

Stephen Devereux of Bodenham and Burghope

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Stephen Devereux of Bodenham and Burghope was a member of a prominent knightly family in Herefordshire during the reigns of Edward I, Edward II, and Edward III. He gave rise to the Devereux Barons of Whitchurch Maund, Earls of Essex and Viscounts of Hereford.

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Stephen Devereux

Spouse(s) Cicely

Issue

John Devereux of Manne

William Devereux of Bodenham

Father William Devereux, Baron Devereux of Lyonshall

Mother Alice de Grandison

Born c 1268

Died 1350

Ancestry and Childhood

Stephen Devereux^[1] was born about 1268, the second son of Baron William Devereux of Lyonshall and his first wife, Alice Grandison.^[a] His mother died while he was still young, and his father married a second time to Lucy Burnell.^[1] She gave birth to his half-brother, John Devereux of Frome,^[1] whose descendants would later contend with Stephen over control of their patrimony.^[b] His father spent his life struggling to regain control of the lands forfeited by Stephen's grandfather who had died in rebellion at the Battle of Evesham in 1265, and were subject to the Dictum of Kenilworth. Stephen Devereux's coat of arms was the same as his father: argent a fesse gules, in chief three torteaux.

Marriage

He married a woman named Cicely^[1] around 1300. They had at least 2 children: John Devereux of Manne (Whitchurch Maund)^[1] in 1302, and William Devereux of Bodenham^[1] about 1305.

Career

During his father's lifetime Stephen Devereux was established in the ancestral Devereux lands of Bodenham and Burghope.^[2] Large parts of Bodenham, including Whitchurch Maund, had been in the possession of his family since the Domesday Survey when they were held by a William Devereux. Burghope had been held by the Longchamp family,^[3] and probably came into the possession of the Devereux's through the marriage of Walter Devereux with Cecilia de Longchamp as did other lands at Frome Herbert (Halmond) in 1205.^[4]

He was a retainer of Humphrey de Bohun, 3rd Earl of Hereford, and was drawn into the de Bohun's private war with Gilbert de Clare, Earl of Gloucester in 1291. His cousin, John Devereux, who held lands at Chanstone in Hereford, also supported the Bohun's in this struggle.^[5] It is probable that de Bohun's defiant actions in support of baronial rights may have contributed to an unfavorable disposition by King Edward I towards the Devereux family.

Steven's father, Baron William Devereux, to meet debts incurred in the service of the King in Gascony, was forced to grant in 1299 his castle of Lyonshall to Roger, 1st Baron de la Warr. Within the year de la Warr transferred it to Walter de Langton, Bishop of Coventry, and in 1300 the Baron is shown granting Lyonshall now to the Bishop for life. In 1300/1301 Langton in turn placed Lyonshall in the possession of William Touchet who began styling himself as Lord of Lyonshall. Stephen forcibly disseized William Touchet from the castle in 1302. He brought suit against Walter de Langton claiming he thus is 'seisin alienated it (Lyonshall) in fee' with this transfer to William Touchet, but the verdict goes against Stephen as he has no claim on the property as long as William Devereux was still alive. Stephen Devereux yielded control of Lyonshall in 1306.^[6] Walter de Langton had fallen out of favor, and was stripped of his lands and imprisoned. Bartholomew de Badlesmere gained the rights to Lyonshall and enfeoffed William Touchet again in 1312. Furthermore, the Touchet's requested 30 pounds and 4 shillings compensation from Stephen Devereux for damages caused by the seizure.

Stephen Devereux's alignment with Humphrey de Bohun during the killing of Edward II's first favorite, Piers Gaveston, probably contributed to the failure of the family to retain their Barony upon the death of Stephen's father in 1314. As later the Despenser War played out, de Bohun was killed at the Battle of Boroughbridge on 16 March 1322. Stephen Devereux was called in 1323 for a jury in Hereford to judge Adam Orleton, Bishop of Hereford's complicity in the rebellion of Roger de Mortimer during this time, and his son, John Devereux of Manne, was among the men testifying against Orleton.^[7] Although Stephen was also in the party opposing the king's favorites, the Devereux of Bodenham bore a grudge against Mortimer that had its roots in his being granted their lands under the Dictum of Kenilworth described above. This placed Stephen Devereux further at odds with the Devereux's of Frome. His half-brother, John Devereux, had become associated with Henry Mortimer of Chelmarsh prior to his death in 1310, and John's widow, Constance Burnell, had married Henry Mortimer as her second husband. Stephen Devereux's nephew, William Devereux of Frome, would be connected to his stepfather's family from this time forward.

The Despenser War also caught up with William Touchet who was executed along with Bartholomew de Badlesmere in 1322 following the Battle of Boroughbridge. His death brought Lyonshall Castle back into the King's hands.^[8] Stephen's nephew, William Devereux of Frome, made his first claim to usurp control of Lyonshall at this time,^[9] but Edward II refused to restore it to either line of the Devereux family and granted it to John de Felton in 1326. The invasion of England by Roger Mortimer and Queen Isabella shifted power to the Mortimers and the King was forced to abdicate in favor of his son Edward III. William Devereux of Frome, took this opportunity to forcibly disseize Felton of the castle.^{[10][11]} He held it until Edward III reached majority in 1331, and had Mortimer executed. Without Mortimer support, William Devereux's petition^[12] was denied and Lyonshall relinquished back to the crown. Edward III bestowed it back on the Badlesmere heir, Giles de Badlesmere. Upon Giles death, William Devereux's son, another William Devereux of Frome would make one last attempt to gain the castle by filing suit in 1340 against John de Vere, 7th Earl of Oxford who had gained possession by right of his wife, but was again denied.

Like his cousin, Stephen Devereux lacked enough royal favor to regain Lyonshall, but remained a loyal supporter of Edward III and a retainer of the de Bohuns for the rest of his life. William and Edward de Bohun participated in the coup against Roger Mortimer that freed Edward III from his control.^[13] The king later

rewarded the family by creating William de Bohun Earl of Northampton. The influence of the de Bohuns facilitated the placement of his grandson, John, in the company of Prince Edward.

Stephen witnessed land transactions in Whitchurch Maund in 1335 along with his son John Devereux of Manne.^[14] In 1340, he had gained enough royal trust to be assigned the task of collecting the ninth granted by Parliament to pay for the King's military actions on the continent.^[15] On 20 July 1348, Stephen was again appointed to collect from Hereford the first of three years of the tenth and fifteenth granted by Parliament to the king. The appointment was renewed on 16 July 1349, but Stephen Devereux must have become ill or infirmed shortly after as another was appointed in his place on 26 September 1349.^[16] When he died in 1350,^[1] he had laid the groundworks for the advancement of his descendents. His grandson, John Devereux of Whitchurch Maund, would rise through his close relationship with the Black Prince to finally regain the barony and Lyonshall Castle.

References

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3. ^ William Henry Cooke. *Collections Towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford in continuation of Duncumb's History. Hundred of Grimsworth*. London: John Murray, Albermarle Street. 1892, Page 172, Grimsworth Hundred
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5. ^ [1] (<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=116347&strquery=parliament%20edward%20i%201291%20epiphany%20pleas%20earls>), Accessed 13 January 2014, British History Online. Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, Roll 5 (SC 9/5). Proceedings on the complaint of the earl of Hereford against the earl of Gloucester
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9. ^ UK National Archives Petitioners: William Deverous (devereux), son and heir of John Deverous (Devereux). Names: Deverous (Devereux) ...[c. 1322] Reference: SC 8/43/2102
10. ^ Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem, Volume VII, Edward III. London: Mackie and Co, LD. 1909. Entry 104 and 308, Bartholomew de Badelesmere.
11. ^ UK National Archives Petitioners: John de Felton. Name(s): de Felton, John. Addressees: King and...[c. 1327] Reference: SC 8/164/8165
12. ^ Ancient Petitions, file 43, no 2102, January 1330/1
13. ^ Dan Jones. *The Plantagenets, The Warrior Kings and Queens Who Made England*. New York: Viking. 2012, Pages 363, 375.
14. ^ John Duncumb. *Collections Towards the History and Antiquities of the County of Hereford, Volume 2, Issue 1*. Hereford: EG Wright, 1812. Page 49, Broxash Hundred, Amongst the Collections of St. George, Clarencieux King at Arms

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Notes

- a. ^ His elder brother was Walter Devereux of Bodenham who married Margery de Braose. Walter probably died before 1300 as Stephen Devereux took the lead at this time in trying to prevent the alienation of the family castle, Lyonshall. Another possible brother is Roger Devereux, who is shown to have held family lands at Bishopstone
- b. ^ The early death of Stephen Devereux's mother, Alice de Grandison, and the granting for life of some of the attainted Devereux lands directly to his step-grandmother, Maud de Giffard, facilitated the passage of lands to John Devereux including Frome, Holme Lacy, Stoke Lacy, and Lower Hayton.

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Categories: 1260s births | 1350 deaths

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