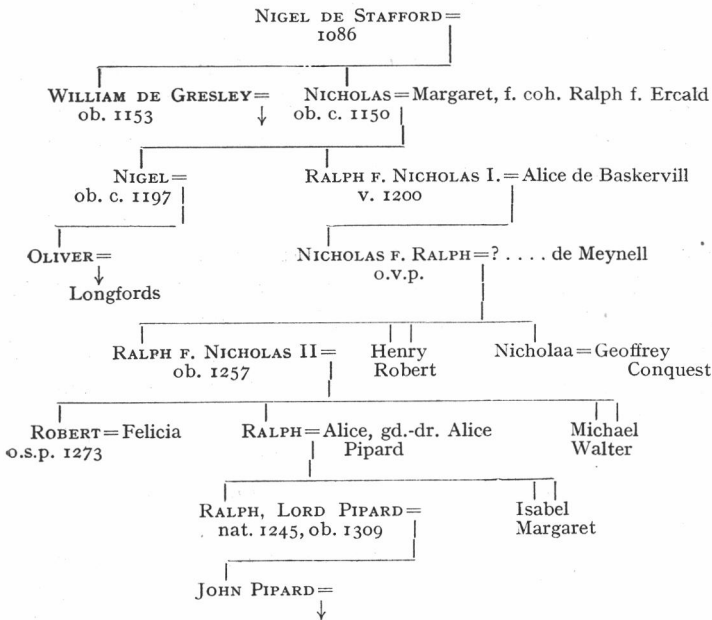


Ralph Fitz-Nicholas.

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RALPH-FITZ-NICHOLAS.

I. NIGEL. Ralph f. Nicholas was a descendant of Nigel de Stafford, the reputed son, or brother, of Robert de Stafford, who, in 1086, held the important barony of Stafford. The Stafford Collections (*Vol. XIX*) contain an account of this family which carries it back to Fornjot, King of Finland. In 1086 Nigel de Stafford held manors

in Drakelow, Heathcote, Swadlincote, Smisby, Ravenstone, Foremark with 3 bovates of soc in Ingleby, Donisthorpe, Oakthorpe and Thringstone. The last three manors are now in Leicestershire. He held also 4 bovates in Stapenhill and 1 carucate of soc in Ticknall. (*V.C.H. Dby.* 332a: 335a: 350a: 355b). In Leicestershire he held Twycross, Swepstone, 3 carucates in "Windesers" and 1 carucate in Linton, now in Dbys. (*ib. Leic. I*, 319b: 320b: 321a). In Berkshire he held Wyboston. (*ib. Berks. I*, 348a). In Staffordshire he held Thorpe Constantine, Moreton in Gnosall and numerous other manors. (*Staff. Doms. Tab. II, VII, VIII*). He died before 1124 and was succeeded by William f. Nigel the ancestor of the Gresleys of Drakelow. (*S. Coll. XIX*). In addition to William he had a second son.

II. NICHOLAS F. NIGEL, who with the consent of Margaret his wife, daughter and co-heir of Ralph f. Ercald, granted to Roger Duredent with Felicia, daughter of Nicholas, 300 acres of land in the manor of Bupton, 7 bovates in Thurvaston together with the lands previously delivered to him to make his buildings and orchards. This grant was attested by William his brother and many others. (*Lands MSS.* 203, 24b). Nicholas was the father of 3 sons Nigel, Ralph and Simon. Nigel was the ancestor of the Longford family, but it is with the second son Ralph that this article is concerned. (*Vid. Harl. MSS.* 3650, 58, 59, *D.M. II*, 119, *ib.*: *R.Pip.* 31 *Hen. I*, 140: *R.B.E.* 263: *S. Coll. I.* 153).

III. RALPH F. NICHOLAS I. received a grant of land, soon after 1162, from Ralph f. Ralph le four which was witnessed by William, earl Ferrars; Ralph de Seal, constable of the earl; Nigel f. Nicholas; Ralph de Montgomery; Ralph Salvein; William f. Herbert, junior; and Thomas Despenser (*F.H.D. IV.* 138). At a later date William, the earl, confirmed to Oliver f. Nigel and his

heirs Trusley with all its tenements the which Ralph le foun, his serjeant, had given to Ralph f. Nicholas his uncle. This deed was witnessed by Robert, brother of the earl; William de Rydware; Henry f. Sewal; Jordan de Toke; William de Gresley; William de Warda; Robert f. Walchelin; Ralph f. Jordan; Hugh de Okeover; John de Bakepuze; Robert de Dun; William de Stanton; Henry de Dunstone; and Robert de Beaufoy. (*Ib.*) At Michaelmas, 1200, Walter Baskervill was impleaded by the prioress of Nuneaton for the advowson of the church of Stretton Baskervill. She produced a grant thereof by Ralph de Turvill, and a confirmation by Hugh Nonant, bishop of Coventry and a charter of Alice, grandmother of the defendant, disclaiming her right of presentation. Walter claimed that Alice had only held Stretton in dower (*Ab. Pl. 73b*). In 1219-20 Ralph f. Nicholas II, steward of earl Ferrars, claimed Stretton on the grounds of his descent from Alice de Baskervill, his grandmother. (*Dug. 50*). Before 1200 Ralph f. Nicholas, Seneschal of the earl, attested the quitclaim of Richard de Curzon to Thomas de Curzon of Kedleston of the aid he owed him for making his eldest son a knight. (*J. 1500*). He died some time after this date and was succeeded by his grandson, Ralph f. Nicholas II.

IV. NICHOLAS F. RALPH. The only reference that has been found to this Nicholas is in a charter, which may be dated 1194, of Robert de Meynell confirming to Ralph f. Nicholas the lands which Nicholas, father of the said Ralph had held in Killamarsh. (*J. 1511*). It is suggested that Nicholas had married a sister of Robert de Meynell and had received with her not only land in Killamarsh but the half fee in Kirk Langley which Ralph f. Nicholas, his son, held in 1235-6. (*B.F. 530, 531*). Nicholaa, the daughter of Nicholas f. Ralph was married to Geoffrey de Conquest and she probably received her

mother's *maritagium* as dower. In 1222 Geoffrey de Conquest and Nicholaa, his wife, granted Kirk Langley manor to Ralph f. Nicholas to be held of them and the heirs of Nicholaa. (*D.F. East* 1222). Kirk Langley remained in the possession of the Conquests of Houghton Conquest for a very long period. (*H.K.F. II*, 312; *A.I. sub Holy Trin. Priory*). In addition to Ralph, his heir, and Nicholaa, his daughter, Nicholas had two other sons, Henry, deputy sheriff of Hereford from 1223 to 1229 (*B.F.* 1261, 1271) and Robert who in 1256 was described as the former rector of half the church of Mugginton. (*J.* 1688, 1743; *R. Cl. I. ii*, 332). Nicholas died during his father's lifetime.

V. RALPH F. NICHOLAS. II. In 1218-1221 Ralph f. Nicholas is spoken of as Seneschal of the earl of Derby. (*Nic. III. ii*, 968). About 1219 he was Bailiff of the Peak with Robert de Shelford as his deputy. (*F.H.D. III*, 194; *H.K.F. I.* 145). In 1223 he was sheriff of Hereford and Seneschal of the King in 1227. (*R.Cl. I.* 576; *R. Chart. I. i*). In April, 1230, he received a grant that his lands in "Bruer," Kirk Langley, Spondon, Thurvaston, Wingfield, Ruddington, Stretton Baskervill, Osbaston, Smeetham, Finborough, Corsham and E. Harnham should be free of Suits. (*R. Chart. I.* 122). In 1235-6 Ralph f. Nicholas held $\frac{1}{2}$ fee in Kirk Langley, 1 fee in Monyash and $\frac{1}{3}$ fee in Chelmorton. (*B.F.* 500). At the same date he held 3 fees in Great Haseley, Lachford, and Rotherfield Pippard, Oxon. presumably as Warden of the heir of William Pippard with his lands in Ireland and England. (*B.F.* 446; *R.Cl. I. ii*, 195; *R.Pat. I.* 172). In 1242-3 he held $\frac{1}{4}$ fee in Thoroton, Notts. (*B.F.* 995); 1 fee in Monyash of the honour of Alfreton; $\frac{1}{4}$ fee in Spondon, the manors of Dunham, Ragnall and E. Drayton of the king's gift. (*Ib.* 995, 999). He held also $\frac{1}{4}$ fee in Fritwell and 1 fee in Luckington and East Harnham. (*Ib.* 825, 723,

741). He received as a gift from the King in 1227 Smeetham, Essex, with its members in Pebmarsh and Finborough with Buxhall. (*B.F.* 235, 290: *R. Chart. I. i Jany.* 1227). In the same year he obtained Corsham, Wilts. (*B.F.* 586). In May 1233 he had a grant of the valuable manor of Dunham, Notts. (*B.F.* 618, 999: *R. Chart. I. i*). At some date after 1232 Nicholas f. Nicholas de Willington enfeoffed him in Potlock Mill. (*J.* 2577, 2580). In 1234 he received as a gift from the Earl Marshal $\frac{3}{4}$ of the manor of Long Compton. (*R. Chart. I. i. Dec.*). He purchased or was granted the guardianship of the heirs and lands of several important families. In 1215 he was the custodian of the heir and lands of Eustace de Morteyn. (*R.Cl. I.* 236). In 1227 he obtained the custody of Michael the son of Leon Malnoers. (*B.F.* 355, 373: *R. Chart. I, i July*). In the same year he paid £100 for control of the lands and heir of Robert f. William (de Alfreton). (*Exc. I* 157: *B.F.* 531). In 1231 he was *custos* of the lands of Robert f. William de Ashby. (*R. Chart. I: B.F.* 520). He was also guardian of William Pincerna and Nicholas de Poinz (*B.F.* 665, 495, 604): of Osbert Giffard (*B.F.* 268): Robert f. William de Catesby (*B.F.* 498, 604): Jordan de Sackvill (*B.F.* 447, 1394): Fulc de Coudray, alias de Cantiluppo (*B.F.* 106, 464, 469, 863, 880, *Exc. II* 123): Ralph de Pichford (*Exc. II* 141) and Stephen de Hereford. (*Exc. II*, 157). In 1235-6 he was one of the collectors of the "Aid" given by the prelates of Notts. and Derbys. towards the dower of £20,000 given by Henry III to Isabel, his sister, on her marriage with Frederick II, Emperor of the Romans. The word prelate referred not to the bishops but to the heads of religious houses such as Darley and Repton. (*B.F.* 405, 558). In 1242 he obtained possession of Lingford, Bucks. and Crowmarsh, Oxon. which Geoffrey de Marisco held in dower with Alice his wife which belonged to the fee of Ralph, son of the said Ralph f.

Nicholas, and Alice his wife and ought to descend to them after the death of Alice, wife of Geoffrey. Ralph senior, was to hold these lands as long as they remained in the King's hand and the Archbishop of York was instructed to give him seisin if it proved to be true that they ought to descend to Ralph son of Ralph f. Nicholas and Alice his wife after the death of her grandmother Alice. (*R.Cl. IV*, 515). In 1242-3 it was returned that Ralph the son of Ralph (f. Nicholas) held only 1 fee of the countess of Oxford, viz.: Linford. (*B.F.* 881). In 1232 it was stated that Alice Pipard was of the King's gift and had been married to Geoffrey de Marisco and that her land in Linford was worth £20. (*B.F.* 1357). In 1235-36 Geoffrey de Marisco held 1 fee in Linford (*ib.* 461, 557), but he was apparently dead in 1242 when Ralph f. Nicholas claimed Linford as the inheritance of his son Ralph and Alice his wife, granddaughter of Alice Pipard. In 1250 Ralph f. Nicholas had a grant for a market in Twyford and of free warren in Finborough. (*R. Chart. I*, 292). In December, 1257, he granted Dunham to William de Valencia, which grant his son and heir, Robert, confirmed. (*Ib. II*). He was dead on December 11 of the same year and the sheriff of Wilts. was ordered to take his lands into the King's hand. (*Exc. II.* 267). No mention of his wife's name has been discovered. In addition to the two sons, Robert and Ralph, he had two others (A) Michael and (B) Walter.

(A) Michael f. Nicholas f. Ralph married Katharine daughter and heir of John de Montague the lineal descendant of Alvred, Pincerna to the earl of Mortain in 1086. Her first husband had been Warin Basset, killed at Cardiff Castle in 1233. (*R. Pat.* 18 Hen. III). In that year Michael obtained the custody of his lands in Somerset to maintain himself in the King's service. (*R.Cl. II* 282) Michael died before 1244 as Katharine died in that year having married Roger de Wouton, as her third husband

before her death. (*Exc. i.* 426). She apparently left no issue as John de Montague's barony of Chiselborough passed after her death to the daughters of her uncle William de Montague Margaret and Isabel. (*R. Pat. Hen. III*, 469).

(B) Walter f. Ralph f. Nicholas is stated to have taken 2 stags and 1 doe and to have carried the venison to the house of William de Morteyn in Eyam. (*F.H.D. III*, 205). No other reference to this Walter has been found.

VI. ROBERT F. RALPH did homage for his father's lands on January 1, 1258. He did no homage for Dunham which his father had given to William de Valence, the King's brother. (*Exc. II*, 269; *R. Chart. II*). Robert sided with the barons against the King and his lands in Egginton, Langley, Spondon, Chaddesden, rents in Ambaston, Thurvaston, Chelmorton, Monyash and Calver were seized into the King's hand (*C.I.M.* 643, 644, 645). The lands in Egginton and the rents in Ambaston had been purchased by his father from Almeric de Gasci in 1234. (*J.* 1160-1162). In 1244 Robert f. Ralph f. Nicholas and Felicia, his wife, had a grant of free warren in Breoley, Worc. (*R. Chart. I* 277). In 1242-3 Robert f. Nicholas held 1 fee in Beoley of William de Beauchamp, and William of the abbot of Pershore. (*B.F.* 960). It is possible that Felicia may have been a daughter of William. In 1260 Robert f. Ralph gave all his rent in Ruddington, Notts., to the bishop of Dunblane (*R. Chart. II*, 32). He died about Epiphany 1273 leaving as his heir Ralph Pippard son of his brother, aged 28 and more. (*I.P.M. II*, 20). He held $\frac{1}{2}$ fee in Thurvaston of Edmund the King's brother; a messuage, 80 acres of land with 26 bovates in Spondon and Chaddesden, also of the said Edmund; $\frac{1}{4}$ of the vill of Egginton with appertinances in Ambaston and Thurlston for $\frac{1}{8}$ fee of a knight from Anker de Frechevile; a mill at Potlock held of Sir

Peter de Tock; Kirk Langley with the advowson of the church and 20 sh. 4d. rent in Weston Underwood held of Sir John le Conquest for a rent of 6 marks yearly; 7 bovates in Echewille of William f. Hugh for 2d. yearly. In Essex he held Smeetham, in Bulmer parish, for $\frac{1}{2}$ fee of the King; and in Suffolk Finborough of the King also, for $\frac{1}{2}$ fee in which his tenant was Guy Cokerel. His manor of West Chinnock, Somerset, had been given to Sir Ralph de Bakepuze by the King under the dictum of Kenilworth; and in like manner his Wiltshire manor of Harnham was held by Sir Robert Walerand.

VII. RALPH F. RALPH. Ralph the second son of Ralph f. Nicholas was married, as we have seen above, to Alice Pipard. In 1242-3 he was returned, as Ralph f. Ralph (f. Nicholas), as holding one fee in Great Linford of the old enfeoffment of the Countess of Oxford. (*B.F.* 881). Most of the information concerning him has been already given above. He died before his elder brother Robert and was succeeded by his son John. He left also a daughter (A) Isabel and possibly (B) a daughter Margaret.

(A) Isabel was married to Robert de Leygh as William f. Henry de Leygh sued Laurence de Rolleston, Robert de Brailsford and others for lands which Ralph Pipard had given Robert de Leygh in free marriage with Isabel his sister in the reign of Edward I. (*Gen. ix*, 146).

(B) It is possible that the Margaret wife of John de Twyford who held Kirk Langley in 1316-46 may have been a sister of Ralph Pipard, who held it in 1284. (*F.A.* 246, 257, 258).

VIII. RALPH PIPARD. Ralph the nephew and heir of Robert f. Nicholas and grandson of Ralph f. Nicholas appears to have assumed his mother's name and to have been generally known as Ralph Pipard and to have lived mainly at Rotherfield Pipard. In 1303 Ralph Pypard

granted to Ralph de Lathebury, his Chamberlain, a rent of 10sh. from Bussuns in Cubley. The grant was dated May 1, 1303, at Rotherfield Pippard, Oxon. and was attested by Henry de Braylesford, Giles de Meynill and John de Bakepuz, knights, and others. (*J.* 928). He also granted to the same Ralph a meadow in Trusley called "Ermite medewe" in April, 1303. (*Ib.* 2386, 2387). He was summoned to Parliament as a baron by writ as lord Pipard. (*G.E.C.*). He died in 1329 holding Long Compton, Wk. of the late King (Ed. I) for 1 fee of a knight; Smeetham, Essex, for $\frac{1}{2}$ fee; Cold Aston Blank, Glouc. of the bishop of Worcester, for 1 fee; the manors of Twyford and Great Linford, Bucks.; Great Finborough, Sfk., for 1 fee; Rotherfield Pippard, Oxon. for 1 fee, and a messuage and 81 acres of land etc. in Fritwell, Oxon.; a capital messuage with 182 acres etc. in Spondon and Chaddesdon for $\frac{1}{4}$ fee. His heir was his son John, whose age was given as between 30 and 40. (*I.P.M. V.* 191). In 1284 John f. Ralph Pipard held one fee in West Chinnock, Somers. (*F. Aids. IV*, 288). In 1303 he held a fee in Wingrove, Bucks. (*Ib. I*, 101). In 1316 John Pipard, William de Harpsden and Gilbert de Elsefeld held the vill of Rotherfield Pippard with Harpsden and Belle Hatch for one fee. (*Ib. IV*, 170). In 1346 John de Twyford held $\frac{1}{2}$ fee in Kirk Langley and $\frac{1}{10}$ fee in Spondon of Ralph Pipard. In 1431 Robert Twyford de Langley held $\frac{1}{10}$ fee in Spondon. (*Ib. I.* 257, 258, 306).

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| Ab.Pl. | Abbreviatio Placitorum. Rec. Commission, 1811. |
| A.I. | Proceedings of the Archæological Inst. Yk. 1846. |
| B.F. | Book of Fees. Rolls Series. |
| C.I.M. | Calendar of Miscellaneous Inquisitions, Dep. Keeper Records. |
| D.F. | Derbyshire Fines, D.A. Journal, Vols. vii-xviii. |
| D.M. | Dugdale's Monasticon, Ed. 1655-83. |

Dug.	Dugdale's Warwickshire, ed. 1656.
Exc.	Excerpta e Rotulis Finium, Rec. Com.
F.A.	Feudal Aids. Dep. Keeper Records.
F.H.D.	Feudal Hist. Derbyshire, J. Pym Yeatman.
G.E.C.	Complete Peerage.
Gen.	The Genealogist.
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H.K.F.	Honors and Knights Fees, W. Farrer, 3 vols.
I.P.M.	Inquisit. Post Mortem. Dep. Keep. Records.
J.	Derbyshire Charters, I. Jeayes.
L.s.	Lansdowne Mss.
Nic	Nichol's Hist. and Antiquities of Leicestershire.
R.B.E.	Red Book of the Exchequer, ed. Hall.
R. Chart.	Rot. Chartarum. Record Commission.
R.Lit.	Rot. Lit. Clausarum. Record Commission
R.Pat.	Rot. Lit. Patentium. Record Commission.
R.Pip.	Mag. Rot. Pip. Record Com: and Pipe Roll Society.
S.Coll.	Staffordshire Collections, Salt Society.
S.D.	Staffordshire Domesday, R. W. Eyton.
V.C.H.	Victoria County History.