

The following text was published in *Le Monde Berrubey* 2019, in the summer's issue.

John de Beruby, wealthy landowner in East Yorkshire around 1320

In number 1 of vol. 25 (winter 2013), there was discussion about people named Beruby from East Yorkshire and in particular of John, signatory around 1322 of a petition that is conserved in the United Kingdom National Archives (UKNA). This petition of notables of the region of Cleveland, northeast of Yorkshire, is signed by large landowners such as the Superior of the Abbey of Whitby and that of the Priory of Hexham. Around 1300, there was also question of heirs *de Beruby* that had obtained important properties in this region, John being, we presume, one of these. A certain Thomas *de Beruby* also appeared on a receipt dating from 1268. We now pose ourselves a question as to this lineage of *de Beruby* that writes their name, to our surprise, exactly as do the Beruby of Northamptonshire in the centre of England or those west of Yorkshire. Can it be that different Beruby of Yorkshire also came from the center of England, there, where the family name seems to have left its oldest traces.

Recent discoveries provide us with clues to answer this question. Let us first speak of William (Willelmo) de Berchebi who lived around 1240. He appears as a witness in a deed registered in the Cartulary (Registry) of the Priory of **Guisborough** or Guisbrough (Gyseburne in Latin), dedicated to Saint-Augustin and situated in the diocese of Ebor (in effect, that of York) and north of Lythe, exactly in this region of Cleveland north of which is also found Durham. This registry was compiled between 1230 to 1250. The foundations of the priory are on lands of the family *de Brus* of Normand origins and date from 1119 to 1129. The spelling of Berchebi corresponds to the name Beruby, today Barby (in Northamptonshire) as it appeared shortly after in the Domesday Book of 1086. In this area, there are traces of the utilization of both forms of the name, either Berchebi or Beruby. At first glance, the similar use of two spellings in two regions, one remote from the other, can be explained by the great mobility of the Normands, "free men" called by their feudal Lord to military service which required their displacement.

If there is a lineage in the north for whom the name Berchebi evolved to that of Beruby, this then corresponds to what transpired to the south where we find, in 1220, Master Samson de Berchebi who witnessed a donation to the Priory of St. André (attached to Cluny in France) situated in Northhampton and of which he appears to be its Superior. He is witness to this act in the company of Master Robert de Melhun and Master Robert Grossetête, two future Bishops who are themselves of Normand descent. At the same period, from 1209 to 1235, Hugh Wells is Bishop of Lincoln before being replaced by Grossetête, the future founder of Oxford University. Therefore, we are clearly in the presence of a Berchebi /Beruby lineage belonging to what we can call the francophone anglo-normand elite that dominates the country.

But there is more. Near Guisborough we find a place named Eston. When we discussed this in an earlier issue about the Beruby Manor, we also mentioned the Manor of Eston. In a volume by J.W. Freeman entitled Discovering Surnames, there is mention of an act dated November 1, 1261 that states at page 261 : *Grant that the executors of the will of Sancha queen of the Romans, for the good of her soul, may dispose of the wardship of the manors of Eston and Beruby late of William de Cantilupo which the King had granted to her.* This leads us to think that the Berubys who appear around these two domains could be related or at least be of the same origin, simply because these two domains, although far apart one from the other, always retained the same Masters whenever they changed hands. In those times, the peasant remained with his Lord, much like the Knights and their squires. When the de Beruby manor passed over to the Zouche family because of the marriage of Eudo La Zouche to Milicent de Cantilupo, born in 1250, the same thing happened in the case of the Manor of Eston.

The family name remains in the northern region as witnessed by another act under the name of Emma de Beruby and dated Sunday, November 4, 1324. This just might be a relative of John de Beruby since it is of the same period. We also find Berheby and other similar names in the region and these names must derive from Bercheby which leads me to think that the spelling of Beruby is not the result of a simple coincidence. Also, we cannot ignore the existence of one Thurstan de Berghby (or Bergaby) who was witness to a donation by Adam de Brus (1113 – 1143) to the Abbey of Rielvaux in **1132** according to a book published in 1889 under the title of *Cartularium Abbathiae de Rievallé*. Some years later, between 1183 and 1203, there is also mention of a gift of eleven acres of land to the benefit of the Abbey of Rielvaux in Leake, by Ralph, son of Uctred de Bergebi, a sector where there existed a fief de Bergheby in 1086. We also find Ralph de Berghby in 1303, William de Berghby in 1346, William de Berroby in 1391 and thereafter a lineage of Barroby which persists to this day (subject matter p. 12, vol.25 # 3, summer 2013).

All this does not prevent me from believing that the Berubys of Guisborough could have the same origins as those of Northamptonshire which I have already identified as the Daventry lineage and the one from the west of Yorkshire which I now refer to as the lineage of Shippen. In number 2 of volume 25, there was indeed question of these people, descendants of William de Beruby, the founder of a coal mine in Shippen in 1262. We ask ourselves the same question because he was married to a Walcote, another anglo-normand name originating from the centre of England.

Some may doubt that we could have descended from large landowners from the north of England as those of the family *de Beruby*. We can nevertheless not exclude this possibility because the black plague of 1349 killed up to 50% of the population of certain regions thereby depriving these owners of a good part of their workforce. Many domains suffered and dwindled along with many hamlets, villages and parishes that disappeared. John and his descendants may not even have survived contrary to the Berubys of Shippen, descendants of William, of whom we

later find traces of in 1375 and even in 1419. It is not impossible that a Beruby, having migrated to Normandy, be a descendant of de Beruby who came from Northamptonshire to Yorkshire. The three lines of Daventry (Northamptonshire), of Shippen (West of Yorkshire) and Guisborough (North-east of Yorkshire) could be related and even so with our ancestors from Upper Normandy.