

ART. IV – *Who was Hubert de Vallibus?*

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EARLY in the 12th century, Ranulph de Meschines, as lord of Cumberland, held the barony of Irthington. He gave this to his brother, William,¹ who was never able to gain full possession of the lands because of their occupation by the Scots. Following the disaster of the White Ship in 1120, Ranulf was made Earl of Chester and gave up his interests in Cumberland, which reverted to the king. When Henry I died in 1136, the Scots under King David invaded the north of England, and Carlisle and Cumberland were ceded to him by Stephen. As a result, all the estates of Irthington were acquired by Gille son of Bueth, from which time they have been more usually known as Gilsland. He retained these lands until Henry II recovered Carlisle in 1157 when the fief was given to Hubert de Vallibus.² This paper will provide further information about Hubert and his antecedents and, at the same time, help to correct some errors about the early history of the family.

In 1879 Ferguson criticised the statement in Dugdale that Hubert de Vallibus and his two brothers, Ranulf and Robert, had been given baronies in Cumberland during the reign of William I.³ He pointed out that this could never have happened because at the time that part of the country was occupied by the Scots.⁴ The origin of Dugdale's information appears to have been Dodsworth,⁵ who had used a document in the cartulary of Wetheral priory, the *Distributio Cumberlandiae ad Conquestum Angliae*,⁶ a later "compilation" which has caused confusion over the years.⁷ Ferguson concluded that Hubert was a son of Robert of Pentney, holder of lands in Norfolk and Suffolk at the time of Domesday. It is interesting that the *Distributio* was copied into the Dodsworth manuscript on the page adjacent to a descent of the families of de Vallibus of Gilsland and of Triermain, all of which is accurate apart from the insertion of Hubert's two brothers, Ranulf and Robert, who have been excluded from the descent of the family from Hubert (Fig. 1).

Some of the earliest references to Hubert (1) occur in Devon where he was a tenant of the Redvers family. Around 1140, he witnessed a gift by Baldwin Redvers to the dean and canons of Christchurch and shortly after this he made a personal gift of land at Farwood Barton in Colyton, Devon, as part of a collective donation to Savigny Abbey for the building of a monastery at its daughter foundation, Quarr Abbey in the Isle of Wight.⁸ This last charter was witnessed by Robert de Vallibus who was probably Hubert's son. Hubert witnessed other charters for the Redvers family between 1141-8 and Robert's name appears three times, the last time in 1159.⁹

Early in the 1140s, Hubert was at Devizes and was a witness to a charter of the Empress Maud.¹⁰ In 1149, he was again present at Devizes¹¹ when Henry FitzEmpress, the future Henry II, was sent to England at the age of 16 to receive a knighthood from King David of Scotland. This ceremony took place in Carlisle and Hubert followed when Henry returned to France the next year. It is possible to trace some of Hubert's journeys with the Empress Maud and Henry, now Duke of Normandy, during this period because of the deeds he witnessed on their behalf.

Thus from 1150-3, he was in Rouen but had returned to England by 1154.¹² He was evidently present at Dunstable in January at one of the last of Henry's meetings with King Stephen. Hubert journeyed to France at least once more because he witnessed a document at Rouen in 1156/7 before the court returned to England. This was a charter which Henry addressed to all his officers in Normandy. He set aside lands for the souls of Henry his grandfather, Geoffrey Count of Anjou his father, and for the "weal" of the Empress his mother. The document was witnessed by Maud, empress and mother of the king, Thomas the chancellor, Geoffrey and William brothers of the king, Hubert de Vallibus, Hubert de Helynn and others.¹³

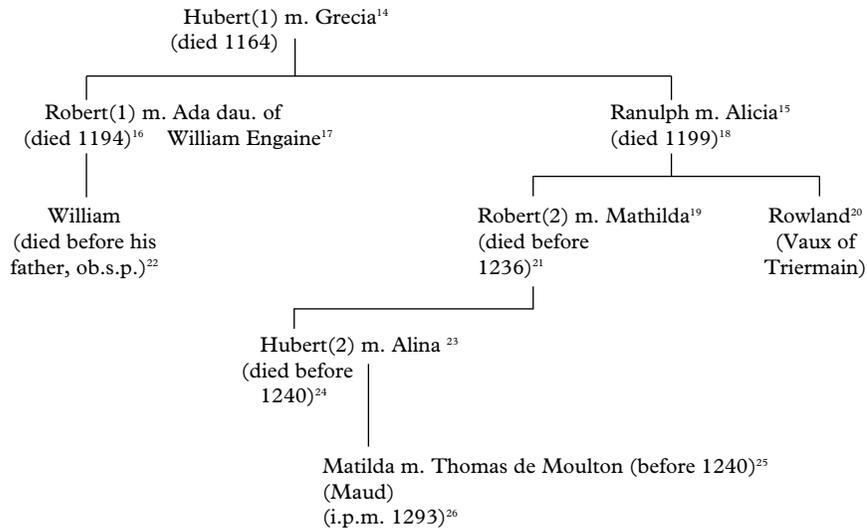


FIG. 1. The descendants of Hubert de Vallibus, first lord of Gilsland.

It was from 1149-57 that Hubert witnessed these deeds and over roughly the same period another de Vallibus was also witnessing documents. This was Godard who was justiciar to Henry II in Normandy 1154-58²⁷ and who does not appear to have come to England. He created the parish of Goderville, Seine-Maritime, which he held of Henry as Duke of Normandy. In 1167, he was feoffed under knights serving the Duke for one fee of Baillia Galfridi de Bleville. How Hubert and Godard were related and whether it was through Godard's influence that Hubert was at Henry's court are questions which cannot be answered.

A further source of information comes from the pipe rolls of which the earliest is for 1129/30,²⁸ a lone survivor from the reign of Henry I, after which there is a gap until 1155/6, the second year of Henry II's reign. In that year Hubert de Vallibus received a gift of 40 marks in silver from the queen and, from the king, lands of £40 in Chippenham and of £10 in Calne, both in Wiltshire,²⁹ presumably reflecting his length of service in the royal household. These were confirmed in the rolls of the next two years, the last being in 1157/8 when the first entries for Cumberland appear.

In 1157, the king had returned from Normandy and during that summer demanded (and received) the return of the three northern counties which had been

in the occupation of Malcolm, King of Scotland. At the end of the year, Henry travelled north to meet the Scottish king at Carlisle and Hubert was charged with making the arrangements. His account appears in the pipe rolls.

And the corrody prepared against the arrival of the King which he (the sheriff) gave to Hubert de Vallibus £11 3s. by the King's writ.³⁰ (Translation).

The meeting, arranged for the knighting of Henry's eldest son, was not a success and the kings went their separate ways. Hubert's continuing service was further rewarded with the barony of Gilsland which formerly had been the lands of Gille son of Bueth, together with the addition of Corby and Catterlen. These were granted in return for the service of two knights, and Hubert was left there, with others, to keep the peace on the borders when the king returned to Normandy.

. . . totam terram quam Gilbertus filius Boet tenuit die qua fuit vivus et mortuus de quocunque illam tenuisset, Et de incremento Korkeby cum piscaria et aliis pertinentiis quam Wescubrich filius Williemi Steffan tenuit, et Kaderlenge cum molendino quod Uchtredus filius Haldani tenuit . . .³¹

In return for this service he was given exemption from the payment of "noutgeld", originally a rent based on the number of horned cattle which the tenant owned. This exemption was worth £18 13s. 3d. annually and needs to be set in perspective. The total receipt for Cumberland for noutgeld in 1160 was £80 10s. 8d. of which Hubert's exemption was nearly one quarter, an exemption that was to be passed to his descendants.

The principal manor of Gilsland was Irthington to the east of Carlisle. Graham considered that it was here that Hubert de Vallibus lived and that the principal building was on the site of a motte adjoining what is now the Nook Farm.³² The farmyard is the likely site of the castle.³³ It was not until the 14th century that the nearby dwelling of Naworth Castle was "crenellated" by Ranulf Dacre and became the stronghold for the barony.

In addition to these lands, Hubert had an interest in Norfolk. In 1157 he was pardoned of payment for 22s through the writ of the king in the hundred of Humelyard³⁴ but there is no further mention of Norfolk until the pipe roll of 1194 when Ranulf de Vallibus, Hubert's younger son, had to pay 100 marks for his brother's debts in Norfolk and Suffolk to be rendered in Cumberland.³⁵

One further entry in the pipe roll of 1158 concerned Hubert.

Et idem Vic reddit Computum de 100 solidos de murdro de Chepeham dicitur. In perdona per breve Regis Hubert de Vallibus 100 solidos. Et quietum est.³⁶ (And the same Sheriff pays the account for 100 shillings it is being said for the murder at Chippenham. In pardon through writ of the King Hubert de Vallibus 100 shillings. And is quit).

The word "murdrum" which could mean either murder or the fine for a murder and usually referred to a secret killing, should probably be interpreted here as a murder fine. The sum of money paid, a large quantity of tested silver, was the responsibility of the community in which the murder was committed. Originally used by William I to discourage the English from killing the Normans, by the second half of the 12th century there had been so much inter-marriage between the two nations that it applied to both.³⁷ For some reason which is not apparent, this fine was the responsibility of Hubert and not the community.

Does this have anything to do with the story of the founding of Lanercost Priory? It is a tale frequently repeated by writers, supposedly because of the remorse which

Robert de Vallibus felt at the treacherous murder of Gille son of Bueth.³⁸ This crime was supposed to have been carried out in breach of a tryst either by Hubert or Robert. The story was originally attributed to William Camden³⁹ but has been rejected by others including Hodgson Hinde in his paper "On the Early History of Cumberland".⁴⁰

Hubert died in 1164/5 and was succeeded by his eldest son, Robert.⁴¹ If Robert had witnessed the charter of 1140, Hubert was probably in his sixties at the time of his death. There is some confirmation of this because Hubert's daughter, who is not named, had been enfeoffed, by 1166, for one knight of the honour of Wartre (Warter) in Yorkshire.⁴² Keats-Rohan suggests that this is a 13th century list⁴³ and that this was the daughter of Hubert (2), but the date of 1166 is confirmed in the pipe roll of the same year.⁴⁴ In 1167/8 a further list of knights is recorded which contains all the same names apart from Hubert's daughter who has been replaced by Herbert de Vallibus, perhaps her son, implying that she had died by then.⁴⁵ Hubert was survived by his wife, Grecia, his sons, Robert and Ranulf (and probably more) and his daughter.

Some 75 years after Hubert's death his great-great-granddaughter, Matilda (Maud) de Moulton, was to claim that she was descended from Aitard de Vallibus. This statement had been noted by Lee Washington in 1942.⁴⁶ However he decided, in view of Ferguson's comments, that Robert of Norfolk was more likely to be her ancestor and that Aitard was a collateral progenitor.

Matilda's claim is recorded in a Suffolk assize roll⁴⁷ of 1240 concerning a case between Galfrid de May and his wife, Alina, and Thomas, son of Thomas de Moulton, and his wife Matilda (Maud) who was the daughter of Hubert (2) de Vallibus (see Fig. 1).⁴⁸ The case concerned the manor of Denham, which Alina had received as a dowry from Hubert (2), and the dispute centred on whether Denham was held of the manor of Surlingham. This was complicated by the fact that Hubert (2)'s father, Robert (2), had been reluctant or unable to produce the original charter. The dowry consisted of one carucate of land, the tithes, rents of 40 saltpits, and the advowson of the church. The jury eventually decided that Alina was correct in her view that Denham was not held of Surlingham. They also found that both Denham and Surlingham had been held by Edard (Aitard) de Vallibus and that he was the ancestor of Matilda.

This suggests that it was Aitard and not Robert who was the forebear of Hubert first lord of Gilsland but is there any other evidence to support this? It is the villages of Denham and Surlingham which hold the clue. The only members of the de Vallibus family to be recorded in the Domesday survey were Aitard and Robert who both had extensive lands in Norfolk and Suffolk, most of which were held of Roger Bigod. Aitard, whose principal holding was Keswick outside Norwich, held, amongst other lands, Denham in Suffolk and part of Surlingham in Norfolk.⁴⁹ The rather wealthier Robert, who founded Pentney Priory,⁵⁰ had also made donations to Castle Acre Priory and in one charter he named his brothers, Robert Pinquis, Gilbert and Hubert.⁵¹ It is this Hubert and the Hubert of the Dodsworth manuscript who appear to have been confused with Hubert of Gilsland in the past. Neither of these was a descendant of Aitard.

Tracing records of Denham and Surlingham produces a link between Aitard and Matilda. The Domesday reference to Denham included a small portion of

Horham.⁵² This was 40 acres with one freeman in Horham but belonging to Denham. The value was 50s. and was held by Aitard of Roger Bigod. Between 1207 and 1220 Aitard gave two thirds of his tithes of Keswick to Thetford Priory which had been founded by Roger Bigod in 1204.⁵³ There is a record of a further donation to the priory by Hubert and Alexander de Vallibus of land in Horham.⁵⁴ The date of the gift is uncertain but probably between 1120 and 1135. It seems more likely that it was this Hubert, probably a son or grandson of Aitard, who became lord of Gilsland. Alexander, perhaps his brother, held Keswick for half a knight's fee in 1166.⁵⁵

It has been noted that the pipe roll of 1157 recorded that Hubert had connections with Norfolk and that his second son, Ranulf, had to pay 100 marks for his elder brother Robert (1)'s debts in Norfolk and Suffolk. Ranulf's son, Robert (2) inherited Gilsland in 1199 and he is the Robert named in the Suffolk assize of 1240. He had had difficulty in producing the charter concerning Denham and Surlingham which may have been due to the fact that, in 1215, he had been in a dispute about the lands of Denham. An entry in the close rolls⁵⁶ of that year records an instruction to the sheriff of Suffolk, by the king, to give full seisin of Denham to Robert de Vallibus after a case had been brought between Robert and Richard Furmy in the "curia regis in banco" in an assize of novel disseisin (recent dispossession). Robert appears to have wronged Richard and had to pay £100 to settle the case. A further entry ordered that all cattle found by the people of Denham were to be given to Richard, including those cattle previously removed by Robert.⁵⁷

A year later Robert (2) fell foul of King John and all his lands in Cumberland, Norfolk, Suffolk, Somerset and Dorset were confiscated and given to Robert de Veteri Ponte.⁵⁸ This included the manor of Surlingham held by Robert de Vallibus of Roger Bigod.⁵⁹ Finally, when Matilda de Moulton died, it was found that, at the inquisition post mortem in 1293, she was still in possession of the manors of Denham and Surlingham at the time of her death.⁶⁰

Hubert appears to have been a younger son or grandson of Aitard de Vallibus who first acquired lands in Devon of the Redvers family. He was lucky enough to have been in the right place when the future Henry II came to England with his mother, the Empress Maud. Fifteen years in their service produced his reward, Gilsland.

Notes and References

¹ I. J. Sanders, *English Baronies: a study of their origin and descent* (Oxford, 1960), 124.

² *Ibid.*

³ W. Dugdale, *The Baronage of England* (1675) i, 525.

⁴ R. S. Ferguson, "The Barony of Gilsland and its Owners to the end of the Sixteenth Century", *CW1*, iv, 454.

⁵ R. S. Dodsworth, MS Dodsworth 45, fol. 28v (Bodleian Library).

⁶ J. E. Prescott, *The Register of the Priory of Wetherhal* CWAAS Record Series, vol. I (London, 1897), document no. 245 and footnote, 384-8.

⁷ T. H. B. Graham, "The Honour of Cockermouth", *CW2*, xxix, 77-9. The *Distributio Cumberlandiae* is one of various versions of the *Chronicon Cumbriae* and was compiled as an abstract for the de Lucy family claim to the manor of Cockermouth. It was originally compiled c.1275 with information from the religious houses of Holm Cultram and St Bees.

⁸ R. Bearman (ed.), *Charters of the Redvers Family and the Earldom of Devon* (Devon and Cornwall Record Society, NS 37, 1994), 66-8.

- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 95.
- ¹⁰ H. A. Cronne and R. H. C. Davis, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* vol. 3, 1135-54 (Oxford, Clarendon, 1969), witness to charter no. 587 (1141-5).
- ¹¹ W. D. Macay (ed.), *Sarum Charters and Documents* (Rolls Series no. 97 London, 1891), witness to charter of Henry fitz-Empress executed at Devizes on 13 April 1149, charter no. 17, 15-16.
- ¹² *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* vol. 3, 1135-54, witness to charter nos. 112, 130, 587, 666, 711, 748, 795, 836.
- ¹³ J. H. Round (ed.), *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France* vol. 1, A.D. 918-1206 (London, 1899), nos. 216, 593, 681, 1276.
- ¹⁴ J. M. Todd (ed.), charter 1, *The Lanercost Cartulary* (CWAAS Record Series, XI), 53.
- ¹⁵ T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium in Turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1835) i, 96. 1212 (14 John), Robert de Vallibus delivered as hostages for himself Alicia his mother, Grecia his sister, Hubert son of the said Robert and Roland his brother, bastard.
- ¹⁶ *The great roll of the pipe for the sixth year of King Richard, 1194-5* (Pipe Roll Society, 1928), 122. Ranulf de Vallibus renders 40s. of the scutage after the second coronation in Cumberland.
- ¹⁷ *The Lanercost Cartulary* (charter 33), 86.
- ¹⁸ *The great roll of the pipe for the first year of King John, Michaelmas 1199* (Pipe Roll Society, 1933), 211. Hubert Archbishop of Canterbury has ward of the land and heir of Ranulf.
- ¹⁹ Deputy Keeper of the Records, *The Book of Fees commonly called Testa de Nevill reformed from the earliest mss.* (London, 1920), 1371.
- ²⁰ T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium, 1212* (14 John) i, 96.
- ²¹ Deputy Keeper of the Records, *The Book of Fees*, 553.
- ²² Fynes Family Documents, Essex Record Office, D/DL F 12/1.
- ²³ A. Nichol (ed.), *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (London, 1991) xvii (1242-3), 131.
- ²⁴ *Records of itinerant justices and other court records Suffolk assize roll* (1240), JUST 1/818 m.19d (The National Archives, Kew – hereafter NA).
- ²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, preserved in the Public Record Office* (London, 1904), vol. 3, Edw. I., 28 May 1293, no. 94, p 64.
- ²⁷ K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday Descendants. A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166* (Rochester, NY, 2002), 756-7. See also *Regesta Regum*, vol. 3 and *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France*.
- ²⁸ The only de Vallibus recorded in this is Robert, grandson of Robert of Pentney.
- ²⁹ J. Hunter (ed.), *The great rolls of the nine for the second third and fourth years of the reign of King Henry the second AD 1155, 1156, 1157 and 1158* (London, 1844), 30 and 57.
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 119.
- ³¹ *Exchequer and Chancery: Cartae Antiquae Rolls*, C52/28, carta 7 (NA).
- ³² T. H. B. Graham, “Extinct Cumbrian Castles”, *CW2*, xii, 181-3.
- ³³ D. R. Periam and J. Robinson, *The Medieval Fortified Buildings of Cumbria* (CWAAS Extra Series, XXIX, 1998), 159.
- ³⁴ J. Hunter (ed.), *The great rolls of the pipe for the second, third and fourth years of the reign of King Henry the second AD 1155, 1156, 1157 and 1158* (London, 1844), 128.
- ³⁵ *The great roll of the pipe for the sixth year of King Richard, 1194-5* (Pipe Roll Society, 1928), 63.
- ³⁶ J. Hunter (ed.), *The great rolls of the Pipe for the second third and fourth years of the reign of King Henry the second AD 1155, 1156, 1157 and 1158* (London, 1844), 116.
- ³⁷ W. O. Hassell, *They Saw it Happen, 55BC-1485* (Oxford, 1957), 42-3.
- ³⁸ R. S. Ferguson (ed.), *An account of the most considerable estates and families in the county of Cumberland from the Conquest to the beginning of the reign of K. James the First by John Demon of Cardew* (CWAAS Tract Series no. 2, 1887), 130-1.
- ³⁹ W. Camden, *Britannia or a geographical description of the Founding Kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland adjacent from the earliest antiquity*. Translated from the edition published by the author MDCVII by Richard Gough (London, 1806), vol. III, 455.
- ⁴⁰ J. Hodgson Hinde, “On the early history of Cumberland”, *Archaeological Journal* (1859) xvi, 234.
- ⁴¹ *The great roll of the pipe for the eleventh year of the reign of King Henry the second 1164-5* (Pipe Roll Society, 1887), 54.
- ⁴² H. Hall (ed.), *Red Book of the Exchequer* (London, 1896), Rolls Series no 99, vol. 1, 436.

- ⁴³ K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday Descendants*, 756.
- ⁴⁴ *The great roll of the pipe for the reign of King Henry the second, 1167-8* (Pipe Roll Society, 1890), 90.
- ⁴⁵ *Red Book of the Exchequer*, 41.
- ⁴⁶ S. H. Lee Washington, "The Early History of the Stricklands of Sizergh", *CW2*, xlii, 190.
- ⁴⁷ *Records of itinerant justices and other court records Suffolk assize roll (1240)*, JUST 1/818 m.19d (NA).
- ⁴⁸ A. Nichol (ed.), *Curia Regis Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* (London, 1991) xvii (1242-3), 131. In this record the name is spelt Say. It states that Alina de Say's first husband was Hubert de Vallibus, son of Robert, and thus the mother (or stepmother) of Matilda.
- ⁴⁹ J. Morris (gen. Ed.), *Domesday Book* vol. 33 Norfolk P. Brown (ed.), parts 1 and 2 Vol. 34 Suffolk, A. Rumble (ed.), parts 1 and 2 (Chichester, Phillimore, 1984 and 1986). Aitard was variously known as Aitard de Vallibus, Aitard Roger Bigod's man and Aitard.
- ⁵⁰ W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London, 1846), vol. V, carta num. 1, 69.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*, vol. VI, 52. The same names for the brothers are included in the Charters of Castle Acre Priory Harley ms. 2110, fol. 91 (British Library).
- ⁵² *Domesday Book* vol. 34 Suffolk, A. Rumble (ed.), parts 1 and 2, 331a. This was 40 acres with one freeman in Horham but belonging to Denham. The value was 50s. and was held by Aitard of Roger Bigod.
- ⁵³ *Monasticon Anglicanum*, Vol. V, charter no. 2, 148.
- ⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, vol. V, 142.
- ⁵⁵ *Red Book of the Exchequer*, 397.
- ⁵⁶ T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum in Turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1833-44) i, 183b.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 187b.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 246b.
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 259b.
- ⁶⁰ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, preserved in PRO* (London, 1904), vol. 3, Edward I, 28 May 1293, no. 94, p. 64w.

