

Nov: Some Early English Pedigrees (#2 @ 2 mo)

Brief historical notes:

After the battle of Hastings in 1066, William the Conqueror, 1027-1087, became William I of England.

His Norman companions were rewarded with titles to many lands. The best known of these were:

1. Robert de Beaumont, afterwards Count of Meulan
2. Eustace, Count of Boulogne
3. William, afterwards 3d Count of Evreux
4. Geoffrey of Mortagne, afterwards Count of Perche
5. William FitzOsborne, later 1st Earl of Hereford
6. Aimeri, Viscount of Thouars
7. Hugh de Montfort, seigneur of Montfort-sur-Risle
8. Walter Gifford, seigneur of Longueville
9. Ralph de Toeni, seigneur of Conches
10. Hugh de Grandmesnil

William de Warenne; William Malet; Eudes, bishop of Bayeux; Turstin FitzRou; Geoffrey de Mowbray, etc.

The great Domesday survey in 1086 described the lands and listed the landholders and values involved: A morgan of land was about 1/2 acre —MGHns v2p231. A hide was equivalent to about 120 acres —RCP33, while several others say it was about 160 acres.

The families generally took their names from their estates: e.g. Richard FitzGislebert (Norman for son of Gislebert), was father of Gilbert Fitz-Richard de Clare, the gr.f. of Roger de Clare.

Titles: Duke (lowest); Marquess; Earl; Viscount; Baron (highest).

All of England, however, did not at once submit after 1066. They were gradually pushed westward from Gloucester, Hereford, etc., their genealogical and other records now being preserved in the National Library of Wales at Aberystwyth and elsewhere. Wales under Llewelyn was finally subdued in 1282 but the boundaries or Welsh Marches were long a virtual "no-man's land" where the king had no writ and acts of Parliament had no effect. "Let him take who has the power and let him keep who can."

The English kings, descendants of the Conqueror, lost Normandy in 1203. The landholders were obliged to choose between their estates in England and those in France, forfeiting one or the other.

The Magna Charta was signed by King John in 1215.

The long struggle between kings and barons ended in their defeat at Evesham in 1265, a year after they had won at Lewes in 1264 and imprisoned the king.

Pope Nicholas' Taxation 1288-1292 gave the king one-ninth! Henry VIII ended the Pope's power in England in 1535, and the suppression of religious houses took place from 1536 to 1539.

From 1649 to 1660 England had no king, being a commonwealth under Cromwell. During that period many genealogical records were destroyed. 1837 marks the beginning of the current system of record keeping, followed closely by the census of 1841.

English reigns:

(Documents usually dated from first year of each king)

William I	1066-1087	Edward IV	1461-1483
William Rufus	1087-1100	Richard III	1483-1485
Henry I	1100-1135	Edward V	1485-1485
Stephen	1135-1154	Henry VII	1485-1509
Henry II	1154-1189	Henry VIII	1509-1547
Richard I	1189-1199	Edward VI	1547-1553
John	1199-1216	Mary	1553-1558
Henry III	1216-1272	Elizabeth	1558-1603
Edward I	1272-1307	James I	1603-1625
Edward II	1307-1327	Charles I	1625-1649
Edward III	1327-1377	(Cromwell	1649-1660)
Richard II	1377-1399	Charles II	1660-1685
Henry IV	1399-1413	James II	1685-1689
Henry V	1413-1422	William-Mary	1689-1702
Henry VI	1422-1461	Anne	1702-1714

Act of 13 Edw VI (1560): Every man, 16 to 60, to be assessed and sworn to armour according to his lands and muster of inhabitants twice yearly to keep the peace.

From Evl:

Patent Rolls: copies of writs of the Crown, comprising every variety of subject, i.e. prerogative, revenue, judicature, safe-conduct, wardships, pardons, licenses, creations of nobility, etc.

Close Rolls: writs of the Crown, folded up and sealed on the outside; as various as patent rolls.

Plea Rolls: show the ancestry of the plaintiff and the defendant. **De Banco**, likewise

Fine Rolls: records of money paid to the Crown for favors or feudal rights

Assize Rolls: minutes of trials, civil and criminal, before the king, before his justices, etc.; (poorly preserved).

Escheat Rolls: inquisitions post mortem; they begin with Henry III.

Testa de Nevill: during reign of John and Henry III

Old word meanings (Welsh)

Hen = older or aged

Vychan = younger

Llwyd = grey or hoary

Wynn or Gwynn = white or fair haired

Ddu = black or dark (complexioned)

Goch = red

Gam = squinter or cross-eyed

Tre = homestead

Serfs = lowest description of tenants; they were at the arbitrary disposal of their lord, life and limbs only being protected by law.

Villeins = higher than serfs but not free to leave the manor.

Borders = higher than villeins; they lived in "bord" or cottages.

Geld = tax money, i.e. geldable land was taxable, being cultivated.

Cousin - often used in old records to designate close relationship, i.e. "my cousin Arnold, son of my cousin Thomas."

Nepos (nephew) - may also mean cousin --Ev7p41

Mother - may mean mother-in-law if mother is dead

"He married when a child of 4" --CPvlp367; child marriages were frequent in earlier times; arranged by parents; not usually binding until:

12 years = age of full complete (for males)

14 years = age of full consent --CPvlp243

21 years = full age for males --Gcs v6p460

Full age (females) varied from 14 to 16 --Gcs v6p460

In legal documents the matter of exact ages and approximate ages when much older than necessary by law, particularly women who were then as they are now secretive about their ages, is discussed in Gns v4p14; i.e. a woman reported to be 30 or more at father's death may actually be 40 or 50, etc.

Up at least to the late 1700s, a son described as the "natural and lawful" son of a parent, or even if shortened to "natural son", was generally if not always legitimate. Later, "natural" began to mean "base" or born out of wedlock --Gcs v5p250.

Pedigree-building rule: When 6 names, exclusive of repetition, are identical in two different pedigrees derived from different bases (two families), these pedigrees, in the absence of any indication to the contrary, are those of the same family --Gns v14p142

Gossip is not new: John age 20 married Elizabeth age 25. The neighbors tittered, "... almost old enough to be his mother." --CPvlp263.

A man was pardoned in Jan. 1415 for all treasons, murders or other offenses up to Nov. 1414, and for all offenses except murders after Nov. --CPv5p317