

EARLY ARMS — AS ATTRIBUTED, ADOPTED OR DOCUMENTED

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Almost 60 years ago Anthony Wagner, the late Garter King of Arms, tentatively concluded that ‘heraldry was coming into use and taking formal shape for a generation or more before our first clear evidence for it.’¹ Other armorists have hinted at the same opinion, but few have tried to substantiate it. Even Wagner himself did not really put forward arguments, other than to list a handful of early armorial seals from all over Europe dated to the period from 1136 to 1159. There are at least two, interconnected reasons for this reticence. The first is the obvious shortage of data, which almost without exception come from seals. Very few seals have survived from the twelfth century, and only three families provide seals for more than one individual (Candavène-Saint-Pol, Clare, and Savoy). The second reason derives from the unwillingness of most scholars to speculate without having documentary evidence on which to build their hypotheses and arguments.

If we accept Wagner’s conclusion though we might more appropriately call it a hypothesis—there are several families that we might expect to have adopted armorial emblems around or shortly after 1100, i.e. at the conclusion of the First Crusade (without proposing any relation between the two). But to what extent, in which order, and at which social level did this happen? The problem facing us in substantiating the hypothesis can be reformulated in more general terms: is it possible to date an adoption of arms to before it is documented?

Speculation has been engaged in for more than a hundred years. J. Horace Round more or less explicitly dated the adoption of the quarterly arms of Mandeville before 1144, but as discussed below, though this dating has often been cited, it was based purely on a rough extrapolation from seal data fifty to a hundred years later.² If it can be shown that different branches of a family bearing nearly identical arms were distinct and separate at a certain date, this would provide a better basis for extrapolation; but they would have to be effectively, physically separated, not just moved into the next valley or a few shires away. The primary aim of this paper is to investigate whether there is evidence to substantiate the adoption of arms before the date of any surviving documentation. Three sets of data were chosen to explore the possibilities.

¹ A. R. Wagner, ‘Heraldry’, in A. L. Poole (ed.), *Medieval England* (Oxford 1958), I, pp. 338-81 at 346-8.

² J. H. Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (London 1892).

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One set of data (the ‘Cross-Channel set’) concerns the many French who settled in England after the conquest of 1066 while still holding lands on the continent, particularly in Normandy. The civil war between Stephen and Maud and the Angevin conquest of Normandy in 1136–54 led to the forfeiture of lands on both sides of the Channel. Some families tried to escape the consequences of taking sides by re-arraigning ownership between branches, notably the Beaumont twins Robert Earl of Leicester, and Waleran, Count of Meulan. The accession of Henry II nullified some, but not all, these forfeitures. A second and permanent separation of lands and branches came when King John lost Normandy to Philip Augustus in 1204. Lands confiscated were given to new owners, but a number of families once more contrived to reallocate ownership, if they had not done so previously.

The second set of data (the ‘Group set’) builds upon the approach pioneered by Round, namely examining the data available for members of armorial groups such as the quarterly coats in the Mandeville Group, or the chevrons ones of the Clare Group. Changes of arms will be considered, if appropriate or illuminating for the process.

The much smaller third set of data (the ‘Branch set’) will be used to explore the possibility of using geographical patterns and armorial differences to date the adoption of a family coat of arms.

Early stages in evolution, sources and a guess

Over several years, Michel Pastoureau elaborated an account of the development of heraldry in four sub-periods: gestation (1080–1120); appearance (1120–1160); diffusion (1160–1200); and stabilisation (1200–1240); followed by further stages of maturation continuing to 1330 and codification until the end of the Middle Ages around 1500. Though more detailed, this reconstruction essentially resembles Wagner’s proposal for a pre-1130s phase;³ and like Wagner’s account, the ‘Pastoureau evolution’ can be regarded as no more than a hypothesis, for which no data and very little argument was given. But the reconstruction that arises from the combination of the two hypotheses is palatable, and offers, at least in part, an explanation for the fact that we have so few surviving examples of early arms. Among the obvious reasons for the lack of data are the variable physical survival of seals and documents, along with changes in the use and deposition of documents. Fairly large quantities of documents have survived from some families, usually when the abbey or manorial archives where they were deposited were retained by a single owner or passed on without major disruption of ownership. The contents of documents have survived better than seals, partly due to the tendency of the latter to decay, but mainly because charters were copied or calendared; copyists tended to transcribe the names of wit-

³ M. Pastoureau, ‘L’héraldique bretonne’, *Bulletin de la Société archéologique du Finistère* 101 (1973), pp. 121–48 at 126; id., *Traité d’héraldique* (3rd edn., Paris 1993), pp. 301, 303. The role of arms on banners, which are an integral part of the ‘Pastoureau evolution’, was refuted and the proposal modified by S. Clemmensen, ‘The proverbial banner—an axiom revisited: a re-examination of the evidence of early heraldry pre 1200’, in *Frontiers in Genealogy and Heraldry. Proceedings of the 30th International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences, September 2012*, ed. J. T. Anema (The Hague 2014), pp. 95–105.

nesses, but not to mention the sealing. For Waleran de Beaumont, Earl of Worcester and Count of Meulan (1104–66), fewer than a dozen impressions of his two seals are known, but 132 charters and copies of his acts survive.⁴

For England, the main sources of early heraldry are seals, the Matthew Paris chronicles (1244–59), the Glover Roll (1252/58), and to some extent the armorials from the reigns of Edward I and II (1275–1315). Using seals as a basis for an argument involves at least three problems: the random nature of their survival; the difficulties of dating and identifying them securely; and the frequently unhelpful way they depict the arms they contain. The first point is self-explanatory, and most people who have looked at impressions of medieval seals have encountered the third, experiencing difficulties in identifying the smaller charges. Dating seals with any precision is difficult, if the document to which they are attached is undated, and nearly impossible for detached seals. For the period under discussion here, equestrian seals make up a large part of the pool. Many of these are without any trace of arms, instead showing the owner on horseback wielding his sword or pennoned lance with the shield turned away so its face is out of sight. In lucky instances arms can be found on shields, surcoats, pennons and/or horse trappers; but in many cases the arms listed in printed collections come from counterseals on surviving documents. So if counterseals were not used, were lost or were personalized in non-heraldic ways (such as intaglio, cut gems), all that we are left with are the non-armorial principal seals as used by high and low.

To describe the incidence of twelfth-century seals as random is an understatement. Using a survey from France (in the absence of comparable statistics for England), one finds just 31 armorial seals from before 1180 (two to three generations after the proposed introduction of arms!) increasing to 190 by 1200. These are mostly concentrated between the lower reaches of the Rhine and the Seine.⁵ However, there are pre-1180 seals from other places including Provence, Austria, Germany, Spain, and Italy. The oldest is from 1148, which is roughly comparable with the earliest in both England and Northern France.⁶ The chance nature of survival and sealing practices both help to explain why families and individuals may have been armigerous much earlier than documented. As will be seen, much of our knowledge of early arms is post-1250 and derived from colourful armorials rather than colourless seals.

As suggested above, post-1320 armorials are of little value for the study of early heraldry. After 200 years memories are compounded with later additions, modifications and interpretations. Even the impressively researched armorials from the reign of Edward I are problematic due to the time lapse, though like later seals they may

⁴ David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins. The roots and branches of power in the twelfth century* (Cambridge 1986), p. xi for charters, and note 10 for seals.

⁵ Pastoureau, *Traité*, p. 303.

⁶ Many discussed by B. Bedos-Rezak, 'L'apparition des armoiries sur les sceaux en Île-de-France et en Picardie (v.1130-1230)', in H. Pinoteau, M. Pastoureau and M. Popoff (edd.), *Les origines des armoiries. Actes de 2me Colloque de l'Académie internationale d'héraldique, Bressanone 1981* (Paris 1983), pp. 23-41. A selection of 93 seals discussed in Clemmensen, 'The proverbial banner', are available on www.armorial.dk/coats-of-arms/EarlySeals.pdf.

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be used as supporting evidence.⁷ That leaves the Matthew Paris chronicles, Glover's Roll and perhaps Walford's Roll of c.1273 for study.⁸ Matthew Paris, a monk of St. Albans, had excellent connections during the years in which he wrote (1244–59), being able to count even King Henry III among his sources, and he wrote of events and individuals living at the start of the century, illustrating the narrative with the arms of the people named in it. But he was still writing a century after the presumed adoption of the coats of arms that interest us here. Furthermore, he may not always have had his facts right, some of his errors being transmitted to modern commentators. In his excellent study of the knightly class, Peter Coss discusses the armorial relationships and evolutions of the families of Segrave, Lacy and the Earls of Chester, all proposed as members of the *garbs* or Clermont-Chester armorial group.⁹ Coss faithfully reproduces *Sable three garbs argent* for Gilbert (B:176, d. 1254), and *Gules three garbs or* for Stephen Segrave (MP I:66, d. 1241), but omits to mention that Stephen is also ascribed a *sable* and *or* version in MP IV:48, and that most later armorials have the arms as *Sable three garbs argent*. The Segraves were prominent tenants of the Earls of Chester in Leicestershire and changed their arms to *Sable a lion rampant crowned argent* between 1246 and 1280.¹⁰ The Segrave change has been related to the extinction of the Anglo-Norman earls in 1237 and the recreation of the earldom for Lord Edward in 1254, though like the Lacy change mentioned below it probably occurred much later, between 1274 and 1285. But why should Stephen Segrave change from the 'royal' colours to black and white between 1244 and 1259? To have done this just because a junior line of the Scottish Comyn Earls of Buchan may have used similar arms does not make sense at a time when Henry III was content to let Scotland be, and the Comyns had little interest in the Midlands, where most of the Segrave estates were.

Matthew Paris is no doubt a valuable source, but a little scepticism is warranted. The Lacys were not only prominent tenants of the Earls of Chester, but they held the hereditary constablership of Chester Castle, a key position in the North-West, and they are mentioned by several modern writers as using *garbs* in their arms. However, the actual evidence for the Lacys bearing *garbs* consists of only two items. The first, a seal, shows the early quarterly Lacy arms between two *garbs* (not as coats of arms, but in reference to the constablership), the second is MP IV:6 for Roger as Constable

⁷ G. Brault, *The Rolls of Arms of Edward I* (*Aspilogia* 3: two vols., Woodbridge 1997).

⁸ Edited by T. D. Tremlett and H. S. London in *Rolls of Arms of Henry III*, ed. Anthony Wagner (*Aspilogia* 2: London 1967), pp. 11-36 (*Historia Anglorum*, c.1250-59; MP I in the *Aspilogia* and *DBA* system of sigla), pp. 36-57 (1259, *Liber Additamentorum* = MP II), pp. 60-74 (*Chronica Majora*, c.1245-51 = MP IV). For Glover's and Walford's Rolls, see *ibid.* pp. 89-114 (intro.), 115-166 (Glover's Roll = B), 167-204 (Walford's Roll = C). Also listed in S. Clemmensen, 'An ordinary of medieval armorials' (www.armorial.dk/ordinary/ordinary12.mdb: 2013 database and 2006 text [PDF] versions available), where additional references, seals and entries in armorials are given for all families discussed here.

⁹ Peter Coss, *The Knight in Medieval England 1000–1400* (Stroud 1993), illns. between pp. 78/79, 80/81.

¹⁰ *BM Seals* nos. 13399 (1246: Nicolas, *three garbs*), 6712 (1280: Christiane, wife of John, *lion rampant*); 13397 (1336/51: John, *lion rampant*, the shield placed between three *garbs*).

of Chester (d. 1211), ascribing him *Per pale gules and azure three garbs or*. This entry dates from fifty years after the fact.¹¹ It is worth pointing out that a closely similar coat of arms, *Per fess gules and azure three garbs or*, is given in MP IV:7 for William de Braose (d. 1211), but this is not thought by anyone to represent a link between the Braoses, whose interests lay in South-West Wales, and Chester in North-East Wales.

The arms of Chester and Lacy (a non-member of the group) were documented by c.1231, only a few years before the earldom became extinct, and those of Segrave by 1246, a decade later—and just a generation before the changes of arms referred to above. It is an open question when and why one substantial tenant family (Segrave) might have adopted a colour variant of the arms of their (geographically distant) overlord. It could, as has been suggested, have happened at any time after the first record of a Segrave in Leicestershire in 1166.¹² And indeed Hugh d’Avranches (d. 1101) might in theory have adopted a similar colour variant from his father-in-law Hugh (II), Count of Clermont-en-Beauvaisis (d. 1103), around 1080, shortly after being created the first Norman Earl of Chester.¹³ As an alternative, the arms may have been adopted by Hugh’s son Richard (d. 1120) for his mother, or by any of his successors descended from Hugh’s nephew Ranulf ‘Meschines’ (d. 1129), in memory of the marriage of their ancestral uncle. Of these possibilities, the adoption of maternal arms by Richard d’Avranches will best fit both the group association and the ‘pre-1130s hypothesis’. Though hardly more self-conscious than the Avranches-Chester group, the descendants of another son-in-law of Hugh (II), Count of Clermont, Gilbert Clare, chose their own armorial design, and founded their own group.

Uncertainties and lack of information

The first task in making the ‘cross-channel’ data set was to create a list of candidate families: families that were established in both England and the Angevin parts of France before 1204, with subsisting branches on both sides of the Channel after that date. A thorough search of armorials for families with similar arms, and of other sources for families having held lands on both sides of the Channel, produced a list of some 70 candidates. As was expected, the information needed to pursue mat-

¹¹ *BM Seals* no. 6159 (dated by Birch c.1300: Henry, *qtly and over all a bend*, the shield placed between two garbs) as discussed and redated to 1285 or earlier by J. E. Titterton, ‘The adoption of the arms *Or a lion rampant purpure* by Henry de Lacy’, *CoA* n.s. 10 (1994), no. 168, pp. 345-6.

¹² GEC 11, p. 596.

¹³ The continental side of the Garbs group was proposed to derive from Hugh (II) Count of Clermont (d. 1103), and includes a son-in-law Gérard de Gerberoy, and the husband of a granddaughter, Guy Bouteiller de Senlis (d. after 1187), who sealed 1186 with *three garbs*. The *five garbs in cross* for Clermont are present in seals of 1203 for a grandson of Hugh (II). D. L. Galbreath and L. Jéquier, *Lehrbuch der Heraldik* (Munich 1978), p. 244. To add another aspect: the Candavènes sprinkled garbs (canting on their name, i.e. *camp d’avène* ‘field of oats’) on their horse trappers by 1162 and placed 5 either in cross or in saltire in 1226 and 1240: G. Demay, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Picardie* (Paris 1875), nos. 209, 210, 213. A Hugues de Candavène m. Marguerite, another granddaughter of Hugh (II).

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ters—seals, heraldically decorated tombs or entries in armorials—was lacking in the majority of cases. When individuals and families who arrived later than 1204 were excluded, two dozen families remained on the list.¹⁴

Among those excluded for other reasons than lack of information were the Savoyard and Poitevin relatives of Henry III, Gascon nobles and possible courtiers and mercenaries who might have settled at any time up to the loss of Gascony in 1454. The Savoyards can be exemplified by the Genevilles, who arrived with Peter of Savoy, the queen's uncle, and married into the Irish Lacy family of Meath and later held Ludlow in Shropshire. Eminent among the Poitevins was the Valence branch of the Lusignans, half-brothers of Henry III, one of whom became Earl of Pembroke by marriage. Matthew, the first Bezille or Besilles, came from Touraine with relatives and filled high offices during the personal rule of Henry III, including the constablerships of Gloucester and Dover Castles, before he and his offspring settled in several counties.¹⁵ In contrast to the Valences, the Montfort-l'Amaury family is counted among those present on both sides of the Channel as they were present through marriage before 1204, though their most prominent member was Simon, Earl of Leicester (d. 1265), who arrived in person from France during the reign of Henry III. At any rate their arms were documented before the loss of Normandy.¹⁶ A few families or individuals may have been in England for only a short period and never settled, e.g. William Mauléon, a Poitevin in the service of Richard I, who had custody of Wollaston in Northamptonshire for a time.¹⁷

Most seals of non-royal Englishmen in French collections are those of people on diplomatic missions, soldiers and officials active during the Anglo-French Wars of 1337–1454, or landholders in Aquitaine. As such they are not relevant to the present investigation, but occasionally family seals that are more difficult to place in relation to cross-Channel possessions. One family that had to be excluded were the Cheyneys, who bore *Gules a fess of lozenges argent*, and held properties in Cambridgeshire, but were employed as stewards of Robert de Vere on Guernsey and as custodians of the Channel Islands.¹⁸

Early adopters: Clare and Vermandois

The best evidence for the 'pre-1130s hypothesis' is probably the set of early seals from members of the Clare family. Their arms (*Chevronny or and gules*, and later *Or three chevrons gules*), pedigree, marriages and place in society are well known, and

¹⁴ See the full list, www.armorial.dk/coats-of-arms/earlyarms-en.pdf.

¹⁵ D. Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery: Britain, 1066–1284* (London 2004), esp. p. 314; C. Moor, *Knights of Edward I* (four vols., Leeds 1929–34), I, pp. 90–1.

¹⁶ GEC 9, pp. 120–30; L. C. Douët d'Arcq, *Inventaire et documents publiés dans les collections de sceaux des Archives de l'Empire* (three vols., Paris 1863–68), nos. 707–8 (1195: Simon, *lion rampant queue-forchée*); S. Clemmens, 'The arms of Montfort-l'Amaury', www.armorial.dk/coats-of-arms/montfort-amaury.pdf.

¹⁷ L. C. Loyd and D. M. Stenton, *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals* (Oxford 1950), pp. 240–1, no. 351.

¹⁸ G. Demay, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Normandie* (Paris 1881), nos. 165–6; Moor, *Knights of Edward I*, I, p. 205.

we know five of their seals from the twelfth century.¹⁹ As an illegitimate branch of the Norman ducal house, they belonged very much to the top level, holding two earldoms during the early part of the reign of King Stephen, a justiciarship under William the Conqueror, more than 175 lordships in England, and two baronies in Normandy. They held a dominating presence both in the South-East and in South Wales and had married into comital families in both England and France.

The key part of the argument rests on two women, and the presumption that women did not take arms by themselves. So if there are arms on the seal of a woman, they are most likely to have been used by her husband or her father (except for certain curious exceptions, as in the present case). Rohese de Clare (d. 1152) married Gilbert de Gant (d. 1156), who was created Earl of Lincoln in 1148/49.²⁰ Their daughter and heir Alice married Simon de St. Liz (c.1138–84) who came of age in 1155, but only succeeded his father (Simon, d. 1153) as Earl of Northampton in 1174.²¹ Neither Rohese nor Alice used the arms of their husbands, but instead had the chevronny Clare arms on their seals.²² A woman using paternal arms causes no problem in interpretation. But a woman using her maternal arms is a rarity. Alice may have chosen this option to emphasize her high birth on the maternal side. The earldom of Lincoln went into abeyance with the death of her father, and her husband was only allowed to succeed his late father to Northampton much later.

The first Richard FitzGilbert was a high-ranking member of the army of William the Conqueror and was generously rewarded with the castle of Clare and other lands in England before he died c.1090. He was succeeded in Normandy by Roger (d. *s.p.* 1131/35) and in England by Gilbert FitzRichard (d. 1117), who fathered at least four boys and three girls (including a Rohese) by Alice, daughter of Hugh (II), Count of Clermont-en-Beauvaisis. The four children of the eldest son, Richard FitzGilbert (d. 1136), all did well. The eldest, Gilbert FitzRichard (d. 1151/53), became active in the South-East of the Welsh Marches and was created Earl of Hertford in 1138. The second, Roger (d. 1173), succeeded him, while the youngest, Robert, became ancestor of the branch that took the name FitzWalter in the early thirteenth century. The daughter, Rohese, married (as we have seen) Gilbert de Gant, soon to be made an earl. The second son of the Earl of Hertford, Gilbert FitzGilbert (c.1100–1148), took his

¹⁹ GEC 3, pp. 242-57 (Clare); 6, pp. 498-503 (Earls of Hertford); 5, pp. 694-715 (Earls of Gloucester); 10, pp. 348-58 (Earls of Pembroke); 7, p. 672 (Rohese & Gilbert de Gant); D. Schwennicke, *Europäische Stammtafeln, neue Folge. Stammtafeln zur Geschichte europäischer Staaten* [henceforth *ESNF*] (Marburg 1980–2003), vol. 3, p. 156. Their seals are listed in *DBA* 2, pp. 515-16, 531, with images of their earliest seals in Wagner, 'Heraldry' (note 1 above), pp. 340, 374.

²⁰ GEC 7, p. 672-4; Gilbert de Gant, equestrian seal (*barry*), 1148/56, *DBA* 1, p. 86; Loyd and Stenton *op. cit.*, no. 297.

²¹ GEC 9, p. 663; *DBA* 4, p. 213; *BM Seals* no. 6403 (1147, Simon St. Liz, Earl of Northampton, equestrian, *lozengy*). The attribution of *Two bars with three fleurs-de-lys in chief* in some later armorials (*DBA* 1, p. 38) is problematic.

²² *BM Seals* nos. 13048 (1148/52, Rohese, oval counterseal, *chevronny*), 6645 (1149/56: Rohese, non-armorial, obverse of seal); nos. 13239-13240 (c.1160: Alice de Gant, *chevronny*).

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interests to Glamorgan in the South West Marches and was created Earl of Pembroke in 1138, when—as the civil war intensified—King Stephen elevated several of his supporters. The two branches worked together and hedged their bets. From time to time they supported the Angevin side, at other times the King’s side, but they largely escaped forfeiture on either side of the Channel. Seals dating to the 1140–50s have survived for both earls, uncle and nephew.²³

All commentators agree that the Rohese seal is genuine; two possible explanations offer themselves. One is a conscious collective decision—perhaps enacted at a family council or similar—to adopt a coat of arms. Is this a likely scenario in the midst of a civil war, with people changing side and fortunes shifting? Is such a novel course of action probable at this juncture? The second and simpler explanation is that Rohese’s father was already armigerous and she was simply following custom—or did she inaugurate it? Gilbert FitzRichard Lord of Clare died in 1117, and would have had to adopt arms some time before his death, early enough to imprint them on his children’s consciousness.²⁴ A more complex version of this theory might propose that he found inspiration for this in his father-in-law Hugh (II) of Clermont, who died in 1103.

Does this fit with other evidence from England or the continent? The celebrated funeral plaque of Geoffrey of Anjou (d. 1151) was only installed much later (c.1170), about the time when John of Marmoutier wrote his story on how Geoffrey was knighted in 1128 at his wedding by his father-in-law King Henry I; it is of little value, though superficially it does offer welcome support.²⁵ The canting emblem of King Alfonso VII of Leon in Spain found on his coins of 1126 and 1138 and mentioned on shields and banners in a poem of 1147 is hardly relevant, and in any case is of a later date. That leaves us with the canting garbs of Candavène mentioned above, but from 1141—also too late—and the chequy design of Vermandois, which we might push back to before their first appearance on a seal of 1135.²⁶ Let us look at the Vermandois case.

The owner of the seal, Raoul (I, d. 1152), was not a male-line descendant of the ancient Carolingian counts of Vermandois (see **Table 1**). Through his father he was a grandson of King Henry I of France and member of a junior branch of the Capetian

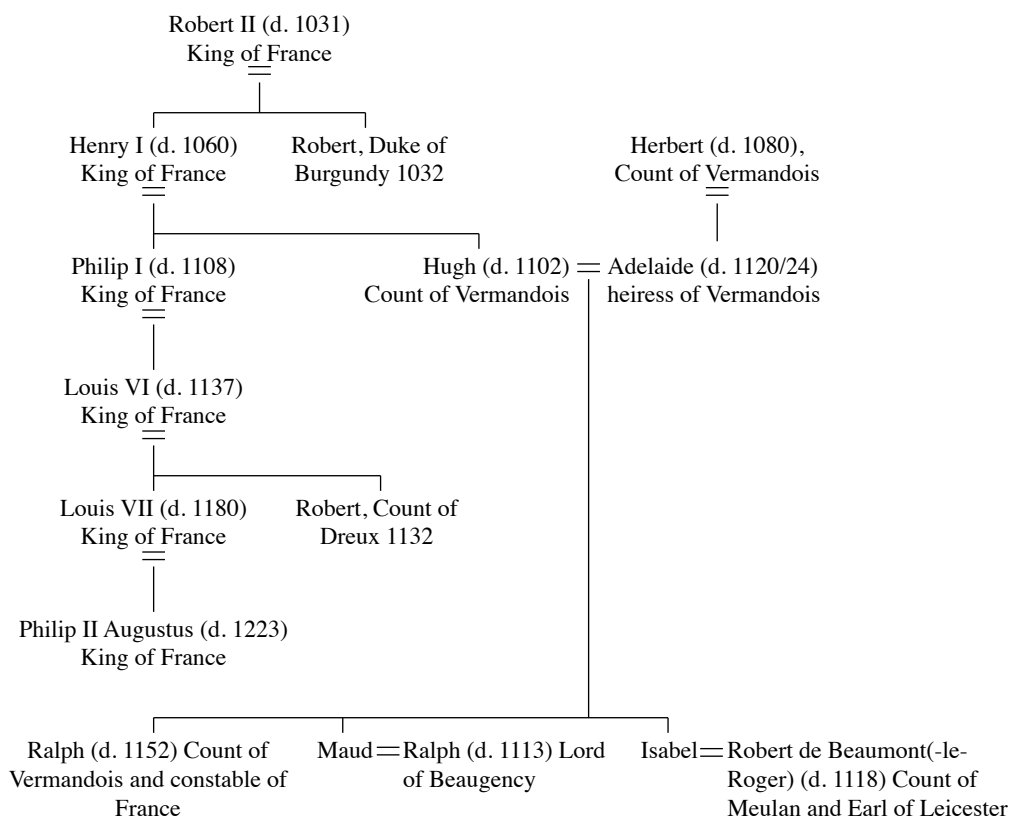
²³ Two of 1141/46, Gilbert FitzGilbert, Earl of Pembroke (d. 1148), on foot and on horseback, drawn in BL Ms Lansdowne 203, fo. 15v; see Wagner, ‘Heraldry’ (note 1 above), p. 340. For a seal of Gilbert FitzRichard, Earl of Hertford (d. 1151/53), see C. H. Hunter Blair, ‘Armorial upon English seals from the twelfth to the sixteenth centuries’, *Archaeologia* 89 (1943), pp. 1-26, fig. 2g. *BM Seals* no. 5833 may be attributed to either Gilbert. The dating of the seals varies among commentators.

²⁴ Two close variants (debruised by either a fess or a label) were adopted by sons-in-law or the descendants; cf. below.

²⁵ A. Engel and R. Serrure, *Traité numismatique du Moyen Âge* (Paris 1894), II, pp. 816-18; P. A. Fox, ‘Crusading families and the spread of heraldry’, *CoA* 3rd ser. 8 (2012), pp. 59-84 at 71.

²⁶ Douët d’Arcq, op. cit. (note 16 above), no. 1010 (1135: Raoul [I] Count of Vermandois, d. 1152, on banner); Demay, *Picardie* (note 13 above), no. 38 (1146: Raoul [I], on shield); both reproduced in Pastoureau, *Traité* (note 3 above), p. 31. The checkered field is hardly visible and not mentioned in either catalogue.

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*Table 1: Three male-line cadets of the House of Capet, and the origins of two female-line sub-cadet lines. Burgundy: *Bendy or and az. a bordure gu.* Dreux: *Chequy or and az. a bordure gu.* Beaugency: *Chequy or and az. a fess gu.* Arms attributed to Vermandois and Beaumont-le-Roger: *Chequy or and az.**

royal family, and as such held the office of *sénéchal de France*.²⁷ It was his mother Adelaide (c.1065–1120), who as daughter and heir of the last Carolingian count Herbert IV (d. c.1080) brought Vermandois to her husband Hugh Capet (1057–1102), brother of King Philip I (reigned 1060/67–1108). The group of arms associated with this family is based on the arms attributed to the Counts of Vermandois, *Chequy or and azure*, and their matrimonial relations. The hypothesis that their choice of colours

²⁷ Fox, *op. cit.* (note 25 above), pp. 83–4, has two genealogical diagrams showing the relations between key families, and on p. 81 a diagram giving his opinion of the spread of arms 1128–35 emanating from the Vermandois family. Wagner, ‘Heraldry’ (note 1 above), p. 341, has a diagram of the ‘Vermandois Group of arms’ and the family relationships. The Vermandois line is helpfully enumerated at fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Liste_des_comtes_de_Vermandois. GEC 12.1, Appendix J, discusses the Chequy Group.

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was determined by the fleurs-de-lys arms of France is an example of extended extrapolation. The earliest example of the French royal arms in use is on a seal of Philip II Augustus from 1204, though his father Louis VII (reigned 1137–80) displayed a single fleur-de-lys on one of his seals.²⁸ It is hardly conceivable that either Henry I (d. 1060) or Philip I (d. 1108) adopted these famous arms without any notice being taken of it in medieval miniatures or decorations during the following century.

While there is no doubt over the linear design of the arms adopted by Raoul (I), or possibly by his father Hugh (de France or Capet),²⁹ the attribution of the tinctures *or* and *azure* is on less solid ground. Their earliest occurrence is in the 'Lyncenich' armorial of c.1460.³⁰ The indirect evidence quoted is all from the marriages of the two daughters of Hugh Capet. The elder, Maud, married Ralph, Seigneur of Beaugency near Orleans in Touraine. By 1285 their descendants had adopted *Chequy or and azure over all a fess gules*.³¹ Though they were related by marriage to the Vermandois, the Beaugency lived several hundred kilometres to the south and are not known to have taken part in twelfth-century Anglo-French activities. The younger daughter, Isabel, was twice married: first to Robert de Beaumont-le-Roger, Earl of Leicester and Count of Meulan (d. 1118); and secondly to William de Warenne, Earl of Surrey (d. 1138). With three sons from her first marriage and two sons and a daughter from the second, there was ample opportunity for the propagation of the Vermandois arms. Most commentators suggest that this is what happened, citing the arms of the earls of Leicester, Surrey and Warwick and even the Counts of Meulan all in gold and blue. They may be right, but the *Or-azure* hypothesis rests on younger sons and female sublines, while the colour used by the senior cadets are either *Or-gules* or unknown (see **Table 2**).

The male line descended from William (II) de Warenne (d. 1138), second husband of Isabel de Capet-Vermandois, was short-lived, and neither his son William (III, d. 1148) nor his daughter and eventual heir Isabel (d. 1203) have left any armo-

²⁸ M. Dalas, *Corpus des sceaux français du moyen-âge* (Paris 1991), II, no. 74 (1204: Philip II, a counter-seal). Matthew Paris had the colours by 1245.

²⁹ To suggest that the Carolingian counts, extinct by 1080, had used the arms would be wishful thinking. Henry, Lord of Chaumont (d. 1130), younger brother of Raoul (I), and his descendants (extinct c.1300) have left no heraldic trace, though there are three different coats of arms Chaumonts, mostly for the Viscomtes de Chaumont, a different family; cf. Clemmensen, 'Ordinary' (note 8 above), s.v. Chaumont.

³⁰ Lyncenich Roll (LYN):540, Brussels, Koninklijke Bibliotheek van België, Ms II.6567, listed in Clemmensen, 'Ordinary'. The armorial is a member of the Toison d'or or Golden Fleece group of armorials emanating from the Burgundian court.

³¹ *L'armorial Le Breton*, edd. E. de Boos et al. (Paris 2004 = LBR):666, in the roll's Touraine segment; Paul Adam-Even and Léon Jéquier, 'Un armorial français du XIIIe siècle: l'armorial Wijjnberghen', *Archives héraldiques suisses* 65 (1951), pp. 49-62, 101-10; 66 (1952), pp. 28-36, 64-68, 103-11; 68 (1954), pp. 55-80 (=WIN):906, in the Vermandois segment. The seal cited by Adam-Even and Jéquier has different arms; cf. Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. (note 16 above) no. 1324 (1256: Raoul, *Chequy on a fess three escallops*). Another seal, no. 1323 (c.1190: Lancelin) is heavily damaged and probably non-armorial.

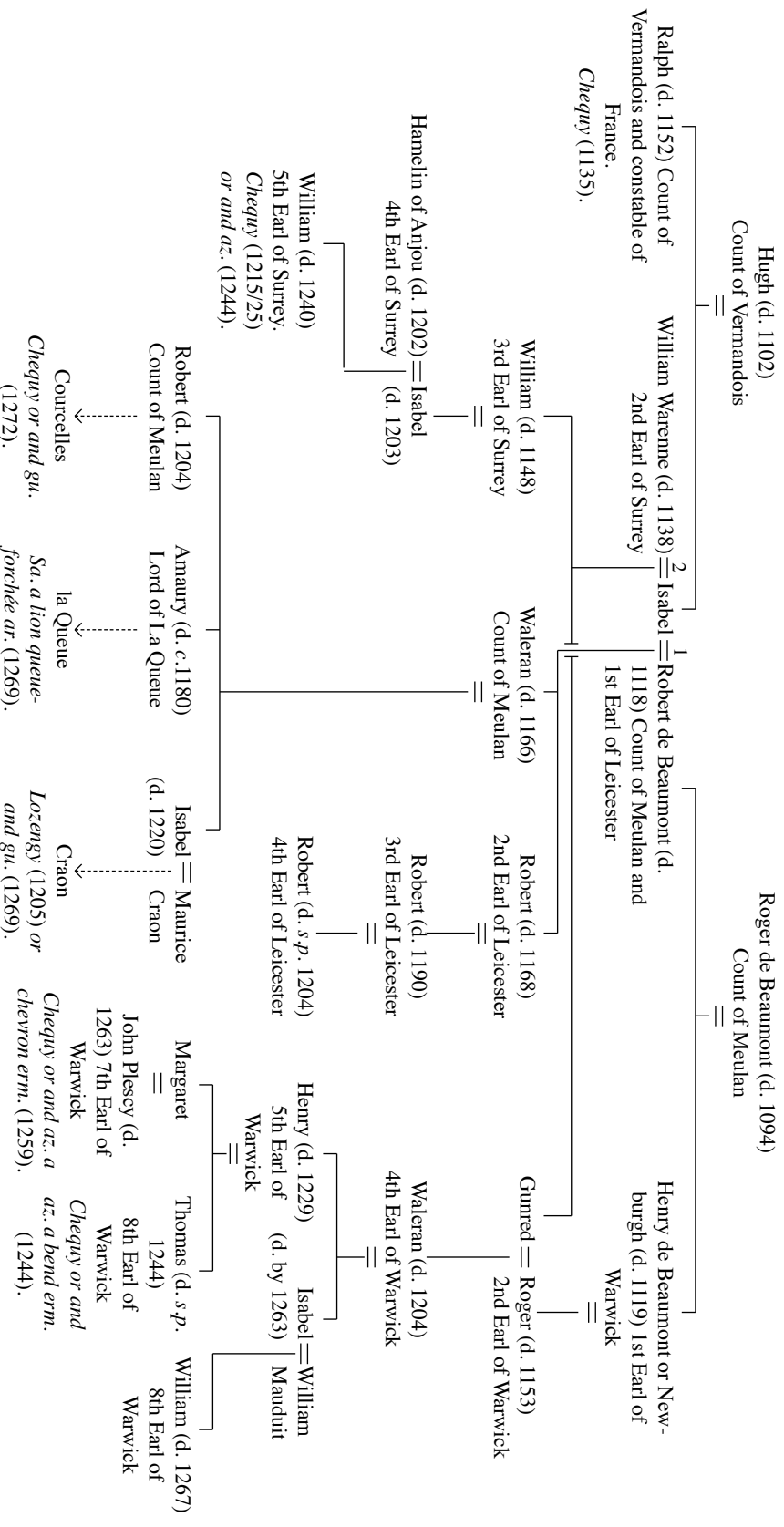


Table 2: Relationships between the Vermandois, Beaumont and Warenne lines using chequy or lozengy arms, with earliest dates of attestation in untingured or tinctured forms. Modified from Wagner, 'Heraldry' (see note 1 in text), p. 341.

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rial trace. She married Hamelin (d. 1202), a natural son of Geoffrey, Count of Anjou, and half-brother of Henry II of England. The first real evidence of the Warenne arms is a seal of Hamelin and Isabel's son William (IV, d. 1240) with the tinctures *or* and *azure* added by Matthew Paris, arms used by this female-line cadet branch until its extinction in 1347.³²

The celebrated 'veyl escu de Warwick', *Chequy or and azure over all a chevron ermine*, could have two origins. As Wagner notes, it could have been derived from the Warenne arms, since Roger, Earl of Warwick (d. 1153), married Gundred, sister of William (III) de Warenne. But Roger de Beaumont was also a cousin of the Beaumont twins and his father Henry Earl of Warwick (d. 1119) may have adopted a variant of the arms taken by his brother Robert Earl of Leicester and Count of Meulan (d. 1118). At any rate the answer is not straightforward. The only contemporary attribution of arms to the male Beaumont-Warwick line ascribes them an ermine bend rather than a chevron; this is given three times by Matthew Paris for the death in 1242 of Thomas, last of the direct line. Of course he may not have been right.³³ The arms with the chevron were probably adopted by Thomas's brother-in-law John de Plescy (d. 1263), who succeeded in 1247.³⁴ The next earl, William Mauduit (d. 1267), a cousin of Earl Thomas, continued with the chevron, as did his successors, the Beauchamp Earls of Warwick, usually as a quartering.

Of the three sons of Isabel by her first marriage, the descendants of Hugh de Beaumont, Earl of Bedford, did not leave any armorial trace, while the junior line of Leicester left only a single seal for its last member, Robert (IV, d. *s.p.* 1204), so no evidence of tinctures.³⁵ The descendants of the senior twin Waleran (d. 1166), Count of Meulan and, until his defection to the Angevin side, Earl of Worcester, are problematic. Waleran had two seals with checkered arms.³⁶ The senior male line, Meulan-Courcelles, descendants of his eldest son Robert (d. 1204) used *Chequy or and gules*, while the junior line descending from his second son, Amaury, at some point adopted a different coat of arms, namely *Sable a lion queue-forchée argent*.³⁷ The Craons from Maine, a female-line cadet branch descending from the marriage of

³² GEC 12.1, p. 491. *BM Seals* no. 6524 (1215/25: William, equestrian, arms on shield and surcoat); MP I:64 etc. The seal of Reginald de Warenne (d. *c.*1179), brother of William (III) noted by Wagner, 'Heraldry', p. 341, is non-armorial; cf. *BM Seals* no. 6523 (1171).

³³ MP II:13, MP IV:54, MP I:70.

³⁴ GEC 12.2, p. 357 (Warwick). First noted in the Walford Roll, B:20, *c.*1259.

³⁵ *BM Seals* no. 5674 (1195: Robert IV, counterseal), noted in *DBA* 2, p. 252 as on the reverse, named for ROBERTI DE BRETVEL; tintured *ar.* and *az.* in William Jenyns' Roll (WJ):1135 (*c.*1390). Breteuil came to the family with the marriage of Robert (I, d. 1118). The primary seal is equestrian and non-armorial.

³⁶ *BM Seals* nos. 5666, 5668 (1136/38, 1141/42: Waleran, Count of Meulan).

³⁷ The Meulan la Queue use of *Sa. a lion rampant queue-forchée ar.* was proposed to be from the Montfort-l'Amaury arms (*Gu. a lion rampant queue-forchée ar.*) as Waleran, Count of Meulan (d. 1166), m. Agnes de Montfort; W. Leaf and S. Purcell, *Heraldic Symbols* (London 1986), p. 47. The Montfort lion is documented 1195 on Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* (note 16 above) no. 707. Meulan-la-Queue 1269 is WIN:43.

Robert and Amaury's sister Isabel to Maurice de Craon, adopted the variant *Lozengy or and gules*.³⁸

From the above one might conclude that the checkered arms bearing the French royal colours derived from Hugh Capet as Count of Vermandois before 1100 and were adopted like a clan totem by his sons and sons-in-law, and by *their* sons-in-law in the following generations. There is no evidence to refute this—but little in support. For the later generations one might argue that this armorial inheritance mirrors the dissemination of wealth, but hardly for the first set of sons-in-law. Neither Maud nor Isabel would have had large dowries; and why take the arms of a minor cadet of the then rather insignificant House of Capet? We know little of how the concept of differences worked before the mid-thirteenth century, and it is possible that even at that time men would take variants of the arms of their better placed relatives or overlords.

One of several alternative hypotheses is that Robert Beaumont (I, d. 1118) was inspired by a fellow baron (Clare, not yet an earl) and adopted either the same arms or a variant of those of his young brother-in-law (or *vice versa*) and passed them on to his eldest son (Waleran). If so, the Beaumonts would have used *Chequy or and gules*, and the Vermandois either combination. His successor in the marriage bed and temporary beneficiary of her dower, William de Warenne, would then (around 1120) have taken a colour variant, *Chequy or and azure*; while his son-in-law Roger Beaumont, Earl of Warwick, on his marriage (c.1135), added a difference (whether bend or chevron).

Also relevant are the arms of the house of Dreux, *Chequy or and azure with a border gules*. Two explanations for this design may be invoked in support of the traditional colouring of the Vermandois arms. The first would be that gold and blue was adopted or decreed by the King of France as head of the House of Capet, geometric patterns in those colours with red differences being reserved for its cadets; thus *Bendy or and azure a bordure gules* for Burgundy (distinct from the main line from 1032), *Chequy or and azure* for Vermandois (1080), and *Chequy or and azure a bordure gules* for Dreux (1132). If so, the time could be at any date before 1135.

The second, less complex, scenario has Robert 'the Great' Count of Dreux (d. 1188), son of King Louis VI (d. 1137), so in awe of his older cousin, the constable Ralph (I) Count of Vermandois, that he was moved to adopt a variant form of his arms.³⁹ A descendant of the Capetian Dreux would hardly have adopted a differenced version of the arms of the rather insignificant Beaungencies from Touraine.⁴⁰

³⁸ E. Pattou, 'Comtes de Meulan, seigneurs de Beaumont (le-Roger) & Earls of Leicester', www.racineshistoire.free.fr/LGN, retrieved 12 Aug. 2014. Demay, *Normandie* (note 18 above), no. 408 (1272, Raoul de Courcelles, *chequy*); Michel Popoff, *Armorial de Gelre* (Paris 2012 = GEL):462 (*Chequy or & gu.*, Meulan, c.1380).

³⁹ Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. nos. 720 (1184, Robert (I) Count of Dreux, possibly *chequy* surcoat), 730 (1202, Robert (II), equestrian seal and counterseal).

⁴⁰ Wagner, 'Heraldry' (note 1 above), p. 341. Raoul (I) de Beaungency (*fl.* 1069-1126) m. Maud de Vermandois (Capet). No seals were found for Beaungency; arms noted c.1285 in WIN:906, LBR:666. The line became extinct in 1305.

The loss of Normandy

Of the eighteen families discussed here for which we have armorial evidence relating to branches on both sides of the Channel after 1204, the most obvious example is probably the Viponts in England and the Vieuxponts in French Normandy. The names and the arms are identical within the usual limits of variations of spelling and blazon. A lord of Vieuxpont near Argentan in Normandy took part in the conquest, and like many of similar stock settled with properties on both sides of the Channel. After a couple of generations, his descendants had been lucky in their marriages with heiresses, acquiring partial interests in extensive honours in Yorkshire and Westmoreland. The first of these marriages was that of William (d. 1203), who married Maud de Morville, an heiress to a part of Appleby, one of the major baronies in Westmoreland and Cumberland.⁴¹ Their eldest son, Ivo (*fl.* 1226), got the patrimony in Normandy and joined Philip Augustus in his conquest of Normandy. The youngest son, Robert (1158–1228), married Idonea Builli, heiress to a portion of the Espec lands, adhered to King John, served him as sheriff in several counties, was castellan of Windsor, and established himself as the leading magnate in Westmoreland, where he was sheriff for more than 20 years. In 1201 Robert was granted the barony of Appleby, once the property of the Morvilles. Another brother, William, had apparently acquired Robert's interests in Normandy by 1203—just in time to escape forfeiture. Similar stories can be found for many of the families who held lands on both sides of the Channel.

Though the family and its branches can be traced back to 881, the earliest evidence of their arms is a seal from 1227 for one of the French cadets.⁴² Evidence for the arms of the English branch comes later, in armorials by 1312 and on seals by 1347—long after the family's prime, as the main branch became extinct in 1264 and the lands were divided between two coheirs.⁴³ Though the number and placing of the annulets vary, the basic blazon of the arms is very similar on all the seals and in all the armorials: *Or* (or *Argent*) *semy of annulets gules*.⁴⁴ The French sources have the field *argent* rather than *or*, and some English sources invert the colours. The consistency of the French sources for the pedigree of Ivo (and possibly William) suggests that the original tinctures were *argent* and *gules*, being changed by Robert around 1204, but the arms were probably adopted before any of them was born, i.e. before 1150;

⁴¹ The father of Maud Morville is variously given as Richard, constable of Scotland, or Hugh, one of the Becket murderers. In any case, the barony of Appleby came to her grandfather Simon through his marriage to Ada Engaine, a coheiress to the barony of Burgh-by-Sands; I. J. Sanders, *English Baronies* (Oxford 1960), pp. 23, 103–4; cf. also useful summaries at en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vieuxpont and D. E. Thomas, 'Vipond History' (www.vieuxpont.co.uk), retrieved 19 March 2016.

⁴² Demay *Normandie*, no. 585 (1227: Ives, Lord of Cuverville). The next found is G. Demay, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Collection Clairambault* (2 vols., Paris 1885–8), no. 9450 (1449: Laurent, in Anjou). The earliest presence in armorials is BIG:274 from 1254: R. Nussard, *Le rôle d'armes Bigot* (Paris 1985); the next in the Vermandois Roll (Paris, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Ms Fr. 2249 = VER):644, c.1290.

⁴³ Parliamentary Roll (= N):118; W. Greenwell and C. H. Hunter Blair, *Catalogue of the Seals in the Treasury of the Dean and Chapter of Durham* (n.p. 1947), no. 2543 (1347: Robert).

⁴⁴ Annulets may be placed 2:2:2, 4:3:2:1, 3:3:3:1 or 3:2:1.

judging from their consistent use by both branches, possibly by Ivo's and Robert's grandfather, William Vieuxpont (1110–74).

The story of the more numerous Harcourts is similar, but has two minor twists.⁴⁵ The brothers Ivo (*fl.* 1166) and Robert, Lord of Harcourt (married 1179, d. after 1212), both held lands on both sides of the Channel. Another Robert (d. 1202), son of Ivo, who held Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire, was so active in the defence of Normandy that Philip Augustus excluded him from the peace treaty and of course confiscated his Norman lands. The elder Robert and two of his sons, Richard and Oliver, sided with the French, with the result that Oliver lost Ellenhall to his cousin William (son of the younger Robert), while a third son William, of Bosworth, chose to stay in England. The senior line, in France, prospered with John (d. 1302) being appointed marshal of France in 1283. The heads of the family were eventually raised to counts and dukes. The English Harcourts only reached the lower ranks of the peerage in 1711.

The second twist is the questionable equestrian seal of the elder Robert, dating from 1200; this may or may not have two bars on the shield and surcoat.⁴⁶ As in the case of the Vieuxponts, the earliest real evidence comes much later: 1267/1280 for the French line and 1312/1317 for the English line.⁴⁷ The armorials indicate that the English line inverted the colours on separation. The original arms must have been *Or two bars gules*, and presumably date from the age of William, father of Robert and Ivo, possibly being adopted before 1150.

The English Mallets and the more renowned French line of Malet de Gravelle used the basic arms *Gules three buckles or* with variations in tincture and other differences. Though an improved genealogy was published recently, the various arms have never been confidently assigned to branches or individuals.⁴⁸ The French arms are documented for Robert, Lord of Gravelle (d. 1242), while the English lines probably adopted theirs later.⁴⁹ The two major lines had their origin in Gravelle-Ste-Honorine on the outskirts of modern Le Havre, but ramified into different branches both before and after the conquest. The two brothers Durand (d. 1066) and William (d. before

⁴⁵ *ESNF* 10, pp. 123-42.

⁴⁶ Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* (note 16 above) no. 2369 (1200: Robert, damaged, hardly arms on shield, possibly on surcoat).

⁴⁷ Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* no. 2367 (1267: Jean, Lord of Harcourt), WIN:322 (*c.*1280); *BM Seals* no. 10464 (1317: John of Stanton Harcourt), N:144 (*c.*1312).

⁴⁸ E. Pattou, www.racineshistoire.free.fr/lgn/pdf/malet-de-gravelle.pdf, retrieved 29 April 2016, has several loose ends. There are differences between published genealogies. Some sub-cadet lines changed their arms. The branches active in Bucks. and Derbs. from the end of the 13th century, which used differences such as *sa.-ar.*, fess or chevron, have never been connected to the main lines. No arms have been related to the posterity of Durand Malet, tenant-in-chief in Leics., and tenant of his brother Robert in Suffolk. A. Williams and G. H. Martin, *Domesday Book. A complete translation* (London 1992, 2000), pp. 645, 1200 etc.

⁴⁹ For the English: Dering Roll (= A):188 Robert (*c.*1275); *BM Seals* no. 11541 (13th cent.: Robert Mallet). For the French, see the Tournoi de Compiègne roll (TCO):181 John (*c.*1278), also Fitzwilliam Roll (FW):570; Douët d'Arcq, *op. cit.* no. 2678 (13th cent.: Robert, Lord of Gravelle, d. 1242); Demay, *Normandie* (note 18 above) no. 374 (1293: John, Lord of Gravelle). William, Robert and John are very common names in all Malet branches.

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1086) each left posterity with lands in England. The senior line of Graville forfeited most of their English lands, when Robert, Lord of Graville and Eye (d. 1105/06) took sides with Robert of Normandy against Henry I. His younger brother Gilbert founded the main English branch at Curry Mallet in Somerset. The Graville line retained some interests in England, where William (III, d. 1214/15) headed diplomatic missions for King John shortly after his accession, probably acting together with his cousin of Curry Mallet. As the two branches separated three generations before the loss of Normandy, it is hard to explain why they should end up adopting exactly the same arms. On the other hand, it is almost as unimaginable that they were adopted by their common ancestor William (I, d. before 1086), or by agreement of his two sons as canting on *fermail* ('buckle').

The roundels of the Courtenays present some of the same problems as the Mallet buckles. The ancient house has two enduring branches, which separated before 1100: the Courtenays of Sutton in Berkshire and Okehampton in Devon, who used *Or three roundels gules*, and those of Yerres in the Île-de-France, who bore *Sable three roundels argent*. The best known French Courtenays are a branch of the royal house of Capet, descended from the marriage of Pierre de France (d. c.1183) to Elizabeth, daughter of Reynold Courtenay of Sutton.⁵⁰ Their son, Pierre, Count of Auxerre, used the arms undifferenced around 1200, while the Sutton and Devon branch differenced them with a label in reference to Reynold of Okehampton (d. 1194), a younger son and brother of Elizabeth.

Four of the sons of William (I) Paynel (d. 1087), established themselves in England. The descendants of one of these, who held Drax and West Rasen in Yorkshire, used the same arms as the senior line of Hambye in Normandy: *Or two bars azure and an orle of martlets gules*.⁵¹ Etienne Pattou has an extensive description of the Paynel lineage, but no mention of the post-separation ownership of Drax and West Rasen. His tabulations do not fit with that in the *Complete Peerage* in regard to the conflict of allegiance. By 1200 there were several cadet lines of the Hambye line, and the two early English junior lines, of Hooton (i.e. Hooton Pagnell, W.R. Yorks.) and Dudley (Worcs.), appear to have been extinct. If so, the most probable ancestor of the Drax line would be Hugh Paynel (d. by 1213), a younger brother of William (III, d. 1184) of Hambye, and the arms may have been adopted at any time before the death of their father Fulk (I) in 1182.⁵²

⁵⁰ *ESNF* 3, pp. 57-62, 629-30; *GEC* 4, pp. 465, 308-38. For the English Courtenays, see *PRO Seals* no. 1244 (1326: Hugh, label), FW:308 Hugh (c.1312: label *az.*); Courtenay (Capet): A. Coulon, *Inventaire des sceaux de la Bourgogne* (Paris 1912), no. 41 (1205/09: Pierre [II] Count of Auxerre), 42 (?1184: Pierre [III]).

⁵¹ E. Pattou, 'Famille Paynel', at www.racineshistoire.free.fr, retrieved 19 Jan. 2014; *GEC* 4, p. 318, diagram of descendance and relations to Courtenay and d'Avranches, fitting in with Pattou p. 3. For the Drax branch, cf. *BM Seals* no. 12422 (1301: William), A:126 Thomas (c.1275). For the Hambye branch, Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. (note 16 above) no. 3158 (1339: Fulk), WIN:1135 s.n. (c.1280).

⁵² Pattou, 'Famille Paynel', pp. 1-3, see also Clemmensen, 'Ordinary' (note 8 above), for a possible line of descent.

Tiptoft/Tibetot, *Argent a saltire enrailed gules*, and Stuteville or Estouteville, *Barruly argent and gules over all a lion rampant sable*, had branches settled in England before 1200 and arms which match those of their continental kin.⁵³ The Brabantian Louvains, *Gules a fess argent* (the field sometimes *billey or*, were early arrivals, though Joscelin de Louvain, brother-in-law of King Henry I, quickly adopted the name (and arms) of his wife Agnes Percy.⁵⁴ The Breton Dinans, who bore *Gules a fess ermine*, had settled by 1122, the name being anglicized as Dinham, Denham or Dynham; the two branches used identical arms, though the Breton branch later differenced them with roundels, while the English branch opted for escallops.⁵⁵

The surviving counterseal used by one of the Albini or Aubigny Earls of Arundel is slightly different from the arms, *Gules a lion rampant or*, recorded by Matthew Paris shortly after the line became extinct in 1243. A couple of French branches later settled in Anjou.⁵⁶ Subsidiary lines of the Monceaux were settled in Sussex and Yorkshire before 1200. Like their Norman cousins, they must have separated from their senior line, the Cayeux of Ponthieu, at the time of the Conqueror. All three lines bore the cross moline in close variations of colour.⁵⁷ The basic Mauleverer arms were *Or a chief gules*, later changed to running greyhounds (*levriers*), but there were cadets on both sides of the Channel, who differenced the design with a bend.⁵⁸ The St Valerys of Caux in Normandy, *Or two lions passant* (sometimes *guardant*) *gules*, also subdi-

⁵³ Tiptoft: GEC 12.2, p. 88; *BM Seals* no. 13942 (1270: Robert), A:196 Robert (c.1275); Urfé Roll (URF):1354 S. Tibetot (c.1380, Norman segment). Estouteville: *ESNF* 13, pp. 103-9, P. Bony, 'Les armes des trois frères d'Estouteville du XV^e siècle', *Revue Française d'Héraldique et de Sigillographie* 60-61 (1990-91), pp. 47-56; *BM Seals* no. 13715 (1314: John of Eckington, Derbs.), N:580 Nicholas (c.1312); Demay, *Normandie* no. 238 (1259: Robert), WIN:356 Robert (c.1260).

⁵⁴ Louvain: *BM Seals* no. 11417 (1338: Thomas of Little Easton), B:120 Matthew (c.1255), *ESNF* 13, p. 714. The Brabantian Louvains of Little Easton may have settled between 1204 and 1226.

⁵⁵ Dinan: FW:538, also as TCO:96 Roland; with three roundels in chief in Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 2023 (1380, Charles de Dinan-Montafilant), LBR:698 S. Dinan (c.1295). Dinham: GEC 4, pp. 369-82; FW:313 Oliver (d. 1299, baron 1295), *BM Seals* no. 9402 (1428: John); with three escallops in chief in FW:314 Robert, also A:181 (c.1275).

⁵⁶ Earl of Arundel: GEC 12.1, p. 515; *BM Seals* no. 5604 (c.1180: William, counterseal, lion passant guardant), MP II:5, MP I:72 (c.1245). Demay, *Clairambault* (note 42 above), no. 369 (1380: Francois), Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 1228 (1457: Francois), URF:659 a banneret (c.1380, lion ermine).

⁵⁷ L. C. Loyd, *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families*, edd. C. T. Clay and D. C. Douglas (Harl. Soc. 103: London 1951), pp. 66-7; Boston, Mass., NEHGS, Bowditch seals Ms 59.2 (1352: John, from *DBA* 4, p. 136), Thomas Jenyns' Book (TJ):1549 Hamo (c.1390, *or and gu.*). Monceaux: Demay, *Clairambault* no. 6164 (1387: Ralph, in Normandy), URF:1275 (c.1380, *ar. and gu.*). Cayeux: URF:1391 Longvillers (*or and gu.*).

⁵⁸ Brault, *Aspilogia* 3 (note 7 above), II, p. 287; N:1079 John (c.1312), seals cited in *DBA* 3, p. 25; 4, p. 25 (1329: John). *Chief*: Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 2746 (1246: Reynold, counterseal: bearing a greyhound), FW:546 and TCO:107 Maulevrier; *chief and bend*: TCO:116 Jean (c.1278).

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vided in 1204,⁵⁹ while the soon-to-be-extinct lords of Laval in Brittany, *Gules a lion passant guardant*, apparently withdrew from England.⁶⁰

For some families similar arms are found on both sides of the Channel, but the available data are not sufficient to decide with certainty whether they were blood relatives. In some cases the arms are canting; in others there is a possibly significant variation, or the link is not established. The Rivers family and their possible Norman relatives, *Azure two bars dancetty* (of Westrop), *Gules six lozenges or* (of Ongar) or *Two bars of three lozenges* (in Normandy, and possibly those of Ongar), are an example of the latter two causes.⁶¹ The problems of canting arms are represented by the cases of Ferrers, Malemains, and Martel. The Ferrers of Chartley (Earls of Derby), who bore *Vairy or and gules* (sometimes *with a bordure azure charged with horseshoes argent*), and the Norman Ferrières de Dangu, for which the surviving blazon may read *Ermine a bordure gules charged with horseshoes or*, both had their origins in the Département of Eure, while the Ferrers in Devon, *Or on a bend sable three horseshoes argent*, probably originated in the Département of Manche.⁶² These families need not be of common descent. The Malemains, who bore *Gules three hands or* (often with other colour combinations), came from the county of Mortain in Département of Manche and were probably of shared ancestry.⁶³ The Martels, *Or three mallets gules*, originated in Bacqueville-en-Caux, where the head of the family Geoffrey Martel, Lord of Bacqueville, lost his English possessions in 1204, leaving junior cadets in England and the senior line in Normandy.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ A. Ailes, 'Heraldry in twelfth-century England: the evidence', in *England in the Twelfth Century. Proceedings of the 1988 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. D. Williams (Woodbridge 1990), pp. 7, 9, mentions a counterseal from 1181 for Bernard IV Lord of St Valery; St George's Roll (E):560 John (c.1285). R. Belleval, *Les sceaux de Ponthieu* (Paris 1896), no. 696 (1208: Thomas, son of Bernard, equestrian seal with counterseal).

⁶⁰ *ESNF* 14, p. 135; extinct in the male line 1211, succession passing through an heiress to the Montmorencys; *BM Seals* no. 6178 (1200, Guy the younger, of Naseby, Northants., equestrian seal and non-armorial counterseal: a wolf? passant). WIN:1001 Montmorency Lord of Laval (c.1280, arms of Laval).

⁶¹ GEC 11, pp. 12-15; Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, pp. 358-9 (attributes all variants to Rivers of Ongar members); *Two bars dancetty*: a PRO seal from *DBA* 1, p. 23 (1374: Thomas), E:398 Richard (c.1285); *Two bars each of three lozenges*: *BM Seals* no. 13004 (1269: John of Ongar), E:202 John. Norman branches, *Two bars of lozenges*: Demay *Normandie* (note 18 above) no. 490 (1285: William), 492 (1257: Richard, label).

⁶² For the Ferrers in England, see GEC 5, pp. 305-40; Loyd, *Origins* (note 57 above), p. 42, *DBA* 2, p. 43 etc. Douët d'Arcq, op. cit. no. 2151 (1205, Henry, Lord of Ferrières). In general, see Clemmensen, 'Ordinary', for arms and further references.

⁶³ E. de Boos, *L'armorial du héraut Vermandois* (Paris 2015), p. 425; Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, p. 274. *BM Seals* no. 11534 (1315: Nicholas, 5 coats of arms); A:63 Henry (c.1275). Demay *Normandie* no. 373 (1367: Nicolas, Lord of Bénésville), LBR:150 Berceville (c.1295).

⁶⁴ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 60; Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, p. 253 (contradictory attributions); F. A. la Chenaye-Desbois et Badier: *Dictionnaire généalogique, héraldique, chronologique, contenant l'origine et l'état actuel des premières maisons de France* (19 vols., Paris 1863-1876), XIII, pp. 306-7; F. M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy. Studies in the history of the Angevin Empire 1189-1204* (Manchester 1913), p. 487. In England: *BM Seals* no. 11634 (1373: Robert), A:65

Early Sunderings

Families divided by the political and physical border of the Channel are not the only cases that may be used to argue for the adoption of arms in generations prior to those they are first documented for. In at least a few cases, female-line kin living either side of the Anglo-Scottish border or in different parts of England are worth investigating. The basis for including the former is the establishment of Anglo-Normans in Southern Scotland encouraged by King David (reigned 1124–54), who employed many from the borderlands or from his Honour of Huntingdon as administrators, castellans and mounted knights, granting them manors and lordships. Over the years more followed. Among the most prominent were Hugh Morville, Walter FitzAlan (Stewart), and Robert Bruce, all of whom left descendants and associates who settled in Scotland, while descendants and other kin stayed with their properties south of the fluctuating border.⁶⁵

One of the claimants to the crown of Scotland was John Balliol (d. 1314), who had a short reign (1292–7).⁶⁶ His family originated in Picardy, where it held Bailleul-en-Vimieu (Département of the Somme), and bore for arms *Gules a voided escutcheon argent*. Guy (d. *s.p.m.* c.1130) acquired Stokesley (Yorks.), and may have entered the service of King David. Part of his land went to his son-in-law William Bertram of Mitford, who adopted the arms of Balliol with a difference (*Or a voided escutcheon azure*), while another part came to Eustace (d. c.1208), a younger son of Guy's brother Hugh, Lord of Bailleul, and ancestor of several Bailleul/Balliol cadet lines. One of his grandsons was John Balliol of Barnard's Castle (d. 1268), who on his marriage with Dervorguilla of Galloway, a potential coheir to the crown, cemented the presence of the family in Scotland. Several Balliols were active on both sides in the war of succession with arms documented in armorials and seals. With regard to the present study, it is highly probable that the Balliols were among the first to adopt arms, the step being taken before 1130 by the brothers Guy and Hugh—if not by their father.

By contrast the Bruces, eventually more successful claimants to the Scottish throne, were probably late in adopting arms. Robert (I, d. 1142) settled in Annandale c.1124, but the descendants of his two sons Adam (d. 1143) of Skelton (Yorks.) and Robert (II, d. 1194) of Annandale, adopted different arms, the earliest documented from 1205/21. None of the Annandale cadets appears to have branched out before 1250.⁶⁷

[note 64 contd.]

Richard (c.1280). In France: Demay, *Clairambault* (note 42 above) no. 5779 (1365: William, Lord of Bacqueville), LBR:227 Geoffrey (c.1295).

⁶⁵ Carpenter, *The Struggle for Mastery*, pp. 181, 212, 256.

⁶⁶ GEC 1, pp. 385-7; *ESNF* 3, p. 707; A. Beam, *The Balliol Dynasty 1210–1364* (Edinburgh 2008), chart 3; B. A. McAndrew, *Scotland's Historic Heraldry* (Woodbridge 2006), pp. 75-9; Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, pp. 25-7.

⁶⁷ McAndrew, *op. cit.*, pp. 80-1, 427. The Annandale arms, *Or a saltire and chief gu. (charged with a lion passant guardant or)*, are in W. M. MacDonald, *Scottish Armorial Seals* (Edinburgh 1904), nos. 268-9 (c.1218: Robert, d. 1221). The Skelton arms, *Ar. a lion rampant az.*, are known from B:48 Peter (c.1258).

THE COAT OF ARMS

Among lower ranking families, two brothers of the Campana or Champagne family with *Or fretty sable* shared interests around 1200 in a manor in Great Doddington (Northants.), while one also held in Kirkcudbrightshire. The branches propagated into Perthshire and Leicestershire, respectively.⁶⁸ This family probably adopted arms before 1200.

The pedigree and armorial evidence for the Anglo-Breton d'Aubignys or Daubenys presents complications not only for this family, but also touching the complex relationships between the Neville families and branches (see **Table 3**).⁶⁹ On the surface, there is the common pattern. The Aubigny/Daubenys hailed from Aubigné in Northern Brittany.⁷⁰ By the mid- to late thirteenth century, branches of the family on both sides of the Channel were using the arms *Gules a fess of lozenges argent*.⁷¹ In addition, both sides used the same brisure of three martlets in chief.⁷² According to the argument of Pol Potier de Courcy, followed by P. W. Daykin, these arms previously belonged to the Montsorels, Lords of Landal, and were adopted by Ralph (II, *fl.* 1198) some years after his marriage to the Montsorel heiress Maud.⁷³ As Bretons, these Aubignys did not suffer the confiscations the Anglo-Normans were subject to after 1204, so family members could hold property on both sides of the Channel.

The pedigree and arguments offered by Daykin appear convincing; but three pieces of evidence do not fit in. First, Daykin proposes that the original Aubigny arms were *Azure three orbs or*, citing a seal of 1095 for Ralph (A). Though he himself notes the source was not very trustworthy, he again invokes the seal for Ralph (II) in 1196, two years before the adoption of the alleged Montsorel arms.⁷⁴ Even with Potier de Courcy and Dom Morice as sources, these references ought to be disregarded. But did Ralph (II) really adopt the arms of his father-in-law? One item, not known to Daykin, argues against. Philip (I, d. *s.p.m.s.* 1236) of South Petherton, brother of Ralph (II), died on crusade and was buried in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem. The armorial tombstone has survived and shows four lozenges in fess.⁷⁵

⁶⁸ McAndrew, *op. cit.*, p. 101; *BM Seals* no. 8297 (1240: Rob, Leics.); MacDonald, *op. cit.* no. 401 (1297: Peter, Perth.).

⁶⁹ Not to be confused with the Anglo-Norman Aubigny of Arundel. GEC 4, pp. 93-105; P. W. Daykin, 'The Daubeney and d'Aubigné (Brito) families and their origins', *Family History* 19 (1999), no. 159, pp. 287-305. GEC 9, pp. 476-502 (Neville). Ralph Neville of Scotton (*fl.* 1201) used identical arms, see Clemmensen, 'Ordinary'.

⁷⁰ Aubigné, dep. Ille-et-Vilaine, ar. Rennes, canton St. Aubin-d'Aubigné, diocese of Dol. Though Daubenys is used in most English sources and commentaries, Aubigny will also be used here for all members of the family.

⁷¹ The basic arms on the English side: B:135 Ralph Daubigny (*c.*1258), *BM Seals* no. 6792 (1292: Ralph, label), and on the French side: WIN:942 (*c.*1285), no seals.

⁷² WIN:943 (martlets *or*), and paired martlets and mullets *argent* in A:179, FW:310 (Philip), A:180, FW:311 (William).

⁷³ Daykin, *op. cit.*, p. 291; Pol Potier de Courcy, *Nobiliare et armorial de Bretagne* (Rennes 1846), p. 22.

⁷⁴ Daykin, *op. cit.* pp. 288, 296.

⁷⁵ For a drawing, see W. von Tümping, 'Der Grabstein Philipps von Aubigni vor der heiligen Grabeskirche', *Der Deutsche Herold* 10 (1879), p. 103. Whether or not Philip (I) had daughters, South Petherton (Som.) came to Daubenys of Inglefield.

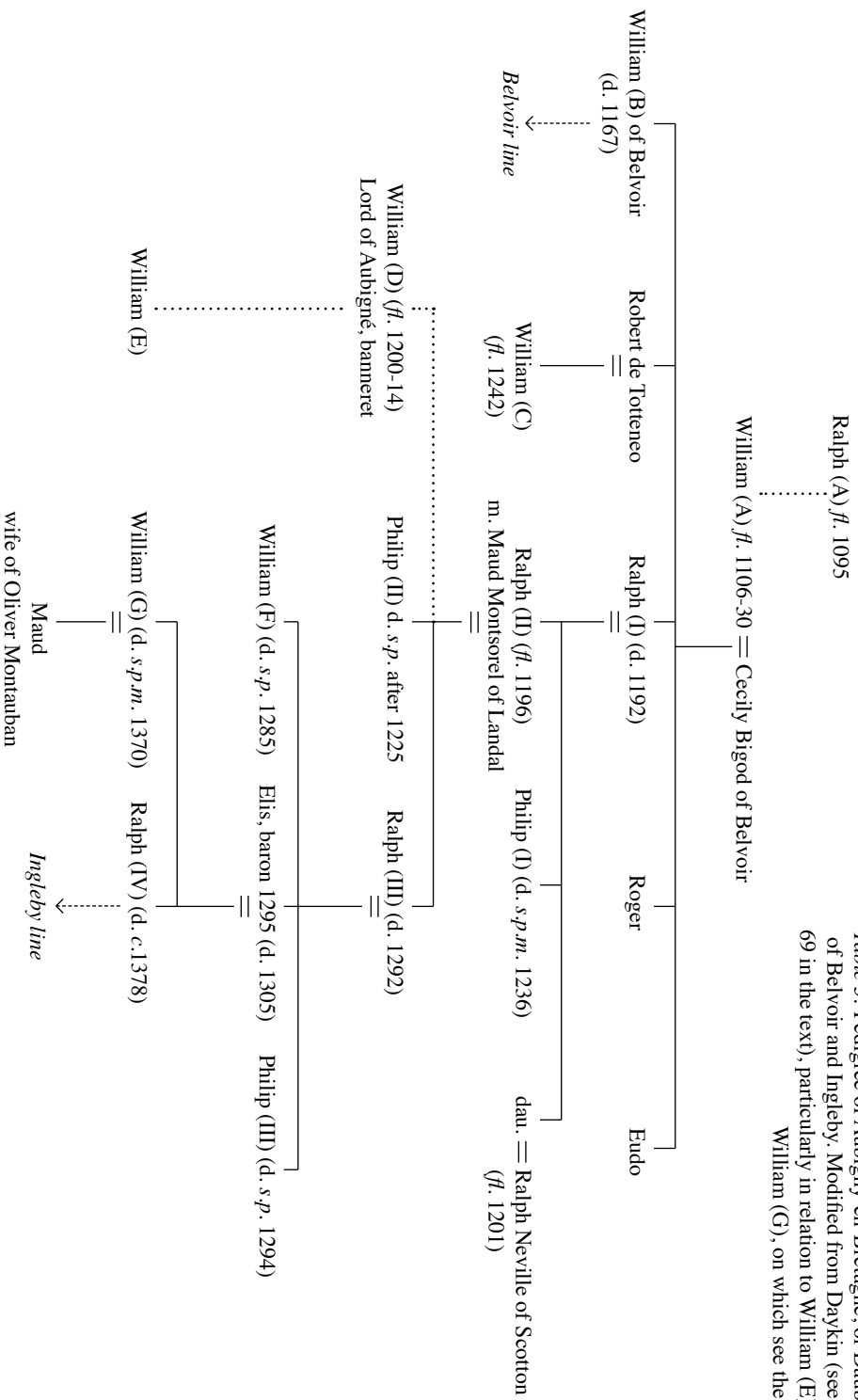


Table 3: Pedigree of Aubigny-en-Bretagne, or Daubeneu of Belvoir and Ingleby. Modified from Daykin (see note 69 in the text), particularly in relation to William (E) and William (G), on which see the text.

THE COAT OF ARMS

An undifferenced seal is also attributed to Philip (I).⁷⁶ The use of the same arms by Ralph Neville of Scotton, brother-in-law of Philip (I) and Ralph (II) also supports an earlier adoption. The third element only indirectly bears upon the date of adoption. Daykin claims that William (G, d. *s.p.m.* 1370), twin brother of Ralph (IV, d. *c.*1378), was an unnecessary invention, and replaces him with William (E), father-in-law of Oliver Montauban.⁷⁷ However, an *inquisitio post mortem* documents that William (G), held Landal in Brittany as well as Fawton and Trenay in Cornwall and Tottenham in Middlesex. It also names him as father of Maud (b. *c.*1344), who married Oliver Montauban.⁷⁸ If his ancestor William (D), Lord of Aubigné, proposed as older brother of Ralph (II) and Philip (I), was indeed a prominent banneret fighting for Philip Augustus between 1200 and 1214, his English possessions would have been lost and not retained for another five generations.⁷⁹ Finally, Fawton was held by Elis (d. 1305) of Ingleby (Lincs.), who was summoned as baron in 1295.⁸⁰ William (D) and his line must be regarded as an invention by Daykin.

In the full Aubigny pedigree there are plenty of potential sons, even if those of William (B, d. 1167) of Belvoir are excluded, to fill the place of the Francophile banneret William, Lord of Aubigné. The most obvious would be a descendant of Ralph (A, *fl.* 1095), proposed as the elder son by Daykin and as witness to a gift to the Abbey of Mont Saint Michel. A second possibility is William (C, *fl.* 1242), son of Robert de Totteneo and grandson of William (A), who had another two sons: Roger and Eudo. Unfortunately, there is next to no information available on the pedigree of the Breton branches of Aubigny. As for the adoption of arms, it could have been done *c.*1100/10 by the father of William (A, *fl.* 1105–30). Ralph (A) recorded in 1095, would fit better as grandfather than uncle of Ralph (I, d. 1192). If so, William (A) would be a younger son seeking his fortune in England, giving his eldest son his father's name. He then gave his own name to his younger son; but why this William (B for Brito I, d. 1167) of Belvoir, or a descendant, chose to adopt *Or two chevrons within a bordure gules* remains to be explained.⁸¹

For most of the families discussed here, it has been possible to argue that one common ancestor must have adopted the coat of arms in question. This cannot be the case for the Percies, unless the date of adoption is forced back almost to the Conquest. The available references allow the joining of three branches in the early pedigree of this Norman family, namely those associated with Sutton, Topcliffe and Dunsley. The latter two were held by two sons, Alan (d. *c.*1136) and Richard, of William (d. 1096), who settled in Yorkshire within 50 miles of each other. The Sutton branch was found-

⁷⁶ Loyd and Stenton, *op. cit.* (note 17 above) no. 35. *BM Seals* nos. 6792-3, with a label for difference, are attributed to Philip (III, d. 1292).

⁷⁷ Daykin, *op. cit.* p. 295; GEC 4, p. 93.

⁷⁸ *CIPM*, vol. xiv, no. 21.

⁷⁹ See the pedigree in Daykin, *op. cit.*, pp. 300-1, William (B) on p. 294.

⁸⁰ GEC 4, p. 95, note (e).

⁸¹ The arms of the last Aubigny of Belvoir, William Brito IV (d. *s.p.m.* 1242) are recorded in *BM Seals* no. 7012 (William, early 13th cent.); MP II:52; B:68 (William Brito III, d. 1236), William Brito II (d. 1236).

ed by Picot (c.1050–1125), a younger brother of William. In addition, there appears to be a fourth branch, Percy of Kildale, not integrated here.⁸² These branches adhered in a clan-like fashion whether they settled in Northumberland or stayed in Yorkshire. All branches used a fess of lozenges in different colours by the mid-thirteenth century. These arms were also adopted by the cognatic branch founded by Joscelyn de Louvain and Agnes Percy of Topcliffe c.1140, though these were changed to a lion in 1297.

The fewer the people involved and the closer they lived to each other, the better the conditions for the adoption of a common coat of arms. In this case to ascribe the step to the brothers William and Picot would mean a date some time before William left for the Holy Land in 1096, and that would be to stretch the argument a little. The next generation is more likely. The evidence suggests that around 1120/30 there may only have been one active person one particularly prominent member of each branch, who tended to take the lead in its external dealings. The more important landowner, Alan of Topcliffe (older son of William), probably adopted the *Azure a fess of lozenges or*, which was also taken by his younger brother Richard of Dunsley, while their cousin Robert of Sutton (son of Picot) inverted the colours. The arms in gules and argent used by the descendants of Arnold of Kildale (*fl.* 1119) remain to be explained, but could have been a later case of similarisation or convergence—as could the Sutton arms.

The *Or two bends gules* design common to the Tracys of Toddington and Sudeley (both Glos.) may be traced back to their common ancestor William Tracy (d. c.1136), an illegitimate son of Henry I.⁸³ His daughter Grace married John Sudeley and had two sons Ralph Sudeley and William Tracy of Bradnich (d. 1176), notorious as one of the Becket murderers. The Honor of Bradnich was lost in 1202, but the Tracys kept part of the lands, including the manor of Toddington.

Convergence and grouping

Differentiation and convergence may lead to similar results—a pair of coats of arms of closely related design, with key functional distinctions—but the processes as well as the concepts are opposites. This is more than a question of semantic niceties, though in practice the modern historian has little knowledge of the actual process. Did a magnate grant his arms with a difference to a relative, vassal or servant, or did the ‘grantee’ get the magnate’s permission before he adopted a variant of the arms? In any case both processes, which were repeated many times not only in England, but all over Western Europe for centuries, result in groups of arms sharing a characteristic.

⁸² The family came from Percy-en-Auge, dep. Calvados, ar. Lisieux, canton Mézidon-Canon; Loyd, *Origins* (note 57 above), p. 77. Pedigrees are given in *ESNF* 3, p. 710-13, *GEC* 10, pp. 435-72, and www.tudorplace.com.ar/percy.htm, retrieved 31 May 2016. For arms, see Clemensen, ‘Ordinary’ (note 8 above), *DBA* 3, pp. 318-25, Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, p. 238.

⁸³ The references do not agree on all details. *GEC* 11, Appendix D, p. 109, note (1); 12a, pp. 1-5; Moor, *Knights* (note 15 above), V, p. 39; Sanders, *English Baronies* (note 41 above), p. 20; *Oxford DNB*, s.v. ‘Tracy, William de’; *DBA* 1, p. 89; 2, pp. 108, 111-112; *BM Seals* no. 13770 (1301: John Sudley).

THE COAT OF ARMS

We know of cinquefoils (or pimpernels), presumably derived from a Grandmesnil badge used by the maternal grandfather of Robert 'FitzPernel' Earl of Leicester (d. 1203),⁸⁴ garbs deriving from the arms of the Earls of Chester, chevrons from those of Clare, annulets from those of Vipont, lions from those of Leybourne in Hampshire, not to mention the continental or trans-channel (Vermandois) ones. In most cases the group members lived in the same or neighbouring counties and had feudal ties to the pivot member; routinely, they could include both male-line and female-line kin, as well as alliances and the alliances of alliances.⁸⁵ In one case the proposed relationship appears almost too remote to credit. In the 'Mandeville' group, the husband of a sister-in-law's husband's daughter-in-law's sister (Sackville), or their descendants adopted a variant of the arms of their rather distant relative (see **Table 4**).⁸⁶

The originator of the presumed group, Geoffrey Mandeville, is attributed *Quarterly or and gules*. A magnate with a basis in East Anglia and a chequered personal history, he was created Earl of Essex by King Stephen in 1140 for his support during the early phases of the civil war. However, he grew too powerful, lost influence, and switched sides a couple of times before turning outlaw in East Anglia and dying of wounds in 1144. His sons regained the earldom, but were the last of their line. All their seals were non-armorial, so the actual arms of the real Mandevilles, if they used any, remain unknown. At the right-hand end of the group, as tabulated here, we find the Sackvilles of Buckhurst, whose lands were in Sussex. They could only have adopted arms around 1200 at the earliest. Their use of the Mandeville arms debruised by a bend vair is only known by 1285, at least two generations later.⁸⁷ If the group membership is real, it was transmitted by way of Alice de Vere, mother of Jordan Sackville's brother-in-law Robert Clavering. Alice was sister-in-law to Geoffrey Mandeville, and sister of Aubrey de Vere, who was created Earl of Oxford in 1141 by the Empress Maud, but for the most part adhered to Stephen. With inverted colours and a mullet for difference, the Vere arms could well have been based on those of Mandeville, especially as Aubrey was close to the Earl of Essex and followed him in his rebellion. If so the Vere assumption of arms would have taken place before 1140, the time of the earliest documented heraldry.

Payn Beauchamp of Bedford, a younger son, married Rohese de Vere, widow of Geoffrey Mandeville. According to the group account he adopted the arms of her former husband differenced by a bend gules. One must ask why, however. Even in those

⁸⁴ The cinquefoil or pimpernel may cant on the name of Petronella Grandmesnil (d. 1212), wife of the last Beaumont Earl of Leicester. The Grandmesnil were dominant in Leicester from 1066 to c.1125; GEC 7, pp. 532-4; J. Raneke, 'Medeltida vapengrupper', *Heraldisk Tidsskrift* 1961, no. 3, pp.112-13. *Gu. a cinquefoil ermine* is recorded in Powell's Roll c.1350, PO:590, attributed to Robert 'Bossu' (d. 1168) 2nd Earl of Leicester; *DBA* 4, p. 67.

⁸⁵ See Raneke, op. cit., Coss, *Knight* (note 9 above), Wagner, 'Heraldry' (note 1 above) and Clemmensen, 'Ordinary' (note 8 above) for examples of members and relations.

⁸⁶ Round, *Geoffrey de Mandeville*; Wagner, 'Heraldry', p. 351; see also R. H. C. Davis, *King Stephen 1135-1154* (3rd edn., London 1977), for the civil war, politics and creation of earls.

⁸⁷ GEC 4, pp. 422-3; Wagner, 'Heraldry', offered no other arguments for Sackville membership.

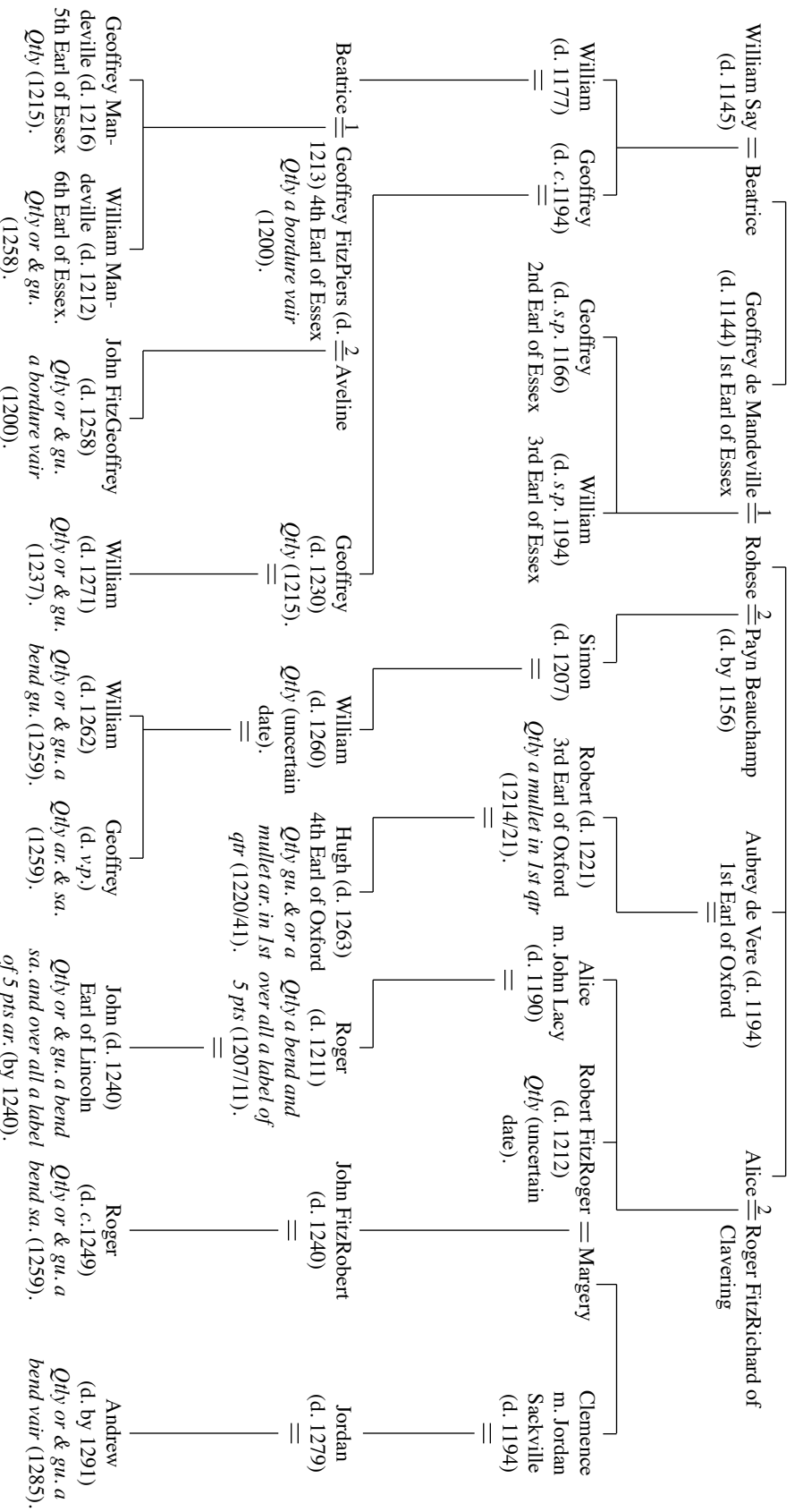


Table 4: Relationships within the 'Mandeville' group of families using quarterly arms, with earliest dates of attestation in unfinctured or tinctured forms. Modified from Wagner, 'Heraldry' (see note 1 in text), p. 341.

THE COAT OF ARMS

times of changing allegiances, he had little to gain by doing so. He was probably of the Empress' party, but his wife's dower could not matter that much; her eldest son was excommunicated, and her second son Geoffrey regained lands and title in 1156. His eldest brother Simon was son-in-law to Hugh Beaumont, Earl of Bedford, so a checkered coat would also have been a possibility. Another elder brother Robert held the office of *dapifer*. In any case Payn and Rohese were wealthy enough to found a Gilbertine priory at Chicksand in Bedfordshire. Note furthermore that Payn's eldest great-grandson Geoffrey (d. by 1260) bore a different coat of arms (*Quarterly argent and sable*), though the younger one William (d. 1262) used Payn's own *Quarterly or and gules over all a bend gules*.⁸⁸

There must also be serious doubts over the implied story of the adoption of *Quarterly or and gules over all a bend sable and a label argent* by the Lacy Constables of Chester.⁸⁹ First, Ranulf Earl of Chester had little to do with Geoffrey Earl of Essex; he was focused on keeping his palatine earldom free of interference, and his preferred sphere of influence seems to have been the Midlands and the North, rather than East Anglia or London. Secondly, the adoption of the name Lacy probably dates from 1194, when Roger (d. 1211) inherited Pontefract (Yorks.) from Aubrey de Lisours, daughter of Robert de Lisours and Aubrey Lacy. In the male line John (FitzRobert, d. 1190), who married Alice Clavering, held the hereditary constablership of Chester after his father Robert FitzEustace (d. 1163), and not from his mother Aubrey de Lisours. The main properties of the FitzEustaces were in Lincolnshire, but the earldom eventually came by 'inheritance' from Ralph Blondeville Earl of Chester and Lincoln (d. 1232). One would more naturally expect to see Roger converging heraldically with the Earl of Chester (as indeed suggested by one of the entries in Matthew Paris) than adopting arms that implied he was a junior cadet of his father-in-law.⁹⁰ At the time the Claverings of Essex were reasonably wealthy, and they might be expected to have converged with their brother-in-law the Earl of Oxford or even better with the dominant magnate Geoffrey Mandeville. In this scenario the Clavering adoption of arms would be expected around 1142, when Geoffrey was at the apex of his power. If the FitzRobert/FitzEustace/Lacy adoption was not an independent venture, it may have happened as late as c.1180. One of the late Claverings, the baron John (d. *s.p.m.* 1332), used a label during the lifetime of his father, probably azure, but also rendered argent.

All the families discussed above incorporated differences into the presumed Mandeville arms. This was not the case for the Say family.⁹¹ William Say (d. 1144)

⁸⁸ Brault, *Aspilogia* 3, II, p. 40; Sanders, *English Baronies* (note 41 above), pp. 10-11; GEC 5, p. 116. For arms, see MP II:76, B:196 (Geoffrey); MP II:28, B:54 (William), and Clemmensen, 'Ordinary' (note 8 above).

⁸⁹ GEC 7, p. 676 (Earl of Lincoln); *ESNF* 3, p. 709; a convenient list of Lords of Halton and constables of Chester appears at [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halton_\(barony\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Halton_(barony)). Loyd and Stenton, op. cit. no. 71 (1207/11: Roger), *BM Seals* no. 6160 (1232/40: John); Titterton, op. cit. (note 11 above).

⁹⁰ See note 11 above.

⁹¹ *DBA* 4, p. 311; Clemmensen, 'Ordinary'; *PRO Seals* E40, A2035 (1214/30: Geoffrey).

married Beatrice, sister and eventual heiress of Geoffrey Mandeville. Their grandson, Geoffrey (II, d. 1230), used the undifferenced arms after his cousin Beatrice, in modern terms *de jure* heiress of the title, married Geoffrey FitzPeter (d. 1213), who obtained the Mandeville estates by a fine of 3000 marks and the third penny of Essex in 1190, and who some years later sealed with a border vairy.⁹² Both of Geoffrey FitzPeter's sons by Beatrice Say succeeded to the earldom and adopted the surname Mandeville and the undifferenced arms.⁹³ But were they in reality adopting the arms of Say or Mandeville? Their father, Geoffrey FitzPeter, who hailed from Ludgershall (Wilts.), certainly used arms similar to those of his (late) father-in-law. But did the long-lived Beatrice Mandeville (d. 1197) insist that her elder son William (II, d. 1177) should take the undifferenced arms of her nephew earls, or did her husband William (I, d. 1144) differentiate with a border? Hardly the latter; neither the cadet grandson Geoffrey (II) nor his father Geoffrey (I, d. 1215) would dare to assume the comital arms by removing a difference in the lifetime of the Mandeville earls, nor while the new earls were favourites of King John and held the office of Steward of England. But it is easier to imagine that the Says continued to use arms adopted by their ancestor William (I, d. 1144) in the time of the first Earl Geoffrey. If *Quarterly or and gules* really were the Say arms in origin, rather than the Mandeville ones, it would be natural for a son-in-law, armigerous or not, to adopt similar arms, and for his sons to reclaim the undifferenced arms as heirs to the senior branch, even while a junior branch continued with identical arms.

Summary and conclusion

The discussion above of the interrelated hypotheses and examples rests largely on one assumption, that coats of arms were adopted by a single individual, the head of the family. Subsequently, the various branches adopted identical or similar arms, as could vassals and allies. As the examples of the Percys, the Courtenays and the Malets de Graille show, unconditional acceptance of this premise would imply that arms were adopted by mid-ranking lords as early as 1080. With the pre-armorial decorations of the Bayeux Tapestry in mind (embroidered c.1077), such a claim would hardly be sustainable.⁹⁴ Two alternatives are entertained. First, family groupings might have assumed identical or similar arms as one, presumably by some kind of explicit agreement. However, family gatherings in the middle of a civil war (for England in 1106, 1136–54), settling upon a common coat of arms and possibly distributing brisures or differences, appear improbable. The second alternative, that the head of a senior (or more prosperous or influential) line chose a coat of arms, and then the heads of junior branches adopted this coat of arms or something closely similar, is more acceptable,

⁹² *De facto* Earl of Essex 1190, formally at the coronation of John in 1199 after the death of Beatrice; GEC 5, pp. 113-34 (Earls of Essex). *DBA* 2, p. 202, seal matrix dated c.1200 found in Kenilworth Castle. The *border vairy* arms were continued by his son by Aveline de Clare, John FitzGeoffrey (d. 1258), see B:28.

⁹³ *BM Seals* no. 11562 (1215: Geoffrey); *MP II*:22 William (d. *s.p.* 1227).

⁹⁴ *La tapisserie de Bayeux. Réproduction intégrale au 17^e* (Bayeux 2007); D. M. Wilson, *The Bayeux Tapestry* (London 1985). The cathedral of Bayeux was consecrated in 1077.

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especially if the adoption took place within a short time and under the influence of a clan-like desire to maintain cohesion and protect property. Still, it would be much easier for one man to adopt arms and to pass it on to his progeny, so this hypothesis ought to have first consideration. As we saw in the case of the Clares, an armigerous woman provides the best support for a thesis that arms were adopted at least one generation earlier than they are recorded. Families like the Balliols with their kin in France and their female-line cadets the Bertrams, probably adopted arms close to 1100. The same can be argued with a fair degree of likelihood for many of the other families discussed, including those of the highest and most powerful position—but, crucially, not only them. The survey not only supports the hypotheses put forward by Anthony Wagner and Michel Pastoureau, but broadens the social basis of early armigers.

Admittedly all the evidence regarding the time at which coats of arms were adopted that the discussion above has presented is circumstantial. But if it is accepted, the examples suggest that already in the reign of Henry I (d. 1135) coats of arms were borne not only by magnates like Clare, Mandeville, and Beaumont, but also families whose wealth lay in the form of a few manors (e.g. Percy, Tracy-Sudley, Vipont, Tiptoft, Bertram). Even so, the incidence of armigerous families was probably low. This is not the place to plot in detail the time at which tenants adopted arms derived from Clare and similar pivots of the armorial groups, but even a superficial review of the names mentioned by Peter Coss, Anthony Wagner, and Jan Raneke indicates that this was a gradual process stretching towards 1250 or even later.

In tracing the membership of armorial groups, finally, the best evidence is provided by pedigrees of male-line kin, the succession to estates, feudal ties and indentures of service; one should be cautious of invoking too many leaps to female-line kin or alliances, as exemplified by the problematic conventional wisdom on the armorial pedigrees of Vermandois and Mandeville. Armorial sources are very helpful, especially when nearly contemporary, but even Matthew Paris did not always get the facts right.