

## CHAPTER NINE

### GILBERT DE CORBEIL Nineteenth in Ancestry

*Section 1, Gilbert de Corbeil—Section 2, History—Section 3, Genealogy of Isabella de Lupus de Avranches—Section 4, Robert de Corbeil surnamed Banister.*

#### SECTION 1.

19. GILBERT DE CORBEIL, surnamed Count of Corbeil by courtesy, son of Regnault, Count of Corbeil by courtesy, Chapter 8, Section 1, married Isabella Lupus, daughter of Richard de Goz, de Avranches, and his wife, Emma de Conteville, half-sister by the same mother of William Duke of Normandy, surnamed the Conqueror. Child:—

1. \*18. ROBERT FITZ-GILBERT de Corbeil, Chapter 10, Section 1.  
Gilbert de Corbeil was between twelve and fifteen years of age at the time of the Conquest, and his wife Isabella was about five years of age. Her grandmother, Arletta de Failace, married her second husband, Herlwin de Centerville, grandfather of Isabella, in 1036, so that it was not possible for Isabella to have been any older than as above stated. The association of Gilbert, his children, and grandchildren for several generations with the nobility of Northumberland, points quite clearly to the fact that Gilbert was in Northumberland just before the Conquest, where he would not only be with his relatives, and safe from the persecuting power of William, Duke of Normandy, but where he could have the advantage of the best schools in all Europe, specially those intended for Norsemen. The Avranches family came into Northumberland, England, before the Conquest, and later, when their brother Hugh was made Earl of Chester, Isabella came along with them. It was in this way that Gilbert and Isabella came to cross each other's path, a fact so essential a preliminary to marriage. They actually met each other when the Northumbrian nobility, and their allied Norman families, migrated from Northumberland to the vicinity of Stone Priory in Staffordshire, and to the vicinity of Edgmond Church in Shropshire, sometime about 1075-1080.

In the Peshall pedigree as given by Rev. John Pershall in Kimber and Johnson's Baronetage, it is stated that Gilbert de Corbeil is son of Richard, earl of Corbeil, a statement which is an error, probably based upon the following deed which appears in the chartulary of William Peshale of Sugghenhill in Staffordshire anno 1638:—*Ranulphus comes Cestriae, Willelmo Constabulario, et Roberto Dapifero, et omnibus baronibus suis, et hominibus Francis et Anglicis totius Angliae, salutem. Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse Gevae Riddel, filiae comitis Hughes, Draitunam, cum pertinentiis in libero conjugio, sicut comes Hughes ci*

in libero conjugio didit et concessit; et teneat bene et in pace, honorifice et libere, ut melius et liberius tenuit tempore Hugonis comitis, et aliorum meorum antecessorum, eisdem consuetudinibus et libertatibus. Testibus Gilberto filio Ricardi, et Adeliza sorore mea, et Williemo Blundo et Alexandro de Tresgor, et Rogero de Bello Campo, et Williemo de Sais, et Roberto de Sais, et Ricardo filio Aluredi, et Hugone filio Osberti, et Henrico de Chalder, apud Saintoram. (Translation: Randolph, the count of Chester, William the constable and Robert Dapiferus, and all his lords and French followers, and the English of all England, greeting. Know that I have given and ceded to Geva Riddel, daughter of Count Hugh, Drayton with the property rights in free marriage, just as Count Hugh gave and ceded it in free marriage, and may she hold it well and in peace, honorably and freely, as she has kept it better and more undisturbed than in the time of Count Hugh and of all my other tenants who have held it of me with the same customs and liberties.

Witnessed by Gilbert, the son of Richard and Adeliza my sister and William Blunt and Alexander de Tresgor, and Roger de Bello Campo and William de Sais, and Robert de Sais, and Richard son of Alured, and Hugh son of Osbert, and Henry de Chalder in the house of the Saints.) There was no such person at this time, or any time prior to this, as Richard, earl of Corbeil. Gilbert son of Richard who witnessed the above deed, means Gilbert de L'Aigle, son of Richard de L'Aigle and Judith, sister of Isabella Lupus who married Gilbert de Corbeil and also sister to Hugh, Earl of Chester. Thus Gilbert son of Richard, was nephew of Gilbert de Corbeil.

Geva, a daughter of Hugh, Earl of Chester, married Geoffrey Ridell; to whom earl Hugh, her father, gave Drayton-Basset in Staffordshire, as appears by this deed, taken out of a manuscript in Arundel-house in London, anno 1638, wherein the old deeds belonging to the Bassets of Drayton-Basset in Staffordshire, about the reign of king Richard the Second, were enrolled.

This Geva founded the monastery of Canwell in Staffordshire, within four miles of Lichfield, as appears by the above transcript from Mr. Dugdale: The original remained with Sir William Peshale of Suggenhill and Canwell in Staffordshire, anno 1639. It is also in the Monasticon, I Pars. page 439. [History of Cheshire by George Omerod, London 1882 vol. page 14 & History of the House of Arundel, by J. Pym Yeatman, London 1882, page 81.]

A Basset of Drayton married a daughter of Peshale, and hence, to subsequent investigators of Basset—Drayton ancestry it would appear that this referred to their maternal ancestor, an error very easy to fall into.

The father of Gilbert de Corbeil was Regnault, the last count de Corbeil of the family of Germain, grand-daughter of Osmun the Dane and her husband Mauger, son of Richard I. Duke of Normandy.

Gilbert Corbeil was about four or five years old when his grandfather, Werlac, was banished from Normandy and his estates of Corbeil and Mortaigne confiscated. His mother being a member of the Northumbrian nobility, she had as her marriage portion a tract of land in Bernicia, and here it was that Gilbert grew to manhood. His father followed his profession of a soldier by serving under King Philip in France, so that Gilbert saw but very little of him, in fact only at

those rare intervals when his father visited Northumberland. Of course all he knew about life was comprehended in the English locality where the changing fortunes of the time had placed him. All the same it must have ill-fitted the finely bred Norman youth to be associated with the rough and tumble English lads with whom he lived.

No doubt he was taught the old English childish prayer which runs as follows:

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on.  
Four corners to my bed;  
Four angels at my head;  
One to watch, one to pray,  
And two to bear my soul away.

[Shropshire Notes and Queries, vol. 1, third series, pages 65 and 68.]

This was later preserved and expanded into a three stanza folk song. The words of the song are:—

Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,  
Bless the bed that I lie on.  
Four angels to my bed,  
Two to bottom, two to head,  
Two to hear me when I pray,  
Two to bear my soul away.

Monday morn the week begin,  
Christ deliver our souls from sin.  
Tuesday morn, nor curse nor swear,  
Christ's body that will tear.

Wednesday, middle of the week,  
Woe to the Soul Christ doe not seek.  
Thursday morn, Saint Peter wrote,  
Joy to the soul that heaven hath bote [bote=bid for].  
Friday Christ died on the tree,  
To save other men as well as me.  
Saturday sun, the evening dead,  
Sunday morn the Books out-spread.

In the time of Gilbert Corbeil, many of the old Druidical customs still prevailed in Bernicia, among the rest being that of the pagan rites at the summer solstice, when the young folks would dress stools with a cushion of flowers. These were exhibited at the doors of the houses in the village or in the entrance hall of the manor house, the attendants begging money to enable them to have an evening feast and dancing. When nightfall came, on the midsummer eve, a great bonfire was made, in the center of which was erected a large summer pole with a great brush at its top.

All where the fair maids may be seen  
Playing at the bonfire. [Brand's Popular Antiquities, vol. 1, page 318.]

There was the Festival of All Souls, with its cakes and goodies.—A day or two before the anniversary of the festival of All Souls, children would begin repeating snatches of their ditties. On the morning of November 2nd they would go round the house and filled with expectation of a goodly reward of fruit and cakes they would recite the rhyme in due form:—

Soul day, soul day,  
 We be come a-souling;  
 Pray, good people, remember the poor,  
 And give us all a soul cake.  
 Soul day, soul day, soul,  
 One for Peter, two for Paul,  
 Three for Him who made us all.  
 An apple, a pear, a plum, or a cherry,  
 Or any good thing to make us merry.  
 Soul day, soul day,  
 We have all been praying  
 For the soul departed:  
 So pray, good people, give us a cake.  
 For we are all poor people,  
 Well known to you before;  
 So give us a cake, for charity's sake,  
 And our blessing we'll leave at your door.  
 Soul! Soul! for an apple or two,  
 If you have no apples, pears will do;  
 If pears are scarce, then cakes from your pan,  
 Give us our souling, and we'll be gone.

And the rough play of Old Hob, or the custom of carrying a dead horse's head, covered with a sheet, to frighten people, which was a frolic between All Souls day and Christmas. Then there was the Christmas waits, with their carols, occasionally accompanied by wind and stringed instruments, who traversed the streets and lanes of town and village long after the closing of tavern and ale-house.

While at Easter the children would go round in the same manner, begging eggs for their Easter dinner, and cry "a pace-egg! a pace-egg!" and also sing a short song addressed to the Farmer's dame, asking an egg, bacon, cheese, or an apple, "or any good thing that will make us merry," and ending with this burthen. "And I pray you good dame an Easter Egg." [Shropshire Notes & Queries, vol. 1, 3rd series, page 65 & 68 & vol. 7, 104-109.]

Up in the north where Gilbert lived the egg was played with and thrown about by the children, and for that purpose was boiled very hard, stained with colors and gilt. And then there was the May Game and the May Pole which were arranged in the manner described in the account of Weverham. On May-day in the ancient times it was customary for persons of all ranks to go out a-Maying. Many writers suppose that the institution of this festival originated from the "La Beltine" of the Celts. Groups of children carry garlands of flowers about the town. The garlands consist of two hoops, one passing through the other, which give the appearance of four half circles, they are decorated with flowers and evergreens, and surmounted with a bunch of flowers as a sort of crown, and in the center of the hoops is a pendant of flowers. Mostly one or more of the children carry a little pole or stick, with a collection of flowers tied together at one end, and carried vertically, and the children themselves are adorned with ribbons and flowers. Thus they go from house to house, which they are encouraged to do by the pence they obtain. On Whit-Monday also, garlands of flowers were suspended on poles and the lads and lasses danced around them. [Shropshire Notes and Queries, vol. 7, page 104-109 & vol. 4, page 39.]

The most interesting event of the year was the custom of Lifting on Easter Monday and Tuesday, an ancient usage. On the first day the men perambulated the streets, and called at the houses with chairs, gaily adorned with ribbons and flowers, in which they sportively held down any young woman they met, and heaving her up three times turned her around and set her down again. The ceremony invariably concluded with a hearty kiss, to which was often added by the more opulent of the inhabitants a small present of money. The women had their revenge the day following. It was the practice in many considerable mansions for the servants of each sex, on the respective days, to place a chair in the breakfast room for their master and mistress, who sat down for an instant, and after submitting to be elevated slightly from the ground, gave money to the domestics.

In the old times the women visited the men when in bed. For example, in 1290 seven Ladies of the Bed Chamber and Maids of Honor broke into the bed chamber of King Edward I., in Crastone Pasche, seized the monarch in leito suo, and were only prevented from pulling him neck and heels out of bed by a promise of 14 pounds sterling, i.e. 2 pounds each, to go away, and the money was duly paid, upon the king's order, to Lady de Weston by the royal scutifer, Hugh de Cerru.

The custom was intended to represent our Lord's resurrection and its origin is coeval with the observation of Easter week as ordered by King Alfred.

In a letter written in 1799, the writer gives a description of the ceremony of heaving or lifting. When at breakfast, instead of in bed, he was invaded by all the female domestics of the Inn, most of them under 20 and in their best apparel, who requested the honor of lifting him to which he assented, then each girl kissed him, and received from him what he discovered to be the customary fee for their attention, and departed to lift others. [Shropshire Notes & Queries, vol. 4, page 39.]

There was a game of football, which was the favorite game of the lower orders in the north. Township played against township, with irons fixed in the front of their heavy clogs, and the consequences of the kicks and bruises were often felt late in life, and were sometimes fatal. The football appears to have been an ancient game and one instance occurs in which it was played with no ordinary barbarity—when the subject of the play was the bleeding head of a monk of Vale Royal in Cheshire.

The Annual Wake was most lively and picturesque, and the best known of the village customs. It was celebrated on the eve of the patron saint of the parish church. At the wake, the open space of the village or some adjoining green was covered with booths for the sale of eatables or wares, and occasionally with raree-shows. All kinds of country amusements go forward, bear and bull baits, donkey and smock-races, cudgel play, grinning through horse-collars, climbing soaped poles, and pulling at the soaped neck of a goose on a horse at speed. These varied, however, according to the funds, numbers, and inclinations of those who resorted to the wake, and were common both to it and to the fair. The ale-houses were filled with dancers, and the farmhouses with friends who all partook of furmetry, a composition of boiled new corn, milk, sugar and spice. The great and peculiar feature of the festival is, however, the Rushbearing, which

is still in use in many parts of the country. This ceremony consists of carrying to church the rushes intended to be strewed on the clay floor under the benches. The rushes are piled neatly up in a cart, and a person constantly attends to pare the edges with a hay knife, if disordered in progress. The cart and the horses are carefully selected from the various village teams, and decorated with flowers and ribbons, and on the rushes sit persons holding garlands intended to ornament the church for the year ensuing. These are composed of hoops slung round a pole connected by cut paper and tinsel. One is placed in the rector's, or principal chancel, and the others in the subordinate ones belonging to the several manor-houses of the parish, and they are frequently ornamented by the young ladies of the respective mansions. The cart thus loaded goes round to the neighboring country seats, preceded by male and female Morris Dancers, who perform a peculiar dance at each house, and are attended by a man in female attire (something between the fool and the Maid Maryan), who jingles a bell to the tune, and holds a large wooden ladle for money. As night approaches, the cart with its attendants returns to the town where the church is situated, and there the garlands are fixed, whilst a peal is rung on the bells and the concourse of village revellers is attracted to view the spectacle.

But life for a Northumberland boy was not all fun. His education began as soon as he could walk and talk. Always it was in the art and school of the soldier and the arts of the gentleman of rank and estate. Riding, fencing, running, jumping, wrestling, throwing, or the care and management of the landed possessions with their tenants both military and servile. The forest and the moors teemed with wild animals, and the noble lads were taught the arts of the hunter and were compelled to take long jouneys, and to submit to the greatest deprivations that they might be hardened as soldiers. Only the very few chose to study books in the school of the monks. Northumberland, i.e. Bernicia, had for six centuries maintained herself, small as she was, against England, Britain and Scot, and her men must be ready to fight even before they had ceased to be boys. To all this Gilbert de Corbeil was no exception. In his case there was an additional incentive; there were wrongs to be revenged. But before all this could happen, events had moved so fast as to entirely change his outlook on life. What a multitude of incidents was crowded into his life. From the banishment of his grandfather to the Conquest, and then to the almost complete devastation of Northumberland by the Conqueror, filled with happenings, and all occurring before Gilbert de Corbeil arrived at manhood. Then to top it all he married Isabella Lupus; tradition says he did this against the wishes of her family; probably he abducted her in the usual northern style and faced the world with a ruined estate and a young wife. But what mattered the clouds without the home when there was so much happiness and contentment within.

## SECTION 2.

Being a continuation of the Norman account of the Conquest of England, particularly the incidents relating to our family history, or reflecting in any way upon it.

In these times, by God's gracious providence, tranquility prevailed in that part of England which William had conquered, and the brigands being driven to a distance, the cultivators of the soil renewed their labors in some sort of security. The English and Normans lived amicably together in the villages, towns, and cities, and intermarriages between them formed bonds of mutual alliance. Then might be seen in some of the towns and country fairs, French traders with the merchandise they imported, and the English, who before in their homely dress cut a sorry figure in the eyes of the Normans, appeared in their foreign garb a different people. No one dared any longer to live by robbery, but all cultivated their lands in safety, and though this did not last long, lived happily with their neighbors. Churches were built and repaired, and the ministers of religion zealously performed in them the service of God. The king's great activity watched

a false charge of disloyalty, and apportioned large blocks of their lands to his Norman knights. The differences between William and Morcar were fomented by wily newsmongers, who went to and fro propounding the treacherous terms that the earl should surrender himself to the king, and the king restore him to his favor as a trusty adherent. The earl might have defended himself for a considerable time in his inaccessible retreat, or when things came to the worst, have taken advantage of the river which surrounded it to escape by sea. But weakly listening to false representations, he left the island, and came to court with his attendants in peaceable guise. The king, however, was apprehensive that Morcar would avenge the evils unjustly inflicted on himself and his countrymen, and be the means of raising endless disturbances in his English dominions; he, therefore, threw him into prison without any distinct charge, and committing him to the custody of Roger de Beaumont, confined him in his castle all the rest of his life. When Earl Edwin, that handsome youth, heard of his brother's imprisonment, he declared that he would prefer death to life unless he could deliver Morcar from captivity, or have his revenge by a plentiful effusion of Norman blood. For six months he solicited aid from the Scotch, the Welsh, and the English. Meanwhile three brothers who were admitted to his familiarity, and were his principal attendants, betrayed him to the Normans, assassinating him, though he made a desperate defence at the head of twenty men-at-arms. The high tide, which rendered it necessary for Edwin to halt on the bank of a stream, aided the Normans in perpetrating this outrage, by cutting off his retreat. The report of Edwin's death, spread throughout the kingdom, was the cause of deep sorrow, not only to the English, but even to the Normans and French, who lamented his loss like that of a friend, or kinsman. This young nobleman was born of pious parents, and lent himself to all good works as far as his multifarious engagements in difficult worldly affairs allowed. The graces of his person were so striking that he might be distinguished among thousands, and he was full of kindness for the clergy, the monks, and the poor. The historians say that King William was moved to tears when he heard of the treason which had cut off the young earl of Mercia, and with a just severity sentenced to banishment the traitors who, to gain his favor, brought him the head of their master. All the same Domesday record discloses that this sorrow did not prevent William from seizing the property of Edwin and using it to pay the rewards that as king he owed to his Norman followers.

For the two great earls of the Mercians having been got rid of, Edwin by death, and Morcar by strict confinement, King William distributed their vast domains, in the richest districts of England, among his adherents, raising the lowest of his Norman followers to wealth and power, among whom were William Fitz Osbern, Hugh Steward of Normandy, Walter de Lacey, Hugh de Avranches, Earl of Chester, Robert de Montgomery, Earl of Arundel, who had for his sub-baron William Pantulf, brother of Ligulph. The latter was the grandfather of Ormunda who married Robert de Peshale, the grandson of Gilbert de Corbeil. The descendants of this Robert and his wife Ormunda were destined for many centuries to be closely associated with, and also intermarried with, the descendants of the Earls of Arundel, and of William Pantulf who became baron of Wemme. It was



about this time or only a little later that the loyal Northumbrian nobility, together with their Norman kinsfolk, emigrated to and settled in Staffordshire and Shropshire.

King William conferred the earldom of Northampton on Waltheof, son of Earl Siward Digera, the most powerful of the English nobility, and, in order to cement a firm alliance with him, gave him in marriage his niece Judith, who bore him two beautiful daughters. The story of how this came about and its full significance in our family history will be set out in the eleventh chapter of this work. King William did not confer on Waltheof the earldoms of Northampton and Huntingdon, as he possessed them before the Conquest, but only confirmed his right to them. His father, Siward, was earl of Northumbria. Siward, the stout earl, was immortalized by Shakespeare in *Macbeth*. Earl Siward was the brother of Ligulph, whose granddaughter Ormunda married Robert de Peshale, grandson of Gilbert de Corbeil. Judith, Waltheof's wife, was the daughter of William the Conqueror's sister Adelaide, Countess of d'Aumale. [Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Ordericus Vitalis, vol. 1.]

The earldom of Buckingham was given to Walter Giffard. As the story of this family history proceeds the Giffards will frequently appear. They were part of the Northumbrian settlement in Staffordshire.

The Conqueror gave Surrey to William de Warronne, who married Gundred, Gherbod's sister. King William granted the earldom of Holderness to Eudes, of Champagne, nephew of Count Theobald, who married the king's sister, that is Duke Robert's daughter; and the earldom of Norwich to Ralph de Guader, son-in-law of William Fitz-Osbern. To Hugh Grantmesnil, the descendant of Hamon Dentatus, he granted the town of Leicester, and distributed cities and counties among other great lords, with great honors and domains. The castle of Tutbury, which Hugh d'Avranches before held, he granted to Henry, son of Walkelin de Ferrers, conferring on other foreigners who had attached themselves to his fortunes, such vast possessions that they had in England many vassals more rich and powerful than their own fathers ever were in Normandy. This family of Ferrers was destined to play a leading part, mostly in opposition, however, in the history of the Peshale family. [Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Ordericus Vitalis, vol. 1.]

What shall I say of Odo, bishop of Bayeux and half-brother to the Conqueror, who was earl palatine, and generally dreaded by the English people, issuing his orders everywhere like a second king. He had the command over all the earls and barons of the realm, and with the treasures collected from ancient times, was in possession of Kent, the former kingdom of Ethelbert, son of Ermenric, Eadbald, Egbert, and his brother Lothaire, and where the first English kings were converted to the faith of Christ by the disciples of Pope Gregory, and obtained the crown of eternal life by their obedience to the divine law. The character of this prelate, if I am not deceived, was a compound of vices and virtues; but he was more occupied with worldly affairs than in the exercises of spiritual graces. The monasteries of the saints make great complaints of the injuries they received at the hands of Odo, who, with violence and injustice, robbed them of the funds with which the English had piously endowed them in ancient times. This Odo was uncle to

Isabella Lupus the wife of Gilbert de Corbeil. [Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Ordericus Vitalis, vol. 1.]

Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances, of an ancient Norman family, who rendered essential services and support at the battle of Senlac, and was a commander of troops in other conflicts, in which natives and foreigners crushed each other, received for his share, by grant from King William, two hundred and eighty vills, which are commonly called manors, which at his death, he left to his nephew De Mowbray, who speedily lost them by his rashness and misconduct. A descendant of this de Mowbray subsequently married a Peshale, a descendant of Gilbert de Corbeil. Almost from the beginning the two families were closely related by feudal service.

Likewise, Eustace de Boulogne, and Robert Morton, William d'Evreux, Robert d'eu, Geoffrey, son of Rotrou de Mortagne, and other counts and lords, received from King William great revenues and honors in England. Thus strangers were enriched with England's wealth, while her sons were iniquitously slain, or driven into hopeless exile in foreign lands. It is stated that the king himself received daily one thousand and sixty pounds, thirty pence, and three farthings, sterling money, from his regular revenues in England alone, independently of presents, fines for offences, and many other matters which constantly enrich a royal treasury. King William also caused a careful survey to be taken of the whole kingdom, and an accurate record to be made of all the revenues as they stood in the time of King Edward. The land was distributed into knights' fees with such order that the realm of England should always possess a force of sixty thousand men, ready at any moment to obey the king's commands, as his occasions required. All this will appear more clearly, and be more plainly set forth, in the eleventh chapter of this work, where we tell the story of our English maternal ancestry, for it happens the beginning of the modern family of Pearsall had its rootlets not only in the Norman male line which we are now following, but maternally in the royal line of Bernician-Northumbrian kings and earls. Thus our family interest comprehends an English as well as a Norman view of the events which are recorded in history as the Conquest of England. At this time it will be sufficient to say that when William had been King of England for about twenty years, he sent commissioners throughout every county to get particulars of every estate and the results of their work are to be found in the famous Domesday Book. From this book we learn how terribly Staffordshire had suffered at the hands of the Conqueror during the years of anarchy between 1066 and 1072. The county had, from its natural formation, always been thinly populated, and badly stocked with cattle and sheep, more than half of it being simply woodland, fit for nothing but the chase or warren. The Domesday Commissioners reported that, whereas there was land enough to employ 1,200 teams of oxen, there were actually less than a thousand: there was only one villein to every 255 acres of actual land-surface; there were but sixty-four mills, whereas Dorset, a county smaller than Staffordshire, had 272. Lands worth £2 a year in the days of Edward the Confessor were reported to be worth only 3s. [The Story of Staffordshire, by Mark Hughes, B.A., page 91.]

Possessed of enormous wealth, gathered by others, the Normans gave the reins to their pride and fury, and put to death without compunction the native inhabitants, who the clergy said, for their sins were righteously subjected by divine providence to the scourge.

Young women of high rank were subject to the insults of grooms, and mourned their dishonor by filthy ruffians. Matrons, distinguished by their birth and elegance, lamented in solitude; and, bereaved of their husbands and deprived of the consolation of friends, preferred death to life. Ignorant upstarts, driven almost mad by their sudden elevation, wondered how they arrived at such a pitch of power and thought that they might do whatever they liked. Fools and perverse, not to reflect, with contrite hearts, that not by their own strength, but by the providence of God, who ordereth all things, they had conquered their enemies, and subjugated a nation greater and richer and more ancient than their own; illustrious for its saints, and wise men, and powerful kings, who had earned a noble reputation by their deeds, both in war and peace! They ought to have recollected with fear, and deeply inscribed in their hearts, the word which says: "With the same measure that ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Thus we see that the Norman Duke who came to claim what he was pleased to name as his rightful succession to the English throne, remained as the destroyer of the very people he had sworn to serve. For granted that as the Normans contend, there was an exchange of oaths between Harold and William, no such high-handed robbery and unwarranted murder were contemplated as William and his followers inflicted upon the English people.

The position of a conqueror can never be an entirely happy one, for even should he say, "Take you the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold for there is no end of the store," yet nevertheless there will be jealousy, heartburnings, and discontent. The more the greedy get, the more they want, and no matter how great the store yet will there be covetousness and theft. The Conqueror's experiences were no exception. His nobility, his relatives, his own household, all were dissatisfied, and when it came to settle the succession, then was there indeed trouble and sorrow. William had returned to Normandy, where he was taken so sick as to be confined to his bed. It was evident that the king was not likely to recover, so his family began to quarrel over the succession to the thrones and the disposition of his wealth.

At length, on Tuesday, the fifth of the ides (the 9th) of September, the king suddenly expired. The physicians and others who were present, who had watched the king all night while he slept, his repose neither broken by cries nor groans, seeing him now expire so suddenly and unexpectedly, were much astonished, and became as men who had lost their wits. Notwithstanding, the wealthiest of them mounted their horses and departed in haste to secure their property. But the inferior attendants, observing that their masters had disappeared, laid hands on the arms, the plate, the robes, the linen, and all the royal furniture, and leaving the corpse almost naked on the floor of the house hastened away.

Meanwhile, the citizens of Rouen having heard of the death of their prince, were in the greatest state of alarm; almost all of them lost their reason, as if they had been intoxicated, and were thrown into as much confusion as if the city had been

threatened with an assault by a powerful army. Each quitted the place where he received the news, and removed, or prepared to remove his valuables, concealing them with alarm, lest they should be discovered.

At length the religious, both clergy and monks, recovering their courage, and, arrayed in their sacred vestments, with crosses and censers, went in due order to St. Gervase, where they commended the spirit of the departed king to God, according to the holy rites of the Christian faith. Then William, the archbishop, ordered the body to be conveyed to Caen, and to be interred there in the abbey of St. Stephen the protomartyr, which the king himself had founded. His brother and other relations had already quitted the place, and all his servants had deserted him, as if he had been a barbarian; so that not one of the king's attendants was found to take care of his corpse. However, Herluin, a country knight, was induced by his natural goodness to undertake the charge of the funeral, for the love of God, and the honor of his country. He therefore procured at his own expense persons to embalm and carry the body; and, hiring a hearse, he caused it to be carried to the port on the Seine; and embarking it on board a vessel, conducted it by water and land to Caen. [Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Ordericus Vitalis, vol. 2.]

When Robert Duke of Normandy, surnamed *Le Diable*, died, his wife was happy to take as her second husband one Herluin, of whom the historians only chose to tell us that he was a Norman gentleman, but who was in fact cousin to Robert and became the father of the Conqueror's half-brothers Robert of Mortain and Corbeil and

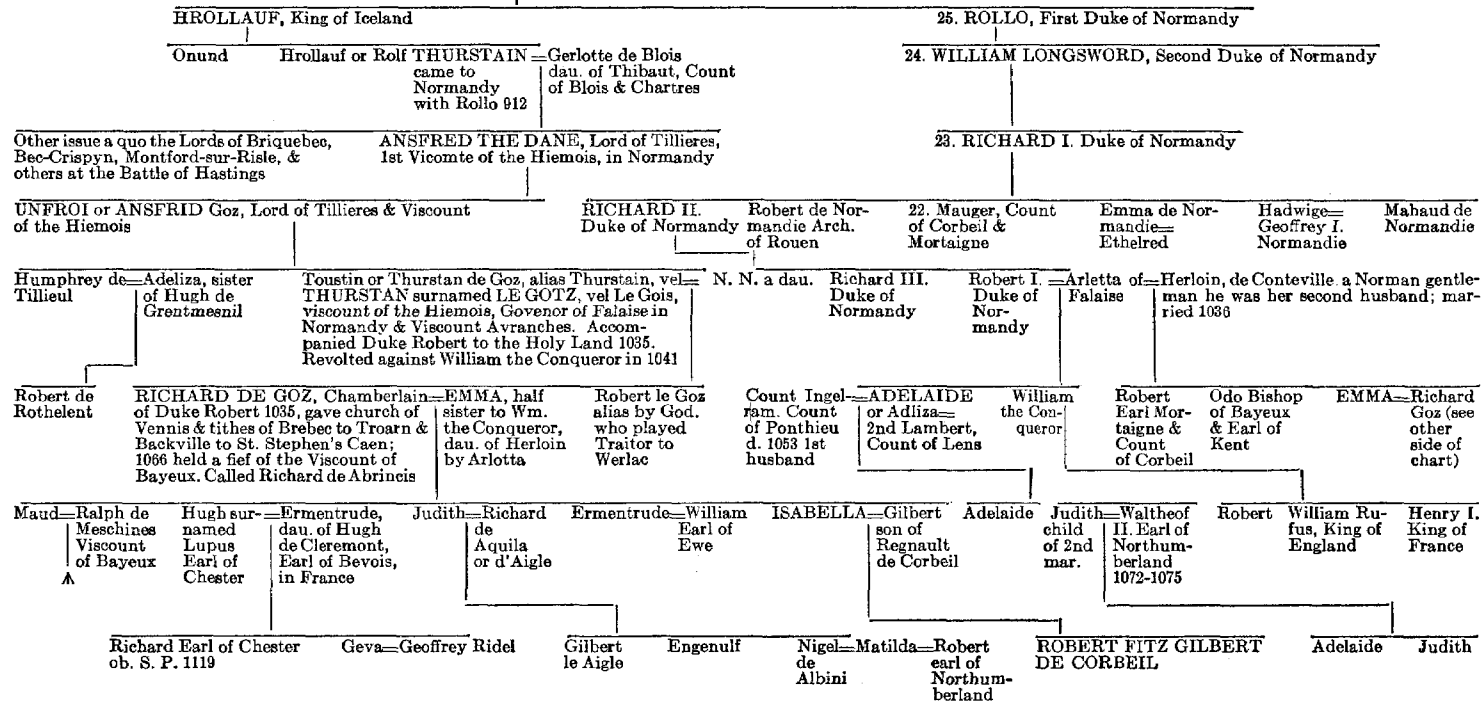
Odo Bishop of Bayeux, and his half-sister Emma, who married Richard de Goz, and thus he and Arletta became our ancestors. Herluin was a good father to his stepson and was the only one who really paid heartfelt service to the dead monarch.

A great man thus passed away—a man who with all his faults did great things for England. He marked out his goal, and no scruples of conscience or mercy stayed him from attaining it. There was nothing which he would not do to gain his end, and much was the suffering he thereby brought both on Anglo-Saxon and Norman. He was a man born to be feared, not to be loved, and when life had departed, and the great Conqueror's hand lay cold, the indignities which mean wretches heaped upon the lifeless corpse, bore witness to the fact that fear once gone, hatred arose and drove out even the sentiment of respect.

### SECTION 3.

The House of Avranches can be distinctly traced back to the father of the first Duke of Normandy, Rognvald, Earl of Möre. Chapter 2, Section 1. Besides his two sons, born of a Princess of royal blood, he had by a favorite slave whom he espoused, a third son named Hrollauf, whose son Onund, or Rolf Thurstan, settled with Rollo in Normandy. Hrollauf's three grandsons each became the founder of an illustrious Norman stock. From the eldest, Anslac de Bastembourg, came the Bertrams, Sires de Briquebec, and the younger house of Montfort-sur-Rille; from the second, William, the barons of Bec-Crespin; and from the third, Ansfrid the Dane, who was Viscount of Exmes, or Hiesmes, before 978, the house of Avranches. His descendants inherited this dignity, as well as his surname of *Le Gotz* or *Gois*. Toustain-Le Gois, his grandson, was Chamberlain to Duke Robert the Magnificent, stood high in his favor, and went with him to the Holy Land; but having rebelled against his successor, forfeited the whole of his possessions, which were granted to the new Duke's mother, Arletta. Thustain's son Richard, however, who had never swerved from his allegiance, obtained his

## 26. Rognvald, Earl of More (Maere) and the Orcades



Quoted from Dormant Baronetages of England, by J. C. Banks, vol. i, London, 1817 (opposite page 211); J. Pym Yeatman's History of the House of Arundel, page 81; History of Cheshire by George Omerod, vol. 1, page 48; and the Battle Abbey Roll by the Duchess of Cleveland.

pardon, and set matters straight by a judicious alliance. He married Emma, or Emmeline, de Conteville, daughter of Arletta, Chapter 7, Section 2, who brought him numerous estates, notably in the Avranchin, from whence his family took its name. In Duke William's charter to the Abbey of St. Evroult (about 1064) he signs himself Richard d'Avranches, being at that time Seigneur or Viscount of the Avranchin. Wace mentions him at the battle of Hastings, where he was among the slain, as his son Hugh received the rewards intended for his father. There is however some difficulty about this, as Hugh, the son, was evidently in ward to William Duke of Normandy, at the time of preparation for the conquest of England. This may have been because his father was then in the bad graces of the Duke. It may be that Richard d'Avranches made his peace with the Conqueror, came to England and was killed at the battle of Hastings. This seems the most likely as agreeing with the events of history and the story of the family. Hugh Earl of Chester, and his brother-in-arms, William de Percy, came into England with King William the year after the Conquest, 1067. As a fact Hugh was only fourteen years of age at the time of the Conquest. If he was at Hastings, it was only as a page to the commander. [Battle Abbey Roll, by Duchess of Cleveland; The Conqueror & His Companions, by J. R. Planche, vol. 2, page 16, & Stenton's William the Conqueror, page 78.]

Hugh Lupus or Le Loup, so styled from the wolf's head that the family of Avranches bore on its banner, D'azur à la teste de loup arrachée d'argent, was a skilful and daring leader, and whether he served at Hastings or not, at all events greatly aided his uncle in his subsequent campaigns against the Welsh. The Pennant mentions that in 1724, while digging within the chapter house at Chester, the remains of Hugh Lupus "were found in a stone coffin, wrapt in gilt leather, with a cross on the breast; and at the head of the coffin a stone in the shape of a T. with the wolf's head, in allusion to his name, engraved on it."



The first guerdon he received was the lordship of Whitby in Yorkshire (of which he afterwards disposed in favor of his friend William de Percy); and quite an extensive estate in Staffordshire which was later recalled and given to others. A far more splendid recompense awaited him. When Gherbod, on whom the Conqueror had conferred the Earldom of Chester, obtained leave to revisit his own country in 1071, and there, falling into his enemies' hands, was "cut off from all the blessings of life" in a dungeon, King William made his nephew Hugh,

Earl Palatine in his stead, "to hold the county as freely by the sword, as the King himself held England by the crown." He had royal jurisdiction, with the state and court of a sovereign prince, and a parliament of eight barons, nominated by himself.

The Welshmen or Britons called him Hugh Vras, that is Hugh the Fat. Ordericus, page 768, calls him Hugh Dirgane, which signifies in the Welsh language Hugh the Gross; for he was very gross and corpulent.

He had land in twenty counties in England, as per the catalogue of the counties wherein certain great men held lands in the twentieth year of William the Conqueror, as it is put in the appendix to the ancient Norman writers, set out by Andrew du Ghesne, and printed at Paris Ann. Dom. 1619.

The French authorities (*Recherches sur le Domesday*) are of the opinion that Hugh Lupus did not accompany the Conqueror at the battle of Hastings, because according to the invariable custom of the time in Normandy, Hugh could not have borne the territorial name of Avranches till after his father's death. There is also a passage quoted by Dugdale from the cartulary of Whitby, which declared that Hugh Lupus held lands in Oxford, Gloucester, Huntingdon, Northampton, Warwick, Shropshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, Nottingham, Rutland, Yorkshire, Lincoln, Norfolk, and Suffolk. [Battle Abbey Roll, by Duchess of Cleveland; *The Conqueror & His Companions*, by J. R. Planche, vol. 2, pg. 16, & Stenton's *William the Conqueror*, page 78.]

The ancestry of Richard d'Avranches is fully set forth in the chart.

Thus we see that Isabella Lupus de Avranches, the wife of Gilbert de Corbeil, was descended from Arletta, the daughter of Fulbert de Falaise, who was the mother of William the Conqueror. [Creasy's *Fifteen Decisive Battles*, page 170.]

Creasy in his account of the battle of Hastings relates that Arletta's pretty feet twinkling in the brook made her the mother of William the Conqueror; and adds as a reflection of Sir Francis Palgrave, Had she not thus fascinated Duke Robert, the Liberal of Normandy, Harold would not have fallen at Hastings, no Anglo Norman dynasty could have arisen, no British empire. If any one should write a history of Decisive Loves that have materially influenced the drama of the world in all its subsequent scenes, the daughter of the tanner of Falaise would deserve a conspicuous place in his pages.

Richard de Goz and his brother Robert Bigod were the two most active of the conspirators who plotted against Guillaume or Werlac Count of Corbeil. No doubt they had hoped that the Duke would reward them with a part of Werlac's vast wealth. It must therefore have been a great disappointment when William instead gave to his half-brother Robert the titles and lands of Corbeil and Mortaigne that belonged to Werlac. And here by a strange turn of the wheel of fortune, we find Isabella, the youngest child of Richard, marrying Gilbert, the grandson of a man he had helped to ruin. It happened therefore that his baby suffered most severely, in point of worldly wealth, by the fact that Richard had himself helped to deprive his son-in-law Gilbert of that wealth and rank which rightfully belonged to him, and which therefore would have been enjoyed by his own child. All the actors in this tragedy were cousins; William Duke of Normandy and Werlac Count of Corbeil were both descended from Rollo in the male line.



STATUE OF TUGH LUPUS AT EATON HALL, THE DUKE OF WESTMINSTER'S COUNTRY  
SEAT NEAR CHESTER  
(PHOTOGRAPHED BY F. HOLLYER)





Richard and Robert de Goz were also descended from Rollo on the female line, their mother being William's aunt, and they were also descended on the male line from Hrollof, the brother of Rollo. Richard's wife Emma was, as has been stated, half-sister to William the Conqueror by the same mother Arletta, and there was every reason to believe that should the vast wealth of Werlac be forfeited, the Duke would be likely to bestow this upon his half-sister.

Perhaps the greatest act of William the Conqueror, looking to the safeguarding of his kingdom, was the creation of the palatinate earldom of Chester. The vassal barons were among his greatest generals, and very likely the shrewdest act of his reign was the appointment of his infant nephew, Hugh Lupus de Avranches, a lad of about fourteen years of age, to be earl of this palatinate kingdom, as thereby he not only effectually prevented any effective action by his aforesaid generals looking towards rebellion, but as king, during the minority of the earl, he was actually in charge of this kingdom. In seven years many changes would occur, and men now anxious for war would pass into well behaved, home loving fathers. At the same time he had placed a thoroughly organized force upon the Welsh border, and could safely trust that not only would this powerful force of Chester Barons not be used against the English king, but that the marauding expeditions of the belligerent Welsh would be effectually stopped. Alas, the weakness of human invention, it was not many generations until by reason of rebellion this palatinate kingdom was forfeited to the crown of England.

Hugh must have been in ward to William at the time of preparation for the expedition of the Normans to England, as his name appears among the list of those who contributed ships to carry the Conqueror's troops to England, says Freeman. William Fitz Osbern who had been the first man in Normandy to pledge himself to the enterprise, now redeemed his pledge by the gift of 60 ships. The same number was contributed by Roger of Montgomery, and by Roger of Beaumont and also by Hugh Avranches, the future Earl of Chester.

At the date of the Liber Niger several Staffordshire fees were held of the Honor of Chester. Hugh de Kevelioc was then Earl of Chester. His fief was a Palatinate. No such Writ of King Henry, as those which compelled the returns of A. D. 1166, would be addressed to the Earl. Consequently the Earl made no return, and we cannot definitely determine what was the holdings in Staffordshire of the Earl of Chester. [Historical Collections of Staffordshire, vol. 1.]

In 1067, King William visited Normandy, returning to England in December of that year. With him came the son of his half-sister, and of Richard Fitz Turstin Guz, her husband, who had fought at Senlac. The King's nephew,—'Hugh fitz Richard' he was then called,—was a youth when he came to England. The earliest grants made by the King to Hugh were seemingly of isolated estates. In the summer of 1068 the Staller Fadnoth, resisting in Somerset the first invasion of the sons of Harold, fell in fight. He had estates in many counties. For some unknown reason the King confiscated these estates, and later history says pretty plainly that he gave them, or many of them, to his nephew. At the same time, or perhaps even earlier, the King seems to have given to his nephew some estates in Staffordshire, for instance the estate afterwards called Tutbury, also Alston-

field, Warslow, Cheddleton, and Basford. These four accrued to the crown by the escheat of Godwin, a Saxon Thane.

With regard to a majority of the Manors in Somerset, Dorset, and Wiltshire, which devolved on Hugh by the escheat of the Staller Fadnoth, Hugh enfeoffed William Malblanc therein. Hugh made a similar feoffment of the Staffordshire estates, which he had by the King's gift after forfeiture of the Thane Godwin. Certainly William Malblanc had the fee of these estates when Domesday was written. Some of these properties Hugh passed away before the king changed the character of his English holdings, for example,—the Earldom of Chester, already on the forfeiture of Earl Edwin bestowed on Gherbod, the King's stepson, was by cession of the latter, placed again at the King's disposal. This was late in the year 1070, or early in 1071. The King gave the Earldom, now a Palatinate, to his nephew Hugh. 'Hugh, Earl of Chester,' is addressed in a Writ of King William which concerned a part of the late province of Mercia, and which certainly passed between August 20, 1070, and January 31, 1071.

And now come the changes which will have taken place after Earl Hugh's seizing of his Earldom, and before Domesday. In Staffordshire the Earl resigned, or was deprived of every acre. Tutbury was given to Henry de Ferrers. The Seigneuery over William Malblanc and four estates, already specified, was given to the Earl of Shrewsbury. Consequently the Survey of A. D. 1086 found the Earl of Chester without the smallest interest in Staffordshire.

The reason for this is plain. For that which he had passed away new lords were created, while as to the other lands new conditions had arisen. The loyal Northumberland nobility, together with their allied Norman relatives, had moved over into Staffordshire and Shropshire, particularly to the vicinity of the Church of Stone Priory, and had been vested with lands formerly intended for Hugh de Avranches, while many of them, like Orme, Siward and others, had been confirmed in estates they owned before the conquest. By the subsequent efforts on the part of the earls of Chester to secure possession of some of these lands, we see that these holdings included the holding of Robert de Toesni, who called himself Robert de Stafford, whose holdings included the manor of Peshale, which either he or his grandson confirmed to Robert Fitz Gilbert de Corbeil.

There are several records which confirm this view, aside from the fact of the migration and settlement as above stated.

There is the Treaty of Devizes, a contract drawn up early in 1153, between the Earl of Chester and Henry, Duke of Normandy, then seeking the Earl's aid in the effort to dislodge Stephen of Blois from the throne of England, wherein the Duke confers, or affects to confer, on the Earl, the 'Honor of Comte Roger, the Poitevin.' That means the Honor of Lancaster; and it was in Stephen's hand by a better title than the Sceptre. It had been given to Stephen by his uncle, King Henry I., some twenty years before Stephen got the Sceptre.

The Treaty proceeds with grants by the Duke to the Earl of the Honors of Blythe and of Eye, and then the Duke grants that which was no less than the Earldom of Stafford.—*Insuper dedi ei Stafford et Comitatum Staffordiae totum, et quicquid ibi habui in feodo et hereditate excepto feodo Episcopi Cestriae et Comitatus Roberti de Ferrariis et Hugonis de Mortuomari et Gervasii Paganelli*

et excepta foresta de Canoc quam in manu mea retineo. Dedi etiam feodum Alani de Lincoln (and other fiefs in Lincolnshire), et feodum Normanni de Verdun et feodum Roberti de Stafford, ubicunque sit, et feodum Willelmi Peverelli, &c.

The Earl and Grantee died by the procurement of the said William Peverel, within the year. Thus the Treaty of Devizes became abortive, ere the Duke of Normandy could ratify it as King of England.

Again when the Duke of Normandy, in 1153, covenanted to give Earl Raoul le Meschin, the fee (feodum) of Norman de Verdon, the purport of that proposal was simply that thenceforth Norman de Verdon, should hold of the Earl of Chester, the Fief, which he had previously held sine medio of the crown. That Fief was the Manor of Alton, with its appurtenances.

About the year 1242, a Staffordshire Feodary has the following entry, entitled honor cestriae.

"Roesia de Verdon tenet Longesdon, Ruston, et Alteram Longesdon, et medietatem de Ipston per servitium inveniendi unum militem in warnestura Castri Cestriae per xl dies." Translation: Rosa de Verdon held Longesdon, Ruston and the Other Longesdon and the moiety of Ipston, for the service of sending one soldier in garniture to the fortified town of Chester for 40 days.

Roesie de Verdon was heiress of her line. She was great granddaughter of Norman de Verdon, the Baron of 1153,—granddaughter of Bertram, the Baron of 1156.

The de Vernons were part of the Northumberland Norman colony at Stone Priory. Henry de Vernon married Hawise de Gresley, granddaughter of Orme le Golden, a Northumberland nobleman of the first rank and whose grandmother was a princess of the royal family of Northumberland. There are many deeds having the signatures of Henry and Hawisa in the Chartulary of Stone Priory.

Hugh, Earl of Chester in 1166 had the Seigneury over the Staffordshire Manors of Elford, Drayton, Pattingham, and Leek.

All these, at the date of Domesday, were 'in manu Regis' as Escheats of the Mercian Earldom. At Elford in 1166, the Earl's immediate tenant was of the House of Montalt; at Drayton and Pattingham, the Earl's tenant was either Geoffrey Ridel, or Geoffrey Ridel's nephew, Ralph Basset (II.) of Drayton. Geoffrey Ridel was, through females, third, and Ralph Basset, was fourth, in descent from Hugh, the Domesday Earl of Chester. Later a John de Peshale will be found marrying a Basset of Drayton.

Earl of Chester, Ranulph III.'s alleged gift of Alstonfield cum pertinenciis to Henry de Audley (see Rot. Cart. 21 Hen. III.) was merely a confirmation of an old feoffment by one of the Earl's Ancestors to one of Audley's ancestors. The Audleys were descended from Adam the son of Ligulph, which made him uncle to Ormunda, who married Robert, the grandson of Gilbert de Corbeil. Nicholas de Verdon's alleged gift of Audley to the same Henry, merely meant that the said Henry's ancestors had held the fee of Audley from a date about that of Domesday, that the Seigneury of Audley had first been given to the Earl of Chester, who had then given to De Verdon the homage and service of De Audley, thus making De Verdon Mesne-Lord of the fee, which mesne-lordship Nicholas de Verdon had in turn abandoned to Henry de Audley.

When Earl Ranulf (III) is similarly certified by the crown to have given to Henry de Audley the whole rent of Tunstall, Chadderley, Chell, Thursfield, Bradwell, and Normancote, the presumption is that the Earl had merely released that which had been previously due to himself as Suzerain; in other words, that those Manors and Vills of Staffordshire had sometime been subjected to the Honor of Chester, and were so subject at the date of the *Liber Niger*.

The de Audleys were well known members of this Northumberland colony who settled in Staffordshire. They were descended from Ligulph through his son Adam, who was brother to Osbert, the father of Ormunda, who married Robert de Peshale. They were of the royal family of Northumberland.

The Earls of Chester seem to have retained some sort of an interest in these Staffordshire lands, as not long after the survey we find Hugh, Earl of Chester passing Sandon to Willion baron of Wich Malbanc, retaining Chartley.

Chartley, in demesne, and Sandon, underheld by Malbanc's heirs were Earl Hugh's. On the eventual partition of the Honor of Chester among coheirresses, this demesne-estate and this Seignury devolved to that Coheirress, who married Earl Ferrers.

The Pipe Roll of 1130 excuses the Earl of Chester (then Raoul le Meschin) four shillings of the Danegeld of Staffordshire. Now four shillings meant two hides, and two hides were the exact Domesday contents of Chartley and Sandon combined.

#### SECTION 4.

ROBERT DE CORBEIL, surname Banastre, Lord of Prestatyn in Englefield, County Flint, Wales. Son of Regnault de Corbeil, Chapter 9, Section 1.

He acquired his surname from his grandfather's Manor of Banastre in what is now the district of Calabria in Italy. Then it was the Country ruled by the Normans under Robert Guiscard. He married the daughter of Robert de Rodelent Als Rhyddlan. Children:—

##### 1. Richard Banaster.

There were probably other children, including the ancestors of the English family of Pulford, as they have the Corbeil Arms. The scope of the present undertaking did not call for an extended search for the descendants of Robert de Corbeil de Banastre, consequently this duty will have to be left for the attention of those more directly interested. The descendants of Richard the son of Robert de Corbeil, in England call themselves Banastre. His son, Richard Banastre, was witness to the deed of William Malbedeng, circa 1100, to the monastery of St. Werburg in Chester. This monastery existed during Saxon times, having been founded in 835 by Edgar, King of Mercia, and Hugh Lupus, earl of Chester, restored and endowed it as a Benedictine Monastery. [History of Cheshire by George Omerod, vol. 1, page 13.]

Richard Banastre also witnessed the grant of Wundmunsley to the Abbey and Church of Abbingt on made circa 1112 by Richard Duke of Chester the son and successor of Earl Hugh Lupus. He married Maud, daughter to Stephen earl of Champagne, Blois, and Chartres, sister to king Stephen, and was drowned coming out of Normandy the 25th November, 1120, with his wife; and with him

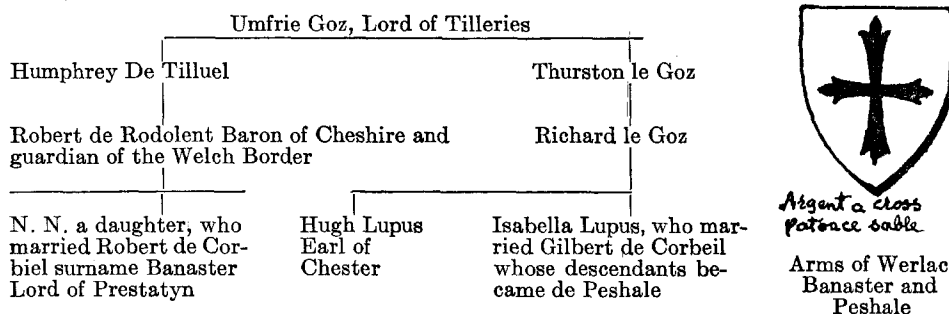
William duke of Normandy, the king's eldest son, and Mary his wife, daughter to Foulk Tailboirs earl of Angeo, Richard his brother, and Maud countess of Perch his sister; Otwell, brother to this earl Richard, and many other noblemen and women, and others, in all to the number of 140 persons, or 150. Some write 160. Only one man escaped, who was a butcher. This earl dying without heirs, the earldom Chester descended to Ranulph Boham, as his next cousin and heir. Was earl eleven years. Omerod says in his History of Cheshire, page 16: But because this lamentable accident is memorable for the destructive influence it had upon many of the nobility of England, I will collect the whole story out of Ordericus, and as briefly as I may, lib. 12, pag. 868, 869, 870. The master of the ship was Thomas the son of Stephen, who came to King Henry the First, then in Normandy, and ready to take shipping for England, and offered him a mark of gold (in elder ages valued at six pound in silver, Rot. Mag. Pipae de Anno 1 Hen. 2. and as others say ten marks of silver, 6l. 13s. 4d.) desiring, that as Stephen his father had transported the Conqueror when he fought against king Harold in England, and was his constant mariner in all his passages between England and Normandy, so that he himself likewise might now have the transportation of king Henry with all his attendance, as it were in fee; for he had a very good ship called Candida Navis, or The White Ship, well furnished for that purpose. The king thanked him, but withal told him, he had already made choice of another ship, which he would not change; yet he would commend him to his two sons, William and Richard, with many others of his nobility: whereat the mariners much rejoiced, and desired the prince to bestow some wine upon them to drink: He gave them tres modios vini, three hogsheads of wine, wherewith they made themselves sufficiently drunk. There were almost three hundred in this unfortunate ship; for there were fifty skilful oars or galley-men, had they not been intoxicated with wine, which belonged to the ship, besides the young gallants which were to be transported: but now being neither able to govern themselves nor the ship, they suffered it to be split on a rock, and so all were drowned, except one Berolde, a butcher of Roan, in Normandy, who was took up the next morning by three fishermen into their boat after a cold frosty night's shipwrack, and with much ado recovered and lived twenty years after.

The same Richard Banastre and his son Richard witnessed the deed of Randle I. earl of Chester (1120-1128) of St. Werburg. This Randle was son of Margaret sister to Hugh Lupus. In the History of Cheshire by Omerod it is stated that A. D. 1093. Anselm, Abbot of Bec in Normandy, came into England at the entreaty of Hugh Lupus, earl of Chester, then sick, by whose help the earl founded the monastery at Chester. Herein Anselm placed Richard his chaplain the first abbot and turned the secular canons into regular monks.

Omerod in his history of Cheshire vol. 2 page 573, speaking of Little Mollington Co. Cheshire, sometimes known as Mollington Banastre, says:—41 Edward III. There was an inquisition from which it was found that Robert Banastre had the Manor of Mollington Banastre by gift of King Edward I. That Robert had lost his lands in Wales during the wars and had his castle of Prestatyn destroyed by Owen Govereth, temp. Henry III, and settled with all his people in Lancashire. He had Walt in le Dale by Grant of Henry de Lacy and Mackels-

field fee. He was heir male and fourth in descent from Robert Banastre, Lord of Prestatyn in Englefield, Co. Flint, Wales. Whose name occurs in the Roll of Battle Abby and is said to have been a follower of Robert de Rodelent als Rhyddlan. This we find is in exact accordance with the pedigree exhibited by the above charters, namely 1. Robert Banastre; 2. Richard Banastre; 3. Richard Banastre; 4. Robert Banastre. Omerod also says that In the Palatinate County of Cheshire, Hugh Lupus the Earl reigned like a King, with his own barons and parliament. Next to the Earl came Robert Fitz Hugh, baron of Malpas, and after him came his uncle, Robert de Rodelent, a name of equal terror to the Welch, who held in Wilverston Hundred, where among other manors he had the two Mollingtons. His lands stretched along Wirval. He also had half of Rhuddlan with vast dependencies in Wales. He also had North Wales besides the lands the King had given him in fee.

From the above and by reference to the chart at the beginning of section 3, chapter 9, we get the following pedigree showing the family and military relationship existing between the families of Lupus and that of Corbeil-Banaster.



Foster in his book entitled "Some Feudal coats of those who wore arms previous to 1406" says: Sir. Adam Banastre of Lancashire bore at the first Dunstable tournament, 1308. Argent a cross Patonce Sable. Also carried by Sir. William who was knighted at the capitulation of Cetain 1348 and by Sir. Thomas K. G. 1376. The cross is variously tricked or blazoned Patee, Patonce and Flory according to the humor of the Herald or his painter.

In the British Museum the seal of Agnes widow of Thomas Banastre. 7106 [A. D. 1392] Red: chipped  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. [Add. ch. 20, 511] A shield of Arms: per pale, dex. a cross fleury, Banastre; sin. Three bars or barry of six. Sigillum Agnetis Banastre, and the seal of Gunnora relict of William Banastre, 7108 [A. D. 1228] green mottled  $1\frac{3}{8}$  in. (Add. ch. 23. 674) A mermaid, embowed, facing to the right, holding a flower slipped, or cross crosslet fitchée.

Pedigree and Arms contained in the Herald's Visitations. Harleian Collections, British Museum. Banaster, 1437. fo. 24.

Henry Banester= . . da. of . . Osbaldston

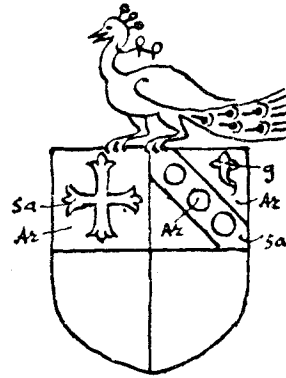
Richard Banester sonne & heire=Margaret da. to Nick: Rig-  
mayden of Widacre in Com.  
Lane.

William Banester=Ellen da. to Hen. Halsall

Henrye Banester of the Banke=Margaret da. of Worthington  
of Blanscoe

William Banester=Christian da. of Raufe Ashton of Lener, Esqr.

Henrye Banester of Banke, Esqr. now living—1613      Richard. 2      Nicholas. 4      Christopher. 3



Ordericus Vitalis gives much account of this Robert Rodelent who was uncle to Hugh Lupus brother of Isabella Lupus wife of Gilbert de Corbeil. As the members of our family were so intimately connected with him, both by marriage and by service in his military command, we give the following which is largely extracted from the Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy, by Vitalis, vol. 2, pa. 422. et seq.

The death of the Conqueror had brought on a war to determine the succession. In consequence of the shock which England received from the violence of the storm and of the wounds which were daily inflicted by its inhabitants on each other, divided as they were into two parties, one of which tried to depose the king, while the other stoutly maintained his cause, Gryffith, king of Wales, at the head of an army, made an inroad on the English borders, and devastated the country about Ruddlan with fire and sword, taking much booty and many captives. On the return of Robert, lord of Ruddland, from the siege of Rochester he received intelligence of these barbarities and his severe losses, which filled him with grief, and drew from him in his wrath the most terrible threats.

Robert de Rhuddlan had joined the league against William Rufus but after the siege of Rochester returned to his duties in Wales. He was a brave and active knight, free of speech, a formidable enemy, but generous and celebrated for his many deeds of valor. He had been one of the Saxon king's squires before the conquest and had received the belt of knighthood. His father Umfrid was son of Amfred of Danish race: his mother Adeliza was a sister of Hugh de Grantmesnil of the noble family of Giroie.

Robert, son of Umfrid, came over to England before the conquest and, with his father, while quite young was in the service of King Edward both in his household and army until he was knighted by the king. Then, newly invested with splendid armour and enriched with honorable tokens of royal favor, he formed the design of visiting his relatives and having obtained the King's license returned to his own country radiant with delight. After the battle of Senlac, while King William was engaged in making head against repeated insurrections the young knight with his nephew Hugh, son of Richard d'Avranches, surname Goz, again came over to England and distinguished himself in all the actions where military glory was to be obtained.



Hugh Lupus was viscount d'Avranches in Normandy and afterwards when he was created earl of Chester, in England, he became better known by his family name of Lupus. His young nephew Robert Rodelent held by grant under him large possessions including two cantrefs in Flintshire or Denbighshire of which Tegengale was one and in the end the whole kingdom of Gwyned, or North Wales. He also held in farm at forty pounds rent, the capital and royal palace of Aberfraw in the Island of Anglesey.

After many exploits he was attached to the service of the earl of Chester who appointed him commander of his troops and governor of his whole province. At that time the Britons on the borders who are commonly called Gael or Welch took arms with great fury against King William and all his adherents. A fortress was therefore rebuilt at Rhuddlan by the king's command to overawe the Welch and the custody of it committed to Robert that he might defend the English frontier against the inroads of these Britons.

Rhuddlan, from which he derived his surname, was Robert's principal seat. It was one of the most important fortresses in Wales and was often taken and re-taken in the long successions of wars from early times. A battle was fought here between the Saxons and Welch as early as 795 an occasion of which a plaintive air was composed by the bards and called Morfa Rhuddlan or the Red Marsh which is still played with enthusiasm by the national harpers.

The warlike lord-marcher had frequent encounters with that turbulent people, in which much blood was shed. The British inhabitants were however, repulsed after some desperate engagements and Robert, enlarging his territories, strengthened the castle on mount Diganwy, close to the sea. This structure which stood on the heights commanding the entrance of the river Conway, was also a very ancient fortress. It is supposed to have been the Roman station Digtum and is mentioned in the Welch Chronicles as early as 810. It was therefore only restored and strengthened and not, as Vitalis has it, built by Robert de Rhuddlan.

For fifteen years he severely chastised the Welch and seized their territory notwithstanding that, proud of their ancient independence, they had refused all tokens of submission to the Normans. Making inroads into their country, through woods and marshes, and over mountain heights, he inflicted losses on the enemy in every shape. Some he butchered without mercy, like herds of cattle as soon as he came up with them. Others he threw into dungeons where they suffered a long imprisonment, or cruelly subjected them to a shameful slavery.

His chief opponent was Gryffyth-ap-Conan, king of North Wales who was engaged in a continual contest for the defence of his kingdom and independence. The Norman Lord, on one occasion, received a visit from the Welsh prince to ask his aid, which was granted but on some quarrel, Gryffyth attacked him in his own castle, took and burned the baily and yard and killed such a number of Rhuddlan's men that very few escaped into the tower.

It happened that on the third of July, 1088 Gryffyth came to land with three ships under a mountain called Horma-heva. This is the lofty promontory, conspicuous from the Menai Straits and the Irish Channel, which forms the extreme north-west of Carnarvonshire, and is now called Great Orm's head. The band of pirates presently spread itself over the country for pillage, like ravening

wolves. Meanwhile the tide ebbed and the ships were left dry on the beach; notwithstanding this Gryffyth and his followers scoured the coast and carried off men and cattle with which they made a hasty retreat to their vessels lying on the strand.

Under these circumstances Robert was roused from his noon-day sleep by the people's cries which made him aware of this hostile inroad on his territory. He sprang up quickly, unarmed as he was, and without delay dispatched messengers to summon his vassals to arms through all the district. Meanwhile he pursued the Welsh without further preparations at the head of a few soldiers and reaching the top of mount Horma-heva, which is very lofty, saw beneath the pirates binding the captives and driving them to their ships with the cattle. Upon this the noble lord-marcher, bold as a lion, shouted aloud to his small band of followers few and unarmed as they were, calling on them to rush on the Welsh on the dry sands before the return of the tide. They however excused themselves on account of their scanty number and the difficulty of descending the precipitous face of the mountain. Upon this Robert, who saw that the enemy was only waiting the return of the sea to make their escape, was overwhelmed with grief and impatient of delay, scrambled down the mountain side to throw himself on the enemy without armour and with only one follower, a man-at-arms whose name was Osbern d'Orgeres. Seeing him coming to attack them, protected by his shield only and supported by a single soldier, the Welsh in a body hurled their spears at him and piercing the shield with the insupportable weight mortally wounded the brave Osbern. But as long as Robert was able to stand and clasp his shield no one ventured to come to close quarters and attack him sword in hand. At length, the intrepid warrior fell on his knees, pierced with darts, and his strength failing the shield with the weight which clung to it, dropped from his hand; and he commended his soul to the Almighty and St. Mary, mother of God. Then the whole band rushed on him, and cutting off his head in the sight of his people, fixed it at the mast-head as a trophy of their victory. Many witnessed this spectacle from the summit of the mountain with grief and rage, but they were unable to render their lord any succor. At last the country people flocked in from the whole district; but it was too late; they were unable to save their lord-master, who was already slain. However, they manned some ships, and pursued the pirates, as they were making their course over the sea, in a tumult of grief at seeing their lord's head carried off on the mast of the enemy's ship. Gryffyth and his crew finding that they were chased, and observing that their pursuer's rage was inflamed by the insult to their lord, took down his head from the mast and threw it into the sea. On seeing this, Robert's followers ceased the fruitless chase. His body was lifted from the sea-shore with loud lamentations both of the English and Normans, and being carried to Chester, was buried in the abbey of St. Werburg the virgin.

Some years afterwards, Arnold the monk, son of Umfrid, crossed over to England, and, with the license of Robert de Limesi, bishop of Lichfield, took up his brother's remains and transferred them to the abbey of St. Evroult in Normandy. They were received with due honors by Abbot Roger and the convent of monks, and interred in the monks' cloister on the south side of the church.