence based, being a regular and knowledgeable contributor to various online forums, in particular Soc.Genealogy.Medieval and the Montague forum on Genealogy.com. and she often addresses queries from both forums.

Acknowledgements

The story presented here is the result of years of research and discussion with many people, and builds on work previously done. It is impossible to acknowledge all who have influenced and helped but a few specific thanks are in order:

The librarians and archivists at the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office in Trowbridge (formerly) and Chippenham (recently) were unfailing helpful and encouraging throughout the study as were those in the County Record Offices in Winchester (Hampshire), Gloucester (Gloucestershire), Taunton (Somerset), Woking (Surrey) and Reading (Berkshire) as well as at the Public Record Office, Kew.

Library staff at Chippenham and Marlborough Public libraries, those of Wiltshire College Lackham and the Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society in Wiltshire and Bath Reference Library in B&NES were incredibly helpful, as were the staff at the British Library in London.

So many individuals have helped but special thanks to Michael and Matthew Blewett, Dr David Crouch ¹ (Professor of Medieval History, University of Hull), Andrew Davies (formerly Museum Curator Lackham Museum of Agriculture and Rural Life Trust, now Curator for Manor Farm Country Park, Hampshire), Dr. Lorna Haycock (Sandwell Librarian at WANHS), Paul Reed FASG, Leo van de Plas, and last but not least Douglas Richardson of Salt Lake City ². Special thanks to Pam, Manfred and Lynne.

Illustrations are by Tony Pratt unless otherwise credited. The kind permissions to use images are gratefully acknowledged, especially Brian Timms for permission to use heraldry from his excellent website.

As far as we are aware no images are used without permission and all copyrights are acknowledged. However if we got it wrong and are using one of your images improperly please accept our very sincere apologies and get in touch so that we can correct things.

There are a number of places where we differ from previous suggestions on how the family of the Bluets developed and in many cases the evidence is inconclusive. We have tried to give fair weight to all sides of the arguments but have eventually had to decide what we believe - this is always going to be open for discussion and we would be very happy to be proved wrong! Any thoughts, comments, or (particularly) additional information would be gratefully received. You can contact us by mail, Tony's address is chetwynd222@aol.com and Karen is at KarRpk@aol.com, or you can write to: Tony Pratt, c/o Gardens Staff, Wiltshire College Lackham, Lacock, Chippenham Wiltshire, SN15 2NY, UK. We would love to hear from you.

Chippenham, Wiltshire and Elyria, Ohio 2008

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Introduction to the revised online edition, February 2009

¹ Author of many excellent books but especially *Tournament* (2005) and *William Marshal: Knighthood, War and Chivalry 1147 - 1219* (2002)

² Author of *The Plantagenet Ancestry* (2006)

Further research, by ourselves and others, has given us much additional information and has corrected, or developed, some of what was already in place. It is unlikely that a new print edition will be forthcoming in the near future and so it has been decided to make this information available on-line. New material has been inserted in blue so that you can avoid re-reading what is already known.

The text has been developed to take advantage of electronic publishing features, specifically by the use of hyperlinks to take you to the figures and references. Hyperlinks to figures are shown in blue underline -

Hopefully the mistakes in the previous edition have been corrected and not too many new ones have been added. As always the help of everyone who has contributed their expertise and knowledge is gratefully acknowledged. If we have scrambled the information that is our fault, not theirs.

Please do get in touch with comments, either by the links above or through the Lackham website

Tony Pratt and Karen Repko
February 2009

Introduction to the revised online edition January 2011

Having lost our Word version of the text (don't ask) we had to recover the document from the pdf file on the web, the 2009 version. Whilst annoying (to put it mildly) this has allowed us to correct errors and incorporate new information into the text, and for this reason we are uploading this new edition. It may well be that some of the blue "new" text was new to 2009, our apologies for this. We have tried to return all the text enhancements, such as italics etc but will certainly have missed some, please do let us know where we have missed things. It is appropriate to launch our most up to date version now, as the final version of the History of Lackham (volume IV) has just been launched

http://www.lackham.co.uk/history/The_Manor_Lackham_IV.pdf.

Our thanks to Peter Haworth for his valuable assistance with the Bluet heraldry

Tony Pratt and Karen Repko
January 2011

List of Illustrations

Fig.	Title	Page
<u>1</u>	Arms of the Bluet family, pre and post 1300	2
<u>2</u>	Bluet family tree - first two generations	4
<u>3</u>	Wiltshire showing places mentioned in the text	9
<u>4</u>	Area map to show some places mentioned	10
<u>5</u>	Children of Ralph I	11
<u>6</u>	Arms of de Clare and Marshal	12
<u>6a</u>	Berkeley - Bluet links	17
<u>7</u>	Children of Ralph II	20
<u>8</u>	Descendents of Walter Bluet	28
<u>9</u>	Children of Ralph Bluet III	39
<u>10</u>	Arms of William, earl of Salisbury	50
<u>11</u>	Arms of John le Sor	61
<u>12</u>	Arms of Llewellyn ap Gryyudd	66
<u>13</u>	Arms of Bluet, de Dernford and St Maur	68
<u>14</u>	Map of part of Netherwent	69
<u>15</u>	Arms in Lacock Abbey cloisters	89
<u>16</u>	Arms of Sir Francis Seymour, Bath Abbey	89
<u>17</u>	Arms of William Bluet from St George's Roll	90
<u>18</u>	Descendants of William Bluet	92
<u>19</u>	Arms of John Bluet from Galloway Roll	95
<u>20</u>	Arms of John de la Mare from Galloway Roll	101
<u>21</u>	Arms of Thomas de Coudre from Stirling Roll	113
<u>22</u>	Probable effigy of Eleanor Baynard	125
<u>23</u>	Supposed arms of de Cusaunce	127
<u>24</u>	Baynard family (Lackham line) arms at Lackham, Wiltshire	128

List of Appendices

<u>1</u>	<i>Dugdale Monasticom</i>
<u>2</u>	<i>Archaeologica Cambrensis</i>

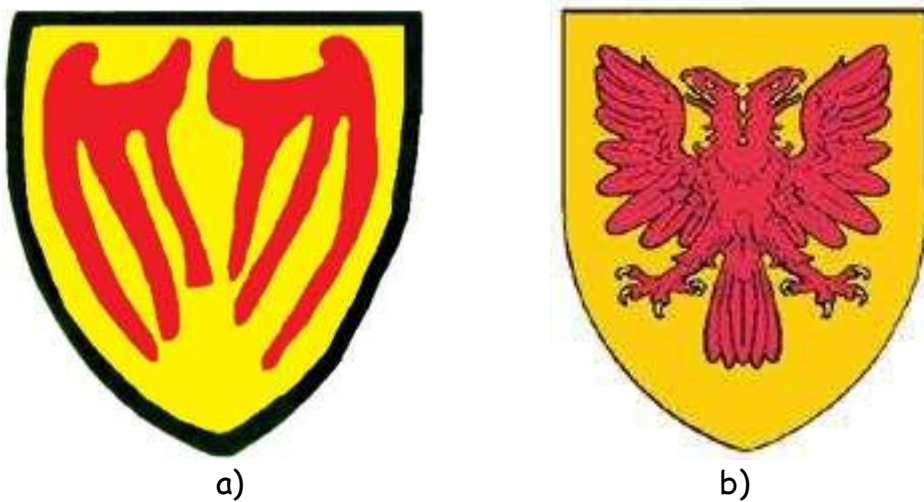


Fig. 1 Arms of the Bluet family *³

³ a) before 1297 or two wings conjoined gules b) after 1297 or an eagle displayed gules

Fig.1 b) by permission of Brian Timms at <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/era/early%20rolls%20of%20arms.htm>

The period between 1066 and the end of the thirteenth century was a volatile and immensely important one for England, its near neighbours and the English and Norman people. There have been many studies of the major landholders, the movers and shakers of that history, but less work has been done on the under tenants, the families who supported the major players and without whom they could not have prospered. The Bluet family was one such, holding land in the south and west of England and the Welsh Marches. The following is not a full one name study, not every member of the family is covered, and the main focus is on the branches of this Norman family that were active in Wiltshire, Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Somerset. Their Manors of Daglingworth (Gloucestershire), and Hullavington Chepstow (and its castle) are given particular importance here and their owners are discussed in depth. It is not possible to discuss a family involved in the national life as often as the Bluets without referring to that national life, and so the background to selected historical incidents is given.

After the Norman Conquest of 1066 land was divided up and held by direct supporters of the King. These tenants in chief then granted land to their followers and so on, with each tier owing service to the land-holder above them and exacting it from those below. The Bluets were a well-established Norman family at the time of Duke William's conquest of England. In 1084 Domesday recorded that they held land from William, the Count of Eu, amongst others. Count William held land in 10 counties in the south

and west of country. In Wiltshire he held 15 manors ⁴, and in Gloucestershire ⁵ 10 as tenant in chief.

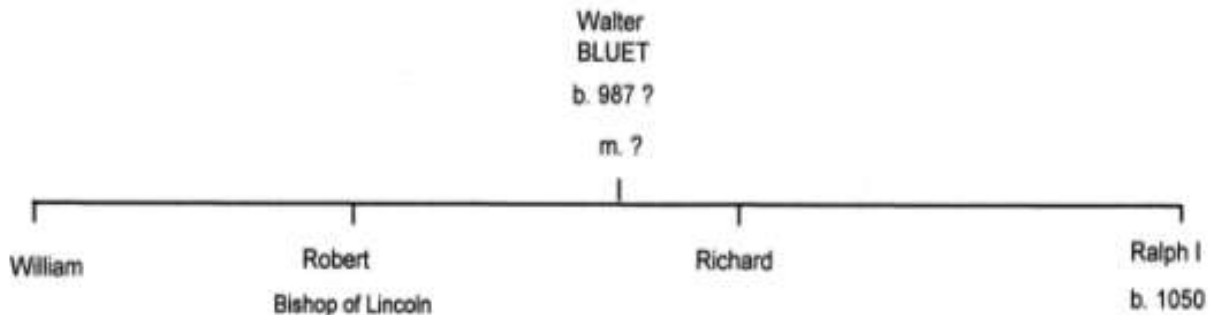


Fig. 2 Bluet family tree - first two generations *

After the d'Eu family lost their English lands the Bluet family continued to hold former d'Eu manors but they probably had more than one overlord, which wasn't that unusual. William d'Eu's honour⁶ of Striguil ⁷ was given by Henry I to a younger branch of the de Clares ⁸ and the rest of his land in Gloucestershire and Wiltshire was given to Gilbert de Clare Marshal of the King's Household ⁹

The earliest member of the line shown in [Fig. 2](#), Walter, has been identified as the Viking but he is somewhat doubtful, as he is said to have

⁴ Thorn, C and Thorn, F (1979) Domesday Book : 6 Wiltshire Phillimore sections 31, 32

⁵ Taylor, Rev CS (1889) Analysis of the Domesday survey of Gloucestershire Bristol & Glos. Arch. Soc. pp260, 276, 280, 288, 292, 320, 324 and 325

⁶ By convention, the term Honour is used to describe all the manors held by a tenant-in-chief. It is, however, a conventional, not a technical term and is sometimes used interchangeably with fief, itself more commonly used to describe those manors held by a tenant-in-chief in a single county

⁷ the medieval name for Chepstow, Gwent, and its surrounding area. The honor included manors in Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Hampshire

⁸ Barkly, Sir Henry (1888) Additional notes on the Manor of Daglingworth in Bazeley, WM (1888) Notes on the Manor and Church of Daglingworth Trans. Brist. & Glos. Arch. Soc Vol 12 p57

⁹ Barkly, Sir Henry (1888) *ibid* p56

been born in about 987¹⁰. This is too early for him to have a son who was one of the Conquerors men; either the birth date is wrong or there is a missing generation.

There is a possibility that this was the Walter known as Walter Balistarius (military engineer¹¹). He held the Gloucestershire manors of Rodley¹², Ruddle¹³ and Bulley¹⁴ at the time of Domesday¹⁵, and they were later granted to St Peter's Monastery, Gloucester, by Ralph Bluet I - this led Barkly to believe that Ralph had become Balistarius' heir, most probably he had married his daughter but it is at least possible that Walter was Ralph's father or uncle¹⁶. It is certainly possible, but probably the most that can be said is that Ralph was supposed to have been a relation, a son, a nephew, a son in law¹⁷. Whether this Walter is the start of the tree in [Fig. 2](#) remains unclear; the four people shown in the next generation, however, are documented and known, to a greater or lesser extent.

¹⁰ Blewett, M (2004) Blewetts document downloaded from blewett.com/blewett/EarlyEnglandResearch.pdf. Michael has done enormous amounts of good research into the Bluet/Bloet/Blewett family and made his results available to anybody who is interested. We gratefully acknowledge his work and assistance, whilst not always agreeing with all of his conclusions.

¹¹ Kerr, RJ (1895) *Notes on the Borough and Manor of Nemham* Trans. Brist. & Glos. Arch. Soc vol XVIII p170 —The *balistarii* were the military engineers of their day and chiefly engaged in working the ballistae and other missile discharging machines! Other sources, eg The Hutchinson Encyclopaedia (2007) Helicon Publishing Ltd, gives this as crossbow man, but this is incorrect.

¹² South east of Westbury on Severn, in the bend of the River Severn

¹³ VCH *Gloucestershire* vol X (1972) p37
South west of Cinderford, on the downstream side of the same bend as Rodley

¹⁴ West of Gloucester, just off the current A40

¹⁵ Taylor, Rev CS (1889) *Analysis of the Domesday survey of Gloucestershire* Bristol & Glos, Arch. Soc. Vol XIII pp320-321 doesn't show Bulley but has instead Pertian, which he identifies with Poulton in Aivre, in Bludstone Hundred

¹⁶ Barkly, Sir Henry (1888) *Additional notes on the Manor of Daglingworth* in Bazeley, WM (1888) *Notes on the Manor and Church of Daglingworth* Trans. Brist. & Glos. Arch. Soc Vol 12 p56

¹⁷ Kerr, RJ (1895) *Notes on the Borough and Manor of Nemham* Trans. Brist. & Glos. Arch. Soc vol XVIII p170

All these Bluets were born in France, possibly at the family seat of Briqueville la Blouett ¹⁸.

There is a William Bluet who is given as being a companion of William the Conqueror ¹⁹, however it is not certain this is true as the source is not entirely reliable. Even if it is true it is very unlikely this was William the first son in generation two.

The William in generation two of [Fig. 2](#) is well known; he supported Henry I, when Earl Robert rebelled against the King in 1102 ²⁰, as did his brother Robert. It is during this rebellion that William is first seen in a national context. Earl Robert, the Earl of both Belesme in Normandy and Shrewsbury in England, was accused of committing offences on deed or word against [Henry I] ²¹

Realising he couldn't defend himself against these charges (mainly because they happened to be true, and the King had proof) he fled to Normandy and was pronounced a public enemy. Earl Robert set about strengthening his castles and called for assistance from his kinsmen and allies in Normandy and England, at which point the King summoned the] English Army. After capturing Arundel castle in Sussex Henry besieged Bridgnorth. Oderic Vitalis records that Earl Robert had also made treaty with the Welsh, and entered into alliance with their Kings Cadwgan and Iowerth, the sons of Rhys ²²

William Bluet was entrusted with the reduction of Tickhill ²³ in Yorkshire early in the year. It is interesting to note that his brother, Bishop Robert of Lincoln, founded the stone castle here (it was previously a simple earthwork motte and bailey) and added a stone curtain wall to the massive

¹⁸ King, HS (1874) *The Norman People and Their Existing Descendants in the British Dominions and the United States of America* reprinted 1975 p162

¹⁹ Crispin, MJ (1994) *The Falaise Roll Recording Prominent Companions of William Duke of Normandy at the Conquest of England* (with additions and corrections by Moriarty, GA) Genealogical Pub. Co Inc p 87

²⁰ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* 1102

²¹ Vitalis, Oderic *On Henry I from the Ecclesiastical History* trans. Burr

²² Vitalis, Oderic ibid www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/oderic.html

²³ Victoria County History *Yorkshire* vol III p 398. It is noted that Tickhill is associated with different owners of the Bluet's Wiltshire manor of Lackham, or their immediate family, no less than five times in the Manor's history.

bailey rampart ²⁴

Earl Robert eventually lost, threw himself on the King's mercy and was banished to his lands in Normandy, where he created havoc for everyone around him.²⁵

The second son, Robert Bluet, was chancellor to both William I and William Rufus (William II); it was the Rufus who made him Bishop of Lincoln. ²⁶ Bishop Robert later fell out of the King's favour. He died suddenly in 1123 ²⁷. His son, Simon, was later Dean of Lincoln.

Robert appears frequently in the records, especially the Close and the Curia Regis rolls.

The only things known about the third son, Richard is that he lived at Helston in Cornwall and apparently had a daughter Sybil.²⁸

²⁴ http://www.castleuk.net/castle_list_north/111/tickhillcastle.htm

²⁵ See Vitalis [Vitalis, Oderic www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/oderic.html] and Carpenter [Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* OUP ISBN 0-19-522000-5] for details of this period

²⁶ In 1093, succeeding Bishop Regimius [Crispin, MJ (1994) *The Falaise Roll Recording Prominent Companions of William Duke of Normandy at the Conquest of England* (with additions and corrections by Moriarty, GA) Genealogical Pub. Co Inc p84]

²⁷ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* part 7 AD 1102 - 1154 record from AD 1123
In this year was the King Henry, at Christmastide at Dunstable, and there came to him the ambassadors of the Earl of Anjou. And thence he went to Woodstock; and his bishops and his whole court with him. Then did it betide on a Wednesday, which was on the fourth day before the ides of January, that the king rode in his deer-fold; the Bishop Roger of Salisbury on one side of him, and the Bishop Robert Bloet of Lincoln on the other side of him. And they rode there talking together. Then sank down the Bishop of Lincoln, and said to the king, "Lord king, I die." And the king alighted down from his horse, and lifted him betwixt his arms, and let men bear him home to his inn. There he was soon dead; and they carried him to Lincoln with great worship, and buried him before the altar of St. Mary And the Bishop of Chester, whose name was Robert Pecceth buried him
<http://omacl.org/Anglo/part7.html>

²⁸ Blewett. M (2004) Blewetts document downloaded from blewett.com/blewett/EarlyEnglandResearch.pdf. —born about 1146, at Helston, Cornwall, England but the source for this has not been seen

The fourth son, Ralph, was the ancestor of the Lackham and Silchester Bluet line. Little seems to be known about him although he appears to have been born in 1050 and died in 1112.

From Domesday it is known that he held five manors from the Count of Eu ²⁹. It is possible that the Ralph shown as holding of William d'Eu at Lackham in Domesday is Ralph Bluet, but it has also been suggested ³⁰ that it was Ralph de Mortemer. This is not impossible but there is no more evidence for de Mortimer than Bluet. Given that Lackham was later held by the Bluets it is likely they held Lackham of William d'Eu. Locally Ralph also held Duntisbourne at the time of Domesday -

Ralph Blewitt holds this manor of William and pays tax but he keeps back the tax on 3 hides. Durand also holds 2 hides in Duntisbourne and Ralph Blewitt holds from him ³¹

an example of holding land of more than one overlord in the same manor. Duntisbourne is north west of Cirencester, and it included the manor of Daglingworth as well. Both Duntisbourne Abbots and Duntisbourne Lee are now very small hamlets slightly further from Cirencester than Daglingworth and exquisite examples of south Gloucestershire rural communities. The lovely church at Duntisbourne Abbots has Norman pillars in the nave and all three of the churches in this area are worth a visit.

²⁹ Domesday Explorer (2000) Domesday on CD ROM Phillimore ISBN 1860771637

Silchester in Hampshire, Hilmarton and Lackham in Wiltshire, Yeovilton and Hinton Blewett in Somerset and Duntisbourne in Gloucestershire

³⁰ Kite, E (1858) *The Baynard Monuments in Lacock Church Wiltshire* Archaeological Magazine (henceforth WAM) journal of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devizes (henceforth WANHS) vol 4 no X p1

³¹ Domesday Explorer (2000) Domesday on CD ROM Phillimore ISBN 1860771637 extract from Duntisbourne, Gloucester (search parameter *Blewett*, searching on *William Eu* misses the hides held by Durand).

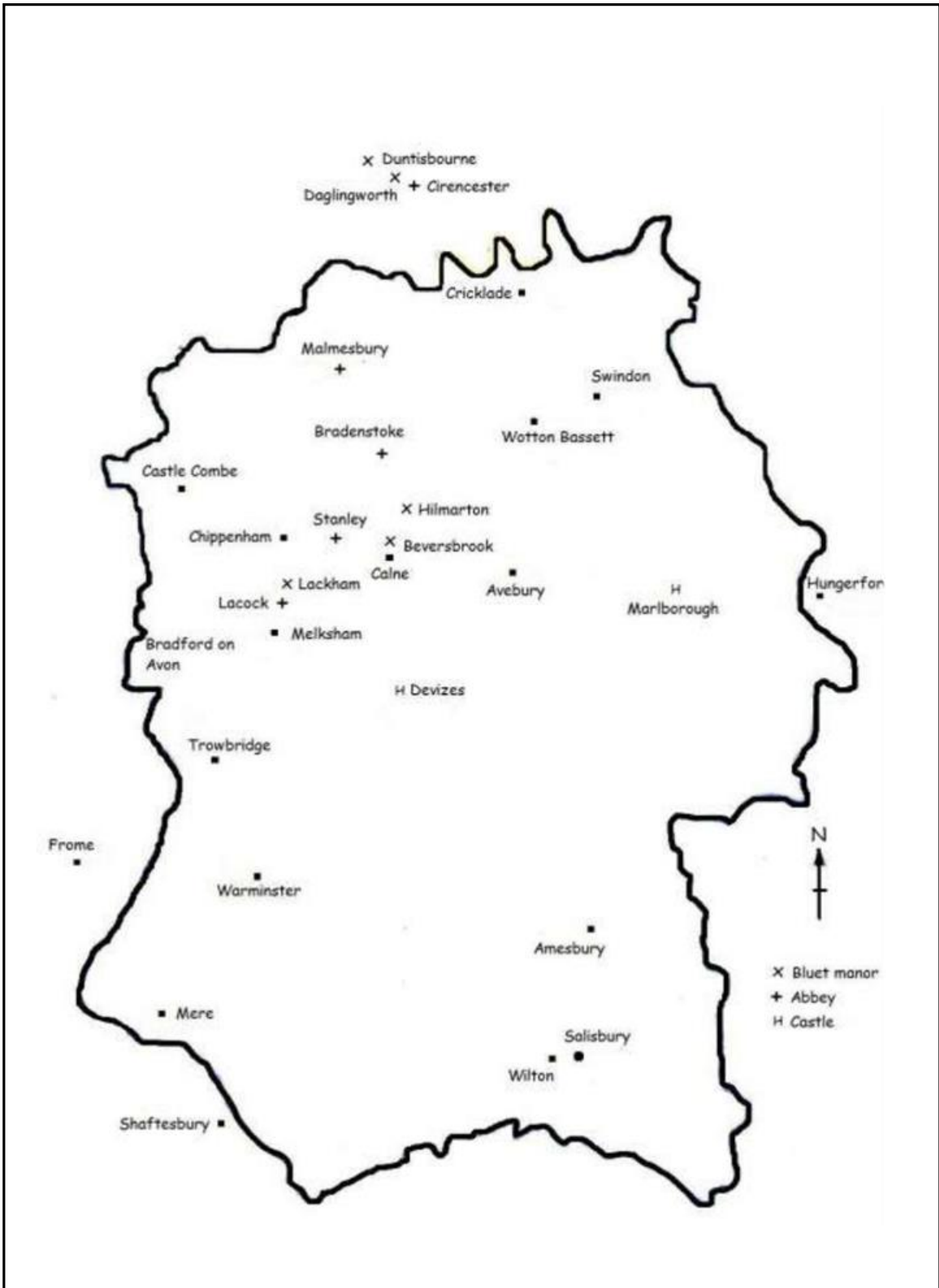


Fig. 3 Wiltshire, showing some places mentioned in the text *

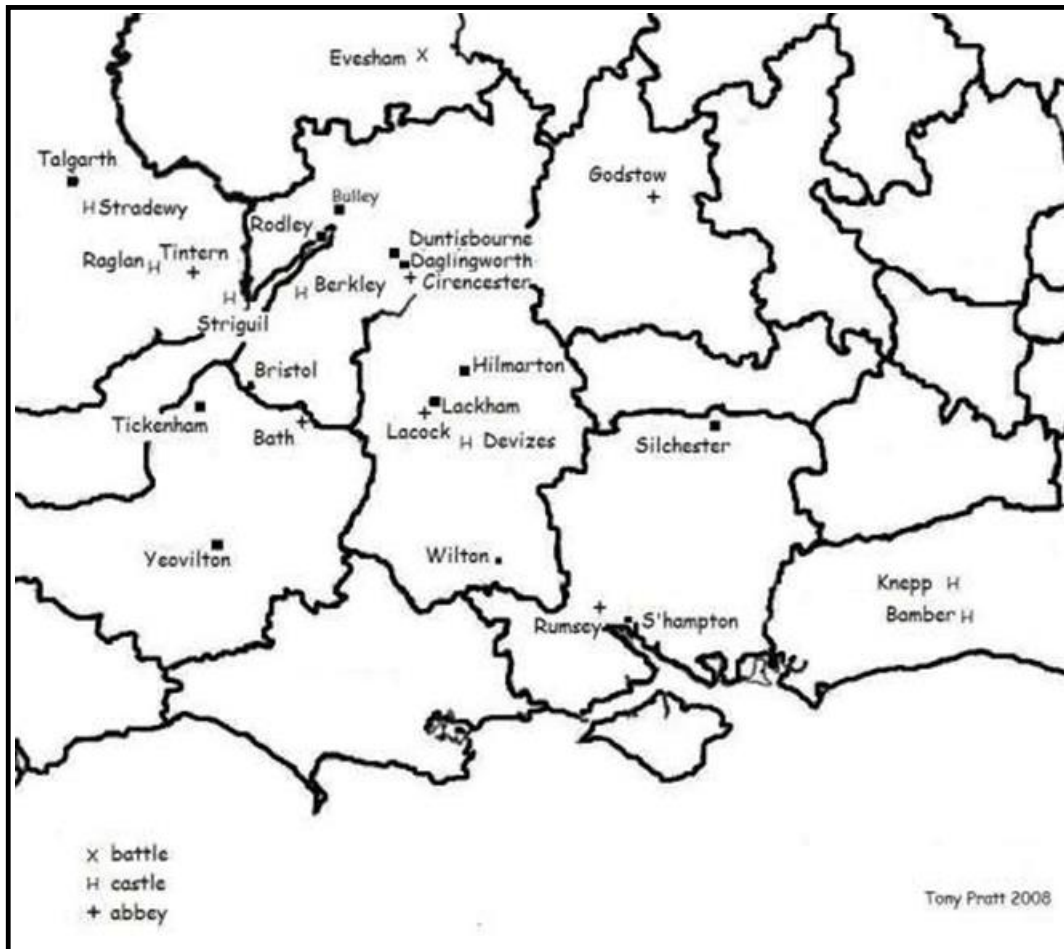


Fig. 4 Area map to show some places mentioned in text [*](#)
 If visiting from below click [here](#) to return to the footnote

Fosbroke maintains that a junior branch of the Bluet family held Daglingworth, the senior branch being settled in Wiltshire³² which probably means Lackham. Daglingworth is now another small, quiet and very attractive village, its early house platforms clearly visible to the south of the narrow lane that leads to the village from

³² Fosbroke (1807) *Abstracts of records and manuscripts respecting the county of Gloucester; Formed into a history, correcting the very erroneous accounts*, Vol 1 p23

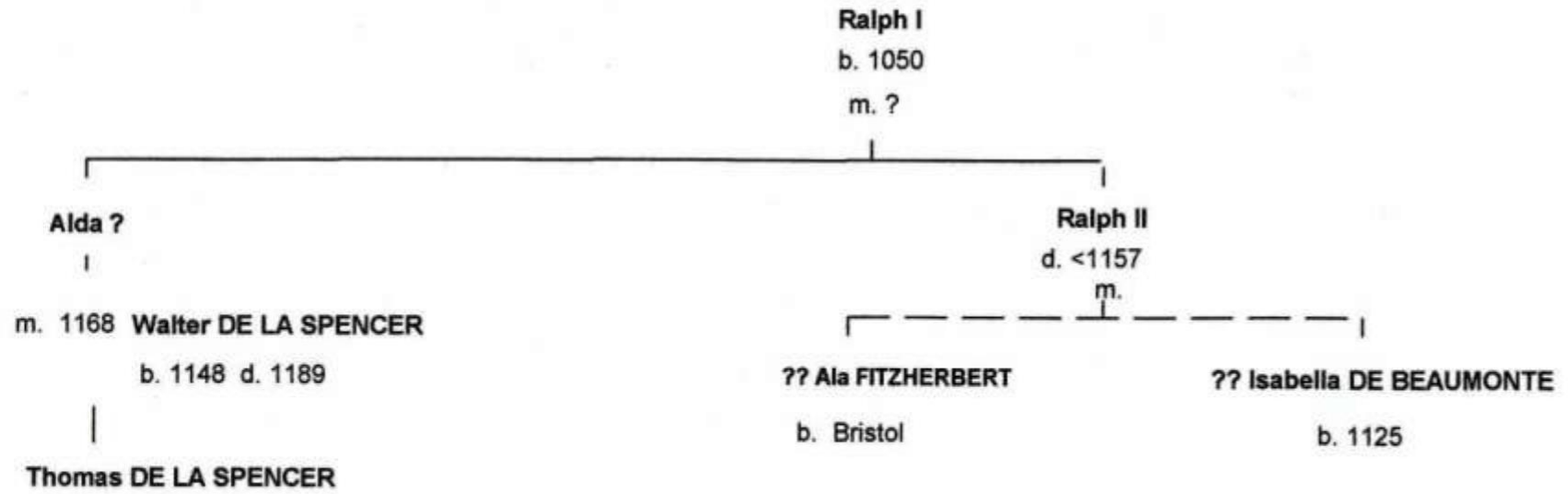


Fig. 5 Children of Ralph I *

Cirencester. Unfortunately the church here, as at Duntisbourne, was *improved* by the Victorians and little remains from before the mid 19th century, save three lovely Saxon carvings built into the walls.

The Bluets, as might be inferred from what has already been seen, were an important family at this period; as indicated at the start they were not usually one of the families that were tenants in chief, holding directly of the Crown, but of considerable weight on the national scale. They were part of the *mesnie*, household knights, of the de Clares before that family's lands passed to William Marshal by his marriage to Isabel de Clare (née de Beaumont)



de Clare³³



Marshal³⁴

Fig. 6 Arms of de Clare and Marshal³⁵ *

They became household knights with the new and powerful Earl of Pembroke. He was

*one of the most noteworthy knights of the Middle Ages. After almost being killed by King Stephen when he was a child, William grew up to be a prominent tournament competitor, and then a soldier, serving in several campaigns. After the death of King John in 1216, William fulfilled the task of regent for the young Henry III, and led English forces to victory at the Battle of Lincoln in 1217.*³⁶

³³ De Clare *or three chevrons gules*

³⁴ Marshal *Per pale or and vert overall a lion rampant gules*

³⁵ by permission of Brian Timms at <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/era/early%20rolls%20of%20arms.htm>

³⁶ Crouch, D (1993) *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147 - 1219* p139

and so it is not surprising that it has been said that

*The tenants who appear in the Marshal's entourage...
were all very significant men.* ³⁷

Ralph I was succeeded by his son, Ralph II, of whom a bit more is known and even more surmised.

Ralph Bluet I's wife is something of a problem. Smyth ³⁸ states clearly that he married Ala Fitz-Harding the daughter of Nicholas Fitz-Robert Fitz-Harding and his wife Ala de Gloucester ³⁹. Ala Fitz-Harding was born in Bristol. She has also been called Alice of Berkeley ⁴⁰ and the records of the Lords of Berkeley Castle ⁴¹ show that Nicholas FitzRobert, of Tickenham in Somerset, had

³⁷ Crouch, D (1993) *ibid*

³⁸ John Smyth of Nibley wrote *The Berkeley Manuscripts*, which is elsewhere referenced under its editor, Sir John Maclean

³⁹ Originally Ala was from Tickenham; The Berkeley family records show that "This Nicholas [Berkeley] had to wife Ala daughter and coheire of Guido also widowed son of Tecius lord of Tickenham (The footnote to this entry shows an interesting link with Lackham - 'Two manors of Tichkenham are mentioned in the Somerset Domesday. One was held by William de Ou, in demesne and the other by Arnulph de Hesding. The first was afterwards held of the honor of Striguil and the other was parcel to the honor of Gloucester, one was purchased by Robert Fitzharding and the other acquired by marriage with the co-heir of Guiod son of Tecius) by which marriage his estate in Tickenham and in divers fair lands in the counties of Somerset, Cambridge &co was greatly advanced'.

This Ala in many of her Deeds of widowhood revered her husband's memory with these words *dominus vir meus Nicholaus* and *dominus meus Nicholaus my lord and husband; my lord Nicholas* and the like

⁴⁰ <http://www.radicalruss.net/family/web/ancestors/pafg58.htm#41564>
Born about 1120 in Bristol. Mr Belville identifies Ala's mother as being Alice de Berkley, which doesn't totally contradict Ala de Gloucester, the marriage being in 1134

⁴¹ Maclean, J (ed) (1883) *The Berkley Manuscripts Vol I The Lives of the Berkeleys* p46

issue Henry, who after mans estate, died without issue. And Roger , Jordan and Ala [Alice] married to Ralph Bloet with whom her said father gave in marriage theManor of Langstan ⁴².

Support for this marriage may be found in the fact that 4 generations later the Manor of Langston was still held by the Bluet family ⁴³.

All well and good, and then Karen's research brought to our attention a charter in the PRO at Kew, which mentions *Williamus Bloet fra[ter] Comes Richard*⁴⁴ The only Earl Richard at this period is Richard (Strongbow) de Clare There are two possible marriages to would allow this. Firstly it might be that Ralph Bluet II married Isabel de Beaumont (the widow of Gilbert de Clare sometime after her husband's death in 1148 and that the William referred to is his son ⁴⁵. Or it might be that William himself married one of Isabel's daughters. Direct evidence of either is missing, but circumstantial evidence for Ralph marrying Isabel can be found. In the charters of Tintern Abbey (founded in 1131, by Walter de Clare ⁴⁶) there is a list of benefactors of the abbey ⁴⁷.

⁴² Maclean, J (ed) (1883) *ibid* A footnote mentions that – *Two manors of Tickenham are mentioned in the Somerset Domesday. One was held by William d'Eu in demesne and the other by Arnulph de Hesding The first was afterwards held of Striguil, and the other was a parcel of the honour of Gloucester. One was purchased by Fitzharding and one was acquired by marriage with the co-heir of Guido son of Tecius*

This Guido was Roger FitzNicholas' maternal grandfather, so Tickenam passed to Roger through his mother, who was also called Ala

⁴³ Sir John Bluet is shown holding Langston and Wytestone in 1315 [*Inquisition Post Mortem* vol V Edw II no 538 IPM of Gilbert de Clare earl of Gloucestershire and Hertford⁷ held at Monmouth 28 Sept 8 Edw II (1315), John held by service of two knights fees]

⁴⁴ PRO E327 / 298

⁴⁵ Richardson, D at

http://groups.google.com/group/soc.genealogy.medieval/browse_thread/thread/44902731e8083f9f/acd4426c3ffb0d41?hl=en&lnk=gst&q=bluet#acd4426c3ffb0d41
May 11 2007

⁴⁶ Notably the grandson of Walter FitzPatrick who was then Count of Eu

⁴⁷ Dugdale, Sir W (1825) *Monasticon Anglicanum: a History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies, in England and Wales* Vol 5 p266 see Appendix I for transcription

Richardson notes that this

*... list of obits is for the founders ["fundatorum"] of the Abbey [that is, the Clare family], and their near kinsfolk ["genere propinquo eorum"]. Included among the people on this list is Walter FitzRichard founder of the Abbey, and many of his other well known Clare relations. Curiously, this list includes an obit for Ralph Bluet the younger, whose obit was commemorated on the 13th of July, presumably the date of his death: "Radulfus Bloeth junior obiit xiiij die Julii." While the inclusion of Ralph Bluet's obit in this list of Clare kinsfolk is not concrete proof of an intermarriage between Isabel de Beaumont and the Bluet family, this is certainly good supporting evidence that the Bluet and Clare families were near related to one another.*⁴⁸

It should be noted that not everyone on the list was a de Clare relative, the King and Queen of France for example,⁴⁹ but it is significant that every single one of those mentioned is either major aristocracy or a Marshal of England, with the exception of Ralph Bluet..... [See [Appendix 1](#) for a transcription of this document, taken from Dugdale.]

Even more telling is a charter, located by Douglas Richardson, which the Countess Isabel de Beaumont witnessed for her son, Earl Richard Strongbow, in about 1170. Immediately following Countess Isabel's name is that of her illegitimate daughter Isabel, followed by Ralph and Walter Bluet⁵⁰. This can be seen as strongly suggestive that they were important, maybe even evidence that they were her sons by Ralph Bluet II. If so this would make Ralph Bluet III a half brother of Strongbow. From a timeline point of view there is enough time for Ralph to have married both Ala and Isabel, but whether he was married to one, or the other, or both is unclear. Isabel appears to have survived as late as 1172.

⁴⁸ Richardson, D at

http://groups.google.com/group/soc.genealogy.medieval/browse_thread/thread/44902731e8083f9f/acd4426c3ffb0d41?hl=en&lnk=gst&q=bluet#acd4426c3ffb0d41 ibid

⁴⁹ MA-R at

http://groups.google.com/group/soc.genealogy.medieval/browse_thread/thread/44902731e8083f9f/acd4426c3ffb0d41?hl=en&lnk=gst&q=bluet#acd4426c3ffb0d41 May 11 2007

⁵⁰ Richardson, D Pers. Comm May 2007

However Dr. Crouch has suggested ⁵¹ that this relationship between William and Count Richard could be explained by William marrying one of Isabel's two daughters. The first, Basila was a full daughter to Richard. If William married her he would certainly have been *frat Comes Richard*. She actually married twice but neither of her husbands was William. The first was Raymond FitzGerald ⁵², (le Gros) and the second Geoffrey FitzRobert, Lord of Kells and Leinster ⁵³. Isabel's other daughter was not Earl Gilbert's at all, but was one of the many illegitimate children of King Henry I. By the King Isabela had the daughter who was also called Isabel ⁵⁴. This sounds promising, as a marriage to an illegitimate daughter of the countess would not give William any rights to lands, and so would not excite much notice and might account for it not being widely recorded. However it is known that Isabel did not marry but lived with her mother even after the death of Earl Gilbert ⁵⁵. Another point against William marrying Isabel is that she was a daughter of King Henry I, albeit an illegitimate one, and the marriages of his illegitimate children are known ⁵⁶. It is very unlikely that William could marry a royal bastard without it being noted, even when there were as many around as there were for Henry I. At the moment it is not possible to say which of the explanations is correct. Figs. 5 & 7 show both possibilities, with question marks to emphasise that neither can be proven. We hesitate to offer even a guess at which is more likely .

Assuming that the marriage to Ala did take place this gives a link between the Bluet family and the family which includes the Berkeleys, although they are on a different line. Fig 6a is presented to show this possible linkage.

⁵¹ In several places, for example Crouch, D (2006) *William Marshal, Knighthood, War and Chivalry 1147 - 1219* p149 and, in more detail, Crouch D (1986) *Strategies of Lordship in Angevin England and the Career of William Marshal* in Harper-Bill, C and Harvey, R (1986) *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood II*. Papers from the Third Strawberry Hill Conference 1986 p17 fn 54

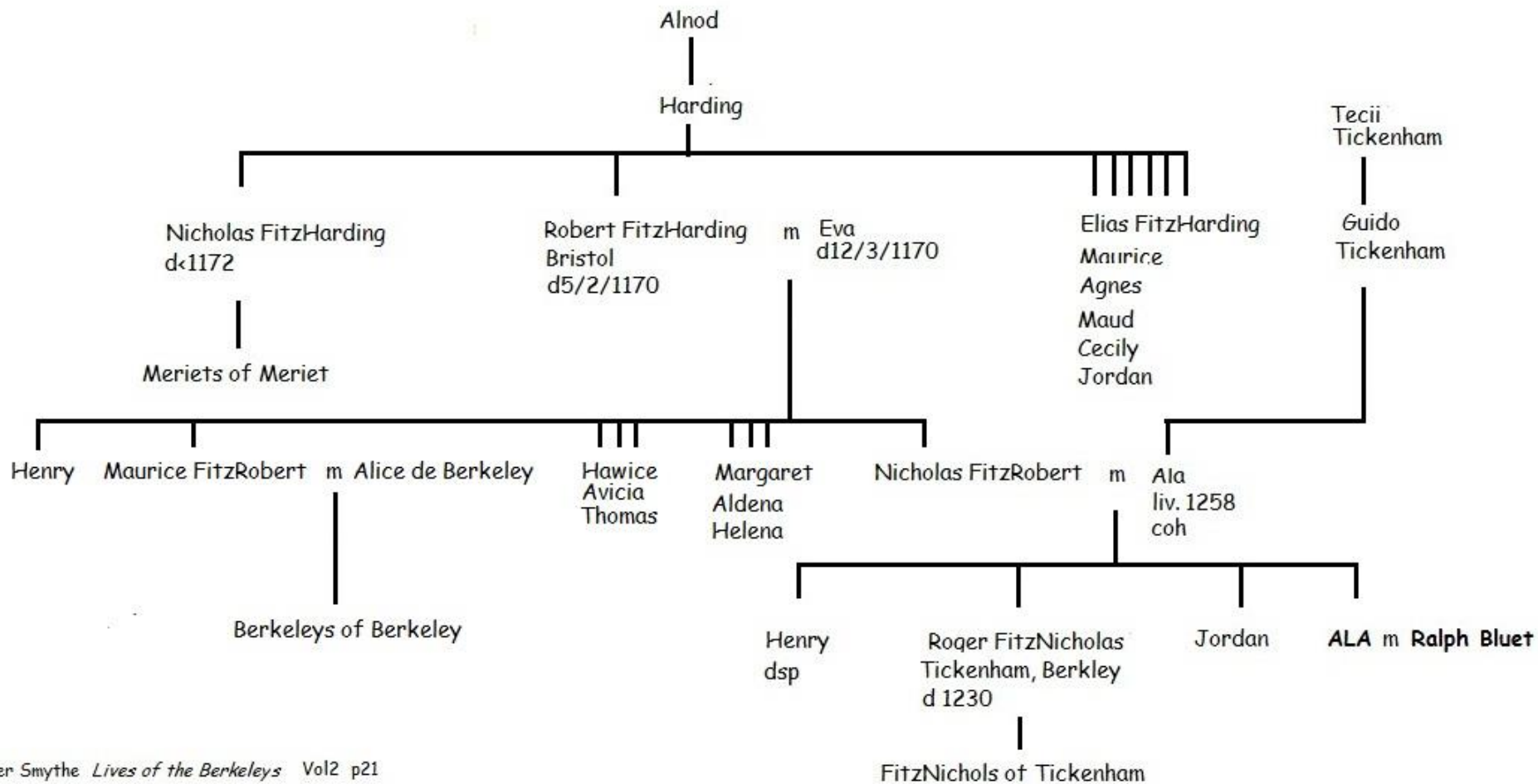
⁵² Died c1188 and celebrated as a *prudomme* - a man of vivacity and fine intelligence (*animi virtus*) by his cousin Gerald of Wales [Crouch, D(2005) *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France 900 - 1300* Pearson Longman, Harlow p45]

⁵³ Cokayne, GE *Complete Peerage* Vol 10 Appendix H

⁵⁴ Cokayne, GE *Complete Peerage* Vol 11 Appendix D

⁵⁵ Cokayne, GE *Complete Peerage* Vol 10 Appendix H

⁵⁶ Cokayne, GE *Complete Peerage* Vol 10 Appendix H



After Smythe *Lives of the Berkeleyys* Vol2 p21

Fig 6a Berkeley - Bluet link *

Note that NicholasFitzRobert is chronologically between Thomas and Margaret

In the charters of Godstow abbey there is one that is almost certainly by Ralph II ⁵⁷; it deals with the gift of the alms of the church at Duntisbourne, which has already been seen to have been one of the Bluet's manors at Domesday.

This charter can be dated to Ralph II because, unusually, it mentions someone whose dates are known and very limited - John Pagham the Bishop of Worcester between 1151 and 1157 ⁵⁸. Any date within this range is too early for a charter of Ralph III. This charter is useful in that it mentions that Ralph Bloet his mother and his brethren gave the alms of the church to Godstow. This is the only reference found so far to Ralph II having brothers.

This charter confirms that the alms were a nun's dower for their sister to serve god and Saint John at Godstow. Who this was is unclear. It has been suggested ⁵⁹ that Ralph Bluet II had a sister Alda, born 1149, who married Walter de Spencer but it has not been possible to confirm this. If this date is correct then it is possible that the sister mentioned in this charter was Alda entering Godstow around age 7. The young Oderic Vitalis was originally going to have been that age when he entered the monastery, but it wasn't possible until he was 10 ⁶⁰. Children were entered into religious orders, there was even a term for them - child oblates .

The children vowed and given by their parents to the monastic life, in houses under the Rule of St. Benedict, were commonly known by the name during the century and a half when the custom was in vogue, and the councils of the

⁵⁷ Clark A (1905) *The English Register of Godstow Nunnery* Part 1 no 155 pp134-135

⁵⁸ Le Neve, J & Hardy, JD (1854) *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae* vol III p49
Consecrated 4th March 1151, died at Rome 31st March 1157. It is noted that *Rott. Profess.* has him being consecrated 6th April 1151 not the 8th

⁵⁹ Gearhart, T; LDS (Church of Latter Days Saints) submission Search: 2549474-0115104090804 ; CD-ROM: Pedigree Resource File - Compact Disc #84, as notified to us by Michael Blewett, our thanks to him for clarifying the source. It should be noted, however, that this is an LDS submission file, and so should be treated with extreme caution (as should much of the LDS data) as these are not usually checked or peer reviewed in any way at all. No other evidence for Alda has so far been found and assertions of her existence must be speculative at best.

⁶⁰ Chibnall, M (1984) *The World of Oderic Vitalis: Norman Monks and Norman Knights* p16

*Church treated them as monks—that is, until the Council of Toledo (656) forbade their acceptance before the age of ten*⁶¹

It is noted that under the rule of the Council of Toledo Alda could not have been entering Godstow as an oblate until 1159 (if her birth date was 1149), which is too late for the dates for this charter. If this charter refers to Alda's nun's dowery then she must necessarily have been born before 1147, at the latest. It is noted that oblates had free permission to leave the monastery, if they wished, when they reached the age of puberty⁶² and so she could have left the nunnery and married de Spencer as suggested. However it is not possible for this sister to be a young girl; Ralph I died around 1112, and even if this is not entirely correct he would have been close to 100 in 1149, certainly not fathering children.

She cannot be a daughter of Ralph II because that would make the charter by Ralph III, who is too young to be issuing charters in 1151-1157. She must, therefore, be a sister to Ralph II and have been born by about 1110, which would make her between 40 and 50 at the time of this charter. It is possible that she entered Godstow after William de Spencer died. Unfortunately no trace of William de Spence.r apart from the reference by Gearhart, has been found⁶³ either and the supposed date of his death is unknown. All that can be said with any degree of conviction is that Ralph II had a sister who was a nun of Godstow, she might have been called Alda but this cannot be substantiated.

To turn to the children of Ralph II (see [Fig. 7](#) below) and whichever of his suggested wives was their mother - Ralph II died before 1157 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Ralph III, who was important man in the Marches. He took his father's place in the Marshal household.

⁶¹ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oblate_\(religion\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oblate_(religion))

⁶¹ [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oblate_\(religion\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oblate_(religion))

⁶³ There is a William de Spencer at the right period (born 1100) but he didn't marry a Bluet, he married Alix Ala de Bourgogne.

18

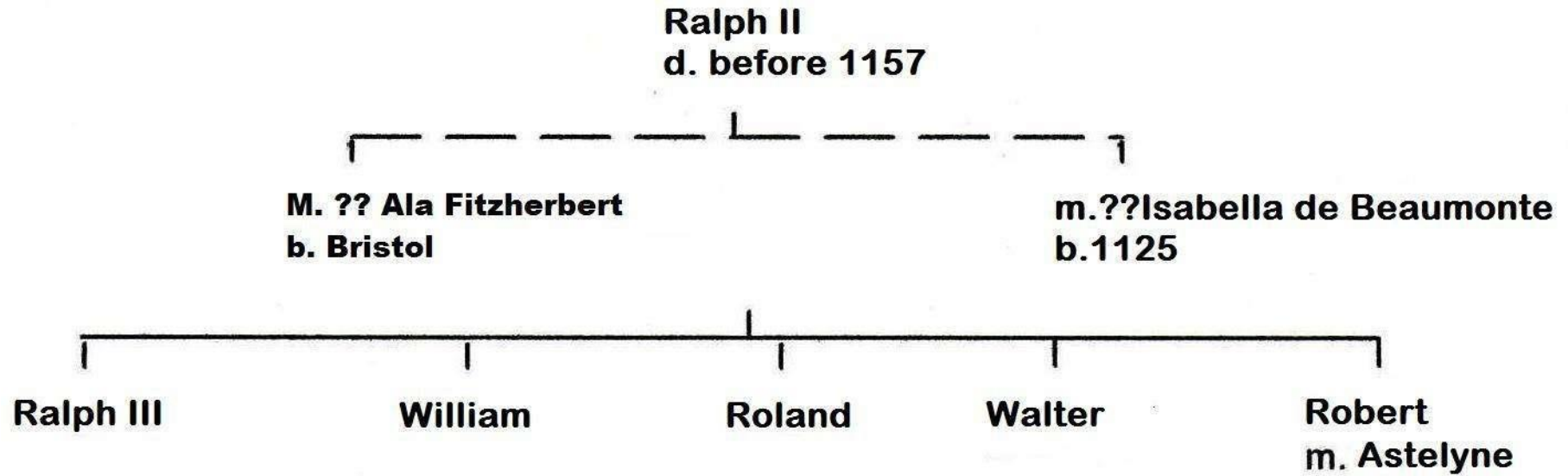


Fig. 7 Children of Ralph II *

To return to the text click [here](#)

It has been said that Ralph III was the most important⁶⁴ of William Marshal's tenants, indeed he had been one of the people who delivered the honor of Striguil and its Castle (Chepstow) to the Marshal when Marshal inherited it in 1189. How Ralph came to be responsible for the honor is a little involved⁶⁵: the original heir to the honor was Gilbert de Clare a minor, and in 1185 custody of the honor had been given jointly,⁶⁶ to William Bluet, and Ralph III who was one of the barons of the honor and, if the suggestion that Ralph II had married Isabel is correct, they would have been Gilbert's (step or half) uncles. Gilbert died young in 1185 and his sister Isabel, whom the Marshal married in 1189, became the heiress. William Bluet also died in 1185 and the honor was then administered jointly by William de St Leger and Ralph Bluet on behalf of Isabel before her marriage. Isabel herself was a ward of the King and kept in the Tower before her marriage. It would have been these men [Bluet and St Leger] who delivered *seisin* of the honor to William Marshal in 1189⁶⁷. Ralph III wasn't only important in the Marches, he inherited Lackham and Silchester - and other estates, of course.

Until recently it was a given that Ralph III only married Nest, a sister of the ruler of Caerleon. However research by Paul Reed⁶⁸ has suggested

⁶⁴ Crouch, D (1993) *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147 - 1219* p134

⁶⁵ Crouch D (1986) *Strategies of Lordship in Angevin England and the Career of William Marshal* in Harper-Bill, C and Harvey, R (1986) *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood II. Papers from the Third Strawberry Hill Conference 1986* p17

⁶⁶ Pipe Rolls 31 Hen II Pipe Roll Society (1903) Vol XXXIV (most of the entry is omitted)
HONOR DE STRIGVIL,
de anno integro.

Radulfus Bloet et Willelmus Bloet reddt. comp. de .xx. 1. de firma de Striguil..... Et in liberatione .iij. vigilum et janitoris castelli .xvij. s. Et comitisse de Strigoil .ij. m.

Et debet .xxij. I. et .ij. s. et .iij. ob..

⁶⁷ Crouch, D (1993) *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147 - 1219* p134

⁶⁸ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset Foundation* (2008) 2 (6) 395-397

that Ralph III had another wife before this, the mother of his eldest son Ralph IV, who was born before 1178⁶⁹ and probably his daughter Emma who may have been his eldest child⁷⁰. Nothing is known of this period of his life, who his wife was or when they married and it remains unproven. At about the same time as his eldest son's birth Ralph granted the Avowson of his manor at Daglingworth, being run by his brother William, to the Abbey of Godstow in Surrey.

Nest's parents⁷¹ were possibly Iowerth ap Owain, Lord of Caerleon, and Angharad, daughter of Uchtyrd the Bishop of Llandaff⁷²; it has been maintained that Angharad [was] Gruffudd's mother, and his wife [was] Ealdgyth, daughter of Aelfgar of Mercia⁷³ but it seems likely that the descent given above is correct. Iowerth's association with Caerleon was that of conquest⁷⁴. He was the son and heir of Caradog ap Gruffudd⁷⁵. It is said that [Iowerth] and his brother Morgan ambushed and killed Richard de Clare near

⁶⁹ The actual birth date for Ralph IV is not known, but as he was of age in 1199 he must have been born by 1178 at the latest, maybe considerably earlier

⁷⁰ A birth date for Emma of before 1187 seems possible. Although not proven Fig 9, shows Paul Reed's suggested lineage

⁷¹ We would like to express our gratitude to Paul Reed for patiently pointing out serious errors in our original version of this section and for his help and encouragement

⁷² Bradney, Sir Joseph A. (1904-33) *A history of Monmouthshire : from the coming of the Normans into Wales down to the present time*. Vol 3 (Hundred of Usk) p190 [Facsimile edition pub Merton Priory Press, 1993]

⁷³ Shortridge B (2004) in *Corrections to K S B Keats-Rohan's, "Domesday Descendants"* p846 at <http://fmg.ac/Projects/Domesday/Desc3.htm>. The authorities quoted are given as Lloyd, J E (1911). *History of Wales*, 2: p367 n.31, chart p767, Davies, J (1993). *History of Wales* p83, chart 101 and Williams, A (1995). *The English and the Norman Conquest* p52 chart, p53 n.33. Note that the authorities listed here have not been checked and are not included in the bibliography

⁷⁴ Raviolus, J.P. posting in GenMed at http://groups.google.com/group/soc.genealogy.medieval/browse_thread/thread/b8953f98e693336a/6600295db78c8eaa?lnk=gst&q=iowerth+caerleon#6600295db78c8eaa

⁷⁵ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) p396

Abergavenny in 1135⁷⁶

Iowerth fought against the English at other times -

*In 1172, Iorwerth, with a large body of Welshmen, destroyed all the country with fire and sword to the gates of Gloucester.*⁷⁷

Then in 1175 the King held a great Council for the quelling of the Welsh⁷⁸
*And Iowerth did homage to Henry II at Gloucester*⁷⁸.

It is said that Nest was mistress of King Henry II and wife of Sir Ralph Bluet⁷⁹ Henry II had a number of illegitimate children⁸⁰ and it is known he

*had a son, Morgan, by a noble Welshwoman called Nest, the wife of Sir Ralph Bloet, a northern knight who had settled on the Welsh Marches*⁸¹

although why Weir claims Ralph was a northern knight is not clear, in the *Annals Dunelmenses* is found only

Henricus rex pater Iohannis regis genuerat eum de uxore cuiusdam militis Angli dicti Radulfi Bloet

[King Henry, father of King John, engendered him [Morgan] on the wife of a certain English knight called Ralph Bloet

⁷⁶ Ravilious, JP posting on soc.genealogy.medieval

[http://groups.google.com/group/soc.genealogy.medieval/browse_thread/thread/b8953f98e693336a/3d37a429e6c47ee1?lnk=gst&q=nest#3d37a429e6c47ee1] Dec 2002, giving a link to a report from Cardiff University Theoretical Archaeology Group, Cardiff 1999, which at the time of writing was non functional

⁷⁷ <http://www.britannia.com/history/city/glos.html> - *History of the City of Gloucester, Gloucestershire Roman Town to Parliamentary City*

⁷⁸ <http://www.britannia.com/history/city/glos.html> ibid

⁷⁹ Bradney, Sir Joseph A. (1904-33) *A history of Monmouthshire : from the coming of the Normans into Wales down to the present time*. Vol 3 (Hundred of Usk) p190 [Facsimile edition pub Merton Priory Press, 1993]

⁸⁰ Batrum, PC (1980) *Welsh Genealogies AD 300-1400*.

⁸¹ Weir, A (1999) *Eleanor of Aquitaine* Cape p98

⁸²}]

[the Angli / English here is noted - it is often debated when the Normans started thinking of themselves as English. Certainly that is the case here but it is not surprising considering this was getting on for 150 years, and several generations, after the Conquest].

From the Annals it appears that Nest was married to Ralph III at the time, and Morgan was certainly known as Morgan Bloet, but it isn't proof; as Crouch says ⁸³ at best it implies it.

It is possible that Nest and Henry met when the king visited her brother Iowerth, in either 1172 or again in 1175. The date at which Ralph Bluet and Nest married is not known, from a consideration of when Ralph's son Ralph came of age it might have been 1175. Henry II does not appear to have been in the habit of seducing wives; as far as is known all his mistresses were unmarried at the time but that doesn't mean Nest was free. It is likely that the chronology will never be known with certainty, if pressed we would probably come down on Morgan being conceived around 1172 and before Nest married Ralph Bluet, but we emphasize this is speculative. Whatever the case Morgan would appear to have been brought up in his mother's household, and would have been a half brother to Ralph and Nest's children. It would seem likely that he was named after Nest's uncle.

Morgan is well known and documented, apart from his date of birth, he was appointed provost of Beverly Castle in 1201 and bishop elect of Durham in 1213 ⁸⁴. His appointment was contested on the grounds of bastardy and, in 1213,

he sought papal confirmation for his election to the see of Durham. It was not altogether an auspicious year in which to be pursuing an appointment which had King John's blessing, for, until Pope Innocent received John's abject submission in June, the interdict which had blighted the spiritual and

⁸² in Barlow, F (1945) *Durham Annals and Documents of the Thirteenth Century* Surtees Soc vol clv pp1-2. Our thanks to Dr. Crouch for making this information available to us

⁸³ Crouch, D (2003) Bluet article in *Dictionary of National Biography* vol 6

⁸⁴ Given in -Wilson, C & Curteis, A (1984) *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England* Routledge & Keegan Paul ISBN 0 7102 0025 0 p99

*political life of England for some years was not lifted and Innocent was hardly likely to be generous with dispensations for bastardy in the English king's favour. Apparently Pope Innocent felt sorry for Morgan, for he had come all the way to Rome in good faith hoping for the papal blessing, and now found himself unexpectedly disappointed. The pope therefore called him aside, and told him that if he was prepared to swear that he was really the son of Ralph and his wife Nest, rather than of the king and Nest, then he would very readily confirm him as bishop of Durham, but that if he continued to insist that he was the son of King Henry, then his illegitimate birth obliged Innocent to refuse confirmation. This put poor Morgan in a quandary: whether to deny his royal blood, or to forgo his hopes of a bishopric. He retired to consult with a friend. The friend's advice was unequivocal: on no account must a man deny his royal blood, a far more worthy endowment than a bishopric. So Morgan returned to the pope, told him that it was unthinkable that he should deny his father the king, and went away a disappointed man.*⁸⁵

Morgan later resigned his benefices after taking the cross and died on Pilgrimage before 1217. He was buried in Fountains Abbey⁸⁶

In Wiltshire it is Ralph III who is the neighbour in an agreement with the Earl of Salisbury⁸⁷ concerning the church at Lacock sometime between 1168 and 1179⁸⁸. In this charter Earl William and Ralph agree that, as they have common patronage of St Cyriac's church at Lacock, they will formalise how the priests are appointed to do away with all discord, which would imply there had been some. They agreed that

one of them shall have the gift of the church for one turn and present a suitable parson to it, on whose death the gift shall come back to the other patron... it is further agreed that

⁸⁵ Given in -Wilson, C & Curteis, A (1984) *The Royal Bastards of Medieval England* Routledge & Keegan Paul ISBN 0 7102 0025 0 p99

⁸⁶ Barlow (1945) (ed) *Durham Annals and Documents of the Thirteenth Century* Surtees Soc. 115 1-2, p130

⁸⁷ William de Evereux, 1150 - 1196, his second wife was Ela, of whom much more later

⁸⁸ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* Wiltshire Record Society, (hereafter WRS) Devizes ISBN 0 9091333 115 no 29 p18 dated 1168 - 1179

*neither of them... shall give the church to religious or otherwise
so that one by means of the other may lose the gift*⁸⁹

This agreement has been quoted at length as it led to later issues for the Bluets.....

One of the witnesses to this agreement was Richard, the Sheriff Richard de Wilton was Sheriff of Wiltshire between 1164 and 1181

In the second half of the twelfth century Ralph granted the church at his manor of Daglingworth to the nunnery at Godstow⁹⁰. Clark dates this to about 1155 but the only dating evidence is that one of the witnesses is Matthew the archdeacon of Gloucester, who died in 1177 so any time before this is a possible date. The other witnesses⁹¹ survive into the next century, so don't help with the dating, although they might indicate a date closer to 1177 than 1155.

On the same sheet as the Daglingworth charter is another in which Ralph grants the church at Duntisbourne to Godstow as well. According to Clark the wording is exactly the same as the Daglingworth one. As already seen Ralph's brother Walter confirmed the grant⁹², interestingly Ralph the donor is a witness to this confirmation.

Little is known of Ralph II's son Robert, but he appears to have married Astelyn who pre-deceased him⁹³. He was of age by, at latest

⁸⁹ Rogers, KH (ed) (1980) *ibid*

⁹⁰ Clark A (1905) *The English Register of Godstow Nunnery* Part 1 p130 no 146

⁹¹ These were Robert de Meysi, and Robert de Evercide Meysi is found in various charters, for example he is mentioned in the charters of Sibton Abbey in Suffolk [Brown, P (1987)(ed) *Sibton Abbey Cartularies & Charters*, Part III, vol VIII p215., Suffolk Records Society] and from this it is known that he was married to Joan of Bramfield in about 1200 and had a brother Roger (d <1211) and a daughter Nicola who married Roger de Leiston. Less is found for de Averci but his heiress was married to Sir Ralph de Wilington and de Averci held land in Gloucester and Worcester in 1208, including some at Yate, near Bristol [http://www.celtic-casimir.com/webtree/6/32819.htm *Sir Ralph DE WILINGTON of Ablington & Yate General Notes*] unfortunately this site does not give the references for the charters from which this information was obtained

⁹² Clark A (1905) *The English Register of Godstow Nunnery* Part 1 p130 no 147

⁹³ London, VMC (1979) *The Bradenstoke Cartulary* WRS no 65 p46

1203, and survived until at least 1260 and witnessed a number of Wiltshire charters.

Robert certainly held land of the Bassett family; sometime between 1244 and 1271 he undertook not to sell any of his lands to one Stephen Froumond, or any others, without the consent of his liege lord, Philip Bassett ⁹⁴

It is possible that Robert and Astelyn had a son called William. Evidence for William's existence comes from the Godstow charters; in the first quarter of the thirteenth century William Bluet confirmed the gifting of Daglingworth church to Godstow which Ralph III made, and "*which his uncles Ralph and Walter gave and granted and confirmed*" ⁹⁵ For both Ralph and Walter to be his uncle this William has to be the son of one of the other children of Ralph II and not Ralph II's son, and Robert is the most likely candidate. Proof of this is lacking and it is speculative, but other issue of Ralph I are known, and Walter does not appear amongst them.

Not much is known of Walter of Ragland, another son of Ralph II,

Gift in alms by Robert Bluet for the soul of Astelyne his wife. The grant is undated but the witness list places it sometime between 1236-56

⁹⁴ *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds*: Volume 4 (1902), pp. 84-96 Deeds: A.6801 - A.6900. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64383>

Undertaking by Robert Bluet, knight, that he will not sell or alienate any of his lands or rents to Stephen Fromund, or any other, without the licence of Philip Basset, his lord, under penalty of any such lands or rents so alienated being entered upon by his said lord for satisfaction. Witnesses:—Sirs William de Insula, and Robert de Camera, Gilbert de Gerpundevile, and others (named). Seal

⁹⁵ Clark, A (1905) *ibid* pp130-131 no. 148 dated about 1220 by Clark

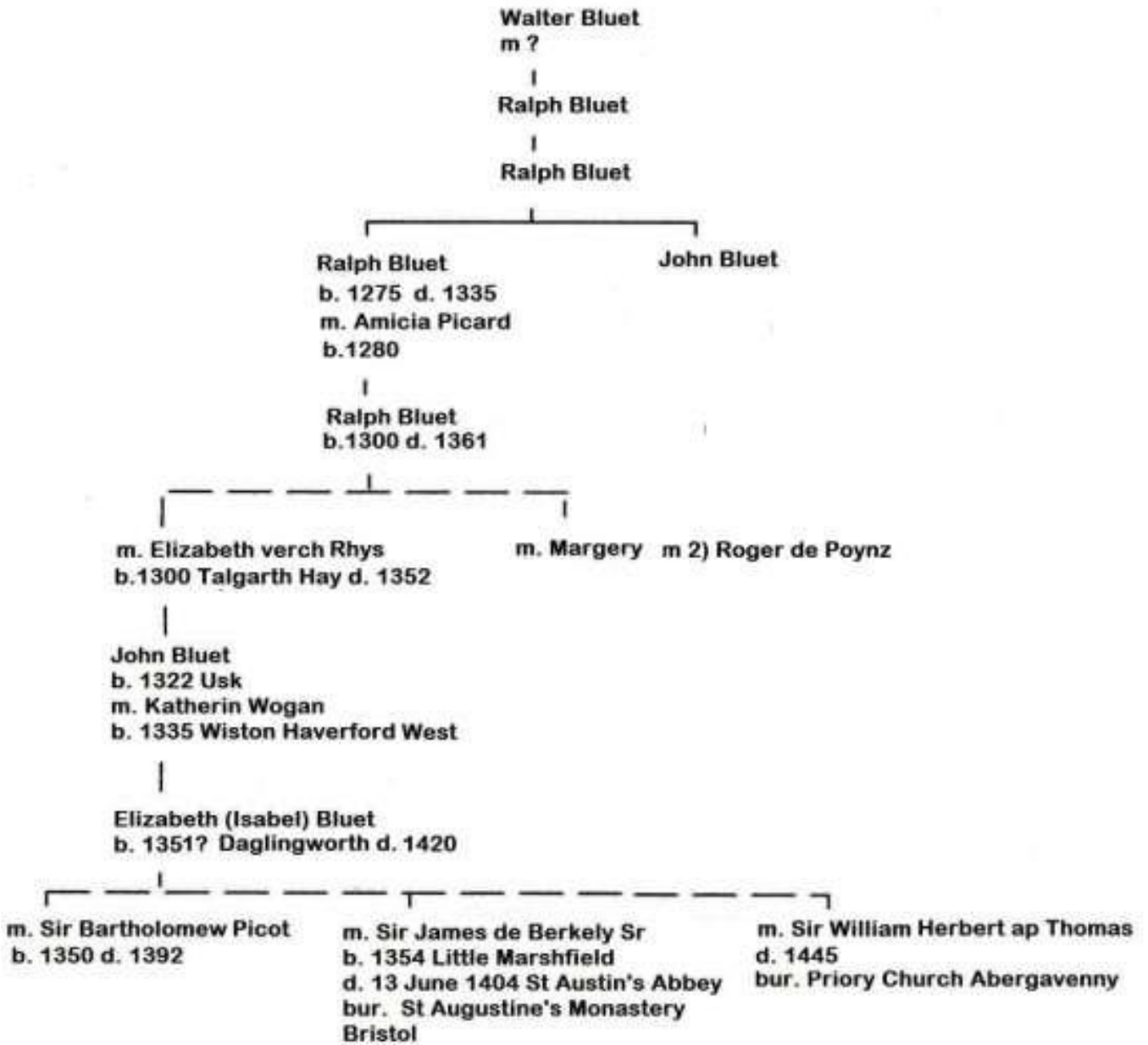


Fig. 8 Descendents of Walter Bluet *

If visiting from Elizabeth below click [here](#) to return to the footnote

If visiting from Petronella below click [here](#) to return

except that he and his brother died in the continuing warfare in Wales after the withdrawal of the French forces in 1217 and the ascendancy of the Bluet's patron, William Marshal. Several of his descendents, however, were involved in national events and are worth discussing.

The first was Walter's son Ralph, who witnessed a charter of Grace Dieu abbey in 1267. Paul Reed ⁹⁶ has shown that this cannot be either Ralph IV

⁹⁶ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) p395 fn27

or Ralph V and is an unrecognised Bluet having previously been assumed to have been Ralph IV or Ralph V.

Nothing else is known of him for certain but his son Ralph married Amicia, daughter and heir of John Picard ⁹⁷. Their lands were mainly in the Marches; they were granted the Manor of Thurcleston, in Herefordshire, by Amicia's father on their marriage and in 1308 "[Ralph Bluet's] wife Amicia and himself were possessors of Almay after the death of John Picard" ⁹⁸. Two years previously John Picard had been tasked with providing a levy of 100 footmen to attend the king at Montgomery ⁹⁹. This was part of a general levy of the local area. It is not clear from whom they held the manor; in 1310 Ralph is seen holding from John son of Reginald ¹⁰⁰ but the surname is not given. Ralph was holding land in Raglan in 1315 ¹⁰¹,

Ralph and Amicia were affected by the turbulent history of the early fourteenth century; in 1321 Thomas, earl of Lancaster, Leicester, Lincoln and Salisbury and King Edward II's cousin, sought to take advantage of a climate of discontent with the king (brought about by his favouritism and weak rule over many years) and rebelled against the King, drawing his support from barons in Wales and the north of England

Uncharacteristically Edward II acted with a sense of purpose ¹⁰² and

⁹⁷ Anon (1878) *The Picards or Pycards of Straddewy (now Tretower) castle and Scethrog, Brecknockshire* Goldney & Lawrence p34, digitised at <http://contentdm.lib.byu.edu/cdm4/document.php?CISOROOT=/FH10&CISOPTR=68552&REC=9>

⁹⁸ Anon (1878) *ibid*

⁹⁹ *Calendar of Welsh Rolls Edw I yrs 5 to 23* pp280-281 dated March 21 1283

¹⁰⁰ *Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol V Edw II no 205 p106 IPM of John son of Reginald deceased Hereford 4 July 3 Edw II [1310] Straddeuw: the manor held by Ralph Bluet for 3 knight's fees.

¹⁰¹ *Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol V Edw II no 538 p336 IPM of Gilbert de Clare earl of Gloucestershire and Hertford, inquisition held at Monmouth, 27 Sept 8 Edw II [1315] Raglan 1 fee held by Ralph Bluet

¹⁰² David Carpenter felt that Edward was a less than successful king, saying at one point *the most hopeless king to sit on the English throne* [Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* OUP ISBN 0-19-522000-5 p525]

first dealt with the rebels in the Welsh Marches. He then moved against Thomas and the two armies clashed at Boroughbridge in March 1322, many of Thomas' troops rapidly deserted, and Lancaster was captured. He was executed at his own castle of Pontefract in March 22nd ¹⁰³. That "No battle on British soil made less impact on British history" ¹⁰⁴ may be a bit of an exaggeration as it led to Edward II being in a position to continue giving his favourites free licence to abuse their power but its effects were very limited. Even if it wasn't a major battle it did, however, have an impact on Amicia.

Exactly what happened is unclear, but Amicia's lands - the castle, town and lands of Straddewy ¹⁰⁵ were under put under the control of Edmund Gacelyn ¹⁰⁶.

King Edward II,

*in the belief that [they were] in the hands of Contrariants,
had lately caused [them] to be seized into his hands and to*

¹⁰³ MacCisack, M (1959) *The Oxford History of England : The Fourteenth Century 1307 - 1399* OUP p69

¹⁰⁴ Green, Lt Col H (1978) *Guide to the Battlefields of Britain & Ireland* Constable, London ISBN 0094592802

¹⁰⁵ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw II* vol 4 1321-1324 p49 dated 7th February 1322 Straddewy / Tretower is north of Crickhowell. For an excellent account of the development of the castle and manor house see <http://www.castlewales.com/tretwr.html>. It's worth a visit when you are in Wales. See [Fig 4](#) for location

¹⁰⁶ Interestingly Edmund, born probably in 1281, served in the Earl of Pembroke's retinue at around the same time as the Berkeleys and Thomas Gurney and so may well have known the Bluets, who were after all his near neighbours at Usk and Raglan and indeed at Lackham; Edmund owned Sheldon Manor just outside Chippenham and only 4 miles from Lackham. Roger Gascelyn, either a cousin or brother, was captured fighting against the royal army at Boroughbridge, and Edmund was granted his manor of Catmore, Berkshire, as well as other lands of his, on 1 June 1322. On 6 April 1322, Edmund's lands had been restored to him, having been seized by the Contrariants, Edward II's baronial opposition. We are indebted to Kathryn Warner for permission to use the results of her extensive research, which can be seen at her excellent website <http://edwardthesecond.blogspot.com/2007/08/rioters-and-ruffians-dunheved-gang-2.html>

*be delivered to the said Edmund*¹⁰⁷

However once he had dealt with the Marcher rebels, but before Boroughbridge, Edward II realised that this was a mistake and that *the said Amicia* [had] *acted faithfully towards him*. Consequently in February 1322 he ordered Gacelyn to hand Straddewy back to Amicia.

Ralph supposedly died in 1335¹⁰⁸, if so it was late in the year as a charter of October that year refers to Ralph Bluet and his heirs¹⁰⁹.

Amicia was in Rumsey Nunnery in Hampshire in 1333¹¹⁰ which happened to be the year when a new Abbess was elected.¹¹⁰

Their son, yet another Ralph, married Elizabeth verch Rhys, born in Talgarth¹¹¹, a few miles southwest of Hay on Wye and about 4 miles north of Straddewy, in 1300. It is probable that he is the Ralph Bluet who, in 1349, was one of those who held the *Commission to levy in Gloucestershire the 10th and the 15th granted in Parliament summoned at Westminster Monday after Sunday mid Lent 22 Edw III*¹¹². His fellow commissioners - those charged with collecting the tax and submitting it to the Treasury -

¹⁰⁷ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw II* vol 4 1321-1324 p49 dated 7th February 1322

¹⁰⁸ Anon (1878) *The Picards or Pycards of Straddewy (now Tretower) castle and Scethrog, Brecknockshire* Goldney & Lawrence p96

¹⁰⁹ *Calendar Charter Rolls* 1-14 Edw 111 1327-1341 vol iv p339 dated Oct 5 1335 grant of special grace to Ralph de Bluet and his heirs of free warren in all their demesne lands of Dagelyngworth co Gloucester

¹¹⁰ Hearne T (1725) *The works of Thomas Hearne MA* vol III p ccii Num. XVI *Extract of a Letter, written to the Publisher from Winchester July 4/A. 1724. by the Reverend Mr. Richard Furncyt relating to the Election of an Abbess of Rumsey Nunnery in Hampshire Anno D. 1333 which confirms what is asserted in this Chronicle, that the said Nunnery was founded by K. Edgar for an hundred Nunns.*

¹¹¹ Tradition has it that it was the capital of the kingdom of Brycheiniog a small independent kingdom of South Wales in the Early Middle Ages. It often acted as a buffer state between England to the east and the powerful south Welsh kingdom of Deheubarth to the west. It was conquered and pacified by the Normans between 1088 and 1095, though it remained Welsh in character (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brycheiniog>)

¹¹² *Calendar of Fine Rolls* vol VI Edw III 1347-1356 p91 dated July 16 1349

were John de Acton son of Odo de Acton, Walter de Gloucestre, William de Eynlode, Edmund Blount, William Hathewy of Ruardyn and Henry de Clifford

In the following year seven extra Commissioners for Gloucester¹¹³ were appointed as "*the King wishes to hasten the levy and collection as far as possible*"¹¹⁴

A month later the King lost patience and sacked the commissioners

*because no part of the said 10th and 15th is yet levied in the county of Gloucestershire and the commissioners¹¹⁵ are inefficient of levying them William de Whytyngton knight, John de Solers, of Shypton, William Maunsel Thomas Prykke of Stareton, Matthew de Button, John Stevens of Lydeney, John Joce of the Forest of Den [sic], Henry le Draper of Gloucester, Walter de Elmer of Gloucester, John de Wycombe of Bristol and John le Spicer of Bristol are appointed in their room*¹¹⁶

Elizabeth died in 1352 and Ralph then married Margery de Gyse¹¹⁷. There were no children from this marriage Ralph died in 1361 and

¹¹³ These being Thomas de la Mare of Ryndecombe, John Sage, Robert Brys, Robert Onderhull, Hugh Mustel, Ralph ap Eygnon and Henry de Brokwort

¹¹⁴ *Calendar of Fine Rolls Edw III 1347-1356* vol VI p222 Dated March 20 1350

¹¹⁵ Ralph Bluet, Walter de Gloucestre, William de Eynlode, Edmund Blount, William Hathewy of Rodmoor (was this a misspelling or had he moved in the previous year?) John de Acton, Thomas de la Sage, Robert Brys, Robert Onderhull, Hugh Mustel, Ralph ap Eygnon and Henry de Brokworth

¹¹⁶ *Calendar of Fine Rolls* vol VI Edw III 1347-1356 p234 dated April 21 1350

¹¹⁷ VCH *Bedfordshire* (1912) vol 3 pp338-343 '*Parishes: Apsley Guise*', Her father was Anselm de Gyse, son of John de Gyse who died in 1363. For some reason John left his manor of Apsley Guise to his grandson, Margaret's brother, also Anselm de Gyse who was a minor and only gained his inheritance in 1375. He is shown holding a moiety in Daglingworth in 1397 [*Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* (1985) Vol XVII 15 - 23 Ric II Inquisition of Richard Talbot, knight pp335-339, no 914 p337 Gloucester and the March of Wales Inquisition taken at Gloucester 11 Oct 20 Ric II]

Margery in 1377¹¹⁸. From her IPM¹¹⁹ she had held the manor of Throgelstone [Thurcleston / Thurleston] in Herefordshire by gift of Walter Bluet and William Scernecote. Although Margery's brother, also called Anselm like her father, was her heir, the manor was inherited by Ralph's granddaughter, Elizabeth

Ralph and Elizabeth's son, John¹²⁰, inherited. He married Katherine Wogan. Little is known of John, but he held part of Daglingworth by service of a knight's fee of Elizabeth Talbot in 1373¹²¹.

A charter of John and Katherine's daughter, Elizabeth, confirms the descent outlined above and shown in [Fig.8](#)¹²². Various dates for

¹¹⁸ Monday before the Annunciation 50 Edw III (5th April 1377). Her second husband was Roger de Poynz (see below)

¹¹⁹ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* Vol XIV Edw III (1952) no 311 p298 *Margery late the wife of Ralph Bluet in a Writ touching the lands held by her of the heirs of Humphrey de Bohun late earl of Hereford, minors in the king's wardship. 23 January 50 Edw III, inquisition taken at Hereford Thursday before Palm Sunday 41 (recte 51) Edw III (8th April 1378)*

¹²⁰ Born 1322

¹²¹ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol XIV Edw III (1954) no 213 pp196-198 *Elizabeth, late the wife of Richard Talbot, knight; p197 Gloucester and the adjacent March of Wales Inquisition taken at Gloucester 7th Dec 46 Edw III (1373) Daglyngworth A moiety of a knight's fee, held by John, son and heir of Ralph Bluet. The said fees are of the inheritance of Aymer de Valencia late earl of Pembroke. She [Elizabeth] held all the premises of the king in chief*

¹²² *Calendar Patent Rolls 1 Hen IV* vol 1 1399 - 1401 p181, dated December 15th 1399 (Henry IV's accession year) *confirming Ralph in right of his wife Elizabeth kinswoman and heir of the undermentioned William and John. The first charter is one of Henry II (1154 - 1199) which was itself confirming the grant to Walter Bloet of the Villam de Ragalen by Earl Richard de Clare, son of Earl Gilbert, the second is a charter of Edward I (Calendar Patent Rolls 26 EdwI dated 5th April 1298) granting to John Pychard that he and his heirs shall have a market and fair at their manor of Straddewy in the cantred of Talgarth*

A *cantred* was an administrative Welsh area, roughly equivalent to an English hundred, in Welsh *Cant* = hundred *tref* = dwellings

Elizabeth's birth have been suggested - 1358¹²³ or 1351¹²⁴ and, given the information in her mother's IPM,¹²⁵ neither seems impossible.

Although the transcription of Margery Bluet's IPM¹²⁶ names him Bigot, Elizabeth's first husband was Bartholomew Picot¹²⁷ (1350 - 1392). Little is known of their life together but, according to Bazely¹²⁸ Elizabeth and her husband alienated Daglingworth in 1368. Bazely does not give the source for his assertion but in the Calendar of Close Rolls for Edward III is recorded a

*writing of Bartholomew Pycot and Elizabeth his wife,
daughter and heir of John Bluet of Rageland, being a
quitclaim with warranty to Lionel, duke of Clarence, his
heirs and assigns of the manor of Daglyngworth co.
Gloucester*¹²⁹

As this is dated 1368 it is just possible that Elizabeth was born in 1351¹³⁰ but 1358 is obviously incorrect. It is interesting that the quitclaim is

¹²³ Blewett. M (2004) Blewetts at www.Bluett.com/blewett/EarlyEnglandResearch.pdf p34

¹²⁴ Richardson, D & Everingham, KH (2005) *Magna Carta Ancestry: A Study in Colonial and Medieval Families* Genealogical Publishing Com, 2005 p96 she was of full age in 1377 reference not given

¹²⁵ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* Vol XIV Edw III (1952) no 311 p298 *Margery late the wife of Ralph Bluet in a Writ touching the lands held by her of the heirs of Humphrey de Bohun late earl of Hereford, minors in the king's wardship. 23 January 50 Edw III, inquisition taken at Hereford Thursday before Palm Sunday 41 (recte 51) Edw III (8th April 1378) states that Elizabeth the wife of Bartholomew Bigot, knight, is 20 years and more*

¹²⁶ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* Vol XIV Edw III (1952) no 311 p298 *Margery late the wife of Ralph Bluet as above*

¹²⁷ Anon (1878) *The Picards or Pycards of Straddewy (now Tretower) castle and Scethrog, Brecknockshire* Goldney & Lawrence p34

¹²⁸ Bazeley, W (1888) *Notes on the Manor, Avowson and Church of Daglingworth* Trans Bris. & Glos. Arch. Soc. vol xii pp53-55

¹²⁹ *Calendar Close Rolls* vol XII Edw III 1364-1368 p466 Dated Feb 4 1368

¹³⁰ Which is what is shown in [Fig. 8](#)

dated February 1368, and Lionel married in May of that year¹³¹. The betrothal negotiations had been going on for some time and it is likely that the marriage date was known in the early part of 1368, so was the alienation something to do with the impending marriage?

It would appear that Bartholomew and Elizabeth got the lands back after Lionel's death very soon afterwards.

At some later date Bartholomew and Elizabeth jointly sued Roger de Poynz for the return of Thurleston manor¹³². de Poynz apparently obtained the manor through marrying Elizabeth's grandfather's widow Margery/Margaret Bluet.

Elizabeth Bluet then married Sir James de Berkeley. In 1390

The extent of the manors held by John and Katherin can be seen from the list of Elizbaeth's property that James Berkeley gained the use of from his marriage to her - "by whom he had the Welsh manors of Raglan, Talgarth, Tore, Edishall, Straddewy and others"¹³³. It is noted in the Berkeley history that the couple lived at these Welsh manors. From her Bluet - Ap Rees connections Elizabeth also inherited the Welsh manors of Bremles, and Langoyde,, and the Seigniori of Cantreshelley, which also went to the Berkeley family through her marriage to Sir James¹³⁴

In 1399/1400 Henry IV

¹³¹ *Dictionary National Biography* (1915) vol xi pp1214-1217

Lionel of Antwerp earl of Ulster duke of Clarence 1338-1368 He was the third son of Edward III and his wife Philippa of Hainault. Lionel was born in Antwerp 29th Nov 1338 during the long stay in the Low Countries by his parents by reason of the war against France (the early part of the Hundred Years War). He was created earl of Ulster in 1347 and duke of Clarence in 1362 the title was derived from the town of Clare in Suffolk which Lionel's wife Elizabeth had inherited along with other shares in the divided Clare Gloucester estates. After Elizabeth died he married Violante, daughter of Galeazzo Visconti, lord of Pavia May or Jun 1368. He died in Italy 7 Oct 1368

¹³² Richardson, D & Everingham, KG (2005) *Magna Carta Ancestry: A Study in Colonial and Medieval Families* Genealogical Publishing Com p96 [date not given, record not found] Bartholomew Picot and his wife Elizabeth sued Roger de Poynz, Chivaler, and his Margaret [sic] for the manor of Thurleston which Roger Pychard gave to Amice his daughter and heirs of her body [Amice's son Ralph, first husband of Margaret and Ralph's son John, father of Elizabeth]

¹³³ Smyth J (1883) *The lives of the Berkeleys* Vol II p375

¹³⁴ Smyth J (1883) *ibid*

confirmed the town and Castle of Raglan in the County of Monmouth which earl Richard son of earl Gilbert gave in the time of king Henry II to Walter Bloet and his heirs to hold by one Welsh knights fee and further confirmed to this Sir James and Elizabeth the grant of a market and fair in their manor of Straddewy in the Cantred of Talgarth which king Edward I in the 26 of his reign granted to John Picard and his heirs; To both which ancient families the Elizabeth (says the record) is heir

They had a son, James de Berkeley II, to whom most of Daglingworth and Raglan descended. The arguments over Daglingworth with the de Poyntz family continued in this generation with Sir James Berkeley maintaining that Robert de Poyntz, Roger's son, did not have rights to Daglingworth ¹³⁵. Neither, of course, did the Bluets any more.

After the death of Sir James ¹³⁶ Elizabeth finally married Sir William Herbert ap Thomas ¹³⁷ who had been her steward. William held a number

¹³⁵ Smyth J (1883) *The lives of the Berkeleys* Vol II p164

Ralph Bluet (in whose name the said Manor had continued for many discents) entailed the same upon Ralph his son and Elizabeth his wife, and the heirs of the said Ralph the son begotten on the body of the said Elizabeth; who had issue John Bluett, who had issue Elizabeth married to Sir James Berkeley, who had issue James, Lord Berkeley father of the said Marques and of this lord Maurice. That James Berkeley afterwards enfeoffed Richard Venables and others of the said manor to certain uses; and after by fine the said lord James and Isabel his wife, granted the same to Nicholas Poyntz and Elizabeth his wife and to the heirs of the said Nicolas, who was the father of Sir John Poyntz, father of this Sir Robert; the estate of which Richard Venables and his fellow feoffees the said Marques Berkeley had from whom the said manor descended to this lord Maurice as to his brother and heir, who entered and thereby was remitted to the entaile made by Ralph Bluet, the father. And so is seized; And so also, that the said lord James his father and other parties of the said fine, had nothing in the said manor at the time of the fine levied.

¹³⁶ 1404

¹³⁷ *Cadw guidebook to Raglan Castle* (1996) [quoted at <http://www.castlewales.com/wmaptho.html>] William ap Thomas was the member of a minor Welsh gentry family and was responsible for beginning the construction of Raglan Castle as we recognize it today. He obtained Raglan through his marriage to Elizabeth Bloet, widow of Sir James Berkeley shortly after 1406. When Elizabeth died in 1420, ap Thomas retained Raglan as a tenant of his step-son James, Lord

of important positions - steward of Abergavenny, steward of the lordships of Usk and Caerleon and sheriff of counties Cardigan, Carmarthen and Glamorgan at different dates ¹³⁸ .

Elizabeth and Bartholomew had no children and she apparently died in 1420 ¹³⁹

To return to the senior line - Ralph Bluet III died in 1199; in 1201 Nest was in dispute with her uncle Robert over a half hide of land and appurtenances ¹⁴⁰ at Daglingworth, sometime between January and Easter ¹⁴¹ .

The right to land associated with a wife was somewhat complicated and involved two terms that can easily be confused.

The wife was given a *dowry* by her family on her marriage; these were lands that they gave to her and her new husband. This was called the wife's *maritagium*:

If marriage is mentioned the land so given may be called a maritagium. A gift of this kind is made before marriage, sometimes at the marriage, sometimes after it. ¹⁴²

On his part the new husband gave, at the marriage, a *dower*, to his wife

Berkeley, and in 1425 Lord Berkeley agreed that he could continue to hold Raglan for the duration of his life

¹³⁸ Richardson, D & Everingham, KG (2005) *Magna Carta Ancestry: A Study in Colonial and Medieval Families* Genealogical Publishing Com p93

¹³⁹ Richardson, D & Everingham, KG (2005) *ibid* p96

¹⁴⁰ *Curia Regis Rolls* vol 1 Richard 1 - 2 John 1189 - 1201 p154 Hilary term 1 John dated 1200 but would have been January 1201, the year starting in April, so dates between January and March in one year are dated to the year before at this period,.

¹⁴¹ The date isn't precise as it is not given in the record. It is dated to Hilary term 1 John. The legal year is divided into four terms : Michaelmas from October to December, Hilary from 11 January to Easter, Easter from Easter to May and Trinity from June to July. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legal_year]

¹⁴² *De Legibus Et Consuetudinibus Angliæ* (Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England attributed to Henry of Bratton, c. 1210-1268) vol 2 p77, online version at <http://hls15.law.harvard.edu/bracton/Unframed/English/v2/77.htm>

*There is a gift of another kind made on the marriage day by a husband to his wife at the church door, which is not properly called a donatio but the constitution or nomination of dower*¹⁴³

an assignment of land - which was not necessarily his but lands of his family so might actually belong to his parents or brothers etc. The dower lands only came to the wife when she became a widow, they were there to support her after her husband died:

*Since it is proper, for a number of reasons, that women be endowed, a gift of propter nuptias is made her by her husband from his own property, or that of his father or mother, brother or sister, or another, with their leave and consent, which is called dower, which cannot be complete before the husband's death, [because] though it may be constituted in the husband's lifetime, it cannot be assigned before his death.....Dower is that which a free man gives his spouse at the church door [on the marriage day], because of the burden of matrimony and the future marriage, for the maintenance of the wife and the nurture of the children when they are born should the husband predecease her*¹⁴⁴

¹⁴³ *De Legibus Et Consuetudinibus Angliæ ibid*

¹⁴⁴ *De Legibus Et Consuetudinibus Angliæ (Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England attributed to Henry of Bratton, c. 1210-1268) vol 2 p265 at <http://hls15.law.harvard.edu/bracton/Unframed/English/v2/265.htm>*

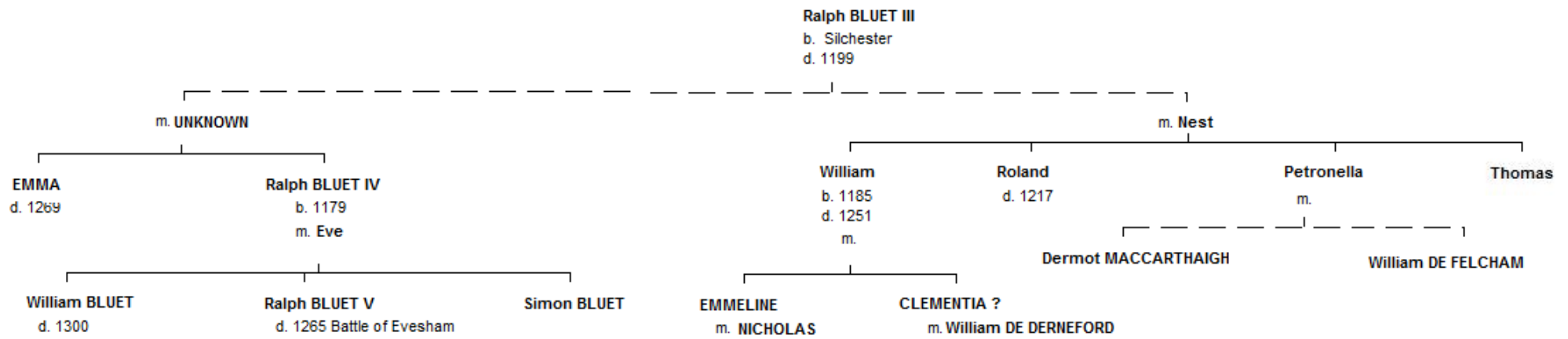


Fig. 9 Descendants of Ralph Bluet III *

If visiting from above click [here](#) to return to the footnote
 If visiting from below (Lacock Abbey land) click [here](#) to return

As Nest is here seen suing her uncle in law Robert this was for lands that were hers by dowry. Robert didn't turn up - he was excused attending court, apparently - and because of this the king took the disputed land into his own hands¹⁴⁵, which is common in this sort of dispute. Robert was given until a month after Easter to attend. He would appear to have actually attended much later, the next record shows him being at court between October and December 1201¹⁴⁶ but he "*refused to say anything against her*"¹⁴⁷ and so Nest recovered the land.

A year later Nest was in dispute with her brother Hoel in connection with the town and lands of Caerleon. She made a claim between January and Easter 1202¹⁴⁸.

Hoel was also excused court appearances and didn't come "*Nor even send witnesses*", so the king ordered the land taken into hand and Hoel to attend in person in the middle of Lent to explain.

It seems that this land was also part of Nest's dowry and she was suing because she had not received it, the land had been promised on her marriage but the family had not delivered it up. The sheriff duly took charge of the disputed area and the hearing was set for¹⁴⁹ the Saturday immediately before the Chair of St Peter¹⁵⁰. A marginal note seems to indicate that Hoel offered a mark to settle things.

¹⁴⁵ *Ideo terre capiatur in manum domi regis etc*

¹⁴⁶ *Curia Regis Rolls* vol 1 Richard 1 - 2 John 1189 - 1201 p362 Michaelmas term 2 John p 362 dated 1201

¹⁴⁷ *et ipsa et noluit loqui quicquam adversus eum*

¹⁴⁸ *Curia Regis Rolls* vol 1 Richard 1 - 2 John 1189-1201 p362 Michaelmas term 2 John dated 1201

¹⁴⁹ *die Sabati proxima* [sic] *ante Cathedram sancti Petram*; the *proxima* here is entirely redundant as it has essentially the same meaning as *ante*, but is incorrectly used. *Proxima* usually means close to the place / location whereas *ante* is immediately before. It is recorded as being used in c1188 to mean soon, in the phrase in *proximo est ut* [Latham, RE (1965) *Revised Medieval Latin Word List* OUP p380], but it is still redundant

¹⁵⁰ Feast of the Chair of Saint Peter = 22nd February [Waters, C (2003) *A Dictionary of Saints days, Fasts, Feasts and Festivals* Countryside Books p35]

Before Easter it was recorded¹⁵¹ that

*The Lord king and his justiciar have pledged that Hoel de Caerleon will pay to Nest Bloet £10, between the middle of May and the middle of the Feast of St John*¹⁵²

Eventually Hoel settled the manor of Salisbury [in Netherwent] on Nest in satisfaction¹⁵³. Nest paid gilt spurs to the Exchequer for the land¹⁵⁴ and willed it to her younger son William before her death. Reed has suggested that this is evidence that Ralph IV was not Nest's son¹⁵⁵, maintaining that otherwise Ralph would have inherited under primogenitor. This follows from the idea of *maritagium*:

*Maritagium was a grant of land made by a woman's relative, usually her father, nominally to her husband with her upon or because of her marriage. As a grant made because of the woman, maritagium, in a society of male primogeniture, served as the woman's inheritance, inheritable only by her¹⁵⁶ children.*¹⁵⁷

Reed's argument would seem to be that, as the land went to William and not Ralph IV, this shows that Ralph IV wasn't her offspring but was from another marriage; if Ralph had been her child he would have been awarded

¹⁵¹ *Curia Regis Rolls* vol 1 Richard 1 - 2 John 1189 - 1201 p397 Hilary Term 2 John dated 1201

¹⁵² Which one is unclear, but it was likely the Feast of the Nativity of John the Baptist, which was June 24th

¹⁵³ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) p396

¹⁵⁴ Reed PC (2008) *ibid* fn34 *Nesta Bluet reddidit ad Saccariam Calcaria deuarata pro terra de Salesburi in Nederwent* taken from E 368/7 m1. This is online at http://aalt.law.uh.edu/aalt1/H3/E368no7/aE368no7fronts/IMG_2653.htm, 6th line up from the bottom of the image, note that "Nesta" looks more like "Hefta"

¹⁵⁵ See also the discussion on William and Roland below

¹⁵⁶ Our emphasis

¹⁵⁷ Biancalana, J (2006) *The Fee Tail and the Common Recovery in Medieval England, 1176-1502* Cambridge University Press, p7

the land anyway and it is only by the fact that the land is part of Nest's *maritagium* [dowry] that she can give it to William ¹⁵⁸.

Whoever his mother was, Ralph IV was born at latest in 1178 and may have died in 1241. He married Eve and had three children, William, Ralph Bluet V and an unnamed daughter

Ralph IV was also a knight of William Marshal, and as such was also known to the Kings the Marshal supported; in 1204 Ralph gave the King [John] a palfrey for license to *inclose his park at Silchester* ¹⁵⁹ and it is known that King John stayed with Ralph at Silchester in 1215 ¹⁶⁰, a month before John signed Magna Carta and a year before the king's death.

Ralph IV was evidently with William Marshal II from the start of his tenure as earl of Pembroke, after his father's death in 1219; in that year Ralph was witness to a charter of William II that confirmed charters made by William I to the burgesses of Haverford, in Pembroke ¹⁶¹. The original charter had also been witnessed by a Ralph Bluet ¹⁶², probably Ralph III, although the date of the original charters is not known.

Ralph IV later supported William II's brother, Richard Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, in his rebellion against Henry III in 1233-34. In 1232 Henry

¹⁵⁸ Whilst very cautious of disagreeing with an authority of Mr Reed's stature we are not entirely sure of this; as we understand from Bracton, [*De Legibus Et Consuetudinibus Angliæ (Bracton on the Laws and Customs of England* attributed to Henry of Bratton, c. 1210-1268) vol 2 p77, online version at <http://hls15.law.harvard.edu/bracton/Unframed/English/v2/77.htm>,] and other sources [eg Biancalana, J (2006) *The Fee Tail and the Common Recovery in Medieval England, 1176-1502*] it was possible for a widow to dispose of her dowry land as she found fit, especially if her other body heirs agreed. However elsewhere Bracton (vol 2 p190, 028 to p191 003) would appear to support Reed's argument.

¹⁵⁹ Morgan, O & Wakeman, T (1864) *Notices of Pencoyd Castle and Langeston Monmouth and Caerleon Antiquarian Ass.* p27

¹⁶⁰ Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council (2004) *Conservation Area Appraisal Silchester* p3

¹⁶¹ *Calendar Charter Rolls 1-14 Edw 111 1327-1341* vol iv p228 A charter confirming grants [by William Marshal I] by William Marshal II, dated Striguil 6 Ides Sept 3 Hen III [9 September 1219] witnessed by Ralph Bloet. The charter here was a reconfirmation of the 1219 reconfirmation and was dated 4 June 1331

¹⁶² *Calendar Charter Rolls 1-14 Edw 111 1327-1341* *ibid*

III sacked his Justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, who had been Regent after William Marshal's death in 1219, and appointed the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Peter des Roches in his stead. des Roche installed many fellow French-Normans (as opposed to English-Normans) in positions of power. One of these was Peter de Maulay and in February 1233 Henry III took the Wiltshire manor of Upavon from Gilbert Basset and gave it to de Maulay. As Carpenter points out

*no-one was closer to Bishop Peter than de Maulay ; few families were closer to the Marshals than the Bassets*¹⁶³.

Richard Marshal, only recently installed as Earl of Pembroke, could not afford to desert one of his major vassals and supported Gilbert fully. He had good reason to resist des Roches, who had

*managed to get Richard's representative at court, William de Rodune, dismissed and to replace all the English ministers of King Henry III with foreign advisors. ... and took the lands of Gilbert Basset and Richard Siward*¹⁶⁴ *Richard's strong supporters, and gave them to his own son Peter des Rievaux*¹⁶⁵

and had also instructed that the Earl's messengers from France were to be stopped and searched on entering the country.

The disposition of Upavon had been a royal decree, which meant Richard was in rebellion against the king and his advisors. Rebellions were not that uncommon in the medieval world; Dr. Crouch has noted that

when medieval magnates put their castles in defence against their king or lord it was not generally for the sort of ideological reasons that the modern mind associates with rebellion; it was more of an aristocratic protest riot...where a magnate felt he was not getting the respect and the privileges he regarded as his right, he was making an armed

¹⁶³ Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p313

¹⁶⁴ Richard Siward was Gilbert Basset's brother in law [Way, J (1839) *Chronicle of The Devises* p88]

¹⁶⁵ http://www.castlewales.com/mar_chld.html

*demonstration to bring home a personal protest.*¹⁶⁶

However this was not the case here; one of the major clauses of Magna Carta¹⁶⁷ was that "No freeman shall be acted against save by lawful judgement of his peers or the law of the land"¹⁶⁸ and specifically forbade arbitrary *disseisin* by the will of the king. By taking Upavon, and other manors, away from their owners without lawful excuse Henry had acted against the laws that were designed to limit his powers and Magna Carta itself seemed at stake¹⁶⁹. All of this was seen not only as tyranny but tyranny by foreigners; it is noteworthy that Richard Marshal's two greatest supporters were Basset and Seward, not de Basset or de Seward, they have English names. The Marshal was not alone.

The rebels demanded that Henry dismiss his inner council of foreigners. Carpenter points out that Marshal was being less than consistent, he had benefitted himself from Henry's actions and only complained when they touched his man Gilbert Basset¹⁷⁰. This did not make him any less popular, however. Roger of Wendover said that

*he fought for the cause of justice, and the laws of the English race against the oppression of the Poitevins*¹⁷¹

des Roches would not have denied the charge of encouraging

¹⁶⁶ Crouch, D (2004) *The Normans: The History of a Dynasty* pp111-112

¹⁶⁷ Originally signed, as has been seen, in 1115, it was updated and developed in 1123, less than 20 year before these events and well within living memory

¹⁶⁸ Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p314. The online translation of the Carta has it slightly differently although the sense is the same :
No free man shall be seized or imprisoned, or stripped of his rights or possessions, or outlawed or exiled, or deprived of his standing in any other way, nor will we proceed with force against him, or send others to do so, except by the lawful judgement of his equals or by the law of the land.
 [http://www.bl.uk/treasures/magnacarta/translation.html]

¹⁶⁹ Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p314

¹⁷⁰ Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p314

¹⁷¹ Quoted in Carpenter, D (2003) *ibid*

foreigners at the heart of power; he

*scorned the idea that the king should govern through native subjects... he needed ministers .. who would punish the latter's pride and perfidy*¹⁷²

and so civil war broke out yet again. It appears that Ralph Bluet supported his lord the Earl of Pembroke and rebelled. Much of the action took place in Ireland and elsewhere in England but there were local events, for example when Hubert de Burgh was liberated from incarceration in Devizes by Marshal supporters in October 1233¹⁷³ specifically by Basset and Siward¹⁷⁴

Ralph Bluet's lands were taken by the King in 1233¹⁷⁵. This would have included his Irish lands in Leinster.

A Close Roll entry from September of that year may result from this: in it Henry III is giving the income from Ralph's land "*at Daglingworth (which are in fee to himself) to the Countess of Pembroke for as long as it shall please the king*"¹⁷⁶. Another landowner is mentioned in the entry, one Ricardi Sulard, almost certainly Richard Siward

Ralph IV was certainly with Richard Marshal at the battle of Wycombe¹⁷⁷; he appears in a list of "*divers people who were against the king with*

¹⁷² Carpenter, D (2003) *ibid*

¹⁷³ Smith, B (1999) *Irish Politics 1220-1245* in Prestwick, M Britnell, R & Frame, R (eds) (1999) *Thirteenth century England : Proceedings of the Durham Conference 1999* It is tempting to think that Ralph, based close by at Lackham, was involved but it was actually Gilbert Basset and Richard Seward [Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p315]

¹⁷⁴ Way, J (1839) *Chronicles of the Devizes* p90

¹⁷⁵ Crouch, D (2005) Bluet entry, *Dictionary of National Biography* online at www.oxforddnb.com/article/54499
 "Ralph [IV] was suspected of supporting the rebellion of his lord, Richard Marshal, earl of Pembroke (d. 1234), against Henry III and had his English lands confiscated in 1233 as a result, although they were soon restored.

¹⁷⁶ *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry III 1231- 1237* pp256-257 1st September 1233

¹⁷⁷ It is noted that Wycombe was the manor of Gilbert Basett of Wycombe, who

the Earl Marshal at Wycombe with horses and arms"¹⁷⁸ In this charter the lands of Richard's supporters are to be taken by the local sheriffs and given to king's men. Ralph Bluet's lands in Dorset, Hampshire, Somerset and Wiltshire were seized and given to Mathias Bezil¹⁷⁹. It seems that Daglingworth, however, was looked after by the sheriff of Gloucester, Simon de Dryby¹⁸⁰. These records would seem to indicate that Crouch was being unduly cautious when he spoke of Ralph as being *suspected* of supporting the rebellion¹⁸¹.

It is unknown whether Ralph was with Richard Marshal during the fighting in Leinster when Richard lost his life (1234), but it is very likely; the Bluets held land of the Earl there. Richard Marshal's death effectively ended the rebellion and Henry was secure. He was not vindictive, indeed

*When news reached [Henry III] of the death of Richard Marshal...there was no rejoicing at the fate of a rebel. Henry burst into tears and ordered masses to be said for Richard's soul*¹⁸²

and he dealt leniently with the rebels, restoring their lands and making Gilbert Marshal, Richard's younger brother, the new Earl of Pembroke. He admitted denying judgement by peers and committing *disseisins*, and his court restored Upavon to Gilbert Basset.¹⁸³

married Isabel Marshal, Richard's sister, and whose manor at Mapledurwell in Hampshire was given to Peter de Rivallis.

¹⁷⁸ *Calendar of Charter Rolls Hen III 1231- 1237*. The original text is to be found in *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry III 1231-1234* (1905) p258 *Pro comite Rogero le Bigod et aliis de reseisina Quia rex reddidit R le Bigod comiti Norf' terras suas, que capta fuerunt in manum regis, eo quod dicebatur ipsum fuisse apud Wycombe contra regem cum comite R Marescallo cum equis et armis;....*

¹⁷⁹ *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry III 1231-1234* (1905) p273 dated 23 Sept 1233 *Pro Macy Besill de terra Radulfi Bloet, excepta auctoritate propria*

¹⁸⁰ *Rot. Orig. in Curia Scacarii* (1805) p263

¹⁸¹ *DNB* (2006) David Crouch section on Bluet family

¹⁸² Prestwicke, M (2005) *Plantagenet England 1225-1360* p82 OUP

¹⁸³ Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: The Penguin History of Britain 1066-1284* p316

The restoration of lands didn't happen immediately, but by 1236 Ralph IV was back in control.

This year was the start of a long, drawn-out series of events, the Appropriation of Lacock Church by Lacock Abbey. The Abbey wanted total disposition of the living of St Cyriacs because

*by the time of the foundation of Lacock Abbey...the appropriation of benefices was a recognised method of increasing the income of a religious house*¹⁸⁴

The nuns held the right of assignment that had been with the Earl of Salisbury, Ela's son William . On 12 February 1236 he agreed he would arrange to obtain from Sir Ralph Bluet "*the avowson which he has in the parish church of Lakoc so that Ela may give [it] to the nuns*"¹⁸⁵. This undertaking was referred to in another charter between Ela and her son in July of the same year¹⁸⁶

Ralph obviously didn't agree to this; it was 75 years before things were at last going smoothly - in an official letter to the abbess in March of 1312 Simon, the Bishop of Salisbury¹⁸⁷, decreed that both Sir John Bluet and the abbess were to surrender their rights and that "*the bishop will grant the whole church, with all its rights, to the abbess the next time it shall be vacant*"¹⁸⁸. Finally, in August 1312, John Bluet granted his rights to Joan, in consideration of "*certain alms for him and the souls of his ancestors and heirs*"¹⁸⁹.

¹⁸⁴ Clark-Maxwell (1904) *On the Appropriation of Lacock Abbey* WAM 33 p359

¹⁸⁵ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 pp11 - 12, no. 9, dated 12 Feb 1236

¹⁸⁶ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 pp 12 - 13 no. 12 dated 22 July 1236

¹⁸⁷ Simon of Ghent was Bishop of Salisbury between October 1297 and September 1315. He was also Chancellor of Oxford University and Archdeacon of Oxford

¹⁸⁸ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p20 no 33, dated 6 Mar 1312

¹⁸⁹ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p21, no. 35 dated 16 Aug 1312

Effectively this gave control to the Abbey, but they could not gain from it until the current priest died. Before this happened, Bishop Simon himself died, in 1315, at which time the appropriation of the Church was not finished¹⁹⁰. The process was not actually completed until 1337¹⁹¹

The Manor of Lackham and the Abbey of Lacock had a very long history as neighbouring estates. An early antiquarian, Sir William Dugdale included the Abbey in his survey of Religious Houses in 1643

Lacock in Wiltshire

Founded by Ela Widow of William Longspata, for Nuns, among whom she her self took the Habit, An 1236 and after became Abbess of this House. This William Longespee was Son of Henry the II and Earl of Rosmar and Salisbury in Right of Ela his Wife, descended from Walter de Ewrons, to whome King William gave the said Earldom of Salisbury¹⁹². The said Countess Ela founded two Monasteries in one day, viz. 16 Cal Mai, Anno. Dom. 1232. Namely Henton for Carthusians, and this Lacock for Canonesses. The said Ela became Abbess here, An 1240, resigned An 1257, died 1261 aged 74.

[Valued at 168l 9s 2d per Annum]¹⁹³

Dugdale¹⁹⁴ says that she ordered the body to be buried in the abbey church at Lacock and that in his time the inscription still remains

Bowles maintains that the memorial stone is to be found in the Cloisters, having been removed from the altar of the destroyed

¹⁹⁰ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p21, no 40, dated 3 Jun 1315

¹⁹¹ Clark-Maxwell (1904) *On the Appropriation of Lacock Abbey* WAM 33 Appendix XIV p374

¹⁹² Marsh AEW (1903) *History of Calne* p240 fn1
Ela had a brother, Stephen, who became Justice of Ireland and Earl of Ulster in right of his wife. He was killed by the Irish in 1260 His remains were brought over to England for internment, his body being buried at Lacock and his heart at Bradenstoke

¹⁹³ Dugdale, Sir W. (1643) *Monasticon* Vol II of the *Canons Regular of St Augustin* p170. This is not the 19th century, new edition

¹⁹⁴ Dugdale, Sir W (1643) *Monsaticon* 1830 edition Vol VI p500

choir and that it read

*Infra sunt defossa Ela venerabilis ossa,
Quae dedit has sedes, sacrae monialibus aedes,
Abbatissa quidem, quo sancta vixit ibidem
Et comitissa Sarum, virtutum plena bonarum*¹⁹⁵

It is noted that the surname of William Longespee translates into modern English as Longsword; the *espee* is an early version of *epee*. For a long time it was believed that his mother was the lady whose transcendent beauty has become proverbial under the name of Fair Rosamund¹⁹⁶. This was Rosamund Clifford, the daughter of Walter de Clifford and granddaughter of Walter FitzPonce. She was believed to be one of Henry II's mistresses.

This is, however, romantic nonsense. William Longespee was actually the son of King Henry II by another of his mistresses, Ida, afterwards the wife of Roger Bigod (died 1221) 4th Earl of Norfolk, a noted Magna Carta baron¹⁹⁷. Evidence that he was the son of Countess Ida comes from two charters of Bradenstoke Priory¹⁹⁸ in which William specifically names his mother as Countess Ida. Moreover, among the prisoners captured at the battle of Bouvines in Flanders in 1214 was a Ralph Bigod whom contemporary records specifically call "brother" [i.e., half-brother] of William Longespée, Earl of Salisbury¹⁹⁹.

¹⁹⁵ Bowles, WL (1835) *Annals and Antiquities of Lacock Abbey* p 5 which he translates, rather freely, as
Beneath, the venerable Ela's bones / Are buried; she, these scenes of sacred peace
- / Countess of Salisbury gave the Nuns, / Herself the Abbess here, and full of
deeds / Of Holy Charity

¹⁹⁶ Michael, W (1901) *Historic spots in Wiltshire* pp63 - 64

¹⁹⁷ For the Bigod family, see *Complete Peerage*. (1936) vol 9 pp586-589 (sub Norfolk) and Thompson, A.H (1928) (ed.) *Liber Vitae Ecclesiae Dunelmenis* (Surtees Soc. vol. 136)

¹⁹⁸ London, VCM (1979) *The Cartulary of Bradenstoke Priory* WRS pp99-100 numbers 301 & 302

¹⁹⁹ .W. Baldwin (1992) (ed.) *Les Registres de Philippe Augustus* in *Miscellanea* no. 13. These details have been taken from postings on Medgensoc newsgroup.

He assisted in laying the foundations of the Cathedral of New Sarum (Salisbury), it is known that he placed the fourth foundation stone and Ela the fifth. He was also the first person buried there.



Fig. 10 Arms of William, earl of Salisbury ²⁰⁰ *

Upon his death [Ela] reigned alone in her castle at Old Sarum; and in fact ruled the county, for she filled the office of High Sheriff for seven or eight years ²⁰¹. At last, being weary of feudal dignity and its burdens, she retired to one of the monasteries she had built, and became Abbess of Lacock, where she died, as it has been said, at nearly 100 years of age ²⁰²

Which contrasts with the 74 given by Dugdale

To return to the children of Ralph III; he and Nest had three sons. One, Roland, is an interesting figure and involved in the trials and tribulations of King John. The earliest mention of him, which is also the earliest mention of a fine at St Briavel's ²⁰³ in the Forest of Dean (which was then

²⁰⁰ *Azure six lions rampant or* by permission of Brian Timms at <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/era/early%20rolls%20of%20arms.htm>

²⁰¹ Jackson, Rev Canon J E (1856) *The Sheriffs of Wiltshire* WAM III pp 194-195 Actually only 5 - 1227-1228 and then 1231-1235, which is a strange mistake to make seeing Jackson wrote both articles, and he is usually impeccably accurate with his facts

²⁰² Jackson, Rev Canon J E WAM XX, no LVIII p 30

²⁰³ <http://www.wyenet.com/stbriavels.htm>

"*St. Briavels Castle was built for King John between the years of 1209 to 1211*"

St Briavel's was the main manufactory of cross-bow bolts later in the century; during Edward I's campaign against Llywelyn in 1276 he ordered 200,000 cross-bow bolts from here [Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King : Edward I and the forging of Britain* p146]

a Royal Forest) is dated to the first year of John's reign, 1213 . This record states that

*Roeland Bloet made a fine with the King of 300 marks and 7 palfreys for the lands of Roger de Meisythe King being at St Briavel's [Castle] that day.*²⁰⁴

Roland was at times in charge of the Castles of Bramber and Knepp²⁰⁵ . These are both in West Sussex. There is no mention on Knepp Castle before 1210, although there was a house there in 1206. It was probably originally built as a hunting lodge by the de Braose family but was forfeited to King John from 1208²⁰⁶ and

*In 1214, [he] founded the stone castle, when adding a two storey keep or hall-house to the natural low mound. Surrounded by a moat, with a counterscarp bank, the keep and a chapel were also encased by a curtain wall, flanked by a gatehouse. Sited in an important centre for hunting, it was used more as a fortified hunting lodge than a castle.*²⁰⁷

Bramber is situated 9 miles south of Knepp, and is an

*interesting stone motte and bailey. Built in the Norman layout of two baileys with the motte in-between and, unusually, its chapel in a small ditched enclosure below the gatehouse. To the west the curtain wall has a strong deep ditch and bank in front of it and the only entrance is guarded by the remains of a tall Norman gatehouse, which was blocked off to become a keep.*²⁰⁸

From the beginning [of Norman rule the Castle] served as the

²⁰⁴ *Feet of Fines 14 John 1* dated 29 Nov 1213, quoted in Taprell-Allen, Rev W (1879) *St Briavel's Castle* Proc Brist. Glos. Arc. Soc. vol 3 p 350. This agreement appears again, [see below](#)

²⁰⁵ Blewett. M (2004) Blewetts document downloaded from www.bluett.com/blewett/EarlyEnglandResearch.pdf . p 18

²⁰⁶ Victoria County History *Sussex* (1986) Vol 6 part 2 p111

²⁰⁷ http://www.castleuk.net/castle_lists_south/198/kneppcastle.htm

²⁰⁸ http://www.castleuk.net/castle_lists_south/198/brambercastle.htm

*centre of administration in the Bramber Rape*²⁰⁹,

The Rape was an administrative division of the county of Sussex.

The six Rapes of Arundel, Bramber,, Chichester, , , Hastings, , Lewes, and Pevensey, were the primary divisions of the county of Sussex, intermediate between the county and Hundred. In this respect, they were similar to the Lathes of Kent and the Ridings of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

In other respects, however, they were dissimilar. Each Rape was a castlery, centred on a castle; each was in the hands of a single tenant-in-chief; and each had

the honour court being usually held there. During the forfeiture of the rape between 1208 and 1215, and also for a time afterwards, the castle was in the keeping of a succession of royal henchmen, including Rowland Bloet (recorded 1210, 1214-15), John of Monmouth (1215), and Robert le Savage (1217). King John visited the castle in 1209, and in the following year the castle was extensively repaired.

The Rapes also had an artificial profile, running in roughly parallel strips between the coast and the northern boundary of the county, each controlling one corridor of communication between London and the Channel. The vital routes between England and Normandy were therefore in the hands of six of the Conqueror's most trusted relatives or lieutenants; but no one or two of them could block his way.

The Rapes were not a Norman innovation since Domesday Book itself refers to their existence in 1066. Their characteristic features in 1086, however, mean that they had certainly been drastically remodelled in the intervening years, with military considerations uppermost in the minds of those responsible for the changes, a fact emphasised by the many references in Domesday Sussex to fragments of manors 'lost' to an adjacent Rape since 1066. Whoever carved out the new Rapes showed a cavalier disregard for the manorial structures of Anglo-Saxon England.

This period under the control of Roland Bluet was the only time that it was outside the ownership of the de Braose family until the line died out in 1324. It was William de Braose who built Bramber castle in about 1070 to defend an important port on the River Adur

²⁰⁹ An excellent review of the administrative unit of a rape is to be found at <http://domesdaybook.net/helpfiles/hs1070.htm>.

210

King John came to the throne in 1199 after the death of his brother Richard the Lionheart. He had, of course, been regent while Richard was on Crusade. It was not a happy reign; he was involved in a war in France, for which he was mostly responsible as had its own sheriff, who answered to the tenant-in-chief not the Crown: no royal sheriffs are recorded before the twelfth century.

King John refused to attend the French King ²¹¹, his overlord as ordered and as a result John eventually lost Normandy, Anjou, Maine, and parts of Poitou to the French king.

With virtually all of his French holdings gone, John was forced to stay in England, where his prestige had dropped due to the loss of lands, amongst many other things, which accounts for his popular name of John Lackland. In an attempt to make up for his reduced revenue, he cracked down on finances, taxing revenues, taxing the Jews (although it was his father who was the first to realise he could simply tax the Jews instead of taking out loans which then, at least in theory, had to be repaid ²¹²) conducting investigations into the royal forests and feudal tenures, and exploiting his prerogatives, all of which would later serve as the basis for the charges of tyranny brought against him. The barons, never particularly fond of John, had grown more discontented; they had lost their French lands and had to stay in England and concentrate on their estates here, or to give up their English lands and stay in France ²¹³. One example of this, relevant to Knepp, is Roger de Courci who

preferring to retain his Norman lands, forfeited his claim to Warblington, [in Hampshire] which became an escheat to King John, of whom it was held by his ardent supporter Matthew son of Herbert, sheriff of Sussex under John... in

²¹⁰ <http://www.theheritagetrail.co.uk/castles/bramber%20castle.htm>

²¹¹ Although the French king was looking for a reason to fight and the disappearance of Arthur, John's nephew and the only other possible claimant to the English throne, probably didn't help

²¹² Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* OUP p252

²¹³ The above is an extremely simplistic and rapid overview of some of the factors in this complicated time, see Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* for a brilliant consideration of the entire period

*exchange for lands which he had lost in Normandy.*²¹⁴

There are a number of interesting letters to Roland with regard to Knepp Castle, mostly from King John²¹⁵. Many of these relate to the arrival of hunting parties sent by the King to Knepp to hunt game there. But in 1214 there is a change in the communications - in June 1214 there is mention of carpenters being sent into Knepp forest to fell timber to be carried to Dover, for the works on the Castle there²¹⁶ and in August of the same year even more timber was called for, with additional men being supplied to Roland by the Sheriff of Sussex, the Matthew FitzHerbert seen above. This directly relates to John's problems with his barons and a threat of invasion by France; it was essential that he secured Dover Castle and the timber from Knepp was to be used to repair it.

By 1215 many of the English Barons were in revolt against King John, and he moved against the rebel Spencers; Thurstan de Spencer was captured and given into the custody of Sir Rowland Bluet.²¹⁷ Thurstan's brother was married to Roland's sister Alda²¹⁸

In May the rebel barons were received by the city of London and John mobilised his forces close to the capital to withstand them. In a letter to Roland Bluet²¹⁹ John wrote

The citizens of London have surrendered the city of London to our enemies,...of their free will. Wherefore we command you, without delay, to transfer all the stores which you have at Knapp... to Bremble [Bramber castle] and that you fortify that house in the best possible manner you can, while resident in that castle; that you destroy altogether the houses at Knapp

²¹⁴ Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* (1908) Warblington Manor Vol 3 p134

²¹⁵ Burrell, CM (1850) *Documents relating to Knepp Castle* Sussex Archaeological Collections Vol III pp 1- 1

²¹⁶ Burrell, CM (1850) *ibid* p7 dated 12 August 1214

²¹⁷ Collins, A (1735) *The Peerage of England* vol 1 pp 340-344

²¹⁸ Click [here](#) to go to the relevant section, use the link in the footnote to return

²¹⁹ Burrell, CM (1850) *ibid* p8 dated 18th May 1215

It is noted that the instruction here was to destroy the *houses* at Knepp, not the Castle itself. It may have been spared because hostilities ceased after June 15 1215 when, at Runnymede, King John accepted the terms in the document known as the Articles of the Barons. This document was further revised over the next few days, until both John and the barons accepted the provisions embodied within it, and it became known as the Magna Carta (the Great Charter).

John almost immediately appealed against the charter to the pope, who took the king's side, and yet another civil war ensued. John captured Rochester castle and devastated the northern counties and the Scottish border lands. But then Prince Louis of France (later King Louis VIII), at the barons' request, invaded England.

Knepp Castle was still in existence in 1216, when the French invasion of southern England was in full swing, with Roland still in charge of the forests at Knepp. This is clear because King John was looking for war engines and instructed that Roland should

*Cause to be made, without delay, in the forest of Knappe as
many good engine-towers called Turkese²²⁰ as you*

²²⁰ This term is difficult but "the mention of a new 'Turkish' engine just prior to Henry III's reign and the 'great engines' of Louis' invasion of England in 1216 have been accepted as evidence for the advent of the heavy counterweight trebuchet in the West. 'Turkish' engines ...[probably] referred to traction trebuchets" <http://medievalhistory.mysite.wanadoo-members.co.uk/chap3.html>

"The TRACTION TREBUCHET was a smaller, shorter range and more portable machine that was "human powered", and therefore, was much easier to construct and move from place to place and siege to siege. Instead of a massive counterweight, the "Traction Treb" employed a group of people pulling down on ropes attached to the rear or short end of the Virga (throwing arm) to provide the weapon's throwing power. The mechanical action was the same; but the weight of the projectiles was much less and the rate of discharge was much faster, up to several shots a minute, as opposed to several minutes to "tens" of minutes per shot with a large counterpoise type machine.

The smallest Traction Trebs could be powered by the weight and pulling strength of one person using a single rope; but most were designed and sized to utilize from 20 to 100 men and/or women, generally two per rope, using their combined weight and pulling strength to power the weapon. These Teams would frequently be local non-combatants (women, children, older men) assisting in the siege or in the defense [sic] of their town. Traction Trebuchets had a range of from 200 to well over 300 feet (60 to 100+ meters) casting weights up to 130 pounds (60kg)

can...[manuscript defective]... to Dover ready and prepared with ropes and other things belonging to them ²²¹

A grant of safe-conduct to Roland's men later in the same year may suggest that the Castle could no longer be held ²²² John fought on until he died in October 1216. His death and the military successes of the Marshal paved the way for peace; the rebels were restored, John's son Henry was assured the succession, and Louis withdrew his forces ²²³. William Marshal became the infant Henry's regent.

The latest mention found for Roland is an Exchequer roll, where he is associated with Robert de Meysi dated 1232 ²²⁴

The Bluets had continued their association with the Earls of Pembroke. Ralph III' and Nest's son William

entered the household of the Marshal's eldest son; he was the Young Marshal's banner bearer at the Battle of Lincoln in 1217 ²²⁵

After the death of King John William Marshal led the English forces against the French army that was besieging the castle of Lincoln, and on May 20th the two sides met in battle. The Marshal personally led the attack against the French forces and defeated them. William Bluet is specifically mentioned

The King's men ²²⁶ *began to get the upper hand; there*

<http://www.legionxxiv.org/trebuchetpage/>

²²¹ Burrell, CM (1850) *Documents relating to Knepp Castle Sussex Archaeological Collections Vol III p 11 dated 3 May 1216*

²²² Victoria County History *Sussex* (1986) Vol. VI, Part 2, p111

²²³ a range of sources, eg

<http://historymedren.about.com/library/who/blwwJohnlackland.htm>

²²⁴ Allen Brown, R (ed) (1991) *Memoranda rolls [Exchequer] Michaelmas 1231 - Michaelmas 1233* HMSO London p205 no. 2835

²²⁵ Crouch, D (1993) *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147 - 1219* pp 139-40

²²⁶ i.e. the English forces

was no question of putting up a defence there, for they knew and could see only too well that they had completely lost. William Bloet, who held the banner of the young Marshal, had no wish to be left behind; indeed, he spurred his horse so quickly that he landed in the press, which was very dense and violent, so heavily and head on that he fell over the side of the bridge he and his horse with him; a man who launches such an attack is no coward. He had not come there to lie down, however; any man who had seen him leap to his feet, would have born witness to his fleetness of foot, his valour and prowess²²⁷.

The Battle of Lincoln and the sea battle off Sandwich, when the French re-supply fleet was destroyed, removed any hope of a French victory, the Marshall negotiated an end to the French invasion, and they withdrew. The civil war was essentially over but not entirely; the Welsh prince Morgan ap Howel, or Morgan of Caerleon as he frequently styled himself, did not cease fighting but waged a damaging war in Gwent. Two members of the Bloet family, Walter and Roland, fell in the hostilities along with several other knights²²⁸

In the thirteenth century, as much as now, people were borrowing money, and there is evidence that William was no exception; in 1233 he owed a debt of 8 marks to Urcello, son of Hamon of Hereford, the Jew [*Judeo*]²²⁹. King Henry III took over the debt and William had to repay the Exchequer at the rate of 2 marks per year, one at the feast and the only people commonly involved were the Jewish communities. For which they were reviled, of course. This grant by Henry III would seem to indicate that he was helping William out by taking over the debt from Urcello. (It is a moot point as to whether Urcello was paid the money owed to him of course. There is no indication the debt was being paid off, just that William would now pay the Exchequer 2 marks per year).

²²⁷ The deeds of William the Marshal were recorded for posterity a few years after his death in the *Histoire Guillaume le Mareschal*, a verse account of 19,214 lines in rhyming couplets, written in Middle French. This excerpt from the account was translated by Stewart Gregory, with the assistance of David Crouch and can be found at

<http://www.deremilitari.org/RESOURCES/SOURCES/marshal3.htm>

²²⁸ Crouch D (2002) *William Marshal : Knighthood, War and Chivalry 1147 1219* 2nd ed p137

²²⁹ *Calendar Close Rolls Henry 111 1227-1231* dated 12 June 1233, p72

As ever there were times when usury was the appropriate name, and abuses were common. To try and improve things Henry had passed a new law earlier in 1233 ²³⁰. The turbulence and violence of the times is graphically illustrated by the fact that the moneylenders were expressly forbidden to make an advance henceforth on church plate or on cloths that are bloodstained or sodden or holed as if by violence

The Close roll entry is also interesting because in it the word that we have translated as *Exchequer* was *Scaccarium*, which is directly related to the reason why the Exchequer is so called :

The Scaccarium in England was the chequered floor of the king's financial centre, the taxation and revenue accounting department. It was due to the chequered floor of this office that it took on the name, "Scaccarium", which has since changed in dialect and spelling to become "Exchequer".²³¹

William Bluet witnessed a charter of 1235 ²³² in which

²³⁰ Rothwell, H (1996) *English Historical Documents 1189 - 1327* p350

In the seventeenth year of the reign of king Henry son of John on the fourth day of April on the morrow of Easter [12 April 1233], it was ordained by the same king at Canterbury that no loan may be contracted with Jews by tally, but by chirograph, whose other part the Jew shall have, with the seal of the Christian contracting the loan appended, and the other part let the Christian contracting the loan have, The third part, however, that is called the foot, let that be placed in the chest to be safely kept by the chirographers, Christian and Jew, and a chirograph whose foot shall not have been found in the chest, as stated, shall not be valid.

No Jew may lend anything by penalty, but let him take interest at twopence per pound per week and no more, so that nothing is put to hazard save the sum first loaned.*

No Jew may remain in our kingdom unless he is such that he can be of service to the king and find good pledges for his loyalty. Other Jews, who have nothing with which they can be of service to the king, shall leave the kingdom before Michaelmas of the seventeenth year of the aforesaid king's reign [Michaelmas 1233]. If they stay longer let them be cast into prison and not released without the king's special mandate.

No Jew may make an advance henceforth on church plate or on cloths that are bloodstained or sodden or holed as if by violence.

this equates to 43.5% per annum. And this was an improvement?!

²³¹ <http://www.medievalhistory.net/page0010.htm> although other derivations have been put forward

²³² *Calendar Patent Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1232 - 1247 p125 dated April 29th 1235

Gilbert Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, [assigned] to his sister lady Eleanor, countess of Pembroke, of all the issues of the manors of Creadon, Stokholt, Kingewud Inteberg, and Clafford

It is noteworthy that William and his co-witness *Ralph, son of Richard* are given as knights of the Countess, not the earl. The other witnesses indicate that William was associating with the great and the (not necessarily very) good of the country ²³³.

There appears to be a wide spread believe, especially among some transatlantic Bluet descendants, that the Bluets were the early Earls of Salisbury. A careful reading of the evidence makes it quite clear ~~that this is not, never was, and never will be, the case.~~

It is surprising that the confusion arises at all; the Earldom of Salisbury has been extensively investigated by medieval genealogists and it is accepted that the very first Earl of Salisbury was Patrick, 2nd son of Walter FitzEdward of Salisbury. Patrick was created Earl of Wiltshire, and styled Earl of Salisbury. He was attesting charters as Earl of Salisbury by 1142-1147, so we may assume he was also created earl by 1142, by Queen Maud / Matilda. The original creation continued through the last female of this line, Ela, the daughter of Earl William who had equal rights in the avowson of St. Cyriac's church in Lacock, see above. After her father's death in 1196 she was given in marriage to the bastard brother of Richard I, one William de Longespee²³⁴. The earldom was part of Ela's inheritance, and William became Earl of Salisbury, (and also Earl of Wiltshire). His line is also well documented; it ended with the last heiress Margaret marrying Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln. Their line ended with a single heiress named Alice who passed it to the Audley family. Neither the Lacys nor the Audleys used the title and, because of this, the king ²³⁵ assumed that the title had reverted back to the crown, and he granted it to his friend William de Montagu on 16th March 1337. It stayed with the Montagu family until it passed to the Nevilles, then

²³³ *Calendar Patent Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1232 - 1247 p125 The other witnesses were : Sir R. Earl of Poitou and Cornwall, Sir Hubert de Burgo, Earl of Kent, Roger le Bigod, Earl of Norfolk and Suffolk —Sir R, Earl of Poitou and Cornwall, is Richard, brother of Henry III, but he was only styled Count of Poitou at this time. However the French rank of Comte equates to an English Earl (My thanks to Leo van de Plas for his assistance with this

²³⁴ see the discussion on Ela, Lacock Abbey and William, below, for more details

²³⁵ Edward III

the Poles and then the Browns²³⁶. Not a Bluet in sight.

The Visitations of Cornwall²³⁷ may be the culprit in the confusion; they start off showing Ralph III and Nest's son, William Bluet, as Earl of Salisbury²³⁸. William actually held Salisbury Manor, probably in Netherwent as the manor was part of Nest's Caerleon dowry.

William Bluet is one example of Henry III's household knights. The accounts²³⁹ for Henry's reign include a number of references to William; the entry for 1244²⁴⁰ reads Liberate to William Bloet 100s for Michaelmas term in the 27th year of his yearly fee of 100s, which gives a start date of 1217 which was when he entered the service of the Regent's son, William Marshal the Younger. One of the earliest records for William is in December 1216 when he

made fine with the king by 60 m[arks]. for having the custody of the land and heir of Roger de Meysey²⁴¹

Originally William's brother Roland had made a fine, in 1213²⁴², with King John, the king's father for the custody of de Meysy's heir but this obviously fell through when John died. William's sureties for the money were Robert son of Payn and Ralph of Broughton²⁴³

²³⁶ Repko, K The section above is taken, almost verbatim, from the concise and knowledgeable synopsis that Karen provided from Cokayne's *Complete Peerage* vol 9 pp75-103.

²³⁷ Exeter, Lt. Col. JL (1887) *The Visitations of Cornwall: Comprising the Heralds' Visitations of 1530, 1573, and 1620* p35

²³⁸ And then goes on to give the pedigree of Roland and his descendants.

²³⁹ *The Calendar of Liberate Rolls of the Reign of Henry III held in the Public Records Office*

²⁴⁰ Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III vol 2 1240 - 1245 p233

²⁴¹ *Calendar of Fine Rolls 1 Henry III* at http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/cocoon/frh3/content/calendar/roll_008.htm|#it002_002 dated December 17th

²⁴² if visiting from above click [here](#) to return

²⁴³ *Calendar of Fine Rolls 1 Henry III* as for previous footnote, at http://www.finerollshenry3.org.uk/cocoon/frh3/content/calendar/roll_008.htm

It appears that William did not join his brother Ralph in supporting earl Richard Marshal's rebellion in 1233; at the same time as Ralph's manor of Daglingworth was being handed over to Mathias Bezill William was gaining control of another rebel manor, Arlington²⁴⁴ in Gloucestershire, from the king²⁴⁵. It was confiscated from John le Sor. He appears to have held considerable land, in 1202 he had 28 knight's fees in the honor of Gloucester²⁴⁶.

Interestingly William Bluet is seen associating with the entourage of Gilbert Marshal, earl of Pembroke, and his household in 1237 when he was one of the witnesses to a charter of Gilbert. That the Marshal household had not been seriously reorganised after Richard Marshal's rebellion a few years earlier is evident in that the witness list also includes many of Richard's supporters, including Gilbert, Philip and David Basset²⁴⁷.

[Broughton](#) is just outside Banbury in Oxfordshire, nice castle well fortified manor house. Later the seat of the Montagu family

²⁴⁴ Located about 8 miles northeast of Cirencester on the road to Burford, Arlington is the neighbouring village to the better known Bibury.

²⁴⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls 1231-1234* p333 dated 7 Nov 1233. See also *VCH Gloucestershire* vol 7 (1981) p28

Either his or his son's arms appear in the St George Roll

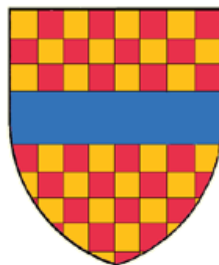


Fig 11 John le Sor St George's Roll part 5 no 350 *
(reproduced by kind permission of Biran Timms from
<http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms1/rolls/StGeorgesE5.html>)

²⁴⁶ Clark, GT & Michel, F (eds) (1862) *Gesta regum Britanniae* Cambrian Archaeological Association

²⁴⁷ This was a high powered gathering, the witness list includes Sir John de Lacy earl of Lincoln Walter Marshal, Ansell Marshal, Gilbert de Minered, Gilbert Basset, Philip Basset, David Basset, Hugh de Watford, Aumary de Sancto Amando, Richard de la Hid [sic], Walter de la Hyd and Gilbert de Kenett

William was abroad in 1244 on the King's business overseas²⁴⁸ and he was let off a fine of 100 *solidis* which he owed the king - which was the amount he was being paid a year²⁴⁹ in 1236, the first year for which information can be found²⁵⁰. It is likely that he was being paid this from when he started; it is certain that he was still being paid the same amount when he disappears from the accounts, years later.

He continued to serve but, finances often being difficult for everyone, including kings, there were occasions when he didn't get paid on time. For example in 1246 he was owed a fair amount. In January he was paid £10, this being

100s for Michaelmas term in his 28th year and 100s for Michaelmas term in the 29th year of his yearly fee of 100s²⁵¹

This was a lot of money to be owed - in 1236 £10²⁵² was the amount given to

*Hugh Giffard Constable of the Tower of London to make payment to the king's crossbowmen and to his smith working in the Tower, and to find the smith iron and charcoal and other necessaries for his work*²⁵³

A month later William was paid another 100s for all the arrears due for

²⁴⁸ *Calendar of Close Rolls Henry III 1242 - 1247* p181 says he *venit in servitium regis ad partes transmarinas*

²⁴⁹ =£5

²⁵⁰ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 1 1226 - 1240 p242. Records for the payments are seen for 1239 (p236) 1240 (p497), 1241 (*Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 2 1240 - 1245 p76)

²⁵¹ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p61

²⁵² This had the equivalent purchasing power of over £2,660 (in 2005 money, based on the currency calculation provided by the National Archives at <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency/results.asp#mid>)

²⁵³ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 1 1226-1240 p242

the whole time [he was] in the king's service in the march of Wales²⁵⁴ which also shows him serving in an area where his family were powerful. Finally, in November, he received 100s for his 30th yearly fee²⁵⁵. The payment for 1248 [Year 31] seems to be missing, but he was paid for the 32nd in January 1249²⁵⁶.

In these accounts all sorts of interesting items appear, but most of those for William are very standard payment records, as has been seen.

However in July 1249 the bailiffs of Bristol were instructed to buy a tun²⁵⁷ of wine in Bristol and deliver it to William Bluet of the king's gift²⁵⁸, the money to come out of the king's income from the city. William received another tun in January 1250²⁵⁹.

In 1249²⁶⁰ William was given exemption from being put on juries, assize or recognitions for life.

In December 1250 he was paid his usual 100s but "*There is still money due to him for last year as he says*"²⁶¹. The payments were again caught up in February 1251, when he was paid 100s for the 33rd year and

²⁵⁴ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p26 (this would seem to be out of sequence, with February's payment being pages earlier than that for January. This may be because it was transcribed out of sequence or that the original roll has it thus. The information here is taken from the published transcriptions / translations, not the original roll.)

²⁵⁵ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p92. In this record five other knights are mentioned, who were also being paid for their 30th year - Hugh de Boelles, Hugh Groundun, Matthew Morel, Walter de Brion, and William Haket

²⁵⁶ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p217

²⁵⁷ A tun cask contained 252 gallons (954 litres)

²⁵⁸ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p244

²⁵⁹ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p276

²⁶⁰ *Calendar of Patent Rolls Henry III* vol 4 1247 - 1258 , p50 dated 6th October 1240

²⁶¹ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p323

*he has his fee for Michaelmas term in the 34th year as appears in this roll, and so is quit down to Michaelmas of this year*²⁶²

In the transcription of the record for the fee of 1252²⁶³ it is noted that in the margin there is a heading for the knight's of the king's household²⁶⁴ This shows that William was not unusual in being in the same retinue for decades, all these knights were being paid for their 36th year of service.

In the same year William brought a suit against Maredudd ap Gruffudd, the grandson of Morgan of Caerleon over land in Llewenich which had been rendered to William's brother Roland, whose heir William was²⁶⁵. Reed points out that this suggests that Ralph IV was not a full brother to William and Roland, otherwise he would have been the heir, not William²⁶⁶

The argument could be made that

*No man can be both lord and heir of the same tenement. The way in which the courts actually handled this to mean, no man can be both lord and heir of the same tenement at the same time. Thus the eldest son can be heir to the second son, because he is not yet the lord as long as his father is alive*²⁶⁷

²⁶² *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 3 1245 - 1251 p335

²⁶³ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III* vol 4 1251 - 1260 p80, dated October 1252

²⁶⁴ The other knights were Hugh de Bueles, John de la Bruere, William Gacelin and Matthew Morrel. John de Busceby is also shown, although he is separated from the 36th year group for some reason. From the previous list it is certain that he had also served the same length of time so this is a puzzle, although it is indicated in the transcription that this part of the roll is unclear.

²⁶⁵ *Rolando Willelmus cuisis heres est*" *Kings Bench Plea roll*, quoted in Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset Foundation* (2008) 2 (6) pp396-397 fn34

²⁶⁶ Reed PC (2008) *ibid* p397

²⁶⁷ <http://vi.uh.edu/pages/bob/elhone/rules.html> Marriage portions 7.1 (3) fn90
The rules being considered here are based on Glanville, Bracton's source

But as Ralph IV was dead by 1252 the argument is academic.

In 1253 William Bluet is listed as being in King Henry's expedition to the rebellious province of Gascony. This was the last English possession in France and had been a troubled area for many years. Henry had been there in 1243 but that was a disastrous campaign. In 1243 only

a limited amount of territory between the Dordogne and the Pyrenees alone acknowledged Henry. This narrower Gascony was a thoroughly feudalised land: the absentee dukes had little authority, domain, or revenue; and the chief lordships were held by magnates, whose relations to their overlord were almost formal, and by municipalities almost as free as the cities of Flanders or the empire. The disastrous campaign of Taillebourg²⁶⁸ lessened the prestige of the duke, and Henry²⁶⁹ quitted Gascony without so much as attempting to settle its affairs.

Henry sent his brother in law Simon de Montfort to Gascony as governor to control the province, but de Montfort utterly disregarded impartiality or justice while doing so. Henry III ignored his methods at the time but continued complaints from the Gascons eventually forced him to act and he and Simon eventually fell out. de Montfort was forced to vacate his office in September 1252 but the tumults of Gascony raged with more violence than ever now that his strong hand was withdrawn²⁷⁰. The interference of the new king of Castile, Alfonso X, didn't help the situation²⁷¹ and King Henry had to go to Gascony himself in 1253. He took his Army, which included William Bluet, with him. The problems were eventually sorted out diplomatically, mainly by Henry III betrothing his son Edward I to

²⁶⁸ When Henry's army had been decisively beaten by the French under Louis IX in 1242. An even more decisive battle was fought at Saintes two days later

²⁶⁹ Tout, TF *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III. to the Death of Edward III. (1216-1377) : Political Retrogression And National Progress* at <http://www.humanitiesweb.org/human.php?s=s&p=h&ID=1971>

²⁷⁰ Tout, TF *The History of England from the Accession of Henry III. to the Death of Edward III. (1216-1377) : Political Retrogression And National Progress* at <http://www.humanitiesweb.org/human.php?s=s&p=h&ID=1971>

²⁷¹ Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* Hutchinson, London p17

Alfonso's half sister, Eleanor of Castile in 1254.

William was naturally also involved in Henry III's wars in Wales. After taking control of areas of north Wales in the early 1250's Henry III put his son, the future Edward I, in control of them in 1254, including Crown lands. However the self-proclaimed ²⁶⁷ prince Llewellyn ap Gryyudd, grandson of Llewellyn the Great, declared himself ruler of North Wales in the following year.

In 1256 Henry called for his knights to assemble on the Feast of St Peter and Vincula. ²⁷² "To oppose Llewelynn son of Gryyudd and his supporters, our enemies" ²⁷³ Amongst those instructed to attend was "Willelmo Bluet, se solo, Glouc" - William Bluet himself alone. The last record showing William was made in November 1257, when he and two other knights were paid the fees for their 41st year of service! ²⁷⁴ . He doesn't appear in later Calendars.



Fig. 12 Arms of Llewellyn ap Gryyudd * ²⁷⁵

It is possible that it is this William who had a son Rowland who married Lettice Ragland, but this is not certain and is not shown in Fig. 9. Certainly Rowland's great grandson Peter held Midgham, in Berkshire which he gained from his wife Lucy Bastard ²⁷⁶ . Records show Peter

²⁷² 1st August

²⁷³ *Calendar Close Rolls Henry III 1256 - 1259 pp139-140*
contro Lewelium filium Griffini ey fautores suos, inimcos nostros

²⁷⁴ *Calendar of Liberate Rolls Henry III vol 4 1251 - 1260 p406*
The two others were John de Bosceby and John le Bruer

²⁷⁵ by permission of Brian Timms at

<http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/era/early%20rolls%20of%20arms.htm>

Quarterly 1 & 4 or a lion passant guardant gules, 2 & 3 gules a lion passant guardant or

²⁷⁶ 272 Victoria County History *Berkshire* (1923) *Manor of Thatcham : Midgham* vol I p322

and Lucy holding land elsewhere; in October 1281 they were holding land in Saltharpe and Miggeham in Berkshire and, Wekelescote in Wiltshire from Peter Bluet²⁷⁷. In 1312 they were still holding in Saltharpe,²⁷⁸ but from a Roland Bluet and Wekelescote in 1337 from Edward de Bohun²⁷⁹. Peter held Midgham until Lucy's death in 1338, when it passed to their daughter Thomasina²⁸⁰. It is likely that this is the line that resulted in the Bluet families in Somerset and Devon later on.

It is likely²⁸¹ that the manor of Salisbury passed from the Bluets to the St Maur family of Penhow through the marriage of either William de St Maur, or his son Roger, to a daughter of William's. As Reed points out she would not only have been heir to his lands (which would be the case if the Roland above is fictitious) but also a heraldic heiress as well. Reed noted that the arms of the St Maur /Seymour family of Penhow were *gules two wings conjoined in lure or*²⁸² and that this is one of the rarest heraldic devices in the medieval period²⁸³. He went on to show that the St Maur's immediate neighbours, Sir William Bluet²⁸⁴ and Sir William de Dernford²⁸⁵ bore arms that differed only in

²⁷⁷ Pugh, RB (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Vol 1, Devizes pp13-14 dated Octet of Michaelmas 12 Edw I (6 Oct 1281)

²⁷⁸ Pugh, RB (1939) *ibid* p80 dated Octet of Michaelmas 5 Edw II (5 Oct 1312)

²⁷⁹ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol VIII Edw III (1913) no 54 p25, IPM of Edward de Bohun, dated Thursday after St Nicholas 10 Edw III (11 Dec 1337)

²⁸⁰ *Calendar Inquisitions Post Mortem ibid* no 90 p56 IPM of Lucy Bluet, dated 10 August 1338. Thomasina was born 1298.

²⁸¹ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) p397

²⁸² See Fig. 13

²⁸³ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) p392

²⁸⁴ *Or two wings conjoined in lure gules*

²⁸⁵ *Or (or argent) two wings conjoined in lure sable* These are to be found on the St George's Roll, just below those of Sir William Bluet

tinctures



Fig. 13 Arms of Bluet, de Dernford and St Maur *

Sir William de Dernford held the manor of Crick (east of Penhow along the road from Striguil to Caerleon) and Sir William Bluet held Langston (immediately to the west of Penhow on the same road).

Both Bluet and de Dernford witnessed charters for William St Maur, William Bluet, his brother Ralph and de Derneford all witnessed a charter of William, abbot of Grace Dieu in 1267²⁸⁶ and the same three knights witnessed an (undated) charter of Bartholomew de Mora²⁸⁷. William Bluet and de Derneford also both served in the Scottish campaigns of Edward I. No other families have been found in the medieval rolls of arms that bore this device²⁸⁸. It seems very likely that three families associated in the same area with such similar devices were

<http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms1/rolls/StGeorgesF4.html>. There is another William de Derneford on the same roll but his arms are sable an eagle displayed argent and so is of a different family.

²⁸⁶ *Calendar Charter Rolls Hen III - Edw I (1257-1300)* vol 2 p304 a revalidation of the charter of 1267, revalidation dated 25 June 1285,

²⁸⁷ *Calendar Charter Rolls Edw I - Edw II (1300-1326)* vol 3 p98] The original charter was undated but the revalidation occurred in 1306. One of the other witnesses to this charter was the Steward of Striguil, Clement de Wyrwod. de Mora is given as being of Crick and was Sheriff of Glamorgan 1266 [Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset Foundation* (2008) 2 (6) p407]

²⁸⁸ Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset Foundation* (2008) 2 (6) p407

related by blood.

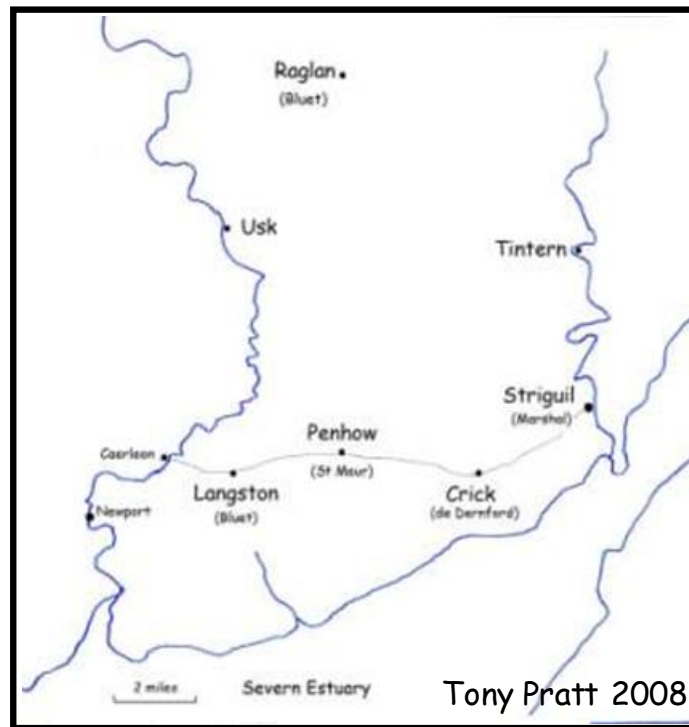


Fig. 14 Part of Netherwent *

Ralph III and Nest's son, Thomas, married Margary de Coglan and they had a son Peter. He was also involved in his sister Petronella's marriage to King Dermot ([see below](#))

The daughters of Ralph III also married well. Petronella married a King, although it was a political marriage as many between those of high birth were. She was married to Dermot McCarthy (or Diarmid mac Carrthaig) king of Cork in Ireland²⁸⁹. Dermot came to the throne in 1138 and then

*began the long, eventful and disastrous reign of Dermot, whose most unenviable lot it was to be the first of the Irish princes who swore fealty to Henry 11, and whose latter days were darkened by the execution of a rebellious son*²⁹⁰

²⁸⁹ Crouch, D (1993) *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire 1147 - 1219* p198 has Desmond, but the original sources clearly give him as King of Cork.. There was Dermot King of Desmond but he died later than this and the dates do not fit. Blewett gives Cork, sourced to the Butlers (Blewett. M (2004) *Blewetts* document downloaded from www.bluetts.com/blewett/EarlyEnglandResearch.pdf .)

²⁹⁰ MacCarthy, D (1858) reported in *Proceedings of the 1858 November Meeting* Jour. Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society. Vol. II p209

King Henry II had landed at Waterford on 18th October²⁹¹ 1172 and then

*The king tarried a few days at Waterford, &c- After came the kinge of Corks, Dermot McCarty, and yeldet himself to the kinge, and did him homag, and sware gret othes, and delywred him ostage for to be his subject, and gawe him sartayne evary yere of his land.*²⁹²

This upset many of Dermot's subjects and eventually his son rebelled, but was caught and executed. The son involved was not Petronella's, as Dermot married her when he was 75²⁹³ and she was *young*. She and Dermot had no children. This was the year after Dermot submitted to Henry II and it is very likely this marriage of a daughter of Henry's former mistress, Nest, was contracted at the meeting of Henry and Dermot in 1172 to cement the alliance. It might be that Petronella was of an age to allow the marriage to be consummated but most likely she was far too young. According to canon law consummation should not take place before the girl was 12 years old²⁹⁴. Petronella's date of birth is

²⁹¹ St Luke's Day

²⁹² MacCarthy, D (1858) reported in *Proceedings of the 1858 November Meeting* Jour. Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society. Vol. II p210 but quoting the words of the unknown author of the *Book of Howth*.

Howth Hill was the site of Tara, overlooking Dubhlinn or Dublin Bay, not far from Eblana, Dublin, and rising 578 feet above the water, it was destroyed by the Danes in 819. The Book of Howth chronicles events from 432 to 1370. <http://www.libraryireland.com/articles/TaraBonwickDruids/index.php>

²⁹³ <http://www.libraryireland.com/Pedigrees1/MacCarthyMor.php>

Dermod-Mór-na-Cill-Baghain, Prince of Desmond, and King of Cork, A.D. 1144 to A.D. 1185: his son; was the first of the family that submitted to the Anglo-Norman yoke, A.D. 1172; was b. A.D. 1098; and m. twice, the second wife being a young Anglo-Norman lady named Petronilla de Bleete (or Bloet), "*dame issue d'une noble famille d'Angleterre*," with whom the family of Stack came to Ireland, and through whose influence they obtained from Dermod MacCarthy extensive possessions in the county of Kerry. Dermod was 75 years old when he contracted this second marriage.

²⁹⁴ Shahar, S (2003) *The Fourth Estate : A History of Women in the Middle Ages*

not known with certainty but she can't have been much over this, if she wasn't considerably younger in 1173. Noble children were often married young,

*when a seigneurs daughter reached the age of 7 her father was entitled to demand feudal aid from his vassals to marry her off. When she reached her ninth year she was entitled to receive her allotted dowry*²⁹⁵

and so Petronella may have been very young indeed. When Dermot died in 1185²⁹⁶ it is possible, even likely, that the marriage had never been consummated because of her tender years.

Petronella's brother (*frat ejus eide Petronille*²⁹⁷), Thomas, paid Petronella's marriage dowry to Dermot and is credited with arranging the marriage. The only Roll entry that refers to this marriage is dated 1217, but it is the instruction for the Justiciar of Ireland, Geoffrey de Marisc to pay Petronella's dowry back to her without delay²⁹⁸ because Dermot was dead²⁹⁹ and had been for a long time; it is noted that this instruction is made almost 30 years after Dermot's death.³⁰⁰

Revised Ed p134

²⁹⁵ Shahr, S (2003) *ibid*

²⁹⁶ Clarendon Mss 4783, page 97 quoted in MacCarthy, D (1858) reported in *Proceedings of the 1858 November Meeting* Jour. Kilkenny and South-East of Ireland Archaeological Society. Vol. II p 212

This yeare (1185) Dermot MacCarthy, prince of Desmond. was slaine neere unto Corke in a parley by the citizens and some of Thoobald Walter's party

²⁹⁷ *Rot. Litt. Claus. in turri Londinensis* (Tower Roll) 1 Hen III (1217)

Mandatu est G de Marisc Justic Hibn qd sn dilone hre faciat Petronilla Bloet maritagiu suu quod Thom' Bloet frat ejus eide Pertonille dedit cu Deremot Magarthy Rege de Cork viro. suo. T. com Supa in the Journal of the Kilkenny and South East of Ireland Archaeological Society (1859) vol II p211

²⁹⁸ *Sn dilone* (see transcript in previous footnote) is taken to be a contraction of *dilatatio sine* = *without delay*. It doesn't appear in Latham

²⁹⁹ It is interesting that this repayment is made in the first year of the Regency of William Marshal, and of course the Bluets were major allies and supporters of the Marshal

³⁰⁰ If visiting from above click [here](#) to go back to the text

There is no question that the Bluets held land in Ireland, the Marshal held Leinster in right of his wife and his knights held land from him. It has been said that Ralph III was the sheriff of Waterford and Cork, for example ³⁰¹ and almost a hundred years later, in 1307, a William Bluet held a sixth of a knight's fee in Kiltorky ³⁰². This cannot be Ralph III's grandson William, however, as he was dead by 1300, he is one of a lateral line and has not been positively identified.

Petronella later married William de Felcham, who died around 1199. There is an alternative version put forward by some that Petronella married William first and then Dermot, king of Cork. The majority of evidence supports the earlier dates for Dermot and Petronella.

Petronella gave all her lands in Bradley (Hampshire) to the Priory at Kington St Michael. ³⁰³ This is a very useful charter; in the witness list there are several Bluets and it helps to indicate one who was previously missed. The witness list includes Ralph Bloet, Ralph his son, Ralph Bloet son of Walter Bluet ³⁰⁴. The Walter Bluet attesting here is the one who

³⁰¹ Davies, RR (1988) *Domination and Conquest : The experience of Ireland, Scotland and Wales 1100 - 1300* p52

³⁰² *Calendar Close Rolls Edw I 1302-1307* p509

³⁰³ Williams SJ and Plucknett TFT (eds) (1956) *Collectanae WRS* vol XII

³⁰⁴ Dugdale, Sir W (1825) *Monasticon Anglicanum: a History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies, in England and Wales* vol IV p399 no. V

Carta Petronillae Bluet de tota terra sua de Bradleya
Sciunt præsentes et future, quod ego Petronilla Bluet, uxor Willielmi de Felcham, pietas intuitu, dedi et concessi Deo at ecclesiae beatæ Mariæ de Kington, et monialibus ibidem Deo servientibus, totam terram meam de Bradleia, in bosci, in plani, in pratis, in pascuis et in omnibus locis cum omnibus pertinentiis et liberatibus suis, in liberam et perpetuam elemosynam; tenadam ita liberè et quietè 299, sicuti ego ipsa ea tenui de Tho. filio Willielmi de Salemonvill; scilicet reddendon ei inde annuatim quique solidos pro omni servicio, et querela et consuetudine et exactione, et demanda, salvo sevicio domini Regis, quantum perinet illam de prædicto Thomas et hæredibus suis jure cessorum meorum, Deum, et ecclesiam beatæ Mariæ de Kyngtone, et præædictas moniales ibidem Deo servientes, de hac eadem prædicta terra, de præfato Thoma et hæredibus suis, liberè et quietè per prædictum servicium teneda, hæredes moes feci. Et, ut hæc mea donation et concessio rata et illibata et inconcussa perserveret in poterum, præsentis ea cartæ meæ munimine, et sigilli mei impressione

held Ragland (Petronella's uncle) and from whom the southwestern (Somerset, Dorset, Devon) and many ex-patriate Bluets are descended. Initially only his grandson was known, the Ralph Bluet who married Amicia Picard (see above). This witness list shows that Walter's son (Petronella's cousin) was also Ralph and this is what is shown in [Fig. 8](#). The dates for this Ralph are not known, but he was obviously of age for this charter. Dating the charter is complicated by the fact that the dates for the witnesses are uncertain, but it has been suggested³⁰⁵ it is between 1194 - 1199³⁰⁶.

Ralph and Nest's other daughter Alda married Almaric Despencer, who was Sheriff of Rutland to Henry II (in 1188) and Richard I (in 1189). He was also Steward to Richard. He was one of the barons who rebelled against King John and brother of Thurstan who was held by Roland Bluet³⁰⁷

Alda Bluet gave a virgate of land she held in Worcestershire to the Priory of Little Malvern and this record reveals that she and Almaric had two sons Thurstan and Ralph³⁰⁸.

Emma Bluet entered the nunnery at Godstow although the date is uncertain. She rose to be Abbess in 1248 and resigned in 1266³⁰⁹. It is almost certain that land would have been granted to the Nunnery when she entered but there is no mention of this in the Godstow records; the

comfirmavi. Hiis testibus, Radulpho Bloet, Radulpho filio ejus, Radulpho Bloet filio Walteri Bloet, Ricardo de Herierd, Roberto filio Pagani, Rogero filio ejus, Willielmo Briwere, Petro de Scudamore, Roberto de Berkleya, Johanne de Warra, Helya de Strodleya, Gilberto capellano, Robert capellano, Waltero clerico, qui hanc hanc cartam fecit et aliis (our emphasis)

³⁰⁵ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* Vol 3 p259 *Houses of Benedictine nuns: Priory of Kington St Michael*

³⁰⁶ Interestingly there is a reference to Dame Parnel Bluet's lands at Lacock in a quitclaim of 1314 but there is no other indication of a Parnel Bluet at this date; it is possible that this recalls Petronella's ownership of the land but this would be unusual over this length of time.

³⁰⁷ If visiting from above click [here](#) to return

³⁰⁸ Anon (1837) *Collectanea Topographica and Genealogica* vol IV, pub. John Bowter Nichols & Sons pp238-240

³⁰⁹ Clark A (1906) *The English Register of the Godstow Nunnery* vol 2 p xxiv

gifting of Duntisbourne, seen above, is far too early to be associated with her, although this was the view of Anthony à Wood³¹⁰. She appears as abbess in 14 of Godstow's charters.

Ralph IV was succeeded by his son William. The date of Ralph's death is uncertain, but one of his agreements recorded in the Curia Regis rolls proves he was dead by late 1245³¹¹ and Reed gives a date of 1241-42³¹². The 1245 agreement concerns the transfer of responsibility for the dower lands of the daughter and heiress of Ralph Bluet from Walter Marshal the 5th Earl of Pembroke³¹³, to Simon de Montfort Earl of Leicester and his wife Eleanor, for the sum of 100 silver marks³¹⁴. Unfortunately the daughter and heiress is not named. Ralph is specifically given as being of Silchester and his wife Eve is named³¹⁵, she apparently had an assignment of land from her dowry. The date of 1241-2 is supported (although not proven) by a number of events: firstly that around 1243 the Earl exercised his prerogative as lord to turn William Bloet's wardship to profit³¹⁶ by selling it to Simon de Montfort

It is known William supported Simon de Montfort in his short lived rebellion (This is also known as the Second Baron's War)³¹⁷. This is not

³¹⁰ Wood, A à (1773) *The Ancient and Present State of the City of Oxford section Dantesborne Church or Danesbourne* p256

³¹¹ This date is sure because one of the principals to the agreement, the 5th Earl of Pembroke, died in November 1245.

³¹² Reed PC (2008) *Descent of St Maur family of Co. Monmouth and Seymour family of Hatch, Co Somerset* Foundation (2008) 2 (6) 395 fn27

³¹³ 1198-1245

³¹⁴ *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* vol XVIII (1243-1245) p152 membrane 8d

³¹⁵ *Si Eve que fuit uxor predicti Radulfi - This Eve who was the wife of the aforesaid Ralph* - Eve is still alive so it is Ralph who was dead before November 1245

³¹⁶ Crouch, D (2005) *The Birth of Nobility* p287. He gives the PRO reference for William's wardship as being KB26/131 membrane 8d

³¹⁷ http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/encyclopedia/S/Se/Second_Barons_War.htm The Second Barons' War (1264-1267) was a civil war in England between the forces of a number of rebellious barons lead by Simon de Montfort, and the

surprising as William, and his younger brother Ralph (V), had been in wardship to Simon³¹⁸. The battle of Evesham, at which de Montfort was killed, was fought on August 4th 1265, and Ralph Bluet also perished there along with more than thirty other of de Montfort's knights³¹⁹.

Others events that might support a 1241- 1243 death date for Ralph IV come from Wiltshire. In 1241 a charter of Lacock Abbey refers to disputes between Abbess Ela and the parson of Lacock, i.e. of St Cyriac's church, one Roger Bluet³²⁰. He only appears in one other record and his origin is unknown. He may have been from a co-lateral line or related but this is unknown. In 1241 Roger Bluet was in dispute

concerning a Mill with it's pond and a bridge built by the abbess... and a way on the south side of the monastery there.....

It would seem that not only was the Mill causing problems but also the Abbey graveyard was blocking Robert's access to his lands south of the Abbey where he carried on agricultural activities:

If the abbess cannot warrant the way across the graveyard of Lak[cock] for the business of Roger she shall find him a suitable way to the south of it, for coming and going to the fields and pastures with carts and ploughs for the convenient carrying on of his affairs

It is not unlikely that there was some tension between the centuries-old St Cyriac's and the newly built Abbey. There was some overlap in the

Royalist forces led by Prince Edward (later Edward I) of England.

³¹⁸ Crouch, D (2005) *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300* p287 (from PRO KB26/131 membrane 8d)

³¹⁹ Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King ; Edward I and the Forging of Britain* Hutchinson, London, p68 Evesham was a very bloody battle - Morris says that "Even before the first blow was struck Edward had let it be known that on this occasion the normal rules of chivalric warfare were to be suspended. No quarter was to be given, no surrender accepted....At least thirty of [de Monforts knights] were killed.. in an orgy of blood-letting not seen for centuries" . Morris provides a very clear and readable account of this turbulent period, highly recommended.

³²⁰ Rogers, KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p 46 no 168 dated very specifically to 11 Aug 1241

responsibilities of the two foundations, for example it is known that the Vicar of St Cyriac's had a few of the abbey officers as parishioners, but all the others within the gate of the Abbey shall be parishioners of the Chapel of St Edmund³²¹. Although it cannot be proved it is possible that Roger, previously restrained by the Lord of Lackham, took the opportunity of his relative's death to have a go at the Abbey about access rights.

Finally, in the history of another Bluet manor, Hilmarton, it is seen that by 1242-3 Roger Bluet was holding it of Ralph de Wancy³²², who held it of the Earl Marshal,³²³ another indication that Ralph is dead by 1242

That William's father was Ralph IV is attested by a record³²⁴ of a gifting of land to Lacock Abbey by William Bluet son of Ralph.

This is of some importance, as it has been suggested by some that the William who was father to the later John Bluet of Lackham was William of Salisbury Manor (Wales), Ralph IV's brother, not his son. The witness list for the charter here includes a reference to Ralph, the donor's brother. From [Fig. 9](#) it can be seen that this would apply to either William of Salisbury [son of Ralph III, brother of Ralph IV] or William son of Ralph IV brother of Ralph V. Distinguishing between these two Williams is difficult, as charters tend not to make it clear where they are from, but the latest charter we have for a William Bluet dates from the last quarter of the thirteenth century³²⁵ which is too late for it to be William of Salisbury Manor.

Some of the witnesses for this charter, notably Richard de Wyk and Thomas Bubbe are also found in other charters of William that date to

³²¹ Talbot, CH (1911) *The Will of Joan Trye* WN&Q vol 7 p58

³²² Not much has been found of Ralph de Wancy, although he witnessed 3 charters for Lacock Abbey (no's 347, 351 and 352)

³²³ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* vol 9 p52 *Parishes: Hilmarton*

³²⁴ Rogers, KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p 28 no 122 undated

³²⁵ Rogers (1978) *ibid* p81 no 320 dated to between 1275 and 1298. the dates are those for the Constable of England here, the 3rd Earl of Hereford, 2nd Earl of Essex

the middle and end of the thirteenth century, supporting the suggestion this William is not he of Salisbury Manor. It might be also be questioned why William of Salisbury Manor in Gwent would be granting to Lacock Abbey on a regular basis? It makes much more sense for a William of Silchester and Lackham to have the multiple dealings with Lacock Abbey that are seen in the abbey Cartulary. (William of Salisbury Manor is specifically mentioned as being of that location but Lackham is not mentioned at all).

William's legal majority is given by Crouch³²⁶ in 1251, which gives a birth date of 1230.

It has already been seen that William of Salisbury Manor was granted an exemption from duties on assize etc in 1249 for life.³²⁷ Another exemption, also for life and made by the same King (Henry III), was granted to William Bluet in 1268³²⁸, 19 years later. This interval is just right for this second exemption to be to the next generation, ie William Bluet son of Ralph IV.

Many of these agreements between William, and indeed specifically Lackham, and the Abbey were about water - for example agreements dated between 1257 and 1270³²⁹.

There appears to have been some degree of relationship between Sir William Bluet and the second abbess of Lacock, Beatrice of Kent, who took office on 25th December 1257 after Ela resigned³³⁰. A record of the

³²⁶ DNB (2006) David Crouch section on Bluet family

³²⁷ *Calendar Close Rolls Henry III*, vol. 4, Years: 1247-1258 Dated Oct 6 1249
Exemption for life for William from sitting on assizes, juries and recognitions

³²⁸ *Calendar Close Rolls Henry III*, vol. 6, Years: 1266-1272 p305 dated Dec 6 1268
Exemption for life for William Bluet from sitting on Assizes, juries and recognitions and being made Sheriff etc

³²⁹ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p25, nos. 49 & 50 dated 1257 - 70 Probably all the records dealing with the watercourse date from about the same time, but none of them are datable exactly

³³⁰ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* III p304
Beatrice was expressly designated by Ela as her successor : *dum vixit abbatissam prefecit Beatricem de Kancia*. She died in or after 1280 Victoria County History Wiltshire (1959) IV footnote 78, p 315

time ³³¹ starts

Beatrice abbess of Lacock and Sir William Bluet, knight, striving to make abundantly clear the bonds of mutual affection and indeed kinship... have agreed to make an exchange of lands between them. ³³²

In this agreement William granted to the abbess a spring on his land in Lackhams lee (*Lachameslie*) with liberty to prepare, inclose and strengthen it, and to make a watercourse across William's land. Sometime later William granted the abbess the right to run a watercourse from Bowden to the Abbey, crossing the land of his men of Bewley. ³³³

This man of Bewley may have been one Robert de Holta ³³⁴, son of Richard, who granted to

Beatrice abbess of Lacok of free power to dig and conduct her water across or beneath the land which he holds of the fee of Sir William Bluet, and to repair her conduit wheresoever and whensoever she wishes without hindrance for ever. ³³⁵

This charter does not have any of the witnesses that signed the agreement between William Bluet and Beatrice, which may mean it was completed at a different time.

³³¹ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p44, no. 157 dated 1257-1283

³³² Dugdale provides a transcription of the latin charter [Monsticon vol VI p504 fn b] which starts Beatrix abbatissa de Lacok et Wilielmus Bluet miles fecerunt inter se excambium terrarium. Dugdale's version is considerably shorter than that given by Rogers (previous fn)

³³³ Harvey B and Harvey, R (1981) *The Early History of Bewley Court ; Part 1 History* WAM vol 81 pp63-64

³³⁴ Ralph de Holta was Abbey Steward in Ela's time Victoria County History *Wiltshire* III p312

³³⁵ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p25, no 50, dated 1257-

Agreements such as this were not unusual but it is worth noting as the records concerning this watercourse provide much of the Wiltshire information about William. Although the phrasing given by the Harveys appear to suggest this was a new enterprise, Lacock Abbey charters indicate otherwise. In an earlier agreement (dated sometime between 1257 and 1270) William and Beatrice agreed that

*she may freely mend the watercourse or aqueduct so that the aqueduct and watercourse continue in the same place and state in which they are now contained and disposed*³³⁶

(It is noted that the water supply to the Abbey still comes in via a pipe across these same lands). It is interesting to note that one of the witnesses to this charter was Sir Ralph Bluet - whether this is William's brother, or the grandson who held Lackham in 1316 is unknown.

The abbey workers didn't have *carte blanche* when working on others land, damage had to be paid for, in a charter of 1280 it was agreed that

*If William or his men suffer damage or detriment from the conduit, the abbess to make reasonable amends by the consideration of lawful men*³³⁷

Things did not always go smoothly between William and Beatrice however - in 1264 there had been problems with

*the cutting off of the watercourse to the mill standing within the close of the Abbey and about the turning back of the water as far as William's free tenement [location unknown] and about damage of the whole path called Churigwei [Church or Carriage Way?] across Snailsmede³³⁸ and of the street extending from the Abbey as far as Beulie"*³³⁹

³³⁶ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p25 no 49 dated 1257 -70

³³⁷ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p25, no 51, dated 1280-08

³³⁸ "Snaylesmede" is the name of the level meadow between Lacock village and the River Avon that is the site of Lacock Abbey Victoria County History Wiltshire IV p 304

³³⁹ Rogers KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p47, no. 169 dated c1264

It is likely that this was the same Mill which was the source of the earlier disagreement between Roger Bluet and Ela.

William agreed never to disturb the supply again in exchange for land, some of which was *next to land of Alice de Beueleye*. Agreement was made concerning repair of the conduit. There had been changes since the earlier agreement. William had remarried, the dedication is "*for the souls of his wife and his children*"³⁴⁰ whereas previously it was only "*for the health of the soul of Margaret his wife*"³⁴¹, which is the only known reference to her that has been found. Alice was the name of the next abbess³⁴². William was given respite from taking up knighthood in 1253³⁴³ and again between 1256 and 1258³⁴⁴.

As has been seen both he and his brother Ralph V supported Simon de Montfort in his short lived rebellion³⁴⁵.

³⁴⁰ Rogers KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* p25, no 51, dated 1257-70 The Harveys indicate a date of 1280 for a similar document

³⁴¹ Rogers KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS p25, no 49, dated 1257 -70

³⁴² Kite, E (1917) *Lacock Abbey and its owners* Wilts. Gazette January 11th

Ela Countess of Salisbury	15/8/124	-	25/12/1257
Beatrice of Kent	25/12/1257	-	?
Alice	?	-	1288
Julianna	1288	-	1299
Agnes	1299	-	1303
Johanna de Montfort	1303	-	>1322
Faith Selyman	>1322	-	1380
Agnes de Wick	1380	-	1403
Elena de Montfort	1403	-	1434
Agnes	1434	-	1483
Margery of Gloucester	1483	-	?
Joan Temys	?	-	Dissolution 21/7/1539

³⁴³ DNB (2006) David Crouch section on Bluet family

³⁴⁴ *Close Rolls (Supplementary) Henry III 1244 - 1266* Roll 2 (1256-1258) contains writs of respite from taking up knighthood.....covering the years 1256-1258 (Introduction p v) and number 21. p6. has *Willelmus Bluet de comitatu Wiltes' per finem etc habet con similem respectum fecit nobiscum dedimus ei de se faciendo militem*

³⁴⁵ http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/encyclopedia/S/Se/Second_Barons_War.htm

Although very little is known about Ralph V some information does exist. There was an Inquisition of 1265 that said that Ralf Bluet was a rebel³⁴⁶ and that his land at [Hinton Blewett] was in the hands of Sir Edward³⁴⁷. This is not surprising as Ralph and William had been in wardship to Simon³⁴⁸. The battle of Evesham, at which de Montfort was killed was fought on August 4th 1265, and Ralph Bluet V also perished there. Thus two Bluets rebelled against the king - Ralph IV rebelled against Henry III in 1233 and lost his lands for a time; thirty years later his son Ralph V rebelled against the same king and lost his life!

In an assize of 1280 there was a dispute about the ownership of tenements in Henton [Hinton Blewett] and Roger Kantok's bailiff said that the tenements were of one Ralf Bluet who was killed at the battle of Evesham [fighting] against King Henry³⁴⁹. It appears that Ralph V's son William gave the tenements in question to a Walter Bluet who had a son Richard. The descent of these Bluets is not known for certain but may have been cousins on the Somerset line³⁵⁰ or Walter may have been William's son although this isn't clear. It may be relevant that the claimant in the assize case was Nicholas de Montfort

Ralph V does appear in connection with an Eyre held in northern Wiltshire in 1249. He was one of the 12 *good and lawful men of Wiltshire* that were the jury for an Inquisition to determine whether

The Second Barons' War (1264-1267) was a civil war in England between the forces of a number of rebellious barons lead by Simon de Montfort and the Royalist forces led by Prince Edward (later Edward I) of England.

³⁴⁶ *Pipe Rolls Henry III*, dated Friday before St Calixdis 49 Hen III 9 Oct 1265. (No details of this Saint have been found, the 9th October 1265 was, indeed, a Friday - calculator at <http://www.albion.edu/english/calendar/weekday.htm> . There was a St. Callixtus, whose feast day was 14th October, it might be that the Pipe roll refers to this saint.)

³⁴⁷ *Calendar Inquisitions Miscellaneous* vol 1 no 826 p265

³⁴⁸ Crouch, D (2005) *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300* p287 (from PRO KB26/131 membrane 8d)

³⁴⁹ *Feet of Fines Somerset Record Society* vol 44

³⁵⁰ *Feet of Fines ibid*. Our sincere thanks to Rosemary Walker of Hinton Blewettfor making this information available to us

three men were held in custody in Sarum jail lawfully. Simon Atteberne, his son John and his son ³⁵¹, or grandson ³⁵², Henry, were accused of killing William de Caudel and they had appealed their detention. This case makes it clear that local feuds and drink related violence are nothing new and is discussed to give a flavour of the time ³⁵³. Five people were alleged to have been involved - Simon, John, Henry, Ralph de la Monte the carter of Godfrey de Escudemor (Roger was said to be a stranger to the area) and Roger the plowman. Ralph and Roger had already fled and were not held in Sarum. The Inquisition had to decide whether Simon, John and Henry "*were being held out of spite and malice or because they were guilty... and if out of spite and malice by what spite and malice and if they are not guilty who is guilty therein*" ³⁵⁴

Ralph and his colleagues decided that the three were not guilty and that they were indeed being held in custody out of spite and malice. They said that this was because of a local dispute between Elias de Calewey (of Kellaways, three miles north east of Chippenham) and his men and Philip de Cerne ³⁵⁵ and his men. The trouble appears to have started when a dog had been stolen from Elias' mill and taken to Philip de Cerne's house and kept there "*Whence often between their men disputes were moved at ale drinkings and elsewhere*". John Atteberne might have been remanded because he had given information against Philip's men when they had fatally wounded his brother Henry ³⁵⁶. The Inquisition decided that Ralph the carter alone had killed Henry with an axe as they were coming

³⁵¹ Original eyre report Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes) p159, no 40

³⁵² Writ of *de odio et atya* issued 2 Aug 1248 from Criminal Inquisitions : C. 114/3 no 31 in Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes) p 260, Notes to the text, no 40

³⁵³ It is emphasised, however, that although this was a violent crime it should not be assumed that people were being murdered on every street corner

³⁵⁴ Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes) p 260, Notes to the text, no 40

³⁵⁵ The William de Caudel who was killed appears to have been Philip de Cerne's nephew

³⁵⁶ Meekings [Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes) p 260, Notes to the text, no 40.] notes that it is likely that Henry had died between August 1248 and April 1249, after the Inquisition took place'

back from the tavern of [Abot's] Langley³⁵⁷

However this didn't mean that the case was over; it came before the local Eyre later in 1249. The Eyre jurors decided that both Roger and Ralph were guilty because they had fled, Roger back to Abbot's Langley just outside Chippenham. As the village had taken him in they were also at risk of punishment - in mercy. Simon denied involvement and the jurors acquitted him. John also denied the charge but was found guilty and sentenced to death by hanging. As Ralph and Roger were not in custody they couldn't be hung but were exacted and outlawed³⁵⁸ A nasty event at any time.

Three of William IV's people from Lackham are known by name in this year, and again it is the Eyre records that provide the information³⁵⁹. John Sercheche had accused 7 people³⁶⁰ of robbery and the case was set to be heard at the Eyre. The defendants turned up by John didn't. Those bringing a charge against others had to have sureties that they would come, and in this case John's pledges were Walter Cloudgirofe³⁶¹ of Lacham and Richard, son of Robert the Reeve of the same so they were at risk. Whether they were punished in some way is unknown but it is very likely.

William Bluet IV, like his uncle William, was involved with Henry's wars in Wales. Wales was a constant concern for both Henry III and Edward I.

³⁵⁷ So here we have a local feud that flares up when alcohol is consumed, a story that TP hears again and again in Court, although now it doesn't usually end with two people getting killed. Hospitalised maybe.

³⁵⁸ Eyre report Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes) p159, no 40

³⁵⁹ Meekings, CAF (1961) (ed) *Crown Pleas of the Wiltshire Eyre 1249* WRS vol XVI Devizes p196 no 237

³⁶⁰ William le Fort, Henry le Hethene, John Smaleman, Adam Cakman, Henry le Careter, Robert son of Perment' [and] Reynold of Bathon'

³⁶¹ It is noted that the writer has made two persons of Walter's unusual name, *Walter Cloude* and *Girofe of Lacham*

In 1274 the Welsh leader, Prince ³⁶² Llywelyn ap Gruffudd had refused to pay homage to Edward I and, indeed, had tried to marry the daughter of the (very) deceased Simon de Montfort. It is possible that this threatened to re-ignite the recent civil war and in 1276 Edward marched an army into Gwynedd and forced Llewellyn's submission in the Treaty of Aberconway. But then

In 1282 the Welsh, chaffing under English overlordship, rebelled. Limited outbreaks of resistance become a united uprising. This was eventually led by Llywelyn himself, who captured key castles and defeated the royal army. Edward responded by leading an even greater host into Wales. ³⁶³

In July of 1282 William Bluet was summoned to appear at the King's Council that was held in Gloucester ³⁶⁴ before the multi- front English campaign which ended the rebellion and killed Llywelyn. This did not end all rebellion in Wales, there were sporadic uprisings until the early 1300's. For example the lord of Dryslwyn in Carmarthenshire, Rhys ap Maredudd, had

taken such exception to the humiliations heaped on him by [the English Justiciar ³⁶⁵] at Carmarthen that he rose in rebellion in June 1287 ³⁶⁶

This rebellion was serious enough that the army was summoned - William had to

appear with horse and arms at a Military Council to be held at Gloucester before Edmund, Earl of Cornwall ³⁶⁷

³⁶² Llewellyn had been officially granted his self-assumed title Prince of the Welsh' when he swore fealty to Henry III, and signed the Treaty of Montgomery, in 1267 [Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King : Edward I and the Forging of Britain* p132]

³⁶³ http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/state/nations/wales_conquest_05.shtml

³⁶⁴ Pulgrave, F (ed) (1827) *Parliamentary writs and Writs of Military Summons* vol 1 p332

³⁶⁵ Robert Tibetot

³⁶⁶ Jenkins, GH (2006) *A Concise History of Wales* Cambridge p107

³⁶⁷ Pulgrave, F (ed) (1827) *The Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military*

on 24th June 1287. This council was being headed by Earl Edmund because Edward I was in France, trying to settle disagreements over the ownership of Sicily. William was not the only Bluet involved this time; his son John Bluet was also in Wales in 1287, he was there with the Duke of Norfolk, his overlord for Silchester and Lackham³⁶⁸. It is noteworthy that two Bluets were called up - this hadn't even happened during the major invasion of Wales two years earlier. In the event it turned out this was because the regents, perhaps fearing a revolt on the scale of 1282-83 was imminent, responded with magnificent overreaction³⁶⁹ and 24,000 men were mobilised. As it turned out this was not that serious a rebellion and was all over by the new year, but ap Maredudd remained at large until he was betrayed by four of his own men in April 1288. He was eventually hung and quartered at York.³⁷⁰

The Bluet's Wiltshire land was not confined to Lackham, of course; in common with the landowning patterns of the time there were parcels of land spread all over the county - for example William is recorded as holding a small amount of land³⁷¹ at Hurdecotes Ashton, somewhere between Semington and Westbury in Wiltshire from at least 1255 to 1277. Other evidence that William owned land in many places can be found, if needed, in an agreement of 1282, where he acknowledged in Chancery that he owed Nicholas, son of Nicholas the treasurer of Wells, 300 marks, and that this was to be levied on his lands in Wiltshire and Berkshire if he³⁷² failed to pay³⁷³. This money was dowry so that

Summons vol 1 p250

³⁶⁸ *Calendar of Close Rolls Edw I 1282 - 1292* p274 — John Bluet who is in Wales with the Duke of Norfolk until Michaelmas¹ dated Hereford 23 July 128

³⁶⁹ Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King : Edward I and the Forging of Britain* Hutchinson London p217

³⁷⁰ Jenkins, GH (2006) *A Concise History of Wales* Cambridge p107

³⁷¹ Victoria County History *Wiltshire VIII* p208. 2 carucates. The land was —probably¹ held from the barony of Castle Combe

³⁷² Morris, M (2008) *A Great and Terrible King : Edward I and the Forging of Britain* Hutchinson London p217

³⁷³ *Calendar Close Rolls Edw I vol 1 1279 - 1288* p 180 dated Friday after St Gegory 1282. This would have been Friday the 13th of March, as the Feast of St Gregory (12 March) was on Thursday in 1282. This St. Gregory was the early Pope Gregory

William's daughter Emmeline could marry Nicholas' nephew Nicholas (son of Nicholas' brother Ralph). Nicholas son of Ralph was a minor at the time, his uncle Nicholas acknowledged that when his nephew came of age at St Nicholas next ³⁷⁴ he would give him control of the lands that he was holding in wardship³⁷⁵.

A few occurrences that involved William's estates in Wiltshire are known - in 1276 four people were arrested in Lacock on charges of larceny and receiving. Three of them - John Sturdi, Thomas la Hattere and Alice Thoregber were found guilty and hanged. The felons' belongings went to Walter de Wick, "*tithingman of Lacok of William Bluet's part*" ³⁷⁶

It is noteworthy that the de Wick family is seen elsewhere - Richard de Wick was a witness to two of the agreements between William and Abbess Beatrice cited above ³⁷⁷ and he appears as a witness to many other agreements in this period. The Wick family also had connections with the Marshals; in 22 Edw IV (1483) an action ³⁷⁸ between Robert Bonham and Robert Baynard of Lackham rested on the fact that Richard Wyke held "*the manor of Charlaweswyke from William Mareschal as of his manor of Lackham*"³⁷⁹, and had granted it to William Bluet Kt., and his

(c540-604) who is most famous for seeing Anglo-Saxons for sale in a Roman market and saying — *These are not Angles, they are Angels!*

³⁷⁴ 6th December 1282. There are far too many *Nicholas's* here

³⁷⁵ *Calendar Close Rolls Edw I* vol 1 1279 - 1288 p 180 dated 12 March 1282, and signed at Down Ampney, a Hungerford Manor south east of Cirencester

³⁷⁶ Pugh, RB (ed) (1978) "*Delivery of Old Salisbury Gaol, Friday in Whitsun week 4 Edw I* [29 May 1276] *before Sir William de Braybuf and H. of the marsh, justices*" *Wiltshire Gaol Delivery and Trialbaston Trials 1275-1306* Wilts. Rec Soc XXXIII no 38 pp38 - 39

a tithingman was *Anciently the chief man of a tithing a headborough, in later use a peace office or petty constable* or — *A collector of tithes, a tithe proctor* (*Oxford English Dictionary Compact Edition* (1971) Oxford Press Vol II p334),

³⁷⁷ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p25, no. 49 dated 1257-70 and p47 no. 169 dated c1264.

³⁷⁸ *De Banco Rolls*, Michaelmas 22 Edw. IV, m. 615 De Banco refers to Justices of the King's Bench and the Common Bench

³⁷⁹ The record actually has — *Kakham* but no such manor is known. It is most likely this is a misspelling of Lackham

descendents

Wick Farm near Lacock in Wiltshire was owned by this family. They also appear as charter witnesses for the Bluets and others see below.

William Bluet was a juror at an inquisition into the destruction of a charter belonging to the Abbot of Quarr by William (some sources say Adam) Brayboef, Sheriff of Hampshire

The King.. ordered the sheriff to summon before the King on the 3rd day after Christmas, wherever he might then be in England thirty lawful knights girt with sword ³⁸⁰

There was a Chapel attached to Lackham. The founding date is unknown, but it was before 1179. In a charter, seen earlier, William gifted an acre of land to Richard Swein, the rent for which was 1d to light the chapel of the blessed Mary at Lakham. ³⁸¹

William held mesne lands at Yeovilton in Somerset and was succeeded by another son, John, about 1303, which gives a possible date for William's death. It has already been seen that the Bluets held Yeovilton under William d'Eu, as they did Silchester.

The date of William's death is unknown but he was certainly alive after 1282 ³⁷⁵ as was seen above, and it may have been as late as the 1300 upper limit in the DNB ³⁸².

³⁸⁰ *Calendar of Charter Rolls* vol 2 p212 1257-1300 Dated 3rd May 1278

³⁸¹ Rogers, KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS p38 no 122, undated but witnesses put it around 1270-1290 This land was later granted to the Abbey church by Richard's son Edward, when the rent to Lackham chapel continued (Rogers, KH (1978) *ibid* p38 no 124 undated, which is the agreement referred to in Kite (1899) *ibid* p2). It is surprising that Kite didn't use the previous agreement. Although both are undated they were both before 1311, as in this year Edward's widow, Isabel gave the remainder of her lands to the abbess. One of the witnesses was Sir John Bluet, agreement made on the feast of St Alphege the Martyr * (19th April) (see Rogers, KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS p29, no 74)

*Saint Alphege is the commonly used name for Ælfheah the Anglo-Saxon Bishop of Winchester and, later, Archbishop of Canterbury. He was martyred at Greenwich on 19th April 1012 (details Wikipedia at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alphege>)

³⁸² Oxford Dictionary of National Biography (2006) Vol 6 Blackmore - Bowyer Bluet family by Crouch, D. p325 gives he died sometime between 1287 - 1300. 377 Boon, GC (2000) *St Mary the Virgin, Silchester* p19

William would appear to have been the last of the Bluets to bear the device that is seen on the chancel wall at Silchester *Or, two wings conjoined in a fesse gules*. (The later Bluet arms are also *or* with the eagle being *gules*, so the same colour scheme). The version seen as [Fig. 1a](#) is taken from this wall painting in Silchester church, Hants.

The paintings belong to the original chancel of c 1230.. In the corners of the east wall, high up, a rapidly sketched coat of arms, consisting of a pair of conjoined wings, badly preserved, may be seen. As befits work executed at the expense of the manorial family, as this would have been, this is the Bluet's signature (at Lacock Abbey, Wilts, their main home, it can be seen on a roof-boss of the cloisters ³⁸³)

And, indeed, in the cloister roof is found a beautifully coloured roof boss. However these are not the Bluet arms, which have not been located in the Cloisters at Lacock as the colour scheme is reversed. As was seen above these are the Seymour arms, they bore *Gules a lure of two golden wings* ³⁸⁴.

³⁸³³⁸³ <http://perso.numericable.fr/~briantimms/rolls/StGeorgesE4.html>

Or two wings conjoined in lure gules

Timms notes that this roll was painted about 1285, which would lend support to William Bluet surviving beyond this date. However it has been shown (Peter , *pers.comm*) that the date of 1285 is only approximate and that it is very possible that the Bluet arms are earlier, which would not support a survival date beyond 1285. Our thanks to Peter Howarth for his constructive and helpful comments on a number of heraldic points. The circumstances that led to the compilation of the roll are unknown. By permission of Brian Timms

³⁸⁴ <http://www.2020site.org/heraldry/beasts.html>



Fig. 15 Arms in Lacock Abbey cloisters ³⁸⁵ [*](#)

The Seymour wings can also be seen, as the second top left of 14 quarterings, in the arms of Sir Francis Seymour in a memorial window in Bath Abbey ³⁸⁶



Fig. 16 Arms of Sir Francis Seymour, Bath Abbey [*](#)

³⁸⁵ Photo © Tony Pratt 2007. If visiting from below click [here](#) to return to the discussion

³⁸⁶ This member of the Seymour family is later than the period we are discussing here, he paid for the glazing of the middle most of the windows in Bath abbey when it was renovated in the 16th century (Peach, REM (1887) (ed) *The History and Antiquities of Bath Abbey Church* by John Britton)

It is noteworthy that the only appearances of the Seymours in the Lacock Abbey Charters are as witnesses, and then only twice.

However they were important enough to the Abbey to have the right of appointing novices, in 1346-7 Sir Thomas Seymour is found paying the expenses of the festivities on the occasion of the veiling of Alice Sthocus ³⁸⁷ and so it is not surprising to find their arms in the Cloister

It has been seen that the Bluet arms are to be found in the St George's Roll, which was a Roll of Arms compiled in about 1285-. The original is now lost but a number of copies do exist, although these differ from each other ³⁸⁸



Fig. 17 from St George's Roll [*](#)

The roll was said to lend support to the idea of William Bluet surviving beyond 1285. However it has been brought to our attention ³⁸⁹ that although Sir Anthony Wagner dated the

³⁸⁷Victoria County History *Wiltshire* Vol 3 *Houses of Augustinian canoneses: Abbey of Lacock* p310 The Victoria County History footnote (fn 169) to this entry gives :N.C. f. iv, *Cellaress's Roll*. 'Ea die' (Monday, 29 Oct.) 'non plus quia dominus Thomas Seymore acquietavit omnia alia propter velacionem Alicie Sthocus'. *Thomas held land in Wick and Notton (Lacock): B.M., Add. Chart. 47145; Cal. inq. pm. ix, 93.* [might this have been Athocus ?]

³⁸⁸ Howarth, Peter *pers comm* 2011 " *The ten copies were made between 1530 and 1640. Four of these are in the College of Arms. The copy used by Brault as his basic manuscript is the one from Queen's College, Oxford. Other copies are to be found at the British Library (3 copies), the Society of Antiquaries, and the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust.*

³⁸⁹Peter Howarth, *pers. conn* 2011

completion of the roll to " c 1285 " ³⁹⁰ he also pointed out several names who had died well before then. ³⁹¹ and William may, therefore, have died before 1285

It has already been seen that Sir John Bluet was with the English army in Wales in 1287, under the command of his overlord, the Duke of Norfolk ³⁹² .

In 1290 John witnessed a charter of Roger Bygod Earl of Norfolk and marshal of England ³⁹³ and in 1293 a charter of William Horn that granted land, close to John's manor at Lackham, to Nicholas de la Hoesse ³⁹⁴ . Another of the witnesses was Edmund Gacelyn, his neighbour at Sheldon.

In 1295 John was an arbitrator for the Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, Gilbert de Clare, in a dispute between the Earl and the archbishop of Canterbury, Robert of Winchelsea. What this dispute was about is unclear, but John and his co-arbiter Luke de la Gare were unable to come to an agreement with the Archbishop's arbitrators ³⁹⁵ and in October King Edward appointed Antony Bek, Bishop of Durham and a King's Man, to finally determine the dissension ³⁹⁶ - what his decision was is also unknown This record, however, shows John Bluet being associated with

³⁹⁰Wagner, A R (1950), *Catalogue of English Mediaeval Rolls of Arms*, OUP, , p 19; comes to the same date (Brault GJ (1997) *The Rolls of Arms of Edward I*, Boydell, vol i. pp 203-4

³⁹¹ Wagner, A R (1950), *ibid*
" No. 76 'Fraunc d'Boun', d. 1273; No. 131 'Geffrai de Dinaunt', d. 1258; No. 246 'George de Cauntelow', d. 1273; No 103 'Tebaud de Verdon', succeeded 1284 [read 1274]."

³⁹² Calendar Patent Rolls Edw I 1282 - 1288 p274 see above, p85

³⁹³ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw I vol 2 1281 - 1292* p134 dated 6 Kalends June 1290 - 27th May 1290. This was the last Roger Bigod to be earl of Norfolk, his line died out with him

³⁹⁴ Kirby, JL (ed) (1994) *The Hungerford Cartulary : A calendar of the earl of Radnor's cartulary of the Hungerford family* WRS vol XLIX p84 no 327 dated Sunday the eve of St Bartholomew [23rd August] 1293

³⁹⁵ Master Simon de Gandavoarch deacon of Oxford, and William de Saredene

³⁹⁶ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw I vol 3 1292 - 1301* p152 dated October 7th 1295

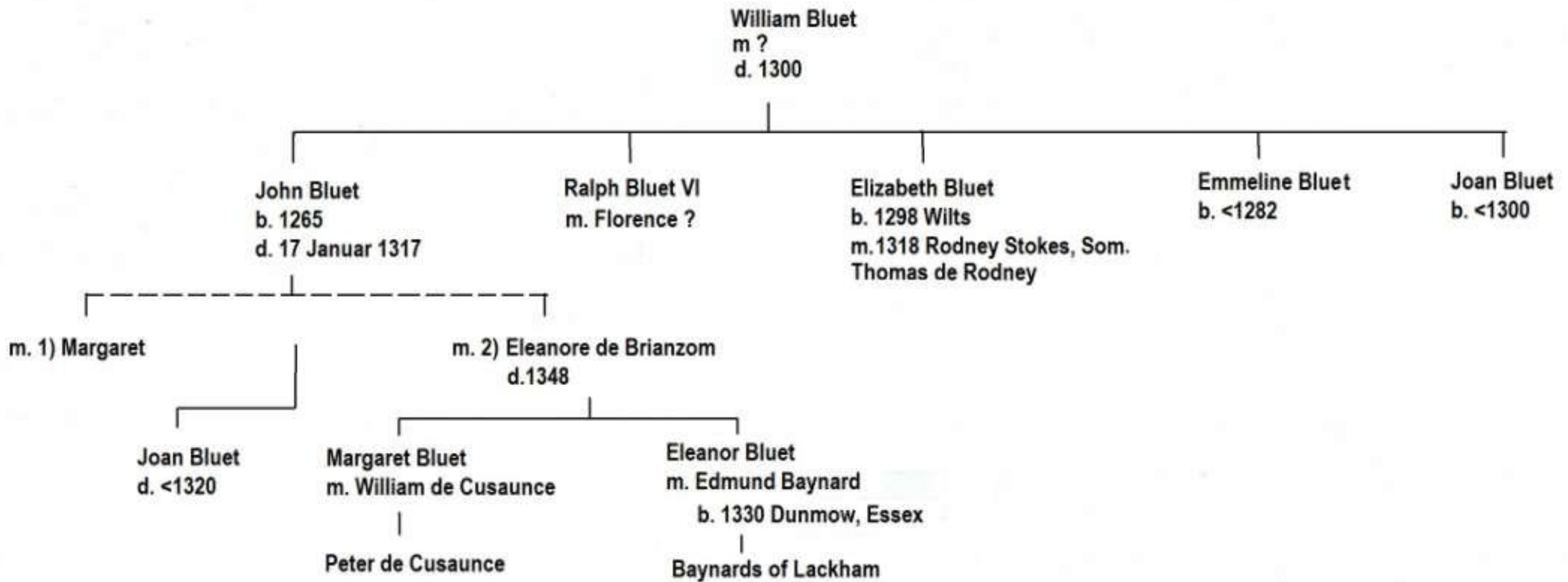


Fig. 18 Descendants of William Bluet *

If visiting from the discussion on Margery below click [here](#) to return to the footnote

If visiting from the discussion on Joan below click [here](#) to return to the text

the prime movers and powers within the country at this time. Both Winchelsea and Bek were of major importance in the conflict between Edward 1 and the Church between 1297 and 1300, which eventually led to them both being banished from the kingdom - only to return at the request of Edward II, years later.

From an Inquisition post mortem of 1297 it is known that John Bluet held land in Bedfordshire³⁹⁷ as well as Wiltshire, Gloucestershire and Berkshire

There is a record of an agreement³⁹⁸ between John Bluet and one William Martel, who became John's squire. The Romantic Movement has given us a skewed and unrealistic view of knights and their squires; this was actually

a contract, and is as formal and business-like a document as any contract between manager and actor, or between author and publisher....

*The fact was thatSir John Bluet wanted a courtly squire. William Martel applied for the engagement, and got it. A contract was then drawn up, and duly sealed: it was a contract valid during the life of William Martel and it was binding on the heirs of Sir John Bluet.*³⁹⁹

The text of this agreement, in both French and translation, was earlier published by Thomas Wakeman⁴⁰⁰ (see [Appendix 2](#) for

³⁹⁷ *Inquisitions Post Mortem Edw I* vol 3 no 386 p257 Inquisition of Laurence de Sancto Mauro Sunday before the Annunciation 25 Edw I [6th April 1297; strangely the IPM says this was April 10th, but the Feast of the Annunciation was April 7th in the old calendar - Waters, C (2003) *A Dictionary of Saints Days, Fasts, Feasts and Festivals* Countryside Books p16] held at Bedford "a capital messuage 140a arable 30s rent of free tenants and 63s rent of bondmen who are ought to reap in autumn, held of John Bluet by service of 110s yearly"

³⁹⁸ British Library Add. Ch. 1531 signed at Silchester 25 Edw I (1297). Written in French

³⁹⁹ <http://www.harvestfields.ca/horror/006/174.htm>. This is a short piece called *Chivalry* by Arthur Macken, a writer of (mainly) horror stories but in this gloss on the agreement he makes some useful points. The original document source is not given, and no reference is made of the Arch. Canb. article, see next footnote.

⁴⁰⁰ Wakeman, T (1847) *Agreement between Sir John Bluet, Knt. And William Martell Temp. Edw. I* *Archaeologica Cambrensis* Vol II pp 143-145. The original and

Wakeman's translation of this agreement). He notes that

The Martells were lords of Llanviagel, Rogeat, and Llanwanches, in the same neighbourhood of the Manor of Langston, which was held by the Bluets from the lordship of Caerleon by the service of one knight's fee ⁴⁰¹

Denholm-Young has argued ⁴⁰², convincingly, that by this time the station of esquire didn't necessarily involve personal service, although in this case it sounds as if it did. However this may be because Martel wasn't a squire. Coss has suggested that in the original French the word most commonly used for a sub-knightly retainer is not esquire, the expected vernacular equivalent of armiger, but valet ⁴⁰³. "*John Bluet retained William Martel seon valet and the valet has both household and military connotations*". Coss points out ⁴⁰⁴ that Valet was undoubtedly a term employed by the magnates to denote retinue membership. It is noted that John Martel, not a knight, witnessed an [undated ⁴⁰⁵] charter of Bartholomew de Mora, along with Sir William Bluet, but whether John Martel was related to William Martel is unknown, it seems very likely.

Sir John is known to have borne the device that is now familiar for the Bluets of Wiltshire ([Fig. 1b](#)). This is different from the two wings seen before ([Figs 1a](#) and [15](#)), the Bluets arms had changed sometime between c1285 (the date of William's arms in St. George's Roll) and 1297. One

translation also appear in Morgan, O & Wakeman, T (1864) *Notices of Pencoyd Castle and Langston* Monmouth and Caerleon Antiquarian Ass.

⁴⁰¹ Wakeman T (1847) *ibid* p143. This whole section is a good example of how two researchers can complement one another - Tony located the record of the original document in the British Library and then, completely independently and many months later, Karen Repko found the article by Wakeman. It was only when we compared the information that we realised they dealt with the same document!

⁴⁰² Denholm-Young, N (1969) *The County Gentry in the Fourteenth Century with Special references to the Heraldic Rolls of Arms* Clarendon press

⁴⁰³ Coss, P (2003) *The Origins of the English Gentry* CUP p225

⁴⁰⁴ Coss, P (2003) *ibid* p226

⁴⁰⁵ *Calendar Charter Rolls* vol 3 Edw1 Ewd II 1300-1326 p98, this record was for a re-inspection of the original charter. Internal evidence from the witnesses of the original would suggest a date around 1260-1270. This charter was seen above

possible reason is suggested by Dr. Crouch's assertion that in 1287 John Bluet was made a Peer . *Some* support for this may be that after this date he is sometimes referred to as "*Lord of Lackham*" but this might just mean he is lord of the manor of Lackham. It is curious, however, that he isn't seen with the title before this. Probably this is the date he succeeded his father ⁴⁰⁶ which would date William's death to 1300, which is what is shown in Fig. 18.

It has however been pointed out ⁴⁰⁷ that there were many instances in this period where families changed their arms. *For some we can find explanations, but for many others we can't.*

In 1297 John was in Scotland with the English army, as a change of scenery from Wales. His arms are shown in the roll that commemorates the Battle of Stirling. We originally said that this was the Battle of Stirling Bridge. It has been pointed out ⁴⁰⁸, however, that Brault shows that the Stirling Roll refers to the siege of Stirling Castle in 1304 and not the disastrous defeat of the English in 1297.⁴⁰⁹



Fig. 19 Arms of John Bluet from the Stirling Roll ⁴¹⁰ * _

Brault notes that ⁴¹¹

⁴⁰⁶ Howarth, Peter *pers.comm* 2011

⁴⁰⁷ Howarth, Peter *pers. comm* 2011.—

⁴⁰⁸ Howarth, Peter *pers. comm* 2011

⁴⁰⁹ G J Brault (1997), *The Rolls of Arms of Edward I*, *Boydell, 1997*, vol i. p 483

⁴¹⁰ <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/rolls/stirlingST1.htm>.

An excellent site that gives superb renditions of the arms described in a large number of rolls of arms. *or a double-headed eagle displayed gules* by permission of Brian Timms.

⁴¹¹ G J Brault (1997), *The Rolls of Arms of Edward I*, *Boydell, 1997*, vol i. p 483

the original roll was from 1304 and refers to the siege of Stirling Castle in April to July of that year, and not to the battle of Stirling Bridge on 11 September seven years earlier. There are two reasons for believing this: (a) the English are unlikely to have celebrated a disastrous defeat in a roll of arms, but they would have been pleased with the recapture of the castle at the end of the siege; and (b) the headnote on the roll describes the forcing of a ford across the Forth on the Saturday after Trinity [30 May in 1304] and the rout of the Scots.

A description (undated but probably about 1300) gives John Bluet as *or une eglee goules and ii testes*⁴¹²

In March 1299 John Bluet was on his way to the court of the Pope in Rome, on behalf of Edward I, with Robert de Halghton⁴¹³. John named William Martel and Thomas Page as his attorneys to act for him while he was away⁴¹⁴. In 1287 the same Thomas Page had quitclaimed

*all his rights in half a 'ham' (a portion of meadow) called Badcockes lying next to the abbey of Lacock in exchange for one and a half acres of meadow in Northmede, formerly belonging to John Crok*⁴¹⁵

The aim of this embassy has not been discovered but it may have been to

⁴¹² As Peter Haworth kindly pointed out

"The best authority by far for mediaeval blazon is Dr Gerard J Brault, a francophone Canadian, sometime Edwin Erle Sparks Professor of French and Medieval Studies at Pennsylvania State University, and a world authority on mediaeval French and [who] also wrote 'Rolls of Arms of Edward I'. In Early Blazon [2nd ed, Boydell, 1997.] he gives examples of 'teste' used as the head of a dragon, wolf, lamb, leopard, serpent, and specifically 'egle de deus testes' (see p 173). Later of course the word became 'tête' with the circumflex indicating the missing 's'. [Haworth, Peter 2011 pers. comm]

⁴¹³ Sir Robert de Halghton was a Staffordshire knight. Interestingly he was an MP, and supporter of Simon de Montfort in the Parliament of 1258, so he too had been forgiven by King Edward (*Political History of Penkridge, 1258 - 1603* at <http://www.timespast.org.uk/id87.html>) Robert de Halghton died in 1303 (*IPM Staffordshire*, dated 20 Jan. 32 Edw 1 - 1303)

⁴¹⁴ *Calendar Close Rolls Edw I* vol 3 1296 - 1303 dated March 8th 1299 p397

⁴¹⁵ Document, detailed in a sale catalogue, dated Lacock, Wiltshire, 26th May 1314, current location unknown.

respond to the appeal made to the Pope by the Scots. They presented Pope Boniface with a well prepared case to show that

Edward had no superiority in Scotland but that, in fact, the kingdom was in the special protection of the Holy See ⁴¹⁶

John wasn't in Rome long, he may have returned when the embassy failed; the Pope issued the Bull *Scimus Fili* instructing Edward I to leave the Scots alone. This wasn't actually presented to Edward until later in 1300, see below.

John Bluet was back in England by October when he acknowledged that he owed 8 marks to John de Tyting to be secured on his property in Southampton,. This doesn't necessarily mean in the town of Southampton as at this date Southampton was often used as a geographical area and appears to have been looked on almost as a county in its own right. It is known from the Close Rolls that de Tyting was a citizen of Winchester ⁴¹⁷ but this doesn't show his true importance. He could afford to lend John Bluet money as he

was Mayor of Winchester on three occasions as well as being Member of Parliament..... He made his fortune from wool and in modern terms was a multimillionaire who had many connections with France and other parts of Europe ⁴¹⁸

Wool and money were major factors of England at this period - " throughout the thirteenth century the amount of money in circulation had been increasing ⁴¹⁹ ; the increase in the [money] supply was certainly stupendous and was supported by the influx of silver to pay for English and Scottish wool. So it is not surprising to find a wool merchant lending money.

Edward invaded Scotland again in 1300 and it is clear that John Bluet

⁴¹⁶ Keen, M (2003) *England in the later Middle Ages* 2nd ed. Routledge p27

⁴¹⁷ *Calendar Close Rolls Edw I* vol 3 1296 - 1303 p508 dated October 28th 1302 when John acknowledged the debt was now £24 6s 4d

⁴¹⁸ Scobie, G *Views of Medieval Winchester* at <http://www.communicate.co.uk/hants/somsoc/page12.phtml>

⁴¹⁹ See, for instance, Carpenter, D (2003) *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain 1066-1284* OUP, chapter 2 generally, and p40 specifically

was again present; his arms appear in the Galloway Roll of Arms⁴²⁰. Brian Timms notes that this roll is not definitely linked with any particular event in 1300, which is certainly its date, but that it probably refers to a skirmish which took place about three weeks after the siege of Caerlaverock⁴²¹. However Brown⁴²² associates it with a fight at the River Cree some three weeks after the siege. A good account of the fight appears in Barrow's excellent book on the period:

the English army reached the [River] Cree and found the Scots facing them across the tidal estuary. . . . The archers on both sides exchanged shots across the river, and when the tide went out the English infantry crossed over and harassed the enemy at close quarters. In each army the cavalry was grouped in three brigades. Edward, mistrusting snares and traps which the Scots were reported to have laid, wished to keep the English horse on the east side. But owing to a misunderstanding the earl of Hereford's brigade went over, whereupon the king and his son Edward of Caernarvon followed in support. At this the three Scottish cavalry brigades, commanded respectively by Buchan, Comyn of Badenoch, and Umfraville, took to flight, many knights⁴²³ abandoning their horses and fleeing to the moors.

It is said that the Galloway roll was composed soon after this and that it only includes the knights in the King and his 16-year-old son's squadrons⁴²⁴. If this is correct John Bluet was one of either Edward I or Edward of Caernarvon's personal knights.

⁴²⁰ <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/rolls/gallowayGA3.htm>

⁴²¹ <http://www.briantimms.com/rolls/gallowayGA1.htm> The Galloway Roll manuscript is M14bis, pp376-90, College of Arms, London. Edward I commenced the siege of Caerlaverock Castle on July 10 1300 and battering rams and trebuchets made short work of the castle and rope tied to the nearest trees made even shorter work of some of the hapless garrison [Barrow, GS (2005) *Robert the Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland* p146]

⁴²² Brown, NM (1996) *Gules Crusily and a Fess Dancetty Or* Research/Penn State, Vol. 17, no. 3, online at <http://www.rps.psu.edu/sep96/gules.html>

⁴²³ Barrow, GS (2005) *Robert the Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland* p148

⁴²⁴ Brown, NM (1996) *Gules Crusily and a Fess Dancetty Or* Research/Penn State, Vol. 17, no. 3, online at <http://www.rps.psu.edu/sep96/gules.html>

John was probably back in Wiltshire in the late autumn of 1300; in August the Pope sent a letter to Edward I demanding that he should withdraw from Scotland, referring to his Bull of the previous year, which Winchelsea had only just presented to the King. Edward deferred his answer, but on October 30th announced a truce with the Scots.⁴²⁵

Edward invaded Scotland again in 1301 and continued to harry the Scots in 1302 and 1303. John Bluet was certainly in Scotland towards the end of this period. In 1303 he was given respite of service due in Southampton and Wiltshire because he is going to Scotland with the King⁴²⁶ and later in the year this was extended because he was staying with Ralph de Monte Hermeri⁴²⁷ in Scotland.

John Bluet was more involved with the royal family at this time than just being one of their knights; he stood surety for Joan of Acre. This is known because shortly after the return from Scotland he was given a grant by the King that neither he nor his heirs were to be

*molested by reason of his having been one of the pledges for the debts of Joan, countess of Gloucester and Hertford, the king's daughter to the king in his lifetime, who is bound to the king in 8,000 marks to have again her goods which for certain causes he had taken into his hands, and also for part of the debts wherein Gilbert, Earl of Gloucester and Hertford, sometime her husband, was bound to the king in his lifetime*⁴²⁸

Joan was married to Gilbert de Clare, the 7th Earl of Hertford, in 1290. He died in 1295 and she secretly married Ralph de Monthermer, 1st Baron Monthermer, who was a member of her personal household, in 1297. King Edward I, who was arranging a marriage for her to an Italian nobleman, was extremely upset when he found out. He threw Monthermer in prison, and

⁴²⁵ Powicke, M (1962) *The Thirteenth Century 1216 - 1307* The Oxford History of England Clarendon Press p693

⁴²⁶ *Calendar Close Rolls 1277 - 1325* p79

⁴²⁷ *Calednar Close Rolls 1277 - 1325* p92

⁴²⁸ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw I* vol 3 1292-1301 p534 dated September 20th 1300

Joan had to plead for his release. King Edward also took control of Joan's household and her property, hence the debt. Eventually her father relented, released Monthermer from prison in August 1297, and allowed him to hold the title of Earl of Gloucester and Hereford during Joan's lifetime. But John Bluet had to wait another three years before he was no longer looked on with disfavour for having backed Joan and probably only then because he gave good service in Scotland.

King Edward I was in Wiltshire in April and May 1302, when he was staying at Devizes Castle. During his visit he let Sir John Bluet off a fine that had been imposed when John had appeared

*before... the king's justices recently appointed to enquire concerning certain trespasses of venison against him [the King] in the Forest of Wolvemer as the king has given him such respite*⁴²⁹

This pardon was only formally granted in 1303 by reason of his service in Scotland when the King was in Dundee. This was yet another excursion into Scotland that had not been much fun; earlier that year, in February, the English had been routed at the Battle of Roslin when Sir John Seagrave's 30,000 English were beaten by 8,000 Scots under various commanders⁴³⁰. John Bluet was not involved in this campaign.

In 1306 Joan, the king's daughter for whom John Bluet had stood surety, died and her IPM shows that Sir John had land, houses and a water mill in Monmouthshire⁴³¹ but that it was only a lifetime tenure and they was not inherited by John's heirs.

⁴²⁹ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw I* vol 4 1301 - 1307 dated October 18 1303 p164

⁴³⁰ including Wallace, Comyn, Fraser, St. Clair, Somerfield of Carnwarth, Simon of the Lee, Fleming of Cumbernauld and the Knights of the Hospital at Torphichen.

⁴³¹ *Inquisitions Post Mortem* vol IV 24-35 Edw I no435, p326
Little Lantrissen on Usk [Monmouth] houses with garden, 175a 1r in the hand of John Bluet for life of the gift of Sir Ralph de Monte Hermeri whereof a part remains void after the war, a water mill held by the said John Bluet Lantrissen tenements which descended to the said earl by hereditary right viz $\frac{1}{4}$ knights fee held by John Bluet for life of the gift of Sir Ralph de Monte Hermeri
 Ralph de Monte Hermeri is now more usually referred to as Ralph de Monthermer, Joan's second husband (see previous page)

As one of the Wiltshire county knights John was involved in law and order. For example in early 1307 he was appointed, with Peter Malorre⁴³², to investigate a problem for a neighbouring landowner and find

the persons who entered the manor of John de la Mare⁴³³, while he was on the king's service and carried away rabbits and other goods under his protection, at Castalcumbe [Castle Coombe], co. Wilts, hunted in his warren there and carried away rabbits and other goods⁴³⁴

Peter Malorre⁴³⁵ may have been sympathetic to de la Mare's problems, as he had suffered similar affront just two years earlier; in the patent Rolls for 1305 there is a record of the appointment of knights to investigate after people

⁴³² *Charter of Inspeximus*, Charter Roll, 5 Ed. II., m. 8 quoted at <http://www.yorkshirehistory.com/RAVENSER/beginning.htm>

⁴³²



Fig. 20 Arms of John de la Mare *

Knights of Edward I vol III (1930) Harl. Soc vol LXXXII p110
Argent bend azure and 3 eagles or by permission of Brian Timms at
<http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/era/early%20rolls%20of%20arms.htm>

John de la Mare held the Barony of Castle Combe as the inheritance of his first wife, Petronilla de Dunstavill, widow of Robert de Montford. He held it after Petronilla's death for life only [<http://www.the-orb.net/wales/esknights/mare.htm>]

⁴³⁴ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw I* vol 4 1301 - 1307 dated Jan 24th 1307 p540

⁴³⁵ Peter Mallore was a witness to Edward II's grant of a charter as a free borough to the Yorkshire town of Ravenserode in 1299. From the witness list it would seem likely that Mallore was one of Edward's household knights.

broke down the close of Ralph de Sandwyco⁴³⁶ and Peter Malorre at Wykewood, co. Surrey and cut down and carried away his trees.⁴³⁷

In 1308 John granted the income from the rental of some Bluet land to Robert of the Bridge, provided he supplied 2lbs (approx 1kg) of wax for the Chapel of St Mary of Lackham annually, presumably for candles⁴³⁸.

⁴³⁶ Barron, CM (2004) *London in the Middle Ages: Government and People 1200-1500* OUP ISBN 0199257779

Ralph de Sandwich was a baron of the exchequer [Royal Arch. Soc. of Gt. Brit. And Ire. (1848) *Memoirs Illustrative of the Antiquities of the County and City of York etc*, p151] and was appointed royal Warden of the City of London when King Edward I took London into his own hands in June 1285 after Lawrence Duket was murdered in St Mary le Bow church. The city was governed by royal Wardens for thirteen years and the city liberties were only recovered after a fine of 2000 marks (an enormous amount) was paid in April 1298. Sandwich is seen as Warden, or Mayor, of London 9 times between 1284 and 1293 (Appendix 1 pp322-323). He may have died in 1307 [Foss, E (1851) *The Judges of England* vol III pp151 - 152]

⁴³⁷ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw I* vol 4 1301 - 1307 dated March 7th 1305

⁴³⁸ A copy of the original document is reported by Hinton, [Hinton, FH (1941) *Notes: Chapel at Lackham, in Lacock WAM XLIX CLXXIV* pp360 - 361]. The entry reads:

Dugdale, Sir W (1825) *Monasticon Anglicanum: a History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies, in England and Wales 1308* (2 Edw II)

(Transcription by JE Jackson from a copy, in his possession, of a Charter in the British Museum. BM Additional Charters no. 1533)

Sciant presentes &c. I John Bluet Kt and Lord of Lackham give &c, to Robert de le Brigg, Clerk, Two shillings & sixpence of annual rent in my Fee of Lackham to be yearly taken, viz, From Matilda Hobekins 18d, & from John le Colt 12 for the Messuages, &c, wh. they hold of me. Moreover I have given to ye said Robert 17 1/2 acres of Arable, viz. 6 in Le Leye; 11/2 on Nethecote, 1 on Cockelegh, 1 at Goidlegh cum Rammesbrok, & 1/2 an acre at Man's Lane. And at Pewsdon 1 acre and at Wynterwell (names still at or near Lackham JEJ) 1 acre & on Eldridge 2 acres, & near the land of dame Hawys in the Inland 1 acre and near Le Weylete 1 acre; & on Flexley 1 acre of meadow called Le Melehamme.

To Have & To Hold the said Annual Rents with the 17 1/2 acres of arable & 1 of adow, of me and my heirs or assigns, To said Robert for term of his life freely, quietly and in good peace, Rendering thereout every year at the Chapel of the Blessed V Mary of Lackham Two lbs of wax (and) to me and my heirs sixpence, for the mess aforsd. And I, ye sd John Bluet, will warrant &c On testimony whereof &c. Our seals are affixed. Witnesses Alan Brecon, Alexander de Fraxino [Ash?, and if so was he from the settlement of Ash, at the top of Naish (Ash) Hill?], Wm Thomas and others. dat 2 Edward II"

Nearly four hundred years later one of these areas (Winterswell) belonged to a Notton clothier⁴³⁹.

Robert was chaplain at Lackham in William Bluet's time; William gave a message in the manor of Lakham to *Robert of Lakham, cleric, and Rosye his wife*⁴⁴⁰

It is noteworthy that Robert was a clerk, not a priest and so could marry. Robert appears as a witness to Lacock Abbey charters between at least 1263 and 1303⁴⁴¹. Other Lackham names that appear at this time are '*Alan de Lacham*⁴⁴² and '*Sir William de Lacham, knight*⁴⁴³, which is dated to between 1257-83, and is presumably William Bluet.

The names of six other chaplains are known - Richard (1168)⁴⁴⁴, Robert

⁴³⁹ Kite, E (1911) *Will of Samuel Mitchellof Notton, 1694* Wilts. Notes & Queries VI p269

Samuel Mitchell gave "lease of grounds at Winters Well Lacock purchased of Nicholas Gore and John Grist" to his son in law Robert Tarrant and grandson Robert Colborn. He didn't actually die until 1698 - *Here lyeth the body of Samuel Mitchell, of Notton, Clothier, who deceased the 4th day of Feb 1698, Aged 74 years* Lacock inscriptions recorded in Sherlock, P (ed) (2000) *Monumental Inscriptions of Witshire 1822* WRS vol 53, p17

⁴⁴⁰ British Library Add. Ch. 7063 dated Edward I

⁴⁴¹ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 He appears in charters between 1257-63, 1286-98 and 1290-1303 [p33 no 94, p28 no 58 and p49 no 178 respectively]. He is shown as "*Robert de Lacham cleric*" in the first and last here.

⁴⁴² Rogers, KH (1978) *ibid* p26 no 58

⁴⁴³ Rogers, KH (1978) *ibid* p33 no 98

⁴⁴⁴ Rogers, KH (1978) *ibid* p18, no 29, dated 1168 - 79 Richard was a witness to the agreement between Earl William of Salisbury and Ralph Bloet between 1168 and 1179, where he is recorded as *Richard, chaplain of Lach* which is the earliest record of a Lackham chaplain. It doesn't necessarily follow that the chapel was the one under discussion as the name is not given.

(1221)⁴⁴⁵, Stephen Draper(1349)⁴⁴⁶, Walter Fynamore (1352)⁴⁴⁷
 William Hunte⁴⁴⁸ (1410)⁴⁴⁹ and the last of the Chaplains to Lackham,
 Sir Michael Brickett (1565)⁴⁵⁰.

John Bluet was also involved with Lacock Abbey. It has already been

⁴⁴⁵ British Library Add. Ch. 47302 is a charter by Sibilia "daughter of Edward Lambel", who granted several pieces of land in Lacock to "Robert, vicar of the chapel of Lakham in Laycok in co. Wilts" which is dated 5 Hen III (1221 [Rogers, KH (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS p26, no 58, dated 1286-98])

⁴⁴⁶ Calendar of Patent Rolls Edw III vol 3 p400
 2nd October 1349 *Presentation of Stephen Draper chaplain, to the Chapel of St Mary within the manor of Lackham*

⁴⁴⁷ It is likely all were local men but Walter certainly is - the "House of Fynemore" (or Fynamour) was located near the south west edge of Bowood and formed a point on the Chippenham Forest boundary as laid down in the Perambulation of 1300 and the Bluets have dealings with various Fynamours.

⁴⁴⁸ The original details for the three middle chaplains are given in Hinton, FH (1941) *Notes : Chapel at Lackham, in Lacock* WAM XLIX CLXXIV pp360 -361 taken from the Register of Sarum, as printed in the vol. of "Wilts Institutions" by Sir Thos. Phillipps

Jackson (Mss) also has exactly the same information, laid out in exactly the same way -

		Institution of Lackham Chapel	
		Patron	Clerk
		The King: for the heir	Stephen Draper
AD 1349	Capel : Lacham	of Eleanor Bluet**	
1352	Capel Lacham situat juxta Lacock	Peter de Cusaunce Ld of ye Manor of Lacham	Walter Fynamour on resig. of Stephen Draper
1410	Cantaria in manerio de Lakham	Philip Baynard Ld of ye Manor of Lakham	Wm Hunte

** she had died in 1348 - the heir was Margaret

⁴⁴⁹ Aubrey, J ed by Jackson, JE (1862) *Wiltshire Topographical Collections* footnote 1 p9 (footnotes by Jackson)

⁴⁵⁰ Thomas, J O (1984) *History of Agricultural Education in Wiltshire* p28 records that Michael Brickett was buried in Lacock church in 1565, available online at <http://www.lackham.co.uk/history/Lackham%201946-1970.pdf>

seen that he gave up his right of presenting to St Cyriacs church⁴⁵¹
and

*when Sir John Bluet agreed to surrender his share of the
avowson of St Cyriac's to the nuns one of the conditions was
that they should build between them a Lady Chapel adjoining⁴⁵²
the conventual church in which he should be buried*

In 1312 this was put in hand and the abbess of Lacock, Joan de
Montfort, was in bond to Sir John for 200 marks⁴⁵³; the abbess and
convent had to complete the chapel by the due date. If this was done
John would assign the money to cover the work, otherwise he would
demand payment. The deadline appears to have been renegotiated,
another agreement was made in 1315 with the same bond amount but
only two thirds of the work had to be completed by 1323 and the final
third by 1327. The chapel was to be built on the side of the Abbey and
two arches made to replace the common wall⁴⁵⁴. It is unknown if the
Chapel was completed on time.

⁴⁵¹ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw II* vol 1 1307 - 1311 John was granted licence to give up his avowson to the Nuns, and they were given licence to appropriate St Cyriac's dated March 4 1311. The licence actually cost him 100 solidos - "*Johes Bluet finem fecit cum R p centum solid' p licen' concedendi jus pronat quod het in ecclia Sci Ciriaci de Lacok abisse et moniabilis de Lacok*" [*Rotulorum originalum in Curia Scacarii* (1805) vol 1 Hen III Edw I & Edw II p115]

⁴⁵² Victoria County History *Wiltshire* III p305

⁴⁵³ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 no 37 pp21-22 payable at All Saints [1st November] in 1319, dated 27 Sept. 1312 . For the original wording (in French rather than the more usual Latin) see Clark-Maxwell (1904) *On the Appropriation of Lacock Abbey* WAM 33 Appendix XI pp372 - 373. The seal, described as Seal armorial : two headed eagle is that of the Bluets. The original text, and the translation given in Talbot CH (1876) *On the agreement between the abbess Johanna de Montfort and the convent of Lacock, and sir John Bluet, Lord of Lackham, concerning the erection of a chapel of Our Lady adjoining the Abbey Church of Lacock AD1315* WAM XVI pp 35 - 39, are much longer and more complete

⁴⁵⁴ Rogers, KH (ed) (1978) *ibid* p23, no 43 dated 28 August 1315 The conversion factor between marks and pounds at this time can be calculated from two other agreements, dated September 1315, where John Bluet formally agreed the bond. From these documents it is seen that 200 marks was equal to £133 3s, one Edward II mark was therefore equal to just under 13s 4d, which is exactly the same value as the Tudor mark [Rogers KH (1979) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS pp22-23, charters 41 & 42]

The original agreement for this work still existed in 1900 although it seems to have disappeared now -

*This the covenant made between lady Johanna de Mounfort Abbess of Lacoke and the convent of the one part of Sir John Bluet Lord of Lacham of the other part. That is to say that the aforesaid Abbess and convent or their successors shall cause to be made and finished a chapel of Our Lady in their abbey of Lacoke, which chapel shall adjoin their high church of the same abbey. And thus shall the chapel be, in length five and nine feet and in width twenty five and a half and there shall be in the said chapel four windows that is to say in each gable one window as large as the one is made and finished and the other is begun shall be well made and finished, and in the far (south) side of the aforesaid chapel the one to be such as is made and finished and the other as large as it is begun shall be made and finished of good and suitable work and the aforesaid windows are to be suitably ironed and glazed. And the old wall shall be taken down from the apex of the two windows which were and appeared on the making of this writing in the wall aforesaid as far as the string course next below the sills of the same windows, and two arches shall be made where the wall shall be taken down as large that is to say as can well be suffered between the two buttresses so that the old arch (window arch) can be sawn without peril. And the aforesaid Abbess and convent or their successors shall cause to be made the roof of the same chapel of good timber and suitable work and a roof of such kind as shall please the aforesaid Abbess and convent or their successors. And the aforesaid chapel, that is to say the roof, shall be well and suitably covered with lead, and the roof within the aforesaid chapel shall be all well ceiled and painted ..*⁴⁵⁵

The Lady Chapel's location is made clear by Talbot, it was

*To the south of the nuns' choir, and its east end ranged with the east end of the Church, which was a little beyond the east face of the tower later built by Sir William Sharrington*⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁵ Breakspear, H (1900) *Lacock Abbey Church* The Archaeological Journal pp4-5 WANHS WT138/13

⁴⁵⁶ Talbot, CH (1911) *The Will of Joan Trye* WN&Q vol 7 p58 The Tower is, of course, the one now seen on the south eastern side of the abbey and famous from

Sir John was appointed Warden of the forests of Chippenham and Melksham, his deputy was John de Montsorel⁴⁵⁷.

According to a much later Visitation of Wiltshire there was another generation of Bluets at Lackham, with John being the son of another John Bluet who married Margaret or Margery Bigod, presumably a daughter of his overlord. There is some problem with this as no such marriage is seen in the pedigree of the Bigod family. There is no direct evidence, from charters etc, that there were two John Bluets at this time, and the dates do not require another generation, although if they were short-lived it would *just* be possible. It is taken that the Sir John who is said to have been married to Margaret Bigod is a confusion of later date and that Sir John married first Margery and then Eleanor⁴⁵⁸.

There is documentary evidence for Margery; in 1300 Alice of Calne, daughter of Thomas Boret granted land in Helmerton (Hilmarton) to Sir John Bluet and his wife Margery⁴⁵⁹. In 1308 she is given as John's wife in an agreement⁴⁶⁰ with John's brother, Ralph VI.

The latest record found of Margery is in September 1309, when she and John took back land in Melksham and Beanacre they had allowed

Fox-Talbot's early photographs.

⁴⁵⁷ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* IV p437

⁴⁵⁸ The Bluet pedigree in [Fig. 18](#) shows this arrangement, not the one depicted in *Visitations*. This lineage remains speculative, but is considered to be as probable as the more widely accepted one.

⁴⁵⁹ Badminton Estate Records D2700/NR11/1/4

⁴⁶⁰ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw II* vol 1 1307 - 1313 dated Nov 1st 1308 p145. This is possibly the grant that is recorded in *Rot. Orig. in Curia Scacarii* (1805) p163 not dated which shows John held in chief - "*Johes Bluet finem fecit cum R p decem marcas p licentia feoffandi Radm Bluet de manio de Helmerton qd de R tenet in capite*".

(An aside, and nothing at all to do with Lackham or the Bluets; the next entry in this Roll is "*Nov 5th 1308 Notification that Roger atte Mershe had accidentally lost part of his left ear by the bite of a horse*" - it is not clear *why* this appears in a Patent but it was too good to omit!)

John de Bradeford⁴⁶¹ and his wife Isabel to use⁴⁶². She was certainly dead by 22nd March 1311 when she is referred to as John's late wife⁴⁶³

John married Eleanor, the widow of William de Brianzon. As Eleanor was the widow of a tenant in chief the King had to grant permission for the marriage. The application was granted in December 1311⁴⁶⁴.

Eleanor appears as Sir John's wife in a fine of 1312⁴⁶⁵ when there was an agreement concerning land in Beanacre and Melksham with John's brother Ralph VI. It is likely this was the same land that John and Margery had claimed in 1309.⁴⁶⁶

It seems that they were reclaiming Wiltshire manors at this time as in 1313 they also took back control of Lackham and Hilmarton from William Martel, John's squire / valet. This is before the birth of Eleanor, John's younger daughter; the fine specifies that the manors are to be held by John and

*the heirs male of John's body. Successive remainders to Margaret, daughter of the said John, the heirs of her body and the heirs of John*⁴⁶⁷.

⁴⁶¹ Bradford on Avon

⁴⁶² Pugh, RB (ed) (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Devizes Vol 1, p74

⁴⁶³ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p20, no 33, dated 6 Mar 1312

⁴⁶⁴ *Calendar Patent Rolls Edw II* vol 1 1307 - 1313 p407
Dec 1311 *Licence, at the request of Ralph de Monte Hermerii, for Eleanor, late the wife of William de Brianzon. tenant in chief, to marry John Bluet, if she will*

⁴⁶⁵ Pugh, RB (ed) (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Devizes Vol 1, p82

⁴⁶⁶ In 1309 it was *1 messuage, 1 carucate of land and 10 acres of meadow in Beanacre and Melksham*. And in 1312 *1 messuage, 1 carucate of land and 12 acres of meadow in Beanacre and Melksham* [Pugh, RB (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Devizes Vol 1, pp 74 and 82 respectively]

⁴⁶⁷ Pugh, RB (ed) (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Devizes Vol 1, p78

Which set up that these two main manors are to be held by John's sons then the remainders to Margaret and her children.

In 1313 John Bluet is seen acting in concert with the porter of Lacock Abbey, John de Menstreworth, in an action regarding land they held in Box ⁴⁶⁸

In 1315 John was appointed a Commissioner of oyer and terminer ⁴⁶⁹ along with Henry de Scrop and John Daubernoun, to investigate

the persons who killed the late abbess at Romsey, on the confines of the counties of Hants and Wilts ⁴⁷⁰

On 11th May, 1315, Alice de Roffia and Margaret de Middleton, who were nuns at Romsey, brought news to the King of the death of Abbess Alice. They alleged that the late abbess had come to her end by foul means,

⁴⁶⁸ *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds: Volume 4 (1902), pp. 410-420. Deeds: A.9301 - A.9400 URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64408>*

Acknowledgment by William de la Barre of Chippenham that he had received from Sir John Bluet, lord of Lacham and John de Menstreworth, porter of the abbey of Lacok, a moiety of all the lands, &c.as fully as they came by descent in pur party to William de Pykewyke by the death of Walter de la Slade his uncle at La Slade in the parish of La Boxe and elsewhere in the said parish, as appeared by their deed (recited) whereby they granted to the said William de la Barre the lands, &c. they had by the feoffment of George de Persy in La Slade in the said parish, to hold to the said William, and Hawyse his wife, and the heirs of his body; with grant, for himself and his heirs, that he held the said lands of the abbess and convent of Lacok. Witnesses:—Sir John de Holt, Sir John de la Mare, Sir William de Cotes and others (named). Lacok, Friday after Midsummer, 6 Edward II (Novemembr 1313)

⁴⁶⁹ http://37.1911encyclopedia.org/O/OY/OYER_AND_TERMINER.htm
OYER AND TERMINER, the Anglo-French name, meaning to hear and determine, for one of the commissions by which a judge of assize sits By the commission of oyer and terminer the commissioners (in practice the judges of assize, though other persons are named with them in the commission) are commanded to make diligent inquiry into all treasons, felonies and misdemeanours whatever committed in the counties specified in the commission, and to hear and determine the same according to law. The inquiry is by means of the grand jury; after the grand jury has found the bills submitted to it, the commissioners proceed to hear and determine by means of the petty jury.

⁴⁷⁰ Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight*, Vol II p126-

and on 28th May the commission was appointed.

This was a busy year for John, he was also involved with an inquisition in Devizes⁴⁷¹; earlier in 1315 the parson of Devizes, Thomas de Yucflel had petitioned the king for tithes he said were owed to him by Queen Margaret⁴⁷² because "*she held the park of Devizes and was responsible for the tithes due on the pasture therein*". Three local men were commissioned⁴⁷³ to make the enquiry - John de Foxley, John Bluet and William de Harden⁴⁷⁴ and the inquisition took place in Devizes.⁴⁷⁵

They found that

The late King Edward⁴⁷⁶ and his ancestors from time beyond memory paid tithe of the meadow in the park of Devizes. The said late king, in the 10th year of his reign [1282] caused the said meadow to be changed to pasture by Ralph de Sandiesthen constable of Devizes castle, and from that time no tithe has been paid therefore. The yearly value of the tithe of the said meadow was 22s

⁴⁷¹ *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous* vol 2 no 206 p49 year 1315

⁴⁷² Marguerite of France (born in Paris in 1282 and died at Marlborough Castle 14 February 1317) the second consort of Edward I. They married in 1299 when she was 17. She and Edward had three children - Thomas of Brotherton; Edmund of Woodstock and Eleanor of England who had died aged 5 in 1311

⁴⁷³ Commission dated Wednesday March 5th 1315

⁴⁷⁴ William de Harden appears frequently in the Patent Rolls around this time as a commissioner as here; interestingly in one of them he is the subject - in a commission issued September 10th 1299 Henry Spygurnel (Spigurnel) and John Durelwere tasked with looking into an appeal by Agatha de Wedone in Northamptonshire, *concerning Theobold prior of Okenurn, Willam de Harden, Henry Botneyand Henry de Okeburn sometime bailiff of Wedone touching the death of her son* This doesn't mean that they were accused of killing him, it is likely the named men were the commissioners who investigated the death of William de Wedoneand that Agatha wasn't happy with the result. (*Calendar Patent Rolls Edw I* vol 3 [1292-1301] p 474)

⁴⁷⁵ *Thursday the morrow of St Barnabas* ie June 12th 1315

⁴⁷⁶ Edward I, died July 7th 1307

In modern usage meadow and pasture are interchangeable. At Domesday they had different meanings - Pasture was land where animals grazed all year round. Meadow was much more valuable, as it was land bordering streams and rivers, which was used both to produce hay and for grazing

⁴⁷⁷ The tithe rate appears to have been different for the two but what that was in Wiltshire is unclear. This distinction is clearly made in a fine of 1312 ⁴⁷⁸ where 12 acres of meadow and 40 acres of feeding are mentioned.

Sir John can be placed in Wiltshire in 1314, when he was at Sheldon Manor, near Lackham, to witness a quitclaim ⁴⁷⁹.

In 1316 John granted lands and tenements in Weston to William Reygnade, his wife Maud and their son ⁴⁸⁰. This charter is of note as it is one of the few that specifies that it was signed at Lackham, showing John was staying there.

In the same year one John granted land to Gilbert de Fynamore his wife and John and Elizabeth their children ⁴⁸¹. This grant was also written in French, and in it he gave the piece of "land of the king's waste..... in the Forest of Pewsham at Horselaperith for the sum of 2¹/2 marks per annum". It may well be that this is part of 138 acres that John Bluet was granted by Edward II "at Horslaperithe by the close of John de Roches"

⁴⁷⁷ <http://www.domesdaybook.co.uk/life.html> Pasture, Livestock and Fisheries

⁴⁷⁸ Pugh, RB (1939) *Abstracts of the Feet of Fines relating to Wiltshire Edw I and Edw II* Wilt. Rec. Soc. Devizes Vol 1, p 80 dated September 1312

⁴⁷⁹ Kirby, JL (ed) (1994) *The Hungerford Cartulary : A calendar of the earl of Radnor's cartulary of the Hungerford family* WRS vol XLIX p84 no 328 dated Sheldon Thursday before Easter [4th April] 1314

⁴⁸⁰ British Library Add. Ch. 7067 Written in French , dated 9 Edw III, Monday before the feast of St. Stephen, which means this charter was signed on Sunday Dec 20th, 1316 (the Feast of St. Stephen, December 26th, fell on a Sunday in 1316), calculation performed using day - date calculator at <http://www.calendarhome.com/tyc/download.html>. which can be printed and used offline; a good online facility that gives the same results is at <http://www.searchforancestors.com/utility/dayofweek.html>

⁴⁸¹ W&SHC 1720 100 This is one of the very few Bluet documents held in Wiltshire and Swindon Archives, Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, Chippenham.

in 1315⁴⁸². Gilbert de Fynamore appears in many grants and charters in the northern Wiltshire area in the period between 1280 and 1320⁴⁸³. A Gilbert de Finemor witnessed a charter of Ela, abbess of Lacock between 1239 and 1257⁴⁸⁴, which may have been the Gilbert under discussion, it is not clear. There are three other charters⁴⁸⁵ in the Lacock cartulary also witnessed by Gilbert de Finemor, but they are undated. Gilbert was a member of the local de Finemor family who

*lived at Whethan Hall, near Calne, and who came into possession of the manor of Comerford or Quemerford in the reign of Henry VII in the year 1504*⁴⁸⁶

This wasn't the only land that Gilbert had in the Forest; in the same year the constable of the castle of Devizes, William de Rameshulle⁴⁸⁷, acknowledged he had received 8s 3d from Gilbert Fynamour for 33 acres in the forest of Chippenham⁴⁸⁸. de Rameshulle was the local receiver of the moneys of Lady Isabella⁴⁸⁹, Queen of England, from

⁴⁸² *Calendar Close Rolls Edw II* vol 2 1307 -1319 p236 dated March 1st 1315. However, in *Rot. Orig. in Curia Scacarii* (1805) vol 1 p217 the acreage is 145, and it cost John 36 sol and 3 dinarii a year - "*R dedit & concessit Johi Bluet de vastis R in foresta R de Pewesham in com' Wiltes centum et qdraginta et quinq acra p pictam viginti pedum apud Horslaperithe etc tened' eidem Johi & hedibud suis inppm reddo inde p ann' triginta et sex solidose et tres denar'*

⁴⁸³ See *Close Rolls of Edw I and Edw II*

⁴⁸⁴ Rogers KH (1979) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS p32 number 92

⁴⁸⁵ Rogers KH (1979) *ibid* numbers 247, 344 and 353

⁴⁸⁶ <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quemerford> *Early history of Quemerford and the Quemerford family*, extract as of article in Dec 2007

⁴⁸⁷ Six years later he was constable of Marlborough castle [*A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds: Volume 1* (1890), pp. 395-405 Deed C192. at <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=64230>]

⁴⁸⁸ W&SHC 1720. 109

⁴⁸⁹ Isabella of France was the wife of Edward II, the king until 1327. She married Edward in Bologne sur Mer cathedral on January 25th 1308 when she was 12 (they had been betrothed since he was 8, not uncommon at the time). For a useful, short biography see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella_of_France the works by

the enclosures of the forests of Melksham and Chippenham.

Records in Hampshire show John Bluet being a witness for Sir Thomas de Coudrein 1297⁴⁹⁰, 1307⁴⁹¹ and 1315⁴⁹². de Coudre is another knight who was in Scotland with the the King, his arms appear in both the Galloway and Stirling rolls, alongside Sir John's.

John died between December 20th 1316 and January 17th 1317, when a patent was issued to set William de North

*in the place of John Bluet, who died at Loughborough after the commencement of the proceedings*⁴⁹³

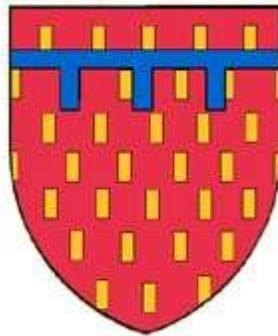


Fig. 21 Arms of Thomas de Coudre⁴⁹⁴ *

These proceedings, although John didn't see the end of the investigation, concerned a

complaint by queen Margaret touching the persons who entered her free chase at Asshedoune, her park at Maresfeld and her free warrens at Maresfeld and Wylingdon, co. Sussex, hunted

McKisack, M (1959). *The Fourteenth Century 1307-1399* and Weir, A (2005) *Queen Isabella: Treachery, Adultery, and Murder in Medieval England* are also good.

⁴⁹⁰ Hampshire Record Office 44769/C312 dated 1297

⁴⁹¹ Hampshire Record Office 44769/C307 dated September 2 1307

⁴⁹² Hampshire Record Office 44769/C31252 dated February 2 1315

⁴⁹³ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw II* vol 2 1313 - 1317

⁴⁹⁴ <http://perso.numericable.fr/briantimms/rolls/stirlingST1.htm>

Gules billey or a label of three points azure by permission of Brian Timms

*therein, and in her chace and park took deer, and in her warren hares, rabbits, etc., cut clown her trees growing in the woods within the chace, fished in her stews and free fisheries at Maresfeld, carried away fish, trees, deer, etc. and also assaulted her bailiffs and servants exercising their offices within the honour of L'Aigle.*⁴⁹⁵

Breaskpear's excavation of Lacock Abbey in 1900 found evidence for what was probably Sir John's tomb

*Each gable was pierced by a window and the south wall had two windows. The monument of Sir John Bluet, who was buried in this chapel and around which four candles were maintained daily, was probably provided for from the first and occupied the centre of the wall between the windows; a large block of foundation stone was found projecting inside the wall face, which probably formed the support to this*⁴⁹⁶

Ralph Bluet VI held in knight's fee in Lackham in 1316, and at Littlecote in Hilmarton. Limited evidence for Ralph is to be found, but in 1309 he and Margery (presumably his wife) had bought the Manor of Beanacre; three years later he conveyed it to John and Eleanor Bluet⁴⁹⁷ and of course he has already been seen acting as an Inquisition juror (see above) .

It is not uncommon for there to be disputes arising from a will, and there is evidence of this with John's. There were three trustees (executors) of John's will - Roger of Chippenham (the parson of Heddington), and two Roberts, the parsons of Bromham and Ditteridge. There was a dispute about payments to be made under the terms of the will - first Robert le Poleter of New Salisbury brought an action against the trustees for £14

⁴⁹⁵ *Calendar Patent Roll Edw II* vol 2 1313 - 1317

⁴⁹⁶ Breaskpear, H (1900) *Lacock Abbey Church* *The Archaeological Journal* pp4-5 WANHS WT138/13

⁴⁹⁷ *Victoria County History Wiltshire VII* pp 98-99

Beanacre Manor was first mentioned in a claim by the Prioress of Malmsbury in 1296 but may have been in existence before that. It was rented by the family of William de Beanacre but they lost it for defaulting on payments. See *Victoria County History Wiltshire* for more details.

⁴⁹⁸ and then in 1319 a writ was issued concerning a plea for £10 from William de Braybok. The trustees should have appeared before the Court early in the year but eventually attended at Woodford in October 1319
⁴⁹⁹ . They obviously didn't pay up - in February 1321 the Abbot of Salisbury warned them to comply with the court decisions ⁵⁰⁰, which presumably they did as no further records are known.

As per the agreement with the Abbey, and mentioned by Breakspear above, ⁵⁰¹ John was buried in the Lady Chapel of the Abbey Church of Lacock and four wax candles lighted during the daily Mass for the Dead ⁵⁰² were maintained until the dissolution in 1539 ⁵⁰³. The nuns had to

find at their own costs a priest... who is bound to celebrate daily for ever for the souls of Sir John and Dame Margery late his wife, and their ancestors, benefactors of the monastery, and all the faithful departed in the Lady Chapel... The nuns are also to cause one of the priests of the monastery to celebrate a mass of the Blessed Virgin with notes (singing) daily in the same chapel, and during these two masses four wax candles, each of four pounds weight of wax, shall burn daily at the four corners of Sir John's tomb when he has been buried in it and when they are consumed to a length of two cubits they shall be renewed at the cost of the
⁵⁰⁴
nuns.

⁴⁹⁸ Reynolds, S (ed) (1965) *The Registers of Roger Martival Bishop of Salisbury 13-15 - 1330 Vol III Royal Writs The Cat. & York Society* p 55 no 180

⁴⁹⁹ Reynolds, S (ed) (1965) *ibid*, This was before Justices R de Worth and William de Selton, the clerk was William de Aisshton

⁵⁰⁰ Reynolds, S (ed) (1965) *The Registers of Roger Martival Bishop of Salisbury 13-15 - 1330 Vol III* p77 no 278

⁵⁰¹ Breakspear, H (1900) *Lacock Abbey Church* The Archaeological Journal pp4-5 WANHS WT138/13

⁵⁰² Aubrey, J ed by Jackson, JE (1862) *Wiltshire Topographical Collections* footnote 1 p9

⁵⁰³ Michael, W (1901) *Historic spots in Wiltshire* Lacock was one of the thirty monasteries spared dissolution in 1536, but was surrendered in 1539

⁵⁰⁴ Rogers KH (ed) (1978) *Lacock Abbey Charters* WRS 15 p20, no 33, dated 6 Mar 1312

These candles required 30 lbs of wax...generally costing 7d a lb - £0 17s 6d annually⁵⁰⁵. This wasn't the only charge on the monastery, every year on the anniversary of Sir John's death "*the nuns are to give ½ d each to a thousand poor people*"¹⁰⁸ which was a yearly cost of £2 1s 6d. "*This payment was maintained until the Reformation - a payment of £2 1s 8d was made to the poor on [the feast of] St Petronilla Virgin Mary (May 31st)*"⁵⁰⁶

Eleanor, John's widow, went on a pilgrimage in 1321, her destination is not known although it was abroad⁵⁰⁷.

Eleanor was able to go away as the girls were in the wardship of Maud, Countess of Gloucester. Maud died a year later in 1322, and from her Inquisition it becomes apparent that John Bluet actually had three daughters. He had held the manor of Langeton, within the lordship of Kaerlion [Caerleon] in Wales⁵⁰⁸; a record of 1322 shows the Countess Maud, the widow of Gilbert de Clare, held the wardship of the manor

*by reason of the minority of Eleanor, Margaret and Joan, daughters and heirs of John Bluet deceased, who held the manor of the said countess as of her dowerie of the fees of her husband.*⁵⁰⁹

Joan does not appear in any other record so far located and her fate is unknown⁵¹⁰ but it is suggested that she is Margaret's daughter. If she

⁵⁰⁵ Talbot CH (1876) *On the agreement between the abbess Johanna de Montfort and the convent of Lacock, and Sir John Bluet, Lord of Lackham, concerning the erection of a chapel of Our Lady adjoining the Abbey Church of Lacock AD 1315* WAM XVI p350

⁵⁰⁶ Recorded in Clark-Maxwell (1904) *On the Appropriation of Lacock Abbey* WAM 33 p361

⁵⁰⁷ Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* Vol II p126-128

⁵⁰⁸ This is the manor which provided the money to pay William Martel the 60 *sous d'argent* seen above

⁵⁰⁹ *Inquisitions Edw III* dated 23 June 1322

⁵¹⁰ It is possible that Joan died 1322 - 23

was a minor in 1322 she had to have been born by 1310 (the age of majority for females at this time was 12) and so she could have been born in the last year of Margaret's life and this is what is shown in [Fig. 18](#)

Countess Maud died in 1322 and the wardship of the Bluet heiresses devolved to the Earls of Norfolk and Pembroke the overlords of Silchester.

In 1323 Eleanor was

*summoned to deliver up the bodies of her daughters Margaret and Eleanor - the co-heiresses of John Bluet - to William de Cusaunce, the King's Clerk who had bought their marriage rights from Thomas Earl of Norfolk and Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, the overlords of the Manor. Although she petitioned to the king to keep her daughters with her by reason of their tender age she was forced to comply with this order*⁵¹¹

It is noted that Joan isn't mentioned as a co-heir who was to be given up by Eleanor and may well have died in the meantime. The birth dates for Margaret and Eleanor are not known but Margaret was born at the latest 1314⁵¹². Eleanor jnr was either born just before John's death in late 1317/ early 1318 or maybe even post mortem; in late 1348 she was 30 years and more. Margaret was certainly born after 1311 - in two of the local Inquisitions held on Eleanor senior's death she is given as being daughter of John and Eleanor⁵¹³ and this is what is shown in Fig. 18

⁵¹¹ Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* vol II p53

⁵¹² The reasoning here is that in late 1348 Peter de Cusaunce was $19\frac{3}{4}$. This means Peter was born in 1329 (actually 2nd February 1329). Given that Margaret's marriage could not be consummated before she was 14 that would give her date of birth at *latest* as 1314, if she was (for example) 17 when her son was born that would give her birth in 1311. [dates etc from *Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) no 104 pp91-93 *Eleanor, late the wife of John Bluet.*]

⁵¹³ *Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) *ibid*
Peter de Cusaunce son of Margaret daughter of the said Eleanor aged 19 years on the feast of the Purification last (Feb 2nd) is one of her heirs in blood and Peter de Cusaunce, knight, son of Margaret daughter of the said John and Eleanor, one heir of the said Eleanor aged 20 years and more [*Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) *ibid* *Investigation into the lands held in Essex 25 Feb 23 Edw III taken at Reghleye on Monday after St Dunstan 23 Edw III*]

There was another Joan however - John's sister. Not much is known of her, she only appears in three records. The earliest is in 1300, when John de Columbariis knight, acknowledges he owes to John Bluet and Joan his sister 200 marks⁵¹⁴. Then in 1302 King Edward I acknowledged he

*has taken the homage of Joan Bluet for the lands that she holds by reason of the lands that Roger le Bigod, Earl of Norfolk and Marshal of England lately surrendered into the king's hands*⁵¹⁵

and a week later the King granted the knight's fees that Joan had from the land back to Roger le Bigod rather than keeping them for himself⁵¹⁶.

In 1327 Eleanor married Sir John de Peyton⁵¹⁷ who was probably appointed warden of Braydon Forest on 18th September 1358, the record reads kings yeoman granted "*the stewardship with the horn*" for life⁵¹⁸

de Peyton's *Inquisition Post Mortem*⁵¹⁹ gives glimpses of the state of

⁵¹⁴ *Calendar of Close Rolls Edw I 1296 - 1302* dated Aug 24 1300 p405

⁵¹⁵ *Calendar of Close Rolls Edw I 1296 - 1302* dated July 17th 1302 p532

⁵¹⁶ *Calendar of Close Rolls Edw I 1296 - 1302* p543

⁵¹⁷ Jackson, LE, in a letter to Kite, written from Leigh Delamare on March 7th 1857 (WANHS library ref 16.267). He notes that *the Peytons were Suffolk people* In Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* it is noted that "*He was in all probability her third husband although he does not seem to be called so specifically anywhere. The same John obtained licence to have a chapel in his manor of Lackham which formerly belonged to the Bluets and it is probable that he was holding it in the right of Eleanor*"

⁵¹⁸ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* IV p435

⁵¹⁹ Stokes, E (1914) *Abstracts of Wiltshire IPM returned into the Court of Chancery in the reign of King Edward III, AD 1327-1377*. Index Library Vol 48. British Record Society.

the Manor in the fourteenth century; there was a messuage⁵²⁰ with garden and curtilage⁵²¹, a dovecot and 160 acres of land, several pastures, woods and a water mill (there were probably two). There were restrictions on what could be done with the land; of the total 160 acres 120 acres (75%) could be sown one year but only 80 acres (50%) the next, with 40 acres (25%) lying fallow. There were a further 20 acres of pasture, of which the Manor held control all the time could only mow every other year when they are worth 5s, otherwise they are worth nothing because they lie in common.⁵²²

Lackham also had land in the Forest, for example an assart - a clearing being used for cultivation - of 64 acres, held of Queen Philippa⁵²³.

Lackham was held by John de Peyton in right of his wife until her death in 1348. She was apparently survived by two of her daughters, Eleanor and Margaret.

⁵²⁰ messuage = mansion. Wiltonensis (1899) *Deed relating to the manors of Bremhill, Stanley, Bromham Battle and Clench AD 1566* Wilts. Notes & Queries III December 1899, footnote 1 p 175

⁵²¹ However a messuage was "Originally the portion of land intended to be occupied, or actually occupied, as a site for a dwelling house and its appurtenances. In modern legal language a dwelling house with its out buildings and curtilage and the adjacent land assigned to it's use "[OED (1971) vol 1 p376]. It is clear the usage here is the earlier term as the curtilage is specified separately. "An area attached to a dwelling house as part of its enclosure " The Concise Oxford Dictionary (1976) 6th ed. p 251

⁵²² Stokes, E (1914) *Abstracts of Wiltshire IPM returned into the Court of Chancery in the reign of King Edward III, AD 1327-1377*. Index Library Vol 48. British Record Society

⁵²³ Philippa of Hainault was wife to Edward III. Her marriage was a result of the problems that led to Edward III ascending the throne: Edward's mother, Isabella of France, was at odds with her husband, Edward II, over the power of the Despenser family, who were trying to get her marriage annulled. She fled to the Low Countries and, in exchange for the promise of Prince Edward marrying Philippa, William II- Count of Hainault, Holland and Zeeland -, supplied 450 Hainaultian troops for Isabella's return to England. The ensuing uprising led to the defeat of Edward II, "the Despensers [being] captured, disembowelled and hanged" [Emerson, B (1986) *The Black Prince* pp2-3] and Edward III's crowning, in 1327.

Under the law at the time land was inherited by primogeniture that is by the eldest male. The advantage of this system is that the estates are not diluted and broken up as they are under the alternative of inheritances being distributed among all the children. Primogeniture is fine until there is no male heir from the first marriage. In that case,

*before about 1130 an inheritance descended only through one daughter or other female heir; after that it was to be divided equally between all valid female heirs.*⁵²⁴

Hence when *old lady Bluet*⁵²⁵ died the estates would be divided between Margaret and Eleanor. Eleanor died on 28th October 1348⁵²⁶

Margaret had been given in marriage to William de Cusaunce, nephew of William de Cusaunce who had acquired the marriage rights in 1323 (see above), and they had a son Peter.

Although it has been suggested that Margaret and William inherited after Eleanor's death, Boon⁵²⁷ states that both Margaret and William died before Eleanor. This is probably correct, it is supported by the fact that, in Eleanor's inquisition, it is Eleanor junior and Peter de Cusaunce who are given as the heirs⁵²⁸. This is clear in all the county inquisitions: in that from Southampton⁵²⁹ (taken at Basingstoke on 3rd December

⁵²⁴ Kenny, G (1997) *The Heiress as Fortune-Maker and Widow in Thirteenth-Century Anglo-Norman Ireland: Christiana de Marisco, Matilda de Lacy and the de Genevre brothers* PaGes, Arts Postgraduate Research in Progress Faculty of Arts, University College Dublin, Volume 4, 1997 @ <http://www.ucd.ie/pages/97/kenny.html>

⁵²⁵ Boon, GC (1989) *St. Mary the Virgin, Silchester* p9

⁵²⁶ *Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) no 104 pp91-93 *Eleanor, late the wife of John Bluet*. Inquisition for Wiltshire, taken at Hilmarton 1 December 22 Edw III

⁵²⁷ Boon, GC (1989) *ibid*

⁵²⁸ *Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) *ibid*

⁵²⁹ *Cal IPM* vol IX Edw III (1916) *ibid* Eleanor the wife of Edmund Baynard aged 30 years and more and Peter, son of William de Cusaunce and Margaret his wife sister of the said Eleanor who is aged 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ years are the heirs of the said John Bluet

1348) from Essex⁵³⁰ (taken at Rayleigh on 23rd January 1249) and from Wiltshire⁵³¹ (taken at Hilmarton on 1st December 1248) Margaret is not an heir as she surely would have been were she alive.

It is not known if Eleanor sen. died from the plague or not, it is very likely; from her Inquisition⁵³² it is known she died on 28th Oct 1348⁵³³ and it is known that the Black Death killed many in Silchester in that year⁵³⁴.

*The Black Death.... struck the county [of Hampshire] in autumn 1348 and in less than two years killed probably half the population*⁵³⁵

and Wiltshire suffered equally badly, for example in Calstone Wellington, near Oldbury,

*The Black Deathhit this community badly and in 1348 the families of one third of the tenants and 40% of the cottars were wiped out. The water mills ceased, as there was no one to run them.*⁵³⁶

⁵³⁰ *Cal IPM vol IX Edw III (1916) no 104 pp91-93 Eleanor, late the wife of John Bluet. Peter de Cusaunce son of Margaret daughter of the said Eleanor aged 19 years on the feast of the Purification last (Feb 2nd) is one of her heirs in blood and Eleanor wife of Edmund Baynard daughter of the said Eleanor Bluet aged 30 years and more is co-heir with the said Peter and another heir in blood of the said Eleanor Bluet*

⁵³¹ *Peter de Cusaunce son of William de Cusaunce and Margaret his wife, is heir to Lacham and the aforesaid parcels and also of a moiety of the tenements in Beanacre. Eleanor wife of Edmund Baynard daughter of the said John and Eleanor of full age is her heir of the other moiety of the tenements of Beanacre*

⁵³² *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem Vol IX Edw III, pp 91-93*

⁵³³ *Tuesday the feast of Saints Simon and Jude 22 Edward III"* This could either be 1348 or 1349; it has to be 1348 if the Feast of Ss Simon and Jude was on the Tuesday, also the dates for the county inquisitions give a late 1348 date.

⁵³⁴ *Victoria County History Hampshire and the Isle of Wight vol 2 p53*

⁵³⁵ *James, TB (1999) The Black Death in Hampshire Hampshire Record Office*

⁵³⁶ *Wiltshire Community History - Calstone Wellington at <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/community/getcom.php?id=45>*

And, even closer to Lackham, Sheldon village was devastated by the plague and never recovered, becoming one of the many English villages that disappeared at this time.

The vast numbers of deaths brought about by the Black Death is well documented. A very rough indication of the progress of the pandemic can be gained by looking at the number of tenants in chief reported dead over a year. These can be judged from the instructions to the escheators to take land into the king's hands, which happened when a *tenant in chief* died. (At this period the background number was around 30 per year (averaged over the years 1330-1345). The figures during the late 1340's were ⁵³⁷

1348	43
1349	378
1350	130
1351	53

Eleanor's Inquisition gives a useful idea of the holdings of the Wiltshire Bluets at this time; Eleanor had land in several counties. In Hampshire she held only Silchester ⁵³⁸, no other land is recorded in the county. In

⁵³⁷

Compiled from data in writs in *Calendar Fine Rolls* vol 16 Edw III 1347 - 1356 It is noted that this only shows when a death was acted on, given the terrible conditions in the country it is likely that information from remote areas took longer than usual to be notified. The monthly figures, for what they are worth, were:

1348		1349		1350		1351	
January	1	January	8	January	17	January	3
February	4	February	10	February	9	February	4
March	3	March	17	March	5	March	1
April	8	April	35	April	39	April	3
May	4	May	25	May	11	May	6
June	2	June	40	June	20	June	4
July	2	July	36	July	8	July	13
August	2	August	57	August	3	August	3
September	2	September	37	September	2	September	
October	7	October	48	October	10	October	5
November	7	November	48	November	5	November	6
December	1	December	17	December	1	December	5

⁵³⁸ Writ taken at Southampton Thursday after St Andrew (3rd December as the

Wiltshire the main holdings were the manors of Lackham and Hilmarton, but other land was held at Goatacre⁵³⁹, Beanacre⁵⁴⁰, Cherleswyck⁵⁴¹ and Notton. These were all inherited from her marriage to John Bluet, whereas other land was hers from her first husband, William de Briazanon (for example the lands held in Essex⁵⁴² - Le Lovetotes in Gt. Akering, Little Wakering, Littleshoebury, Shopelond, Leigh, Reighleigh, Gt Stanbrugge, Southchurch, Bemfleet and Stanford.) Not all of the land she held descended to her heirs as they were held in right of her first husband, William de Brianzon, for Eleanor's life after which they reverted to their owners. For example in Rochford the marsh of Landwick another marsh called Littleburghwerth⁵⁴³ and the marshland in Gt. Stanbrugge La Pole⁵⁴⁴ all reverted to the brother and heir of William the earl of Northampton on Eleanor's death and the Manor of Southfanbrugge likewise reverted to the Bishop of Ely. It is clear that Essex was a marshy county; Eleanor held other wetlands - a marsh called Bernemarsh and land called *Gedybernelond*

William de Cusaunce had bestowed the hand of Eleanor [Bluet jnr] upon Edward (Edmund?) Baynard⁵⁴⁵ of Dunnmow in Essex before 1348⁵⁴⁶. Actually it was considerably before; a 1334 record in the Badminton Estate archive⁵⁴⁷ shows Edmund Baynard discussing lands and tenements that his

feast of St Andrew is the last day of November, and this was a Monday in 1348)

⁵³⁹ Held from the manor of Hampstead Marshal, of the King

⁵⁴⁰ Writ taken at Hilmarton 1st December 22 Edw III (1349)

⁵⁴¹ This is now Wick Farm, Lacock.

⁵⁴² Writ taken at Reighleigh Saturday after the Epithany 22 Edw III (January 20th 1349)

⁵⁴³ *daily inundated by the sea, held of the King*

⁵⁴⁴ some 500 acres in all

⁵⁴⁵ Victoria County History *Hampshire and the Isle of Wight* vol 2 p53

⁵⁴⁶ The year of Eleanor senior's IPM, when Eleanor jnr is given as *the wife of Edmund Baynard* [Cal IPM vol IX Edw III (1916) no 104 pp91-93 *Eleanor, late the wife of John Blue*]

⁵⁴⁷ Duke of Beaufort Badminton Estate Archive DL700/NR11/1/6 dated 1334/5

wife Eleanor will inherit fully after the death of her uncle Ralph Bluet including parcels occupied by William de Cusaunce. This is noteworthy for a number of reasons. It shows that the lands were not only to be split between the two heirs as has been indicated previously, but that Sir John's brother Ralph inherited some of them for his lifetime, although it would appear that William de Cusaunce at least was holding some from him (and was therefore still alive in 1344) There is a Ralph who was a member of an extent and appraisal jury⁵⁴⁸ held in Chippenham on the 10 June 1379 and it is possible that this was Ralph VI, although he would have been very old and it is at least as likely that this was yet another Ralph Bluet. If Ralph VI was holding Daglingworth in 1321 it is not likely he is the one mentioned in 1379.

Finally the document dated 1334/5 is the earliest record so far found that shows Edmund and Eleanor married. How much earlier than this they were married is not yet known.

It is possible this was before Eleanor became the last surviving Bluet and gained control of both Silchester and Lackham, but may have been afterwards. The Manor at Beanacre may have formed part of Eleanor's dowry - it was conveyed to Eleanor and Edmund Baynard⁵⁴⁹ in the year of their marriage.

In Silchester church there is an effigy that is thought to be of this last of the Bluets, Eleanor Baynard

The effigy, later fourteenth-century and probably that of Eleanor Baynard, wears kirtle, open-sided cote-hardie with deep V-neck once painted vermilion, and mantle; her head is covered by a substantial kerchief, and her neck and chin by a wimple-like barbe' - in all, widow's weeds. Her feet peep out to

⁵⁴⁸ Conyers, A (ed) (1973) *Wiltshire Extents for debts Edward 1 - Elizabeth 1* WRS Devizes vol XXVIII pp25-26 no 21

This was held after a writ had been issued by John atte Yerd and William Worston *merchants of Winchester* because William fitz William owed them 60l. The *extent* was a survey of the debtor's lands made by the sheriff with the assistance of a local jury composed of at least twelve men, as in this case Under the statute procedure all lands held at the time of the debt were liable to be surrendered to the creditor(s). This extent found that William owned a *messuage and a carucate in Wambergh, with meadows, feeding, and pasture belonging worth 4 marks* [£2 13s 4d = £2.67] yearly - the record notes that the lands were *delivered on 14 June according to the writ*

⁵⁴⁹ Victoria County History *Wiltshire* VII p435

*rest against a dog (damaged), and two winged angels support her head.*⁵⁵⁰



Fig. 22 Effigy of Eleanor Baynard, Silchester Church, Hants *

*Peter de Cusauce, Eleanor Bluet's grandson, was also an heir and inherited a moiety of the Silchester Manor, he was holding [Silchester] in right of his mother [Margeret]*⁵⁵¹.

He was also lord of Lackham; in 1351 he confirmed the grant of land at Horslaperyche, made by John Bluet to Gilbert de Fynamour in 1316, to John de Fynamour⁵⁵² He was Gilbert's son, and married Alice⁵⁵³.

The Fynamour family involvement with de Cusauce was more than this, however. In 1352 Peter gifted Lackham and Helmerton to Walter Fynamour who was the Chaplain of the Chapel at Lackham⁵⁵⁴. What relationship Walter had to John Fynamour is unclear, he doesn't show up

⁵⁵⁰ Boon, GC (1989) *St. Mary's Church, Silchester* p21

⁵⁵¹ Leland (1540) *Itinerary*⁵⁵¹ vi, p53, quoted in Kite (1899) *Old Lackham House and its owners* Wilts Notes & Queries Vol III

⁵⁵² W&SHC 1720.146 dated 1351 Witnesses were John de la Roche. Geoffrey le Eyr, Robert de Cauntelo, John atte Halle and William Cryps

⁵⁵³ the descent of the Fynamour family is given in a memorandum from the "mid 15th century (W&SHC 1720.296) *Gilbert had issue John, John had Robert, Robert had William, William had John, John had Thomas and Thomas had Roger now surviving*' From another record it is known that *John son of Gilbert* also had Margaret, Christine and Alice [W&SHC 1720.176 dated 1346]

⁵⁵⁴ Kite, E (1899) *Old Lackham House and its Owners* Wilts. Notes and Queries vol III p51

in any of the records held by the Wiltshire & Swindon History Centre.

Then, in January 1361,⁵⁵⁵ Peter and Margaret put forward an action to "grant back and render the manors to be held directly by Peter and the heirs of Peter's body". This was a legal action called a *Plea of Covenant* by which the plaintiff (Peter and Margaret) alleged that the defendants (in this case John de Burbach the vicar of Helmerton church, and Walter Fynamour) had failed to keep an agreement (to grant back and render the land to Peter)⁵⁵⁶ It was noted that this was a moiety of the manors, and that the remainder (and, as it turned out, Peter's part as well, there being no heirs) went to Edmund Baynard and his wife Eleanor [Bluet, Margaret's younger sister]⁵⁵⁷

Peter de Cusaunce was obviously important within the county - he was Sheriff of Wilshire in 1377 and presented the rector to the church at Hilperton in 1380.

In the windows of Silchester Church coats of arms relating to the holding families of the manor could be found⁵⁵⁸. Each coat of arms was in a separate window, and it might be that each was financed by different members of the famil.

In his article on the history of Lackham⁵⁵⁹ Kite gives a coat of arms which includes those said to be of de Cusaunce⁵⁶⁰

⁵⁵⁵ Actually the action (see next fn for reference) took place in the week beginning on the Quin[dene] of Hil[ary] 35 Edw III which is the 21st of January 1361. Hilary was "formerly, one of the four terms of the courts of common law in England, beginning on the eleventh of January and ending on the thirty-first of the same month, in each year; - so called from the festival of St. Hilary, January 13th".
<http://www.thefreedictionary.com/Hilary>

⁵⁵⁶ Elrington CR (1974) (ed) *Feet of Fines Edw III* WRS Introduction, pp6-7

⁵⁵⁷ Elrington CR (1974) (ed) *Feet of Fines Edw III* WRS no 488 p118

⁵⁵⁸ Bishop Gibson, in Cambden's *Brittanica* (1695) describes three coats of arms, viz *in a field sable, seven fusils argent bendwise* [Cusaunce], *in a field sable, a fesse between two chevrons or* [Baynard] and *in a field or an eagle displayed with two heads gules* [Bluet].

⁵⁵⁹ Kite, E (1899) *Old Lackham House and its Owners* Wilts. Notes and Queries vol III

⁵⁶⁰ Kite credits this to John Withie (*Harleian Ms#1443*) and shows (top) Baynard. Bluet, Cusaunce and below Ufford (aka Willoughby) Blake, and Baynard. The full

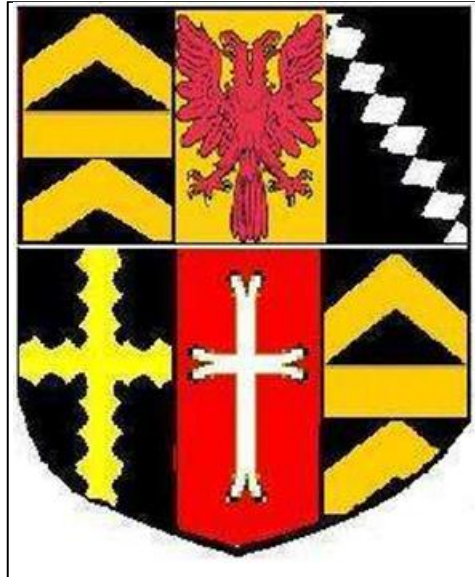


Fig. 23 Supposed arms of de Cusaunce *

The presence of the Baynard arms and crest here is difficult; Peter was not descended from the Baynard - Bluet marriage but the de Cusaunce-Bluet one. It is likely this is not an actual coat of arms but a composite put together for some unknown reason, possibly by Withie. Peter de Cusaunce died without issue and his portions of Silchester, Hilmarton and Lackham passed to Eleanor Baynard, nee Bluet.⁵⁶¹

Leland⁵⁶² noted that

one of the Blueths leaving no sons, the land not entaylid to the heire (male or generale) came by marriage to one Peter de Cusaunce, and after to one Edmunde Baynard, coming out of the Baynards of Essex whose name is now ther obscured. The lands of the Blueths entaylid to heyre male of that name

blazon included the Baynard crest of a demi-unicorn rampant and their motto *Vive ut Vivas*.

⁵⁶¹ Victoria County History *Hampshire and Isle of Wight* p 54. Victoria County History does not mention Hilmarton but it is known that he was lord of this Manor as well

⁵⁶² Leland (1540) *Itinerary* vi, p53, quoted in Kite, E (1899) *Old Lackham House and its Owners* Wilts. Notes and Queries vol III

yet remaining in Devonshere. Leecham longgid to Baynarde as his principale how[se]

Eleanor was the last of this major Bluet line her date of death is unknown but is after 1380. The Bluet family continued elsewhere of course, in Ireland, the Marches, Somerset, Devon and Cornwall, but their long association with the land in Hampshire, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire was over. Some reminder of them continued, however; The Baynard line descending from Edmund and Eleanor retained the Bluet sigil as part of their arms. A carved shield, thought to have originally come from the front porch of the old Lackham House is to be found on the west wall of the current house at Lackham and shows the combined Bluet and Baynard arms.



Fig. 24 Baynard family (Lackham line) arms at Lackham, Wiltshire ^{* 563}

Appendices

Appendix 1 Dugdale *Monasticom*⁵⁶⁴

Tintern abbey was founded in 1131 by Walter de Clare, grandson of Walter FitzPatrick Count of Ew. The Itinerarium of Willelmi de Worcestre has these entries relating to Tintern

De obitibus fundatorum et de generis propinquo eorum ecclesie sancto Mariae Tynterniae ul antique lalendario inveni registratum

Comes Gilbertus sexto die Junio obit
 Comes Robertus Altiabatensis obit die Octavo Februarii
 Isabella Comitissa Pembroc obit die nons Martii
 Ricardus Rex Anglicae prime obit de xxvii Martii
 Matilda Comitissa Warena obit de xxix Martii
 Walterus fundator exx.esiae sanctae Mariae Tynternae obit de x Martii
 Ricardus comes marescallus obit de xx Aprilii
 Babilla comitissa mater Willielme comitis de Penbrok obit de iii Junii
 Galfredus marescallus comes de Penroc obit de xxvii Junii
 Radulfus Bloeth junr xiii de Julii
 Johannes Rex Francieae obit die sexton Novembro
 Elizabet comitiss V xix de Novembro obiit
 Blancha Regina Francieae obit xxviii Novembro
 Magareta comitissa Flanduiae obit iv decembro
 Berengerusel comitissa soro ejus obit xxiii Decembro
 Asissimus marescallus obit xxiv decembro
 Matilda de Clare comitissa Glouestrae et Herefordiae obit xxix decembro
 Rogerus Bygod comes marescallus quiedificas eccelsiam Tynterniae obit de vii Decembro seizer Wiliam E ut in lalendario religiosum Tynterniae
 Thomas de Bolterton marescallus Anglia obit xxiv Aprilii obit

To return to the text click [here](#), to return to the index click [here](#)

⁵⁶⁴ Dugdale, Sir W *Monasticon Anglicanum: a History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, Frieries, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies, in England and Wales* [new edition eds Caley, J Ellis, H and Bandinel, Rev. B (1825) vol 5 p266]

Appendix 2 *Archaeologica Cambrensis* vol II pp143-145

Agreement between Sir John Bluet Knt. And William Martell Temp. Edw.
I

Translated by Thomas Wakeman, 1847

In the year of the reign of King Edward, son of King Henry, one score and five [1297] it was thus agreed between Sir John Bluet, knight and William Martel, that is to say, that the said John Bluet acknowledges for himself and his heirs to be bound to the aforesaid William Martel, his esquire, for the life of the said William, in sixty pence of silver of the good and lawful money, to be paid yearly and every year at the two terms of Hockday [ie the second Tuesday after Easter week] and Michaelmas, out of his manor of Langston, in Netherwent, that is to say, out of the lands and tenements that Walter le Swon, John Fitz Thomas Robert le Joevene, Ann le Swon and Alice Ketyng hold of him in the moor of Langston, so that the aforesaid William, or his certain attorney, may levy the said rent by distress upon the said tenements in whosoever hands they may be, at their will and pleasure, without let or hindrance from any one, and such distress securely keep till such time as the said rent be duly paid; and also two Robes yearly of the value of twenty pence from his chamber during the life of the said William, one at Christmas and the other at Easter: and maintain the said William as long as he lives in sufficient meat and drink as a gentleman ought to have, and his two boys,[servants] and to find his two horses in hay and oats and shoes during the life of the said William, that is to say half a bushel of oats each. And for these advantages the said William Martel will serve the said John Bluet well and faithfully as an esquire ought to do, in the wars now waging between the King of England and the King of France; and also in England, if war should break out there, which God forbid, and in Wales, and in all other lands either on this side of the sea, or beyond the sea, wherever the said John shall be (except the Holy Land;) and in tournaments, in the time of peace, with a great war-horse which the said John will find him, and good and suitable armour without any default on his part; and for the greater security for the due performance of the due performance of the covenants above written, the said John Bluet binds himself and his heirs and executors, and all the lands and tenements in England and Wales which he holds on the day of completion of this writing, in whose hands soever they be in time to come; and also that he may be constrained by the stewards or Marshals of our lord the King of England or the bailiffs of the liberties of Caerleon, whosoever

they may be, if he in any lanner make default in the above named covenants. And if any of the horses of the aforesaid William, either in time of peace or of war, should perish in the service of the said John Bluet, the said John Bluet binds himself, his heirs, and executors, fully to restore them. In testimony of which the parties hereto have interchangeably affixed their seals as witnesses Sir John ap Adam, Sir Thomas de Knoyvyle, Ralph de la Grave, John de Howel and others, given at Cilchester, on the Feast of St Lawrence, in the year of the reign of our lord King Edward, one score and five [10th August, 1297] ⁵⁶⁵

⁵⁶⁵ To return to the Index click

http://www.lackham.co.uk/history/The_Manor_Lackham_IV.pdf

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- Abbess of
 Lacock, 77, 78, 105, 112
 Agnes, 80
 Agnes de Wick, 80
 Alice, 80
 Beatrice, 86
 Beatrice of Kent, 80
 Ela Countess of Salisbury, 80
 Elena de Montfort, 80
 Faith Selyman, 80
 Joan Temys, 80
 Johanna de Montfort, 80
 Julianna, 80
 Margery of Gloucester, 80
 Romsey
 killed 1315, 109
- Abbey of
 Fountains, 25
 Godstow, 22, 26
 Grace Dieu, 28
 Lacock, 1, 39, 47, 48, 49, 59, 75,
 76, 77, 79, 88, 89, 90, 96, 104,
 105, 114, 116
 porter 1313, 109
 Sibton, 26
 Tintern, 14
- Abbot of
 Quarr, 87
 Salisbury, 115
- Abbot's Langley, 83
 Abergavenny, 23, 37
 Aelfgar of Mercia, 22
 Alice of Berkeley, 13
 Alice of Calne, 107
 Angharad, 22
 Anjou, 53
 Antwerp, 35
 ap Eygnon, Ralph, 32
 ap Gruffudd, Llewellyn, 84
 ap Gruffudd, redudd, 64
 ap Gryyudd, Llewellyn, 66
 ap Howel. Morgan, 57
 ap Maredudd, hung and quartered at
 York, 85
 ap Maredudd, Rhys, 84
 at large until 1288, 85
 ap Owain, Iowerth, 22
- ap Thomas, Sir William Herbert
 sheriff of
 Cardigan, 37
 Carmarthen, 37
 Glamorgan, 37
 steward of
 Abergavenny, 37
 lordship of Caerleon, 37
 lordship of Usk, 37
 steward to Elizabeth Bluet, 36
 ap Thomas, William, 36
 Appropriation of Lacock Church, 47
 archbishop of
 Canterbury, 91
 Archbishop of Canterbury, 87
 Arlington, 61
 Arms
 Bluet, de Dernford & St MAur, 68
 de Cusaunce?, 126
 de Dernford, 68
 early Bluets, 88
 John Bluet, 96
 John le sorle Sor, 61
 Llewellyn ap Gryyudd, 66
 Seymour Lacock Abbey cloisters,
 88
 St Maur, 68
 Thomas de Coudre, 113
 William, earl of Salisbury, 50
 Arthur, 53
 Aspley Guise', Bedfordshire, 32
 Athocus, 90
 atte Halle, John, 125
 atte Mershe, Roger loses ear to
 horse, 107
 atte Yerd, John, 124
 Atteberne, Henry, 82
 fatally wounded, 82
 Atteberne, John, 82
 guilty and hung, 82
 Atteberne, Simon, 82
 Audley, Alice, 59
 Badcockes, 96
 Baron Monthermer, 99
 Basset, David, 61
 Basset, Gilbert, 43, 46, 61
 lands taken by Henry III, 43

- loses Upavaon, 43
- releases de Burgh from Devizes, 45
- Basset, Philip, 27, 61
- Bastard, Lucy, 66
- Battle of
 - Boroughbridge, 30, 31
 - Bouvines, 49
 - Evesham, 75
 - Lincoln, 12, 56, 57
 - Roslin, 100
 - Saintes, 65
 - Stirling, 95
 - Stirling Bridge., 95
 - Tailebourg, 65
 - Wycombe, 46
- Baynard, Edmund
 - married to Eleanor Bluet, 121
 - marries Eleano <1334, 124
- Baynard, Eleanor, 121
 - dies >1380, 128
 - dowry of Beanacre manor, 124
 - effigy in Silchester church?, 124
 - lands to be inherited, 124
- Baynard, Robert
 - lord of Lackham, 86
- Beanacre, 107, 108, 121, 123
- Beatrice of Kent, 77, 80
- Bedfordshire, 32, 93
- Bek, Antony, 91
- Bemfleet, 123
- [Berkeley, Sir James](#), 36
 - [welsh manors gained by marrying Eliz. Bluet](#), 35
- Bewley, 78
- Bezil. Mathias, 46
- Bibury, 61
- Bigod, Margery
 - marries John Bluet?, 107
- Bigod, Ralph
 - captured at Bouvines, 49
- Bigod, Roger, 49
- Bigot, Bartholomew, 34
- Bishop of
 - Chester, 7
 - Ely, 123
 - Lincoln, 7
 - Llandaff, 22
 - Salisbury, 7, 47
- Bishop of Durham, 91
- Bishop Regimius, 7
- Bishop Roger of Salisbury, 7
- Black Death, 121
 - Calstone Wellington, 121
 - Hampshire, 121
 - Sheldon, 122
 - Wiltshire, 121
- Black Death analysis from IPM, 122
- Blount, Blount, 32
- Blount, Edmund, 32
- Bluet family
 - not earls of Salisbury, 59
- Bluet, Alda
 - children Turstan & Ralph Despencer, 73
 - daughter of Ralph III & Nest, 73
 - gives land to Priory at Little Malvern, 73
 - married to de Spencer, 54
 - marries Almaric Despencer, 73
 - sister to Ralph II, 18
- Bluet, Amicia
 - in Rumsey nunnery 1333, 31
- Bluet, Astelyn, 26
- Bluet, Eleanor, 107
 - born pm John Buets ?, 117
 - dau of John and Eleanor, 108
 - dau of John Bluet, 116
 - daug of John and Eleanor, 117
 - dies >1380, 128
 - dies 1348, 119
 - dowry of Beanacre manor, 124
 - effigy in Silchester church?, 124
 - heir of sister Margaret, 120
 - land in
 - Essex, 123
 - Hampshire, 122
 - Wiltshire, 123
 - married to Edmund Baynard, 121
 - marries John de Peyton 1327, 118
 - survived by Eleanor anmd Margaret, 119
- Bluet, Elizabeth
 - dau of John and Katherine, 33
 - dies 1352, 32
 - dies 1420, 36
 - dies 1429, 37

- inherits Thurlestone, 33
 marries 2 James de Berkeley, 35
 marries 3 William Herbert ap
 Thomas, 36
 marries Bartholomew Picot, 34
 marries William ap Thomas, 36
 welsh manors, 35
- Bluet, Emma
 enters Godstow nunnery, 73
 not dau of Nest?, 22
- Bluet, Emmeline
 marries Nicholas' nephew Nicholas,
 86
- Bluet, Eve
 wife of Ralph IV, 74
- Bluet, Joan
 dau of John Bluet and Margaret?,
 116
 does homage for lands, 118
 pwwed monry by John de Columbariis,
 118
 sister John Bluet, 118
- Bluet, John
 agreement with William Martel,
 131
 agrees to hand over avowson of St
 Cyriacs 1312, 47
 altar tomb, 106
 arbitor in dispute with Archbishop
 of Canterbury, 91
 back in England October, 97
 burial rights in Lacock Abbey
 Church, 105
 charter signed at LACKHAM 1316,
 111
 commissioner in Devizes, 110
 Commissioner of oyer and terminer,
 109
 daily mass for the dead in Lady
 Chapel Lacock, 115
 dau Elizabeth, 33
 dies late 1317, 113
 executors of will, 114
 given Beanacre Manor by Ralph VI,
 114
 gives up avowson of St Cyriacs, 105
 holds Daglingworth from Elizabeth
 talbot, 33
- holds lands from de Monthermer,
 100
 holds Langston, 14
 in Scotlad with the King, 95
 in Scotland with the King, 98
 in Scotland with the King 1302-3,
 99
 in Wales, 85
 in Wales 1287, 85, 91
 land in
 Bedfordshire, 93
 Gloucestershire, 93
 Monmouthshire, 100
 Wiltshire, 93
 land in Box 1313, 109
 made a peer? discussion, 95
 marries Eleanor, 107
 marries Eleanore de Brianzon 1311,
 108
 marries Katherine Wogan, 33
 marries Margery, 107
 on embassy to Rome, 96
 son of Ralph IV?, 76
 succeeds 1303?, 87
 surety for Joan of Acre, 99
 three daughters ?, 116
 tomb found 1900 excavation, 114
 with Duke of Norfolk in Wales, 85
 witnesses charter <1311, 87
 witnesses charters 1290, 1293, 91
 witnesses charters in Hampshire,
 113
- Bluet, John, of Ragland, 34
- Bluet, Katherine
 daughter Elizabeth, 33
- Bluet, Lucy
 dies 1338, 67
- Bluet, Margaret
 born <1315, 117
 dau of John Bluet, 116
 dies before sister Eleanor?, 120
 wife of William, 80
- Bluet, Margery, 32, 107
 dies <1311, 108
 dies 1377, 33
 marries Roger de Poynz, 33
 named in agreement 1308, 107
 wife of Ralph VI?, 114

- Bluet, Morgan
 bishop elect of Durham, 24
 dies on Pilgimage <1217, 25
 illegitimate son of Henry III?, 24
 insists he is son of Henry III, 25
 named after Nest's uncle, 24
 provost of Beverly Castle, 24
- Bluet, Nest
 daughter Petronella, 70
 dispute with Robert over land 1201,
 37
 given Manor of Salisbury,
 Netherwent, 41
 in dispute with brother Hoel, 40
 mistress of Henry III, 23
 paid £10 by Hoel, 41
 recovers land at Dfaglingworth,
 40
- Bluet, Peter, 67
 great grandson Rolan, 66
 holds Midgham, 66
 marries Lucy Bastard, 66
 son of Thomas and Margaret, 69
- Bluet, Petronella
 age at marriage to Dermot, 70
 dowry paid by brother Thomas, 71
 gives land to Kingston St Michael
 priory, 72
 lands at Lacock ?, 73
 marries William de Felcham, 72
- Bluet, Ralph
 at Chippenham 1379, 124
 commissioner for 10th and 15th, 31
 dies 1361, 32
 dies late 1335, 31
 grandson of Walter of Ragland, 29
 grandson Walter Bluet, 73
 holds Thurclesdon from Joihn, 29
 marries Elizabeth verch Rhys, 31
 marries Margery de Gyse, 32
 son of Walter Bluet, 72
 son of Ralph Bluet II?, 15
 son of Walter of Ragland, 28
 witnesses St Maur charter, 68
- Bluet, Ralph I
 born 1050?, 8
 dies 1112??, 8
 give Glos manors to St Peters, 5
 holds Lackham of William d'Eu, 8
 wife Ala Fitzharding?, 13
- Bluet, Ralph II
 charter of Godstowe abbey, 18
 dies <1157, 19
 has brothers, 18
 uncle of William, 27
 unknown wife?, 21
- Bluet, Ralph III
 avowson of Lacock Churhk, 25
 grants avowson of church at
 Daglingworth to Godstow, 26
 grants avowson of church at
 Duntisbourne to Godstow, 26
 jointly holds Striguil with William,
 21
 son William, 56
 succeeds his father, 19
 witnesses charter by William
 Marshal, 42
- Bluet, Ralph IV
 born by 1178, 42
 date of birth <1179, 22
 daughters dower to de Montfort,
 74
 dead < 1252, 65
 dies < late 1245, 74
 dies 1241?, 42
 dispute with Abess of Lacock, 80
 does not agree to hand over
 avowson of St Cyriac's, 47
 does not inherit Salisbury manor, 41
 gives pony to King John, 42
 knight of William Marshal, 42
 knight of William Marshal II, 42
 land seized after Wycombe, 46
 lands taken by Henry III 1233, 45
 marries Eve, 42
 not a full brother to William ?, 64
 not son of Nest ?, 41
 not son of Nest?, 22
 of Silchester, 74
 rebel against Henry III 1233, 81
 regains lands 1236, 47
 suport Richard Marshall, 42
 three children, 42
 with Richrd Marshal at BATTLE of
 Wycombe, 45

- witnesses charter by William
 Marshal II, 42
- Bluet, Ralph V
 jury for eyre 1249, 81
 killed at Evesham, 75, 81
 rebel, 81
 rebels against Henry III 1263, 81
 son of Ralph IV, 42
 tenements in Hinton Blewett, 81
 ward of de Montfort, 74
- Bluet, Ralph VI
 at Chippenham 1379?, 124
 holds Lackham and Littlecote 1316,
 114
 land in Melksham, 108
- Bluet, Richard
 lives at Helston, Cornwall, 7
 son of Walter Bluet, 81
- Bluet, Robert
 Alms for soul of his wife Astelyn,
 27
 has son William ?, 27
 holds lands of Philip Bassett, 27
 in dispute with Lacock Abbey 1241,
 75
 marries Astelyn, 26
- Bluet, Robert I
 Bishop of Lincoln
 builds Tickhill Castle in stone, 6
 chancellor to William I & II, 7
 made Bishop of Lincoln, 7
- Bluet, Roger
 holds Hilmarton of Ralph de Wancy,
 76
 parson of St Cyriac's, 75
- Bluet, Roland
 dies in Gwent 1217, 57
 holds Bramber Castle, 52
 holds de Meys's heir 1213, 60
 holds Thurstan de Spencer, 54
 holds Thurstand Despencer, 73
 inherits manors from Peter Bluet,
 67
 land in Llewenich, 64
 last mentioned 1232, 56
 marries Lettice Ragland, 66
 son of Ralph III, 50
- Bluet, Simon
 dean of Lincoln, 7
- Bluet, Sybil, 7
- Bluet, Thomas
 marries Margary de Cogan, 69
 pays Petronella's dower, 71
- Bluet, Thomasina, 67
 born 1298, 67
- Bluet, Walter
 confirms grant of Ralph III, 26
 dies in Gwent 1217, 57
 gifts Thurlestone to Margery, 33
 given tenements HB, 81
 hold Raglanf, 73
 son of Ralph Bluet II?, 15
 the Viking, 4
 uncle of William, 27
 Walter Balistarius?, 5
- Bluet, Walter of Ragland
 dies in Wales after 1217, 28
 son of Ralph II, 27
- Bluet, William
 abroad 1244, 62
 actions at Lincoln, 57
 alive > 1282, 87
 attends Henry's summons, 66
 born 1239, 77
 borrows money from Urcello, 57
 chaplain Robert de la Brigge, 103
 confirms gifting of Daglingworth
 chrch, 27
 custody of lands and heir Roger de
 Meisey, 60
 date of death from St Georges roll
 ?, 90
 dau marries de St Maur, 67
 dies <1285?, 91
 dies <1300, 72
 dies 1185, 21
 frater Comes Ricardus, 14
 given exemption 1268, 77
 gives property HB to Walter Bluet,
 81
 holds Duntisborne from Ralph III,
 22
 holds Kiltorky 2307, 72
 holds Langston, 68
 holds Salisbury Manor, Netherwent,
 60

- household knight of Henry III, 60
- in *Gascony* 1253, 65
- in the March for the King, 63
- in Wales 1287, 85
- inherits Salisbury Manor
 - Netherwent, 41
- involved in wars in Wales, 83
- jointly holds Striguil with Ralph, 21
- juror re charter destruction, 87
- kinship with abbess Beatrice, 78
- knight of Countess of pembroke, 59
- knight of William Marshal II, 56
- last charter evidence late 13C, 76
- last record 1257, 66
- payments as household knight, 60
- pays Exchequer 2 marks pa, 57
- reduces Tickhill, 6
- respite from taking up knighthood
 - 1253,1256, 1258, 80
- serves in Scottish wars of Edward I,
 - 68
- shown as earl of slaisbury in
 - Visitation - wrong:, 60
- son of Ralph, 76
- son of Ralph IV, 42, 77
- son of Ralph V, 81
- son of Robert?, 27
- standard bearer at Battle of
 - Lincoln, 56
- succeeded by John, 87
- succeeds Ralph IV, 74
- summoned to Council at Gloucester
 - 1283, 84
- supports de Montfort, 80
- supports de montfort in rebellion,
 - 74
- supports Henry I, 6
- Walter de Wick tithing man, 86
- wardship sold to de Montfort, 74
- wintesses Gilbert Matshal charter
 - 1235, 58
- witnesses charter by de Mora, 94
- witnesses charter for William St
 - Maur, 68
- younger son Nest, 41
- Bonhamand, Robert, 86
- Boret, Alice, 107
- Boret, Thomas, 107
- Botneyand, Henry, 110
- Bowden, 78
- Box, 109
- Bradenstoke Priory, 49
- Bradley, Hants, 72
- Bramber Rape, 52
- Brault, 90, 95, 96
- Brayboef, William or Adam, 87
- Brickett, Michael, 104
- Briqueville la Blouett, 6
- Bristol, 4, 5, 13, 26, 32, 63
- Bromham, 114
- Brycheiniog, 31
- Brys, Robert, 32
- Bubbe, Thomas, 76
- Buchan, 98
- Bull Scimus Fili, 97
- Bygod, Roger, 91
- Caerleon, 21, 22, 37, 40, 41, 57, 60,
 - 64, 68, 94, 116, 131
- Calne, 48, 107, 112
- [Cantred of Talgarth](#), 36
- Cardigan, 37
- Carmarthen, 37, 84
- Castile, 65, 66
- Castle
 - Arundel, 6, 52
 - Berkeley, 13
 - Beverly, 24
 - Bramber, 51, 52, 54
 - built 1070, 52
 - Chepstow, 3, 21
 - Chichester, 52
 - Devizes, 45, 100, 110
 - Dover, 54
 - Hastings, 52
 - Knepp, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56
 - built by de Braose, 51
 - carpenters sent, 54
 - exists 1216, 55
 - forfeited to King John, 51
 - Lewes, 52
 - Lincoln, 56
 - Marlborough, 110
 - Pevensey, 52
 - Raglan, 36
 - construction, 36
 - Rochester, 55

- St Briavel, 51
 Straddewy, 30
 Tickhill, 6
 Castle Coombe, 101
 chapel of the blessed Mary at
 Lakham, 87
 Chepstow, 3, 4, 21
 Cherleswyck, 123
 child oblates, 18
 Chippenham, ii, iii, iv, 30, 82, 83, 104,
 107, 111, 112, 124
 Cirencester, 8, 12, 61, 86
 Clare, Suffolk, 35
 Cloudgirofe, Walter of Lackham, 83
 Colborn, Robert, 103
 Comyn of Badenoch, 98
 Cork, 69, 70, 71, 72
 Council of Toledo, 19
 Count of
 Hainhault, 119
 Countess of
 Gloucester and Hertford, 99
 Leicester, 74
 Pembroke, 45
 Salisbury, 49
 Crick, 68
 Crickhowell, 30
 Crok, John, 96
 Cryps, William, 125
 d'Eu, William
 holds Tickenham Manor, 14
 Daubernoun, John, 109
 de Acton, John, 32
 de Acton, Odo, 32
 de Averci, Robert
 heiress marries Sir Ralph de
 Wilmington, 26
 witnesses charter Ralph III, 26
 de Beanacre, William, 114
 de Berkeley, James II
 son of Elizabeth Bluet, 36
 de Berkeley, Sir James
 marries Elizabeth Bluet, 35
 de Beuelye, Alice, 80
 de Bohun, Edward, 67
 de Bohun, Humphrey, 33
 de Bosceby, John, 66
 de Bradeford, Isabel, 108
 de Bradeford, John, 108
 de Braybok, William, 115
 de Brianzon, Eleanor
 marries John Bluet, 108
 de Brianzon, William, 108, 123
 de Brokwort, Henry, 32
 de Brokworth, Henry, 32
 de Bueles, Hugh, 64
 de Burbach, John, 126
 de Burgh, Hubert
 liberated from Devizes Castle, 45
 de Burgh, Hugh, 43
 de Busceby, John, 64
 de Button, Matthew, 32
 de Calewey, Elias, 82
 de Camera, Robert, 27
 de Cauderin, Thomas
 in Scotland with John Bluet, 113
 de Cauntelo, Robert, 125
 de Cerne, Philip, 82
 de Clare, Basila
 marries Raymond FitzGerald, 16
 marries Geoffrey FitzRobert, 16
 de Clare, Gilbert, 4, 14, 33, 91, 99,
 116
 dies young, 21
 heir to Striguil, 21
 de Clare, Isabel, 12
 alive in 1173, 15
 illegitimate dau of Isabel de Clare,
 16
 de Clare, Richard, 33
 gives Raglan to Walter Bluet, 36
 killed at Abergavenny, 22
 related to William Bluet?, 14
 de Clare, Walter
 founds Tintern Abbey, 14
 de Clare, Isabel
 marries William Marshal 1189, 21
 de Clifford, Henry, 32
 de Clifford, Walter, 49
 de Coglan, Margary, 69
 de Columbariis, John, 118
 de Cotes, William, 109
 de Coudrein, Thomas
 charters witnessed by John Bluet,
 113
 de Courci, Roger, 53

- de Cucasunce, Peter
 gifts Hilmarton and Lackham to
 William Fynamour, 125
- de Cusaunce, Peter
 arms?, 126
 dies sp, 127
 heir of mother Margaret, 120
 inherits Lackham, 125
 inherits moiety of Silchester, 125
 sheriff Wiltshire 1377, 126
 son of Margaret and William, 120
 son of Margaret dau of Eleanorret,
 117
- de Cusaunce, William
 buys marriage rights of Eleanor &
 Margaret, 117
 land held of Ralph Bluet VI, 124
 marries Eleanor to Edmund Baynard,
 123
 nephew of William de Cusaunce, 120
- de Cusuanche, Margaret
 action to grant land, 126
- de Cusuanche, Peter
 <20 1348, 117
 action to grant land, 126
- de Dernford, William
 holds crick, 68
 serves in Scottish wars of Edward I,
 68
 witnesses charter for William St
 Maur, 68
- de Dryby, Simon, 46
- de Dunstavill, Petronella, 101
- de Elmer, Walter, of Gloucester, 32
- de Escudemor, Geoffrey, 82
- de Evercide, Robert, 26
- de Eynlode, William, 32
- de Ewrons, Walter, 48
- de Felcham, William
 dies c1199, 72
 marries Petronella Bluet, 72
- de Foxley, John, 110
- de Fynamor, Gilbert
 witnesses charters, 112
- de Fynamore, Elizabeth, 111
- de Fynamore, Gilbert
 granted land by John Bluet, 111
- de Fynamore, John, 111
- de Fynamour, John, 125
- de Gerpundevile, Gilbert, 27
- de Gloucester, Ala, 13
- de Gloucestre, Walter, 32
- de Gyse, Anselm, 32
- de Gyse, John, 32
- de Gyse, Margery, 32
- de Halghton, Robert, 96
- de Harden, William, 110
 commissioner at Devizes, 110
 named in complaint 1299, 110
- de Hesding. Arnulph, 14
- de Holt, John, 109
- de Holta, Ralph
 Lacock abbey steward, 78
- de Holta, Robert, 78
- de Insula, William, 27
- de Kenett, Gilbert, 61
- de la Barre, William, 109
- de la Bruere, John, 64
- de la Gare, Luke, 91
- de la Hid, Walter, 61
- de la Hyd, Walter, 61
- de la Mare, John, 101, 109
 holds barony of Castle Coombe, 101
- de la Mare, Thomas, of Ryndecombe,
 32
- de la Monte, Ralph, the carter, 82
- de la Sage, Thomas, 32
- de la Slade, Walter, 109
- de Lacham, Alan, 103
- de Lacham, Robert, 103
- de Lacham, Sir William, 103
- de Lacy, Alice, 59
- de Lacy, Henry, 59
- de Lacy, John, 61
- de Leiston, Roger, 26
- de Marisc, Geoffrey, 71
- de Maulay, Peter
 given Upavon by Henry III, 43
- de Meisy, Roger
 Roland Bluet obtains lands, 51
- de Menstreworth, John, 109
- de Meysey, Roger, 60
- de Meysi, Nicola, 26
- de Meysi, Robert, 56
 married to Joan of Bramfiled, 26
 witnesses charter Ralph III, 26

- de Meysi, Roger, 26
 de Middleton, Margaret, 109
 de Minered, Gilbert, 61
 de Monfort, Eleanor, 74
 de Montagu, William
 earl of Salisbury, 59
 de Monte Hermeri, Ralph, 99, 100
 de Montford, Robert, 101
 de Montfort, Elena, 80
 de Montfort, Joan
 owes John Bluet money, 105
 de Montfort, Johanna, 80
 de Montfort, Nicholas, 81
 de Montfort, Simon, 96
 buys William Bluet's wardship, 74
 daughter, 84
 killed at Battle of Evesham, 75
 loses office 1252, 65
 rebellion, 80
 sent to Gascony, 65
 de Montfort, Simon, 74
 de Monthermer, Ralph, 99
 de Montsorel, John, 107
 de Mora, Bartholomew, 68, 94
 de Mortemer, Ralph
 holds Lackham ?, 8
 de North, William, 113
 de Okeburn, Henry, 110
 de Persy, George, 109
 de Peyton, John
 chapel at Lackham, 118
 holds Lackham in right of his wife,
 119
 marries Eleanor Bluet sen, 118
 de Poynz, Roger
 sued by Bartholomew Picot, 35
 de Poynz, Roger
 second husband of Margery Bluet, 33
 de Pykewyke, William, 109
 de Roches, John, 111
 de Rodune, William, 43
 de Roffia, Alice, 109
 de Sancto Amando, Aumery, 61
 de Sancto Mauro, Laurence, 93
 de Sandwyco, Ralph, 102
 de Sandyesthen, Ralph, 110
 de Scrop, Henry, 109
 de Solers, John, of Shypton, 32
 de Spencer, Thurstan, 54
 de Spencer, Walter
 marries Alda Blue?, 18
 de St Leger, William, 21
 de St Maur, Roger, 67
 de St Maur, William, 67
 de Tyting, John, 97
 mayor of Winchester, 97
 de Valence, Aymer, 33
 Sells marriage rights, 117
 de Wancy, Ralph, 76
 de Watford, Hugh, 61
 de Wedone, Alice, 110
 de Wedoneand, William, killed 1299,
 110
 de Wick, Agnes, 80
 de Wick, Richard
 witnesses Lacock agreements, 86
 de Wick, Walter, 86
 de Wick, Richard
 witness William's charter, 76
 de Wilington, Ralph, 26
 de Wilton, Richard, 26
 de Wycombe, John, of Bristol, 32
 de Wyrwod, Clement, 68
 de Yucflel, Thomas, 110
 de Beaumont, Isabel
 marries Ralph Bluet II?, 14
 Deheubarth, 31
 des Rievaux, Peter, son of Henry III,
 43
 des Roche, Peter
 appointed Justiciar, 43
 des Roches, Peter
 Archbishop Canterbury, 43
 Despencer, Almaric
 chancellor to Richard I#, 73
 sheriff of Rutland 1188, 73
 Despencer, Thurstan
 brother of Almaric, 73
 son of Alda Bluet, 73
 Despencer, Ralph
 son of Alda Bluet, 73
 Devizes, 110
 de Whytynghon, William, 32
 Ditteridge, 114
 Domesday, 3, 4, 5, 8, 14, 18, 52, 111,
 136

- donatio=dower, 38
 dower, 37
 dowry, 37, 40, 42, 60, 71, 74, 85, 124
 Draper, Stephen, 104
 Dublin, 70, 120
 Duke of
 Clarence, 34, 35
 Duke of
 Norfolk, 85
 Dundee, 100
 Dunnmow, 123
 Dunstable, 7
 Duntisbourne, 18
 Duntisbourne Abbots, 8
 Duntisbourne Lee, 8
 Durand, 8
 Durelwere, John, 110
 Ealdgyth, 22
 Earl of
 Anjou, 7
 Belesme, 6
 Cornwall, 84
 Essex, 76
 Gloucester and Hereford, 100
 Gloucester and Hertford, 91
 Gloucester and Hertford,, 99
 Gloucestershire and Hertford7, 14
 Hereford, 76, 98
 Hereford,, 33
 Lancaster, 29
 captured after Boroughbridge, 30
 rebels against Edw II, 29
 Leicester, 29, 74
 Lincoln, 29, 59
 Norfolk, 49, 117, 118
 Northampton, 123
 Pembroke, 12, 30, 33, 42, 43, 45,
 46, 59, 74, 117
 Rosmar, 48
 Salisbury, 25, 29, 47, 49, 59, 103
 charters 1142, 59
 Shrewsbury, 6
 Ulster, 35
 Wiltshire, 59
 Eblana, 70
 Edmund of Woodstock, 110
 Edward of Caernarvon, 98
 Eleanor of England, 110
 English Barons in revolt, 54
 Fair Rosamund, 49
 Feast of
 St Alphege the Martyr, 87
 St Gregory, 85
 St Peter & Vincula, 66
 St Petronilla Virgin Mary, 116
 St Simon and Jude, 121
 St. Stephen, 111
 FitzEdward, Patrick 1st earl of
 Salisbury, 59
 FitzEdward, Walter, 59
 FitzEdward, William
 dies 1196, 59
 FitzGerald, Raymond
 dies c1188, 16
 Fitz-Harding, Ala, 13
 Fitz-Harding, Robert, 13
 FitzHerbert, Matthew, 54
 FitzNicholas, Roger
 grandson of Tecius, 14
 FitzRobert, Geoffrey, 16
 Fitzrobert, Henry, 14
 Fitzrobert, Jordon, 14
 FitzRobert, Nicholas, 13
 FitzThomas, John, 131
 FitzWilliam, William, 124
 Flanders, 49, 65
 Forest of
 Braydon, 118
 Chippenham, 107, 112, 113
 Dean, 32, 50
 Melksham, 107, 113
 Pewsham, 111
 Wolvemer, 100
 Fountains Abbey, 25
 Fromund, Stephen, 27
 Furncyt, Rev Richard, 31
 Fynamor, Walter, 104
 Fynamour, Alice, 125
 Fynamour, Christine, 125
 Fynamour, Gilbert, 125
 Fynamour, John, 125
 Fynamour, Margaret, 125
 Fynamour, Robert, 125
 Fynamour, Roger, 125
 Fynamour, Thomas, 125
 Fynamour, Walter, 125

- Fynamour, William, 125
 Gacelin, William, 64
 Gacelyn, Edmund, 91
 controls Straddewy, 30
 hands Straddewy back to Amicia, 31
 Galloway roll, 1, 98, 113
 Galloway Roll of Arms, 98
 Gascelyn, Roger
 captured at Boroughbridge, 30
 Gascony, 65
 Gerald of Wales, 16
 Giffard, High, 62
 Glamorgan, 37, 68
 Gloucester, iii, 5, 8, 10, 13, 14, 23, 26,
 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 46, 61, 84, 99,
 100
 Gloucestershire, iii, 3, 4, 5, 8, 14, 23,
 29, 31, 32, 61, 93, 128
 Goatacre, 123
 Godstow abbey, 18
 Gore, Nicholas, 103
 Grace Dieu, 68
 Greenwich, 87
 Grist, John, 103
 Gt Stanbrugge, 123
 Gt. Akering, 123
 Guido son of Tecius, 14
 Gurney, Thomas, 30
 Gwent, 57
 Gwynedd, 84
 Hamon of Hereford, the Jew, 57
 Hampshire, 113
 Hathewy, William, of Radmoor, 32
 Hathewy, William, of Ruardyn, 32
 Haverford, Pembroke, 42
 Hay on Wye, 31
 Heddington, 114
 Helmerton, 107, 125
 Helston, 7
 Hereford, 85
 Hilmarton, 8, 76, 107, 114, 120, 121,
 123, 127
 Histoire Guillaume le Mareschal, 57
 Hoel, 40, 41
 Horn, William, 91
 Horselaperith, 111
 Horslapyryche, 125
 Howarth, Peter, 88, 90, 95
 Howth Hill, 70
 Hunte,
 William, 104
 Hurdecotes Ashton, 85
 Ida, mistress of Henry II, 49
 Importance of wool, 97
 de Beaumont, 12
 Isabella of France, 119
 Joan of Acre, 99
 dies 1306, 100
 marries Gilbert de Clare
 dies 1295, 99
 marries Ralph de Monthermer#, 99
 Joan of Bramfield, 26
 Joce, John, of the Forest of Dean, 32
 John of Monmouth
 holds Bramber Castle, 52
 Justiciar of Ireland, 71
 Kantok, Roger, 81
 Ketyng, Alice, 131
 Kiltorky, 72
 King
 Cadwgan, 6
 Edgar, 31
 Edward 1
 conflict with church, 93
 edward I
 dies 1307, 110
 invades Scotland 1301, 99
 Edward I, 36, 68, 75, 83, 84, 96
 announces Scottish truce, 99
 betrothed to Eleanor of Castile,
 65
 charter, 33
 controls North Wales 1253, 66
 homage from Joand Bluet 1302,
 118
 in France 1287, 85
 in Wiltshire 1302, 100
 invades Scotland 1300, 97
 marries Marguerite of France,
 110
 throws de Monthermer in jail, 99
 Edward II, 29, 101
 at odds with Isabella, 119
 defeated, 119
 faces rebellion in Wales, 29
 grants land to John Bluet, 111

- returns Straddewy to Amicia, 31
- Edward III
 - marries Philipa of Hainhault, 119
 - third son, 35
- Henry I, 4, 6, 16
 - summons army 1101, 6
- Henry II, 23, 33, 36, 48, 49, 73
 - daughter by Nest, 70
 - in Gascony 1253, 65
 - knights named, 64
 - lands at Waterford 1172, 70
 - meeting with Dermot MacCarthy 1172, 70
 - Nest was mistress, 23
 - visits Iowerth, 24
- Henry III, 12, 25, 57, 65, 66, 77, 83
 - acting against Magna Carta, 44
 - assembles host to fight Llewellyn, 66
 - controls North wales, 66
 - household knights, 60
 - ignores de Montfort's excesses, 65
 - sacks justiciar, 42
 - takes over William's debt to Urcello, 57
- Henry IV, 35
- Henry VII, 112
- Henry I, 16
- Iowerth, 6
- John, 12, 50, 51, 60, 73
 - comes to throne 1199, 53
 - dies, 42
 - dies 1216, 56
 - given pony by Ralph Bluet IV, 42
 - loses french possessions, 53
 - signs Magna Carta, 42
 - stays at Silchester with Ralph IV, 42
 - supports Morgan Bluet as Archbishop, 24
 - supports Morgan Bluet as bishop, 24
- Louis IX, 65
- Louis VIII, 55
- of Castile Alfonso X, 65
- of Cork, 70
- of Desmond, 69
- Richard I, 73
- Stephen, 12
- William I, 7, 48
- William II (William Rufus), 7
- Kington St Michael, 72
- la Hattere, Thomas of Lackham, 86
- Lackham
 - Chapel, 87
 - candles, 102
- Lacock Abbey of
 - lady Chapel, 105
 - watercourse rights, 78
- Lady Chapel, 115
- Lambel, 104
- Lambel, Edward, 104
- Lambel, Sibia, 104
- Langston, 68
- le Bigod, Roger, 118
- le Bruer, John, 66
- le Draper, Henry, of Gloucester, 32
- le Eyr, Geoffrey, 125
- le Poleter, Robert of New Salisbi ury, 114
- le Savage, Robert
 - holds Bramber Castle, 52
- le Sor, John
 - lands confiscated, 61
- le Spicer, John, of Bristol, 32
- le Swon, Ann, 131
- le Swon, Walter, 131
- legal year, 37
- Leigh, 123
- Leinster, 45, 46, 72
- Lionel of Antwerp
 - born 1338, 35
 - third son of Henry III, 35
- Little Lantrissen on Usk, 100
- Little Wakering, 123
- Littleshoebury, 123
- Llewellyn the Great, 66
- Llewenich, 64
- Longespee, Margaret, 59
- Longespee, William, 48, 49, 59
- Lord of Kells and Leinster, 16
- Macken, Arthus, 93
- Magna Carta, 34, 35, 37, 42, 44, 49, 55

- magnificent overreaction, 85
 Maine, 53
 Mallore, Peter, 101
 Malmesbury, 114
 Malorre, Peter, 101, 102
 Manor of
 Ablington, 26
 Almay, 29
 Apsley Guise, 32
 Beanacre, 114, 124
 Bremles, 35
 Bulley, 5
 Catmore, 30
 Charlaweswyke, 86
 Clafford, 59
 Creadon, 59
 Crick, 68
 Daglingworth, 3, 4, 5, 8, 22, 26, 31,
 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 45, 46, 61, 124
 Duntisbourne, 8, 74
 Edishall, 35
 Hampstead Marshal, 123
 Hilmarton, 76, 107, 108, 123
 Hinton Blewett, 8, 81
 Hullavington, 3
 Kingewud Interberg, 59
 Lackham, 3, 30, 48, 85, 108, 123
 overview, 119
 Langoyde, 35
 Langstan, 14
 Langston, 14, 68, 94, 131
 Langton, 116
 Llanviagel, 94
 Llanwanches, 94
 Midgham, 66
 Pertian, 5
 Raglan, 30, 35
 Rodley, 5
 Rogeat, 94
 Ruddle, 5
 Salisbury (Wales), 76, 77
 Salisbury (Wales), 67, 76, 77
 Salisbury, in Wales, 41
 Salisbury, Netherwent, 60
 Saltharpe, 67
 Sheldon, 30, 91
 Silchester, 42, 77, 85, 93, 122, 124
 Stokholt, 59
 Straddewy, 30, 33, 35
 grant of fair 1308, 36
 Talgarth, 31, 35
 Throgelstone, 33
 Thurcleston, 29
 Thurleston, 33, 35
 Tickenham, 14
 Tore, 35
 Upavon, 43
 Usk, 30
 Wekelescote, 67
 Wytestone, 14
 Yate, 26
 Yeovilton, 8, 87
 Mareschal, William, 86
 Margery of Gloucester, 80
 Marguerite of France, 110
 maritagium, 37, 41, 42
 marsh of
 Bernemarsh, 123
 Gt. Stanbrugge La Pole, 123
 Landwick, 123
 Littleburghwerth, 123
 Marshal, Ansell, 61
 Marshal, Gilbert, 61
 charter 1235 witnessed by William
 Bluet, 59
 made earl of Pembroke, 46
 Marshal, Richard
 killed 1234, 46
 rebels against Henry III, 42
 supports Gilbert Bassett ke, 43
 Marshal, Walter, 61
 Marshal, William
 dies 1219, 42
 marries Isabel de Clare, 12
 regent to Henry III, 12
 Marshal, William II, 42, 60
 Martel, John, 94
 Martel, William
 attorney for John Bluet, 96
 gives back Hilmarton, 108
 grant of money, 116
 related to John Martel ?, 94
 squire to John Bluet, 93
 Mass for the Dead, 115
 Matthew son of Herbert, 53
 Maunsel, William, 32

- McCarthy, Dermot, 69
 Meadow, 111
 Melksham, 107, 108
 Michaelmas, 40, 56, 58, 60, 62, 64, 67, 85, 86, 131
 Midgham, Berks, 66, 67
 Midgham, Berksd, 66
 Mitchell, Samuel, 103
 Monmouth, 14, 22, 29, 64, 94
 Montgomery, 29, 84
 Morgan of Caerleon, 57, 64
 Morrel, Matthew, 64
 Mustel, Hugh, 32
 Netherwent, 1, 41, 69, 131
 Nicholas, son of Nicholas, 85
 Normandy, 6, 7, 52, 53, 54, 135
 North Wal, 66
 Northamptonshire, 110
 Northmede, 96
 Notton, 90, 103, 123
 Onderhull, Robert, 32
 Page, Thomas
 attorney for John Bluet, 96
 quitclaim 1287, 96
 Pagham, John, 18
 pasture, 110, 111, 119, 124
 Pavia, 35
 Pecceth, Robert, 7
 Penhow, 67, 68
 Philippa of Hainault, 35, 119
 Picard, Amicia, 73
 marries Ralph Bluet, 29
 Picard, John, 36
 granted Manor of Thurcleston on marriage, 29
 levy of 100 for Edw II, 29
 Picot, Bartholomew, 34
 alienates DAGlingworth 1368, 34
 Picot, Elizabeth, 34
 Poitou, 53, 59
 Pope
 Gregory, 85
 Innocent, 24
 Priory of
 Kington St Michael, 72
 Little Malvern, 73
 Prykke, Thomas, of Stareton, 32
 Pychard, John
 granted market at Straddewy, 33
 Queen
 Isabella, 112, 119
 Margaret, 110
 Matilda, 59
 Philippa, 119
 Quemerford, 112
 Ragland, Lettice, 66
 Ralph of Broughton, 60
 Ravenserode, 101
 Marshal, Richard, 61
 Rebellion of Earl Robert 1102, 6
 Reighleigh, 123
 Reynnade, Maud, 111
 Reynnade, William, 111
 Richard the Lionheart, 53
 River
 Adur, 52
 Cree, 98
 Robert of Lakham, 103
 Robert of the Bridge, 102
 Robert of Winchelsea., 91
 Robert son of Payn, 60
 Robert the Reeve, 83
 Roger of Chippenham, 114
 Roger of Wendover, 44
 Roger the plowman, 82
 Rumsey Nunnery, 31
 Runnymede, 55
 Sage, John, 32
 Saltharpe, Berks, 67
 Scaccarium, 58
 Scernecote, William, 33
 Scethrog, Brecknockshire, 29, 31, 34
 Seagrave, John, 100
 Second Baron's War, 74
[Seigniorship of Cantreshelley](#), 35
 Selyman, Faith, 80
 Semington, 85
 Sercheche, John, 83
 Seymour, Francis, 89
 Sharrington, William
 builds tower at Abbey, 106
 Sheriff of
 Hampshire, 87
 Shopelond, 123
 Sicily, 85
 Siege of

- Caerlaverock, 98
 Stirling Castle), 95, 96
 Silchester, 8, 21, 42, 74, 77, 87, 88,
 117, 120, 121, 124, 125, 127, 133
 Simon of Ghent, 47
 Siward, Richard, 43
 lands taken by Henry III, 43
 releases de Burgh from Devizes, 45
 Southampton, 97, 99, 120, 122
 Southchurch, 123
 Manor of, 123
 Spigurnel, Henry, 110
 St Briavel, 50, 51
 St Cyriac's church, 25, 75
 St George Roll, 61
 St George's Roll, 61, 67, 90
 St Maur, William, 68
 St Peter's Monastery, 5
 Staffordshire, 96
 Stanford, 123
 Stevens, John, of Lydeney, 32
 Stirling roll, 113
 Straddewy, 30
 Striguil, 4, 14, 21, 42, 68
 Sturdi, John of Lackham, 86
 Swein, Richard, 87
 Talbot, Elizabeth, 33
 Talgarth, 33
 Tara, 70
 Tarrant, Robert, 103
 Tecius, 14
 Temys, Joan
 Abbess of Lacock, 80
 Term
 Easter, 37
 Hilary, 37, 41, 126, 137
 Michaelmas, 37
 Trinity, 37
 Thomas of Brotherton, 110
 Thoregber, Alice of Lackham, 86
 Tickenham, Som, 13
 treasurer of Wells, 85
 Treaty of Aberconway, 84
 Tretower, 30
 tun, 63
 Uchtyrd, 22
 Umfraville, 98
 Upavon, 43, 44, 46
 Urcello, 57
 Usk, 22, 23, 37
 verch Rhys, Elizabeth
 born Talgarth, 31
 marries Ralph Bluet, 31
 Violante, 35
 Visconti, Galeazzo, 35
 Visitations of Cornwall, 60
 Wagner, Anthony, 90
 Wakeman, Thomas, 93
 Wales, Richard, 33
 Walker, Rosemary, 81
 Warner, Kathryn, 30
 warren, 31, 101, 114
 Wekelescote, Berks, 67
 West Sussex, 51
 Westbury, 5, 85
 Whethan Hall, 112
 Wick Farm, 87, 123
 William Marshal
 regent to Henry III, 56
 William, abbot of Grace Dieu, 68
 William, the Count of Eu, 3
 Wiltshire, 99
 Winchelsea, 99
 Winchester, iii, 31, 87, 97, 124
 Winterswell, 103
 Wogan, Katherine
 marries John Bluet, 33
 Woodford, 115
 Woodstock, 7
 Worcestershire, 73
 Worston, William, 124
 Wykeheld, Richard, 86
 Yeovilton, 87
 York, 85, 102
 Young, Denholm, 94