

## EARLY OWNERS OF BRADLEY MANOR.

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BRADLEY near Newton Abbot was in the Domesday Survey a portion of the king's hundred manor of Teintona in the hundred of that name, later called Teignbridge Hundred. The royal manor comprised Teignwick (the modern Highweek) and Kingsteignton, in the former of which Bradley was situated. There are other Bradleys in Devon, but for the history of this one in feudal times we must search under Teignwick. As the residence of the Bussel family, from whom the name Newton Bushel is derived, Bradley Manor rose to importance in the fourteenth century. From about 1419 to 1751 the Yardes were in possession.

Several references to it and its parent manor of Teignwick can be found in Pole (both in the printed *Collections* and the MS. *Collectanea*), Risdon (*Survey and Note Book*) and more recent writers, such as Reichel.<sup>1</sup> In a paper written ten years ago Mr. H. R. Watkin quoted at length nine deeds from Pole's *Collectanea*, which go far towards building up the story of Bradley's changes of ownership. Miss Firth has collected a number of *inquisitiones post mortem*, ten of them between the dates 1250 and 1500, relating to the property and its owners. These, with a few stray references to holders in State Papers and one in Bishop Lacy's *Register* (1428), constitute the body of the material available.

In regard to Pole, the value of whose conclusions there has been in some quarters a tendency to disparage, one may safely assert that even if there are regrettable gaps in his information and occasional errors in the Christian names of the persons to whom he alludes, his standard of accuracy, both in facts and dates, is much higher than that of any other early West Country chronicler; and for the history of an old Devon family or manor, his account always affords a useful foundation.

We begin then with the nine deeds, already published and discussed by Mr. Watkin.<sup>2</sup> We need not repeat his translations; it will be sufficient to state their purport. He has

<sup>1</sup> *Trans.* XXIX, 226, and XXXVII, 443 f.

<sup>2</sup> *Trans.* LVIII, 245 ff.

assigned a date to each of them, but at least five of his nine dates raise chronological difficulties, as we shall show; the medieval practice of dating deeds by regnal years instead of by years of grace is bound to cause difficulties, especially where no distinguishing number is affixed to the king's name.

I. c. 1154 (perhaps 1155). Henry II granted to Lucas his butler (*pincerna*) Tingwike and part of Dippeforde.

II. c. 1166. Henry II granted to John, son of Lucas Pincerna (who was presumably dead), Tyngwike and Dedeford.

III. 15 May 1247. Henry III granted Tingwyke and the land which Lucas son of John held in Depeford to Theobald de Englishvil. Mr. Watkin dates this 15 May 1185, as if it refers to 31 Henry II. But Henry is described *inter alia* as 'Lord of Ireland'. Henry II made his youngest son John Lord of Ireland in 1177, and the latter retained that title after becoming king in 1199. Both kingship and lordship passed to Henry III when John died in 1216. Hence 1247 is correct; also the names of some of the seven witnesses (*e.g.* William de Chaeny) are found in other documents between 1240 and 1250.

IV. 12 December 1246. (Quoted by *inspeximus* in Deed VIII *infra*). Henry III granted the manor of Tyngwike to Theobald de Englechvile with the right to reclaim and assess burgages. Mr. Watkin dates this 12 December 1185 (again 31 Hen. II), but there are the same titles and regnal year as in Deed III, which appears by its drift to be the later of the two; also 12 December precedes 15 May in the regnal years of Henry III, which begin on 28 October, but not in those of Henry II, which begin on 19 December.

V. c. 1262. Theobald de Anglica Villa devised to Robert Bussell, his kinsman and foster-child, his land of Tyngwike which he had by gift of King Henry, son of King John (this clearly refers to Henry III; Henry II would probably have been described as 'sometime King of England, grandfather of the Lord Henry, now King'), with rent in Nywton but excepting the land of Ralph de Stokes in Dippeford.

The date of Theobald's death is not certain, but apparently was not long before 2 September 1262. It has been suggested that Theobald died in or just before 1252, because an inquisition of that year, reciting that he had enfeoffed William de Ebgleschevill [*sic*] of Wahull Manor in Wiltshire, is indexed in Mr. E. A. Fry's list published by the Devon and Cornwall Record Society. This, however, was a grant and not a bequest; the abstract of 2 September 1262 shows that William had held the land for ten years before the escheator took it into the king's hands by reason of Theobald's death.<sup>1</sup> This example shows the danger of accepting an index date to

<sup>1</sup> *Cal. Inq.*, Hen. III, Vol. I, No. 509.

determine an obituary date, instead of referring to the facts indexed. Mr. Watkin's date, 'before 1252', was of course more compatible than 1262 with the dating of Deeds III and IV as 1185, because this dating implied that Theobald was born before 1165, and was at least 88 in 1252. Theobald, however, was alive eight years later than 1252.<sup>1</sup>

VI. 15 May 1263. Henry III confirmed to Robert Bussel the bequest of his foster-father Theobald de Englishville. The King mentioned his former gifts to Theobald, and here we have another verification of the date 1246 for Deed IV. The date 1263 for this Deed VI is supported by the date 16 May 1263<sup>2</sup> for an inquisition relating to land held by Theobald of the King at Woburneford (now Oburnford) in Halberton. Mr. Watkin suggests 15 May 1262, but it would be strange if an inquisition was delayed for twelve months after the fact of Theobald's death was made known to the King.

VII. 10 May 1309. Edward II on the intercession of William Montacute granted two annual fairs to William Bussel in the latter's manor of Bradlegh. This is the first actual mention of Bradley (or Bradlegh) as a separate place-name; previously the name was Teignwike. Mr. Watkin suggests 10 May 1274 as the date (assigning the grant to 2 Edward I), but this is impossible because (i) Edward I did not get back to England from his Crusade until August 1274, (ii) most of the witnesses to the grant were conspicuous in the 'lords ordainers' controversy of 1310, and (iii) the head of the Bussel family in 1274 was a child of ten named Theobald, father (or possible elder brother) of the William to whom the grant was made. The only real difficulty in the deed is that the Archbishop of Canterbury (Robert de Winchelsey) is wrongly given (perhaps by Pole in his transcription) as 'Richard'.

VIII. 10 April 1331. King Edward confirmed the grant quoted by *inspeximus* (see Deed IV) of his great-grandfather King Henry. Mr. Watkin dates this 10 April 1277. It is true that Henry II was great-grandfather to Edward I, but it is equally true that Henry III was great-grandfather to Edward III. That the later Edward is the grantor is made certain by the name of the first witness, John de Eltham, Earl of Cornwall, who is well known as the younger brother of Edward III and lived from 1316 to 1336. Indeed the mention of this witness, described as 'our brother, warden of our kingdom' (which Earl John actually was during part of 1331), supplies additional clues for the dates of most of the nine deeds recorded by Pole.

<sup>1</sup> *Close Rolls*, 1260.

<sup>2</sup> *Cal. Inq.*, Hen. III, Vol. I, No. 540.

IX. 10 October 1331. Edward III confirmed the grants in Deeds III and IV. The wording of this Deed IX makes it clear that Deed IV preceded Deed III in order of time. Mr. Watkin's date for IX, 10 October 1277, needs the same alteration as his date for VIII.

So much for Pole's raw material. In his *Collections*<sup>1</sup> he has worked up a narrative to the following effect :—

'Ting Wike, and Newton Bushell, and Bradlegh, are parcell of the parish of Kingstington; and Newton Bushell hath a chapell in it. This was by Kinge Henry 2 given unto John, the sonne of Lucas his boteler, and uppon the revolt of Normandy resumed by Kinge John, in whose tyme Eustachius de Courtenay held the same; afterward Kinge Henry 3, anno 31, granted the same unto Theobald de Englishville, which the said Theobald granted unto Robert Bussell his kinsman and foster child, which grant the said Kinge, anno 46, ratified. Robert Bussell had issue Theobald, which had issue Theobald, which had issue William, which had issue William, John, and Elisote. William died without issue. John his brother had issue John, which in Kinge Richard 2 tyme died without issue. After whose death this land fell unto Thomas Yarde, the sonne of Roger and the said Elisote. The said Thomas Yarde had issue Richard, which married Jone, daughter of William, and on of the heires of William Ferrers, of Churchton, and had issue Gilbert, which had issue Roger, which had issue Richard, . . . .' Here we may stop, as we are now well into the sixteenth century, and this paper is not meant to go beyond the fifteenth.

Unfortunately Pole, under High Wike, six pages farther on in his *Collections*<sup>2</sup>, gives a second narrative of the descent, in which he repeats most of the names, but replaces the second Theobald Bussel by William, states that John Bussel, brother and heir of the younger William, died without issue, changes Elisote to Elizonta, names the wives of Gilbert and his son Roger Yarde, and omits the second Richard Yarde.

Pole had access to documents which have since been lost or destroyed, and while it is easy to point out these minor inconsistencies, it is better to see what can be done by collating his statements with those found in official documents to which he may not have had access. We shall base our comments on the first of Pole's two narratives and premise that in three or four particulars it needs to be corrected.

i. He only gives two definite dates, both in regnal years (31 Henry III and 46 Henry III). The former is certainly correct; the latter is either correct or just one year too early. It may be that Theobald de Englishville died in 46

<sup>1</sup> pp. 262 f.

<sup>2</sup> pp. 268 f.

Henry III and that his bequests were confirmed in 47 Henry III.

ii. He only mentions two members of the Pincerna or Butler family, Lucas and John his son. The deeds and other documents imply a third, Lucas, son of John and grandson of the first Lucas, who seems to have forfeited his English property as a Norman, because after the loss of Normandy in 1204 he became a French subject.

iii. There was no Eustachius de Courtenay. Eustachia de Courtenay, wife of the younger Lucas, was granted by King John possession of her husband's forfeited land in Tingwike.<sup>1</sup> She was subsequently married to Philip Fitz Ancelin and died in 1234. Students of the arms in Bradley Chapel and in Highweek Church suggest that she may have married as a third husband Theobald de Englishville and thus afforded him a footing as her successor to the Bradley property. She appears, however, to have been several years Theobald's senior.

iv. Pole seems to have introduced one generation too many into the Bussel descent. We can only account for one Theobald, the boy of five who inherited in 1269. William, the grantee of 1309, was probably his son, the father of William, John and Elizota, and the great-grandfather of Richard Yarde, the chapel builder. The *Visitation* of 1564<sup>2</sup> rejects Pole's first sequence of Robert—Theobald—Theobald—William—William, John and Elizota, and, as in Pole's second narrative, replaces the second Theobald by another William. A careful study of the chronology points to the conclusion, supported by inquisitions, that in both sequences there is one Bussel too many, so that we may omit both the second Theobald and the substituted William, as Westcote does in his account of the family.<sup>3</sup>

With these rectifications we are now in a position to give a fairly complete, though not fully documented, succession of owners between 1154 and 1500, with their actual or approximate dates.

1. *Lucas the Butler* (c. 1100—c. 1166) appears to have come over with Henry II from Anjou in 1154. The grant to him of Teignwick and land at Diptford was made soon after, perhaps in 1155 (Deed I). Presumably he was dead in 1166.

2. *John Fitz Lucas* (c. 1135—c. 1200) had a grant of the same lands on the death of his father in 1166 (Deed II). He is mentioned as a bailiff of the Norman Exchequer in the Rouen district in 1197. The date of his death is unknown, but was probably before 1204.

<sup>1</sup> Risdon, *Note-Book*, editorial footnote on p. 133.

<sup>2</sup> Colby, p. 215.

<sup>3</sup> *View of Devonshire in 1630*.

3. *Lucas Fitz John* (c. 1165–c. 1215) succeeded, but forfeited the property as an alien when Normandy became a French possession in 1204. He married Eustachia de Courtenay, possibly a sister of Robert, Baron of Okehampton, who died in 1242. Lucas seems to have died not long after the forfeiture.

4. *Eustachia* (c. 1280–c. 1234) sued for and obtained her husband's forfeited lands by writ for an annual payment of 15 marks. Her history is obscure. It is said that she re-married Philip Fitz Ancelin and brought to him the lands previously granted to her.<sup>1</sup> Between 1218 and 1222 one Henricus de Ponte Audmari (Punchardon) was lessee at an annual payment of 100s. but in 1222 he was acquitted of the payments.<sup>2</sup>

5. *Theobald de Englishville* (c. 1200–c. 1262), possibly the third husband of Eustachia, but more probably her son-in-law (the dates fit in better with this suggestion), is named as grantee of Steinwic (*sic*) in 1230.<sup>3</sup> Payments to him are mentioned in 1227<sup>4</sup> and in 1241–2<sup>5</sup>. In addition to the grants of 1246 and 1247, already described in Deeds III and IV, there were grants to him of a weekly market on Tuesday in the manor of Teynewick<sup>6</sup>, and free warren there<sup>7</sup>. He had no direct heirs and left the property to his adopted child, Robert Bussel, perhaps his sister's son, in 1262 (Deeds V and VI).

6. *Robert Bussel* (c. 1230–1269) died in January 1269, leaving a son Theobald, born 24 June 1264<sup>8</sup>.

7. *Theobald Bussel* (1264–c. 1295) was during his minority under the guardianship of Henry de Bickleigh and his wife Matilda. The guardians were grievously vexed by the exactions of sheriffs and sub-escheators, and there is a long series of allegations against these officials recorded in the Hundred Rolls and elsewhere. We hear nothing more about Theobald except that he married one Joan, perhaps a daughter of his guardians. He was dead by 1295, in which year Joan had dower granted to her<sup>9</sup>.

8. *William Bussel* (c. 1287–1346) probably the son of Theobald and Joan, had succeeded by 1309. We may presume that he was born about 1287, and had just come of age when he took over the property. His is the first name

<sup>1</sup> *Close Rolls*, 2 Hen. III.

<sup>2</sup> *Close Rolls*, 1230, pp. 340, 345, 417.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> *Liberate Rolls*.

<sup>5</sup> *Pipe Rolls*.

<sup>6</sup> *Charter Rolls* (1246).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.* (1248).

<sup>8</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 29 April 1269.

<sup>9</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 23 Edw. I.

associated with Bradley, where at the instance of William, Lord Montacute, he was granted two fairs. Further privileges were conferred on him by the charters of 1331 (Deeds VII, VIII and IX). He may in a sense be regarded as the founder of Bradley Manor, though the place-name is very much older. It is possible that the manor house was begun there in the thirteenth century, perhaps by Englishville, but its recognition as the chief residence and centre for fairs dates from William Bussel's time. He is said to have held the manor of Tengewyk and a third part of the hundred of Teyngbrugge of the king in chief by service of rendering a pair of gilt spurs yearly. He died on 10 June 1346, leaving as his heir William, aged 28 years<sup>1</sup>. This is compatible with his having been born about 1287.

9. *William Bussel II* (1318–1359) was, as we are told, born about 1318. It will be noted that the age here seems to be stated with precision and not in round numbers. His tenure comprised two-thirds of his father's property, the remaining third being held in dower by Joan, his father's widow, who also survived him. He died on 14 October 1359, and was succeeded by his younger brother John 'Boischel', aged 30 years and more<sup>2</sup>. It will be noted that John's age seems to be in round numbers, and '30 and more' may mean as much as thirty-five or thirty-six.

10. *John Bussel I* (c. 1325–c. 1400) in 1359 succeeded a brother of forty-one, and presumably was born c. 1325. In 1379 he made a settlement on his son John, who had married Joan, widow of John Bernehus, and the property was vested jointly in the names of John the elder, John the younger, and Joan<sup>3</sup>. Probably the son was of age and the father was not in good health; nevertheless the latter out-lived his son.

11. *John Bussel II* (c. 1357–1391), who presumably was born c. 1357, died *s.p.* in 1391<sup>4</sup>.

12. *Joan Bussel* (c. 1360–1419), sister of William Ferrers of Churston and aunt of Joan Yarde,<sup>5</sup> continued to hold the property as joint grantee. She was married for the third time to John Izak.<sup>6</sup> A few years later her father-in-law John I died, leaving as his heir Thomas Yarde, son of his sister Elizota. Soon after John Izak also died. His widow Joan, who survived all three husbands, passed away on 16 July 1419. Thomas Yarde, probably on account of his age,

<sup>1</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 1 July 1346.

<sup>2</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, November 1359.

<sup>3</sup> *Inq. ad quod damnum*, 2 Rich II.

<sup>4</sup> *Pat. Rolls*.

<sup>5</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 9 January 1420.

<sup>6</sup> *Fine Rolls*.

renounced the inheritance in favour of his son Richard<sup>1</sup>. The arms of the Bussels and Yards of Bradley were apparently the same: *argent, a chevron gules between three water bougets sable*. Those of Englishville were: *gules, on a bend argent three pallets sable*<sup>2</sup>.

13. *Richard Yarde* (c. 1385–1467), son of Thomas, married Joan, daughter and co-heir of William Ferrers of Churston. His is the second notable name associated with Bradley as a manor house. In 1428, when Highweek Church was built and consecrated, Richard and Joan Yarde added a Chapel to Bradley House, which was licensed on 7 February 1428<sup>3</sup>. Richard's name stands twenty-seventh on the list of seventy-four Devon magnates sworn to the peace on 1 May 1434;<sup>4</sup> he was sheriff of Devon in 1442-3, and he died at an advanced age in January 1467, leaving an heir Richard aged '40 years and more'.<sup>5</sup> Joan survived him.

14. *Richard Yarde* the younger (c. 1420–c. 1470) does not seem to have entered into full possession. We read that Joan as survivor of the elder Richard made over the premises to another son Gilbert<sup>6</sup>. It is possible that the younger Richard died soon after his father, and while his mother was holding in dower, but there is a romantic tradition that he disappeared leaving Gilbert in possession, one of those traditions that seem to be based on the Esau and Jacob theme.

15. *Gilbert Yarde* (c. 1422–1492), according to Pole, married Margaret, daughter of William Wadham of Merrifield near Ilchester, but his inquisition, stating that he died on 2 November 1492, gives his wife's name as Joan; she may have been his second wife.

16. *Roger Yarde* (c. 1442–c. 1493), whose age is stated to be '50 or more' at the death of his father Gilbert, only survived that father a short time. By his wife Joan, daughter of Richard Hals of Keynedon in Sherford, M.P. for Plympton in 1455, he left a son Richard, born at Okenbury in Ringmore on 4 August 1475 (or 1476)<sup>7</sup>.

17. *Richard Yarde* (c. 1475–1533) takes us into the sixteenth century.

This is the succession of Bradley owners, which the researches of Pole, Risdon and others, with additions and corrections supplied by original documents, have given us. We are indebted to recent investigators, like the Rev. O. J. Reichel

<sup>1</sup> *Pat. Rolls* (1416-22), pp. 263 f.; *Close Rolls*, 1420, pp. 35 f.; *Inq. p.m.*, 10 March 1420.

<sup>2</sup> Risdon, *Note-Book*, pp. 10, 20 and 52.

<sup>3</sup> *Ep. Reg. Lacy*.

<sup>4</sup> *Pat Rolls*.

<sup>5</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 30 October 1467.

<sup>6</sup> *Inq. p.m.*, 5 August 1493.

<sup>7</sup> *Inq. prob. aet.*, 13 November 1497.

and Mr. H. R. Watkin, who have also written on the subject, and we are specially grateful to Miss Diana Firth, the present owner of Bradley, who has not only pieced together the work of these writers but has added important new information from inquisitions and other sources.

Lastly a tribute is due to her father, the late Mr. Cecil Firth, who from the time of his taking possession of Bradley Manor in 1927 until his untimely death in 1931 devoted the spare time of his busy career to its restoration. Thanks to his expert knowledge and careful supervision students of medieval architecture are now able to see for themselves the structural attractions, as nearly as they can be reproduced, of this fine old Devon mansion.

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