

## **The Warne Family**

*Don Warne May 2010*

Here follows a brief summary of the tales and brute facts of the lives of our ancestors back to Alfred the Great who was the Saxon King in 871-899. Libraries are full of books telling these stories. We can be confident, because of the detailed system of recording Monarch events, that these stories are generally true. We realize that some may be tales, based only partly on facts. For instance, as children we heard the touching story of King Alfred, deserted by his troops and on the run from the Danes, finding shelter in a humble cottage. He was given a task by a widow who didn't know that he was king to watch the buns toasting in the fire. Ironically the monarch forgot his task and let the buns bum. Now we have the truth.

In the National Portrait Gallery History of the Kings and Queens of England, this story is considered apocryphal. But most tales have a modicum of truth in them. The facts are that, early in his career as King, Alfred was being pursued by the Danes in the marshy island of Athelney in Somerset and could easily have taken shelter in a cottage there. This reminds us that our own histories may contain both tales and established truth.

Here are some of the accepted truths of Alfred's history. He was King in the period 871-899. As a young man he travelled to Rome to meet Pope Leo IV. He was invested as a Roman Consul by the Pope. While waiting for his call to be King, Alfred entered into a thorough study program. He learned to read and write and became a proficient scholar. Alfred succeeded in rolling back the attacks of the Danes. He encouraged learning and religion throughout his land and is generally recognized as being a really great King.

The Saxon Kingdom lasted until 1066. That was when William, Duke of Normandy, defeated Harold, the Saxon King of England. William's father, the previous Duke of Normandy had fallen in love with Arletta, the daughter of a tanner. Despite the fact that the rulers of Normandy were all fervent supporters of the Church, the Duke took Arletta as his mistress and they had a son, William, who was known at first as William the Bastard. Then, after he defeated Harold, he became known as William the Conqueror. William married Matilda, daughter of Baldwin of Flanders, perhaps because she was a descendant of Alfred the Great. He was a powerful ruler, ushering in the first feudal state in England.

We turn now to Henry I who ruled from 1100 to 1135. He was the youngest

son of William the Conqueror and the favourite of his mother, Matilda. On her death in 1083 she left him her English estates. Matilda is important for our family history because her mother was St. Margaret through whom we have a direct sequence of ancestors back to Alfred the Great who died in 899 A.D. Also, Matilda's father, Malcolm III Caenmor, was King of Scotland in 1093. Through him we can trace our ancestors in the long history of Scottish monarchs.

Before his accession to the throne in 1100, Henry received a good education, learning to read and write Latin, studying English law and customs. He suffered a great tragedy when William, his only legitimate son, was drowned. Before Henry's death in 1135, he designated his daughter, Matilda, as his heir. This was an unusual recognition of the rights of women to exercise power. Against Henry's wish, the ruling council nominated Stephen, grandson of William the Conqueror as king. Later, when Matilda died, her eldest son became King Henry II.

We move quickly now past the colourful reign of Henry III to that of his son, Edward I, who reigned 1272-1307. At age 15, Edward travelled to Spain and was married to Eleanor, daughter of Fernando III, King of Castile and Leon. These two were inseparable for the rest of their lives. When Henry III died in 1272, the couple had reached Sicily and, like those of us who travelled there with Michael Quin in September, they took their leisured time. They returned to Westminster Abbey to be crowned together on August 12, 1274.

Edward was a great warrior but also a good statesman. He summoned parliaments, laying the groundwork for later good government. After the death of Queen Margaret of Scotland (the Maid of Norway) in 1290 Edward travelled north to deal with the issue of succession. Queen Eleanor and her company were following him when she took ill and died at Lincoln. Her grief-stricken husband followed her coffin back to London. At each of the twelve stopping points, Edward had a memorial cross erected. Today a replica of the last of these may be seen in the forecourt of Charing Cross Station, London. This shows a remarkable devotion which death could not extinguish.

We come now to the reign of Edward III, the last of the monarchs we can claim as our direct ancestors. A year after he was crowned King, Edward married Philippa, third daughter of William I, Count of Holland and Hainault. This was an excellent marriage, effective in producing 12 children in 25 years. At this time, Edward was busy with his preparation for war with France. He mobilized the youth by getting them to focus on the use of the long bow. They were directed away from lesser skills such as football, hardball and tennis. This enabled the English with

smaller numbers to defeat the French at Crecy, Calais and Poitiers. Edward installed the Order of the Garter and brought Mome Dancers in from Spain.

Our list of ancestors focuses now on Edward son, John of Gaunt, who as a youth spent time in Ghent (hence his nickname). John was able to gain great wealth by marrying Blanche, Countess of Lancaster. From that union came Henry IV, who ruled from 1399-1413. Apparently, John was devoted to his first wife because after her death he established a number of charities in her honour. His second marriage produced no children. Perhaps that explains his taking a mistress, Lady Katherine Swynford, who was the sister of Chaucer's wife. This affair produced four children who were considered illegitimate until John's nephew, Richard II, passed a decree recognizing the marriage of John and Katherine. Hooray! Through this decree, we who are descendants of this affair have avoided having to put the prefix Fitz (or bastard) to our surnames. It is interesting that the present Queen Elizabeth is a relative of ours through this affair. She is a descendant of John Beaufort, the elder son of Katherine Swynford while we are descendants of Joan Beaufort the older daughter of the royal couple.

Aristocrats usually married aristocrats and so we can trace a remarkable series in the sequence of our ancestors. Joan Beaufort (1379-1440) married Ralph Neville (1364 -) the first Earl of Westmoreland. Their son Richard Neville (1400-1460) was the first Earl of Salisbury. He married Lady Alice Montacute. This Richard was executed in 1460 in the War of the Roses. Their daughter, Katherine, (sister of the Kingmaker Neville) married William Bonville, Lord Harrington. Sadly, he was executed in the War of the Roses on December 31, 1460. He never saw his newborn child, Cecily, who was born in 1461. That Cecily married Thomas Grey, First Marquis of Dorset. He was related to Lady Jane Grey who for nine days in 1553 was Queen of England and then executed.

Now comes a whole new section of our ancestral history. That Cecily had a child called Eleanor (d. 1534) who married Sir John Arundel] (1471-1545). He had control of Lanherne, the Family Manor in Cornwall. Our story is now focussed on that beautiful County on the western tip of the British Isles. The Arundell's were a Norman family who through marriage gained control in 1231 of Lanherne. Although Hester and I visited Cornwall two years ago, we missed seeing Lanherne. Therefore we commissioned Hester's Devon cousins Hedley and Pam and Ann and Stephen to travel to the site which is just a few miles south of Newquay in the village of St. Mawgan. They brought back interesting information and photos on the history of Lanherne. It is now occupied by monks of the Franciscan Order after having been sold in 1795 to a Carmelite nunnery. Our cousins couldn't enter the

monastery, but they enjoyed seeing the beauty of the Vale of Lanherne.

The Arundel's dominated the life of this village of St. Mawgan in the Vale of Lanherne for 500 years. They were known as the Great Arundells and were the richest and most influential family in Cornwall. Following is a copy of a recent photo of Lanherne.



The Arundells were always zealous supporters of the Church. Henry break with Rome caught them by surprise and made their continued support of the Roman rites a test of their fortitude. Queen Elizabeth was ruthless in persecuting those who continued to support Rome. Their estates were under constant pressure.

This leads us now to consider tales we could make up concerning the romance between Cecily Arundell (1614-1639) and one of our own clan, John Docton (1600-1653) who was born in Hartland, Devon. John was grandfather to Honor Docton (1700) who married John Warne in 1721. And so we have our long history of farming linked with the Docton experience of running a mill in North Devon and moving into the fabled history of the aristocratic Arundells. How did John Docton ever meet Cecily Anuidell? Did she visit the Docton Mill? Apparently the Arundell family had enough money left to arrange the expensive marriage of John and Cecily at the Church of St. Martins-in-the-Field in London. What stories of this romance reached John Docton's grandson (by marriage) John Warne (1700- ?). Records show that Cecily died at Hartland in Devon in 1639 –

such a young age! To scout this story we should visit Hartland in Devon.

John Warne and Honor Docton, both born in 1700, represent the cusp of our knowledge of the Warne clan in Cornwall for the next 140 years. We have noted the sequence down to John Blake Warne, born 1794, but with the emigration of our great-great grandfather, William Warne (born 1824) to Cobourg in 1843, effectively ties with the Warnes in Cornwall and tales and stories of those farming families near Padstow have been cut off.

Two years ago, David Warne, son of Eleanor (Warne) Richardson, used his internet skills to trace the Warne genealogy back to the sixteenth century. He also pursued the links of ancestry from the Docton to the Arundell families. Everything then connected with our royal ancestors through John of Gaunt. One interesting clue to our real link with Britain was Eleanor's memory that her grandfather had a horse on his farm in Oshawa named Clio. This turns out to be the name of the sailing ship on which William Warne sailed from Padstow, Cornwall, in 1843 to Quebec and then Cobourg. Many thanks go to David for his detailed research.

We should remember also the role Richard 11 played using his power to legitimize the marriage of our royal ancestors, John of Gaunt and his mistress, Katherine. We should pay tribute also to the young couple Cecily and John who by their marriage dramatized the union of aristocrats and farming people.

Come, at this wonderful time of year during the Feast of Christmas, let us raise our glasses to Richard II and Cecily and John.