ODARD THE SHERIFF.

By J. HORACE ROUND.

In the course of studying the early charters I am editing for the Pipe Roll Society, I have been incidentally led to a genealogical discovery, which carries back the pedigree of an apparently Norman house, in a somewhat unexpected way, to the Conquest.

The actual charter in the Pipe Roll Series (*Duchy of Lancaster Royal Charters*, No. 10), belongs to the close of the reign of Henry I, and is merely a confirmation to William, son of Udard de Bamburgh ("Udardus de Baenb' "), of all his father's lands. This, however, is our starting point. Our next step is found in a memorandum among the Duchy records of the charter by which Stephen confirmed that of his predecessor, and which grants "Willelmo filio Odardi *Vicecomitis*," all his father's lands, "et nominatim carucatam terre de Baenburge quæ fuit Favelli et carucatam terre de Colebriggia et terram de Burnulfestona et de Chinewallia etc." We thus establish the identity of Odard (or Udard) de Bamburgh with Odard the Sheriff ("Vicecomes"), who, as Sheriff, would have his official residence at Bamburgh the old seat of Northumbrian sovereignty.

But who was this Odard the Sheriff? A glance at the Pipe Roll of 1130 will shew us that, at the date of that record, he was acting as Sheriff of Northumberland, and making disbursements, in his official capacity, at Bamburgh Castle. But, from a passage in Symeon of Durham (ii. 261), we learn that in 1121, he was already Sheriff of the Northumbrians ("Vicecomes Northymbrensium.") Further, we learn from the *Liber de*

[1] Original Controller's Account, 14 Edwd. II. (Brit. Museum.)

Calchou,[1] that, as "Odardo vicecomite de babenburch," his name occurs among those of the witnesses to Earl David's foundation charter to Selkirk Abbey [1119-1124].

The eminent historian of Northumbria, Mr J. Hodgson Hinde, writes of him as follows:—

"Odard, the first Sheriff under the Crown on record, occurs as a witness to the foundation charter of the Abbey of Selkirk, afterwards removed to Kelso, in 1113,[2] and is there described as 'Vicecomes de Bebbanburch.' He is mentioned by Richard of Hexham, in connection with the early history of his monastery founded in 1114, and by Simeon of Durham, in 1121. He was still Sheriff of Northumberland, in 1131, and his father Hildret was Sheriff of Cumberland the same year, as appears from the isolated Pipe Roll of the 31 of Henry I. Odard was the founder of two families of baronial rank. He was succeeded by his son Adam in the Barony of Wigton in Cumberland, and by John, who adopted the name of Vicecomes or le Vesconte, in that of Emeldon in Northumberland."[3]

The assumption that Odard the Sheriff of Northumberland, was son of the contemporary "sheriff" of Carlisle (not of Cumberland), Hildret, might easily be made by anyone reading the entry in the Pipe Roll of 1130:—

Hildret et Odardus filius suus reddunt compotum de xl solidis pro concessione terre gamel' filii Ber' (p. 142.)

It is certain, however, that Odard the Sheriff was not identical with Odard, son of Hildret; and it is even doubtful whether Hildret the "Sheriff," was identical with Hildret father of Odard.

I differ, moreover, from all authorities in boldly questioning whether the Hildret who answers for Carlisle on this Pipe Roll was a "sheriff" at all. He is, indeed, so recognised in the official list of sheriffs,[4] in Mr. Bain's valuable Calendar (p. 21), in the Cumberland *Pipe Rolls* (1847) of the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-on-Tyne, etc. But, in the first place, on the Pipe Roll itself he is nowhere styled sheriff, although the other sheriffs are always so styled; and, in the second, the district for which he accounts ("chaerleolium") comes at the end of eight towns and honours, none of which had a sheriff, on the 14th rotulet. Further, we have the charter by which Henry I granted Gamelesby and Glassaneby to Hildret and Odard his son. This charter is known to us from its enrolment on the Rolls of 11 John,[5] and a translation of it is printed in Mr. Bain's valuable *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland* (i, 80).[6] It is the grant the payment for which is recorded in the above extract from the Pipe Roll of 1130, and is therefore of about that date. It is addressed to Walter Espec and Eustace fitz John, together with our own Odard the Sheriff, all three of whom are found in such close

[1] Bannatyne Club.
[2] The date assigned to this charter in the *Liber de Calchou* is '1119-1124.'
[3] *A History of Northumberland* (1858), Part I, pp. 203-4.
[4] Thirty-first report of Deputy-keeper, p. 275.
[5] *The Pipe Rolls . . . for . . . Cumberland* (1847), p. 65, note.
[6] From *Coram Rege*, 11 John, No. 41, no. 9.

connection in the above Pipe Roll. Now Hildret the grantee is spoken of not as Hildret the Sheriff, but only as Hildret "de Karleolio." Conversely, the sheriff to whom the writ is addressed is our own Odard, who must consequently have exercised jurisdiction in Cumberland, as indeed is implied by the Pipe Roll itself. Now this is no unimportant point; for if Carlisle had, in 1130, no sheriff, but only a *firmarius*, it affects the whole status of the district at the time.

The main point, however, is that in this charter Odard the Sheriff is shown to be quite distinct from Odard, the son of Hildret. Who, then, was the father of Odard the Sheriff?

We must turn for the solution of this question to that grand series of charters preserved in the Durham Treasury, of which some are facsimiled in the Scottish *Facsimiles of National Manuscripts*, and still more are printed in an Appendix to Raine's *North Durham*. Several of these relate to Swinton, co. Berwick, just across the Scottish border. Among them is one of King David (1124-1153), granting that manor "Arnolfo . . . meo militi sicut *Vdardus Vicecomes* eam tenuit" (No. 22). A variant of this charter (No. 21), grants it "meo militi Arnulfo . . . per easdem consuetudines per quas Liulfus filius Edulfi et *Vdardus* filius suus tenuerunt." Collating these charters, we establish the identity of Odard (or Udard) the Sheriff, with Odard, son of Ligulf ("Liulfi"), son of Eadwulf ("Edulfi.") Let us now advance a step further. King Edgar [1097-1107], by his charter at the dedication of Coldingham, grants "villam totam Swintun cum diuisis sicut Liulf habuit." And one of the witnesses to this charter is "Ligulf de Bebbanburch." Who is this but the man we are in search of, the father of that Odard the Sheriff "de babenburch," who was present at the foundation of Selkirk Abbey.

Here we have an apt illustration of the truth of Mr. Bain's remarks[1] on the necessity, in studying the history of the time, for keeping our eyes on both sides of the Border at once, and of remembering that Northumberland at one time "stretched from the Humber to the Forth."

So suggestive are the names of Ligulf and Eadwulf from their occurrence in the house of the Northumbrian Earls, that I wish we might find a missing link to identify Eadwulf the Northumbrian, with his contemporary Eadwulf "Rus" who headed the avengers of Ligulf's death, by the murder of Bishop Walcher, in 1080. In that case we could prolong the pedigree backward at a bound.

We must content ourselves, however, with carrying the pedigree downwards. In this we are helped by the *Testa de Nevill*, where we have this instructive entry:—

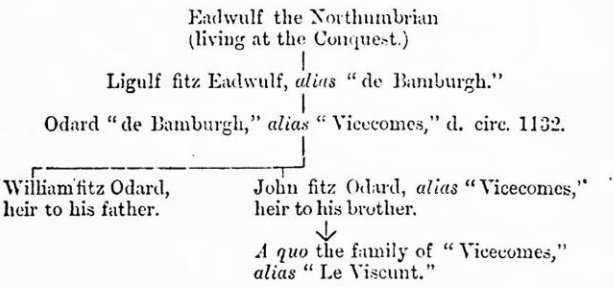
[1] *Calendar* I, 13-4.

"Johannes Vicecomes tenet in capite de domino Rege baroniam de Emelesdon per servicium iii militum et omnes antecessores sui tenuerunt per idem servicium de dono domini Regis H. primi qui eos feoffavit, et preterea idem Johannes Vicecomes tenet sex bovatas terre in burgo de Bamburg, reddendo per annum vii solidos ad firmam burgi quas dominus rex H. pater domini Regis J. dedit Johanni filio Odardi antecessori prefati Johannis."[1]

This Barony lay in Emeldon and the neighbourhood, on the coast, some miles south of Bamburgh.

The statement that the founder of the family was enfeoffed by Henry I is of special interest as suggesting that this was done while the forfeited Earldom was in the King's hands, and that warned by his brother's experience before its walls he had resolved to entrust the Northumbrian stronghold to an officer of his own choosing, holding *in capite* from himself. In the *Liber Niger* the Barony is held by John fitz Odard, whose identity with John le Vicunt ("Vicecomes") is thus established. The two names appear to be used indifferently on the Pipe Rolls. He was "le fitz Odart" of Jordan Fantosme. From him descended the house of Viscunt, which (so far as the main line was concerned) ended in an heiress under Henry III. That he and his descendants eventually assumed *Vicecomes* as a surname is a curious fact, and seems to imply that the office must have been held for many years by his father, if not his grandfather.

This then is the origin of the family.



As far as I can learn, this interesting descent has been overlooked by Canon Raine, by Mr. Hinde, and the other great antiquaries of Northumbria. The erroneous parentage of "Odard the Sheriff" is, in any case, found in the volume of local Pipe Rolls, published in 1847, by the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries. I may touch, in a subsequent paper, on the pedigree of that Odard of Carlisle with whom he has been confused.

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[1] 392 b. See also "Baronia Johannis le Viscunt," (p. 383 b), and "Socagium Baronie Johannis le Viscunt" (p. 387 b).