DOMESDAY PEOPLE REVISITED

***by Katharine Keats-Rohan*[1]**

ABSTRACT

I was honoured to be invited to address the Foundation of Medieval Genealogy on the occasion of its tenth anniversary meeting in Oxford in October 2011. I chose to talk about my books, in which members of the FMG have shown so much interest. In doing so I make some more general points about the type of research it embodies, and show its usefulness in trying to understand a particularly difficult text, the Thorney Abbey *Liber Vitae*.

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It is 12 years since *Domesday People* was published, and 10 years since the second volume, *Domesday Descendants* appeared.[2] Both are now regularly cited, standard reference works. Two volumes of a single work, together they come to 1732 pages, and total, including references, just under one million words. They encompass probably hundreds of thousands of data assembled together in one place for the first time. This was a huge achievement, and a major boost to the study of late eleventh-century England and the areas of northern France from which the conquerors of 1066 came. Partly it was a large-scale exercise in synthesis, bringing together the large volume of published work on the families of the Conquest period and the following 100 years that had been produced by scholars since the early nineteenth century. Partly it was based on extensive new research with clear and strategic objectives. By framing the work firmly within the context of an inquiry into the specific continental origins of those who took over English landholdings during the eleventh century, predominantly after 1066, and by focusing on one key text as the framework of the inquiry, *viz* Domesday Book, a massive exercise in genealogy, biography and archival research was elevated into something much more, a true prosopography.

Prosopography is a word that has started to be over-used. Or perhaps the concept is becoming devalued. It was once said of prosopography and biography, the '*one is not simply the plural of the other*.'[3] The same is true of genealogy and prosopography. Yet a prosopography of any society will demand extensive genealogical inquiry if sense is to be made of the connexions between people that, taken together, yield genuine insights into the formation and functioning of social networks, which is the business of prosopography. It is more than a list of

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[2] K S B Keats-Rohan, *Domesday People: A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166 Volume I*, *Domesday Book* (1999) (abbreviated to DP hereafter); *Domesday Descendants: A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166 Volume II Pipe Rolls to Cartae Baronum* (2002) (abbreviated to DD).

[3] Paul Magdalino, "The contribution of prosopography: the Byzantine Empire or why prosopography? A question of identity," in *Fifty Years of Prosopography. The Later Roman Empire, Byzantium and Beyond*, ed. Averil Cameron (2003), 42-3. On prosopography see K S B Keats-Rohan, "Biography, Identity and Names: the pursuit of the individual in prosopography," in *Prosopography Approaches,* ed. Keats-Rohan (2007), 39-81, available at http://prosopography.modhist.ox.ac.uk/course_syllabuses.htm.

people, with basic biographical information and a few dates, attached to the study of a particular person or group in much the same way as a list of *dramatis personae* for a play. Far too much of this approach is seen in graduate theses and even in some scholarly biographies. It should also be much more than a mere biographical repertory of persons loosely connected by membership of an ill-defined group, often over many centuries. The classical prosopographies began this way in the late nineteenth century and produced much of value in laying the foundations of serious study of ancient societies, but we should now be moving on. The increasing prevalence of online prosopographies is not helping the situation, especially when these do not readily yield an accessible basic biographical framework for each person, and so atomize data on individuals that any chance of identifying and exploring the networks within the core groups – which is supposed to be the point – is seriously compromised.

These were not mistakes made in producing *A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166*. It had long been known that not all the newcomers were Normans, and much of the spade-work had been done. With the completion of a full prosopography, the provenance of the newcomers has been securely established and a much better understanding of the regional groupings, their formation before the Conquest and development thereafter, has resulted. Important new insights emerged from the work. In terms of personnel, this was a highly stratified élite phenomenon. Not everyone had the chance to participate in the event – there are clear signs of 'in' and 'out' groups in Norman society at the time. Those in the ducal inner circle or with close connections to it took part. Among those who accompanied them and settled with them were the men, lower in the social hierarchy but of key importance none the less, who specialized in local administration. These were the men who intermarried with the English - more frequently from the second generation onward - and began the slow process of integration. A lot of important work in the past dozen years has focused on the question of ethnic and regional identity, and the importance of naming in understanding that phenomenon.[4] It is this concentration on the fine detail at local level whilst the object remains the understanding of society at both the wider regional and the supra-regional level that makes documentary research fruitful, and makes prosopography both possible and powerful as a research strategy. Most of what follows below will be concerned with a single text that illustrates these points well.

First, though, a few words about *A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166*. As members of FMG have pointed out since the two volumes appeared, there were a number of slips in the work. (Try writing a million words without any!) All such slips once brought to my attention have been corrected in the database in which the work is kept. Very many more have been corrected as I have continued to work on the material. Since that has also meant adding considerably to the material, I have doubtless continued to add to the number of slips. Such, unfortunately, is bound to be the case when working on this scale. During work on the original proofs a choice eventually had to be made: take till Doomsday to achieve an unachievable perfection, or get on and publish. From what I have seen in multifarious footnotes, the decision to get on with it was the right one. It was inevitable right from the start, then, that a

[4] Ann Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest* (1995); Hugh M Thomas, *The English and the Normans. Ethnic hostility, assimilation and identity 1066-c.1220* (2003); Ann Williams, "Henry I and the English," in *Henry I and The Anglo- Norman World. Studies in Memory of C. Warren Hollister*, eds. D F Fleming and J M Pope, *Haskins Society Journal* 17 (2007): 27-38, esp. 37-8.

second edition would be required sooner rather than later. In fact, work on a second edition is already well advanced and should not be too long delayed, once some technical issues are resolved. The aim is to publish electronically, in a format that will make it affordable to everyone. Such a format will also make it possible for a third edition, or even a fourth, should I live long enough, to follow in due course. Some of the infelicities of the first edition should disappear, including the all too obvious traces of its origin inside a computer database. A two-volume work of which each volume has a separate title is a bibliographer's nightmare, and will be the first thing to be corrected in the new edition. It will become a new single work, *Domesday People and Their Descendants: A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166*. The Introductions will be merged to become a single Introduction, suitably updated.

Why should any book be so unstable that its author can contemplate a fourth edition at the moment of announcing the second? The answer, of course, is that research of the sort it embodies never ends, neither mine nor that of others. This will be reflected in the new version, which will incorporate the corrections indicated by members of FMG on its excellent and very useful website. In many cases they are corrections of errors such as either already had, or would have been picked up in the course of the revision. In others there are more substantial offerings, which, where adopted have been suitably acknowledged in the new text. These include a clutch of important offerings by Rosie Bevan, including those clarifying aspects of the de Ballon family, and the identity of the wife of Henry of Essex.[5] But the book is a work of prosopography. The entries need to be as uniform as possible. The finer points of detailed genealogy are not what it is about, however interesting we may find them. So I have to leave them for other people's monographs. Sometimes they lead on to the discovery of additional problems. Alerted by Tim Powys-Lybbe to a problem with a entry on Roger IV of Berkeley, now no longer a separate entry but attached to one on his grandfather Roger III, most of the entries for that family were found to be in need of revision.[6]

A more interesting case is that of Walter I de Aincourt, who was dead by 1116. A major Lincolnshire tenant-in-chief, one of his sons died in childhood at the court of William II. A still surviving epitaph described William's father Walter as a kinsman of Bishop Remigius of Lincoln, and went on to describe his son William as of royal stock. A slip in *Domesday People* pointed out by Chris Phillips, made Walter himself into a relative of the Norman kings, although the inscription is quite clear that it was his son who was of royal stock.[7] A paper published in 2008 by Richard Sharpe examined this question in detail, and came to some startling, but to my mind convincing conclusions.[8] He embarked on his investigation because he wanted to understand why Walter de Aincourt had made gifts at the foundation of St Mary's Abbey, York. Closely associated with Count Alan Rufus, lord of Richmond, the abbey lay in a county with which Walter had little connexion. Moreover, and most unusually, Walter's wife Matilda made gifts at the same time to the abbey on her own account. The lands she gave had formerly

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5 Rosie Bevan, "Lost in time: the other daughter of Hamelin de Ballon," *Foundations* 3 (2010): 179-215, and contributions of the FMG website pages on *Domesday Descendants* [http://fmg.ac/Projects/Domesday/].

6 *DD,* 321; http://fmg.ac/Projects/Domesday/Desc2.htm.

7 http://fmg.ac/Projects/Domesday/People.htm; *DP,* 410.

8 R Sharpe, "King Harold's Daughter," *Haskins Society Journal* 19 (2007, publ.2008): 1-27.

been held by Count Alan; they included Little Abington in Cambridgeshire, and he had acquired them with the lands of Eddeva Pulcra.

Edgiva, or *Eadgifu* in Old English, was an immensely wealthy lady who died after 1066 and whose lands had initially been given to the Breton Ralph de Gael, earl of Norfolk. When he forfeited his lands following his revolt in 1075, they were given to Count Alan. Eddeva Pulcra was first identified in the margins of a seventeenth-century manuscript with Edgiva Swanneck, the concubine of King Harold Godwinsson, and the case was argued in detail by J R Boyle in 1896.[9] Sharpe shows on chronological grounds that Edgiva was Gunnilda's mother. It is known from letters of Archbishop Anselm that Harold's daughter Gunnilda, who had taken refuge in Wilton abbey in 1066, was later the wife or concubine of Alan Rufus, and had sought the protection of Alan's brother and successor on his death in August 1093. Sharpe argues that, as was not uncommon at that time, Gunnilda had first entered the abbey to escape the turmoil of 1066, and had subsequently left the abbey in order to legitimize the succession of one of the newcomers to an English inheritance by marriage; in this case by her marriage to Count Alan, who now held the land her mother Edgiva had been given by Harold. Alan and Gunnilda's daughter Matilda was probably born about 1073, according to Sharpe; she married Walter around 1089 and was mother of both his sons. She was not, of course, treated as her father's heiress, and disposed of only a few of her grandmother's manors, but her mother's marriage had served its purpose in helping to consolidate the creation of the eastern portion of what was to become the vast honour of Richmond.

A lot of newly published work has meant that many entries can be revised. Such is bound to be the case. Equally, the rate of publication is now such that it is impossible to keep pace, so that some things will continue to escape the net. Naturally, my own research continues to augment and to refine the core prosopography. During the past two years I have been working as part of a team led by Dr Lynda Rollason that is producing an edition and commentary on the Thorney Abbey *Liber Vitae*, now British Library Additional MS 40,000. Projected editions by the late Cecily Clark and Otto von Feilizten were left incomplete at their deaths.[10] Part of the aim is to include as much of their work as possible, but primarily we aim to subject the manuscript to a rigorous new scrutiny. My role is to produce a prosopography from the three thousand-odd names entered in the *Liber Vitae*. The majority cannot be securely identified, because there is not enough accompanying information. Even less could be achieved without the benefit of a full understanding of conquest prosopography yielded by *Domesday People*, for which the Thorney *Liber* provided key evidence.[11]

Three *Libri Vitae* survive from monasteries of the English Middle Ages, Durham, Thorney and Hyde Abbey in Winchester.[12] The entries in these works, which

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9 Sharpe, *op.cit. (2007),* 20-22; J R Boyle, "Who was Eddeva?" *Transactions of the East Riding Antiquarian Society* 4 (1896): 11-22.

10 Cecily Clark, "The *Liber Vitae* of Thorney Abbey," in *Words, Names and History. Selected Writings of Cecily Clark*, ed. Peter Jackson (1995), 301-347.

11 Especially important for understanding the Craon family, since its evidence about naming patterns in the family was key to linking the family to continental counterparts and hence to identification. The family will appear later in this paper, without referring again to this evidence, which appeared in *Domesday People*, 464.

12 David & Lynda Rollason, eds., *Durham Liber Vitae* (2007); E Edwards, *Liber Monasterii de Hyda* (1856); *Monasticon Anglicanum* ii, 434 ff; BL Cotton Domit. A xix, fols. 22-237; Simon Keynes, ed., *The Liber Vitae of the New Minster and Hyde Abbey, Winchester* (1996); David Rollason *et al.,* eds.,

consist of groups of names, are very difficult to define. The names in them are of people who are equally likely to have been alive or dead at the time they were enregistered. The intention behind the entries is the memorialization in perpetuity of persons who have confraternity or full membership with the community, and of those they chose to be remembered with them. These were not always relatives, but could be household servants or mesne tenants, for example. Each of these three works is highly individual and each has to be considered on its own terms. The curious thing about the Thorney *Liber* is that the entries are contained on a number of folia added to a Gospel Book. These folia clearly began life as a distinct project, being ruled in the same way and intended initially to contain names in columns. Folio 10 is particularly instructive. The original columns begin with a group of notables from the reign of Cnut and continue down to the reign of William II. They represent a concerted attempt to gather existing information from probably disparate sources and enter them here in a formal setting. A few escaped the net and were added, sometimes untidily, to other folia during the twelfth century. The conclusion to the first part of the work is probably on folio 9v (9r is not part of the *Liber*); folio 10v contains material from about 1098 to 1140 and is the precursor to material on folio 3 (*recto* and *verso*) which contains material of *c.*1100 to *c.*1150. This is then followed by folio 2, which contains material covering *c.*1135 to the later twelfth century. The project was begun in the late eleventh century and was mainly completed by the end of the twelfth. A few additions were made long after this time, but these do not represent the original work. Overall then, it appears that whole groups of tenth and early eleventh century names were purposefully gathered from a number of sources to form the basis of the work, some time in the late eleventh century; from then onwards for about a century other groups are entered on an *ad hoc* basis, normally reflecting occasions involving living people. When it was realized, on at least one certain occasion in the first quarter of the twelfth century, that some mid-eleventh century names that should have appeared on fol.10r had been omitted, these were scrawled into the lower inner margin of fol.10v. These were *Turstan(us) de Stanforde monitari(us) Gunuuare uxor ei(us) Freþegist*. Cecily Clark identified Thurstan as as a moneyer at work in Stamford, Lincs, from late in Æthelred II's time until the Confessor's (*c.*1010-44). The following names are presumably those of his wife and son.[13] A good series of coins from the Stamford mint is in the collection at the FitzWilliam Museum and there can be no doubt about the identification. This is just one of the perils encountered when trying to understand how this text evolved.

The project is attempting to identify each stint, that is to say, discrete groups of people whose names were entered by the same scribe, normally at the same time. The dating of the stint is first done on a palaeographic basis, but this can occasionally be unreliable. Most of the entries belong to the twelfth century, a time when handwriting was slowly evolving from proto-gothic to gothic script. The palaeographic dating is an initial aid in trying to produce a prosopography of the whole name base; but ultimately, only firm prosopographical identification of the groups will clinch a date range.

The Durham Liber Vitae and its Context (2004); J Moore, "Prosopographical Problems of English *libri vitae*," in *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics,* ed. K S B Keats-Rohan (1997), 165-88.

[13] Clark, *op.cit.,* (1995), 309; see V J Smart, "Moneyers of the late Anglo-Saxon coinage 973-1016," *Anglo-Saxon England* 16 (1987): 233-308.

The task is daunting, as you can see from just one folio, fol.2 *recto*, illustrated here (Fig. 1). Total certainly about the composition of groups on the basis of visual examination alone is not really possible. It is not possible even when there is a solid basis for the identification of most of the members of a given group. Fortunately, the existence of the still unpublished fourteenth-century cartulary of Thorney, the so-called *Red Book*, kept in Cambridge University Library (MS Add. 3020-1), provides the rock upon which any prosopography of the *Liber Vitae* must stand. Unfortunately, it embodies one of the main problems with this, as so many other post-Conquest texts: it takes very little heed of the native English, so that the vast bulk of groups of English persons in the text will probably never be identified.

The cartulary principally records all the main property transactions of the abbey from the twelfth to fourteenth centuries. Of especial importance are the transactions made when a benefactor, and sometimes other members of his family, entered into confraternity with the monks. In so doing they assured themselves of the monks's regular prayers in Chapter after their deaths, as well as the right later to enter the house as a monk, or to be buried in the church.[14] The details of family and followers contained in these charters are central to identifying the groups in the *Liber Vitae*. They provide invaluable information on even well-known families, as well as obscure ones. This one folio alone has a great deal of interest.

The first task is to understand the composition of the entries. Let's start with a simple example, one of the relatively few entries relating to a post-Conquest English family, which is stint 2r11 in the forthcoming edition.

> *Toui(us) de Lufuico. (et) Agnes uxor eius. (et) Radulfus fili(us) eius. (et) alt(er) fili(us) eius. Rodb(er)t(us).*

The name of Robert is an addition in a separate hand to this group, but otherwise it is very straightforward. The subject of the entry is the Englishman Tovi of Lowick, Northants, who gave land there to the abbey, with his wife Agnes and son Ralph, in return for confraternity.[15] There is no way of knowing the origin of his wife Agnes, whose name is that of a widely venerated saint, but their children had continental names, as was becoming the norm in many English families. Tovi may have been the son of the Algar who had held land in Islip, Raunds and Lowick, Northamptonshire, from the bishop of Coutances in 1086; after the bishop's forfeiture much of his land was regranted to Gilbert de Clare.[16] Tovi's grant was later confirmed by Adeliza, widow of Gilbert de Clare some time between 1117 and 1130.[17] In this group his name is followed by that of his wife Agnes, his son Ralph and his other son, Robert.[18] In each case '*eius*', 'his', relates to what I have come to think of as the *ego* of the entry. This is the key to understanding how they work.

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[14] For the background to this practice, see Rollason *et al.*, *op.cit.* (2004) in general, including K S B Keats-Rohan, "Testimonies of the Living Dead: The Martyrology-Necrology and Necrology in the Chapter Book of Mont-Saint-Michel (Avranches, Bibliothèque municipale, MS 214)", available as a pdf from http://www.coelweb.co.uk/downloads.html.

[15] *Red Book of Thorney Abbey*: Cambridge University Library, 2 vols., MSS 3020-1, fol. 419r-v.

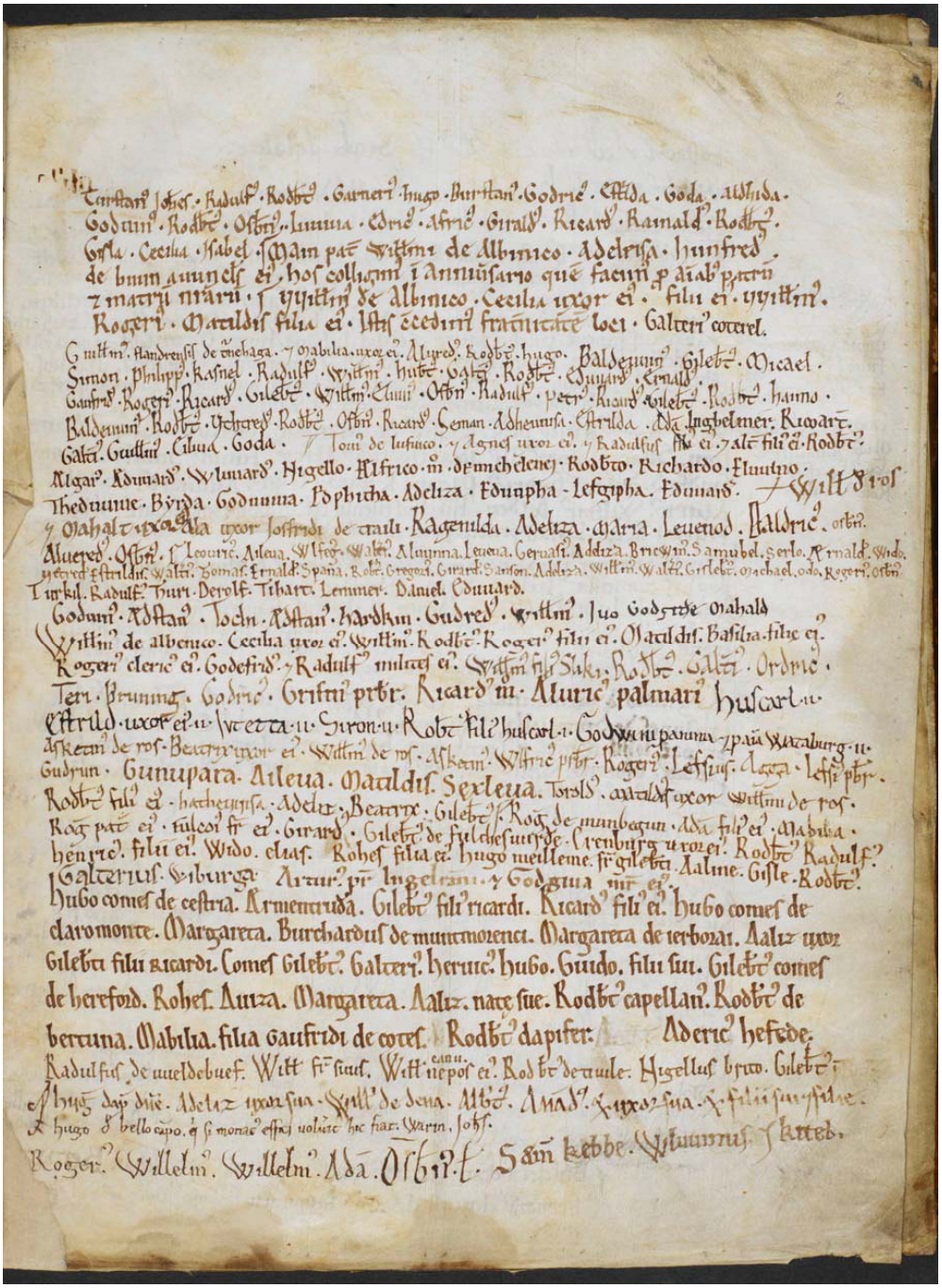
[16] For Raunds, see *VCH Northants* 4 (1937), 29-39; *Domesday Book [DB] Northants* 4:26-7.

[17] *Monasticon Anglicanum* ii,p. 601, no. X; *Red Book*, fol. 229r.

[18] There is a slight ambiguity whether 'Robert' was the 'other son', or the name of a different person. Despite a slight difference in the ink, I favour the former view.

Fig 1. The Thorney Abbey *Liber Vitae*

© The British Library Board, MS Add. 40,000, fol.2r.



Another well-known example makes the point. This is the entry of which William I de Albini Brito is the *ego.* This example [2r2] is unusual (see Fig. 1).

> ¶ *(1) Main pater Willelmi de Albinico. (2) Adeleisa. (3) Hunfredus. de Buun auunculus eius. Hos colligimus in anniuersario quem facimus pro animabus patrum et matrum nostrarum.* ¶ *(4) UUillelm(us) de Albinico. (5) Cecilia uxor eius. filii eius. (6) UUillelmus. (7) Rogeri(us). (8) Matildis filia eius. Istis concedimus fraternitatem loci.*

The stint begins with Main father of William de Albini, Adeleisa, and Humphrey de Buhun, William's maternal uncle (*avunculus*); the text then states that these are remembered on the occasion when the anniversary of 'our fathers and mothers' is celebrated, the 'our' referring to the monks and their confratres. This may be a reference to the fact that William's parents, Main and Adeliza de Bohun, had not lived or died in England, unlike his wife Cecilia's, daughter of Roger Bigod of Norfolk and Adeliza de Tosny. A Humphrey of Humphrey de Bohun's family (the name Humphrey is dominant so the identification of this one is impossible) held a single manor, at Tatterford, Norfolk, in 1086, though the family increased in importance thereafter.[19] Main cannot have been the Buckinghamshire tenant-in-chief Maino Brito of Wolverton, as some have supposed, on a number of grounds, including the very distinctive naming patterns of Maino's descendants. The importance achieved by William would have left evidence of any relationship to the Wolverton family, had it existed. A charter of Mont-Saint-Michel provides the origin of Main and his son in Saint-Aubin-d'Aubigné (Ille-et-Vilaine), further evidenced in the names of his nephews Geoffrey de Chauvigné (Ille-et-Villaine, Brittany), brother of Iwain and Helias de Albini.[20] There is apparently no sign of these men in the Thorney *Liber*, although they attested the charter by which William, his wife and sons, gave land at Stoke Albany to Thorney for confraternity, along with Godefrid Clement and Ralph fitz William, whose names do appear in a second Thorney list.[21] His nephews were tenants of William's honour of Belvoir, Leics, and frequently attested his charters; all of them were recorded in the necrology of Belvoir.

In the second part of the stint, indicated like the first with a *paragraphus*, William's family are given as wife Cecilia, sons William and Roger and daughter Matilda. The text then states that these have been given confraternity at Thorney. William clearly negotiated the inclusion of his absentee and probably deceased relatives in the prayers to which he and his family were now entitled. For good measure, this was topped up only a short time later, when another entry on the same folio lists William, his wife Cecilia, sons William, Robert and Roger, and daughters Matilda and Basilia.[22] The two were probably closely related in time because the second stint is directly related to the confraternity charter in the *Red Book*.

These entries are relatively straightforward. In that, they are not typical, but they provide important insights into how the book was used, both by those named in it and by the monks who enregistered those names. One example of

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19 *DB Norfolk* 40.

20 K S B Keats-Rohan, ed., *The Cartulary of the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel* (2006), no.64, pp.143-4; *DD,* 270-1, 392. For Maino's family, *DP,* 293, and *DD,* 185.

21 *Red Book of Thorney Abbey*, fol. 205r. For the details of this family see *DD*, 271-2. I have so far found no indication of marriages for either of his daughters.

22 The whole entry reads: *(1) Will(el)m(us) de Albenico. (2) Cecilia uxor ei(us). (3) Will(el)m(us). (4) Rodb(er)t(us). (5) Roger(us) filii ei(us). (6) Matildis. (7) Basilia. filie ei(us). (8) Rogeri(us) cleric(us) ei(us). (9) Godefrid(us). (et) (10) Radulf(us) milites ei(us).*

particular interest has been highlighted before. It occurs towards the bottom of folio 2r [2r35], which we have already seen in full (Fig. 1). Beautifully legible, the full transcription reads:

> *(1) Hugo comes de Cestria. (2) Ærmentruða. (3) Gileb(er)t(us) fili(us) Ricardi. (4) Ricard(us) fili(us) eius. (5) Hugo comes de Claromonte. (6) Margareta. (7) Burchardus de Muntmorenci. (8) Margareta de Ierborai. (9) Aaliz uxor Gileb(er)ti filii Ricardi. (10) Comes Gileb(er)t(us). (11) Galteri(us). (12) Heruic(us) (13) Hugo. (14) Guido. filii sui. (15) Gileb(er)t(us) comes de Hereford.*[sic] *(16) Rohais. (17) Auiza. (18) Margareta. (19) Aaliz. nate sue (20) Rodb(er)t(us) capellan(us). (21) Rodb(er)t(us) de Bertuna. (22) Mabilia. filia Gaufridi de Cotes. (23) Rodb(er)t(us) dapifer. (24) Aderic(us) Hefede.*

So who is the *ego* around whom this entry revolves? The answer is (9) *Aaliz uxor Gileberti filii Ricardi.* The way the information should be understood is therefore as follows:

> Earl Hugh of Chester. Ermentrude. Gilbert fitz Richard. Richard son of *ego*. Hugh count of Clermont. Margaret. Burchard de Montmorency. Margaret de Gerberoy. Alice wife of Gilbert fitz Richard. Earl Gilbert. Walter. Hervey. Hugh. Guy sons of the same *ego* [*sui*]. Gilbert earl of Hertford.[23] Rohais. Avice. Margaret. Alice. *ego's* female children. Robert the Chaplain. Robert of Barton. Mabel daughter of Geoffrey de Cotes. Robert the steward. Aderic Hefede.

The spelling of her name varies, but she is usually referred to in the literature as Adeliza. She was the daughter of Hugh count of Clermont-en-Beauvaisis, who died in late 1102 or 1103,[24] and his wife Margaret de Roucy; they occur as numbers 5 and 6 in this group. She was sister of Ermentrude (no.2), the wife of Hugh earl of Chester, the first in the list, who died in 1101, and sister also of no.8, Margaret de Gerberoy, who died in 1136 and was wife of Gerard de Gerberoy.[25] Her first husband (3) Gilbert son of Richard de Clare died between 1114 and 1117. Their son Richard (4) was killed by the Welsh in 1136.

We may confidently infer that all eight names in the Thorney list occurring before Adeliza's were those of dead members of her family. Adeliza is known to have married a second time, to a member of the house of Montmorency. His identity has long been the subject of a guessing game, but though some have guessed correctly that her Montmorency husband was Burchard, this list provides the only solid evidence discovered until now that permits the identification of which of a number of Burchards he actually was.[26] The date of the entry is easily established, since it relates to a confraternity charter in the *Red Book* in which Adeliza granted land at Raunds in Northamptonshire, possibly at the request of her son Baldwin, who is not named in either the charter or this entry.[27] He does occur in relation to another of his mother's charters, dealing with the holding of Tovi of Lowick in Raunds, where Tovi's widow Agnes claimed dower from her

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23 The apparent slip in his title reappears when his nephew Richard was named in a charter of Richard I *Ricardo de Clar' comiti de Hereford* (J Conway-Davies, ed., *Cartæ Antiquæ Rolls 11-20*, Pipe Roll Society (1960), no.564, p.165.

24 Suger, *Vie de Louis le Gros*; he was attacked at Luzarches by his son-in-law Matthew de Beaumont concerning dower of Matthew's wife.

25 See V Leblond, ed., *Notes pour le nobiliare du Beauvaisis* (1910), I, 136.

26 *Cf* J H Round, "The Montmorency imposture," in *Feudal England*, (1895, reprinted1964), 392-7. He demolishes various myths about the connections, but could only hazard a guess that Adeliza's husband was Burchard. Moore, *op.cit.* (1997), 176, and Clark, *op.cit.* (1995), 336, identified the Burchard in this list as her second husband, but had no further information on the family.

27 *Red Book*, fol.206r; *cf. Monasticon Anglicanum* ii, p.602, no.XX.

son-in-law Ralph fitz Nigel.[28] Ralph earned Baldwin's displeasure by claiming rights in Raunds already given to Thorney; Baldwin addressed a charter to his mother requesting her to see that the situation was rectified.[29] He probably has his own entry in the *Liber* earlier on the same folio of the *Liber Vitae*, doubtless related to his grant of the churches of St James and St Guthlac at Deeping, confirmed by Bishop Robert of Lincoln *c.*1148x54.[30] This was part of the barony of Bourne, Lincolnshire, which Baldwin had acquired by marriage with Adelina, daughter and heiress of Richard de Rullos.[31] Raunds had been given to Gilbert de Clare after the forfeiture of Geoffrey and Robert of Coutances in 1093/4, and seems to have been settled on Adeliza.[32] Her confraternity charter is dated by its reference to the seizure of Ramsay Abbey by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1144. So, all of the first eight people in the *Liber* list had died before Pentecost 1144. They include Burchard de Montmorency (8), who can therefore be confidently assumed to have been her second husband. We shall return to him hereafter.

Following Adeliza are the names of living persons, both members of her family and of her household, all presumably with her on the occasion of her receiving confraternity. Though not all of them are named in the corresponding charter in the *Red Book*, they attest related charters of a similar date. On fol.206v of the *Red Book*, Adeliza, described in the margin as mother of the earl of Gloucester, notifies and confirms a grant of land in Raunds by Ralph fitz Nigel and his wife Avice (identfied elsewhere as daughter of Tovi of Lowick), attested by Robert her knight, of Barton (Seagrave), Mabilia her maid, and Aderiz Heved, one of her English tenants. Mabel was daughter of Geoffrey, a bastard son of the Domesday tenant-in-chief Eustache de Boulogne who held Coton, Cambridgeshire, from his father. His wife, Mabel's mother, was Beatrice daughter of Geoffrey I de Mandeville.[33] Barton was perhaps a part of Raunds. As Adelicia de Claromonte she gave rents in Barton once held by the provost Herluin to Thorney. Robert *de Berthon* was among the witnesses. [34]

Immediately following Adeliza are her sons by her first marriage, Earl Gilbert of Pembroke and Walter de Clare (10-11). Three further sons, Hervey, Hugh and Guy (12-14), were the sons of her second marriage. In the confraternity charter which gives rise to this entry, Adeliz grants land and dues in Raunds with the assent and testimony of Hervey her son and heir. The lack of mention of his father confirms that the latter is already dead. The witnesses are Robert Monk of Chester, Walter and Albin chaplains, Hugh de Montmorency and Guy his brother, followed by Margaret de Montfichet and Henry de Montfichet. Although she gives the charter as Adeliz mother of Earl Gilbert, the only de Clare in the witness list is her daughter Margaret, no.18 in the Thorney list, and Margaret's son Henry de Montfichet. The Thorney list of Adeliza's sons ends with Guy, and is signed off with '*filii sui*', *i.e.* sons of Adeliza. This is intended to clarify the ambiguity of *filius eius* in reference to her son Richard, whose name follows that of his father

28 *Red Book*, fol.229r; *cf. Monasticon Anglicanum* ii, p.601, no.X.

29 *Red Book*, fol.206v.

30 *Monasticon Anglicanum* ii, p.602, no.XX; David M Smith, ed., *English Episcopal Acta I: Lincoln 1067-85*, (1980) no.271.

31 Ivor J Sanders, *English Baronies A study of their origin and descent, 1086-1327*, (1960), 107.

32 *VCH Northamptonshire* vol. 4, ed. L F Salzman (1937), 29-39.

33 J H Round, "Faramus of Boulogne," *The Genealogist* n.s. 12 (1895/6), 145-51.

34 *Red Book* fol.206v-7r. A Robert, apparently an Englishman, had held land in Raunds, Barton Seagrave and Cranford from Geoffrey of Coutances in 1086; *DB Northants*, 04:1, 7, 18.

(nos.3-4), to whom the *eius* could be (correctly) taken to refer, against the general sense of the entry which is to convey relationships to Adeliza. The next name is that of Gilbert earl of Hertford (15), who was her grandson, son of the Richard who occurred as no 4 in the list, among the dead. Gilbert died around 1152, when his brother Roger was his heir. The list then continues with four female names described as *nate sue*, (16-19), the form *sue* again emphazing that these are the daughters of Adeliza. Rohais was wife of Baderon of Monmouth, Alice of Aubrey de Vere; Margaret de Montfichet has already been mentioned. Avice, who was obviously alive in 1144, is otherwise unknown. She has been identified with Adeliza 'of Tonbridge', wife of William II de Percy by 1139 but dead before 1166, firstly by J H Round, and more recently by John Moore, in his essay on the English *Libri Vitae*.[35] However, as was observed in Cockayne's *Complete Peerage*, chronological grounds make it obvious that William's wife should be identified as a daughter of Richard fitz Gilbert de Clare and Adeliza of Chester.

So we can now say with conviction that Adeliza's second marriage was to a Burchard de Montmorency, by whom she had three sons. A career is recorded for only one of them, the eldest, Hervey, who occurs as constable of Ireland in 1172, serving as seneschal over the lands of his nephew Richard 'Strongbow', earl of Pembroke. He married Nesta, daughter of Maurice FitzGerald, but died a childless monk at Canterbury some time afterwards.[36] His younger brothers had clearly predeceased him, also without issue, since Hervey's heir was Richard son of Gilbert, his half-nephew.[37] As to Burchard himself, he can only have been Burchard IV de Montmorency, in Brigitte Bedos's numeration, son of Hervé.[38] This Burchard had been married twice before, first to Agnes de Beaumont-sur-Oise, and secondly, by 17 December 1099, to Agnes de Pontoise.[39] By his first wife he was father of Matthew, who married Henry I of England's natural daughter Aline in 1126.[40] In a charter of his son Matthew, relating to the latter's marriage in 1126, Burchard occurs as living; in an act of c. 1131-2, in which Matthew acts as seigneur, Burchard is explicitly described as dead.[41] The last known sealed act by Burchard in France dates to 1124.[42] Quite possibly the marriages of Henry I's daughter to the Frenchman Matthew de Montmorency and that of the French widow of a senior Anglo-Norman baron to his widowed father, occurred relatively close together in time. In fact, however, it is very likely that Burchard and Adeliza were already married by August 1119, the date of the battle of Brémule.

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35 J H Round, "Walter Tirel and his wife," *Feudal England*, (1895, repr.1964), 355-63, at 358-9; Moore, *op.cit.* (1997), 182ff.

36 J F Dimock, ed., *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera, Topographia Hibernica, Expugnatio Hibernica,* (1867), *Expugnatio Hibernica* I, II, IV, p.314; III, p.230.

37 J H Round, "The Montmorency imposture," *Feudal England*, (1895), 519-27, attested a Thorney act of his mother in relation to Lowick; *Red Book,* fol. 229r.

38 Brigitte Bedos, *La Châtellenie de Montmorency des origines à 1368 : aspects féodaux, sociaux et économiques* (1980).

39 When her mother was buried: *Cart. St-Martin-des-Champs,* 86, p.138-9.

40 She died between 1135 and 1143, when Matthew married the widow of Louis VI, Adelaide de Maurienne. See K Thompson, "Affairs of State: the illegitimate children of Henry I," *Journal of Medieval History* 29 (2003): 129-51, at p. 149.

41. A Graboïs, "L'Abbaye de Saint-Denis et les Juifs sous l'abbatiat de Suger," *Annales, Histoires, Sciences Sociales* 24e année (1969), pp.1187-95, at p.1110, note 3, following Duchesne; he possibly died in Jerusalem: *Obituaires de Sens* Tome I.1, *Abbaye du Val*, p. 630.

42 A Duchesne, *Histoire généalogique de la maison de Montmorency*, (1680), *Preuves* p.38; see Graboïs, *op. cit.*

One of a series of encounters during the lengthy campaigns between Henry I of England and Louis VI of France, Brémule was a real reverse for the French king. Henry's prisoners included Burchard de Montmorency, Guy de Clermont, Adeliza's brother, and Matthew de Beaumont, her brother-in-law.[43] To Henry's sorrow, so Orderic Vitalis informs us, Guy died a captive at Rouen soon afterwards, but Burchard was freed because he was a vassal of both kings.[44] He had no known holdings in Normandy, so this can only be because of his third marriage. The only occasion he has so far been discovered in an English document was in respect of a donation of eels to to the newly founded abbey of Thetford some time in the 1120s.[45]

Adelisa occurs in one Thorney charter as *Adelisa de Claramonte*. Otherwise, she names herself in relation to her de Clare husband or sons, presumably because her property in England was dower land derived from that marriage. She was once described as Adeliza de Montmorency in a confirmation charter for Thorney by Bishop Robert de Chesney of Lincoln (who confirmed the grants represented by all the cases discussed so far between 1148 and 1166).[46] She is last heard of, by then at an advanced age, when she and her steward were reprimanded by her grandson Earl Roger, for trying to extort rents from his monks at Stoke-by-Clare.[47]

With this insight into how the entries in the *Liber Vitae* work, it is possible to look at other entries in a fresh light. The examples we have looked at so far are relatively straightforward. In referring to generally well-evidenced people, we can be the more confident of the interpretation. Other cases are trickier, and seem to suggest that what was written into the *Liber* was information taken from a separate source that was arranged differently to the layout of the *Liber* entry. One example concerns the family of Geoffrey I de Trailly, whose family acquired a part of the honour of Espec of Wardon, Bedfordshire, through his marriage to Albreda Espec, daughter of William and sister and in her issue eventual coheiress of Walter Espec. Geoffrey and his wife became confratres of Thorney, to which they granted the church of Yelden, probably shortly before their deaths, by *c.*1122.[48] The fuller of two entries for them and their family in the Thorney *Liber* reads [3r12]:

> *(1) Gesfridus de Traili. (et) (2) uxor ei(us). Albreþa. (3) Gefridus filius eius (et) (4) Rodbertus. (et) (5) Willelm(us). (et) (6) Gilebertus. (et) (7) Rodb(er)tus fili(us) ep(iscop)i. (et) (8) Gilebert(us). (et) (9) Galterius. (et) (10) Nicholaus. (11) Beatrix soror eor(um). (et) (12) Æþelina. (13) Lecelina. (14) Emma. (15) Haþeuuis. (16) Galteri(us) de Furnels.*[49]

Here there is no doubt that Geoffrey I de Trailly is the *ego*. Again, the family is fairly well evidenced. Four of their sons, Geoffrey II (3), William (5), Gilbert (6)

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43 Attested a charter of Henry I in 1110 for Abingdon Abbey; the other witnesses attest Henry's interest in the French king's vassals at that date, H W C Davis, ed., *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum [RRAN]* I (1913): 956.

44 Ord. Vit. vi, pp. 236-42, Guy's death at 242.

45 C Johnson & H A Cronne, *RRAN* II (1956): App. no. cxxvii; *Monasticon Anglicanum* V, pp. 150-51, No. VIII.

46 Smith, *op.cit. (1980)* no. 271.

47 *Cart. Stoke-by-Clare*, no. 32.

48 The grant for confraternity occurs in the *Red Book* on fol. 297v and 414v; printed *Monasticon Anglicanum* II, p. 601, no. xiii.

49 Fol. 3r. The other is on fol. 10v.

and Nicholas(10), were all named in a charter of 1133x35, after their parents' deaths, by Walter Espec in the order Geoffrey, William, Nicholas and Gilbert.[50] The name of Robert son of the bishop is apparently an interpolation in this group, as perhaps also is the name of either the preceding or the following Gilbert, since it has no context in any Thorney or other document relating to the family; Walter de Furnels has also yet to be accounted for.[51] Otherwise it is clear that additional sons are named, Robert and Walter, as well as their sister Beatrix. It is fairly likely that the following four names should also be taken to be their sisters, since the briefer mention of the family on fol.10v refers to Geoffrey de Trailli, Albreda his wife and their sons and daughters.[52] Lecelina de Trailli (13) was wife of Ralph de Hastings. She accounted for *terra data* at Fordam, Cambridgeshire, in 1162/3, when she may have already have been a widow. Her husband's nephew and heir was confirmed as steward of Bury St Edmunds in 1164.[53] Entries in documents like this include the dead as well as the living and in many cases children entred with their parents when alive may not have survived until adulthood.

Although as we have seen the same person or persons can occur more than once, an isolated reference on folio 2r to '*Ala uxor Iosfridi de Trailli*' should not be taken to refer to Geoffrey I de Trailli and his wife Albreda, with the form Ala being explained as a diminutive.[54] The fact that the entry was made up to 30 years later does not in itself preclude the possibility. More likely, however, is that it refers to the first wife of Geoffrey II de Trailly. At his death in 1177x79 his heir was his son Walter. His widow Mary, a kinswoman of Earl Simon of Northampton, was a widow aged 40 in 1185, according to the *Rotuli de Dominabus*, with one other son, a married daughter and a daughter who was a nun. Geoffrey had first occurred in the public records when he accounted for the custody of the widow of Richard de Camville and her son on the Pipe Roll of 1129/30. Such arrangements frequently involved marriage, the better to exploit the property in wardship. She may have been the first wife who was mother of his daughter Philippa, who married Hugh de Beauchamp of Eaton Socon (subject of stint 2r38). Philippa's daughter Alda also appears on the *Rotuli de Dominabus* in 1185, as widow of William Malbank, aged about 30, so born c. 1155.[55] It would make sense for the *Liber*'s Ala to refer to Geoffrey's first wife, mother c. 1130 of Philippa de Beauchamp, who gave her name to her granddaughter Alda (which might be the more accurate rendering of the name).

The importance of engaging with texts such as this on their own terms, and with respect for their originators, is further exemplified by the entry relating to the Chesneduit family on folio 2 verso [2v17]:

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50 *Monasticon Anglicanum* VI, p. 208-9, no I.

51 A writ of William II relating to abbey property in Charwelton and Twywell, Northants, was addressed to four men, including R de Fornell (*Red Book*, fol. 18v). A manor in Raunds was known as Furnells. In 1203 a Hervey son of Geoffrey sued Roger de Furneus for a knight's fee there and in Ringstead, alleging that his grandfather Hugh de St Lo had held in the time of Henry I (*CRR*. iii, 72, 228, 291.); see *VCH Northants* 4, pp. 29-31, where Salzmann suggests this was the part of Raunds held by a Geoffrey of the bishop in 1086 (*DB Northants* 04:26).

52 *Gosfrid(us) de Traili. (et) uxor ei(us) Albreiða. (et) filii ei(us) (et) filie.*

53 D C Douglas, *Feudal Documents from the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds* (1932), no. 89.

54 Not distinguished by Clark, *op.cit.,* pp. 309, 323-4, 331-2, 337. Not mentioned by Moore, *op.cit.,* who discusses the Traillys pp.182-7.

55 J H Round, ed., *Rotuli de dominabus et pueris et puellis de XII comitatibus, 1185* (1913), 30-31, for both Mary de Trailli and Alda de Beauchamp.

(1) Rad(ulfus) Cheneduit. (2) Will(elmus) Cheneduit fili(us) suus. (3) Rad(ulfus) Cheneduit. (4) Simon Cheneduit. (5) Rog(er) Chehneduit. (6) Will(elmus) nepos ei(us). (7) Matildis de Port. uxor ei(us). (8) Matildis (et) (9) Matild(is) filie ei(us). (10) Warin(us) d(e) Blacheuilla. q(u)i testis est de carta n(ost)ra d(e) lxta. ac(r)is d(e) Cherwoltonia. (11) Rad(ulfus) d(e) Blacheuilla. (12) Will(elmus) d(e) Blacheuilla fili(us) ei(us). (13) Hugo de Blacheuilla. (14) Hugo d(e) Blakeuilla. (15) Ric(ard) d(e) Blacheuilla.

Referred to by John Moore as the 'somewhat mysterious' Chesneduit family, he correctly identified the subject as Ralph II Chesneduit, but was thereafter completely misled by what he found in erroneous secondary sources. Knowing that Ralph II had additional children to those mentioned here, he conceded that they may have been born after the entry was written, but referred to '*some scribal misplacing of children's names*' with '*one fairly certain miscopying of a daughter's name*', the latter referring to the two Matildas. The doubling of a name within a family was common into the early modern period, even if both survived infancy, so there is no need to assume or suspect a mistake. For the rest, though, the account of the Chesneduits is straightforward enough. The difficulty is to account for the de Blachevilles, who are not well evidenced and cannot be disentangled from the evidence here.

This is the second occurrence of the very rare use of *suus* in the *Liber*, here emphasizing the subject of the stint, as we have already seen it used in relation to Adeliza de Clermont. Ralph II Chesneduit was son of Simon Chesneduit (4), who was dead by 1129/30 when Ralph de Picquigny was entered on the Pipe Roll accounting to marry his widow. Simon's father Ralph I (1) Chesneduit had been a major tenant of Robert of Mortain in Northamptonshire in 1086. He appears to have died between 1100 and 1116, as suggested by a charter of Henry I confirming an agreement between Simon Chesneduit and the abbot of Thorney in respect of land at Charwelton, Northants.[56] Between 1118 and c. 1129 Henry I confirmed to Nostell the grant of Adeliza widow of Ralph Chesneduit and her sons Simon and Hugh.[57] The occurrence of *Willelmus nepos eius* is so placed as to suggested that he was son of Roger Chesneduit, who will have been a brother of Ralph II, to whom *eius* continues to refer. Alternatively, it could mean 'grandson', in which case we might infer that Roger was another of Ralph's sons. Ralph II's wife is here identified as Matilda de Port. When Ralph II and his wife gave the charter relating to Charwelton, Northants, in return for confraternity, the first of the witnesses was *Guarinus miles meus*, identified in this entry as Warin de Blacheville. Little else can be inferred reliably about this family from the entry. The only other clue comes in later years, after the death of Matilda, when Ralph was married to his second wife, Alice daughter of Arnald the Goldsmith. He had two children by Alice, a son who always occurs in the sources as *Ulian*, perhaps representing Julian, and a daughter Rose. In 1181, shortly before Ralph's death, Henry II confirmed an agreement between Ralph and his eldest son William settling land in Abbots Langley, Hertfordshire, once of William de Blakeville, on the issue of Ralph's second wife Alice, daughter of Arnold Goldsmith, *viz* their son Ulian and daughter Rose.[58] The holding may have come to the family by the marriage of Simon Chesneduit and a de Blakeville. Alice answered for 10 marks over several years from 1179/80 for confirmation of the

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56 *RRAN* II (*op.cit., 1956),* App. xxxiii.

57 *RRAN* II (*op.cit., 1956),* 1678, and p.371, no.ccxlv.

58 L Landon, ed., *Cartae Antiquae* (Rolls Series n.s. 17, 1939), no. 95.

grant.[59] Ralph's arrangement with his eldest son William made provision for further issue from Ralph's second marriage. From 1182/3 Alice widow of Ralph de Chesneduit answered for an unjust dissaisin in the honour of Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire.[60] The Thorney entry predates this second marriage as no reference to Alice or her children occurs in it. A case recorded in Bracton's Notebook (no.429) shows that Ulian married Matilda de Essewegge and was father of a second Ulian, and that Rose married Simon le Franklin. Alice had tried to suggest her grandson Ulian was illegitimate in order that his property might revert to Rose; in the event, Matilda proved the validity of her marriage and Rose appears to have died without issue.

Another apparently awkward group is formed by the family of Gilbert of Folksworth, Hunts, a tenant of the barony of Bolbec. The stint [2r32] reads:

> *(1) Gileb(er)t(us) de Fulchesuurðe. (2) Erenburg uxor ei(us). (3) Rodb(er)t(us) (4) Radulf(us) (5) Henric(us). filii ei(us). (6) Wido. (7) Elias. (8) Rohes filia ei(us). (9) Hugo Meilleme. f(rate)r Gileb(er)ti. (10) Aaline. (11) Gisle. (12) Rodb(er)t(us).*

Here *eius* throughout applies to Gilbert of Folksworth, whose name is followed by that of his wife Eremburg and sons Robert, Ralph and Henry. Three names later our attention is called to a brother of Gilbert, Hugh Meilleme. The identity of the three names between Henry and Hugh are a trap for the unwary.[61] There is sound evidence that both Guy and Elias were sons of Gilbert from the Thorney *Red Book* and from a confirmation of Bishop Robert of Lincoln, c. 1150x27 December 1166, of grants made when Gilbert had become a *frater* at Crowland.[62] Given the way these lists work, Rose was Gilbert's daughter. Hugo's name interrupts the sequence, possibly because names were being transferred from a previously written list. Aline and Gisla could have been further daughters of Gilbert, or they might have been the wife and daughter of Hugh. Hugh occurs in the 1130s associated with acts for Ramsay Abbey, but little more is known of him.[63]

Since monasteries tended to have a core group of supporters, drawn from a distinctive 'catchment area', as Cecily Clark put in Thorney's case, it is not surprising to find that many connections existed between these people, both familial and tenurial. An awareness of such interconnections appears among the entries. On folio 3r there is a group headed by Alan de Craon [3r2]. Interestingly, the explication of the entry he heads is possible not from a Thorney document, but from his charter founding the priory of Freiston as a cell of Crowland, attested by Abbot Robert of Thorney (1113-52).[64] His father was Guy de Craon, a tenant-in-chief who had the core of a sizeable barony (of Freiston) recorded in Domesday Book, which also revealed that his wife was one of two daughters of

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59 *Pipe Rolls*, 26 HII, p. 6; *Pipe Rolls*, 27 HII, 100; 29 HII, 21.

60 *Pipe Rolls*, 29 HII, 162; *Pipe Rolls*, 31 HII, 219.

61 Into which Moore fell, p.176, misled by *English Episcopal Acta* I, no.101, as was its editor (Smith, *op.cit.,* 1980, see next note).

62 *Red Book*, fol. 156r, a quitclaim of the 1170x80 was attested by *Wido de Folkesworth. Helias fratre eius*; Smith, *op.cit.,* 1980, no. 101, pp.67-8. The text makes clear that Gilbert's grant is made with his sons*, Wydo filius eius et heres Elyas quoque frater eius*, where *eius* is used normally, as confirmed in the bishop's final confirmation and sealing clause *secundum tenorem cartarum iamdicti Gilberti et filiorum eius.*

63 W H Hart & P A Lyons, eds., *Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia*, (1884-93), nos. XCIII, XCV.

64 E M Poynton, "The fee of Creon," *The Genealogist* n.s. 18 (1902), 163. There were strong interconnections between the Fenland abbeys in the late tenth and eleventh centuries.

another tenant-in-chief, Hugh fitz Baldric. Hugh was one of the casualties of the rivalry between William II and his brother Robert duke of Normandy and their supporters after the death of their father in 1087. He chose Robert and lost his English fief, much of which was regranted to Robert I de Stuteville (who also soon lost it). In the *Liber Vitae* the group formed by Alan's family appears in a column. Subsequently entered alongside it was a separate group, headed by Hugh fitz Baldric. It seems clear that the intention was to link the two, since they were linked by the fact that Hugh was Alan's grandfather.

The first part of the group headed by Alan reads:

> *(1) Aleinus de Crehun. (et) (2) Wido pat(er) eius. (et) (3) Isenbele. (4) Wido (5) Morize. (6) Gefridus (7) Meæriel de Belca(mp). (8) Mabiliæ. (9) Isenbele.*

The subject is clearly Alan, whose name is followed by those of his parents, his sons, his wife and his daughters. The names of Guy (*Wido*) his father and Isabel appear to have been added above the first line of the entry at a very early date, strengthening the notion that Isabel is the name of his mother, which does not occur elsewhere, though the names of his sons do. This text also supplies the family name of his wife Muriel, who, together with their sons was associated with him in the grants of Freiston to Crowland. The first part of the group headed by Hugh [3r3] reads:

> *(1) Hugo. fil(ius). Baldri. (2) Fulco. f(rate)r. Alein. (3) Roger. f(rate)r. ei(us). (4) Ricard. auunc(u)l(us) ei(us).*

It appears that Alan de Craon is still the subject and that we have here two of his brothers and an uncle, none of whom are otherwise known. The brothers may represent the issue of a second marriage of his mother. Richard might have been her brother, the son of Hugh who had been disinherited by his father's forfeiture. Hugh had a Domesday tenant Richard at Cuckney, in Nottinghamshire, who may been the same as the Richard *miles* who attested a charter with him, but in the very limited evidence we have about Hugh there is no sign of a son.[65] If such he was, Richard may have been illegitimate. There is no other evidence for any of this, or for an alternative set of identifications. But the deliberate placing of these names together was certainly intended to denote a significant connection of some sort. It is but one glimpse into the possibilities afforded by study of texts such as this, and another reminder, if we needed one, of how much information we have lost.

A majority of names in the Thorney *Liber Vitae* are English. In one way or another one must suspect that the origin of the work lay in a reaction to the Norman conquest and the concern to preserve a strong local tradition of self-identification. The slow emergence of intermarriage and the beginnings of a shared name stock are other aspects of the interest and importance of this text. Study of the text gives us insight into a hugely significant phenomenon at the level of both microcosm and macrocosm. An antiquarian or genealogical approach will only yield a thin gruel from this text; approached prosopographically a rich and flavoursome soup emerges, containing not just juicy morsels of otherwise lost genealogical details, but a real taste of a society during one of the most momentous transitional episodes in its history.

These few examples from this one rather extraordinary text have a great deal to tell us. The whole of this small work is rich in information, once one has learnt

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65 *DB Notts* 22:02; *Monasticon Anglicanum* III, pp. 5550-1, no III.

how to read it, — and the rules of top to bottom, left to right, do not apply. To a greater or lesser extent this is true of all our sources, which will continue to yield their treasures as long as we have the patience and the skills to read them constructively. Clearly, then, *Domesday People and their Descendants*, both the book and the phenomenon, will keep on changing. That is both exciting and challenging, but also invites realism. As far as the book is concerned, the focus will remain on the century after the Conquest, with the tracing of Domesday fees down to 1242 regarded as a desirable bonus. For anyone wishing to build a prosopography of the century 1166-1266 it will form a useful basis. It certainly will not, however, be me that does it: one hydra-headed monster is enough for one lifetime.

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