

The History of the Barton Stacey Knights Rogo and Emery de Sacy

This year 2016 is the 775th anniversary of King John granting Barton Stacey the right to hold an annual fair. So we wanted to find out more about the Knights after whom our village is named. We started with Peggy Hoare's wonderful research into the history of Barton Stacey which told us a little about our past:-

- We knew that in 1086 Barton Stacey was in Domesday with the land "held by the King"
- We knew that in 1199 Rogo de Sacy was awarded the manor of Bertune by the crown
- We knew that by 1215 he had been succeeded by his son Emery as in that year Emery was granted a charter for a weekly market
- We knew that by 1253 Emery had died because his daughters had inherited the manor

.....And not a lot more besides that.

But we had often asked ourselves "Why was Barton Stacey historically so important?"

Our initial approach was to the Hampshire Records Office who identified a few documents that they held.... but they were outside of the timescale of the 1215 grant of the market and even the wonderful Victorian County History had little information, so our expectations of finding much detail were not high and we thought we would have to dig into records in the Hampshire Records Office and Kew. We expected to find only a small number of records and so embarked on researching the whole medieval period (1066-1485).

How wrong we were.....

We have uncovered more than 100 pages of information on Rogo and Emery de Sacy and some wonderful documents and most surprisingly Emery's seal. We have found so much about our two "Humble Knights" that we have simply researched their lives for now, leaving the rest of the medieval period for a later date.

Typing the words Emery de Sacy or Rogo de Sacy into a search engine uncovered a wealth of information and we began to

realise that they were both much more important than we expected. Slowly records kept by the Royal Court appeared, one by one uncovering snippets of the lives of both Emery and Rogo.

Many of these records were in Latin.... Well not just Latin..... Medieval Latin, not just medieval Latin but Medieval Latin shorthand. In medieval times documents were written by hand (usually in triplicate) on hand-made vellum or parchment, using ink probably made by the scribe as well. So it was an expensive and time consuming process to write these records and the scribes developed a form of shorthand to save time and precious materials.

We came across this complexity very early on when we found a copy of the charter of 1199 where King John awarded Rogo the manor. This document started - which does not make a lot of sense even if you do read Latin.

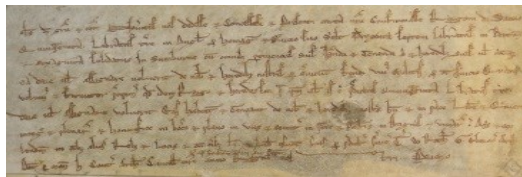
Jou's Di gra 'tceet.

We found a book on the internet that explained the shorthand and it allowed us to expand some of the words.

For instance tcet - with a mark over the first 't' indicates the scribe has missed a letter or letters before this and the mark on the last 't' means there are some letters following omitted. So tcet expands to etcetera. Luckily Jamie Leader and Katie Clarke joined us to help with the Latin translations and have done a fantastic job translating documents and finding material on the internet we had missed.

So back to Joh Di gra tcet - this expands to **Johannes, Dei gratia etcetera...** and expanded this becomes **John, by the grace of God King of England, lord of Ireland, Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine and Count of Anjou, to his archbishops, Bishops, Judges, Sheriffs, governors and all bailiffs and Faithful People Greeting.....**

Jamie managed to uncover a copy of the original charter roll



document which had a shorthand introduction as above and then on a

trip to the Hampshire records office we found the Manor records and in there was a copy of the charter which had been transcribed in full and confirmed the above words.

On top of the problems with Latin shorthand we also had to read the medieval handwriting which, at times, looks like a spider has walked through the ink well and you can find it hard to even tell if the words are written left to right or right to left.

Katie Clark pitched in with search words in Latin which uncovered a wealth of documents held in France and it quickly became clear that Rogo de Sacy spent little time if any in England. He was clearly a Norman through and through and, along with the grant of the manor of Bertune, King John gave him about a quarter of the St Malo peninsula. Widening our search for any people bearing the name de Sacy, we uncovered potential relatives and a possible link to the small town of Saussay, just North of Pavilly which itself is a little North of Rouen. There is much more to do to confirm if this is the area Rogo de Sacy came from.

We had already found a document that said Rogo fought beside Richard the Lionheart in the 3rd crusade but there was some doubt in the historical records that this was him and not another Knight Rogo de Lacy. We have been able to prove it was our man who fought with Richard. We have Rogo being given charge of very large sums of money before the crusade started, then witnessing charters in Sicily where the crusaders stopped for a while and captured Messina. We have Rogo in Cyprus where Richard married his Queen Berengaria.

The account of the battle that Rogo fought alongside Richard and nine other Knights is a colourful medieval account where the Turks were trying to surprise Richard in his sleep but were arguing whether it was chivalrous to sneak into his tent. They were overheard and the alarm was raised. They prepared to fight but did not have time to dress fully so some fought "in their underwear".



King Richard had made enemies whilst on the Crusades and he was captured on his way home and eventually imprisoned for ransom in Germany.

It is clear that Rogo de Sacy was instrumental in his release as we have him giving surety for large amounts of money which Berengaria was raising. He may have even been one of the Knights who delivered the ransom.

In the early evening of 25th March 1199 at Chalon, France, Richard was walking around the castle walls when he was struck by a crossbow bolt and died of gangrene 12 days later. It is highly likely that Rogo was at Chalon with Richard and probably he was there at his death because we have him witnessing charters by Eleanor of Aquitaine, concerning inheritances immediately after his death.

King John rewarded Rogo for his military service (to Richard we assume) in the charter of September 1199 when he was given not only the manor of Bertune but also lands in France and a large amount of income from other lands. He was clearly an important man and we suspect he may even have been part of Richard's personal bodyguard.

Later records speak of Rogo witnessing the King's charters and being sent to defend castles and on other Royal business. We know that by 1206 he had left the King's service as he was granted his lands in Pamber (just north of Basingstoke). These lands are described **"as he held when he departed the Kings service"**.

We pick up the story of his son Emery at this point when Emery paid his knights fees for Bertune Sacy in 1206 which means that Rogo must have by now died.

We think we still have much to find about Emery's early life but we know that by 1215 (the time of Magna Carta) he was in charge of Bristol castle. The constable of the castle (Guy de Cigogné) is one of the people named in Magna Carta who should be removed from office (more on him later). It explains the footnote in the castle accounts "that there were no constables accounts while Emery de Sacy was in charge". Emery was awarded the right to hold a weekly market in the same year, probably once again payment for his support for the King.

This was a time of huge turmoil with the baron's revolt and Magna Carta and it looks as though Emery was squarely on the King's side. It is interesting then that he decided to join the 5th Crusade. We know he was on this Crusade because he wrote his will in Damietta – the battle for the town saw many deaths on both sides and Emery obviously feared for his life as he gave his Selborne lands to the Templars. The crusaders were led by a Cardinal appointed by the Pope and eventually took Damietta. The Arabs offered to surrender Jerusalem in return for the return of Damietta. The Cardinal refused and continued attacking the Arab forces but they were soon beaten by the Arab army and had to leave, surrendering all they had gained.

On his return to England, Emery had confirmed the grant of the lands in Pamber given to his father.

By 1220 Emery was given 500 marks for the defence of Poitou in France and he was in France with Guy de Cigogné (whom we saw ousted from Bristol castle earlier) and in 1222 he was embroiled in issues with the men of La Rochelle who had not upheld their end of the bargain over money from the King.

These accounts are very interesting as they illustrate the role of the Templars who were in effect the 'bureau de change' and Western Union of the day. The Templars reduced the risk of transporting large amounts of money from place to place. This is such an interesting set of papers that we have more to do to translate and analyse them.

The King continued to give gifts to Emery, including heathland in Portsmouth. Emery was asked to greet the King of Jerusalem when he landed in Kent in 1223. He was sent by the King to take over Berkeley castle in 1233 from Sir Thomas Berkeley and in 1235 the King granted him the wardship of Warin de Bassingbourne and Emery's daughter Isabella was betrothed to Warin. Wardships were extremely valuable as Emery would have had the revenue from all of Warin's lands until he came of age and it enabled Emery to marry his daughter well. Later his other daughter Agnes would be betrothed to Peter de Coudray another good match.



The King clearly favoured Emery enormously as he showered him with gifts right up until his death and even made some gifts directly to Emery's wife. An analysis of the presents made to the King in the year to 23rd June 1235 makes interesting reading. 66 individual presents (some included multiple items) were made to the King by senior figures in the Kingdom, and overseas. These gifts were re-distributed between January 1235 and July 1236. Many were kept by the King but 11 were given by the King as gifts. The beneficiaries are listed - his brother Richard, his future Queen, his sister, his Uncle William of Savoy, Olaf King of Man, the Earls of Derby, Lincoln and Pembroke..... **and the relatively humble Knight Emery de Sacy.** That statement really makes you ask why Emery (and Rogo) were so favoured – no doubt their service directly to the King.

The story continues in 1239 when Emery was made High Sheriff of Hampshire. Tom Floyd, our current High Sheriff, can thus trace his post directly back to Emery. Whilst Sheriff, Emery de Sacy was responsible for building the gate at Winchester castle and in 1241 he was granted Alton and Basingstoke 'for as long as the King pleases'.

In 1241, 775 years ago, Emery was granted the right to hold an annual fair – that fair we have tracked back to the 1600s. The charter was re-issued by Henry VIII so there are later records of it as well. Emery ceased to be Sheriff in 1243 when he joined the King in France on yet another campaign. Emery continued to receive gifts from the King over the next few years and to fight for the King in England, Wales and France.

In 1250 he gave his son Peter de Sacy all his lands in Pamber. Attached to this particular charter, which is in the Hampshire Records Office, is a wax impression from the seal of Emery de Sacy. **This seal carries one of the oldest identifiable Knight's shields in England.**



The Seal of Emery de Sacy

In 1253 the King went to France, accompanied by Peter de Sacy and Warin de Bassingbourne. Emery was clearly not well as revealed when the King drafted a charter commanding Warin to look after Agnes and Emery's wife if he died while they were away.

Emery was probably between 63 and 68 when he died – the detective story behind that assumption starts with him taking over the manor in 1206. To do that he would have normally been around 21 years of age. So if Emery was born when Rogo came back from the Crusades in 1193 he would only have been 13 years old and could not have inherited the manor. So he had to have been at least conceived before Rogo left in mid-1190. Therefore, the youngest he could have been when he died was 63 years and if he was 21 in 1206 he would have been 68.

We have much more to find out and we know that the descendants of Emery are going to be just as interesting when we uncover their past. High on our list is to identify the Manor house al-la "Time Team" and we already have ideas on how to go about this search.

Our thanks to the Hampshire Records Office and the Jervoise / Herriard collection for permission to use the seal

Read more on www.bartonstaceyfete.co.uk and on www.bartonstaceyhistory.co.uk