ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS TO THE COMPLETE PEERAGE

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The FMG has asked Chris Phillips to contribute some corrections and updates to information in ***The Complete Peerage****. These are the first two articles in the series.*

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The Marriages of Geoffrey I and II de Say

The genealogy of the Says in the late 12th century is an interesting example of how traditional genealogical statements can persist – and even reassert themselves – long after they have been corrected in print.

Dugdale (1675) stated that Geoffrey I de Say (d.1214) married an unnamed sister and coheir of Walkelin Maminot (d. c1190), the only authority given being "coll. R. Gl. S." (the collections of Robert Glover, Somerset Herald). No doubt this was an attempt on someone's part to explain the Says' succession to lands previously held by the Maminots[2], but in fact there is ample contemporary evidence to show that Geoffrey married a woman called Alice de Chesney, not a Maminot. Her parentage and her connection to the Maminots had been made clear by the early 20th century, but Dugdale's version proved resilient, and Geoffrey's wife continues to be identified as "Alice Maminot" to this day (e.g. Sanders, 1960)[3].

Eyton (1854-60) printed evidence from the pipe rolls and from charters, showing that Hugh de Periers died around 1175, leaving a widow Alice "de Caineto", who was married to a Geoffrey de Say by 1180[4]. Evidently she survived at least until 1185, as Geoffrey and Alice made a gift to Brockley (later Bayham Abbey) with the assent of Gilbert, bishop of Rochester, who did not succeed until that year (Thorpe, 1769, p.378, [citing Cotton MS Otho A II, ff. 36, 37]).

Further charter evidence fixes the place of Alice's husband in the Say pedigree, making it clear that he was indeed Geoffrey I de Say (d. 1214):

(1) On 1 January "1198", Geoffrey de Say and his son Geoffrey made a grant to the hospital of Drincourt, providing for prayers for the soul of Alice "de Kaisneio", the mother of the younger Geoffrey[5]. Clearly these two Geoffreys are the same father and

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1 The author's webpage at http://www.medievalgenealogy.org.uk/cp/index.shtml provides many more suggested corrections and additions to *The Complete Peerage*.

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2 In the pipe rolls, Geoffrey de Say is named as the heir, but the relationship is not specified (e.g. Stenton, 1928).

3 Keats-Rohan (2002, p.1027) identifies Geoffrey's wife as Alice, either a sister or an aunt of Walkelin Maminot, though on p. 368 she is correctly described as Alice, daughter and coheir of John de Chesney.

4 See also two undated charters for Combwell Priory (Kent) both making provision for the soul of Walkelin Maminot, the first with the consent of Hugh de Periers, and the second by Alice "de Caineto" (Anon., 1866).

5 Round (1899)

son who appear in two charters dated 1196-1198 concerning the manor of Rickling (Essex), the father describing himself as Geoffrey the son of William de Say[6].

(2) A sequence of Bermondsey charters shows an original grant by Walkelin Maminot, successively confirmed by Geoffrey de Say, later by his son Geoffrey de Say – describing himself as the son of Geoffrey de Say and of Alice "de Chemunei" – and eventually by William de Say - mentioning his wife Sibyl and referring to the gifts of his father Geoffrey and his grandfather Geoffrey (Thorpe, 1769, p.169, [citing Cotton MS Claudius A VIII, no 14]).

The parentage of Alice de Chesney was established by Round (1902), p.9, from comments in Dugdale (1675), based on the cartulary of Coxford (Norfolk). These showed that Alice, the wife of Geoffrey de Say, and Emma, the wife of Michael Belet, were daughters and coheirs of John de Chesney[7].

Evidently, the Says' interest in the Maminot lands came through this John de Chesney. John was the son of Ralph de Chesney and the grandson of another Ralph, a Domesday tenant. The cartulary of Merton Priory records that Hugh Maminot [the grandfather of Walkelin] gave the manor of Petham (Kent) to Ralph de Chesney in marriage with his daughter Alice. Chronologically, this would be John's father rather than his grandfather (Salzman, 1924, p. 21-22)[8]. So Geoffrey de Say succeeded Walkelin Maminot as a result of his marriage to the granddaughter of Walkelin's aunt.

This solution seems clear enough, and *The Complete Peerage,* (Cokayne, 1926) in its article on *Essex,* follows Eyton and Round by identifying the wife of Geoffrey I de Say as "Alice (widow of Hugh de Periers, who d.s.p. about Dec. 1175), da. and coh. of John de Chesney". But in the later article on *Say* (Cokayne, 1949), an attempt is made to combine this with the traditional version given by Dugdale, by identifying the wife of Geoffrey I as "Alice, widow of Ralph de Cahaines and da. of Hugh Maminot" and shifting Alice de Chesney a generation later to place her as the wife of Geoffrey II[9]. This is particularly unfortunate, as the chronology of this account is based on the dating of Alice de Chesney's marriage to the late 1170s. As a result, the account places the birth of Geoffrey I in the 1130s, and that of Geoffrey II in the 1150s.

In fact, it is clear from the evidence summarised above that – as Eyton and Round showed – Alice de Chesney was the wife of Geoffrey I, not Geoffrey II. So Geoffrey I was probably born soon before his father's death in the 1140s, and Geoffrey II around 1180,

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6 Anon. (1894 & 1900). The first of these shows that Geoffrey and Alice had sons William [dead by 1 January "1198"] and Geoffrey, and that after Alice's death, he was married to Alice de Ver, by whom he had another son Geoffrey. Sanders (1960) says that he possibly had a third wife, Alice, the daughter of Henry de Essex of Rayleigh, but this is probably through confusion with Alice de Ver.

7 Farrer (1924) prints an extract from Dugdale's notes from the cartulary (Bodleian, Dugdale MS 39, f. 103), according to which there was another daughter, of whom 'came dame Alice de Suthsex'.

8 Salzman points out that, according to a manuscript from Lewes Priory, Ralph was predeceased by a wife named Emma (Dugdale, 1817-30). Keats-Rohan, (2002, p.369) says that Ralph's wife was Emma Maminot, apparently assuming that these wives were identical and that the Merton cartulary is mistaken about the name.

9 The first Alice is perhaps intended to be the Alice, daughter of Hugh Maminot, identified in the Merton cartulary as the wife of Ralph de Chesney. But, curiously, there is evidence suggesting that another daughter of Hugh (or perhaps the same daughter, in her widowhood) married Ralph de Keynes, who belonged to a family distinct from the Chesneys but often confused with them (Salzman, 1922, p.183).

implying significant revisions to the careers of both men as described in *The Complete Peerage*. The identity of the first wife of Geoffrey II, the mother of his successor William, remains unknown.

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The Marriages of Thomas West, Lord la Warre

According to the account of "La Warre, now de la Warr", in *The Complete Peerage*, Thomas West, Lord la Warre (d.1525) married firstly Elizabeth, daughter of Hugh Mortimer, and secondly Eleanor, daughter of Roger Copley (Cokayne, 1926, p.156). He had issue by both these marriages, but the male issue of the first failed with his son Thomas (d.1554).

However, a pedigree of the Percy family, which seems to have been compiled in the 1480s, shows Eleanor, a daughter of Henry Percy (Earl of Northumberland, d.1461), married to a Lord “de la Ware” (Hunter Blair, 1930).

The Complete Peerage elsewhere discusses earlier assertions - presumably based on this pedigree - that Eleanor Percy was married to either Thomas's father or his grandfather (Cokayne, 1926, p.155, note c). It is pointed out that she was mentioned as unmarried in her father's will, dated 1st November 36 Henry VI [1457], which means that both these suggestions are impossible, because by that date the grandfather was dead, and the father was already married to the wife who survived him[10].

The correct solution seems to be that it was Thomas himself who married Eleanor Percy.

Chronologically, it is quite feasible for Thomas, who was born in the mid-1450s, to have had another wife before Elizabeth Mortimer. There is no doubt that his son and successor, Thomas, was Elizabeth's son[11], and we have two estimates of the age of this son - he was said to be aged 38 years and more on 6 February 1519/20[3], and 40 years and more at his father's death, 11 October 1525[12]. The second of these is probably a "round figure", but the first appears more precise, and implies that he was born about 1481.

Perhaps Thomas was really born a little earlier than this, as he was married by 24 August 1494, and had been made a knight of the Bath as early as 29 November 1489 (Cokayne, 1926, p.156)[13]. Even so, there is no chronological difficulty with his father having had a previous marriage to Eleanor Percy, say in the early 1470s.

The date of Elizabeth Mortimer's death can also be fixed, from an interesting passage in the will of the elder Thomas West, dated 8 October 1525, which recites that after the death of his wife, Dame Elizabeth, he made provision for a mass of Our Lady to be said in the church of the White Friars in London, and for an anniversary or yearly obit to be kept, for the term of 30 years. The testator adds that "sith the death of my said wife is now expired xxiij yeres at Saint Peters day the appostell last past", which tells us that Elizabeth died 29 June 1502[14].

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10 *Collins Peerage* (1779 ed.), vol. 2, p.373, cited by Cokayne (1926, p.155)

11 Thomas was named as the heir at the inquisition taken in 1519/20 after the death of Elizabeth's mother Eleanor, then the widow of Richard Crofte, at which his age was given as 38 years and more. Public Record Office, Kew, England. Catalogue reference C 142/34/63.

12 Inquisition taken after the death of Thomas West, Lord la Warre. Public Record Office, Kew, England. Catalogue reference C 142/45/100.

13 The contrast with the later evidence of his age is not as clear as it may appear at first, as it was not unknown for boys under the age of ten to be made knights of the Bath. This may have been the case with Thomas, as the occasion of his knighthood was the creation of the Prince of Wales, who was a child of three.

14 PCC 2 Porche: Public Record Office, Kew, England. PROB 11/22, f.11.