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HISTORICAL RESEARCH NOTES

BEKESBOURNE AND THE KING'S ESNECCA 1110-1445

Bekesbourne, just south of Canterbury, has two unusual claims to fame in that it was a member of the Cinque Ports and also supplied one of the king's esneccas, his cross-Channel passenger ship.¹ The only other place in England that supplied the king's esnecca was Southampton, which is a large port with extensive cross-Channel shipping. How these arrangements came about for a very small inland village nestling on the banks of a stream, which nowadays only runs intermittently, is an intriguing story. The transfer of the administration of the esnecca from generation to generation also resulted in two court cases, one of which involved a divided serjeanty and created a virtually unique legal precedent.

The first record, which confirms the provision of the king's ship, comes in a court case of 1190 in which William de Bec produces a charter from Henry II which says:

that this land (Bekesbourne) is held in serjeanty from the King for the administration (and presumably provision) of the king's esnecca by Hugh de Bec (William's father) and that Roger de Burnes, brother of Harria who was the wife of Hugh de Bec, and Roger's ancestors had held this serjeanty in the reign of Henry I.²

In the search for Roger de Burnes and his ancestors the next record comes from the Pipe Roll of Richard I in 1190 recording a payment for Eustace de Burnes' ship.³ So what is Eustace de Burnes and Roger's ship? The esnecca, as used after the Norman Conquest, is a long narrow, fast ship for the transport of passengers and in modern terms the king's esnecca can be compared to a royal yacht. It is said of Henry II that the King of England had not one but three ships for his crossings.⁴ Eventually there were four esneccas based at Southampton, Barfleur, Dieppe and Hastings, and there may have been another berthed at Chester.⁵ The Southampton esnecca was a large narrow ship of some 240 tons crewed by 64 men and was used for the King's frequent journeys from England to Normandy. The size of the Southampton esnecca is confirmed by the information about the collection of ships by Richard I when about to embark on his crusade:

He had taken into his service all the vessels, which the Cinque Ports could produce, to the number of thirty-three. Six more had been obtained from Shoreham and Southampton, and four by gift or hire from private persons; the King commissioned for his own use a vessel called the Esnecca which was much larger than the rest and carried a crew of sixty-one men.⁶

It is quite likely that the esnecca supplied by Bekesbourne was included in the quota of Cinque Port ships and that this esnecca, berthed at Hastings, was a smaller ship of 60 tons crewed by 21 men and a boy, which was the normal size of ship for that period. Although it was perfectly capable of travelling the eighty miles from Hastings to Dieppe, the king's preference was to use the larger ship for travel from Southampton to Barfleur. However despite the differences in size both the Southampton and Hastings ships were called an esnecca. A seal from Winchelsea shows the likely configuration of a ship fitted out for the king's travel, with a small cabin for shelter (**Fig. 1**).

The provision of a ship for the king's crossing of the English Channel commenced in the reign of William I, who used the services of Stephen Fitz Airard, one of his sea captains in the transport fleet to the Battle of Hastings. Fitz Airard, who had connections with Southampton, supplied the esnecca berthed at Southampton. On the death of Stephen Fitz Airard, sometime between 1110 and 1120, the service did not pass to his son as it is known that by 1120 Henry I had made other arrangements.⁷ The administration of the Southampton esnecca passed to an Italian family based in Southampton and from them to Nicholas de Sceau and on to Alan Trenchemer.⁸

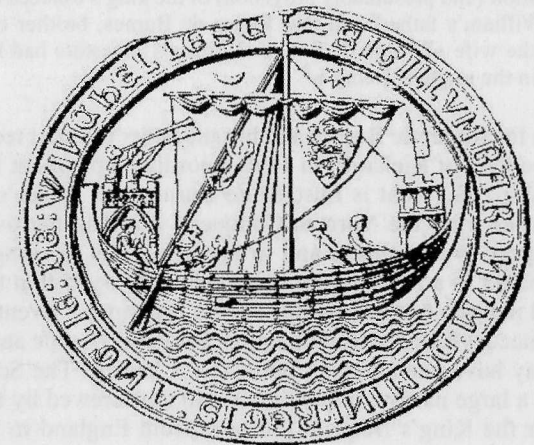


Fig. 1 The Winchelsea seal. There is no known depiction of an esnecca and this is probably the closest available likeness of the Bekesbourne vessel.

The other change in arrangements made by Henry I was the appointment of Godwin Frenes to administer the king's esnecca based at Hastings. Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, had been in possession of Bekesbourne in 1086, the time of the Domesday Book, but he was stripped of his lands and exiled in 1087. Bekesbourne was therefore vacant after this and could be allocated to the supplier of a service to the king. Godwin Frenes was in possession of Bekesbourne in 1120 and the gift of this tenure by the king was the reward for supplying the king's esnecca at Hastings. It was a very handsome gift, as the manor of Bekesbourne was just over 1,000 acres. The tenure was held in serjeanty, the provision of a specified service to the king.

Godwin held the appointment for several years and when he died c.1130, his eldest son Robert de Hastings, then in possession of Grange (Gillingham) took over at Bekesbourne. He either held Grange as well as Bekesbourne or more likely passed Grange over to his younger brother, as there is a record of Grange being held in the de Hastings family for many years. Manasser de Hastings is shown as holding Grange by the service of finding a ship and 2 armed men for the fleet of the Cinque Ports, during the reign of Edward I. The tenant is also said to have owed the service of an oar whenever the king sailed to Hastings.⁹ On the death of Matthew de Hastings in 1276/7, his Inquisition Post Mortem shows him as holding Grange as a limb of Hastings by service of finding an oar at the same port when the king shall wish to cross the sea there.¹⁰ Robert must have felt that taking over Bekesbourne was a prestige appointment and this is reflected in the change of his name from de Hastings to de Burne, derived from the old name for Bekesbourne. However, the connection with Hastings for both the de Burnes and the de Becs is maintained over many years. The Grange branch of the family not only kept the Hastings name, from the *Inquisitions Post Mortem* they also had property in and around Hastings (see below), and their tenants supplied the guard at Hastings Castle.

If Eustace de Burnes is the operator of the Bekesbourne esnecca in 1190 how is he related to Roger de Burnes, named in the above charter? Eustace de Burnes appears several times in the Cartulary of St Gregory, Canterbury, and, in particular in charter 38, he is named as the son of Robert de Burnes.¹¹ Robert also has several entries in the cartulary and in charter 35 he has the names of Robert de Burnes and Robert de Hastings. In charter 36 Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, confirms his name as Robert de Hastings, son of 'Godwini freni'. Freni seems to be a descriptive word rather than a place name or surname, especially as the Godwin is capitalised and the freni is not. The only Latin word close to freni means a bit, bridle or brake which does not seem to be a suitable description. In a list of landholders in Kent for 1120 there is an entry for Godwinus Frenesena as holding 2 sulungs in Bekesbourne.¹² Colin Flight has suggested that Godwinus Frenesena means the son of Godwin of Frenes but he is unsure of this interpretation and it may simply mean

a Frenchman or as the latin suffix *ena* means of or from, his name should be rendered into English as Godwin from Frenes, a small commune in Normandy. If this is the case Godwin therefore either came over with William the Conqueror or was the son of one who did. His son is shown as Robert de Hastings and not Robert *freni* or *frenesena* so he was most likely born in England. In the same list of landholders, Robert de Hastings is shown as holding one and a quarter sulungs in Grange. It is unlikely that they were an English family as the Norman kings by the time of Domesday trusted very few of the English to hold positions of authority and they had to be skilled in seamanship to be entrusted with the life of the king on a channel crossing. The link between Grange and Bekesbourne is vital to understanding the start of the supply of the king's esnecca.

In the *White & Black Books of the Cinque Ports* there is an entry, covering Grange, which reads:

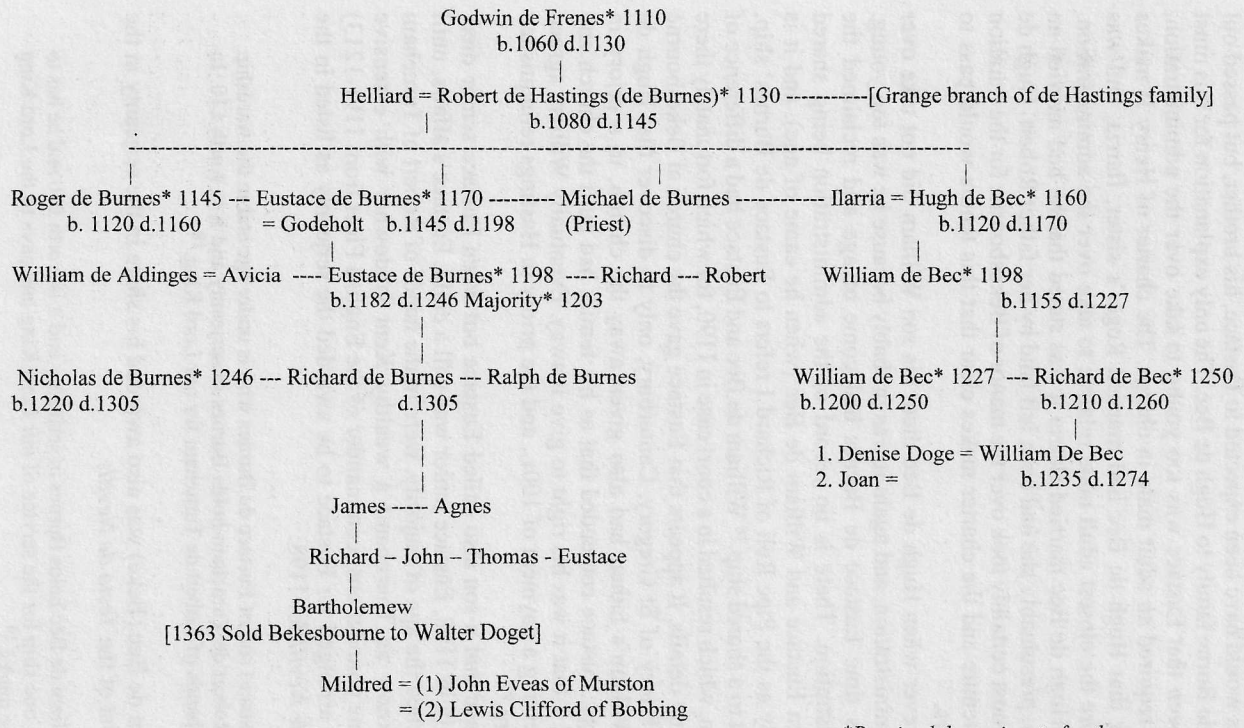
Grange is a limb of Hastings as a result of a Hastings family migrating and carrying one oar of one boat, a purely personal service.¹³

As the family that held Grange in 1120 had the surname de Hastings we can assume that this is the same family, and that Godwin held that manor, before his son Robert, and before he held Bekesbourne. This personal service was later translated into a requirement that Bekesbourne and Grange

will find these ships (one each) on the summons of 40 days, armed and in each ship, 20 men and the captain, and they must maintain this at their own expense.¹⁴

The provision of the ships is the reason for both Grange and Bekesbourne being Cinque Port limbs of Hastings, as these two ships would have counted against Hastings' allocated requirement to supply 21 ships. Grange does not ever appear to have been involved in the supply of the king's esnecca. Nor indeed does Hastings, except that the esnecca supplied by Bekesbourne was berthed there.

When Robert died, around 1145, the succession was not clear. The only children we have a record of are Eustace and his younger brother Michael.¹⁵ Michael went into the priesthood and was vicar of Bekesbourne from 1180 to 1182. Eustace did take over the administration of the esnecca, which he held in 1190, but the court case, at which the charter of Henry II is revealed, shows that both Roger de Burnes and Hugh de Bec had the administration before 1190; therefore Eustace could not have succeeded directly. As Hugh de Bec succeeded Roger, it must have been Roger de Burne who took over from Robert de Burne and Roger de Burne must therefore be Robert's son and Eustace de Burne's elder brother, despite not being mentioned in the cartulary of St Gregory's Priory, Canterbury. (See **Fig. 2** showing the family tree.)



**Received the serjeanty for the esnecca.
All dates are provisional.*

Fig. 2 The de Burnes/de Bec family trees.

When Roger died he left only a widow and the administration did not pass, as would have been expected to Eustace, his brother, but passed out of the de Burne family to Hugh de Bec. The only explanation for this must have been that Eustace was too young to take over the administration, which required an adult male in charge. The charter of Henry II makes it clear that Hugh de Bec had married Roger's sister, Ilarria, and was therefore the closest adult male relative to take over the administration. When Hugh de Bec married Ilarria it was stated that he had married an heiress; presumably she had been left land by her father Robert. Hugh de Bec almost certainly took over the manor of Bekesbourne for the duration of his tenure and the charter makes clear that this tenure would pass to his heirs.

However when Hugh de Bec died, his son William did not take over the administration, and again it was probably because he was too young. By this time Eustace de Burnes had come of age and reclaimed the administration. There is no record of the administration being shared between Eustace and William de Bec (when he came of age), and it is unlikely as the Pipe Roll of Richard I refers to Eustace de Burnes' ship, and not to a shared ship.¹⁶ William de Bec and Eustace had a difference of opinion, which resulted in a court case in 1190, for which fortunately there are many details. It appears that Eustace gave the church at Bekesbourne to the Priory of St Gregory, Canterbury, only to discover that Hugh de Bec, William's father, had also given away the church, to a priory in Hastings. Eustace contended that as his family had built the church and funded it that it was his right to give it away. Eventually William agreed on receiving a payment of 100s., and the priory in Hastings relinquished its claim.¹⁷

Eustace had a son also called Eustace but when Eustace senior died, probably in 1198, Eustace junior was still a child. Eustace's affairs, until he reached the age of majority, were in the hands of Robert of Turnham (now known as Thurnham) a wealthy Kent landowner with extensive maritime connections (commander of the English Fleet from 1191-1213) and he arranged for Eustace to be awarded the serjeanty as listed in the *Testa de Nevill* for 1198:

(Eustace) son of Eustace de Burnes who is under age and in the wardship of Robert de Turnham holds Burnes in serjeanty and it is worth £10. In the hands of Robert de Turnham for our Lord King.¹⁸

William de Bec (Beke) was also awarded his share in the serjeanty in the same list of the *Testa de Nevill*:

William de Bec holds Burnes in serjeanty and it is worth £10 and he has to find one ship for the service of our Lord King and pays to the Lord King three marks.¹⁹

This is the point at which the divided serjeanty becomes the subject of a court case which took place in 1201. These entries clearly show that the serjeanty was for the provision by William de Bec (and not Eustace) of one ship at the king's service and that the land held in tenure, supposed to support that supply, as a result of this serjeanty was divided into two equal parts. The action was brought by William of Alding (Yalding) husband of Avicia against William de Bec, claiming the whole land as serjeanty on the grounds that Avicia was the eldest daughter (presumably also the sister of Eustace, junior) the niece of Roger de Burnes and was the eldest co-heir of the eldest co-heir, and that William de Bec, who held the serjeanty was the representative of a junior co-heir. William obtained the declaration below that land held in serjeanty could not be divided; however the phrase used is partible and this may refer to the custom of gavelkind and partible inheritance from which serjeanty was exempt.²⁰

William (de Bec) is advised that his land is by serjeanty of the Lord King and is non partible, and is confirmed by charter of the Lord King Henry father's [i.e. Henry II] and in order to preserve this I give and concede to Hugh de Bec administration of my snecca of Hastings of which Roger de Burnes brother of Illaria wife of Hugh de Bec had and his ancestors before him ... and I order that the same Hugh de Bec as tenant and his heirs administers the same with land and all appurtenances in peace etc., as fully as did the ancestors of Roger in the time of King Henry my grandfather.²¹

Although Avicia initially claimed the serjeanty as the eldest co-heir of the eldest co-heir, on the grounds that Roger was her uncle and referred to William as the younger co-heir, she did not succeed in her claim and when she returned to the attack in 1203 by simply claiming a caracute of land as her share she was again defeated. The result of the court case created a legal precedent and it was used as almost the only example of the fact that a serjeanty could not be divided even into the beginning of the reign of Queen Victoria in 1837, concerning the serjeanty of the Lord Great Chamberlain.²²

The whole of this court case seems to hinge on the declaration that a serjeanty could not be divided but this same serjeanty was in fact divided between William de Bec and Eustace de Burne junior. One thing the court case seems to make clear is that Eustace junior was not involved in the case, probably because he was under age, and at this stage he did not have any involvement in the administration of the king's esnecca. However Eustace came of age in 1203 and the administration of the esnecca was then shared between himself and William de Bec. This must have been an amicable arrangement as the two tenure holders of the manor also held land jointly outside the manor.²³

The next entry in the *Testa de Nevill* is in 1227, probably when William

senior died and was succeeded by his son, also William. This shows William and Eustace jointly holding land worth £20 for the provision of a ship on the summons with the men of Hastings. This seems to be the normal service of a limb of the Cinque Ports in supplying a ship as part of the quota of the head port, and not the provision of the king's ferry service.²⁴ This also accords with an ordinance issued by Henry III in 1229 which is quite clear:

an ordinance touching the service of shipping to be furnished by the Cinque Ports. These are the ports of the King of England, having liberties which other ports have not, that is to say, as more fully appeareth in the charters thereof made: Hastings, to which pertains as members ... Seaford, Pevensea, Bulverhithe, Hydney, Iham, Beaksborne, Grench and Northye. The services therof due to the Lord King, twenty one ships, and in every ship twenty one men with one boy, which is called a gromet.²⁵

The next entry relating to Bekesbourne in the *Testa de Nevill* for 1240/1 rectifies this situation with a specific reference to the king's ferry service as a joint service between William and Eustace.²⁶ Eustace was succeeded by his son Nicholas in the 1240s although we can find no entry for his award of serjeanty, and William de Bec, who died childless, was followed by his brother Richard de Bec about 1250 according to the following entry from the *Testa de Nevill*:

Sergeanty of Richard de Bec in Burnes for which is found to be responsible to our Lord King of one ship for whatever passage is alienated in share.²⁷

And a further entry for the same person:

Sergeanty of Richard de Bec for which is found to be responsible to our Lord King of one ship for whatever passage is alienated in a small part.²⁸

Why there were two entries for essentially the same service is not known, especially as they are for the same year; it may possibly have been a clerical error where the writer did not realise he had already made an entry for Richard. The serjeanty of Richard is shown as shared, and this is confirmed by the following entry in the Patent Rolls, when Nicholas de Burne and Richard de Bec go off together, presumably in their joint ship, with the King on an expedition to Gascony in 1253:

Exemption of Nicholas de Burnes and Richard de Bek, because they hold of the king in the liberty of his ports, by the service of finding one ship for the king's crossing, from being put on assizes, juries or recognitions, and from being made coroner or escheator. Grant also to them that if their heirs will defend (*vindicare*) before the king the said liberties, the king will do them full justice in his court.²⁹

The joint serjeanty continued until the death of Richard de Bec, probably around 1260. His son William succeeded him but there is no record of the serjeanty being awarded to him. Nicholas de Burnes' son James succeeded him but there is also no record of him claiming the serjeanty. Richard de Bec's award of the serjeanty in 1250 is the last record of such, as serjeanties were in retreat during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307).³⁰ However the obligations and privileges of the tenure continued and in 1276 we find a record that 'the tenant of Bekesborne, alias Levingsburn, was bound to find a ship called *Baard* for this purpose'.³¹ When the two halves of the manor passed from the de Burnes to the Dogets in 1363, and from the de Bees to the Cobhams in the late thirteenth/early fourteenth centuries, these privileges, and presumably obligations, were confirmed by a charter of the late fourteenth century from Richard II:

The king commands the treasurer and barons not to compel John of Cobham, knight, Walter Doget and John Doget, tenants of the manor of Bekesbourne and of 32 acres of land parcel of the same manor, purchased by Walter Doget, deceased, which manor and lands are a limb of the port of Hastings, to pay the tenth and fifteenth or the moiety of the tenth and fifteenth, because they contribute to maintaining the ships.³²

These obligations and privileges passed from owner to owner down the years, and when Christchurch Priory, Canterbury was contemplating the purchase of the manor, they made diligent enquiries as to what the obligations involved. In a letter from John Elham to William Molash the Priory of Christchurch Priory, he refers to discussions with the Lord Cardinal [Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester] about port tolls imposed for Bekesbourne and about other matters.³³ These port tolls were presumably the cost of providing a ship for the king, whether an actual ship or a monetary payment.

Unfortunately, despite the provision of the ship at Hastings over many years, there is actually no record of the King, or his court, ever sailing from Hastings or any of the Cinque Ports to Normandy.³⁴ On the occasions when the king should have been able to use his own ship from Hastings he was more likely to hire a ship, as in 1246, when he authorised the sheriff of Kent to pay out 30s. 6d. for a ship from Dover for the voyage of Imbert de Salinas and Master Eymes the Emperor's clerk.³⁵ And even earlier in 1186 instead of using his *esnecca* berthed at Hastings he had the Southampton *esnecca* sailed from there to Dover for a crossing to Wissant:

To delivery of a ship – the king's *esnecca* with the treasury and king's equipments for a channel crossing from Dover, £19. 7s. 0d. by the king's letter [of authority].³⁶

Despite the fact that the king never used the ship berthed at Hastings, the arrangements for its supply were continued and renewed for some 200 years.

And finally after 300 years of providing a service that was not used, in 1445 Margaret of Anjou, the bride to be of Henry VI, crossed the Channel to England and according to the accounts of the manor, now kept by Christchurch Priory, they as owners of the manor had to pay 53s. 4d. of the total cost of £4; presumably the other half of the cost was borne by the joint owner of the manor, the Cobhams.³⁷

However throughout the whole period of the Bekesbourne tenure there seems to have been no certainty on the part of the authorities as to whether the tenure was held by the service of providing a ship specifically for the king's cross-Channel crossing or simply by the provision of a ship as part of the quota of Hastings. It is unlikely that Bekesbourne was required to provide two ships so even the authorities are not sure what the ship is actually for, but since the king never used the ship it was a useful addition to the Hastings quota. This Hastings connection is the reason for Bekesbourne being granted non-corporate membership of the Cinque Ports as a limb of Hastings. Along with Grange (Gillingham) it was required that Bekesbourne (and Grange) as limbs had to supply one ship each, which would count as part of the allocation of ships supplied by Hastings for its Cinque Port obligations.

Hastings was very happy to have this obligation as part of its quota, and whether the ship was for the king or not, it counted towards the quota. Both the Bekesbourne and Grange families had close connections with Hastings other than the Cinque Port connection and these were maintained over many years. The Grange branch of the family kept the de Hastings name and the records show that Matthew de Hastings held land and had obligations in Hastings including provision by his tenants of a guard at Hastings Castle.³⁸ The de Burnes and the de Becs also had property in and around Hastings, as there is a record of Eustace de Burne selling land at Eggingeth, near Hastings, which was passed on to the Abbey of Robertsbridge, also near Hastings.³⁹ And as we have seen above the de Becs tried to give the church at Bekesbourne to the priory of Holy Trinity, Hastings, which showed their close ties with Hastings.

Why Henry I and Henry II would want the provision of a ship at Hastings when they used the ship provided at Southampton is not clear. Hastings occupied a special place in the hearts of the Norman Kings as the place of the successful invasion and conquest and was, in their eyes, the principal port of the Cinque Ports. Using a family with Hastings origins to provide them with a personal service would have seemed appropriate. The serjeanty was renewed time and time again even though as we have seen above the obligations varied from the provision of a ship

for the exclusive use of the king to the provision of a ship for general use. Although the serjeanties declined in the reign of King Edward I, the obligations incumbent on the tenure of the manor of Bekesbourne continued as though the serjeanty was in place, and even when the manor was divided and sold on, the obligations were divided as we have seen above in the case of Margaret of Anjou in 1445.

The documentary evidence for the early Norman period is sparse and some aspects of the supply of the esnecca, and the serjeanty required for supporting the supply, are still obscure. Unusually the serjeanty tenure was divided, quite clearly in the case of Eustace de Burnes junior and William de Bec senior in 1198. Although the divided serjeanty is recorded in the *Liber Feudom (Testa de Nevill)* for 1198 it could well have occurred earlier and simply been recorded as a fact in 1198. It is also possible that the division occurred when Hugh de Bec took over the administration of the esnecca sometime between 1160 and 1170, but there are no records to check for these early dates. Whether the requirement of the tenants of Bekesbourne was for the supply of the king's cross-Channel ferry, or simply the provision of a ship as part of the quota of Hastings, is also obscure, but some aspects of this dual requirement may be due to changing circumstances over the years. When the esnecca service was required in the reigns of King Henry II and King Richard I, England, Normandy, Anjou and Aquitaine were all part of the Angevin Empire, with the ports of Dieppe and Barfleur on the French coast within that empire. After the reign of King John, Normandy and Anjou were lost and the nearest port in France within the empire was in Gascony. The small esneccas of 21 men and a boy would not have been suitable for regular crossings from England to Gascony although they were used on exceptional occasions. Eventually with the loss of the French territories the requirement for any sort of cross-Channel service was greatly diminished and the only requirement left was for the provision of ships as part of the Cinque Port quotas, and even these requirements were superseded by the founding of the Royal Navy. Despite this the Cinque Port privileges continued at Bekesbourne for many centuries until finally ended in the reign of King George IV in 1832, with the passing of the Great Reform Act.

DAVID GILMOUR

¹ The esnecca, from a Norwegian word for snake was a derivative of the Viking longship propelled by oars or by a single masted square rigged sail. Basil W. Bathe, *Seven Centuries of Sea Travel*, p. 15.

² Rose, G. and Illingworth, W, *Placitorum in Domo Westmonasteriensi asservatorum Abbreviatio: Temporibus Regum Ric. I Johann. Henr III, Edw I and Edw II*, Record Commission, London, 1811, p. 39b. *Willelmus [de Bec] dicit quod terra illa est de sergeantia Domini Regis et non debet partiri, et profert cartam Domini Regis H. patris [i.e. Henry II], in qua continetur quod ipse concessit et dedit Hugoni de Becco ministerium de*

Esnetka [? Esnecka] *sua de Hasting quem Rogerus de Burnes frater Illarie uxoris Hugonis de Becco habuit et antecessores sui ante eum ... et precepit quod idem Hugo habeat et teneat et heredes sui ministerium illud cum terris et omnibus pertinen' in pace etc. sicut unquam antecessores Rogeri plenius etc. tempore H. regis avi.* Richard I. 1190.

³ J.H. Round, 'The Dating of the Early Pipe Rolls', *English Historical Review*, Vol. 36, no. 143, July 1921, p. 327, 'in pay of one sailor additional in Eustace de Burnes' ship 60s.10d'.

⁴ J.C. Robertson, *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket Archbishop of Canterbury*, Longman, London, 1876, Vol. 3, p. 26, Fitz.Stephen, *Rex Anglie ad suam transfretationem navem propriam solet habere. Cancellarius ei fieri fecit non unam solam sed tres simul naves optimas.*

⁵ *Pipe Roll 14 Henry II*, Pipe Roll Society, Vol. 12, 1890, p. 92.

⁶ H.W.C. Davis, *England under the Normans and Angevins*, Methuen, London, 1905, p. 295.

⁷ Charles H. Haskins, 'The Administration of Normandy', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 24, no. 94 (Apr., 1909), p. 230.

⁸ Austin Lane Poole, *From Domesday to Magna Carta 1087-1216*, Clarendon Press Oxford, 1955, p. 434.

⁹ Charles I. Elton, *Tenures of Kent*, James Parker, London, 1867, p. 228.

¹⁰ *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem*, HMSO, London, 1906, Vol. 2, 5 Edward I, 1277, 220, p. 134.

¹¹ Audrey M. Woodcock, *Cartulary of the Priory of St. Gregory*, Royal Historical Society, London, 1956, charter 38, p. 29.

¹² Colin Flight, 'Landholders in Kent', *Archaeologia Cantiana*, 125 (2005), 364.

¹³ Felix Hull, *A Calendar of the White and Black Books of the Cinque Ports*, HMSO, London, 1966 (fol. 408v), p. 630.

¹⁴ British Library, *Cotton MSS Vespasian, A 5, 67*, Ils trouveront ces neifs sur la sumonce de 40 jours, armées at en chacun neif 20 hommes, et le maistre des mariners, et ils maintiendront a leur costes demesnes.

¹⁵ A.M. Woodcock, *op. cit.*, charters 37 and 38.

¹⁶ J.H. Round, *op. cit.*, p. 327.

¹⁷ A.M. Woodcock, *op. cit.*, charter 37 and 38.

¹⁸ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill)*, Part 1, Public Record Office, 1920, 1198, p. 13, II 49: *Stacekinus de Bumess qui est infra etatem et in custodia Roberti de Turneham tenet Bumess in seriantia, et valet x.l. In manu Roberti de Turneham per dominum regem.*

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Part 1, p. 13, 1198, *Willelmus de Beche tenet Bumess in seriantia, et valet x.l. et debet invenire domino regi j. navem ad servicium suum, et offere domino regi iij.m.*

²⁰ C. Elton, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

²¹ Rose and Illingworth, *op. cit.*, p. 39b.

²² C. Elton, *op. cit.*, pp. 38-40.

²³ Canterbury Cathedral Archives (hereafter CCA)-DCC-ChAnt/I/132 1227. Ancient Charters Final Concord.

²⁴ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill) Part 2* Public Record Office, 1920, p. 1346, m 26 d. *De seriantiiis, dicunt quod Willelmus del Bek et Eustachius de Burn' tenent xx. libratas terre in Livingeburne de domino rege per servicium inveniendi j. navem ad summonitionem suam cum hominibus de Hasting.*

²⁵ Sir Nicholas Harris Nicholas, *The History of the Royal Navy from the earliest times*, Bentley, London, 1847, p. 262.

²⁶ *Liber Feodorum (Testa de Nevill)*, Part 2, Public Record Office, 1920, p. 1381, 7 d. *De seriantiiis, dicunt quod Wilelmus de Becko et Eustachius de Livyngeburn' tenent xx. libratas terre in Livyngeburne per seriantiam inveniendi unam navem domino regi ad custum eorum quandocunq; dominus rex voluerit transfretare.*

Indo-European languages, for example English ruddy, rusty, russet, etc, or Welsh *rhwd* (filth, rust).

The third part *-iae* is generally taken to indicate a plural. The problem lies with the second syllable. Maybe *-up-* can be linked with a hypothetical **apa* (water), related to words such as *abona* (Celtic), *aqua* and *amnis* (Latin), and the *-appe* suffix in Germanic place names. However, it seems perverse to abandon the letter A, which is common to all these watery words, while keeping the P, which varies.

Many authors are content to guess that *Rutupiae* meant 'muddy waters', but this is unlikely. Ancient *Rutupiae* was a respectable port, protected by a shingle bank and it is hard to see how whitish shingle, yellowish sand, or even brownish mud could be called *rut-*, reddish. *Rutupiae* was famous for oysters (which cannot tolerate large amounts of mud) and the remains of oyster beds in the Wantsum/Stour area described by Smith (1850) and Dowker (1872) lie on an ancient sea shore covered by more than a metre of alluvium, which cannot have arrived before late Roman times.

Was there anything else at *Rutupiae* that was genuinely reddish and so prominent as to give its name to the place? The obvious answer is Red Hills, the distinctive archaeological remains of ancient salterns, which have been much investigated in Essex. In that case, can the *-tup-* syllable reasonably be translated as 'mound'? *Terp* has been taken into English from Frisian to mean 'mound', though most authorities hold that meaning to be secondary to a meaning of 'village' as in its cognates: English *thorp*, Dutch *dorf*, Welsh *tref*, etc. *Tap*, in Taplow, probably means 'tapering cylinder' (contrary to what some place name compilations assert). Particularly interesting is *toft*, which dictionaries consider to be originally a Norse word and define as 'eminence, knoll, or hillock in a flat region'.

In fact, a remarkable number of words with a sense of enlargement and/or sticking up have descended from a Proto-Indo-European root **tu* or **teu* ('to swell'). Examples in English include *tip*, *top*, *tuft*, *tumour*, *tuber*, *tussock*, *tomb*, and *thumb*. One line of descent ran through proto-Germanic **tuppaz*, which is generally considered the origin of the Latin word *tufa* (helmet plume), which Bede helpfully translated with Anglian *tuuf*.

One argument against translating *Rutupiae* as 'red tops' is that in Roman times languages put declensional endings on both nouns and adjectives. So, at the very least, a hypothetical local-language source of *Rutupiae* should have had a structure something like **rut-vowel-tup*. However, vowels are well known to disappear from the middle of multi-syllable words, especially if unstressed or sandwiched between two similar consonants.

If *Rut* did indeed have no declensional ending, *Rutupiae* would be analogous with later Anglo-Saxon place names. Among the dozens of compound names beginning with 'red' that Gelling and Cole (2003) cite,

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