NOTES AND QUERIES

No. 4 – The Ebriaci of Pisa, Jewish ancestors of the Plantagenets? (*Lindsay L Brook*)

Some time before 1285, Richard Fitz Alan, Earl of Arundel (d.1302) married Alasia (d.1292), daughter of Tommaso I, Marquis of Saluzzo (C[okayne], 1910-59, **1:** 241). Both are ancestors of Elizabeth of York (Turton, 1928). Brook *et al.* (1984, tables XVII & VI) trace Alasia's ancestry back to her great-grandfather, Bonifazio of Saluzzo (d.1212) and his wife Maria, daughter of Comita I (d.1218), Giudice of Torres, one of the four provinces of medieval Sardinia[1].

So much is well known. Not so well known is that Comita's grandmother was Maria, daughter of Ugone Ebriaci, a member of a prominent Pisan merchant family[2], one of thirty or so named as '*console del mare*' (Cristiani, 1962, pp.47-48). Brook *et al.* (1984, table XVI) trace Maria's ancestry back a further two generations. However, Ceccarelli-Lemut (1994) has argued convincingly that Maria's ancestry can be taken back yet another generation. Maria dei Ebriaci, living 1127-1136, was the daughter of Ugo (d.1136), son of another Ugo (d.1115)[3], himself the son of Pagano (d.1091/1092)[4].

Cristiani (1962, Appendix III, p.356) cites as a member of the Ebriaci family a '*Hebriacus de Hebriacis*'. Perhaps the Ebriaci were Jews who converted to Christianity and were accepted into the Pisan aristocracy (in much the same way as the Pierleoni were absorbed into the Roman nobility). So perhaps the Plantagenets have Jewish ancestry through the Ebriaci of Pisa, and maybe via other families too. Comments via the editor are always welcome.

References

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1 The others were Arborea, Gallura and Cagliari.

2 '*…involved in ventures in Constantinople and the Orient*' (Ceccarelli-Lemut, 1994).

3 In other words, the Ugo Ebriaci, cited in Brook *et al*. (1984), p.105, was not one person but two.

4 Ceccarelli-Lemut (1994) provides further evidence as to how the Ebriaci forged trading relations with Sardinia by matrimonial alliances. Ganis Ebriaci (c.1136-1164), son of Ugo (d.1136) married Susanna (sometimes called Pisana) daughter of the powerful Sardinian noble Costantino de Athen (living 1136) and of Preziosa de Lacon, the latter descended from the *giudici* of Torres and Arborea (Brook *et al*., 1984, Tables V and VII). So VII/13 needs correcting, in the light of this new information.