

THE OSPRINGE FAMILY - Additional Information

by Kenneth W. Jacob

Since I wrote the article 'A Vignette of the de Ospringe Family', published in *Family History* (Volume 21, No 176, New Series No. 153) in October 2003, a great deal of further information on this family has come to light. This is largely from the archives of Canterbury Cathedral, some of which have been made available on-line. Much of this fresh data cannot yet be assigned to the skeleton pedigree established; I do believe what can should be published.

Gervase of Ospringe:

I had, in a draft for the article referred to above, suggested that he was of Anglo-Norman or Anglo-French origin. The only charter then found (Lord de Lisle and Dudly MSS, Volume 1, p 41, HMC HMSO, 1921), in which he was grantor, had the character of a 'continental' deed. I decided not to refer to it as such, as my supposition was based solely on one piece of evidence.

However, another charter has come to light out of the Canterbury Cathedral Archives, that lends further credence to him being of Anglo-French origin (CKS-CCA-DCc-ChAnt/F/135). Whilst undated, it is patently of the latter part of the 12th century. It is a grant by Guy Malevicinus to Christ Church Priory of an annual payment of 10s of *Paris* from his rents of 'Roeni' and Mantes (Seine-et-Oise) for tolls for the monks' wine. If they owe more, they shall pay more. The grant is made for the soul of his father William Malevicinus, and the souls of his ancestors and the salvation of himself, his mother and brothers. The grant was placed on St Thomas's tomb on 29th December. No one is to be allowed to worry the monks or their messengers about this matter. The witnesses were Aklina, mother of Guy Malevicinus, Hubert of Osey, Hugh Croc, Heynardus, chaplain of Guy Malevicinus, Gervase of Ospringe, and William of Faveriz.

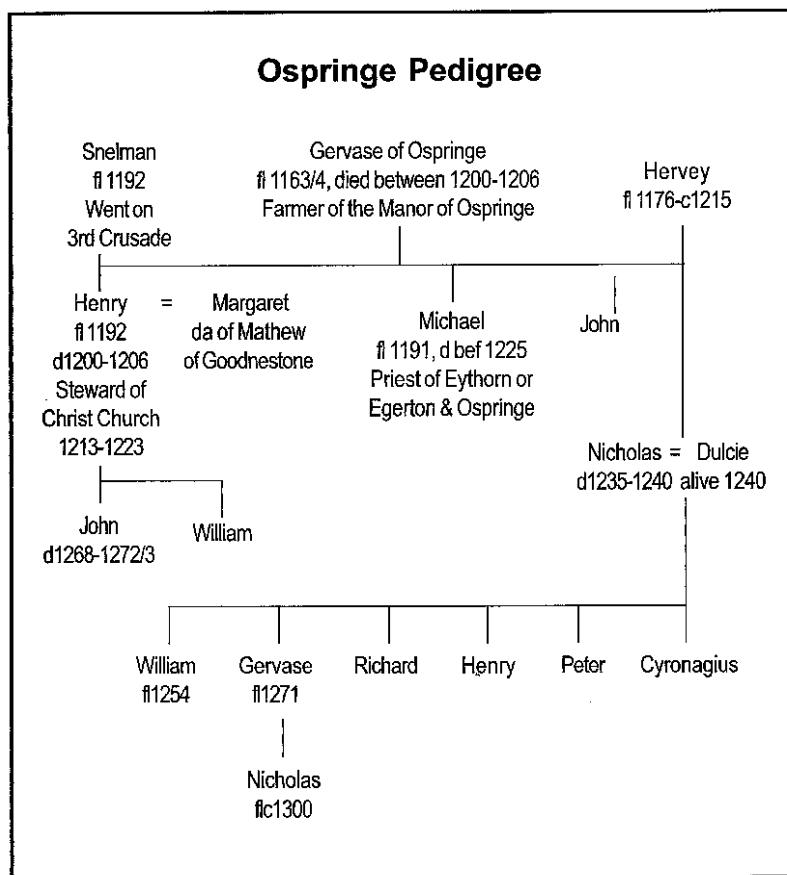
Part of the land referred to, Mantes, is the modern Mantes-sur-Seine, a town in northern France, on the left bank of the Seine. It is incidentally the town, at the capture of which, William the Conqueror lost his life. It is possible, therefore, that the charter was enacted in France. The names of the witnesses, as also that of the grantor, are patently French, as is the land from which the payment is to be made. It is possibly that Gervase held land here as well. It may well be that further charters await discovery in French archives.

Guncelin of Ospringe:

This name appears in 1203, when he and Herbert, son of Fubert, were given a day in court to covenant in 3 weeks after the feast of St Trinity, ie beginning three weeks and one day after Trinity Sunday (Pipe Rolls).

The name occurs again in this family in that a Guncelin, the son of Richard of Ospringe, granted to Richard Kenteyes 1 acre of land, lying to the east of Guncelin's house (in Ospringe) towards the wood called *Undunewode*, at a yearly rent of 3d. A fine of 8s was paid (St John's College, Cambridge, SJCA, D8.283). It can be dated to before 42 Henry III (1257-1258), as Richard Kentys was dead by then (Faversham Biographical Register, Kenneth W. Jacob, 2nd edition).

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He further granted him 8½ acres of land, of which 4½ lie in the valley to the east of Guncelin's house, and 4 on the other side of the road east, at a yearly rent of 2s, for all service save the scutage of the King, which Richard shall pay for 3 acres when occasion shall arise. A fine of 5½ marks was paid. (SJCA, D8.284). It is possible that he was a son of Richard son of Nicholas.

Henry of Ospringe:

The son of Gervase of Ospringe, further charters in which he is named have been identified.

In one he was the grantor, it being a feofment by him to the Maison Dieu at Ospringe of an annual rent of 16d arising out of an acre of land in Harbledown (Centre for Kentish Studies, CKS, CAC-U/24/48/68).

He witnessed many charters, most undated. A few carry dates or can have limiting dates applied. Particularly interesting are those he witnessed whilst steward of the prior's court (Christ Church). They are:

1213-1214 (CKS-CCA-DCc-ChAnt/L/357); 12th September 1217 - 11th September 1218 (ChAnt/C/850); 28th October 1217-27th October 1218 (ChAnt/C/1177); 1217 or 1218 (ChAnt/C/1186 and ChAnt/C/1196); 29th September 1220- 28th September 1221 (ChAnt/C/717); 16th November 1223 (ChAnt/G/98).

We know now that he was steward of the Priory between c1213-1223, and possibly either side of these dates. I can limit some of the dates in undated charters by referring to the Faversham Biographical Register in due course. One of my on-going pieces of research is drawing up lists of officials of many Kentish religious institutions; this includes a list of stewards of Christ Church. I have found that Henry was steward for a long time, so presumably he found favour and did his job well.

He witnessed the following undated charters as steward: ChAnt/C/505, C/699, C/700, C/720, C/793, C/801, C/855, C/884, C/987, C/984, C/923, C/1133, C/1167, L/355, L/356.

C/984 is described as being of the mid-13th century. We know Henry had died by 1240, but it is possible that he continued in his stewardship into the 2nd quarter of the 13th century. Alternatively, the charter is of an earlier date or another Henry, possibly the son of Nicholas, his brother, is referred to, and also acted as steward.

Dated charters, or charters with limiting dates, that do not describe him as steward are three in number. Whilst they do not describe him as being steward, it does not mean that he was not:

C/902 (1213-1220), A/80 (1222) and A/66 (January 1222)

Further charters that are undated and do not describe him as being steward of Christ Church are:

CKS-CCA-DCc-ChAnt/B/320, C/352, C/504, C/507, C/516, C/520, C/521, C/523, C/533, C/539, C/541, C/546, C/551, C/560, C/587, C/590, C/599, C/676, C/682, C/694, C/699, C/700, C/896, C/897, C/930A, C/979, C/986, C/991, C/1132, C/1012, C/1134, C/1319, C/1338, I/47, H/24, G/103, B/351, A/184. Again, we have three charters whose dates are assigned to the mid-13th century, C/320, H/24 and A/184.

British Library, Additional Manuscripts 16181, 16379, 16381 - 16412.

Henry of Ospringe fl 1269-1273

One of the many references that cannot be assimilated as yet is the following, which I feel I must introduce, because it shows the name occurring in another county, some distance from Kent. He was bailiff of Peter de la Bere in Porchester, Hampshire in 1269 (Calendar Miscellaneous Inquisition). Described as a merchant of Winchester, he was granted two licences to export wool to all but to Flanders, and to where Flanders had control, the one on 5th July 1272, the other on 4th April 1272 (Patent Roll).

The name Henry occurs earlier in this part of the country in that one of that name was one of the 'servants' performing military service due from the abbot of Wilton (in Wiltshire). Muster Roll at Bikker, 28th October 4 Edward II (1310) (Parliamentary Writs, I.408). Presumably the same man also performed military service due from Juliana de Leyburn. A muster dated 14th October 4 Edward II (1310) (Parliamentary Writs, I.408.36). Whether he is Henry the son of Gervase remains to be seen.

Michael of Ospringe:

A son of Gervase of Ospringe, he acted as a witness to a charter that can be dated to 12th June 1208 or before (British Library, Red Book of St Augustine, fo 260d)

Another charter of the period 1185-1190, to which he was a witness, was a confirmation by Baldwin, Archbishop of Canterbury to Rochester Priory,

being of a gift in free alms made by Abreda, daughter of Robert the moneyer to Rochester Priory, of a messuage she had and held by hereditary right inside the walls of the city of Rochester. Services were due to Darenth manor. The witnesses were Gilbert, Bishop of Rochester, Master Silvester, Master William of Sancta Fide, Master Ralph of Sancto Martino, Geoffrey, the notary, Michael, clerk of Ospringe, Osbern of Wrinedel', Ralph le Bor, and Roger of Pundherste (Dean and Chapter of Rochester, DRc T293).

Master William of St Fide's name occurs in my original article in relation to the founding of the Maison Dieu at Ospringe.

I would like to point out that when Malcolm Underwood, the archivist of St John's College, read the above article, he asked me to look at the original manuscript that referred to the Maison Dieu having possibly been founded by Henry II; this is what the typescript stated, but the manuscript does not support this.

John of Ospringe:

This John was a son of the above Henry. There is a charter by him to St Augustine's Abbey of 12d rent issuing out of a messuage in St Margaret's parish in the ward of Worthgate (Red Book of St Augustine, fo 142d).

Another charter by him of one *libra pipis* which John of Chivene and Lavina, his sister, annually pay him out of the denne of Swetlyndenn in the pish of Cranbrook (Ibid, fo 74).

I had stated in my article that he held the manor of Nackington. Some notes I had made many years ago state that he and William of Nackington held the manor in *gavelkind*. Unfortunately I had not recorded my source. Nevertheless, this could imply that they had inherited the manor from Henry and that they were brothers. We know Henry held land in Nackington (see Family History (Volume 21, No 176, New Series No 153, page 212). This will entail looking at the quasi name 'de Nackington' to see what other information comes to light.

He witnessed a number of charters that are largely undated, but of the mid-13th century:

Red Book of St Augustine:

Folios 76d, 77, 77d, 78d, 91d (before 1261), 104 and 104d (5th May.1268), 142d (1253-1254), 44 (1262-1263) and 299d.

Nicholas of Ospringe:

There is a grant by a Nicholas, son of Gervase de Ospringe (a date of c1300 ascribed to it) to John Champeneys and Deonisia his daughter, of 6s annual rent which he inherited on his father's death and which John Champeneys used to render him for various tenements in Ospringe. The fine paid was 36s (DRc-T-460-02). If the date assigned is substantially correct, then the Gervase referred to is probably Nicholas, a son of Gervase, the son of Nicholas and Dulcie (see pedigree chart). One of the witnesses was Henry, son of Gervase of Ospringe, who would have been his uncle.

William, son of Gervase of Ospringe:

He is named in a charter, being a grant in free, pure and perpetual alms by Michael, master of St Mary's Hospital, Dover to the master and brothers of St Mary's Hospital, Ospringe, of their right in the inheritance which was of William, son of Nicholas of Ospringe, which he gave them. Reserving to St Mary's Hospital, Dover, 1 acre of land of the said tenement which lies next to the garden of the rector (of Ospringe?). Given at the chapter house of St Mary's Hospital at Dover. The witnesses were William of Vienna, Robert of London, Luke of Hornesclive, William of Putewude, Roger of Hornesclive, Aldwin Sparue, John le Waudeis, Geoffrey le Salvage. Endorsed with descriptions in mid 13th and late 14th century hands. The late 14th century description states that the lands consist of 17 acres of land and 13 acres of wood at *Frankichefeld* and *Coxett* (in Ospringe) in a field called *le Dromefeld* and at *Arrihole* and *Hail Beech* (in Ospringe) and elsewhere. Dated 20th March 1254. (CKS-CCA-DCc-ChAnt/O/122)

There can be little doubt that this refers to William, the son of Nicholas, the son of Gervase

Robert of Ospringe:

I briefly mention a Robert of Ospringe; a further reference has been found that may relate to him. He is mentioned in an abutment to land in St Peter's parish, Canterbury, in a charter dated 9th July 1354 (CCA-DCc-ChAnt/C/1032).

I hope in due course to continue this pedigree well into the 14th century.