

# The Arms on the Chaucer Tomb at Ewelme

with a note on the early manorial history of the parish

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ALTHOUGH representing one of the largest and most interesting collections of mediaeval coats to be found on any tomb in England, the arms on the Chaucer tomb at Ewelme have never been competently examined, so that the persons represented by them have been only partially, and sometimes incorrectly, identified. The most recent account of them, in the otherwise admirable notes on the church compiled by a late rector, is of little genealogical or heraldic value; and the account in the first volume of the *Oxford Journal of Monumental Brasses* is of no value at all:

‘Others to some faint meaning make pretence  
But Shadwell *never* deviates into sense.’

its author's competence may be judged by his description of ‘time-honoured Lancaster’ as ‘the Duke of Gaunt.’ Sir Harris Nicolas, who wrote the Memoir prefixed to the Aldine Chaucer of 1845, realised that the solution of the problem was the construction of a pedigree; but the tree he drew up was quite inadequate for the purpose.

The earliest record of the coats is in the notebook of Richard Lee, Portcullis, who sketched them for his Gatherings of Oxfordshire on his Visitation of the County in 1574. It is now in the Bodleian (Wood MS. D. 14), and a page of it, showing some of the shields on the Ewelme tombs, was reproduced in facsimile in the Harleian Society's volume of the Visitations of Oxfordshire. Lee, no doubt, recognised most of the arms; but if he did he omitted to name them. Leland, a generation earlier, must have seen them, for he copied the inscription on the tomb; but he makes no mention of the arms. Camden's *Britannia* (1586), dismisses the church in a line. Speght (PLATE XIV) had the shields drawn for his ‘Plate of the Progenie of Geoffrey Chaucer’ prefixed to the Life in his edition of the *Works* in 1598; but he attempts no explanation of their meaning. Wood, in the middle of the next century, had Lee's notebook

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in his possession and made a list of his own, Wood MS. E.1 folio 211, printed in the fourth volume of the Oxfordshire Record Society, p. 133, and including 27 shields, hardly any of which are identified; he omits Stafford and duplicates Despenser and others. Rawlinson, in 1718, merely transcribed from Wood, and having numbered the shields 1 to 27 adds Wood's note, copied from Lee, '4 on top, 14 on sides, 2 at one end 4 at other' without observing that these numbers total only 24. Lastly, in 1823, Skelton (PLATE XV) made his beautiful plate of the tombs for his *Antiquities of Oxfordshire* and for the first time attempts to identify, not indeed the persons, but the families concerned.

By this time, as he says, and as his drawing shows, almost half the shields were missing and many of the rest were indistinct. He claims that he compiled his list of the originals from 'Records of the Heralds' College and the MSS. of Anthony à Wood'; but his description agrees not with the accounts of Wood and Lee but almost exactly with the drawing in Speght which differs considerably from their records. However, as he gives the date correctly, from Leland, 18 November, 1434, while Speght's drawing shows 13 December,<sup>1</sup> it seems probable that he copied not the drawing but a 'pedigree by the hands of Master Glover alias Somerset that learned Antiquarie' to which Speght refers and which may have been the source from which his drawing was made.

In 1843, when Dr. Kidd, Master of the Hospital and Regius Professor of Medicine, undertook the repair of the tomb, eleven of the shields were missing. Napier, who gives an account of the work in *Historical Notices of the Parishes of Sewyncombe and Ewelme* (1858), p. 45, says that 'these eleven have been replaced, as well as all the twenty-four arranged on the tomb, according to the account of it by Richard Lee, Portcullis.' The order of the shields and their charges certainly correspond with Lee's list, except that he drew a cardinal's hat above the first of the Beaufort shields; and the draughtsmanship suggests that the words here italicised must be interpreted to mean that all the shields were renewed in 1843. The middle one in the top row is crucial: it was not one of those listed as missing; yet the drawing of the label, to say nothing of the leopards, is such as no mediaeval herald could possibly have perpetrated; it suggests the heraldic stationery of the Victorian era. We must therefore regard the shields as probably a faithful record of the original list but unfortunately not as an illustration of mediaeval heraldic art. Napier identifies some of the families represented, but he entirely fails to recognise the particular persons intended, and he disposes of the problem with the sonorous platitude that 'many of the armorial bearings in the list show the collateral connections of the

<sup>1</sup>The D.N.B. says that Thomas Chaucer died on 14 March. The I.P.M. taken 13 May, 1435, says 'the Thursday next before the Feast of St. Edmund, King and Martyr,' i.e., 20 November.

Chaucer family, agreeably to a custom not unusual in former days with respect to the marshalling of arms on funeral monuments.'

When the 'collateral connections of the Chaucer family' are examined by means of an adequately extended pedigree it is seen at once that the families concerned are those of Thomas Chaucer's mother, Philippa Roet, of his wife, Maud Burghersh, and his daughter's husbands, Thomas Montagu and William de la Pole, and that the particular individuals commemorated are, mainly, some of the royal nephews and nieces of Philippa with their children, and some of the baronial cousins of Maud with their parents.

There are no shields representing members of Chaucer's own family, for the sufficient reason that they were unknown to the heralds. John Chaucer citizen and vintner of London, who is believed to have been Geoffrey's father, used an armorial seal, bearing ermine a chief with three bird's heads issuant, in sealing a deed of 30 November, 1363, by which he and Agnes his wife conveyed a quit rent of 40 pence to Nicolas Long, citizen and butcher,<sup>1</sup> but the name appears in no roll of arms until Randle Holmes's Book of c. 1460, where the coat is given as party silver and gules a bend counter-coloured. It is significant that these arms are ascribed not to the family but to the individual, 'Jafferay Chawserys' as if newly adopted.<sup>2</sup> This is the shield which Nicolas Brigham afterwards put on the tomb at Westminster. A letter of Joseph Hunter to Sir Henry Ellis, printed with a drawing in *Archaeologia*, xxxiv, 42, and dated 14 May, 1850, quotes a deed 'discovered by me in the unsorted masses of Her Majesty's Exchequer' dated at Ewelme, 20 May, 10 Henry IV and sealed by Thomas Chaucer with what may be Geoffrey's seal, as it bears the coat ascribed to him, though the indistinct legend might as well be 'Thomae Chaucier' as the 'Ghofrai Chaucier' which Hunter makes it. Sir Harris Nicolas, in his Introduction to the Aldine Chaucer, reproduced a drawing of another seal bearing this shield, surmounted by the crest of a unicorn's head, which he asserts was Thomas Chaucer's, though the scroll for a legend is blank.

It is clear that Thomas Chaucer's heraldic antecedents were not such as to induce his daughter to include any reference to them on his tomb. And it is equally clear that in spite of the discrepancies in the records of Lee and Speght, with the consequent uncertainty as to the exact display originally on the tomb, there is no doubt whatever as to the persons intended by every one of the shields now upon it.

The identification of two of them enables us to date the monument with more precision than has yet been possible. Richard, Duke of York's marriage to Cecile Neville took place, according to the D.N.B. and Doyle's *Official Baronage*, in 1438 (their eldest child, Edward IV, was born in August the

<sup>1</sup> *Academy*, 13 October, 1877, p. 364.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancestor*, iv, 250.

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following year); their arms impaled on the tomb (No. 8) show that it cannot have been completed until after that event. Humphrey Stafford assumed the style of Earl of Buckingham and quartered the arms of Woodstock after the death of his mother Ann, granddaughter and heir of Thomas of Woodstock, in October, 1438;<sup>1</sup> as his arms on the tomb (No. 12) are Stafford unquartered it must be earlier than that date. The third quarter of 1438 is thus the probable time of its completion. This would make it part of the plan for the chantry chapel added to the church following the foundation of the Hospital, the licence for which is dated 3 July, 1437.<sup>2</sup> The arms also provide evidence to confirm or supplement suggestions made by the editors of the *Complete Peerage* in the pedigrees of Kerdeston, VII, 194c, and Grey of Rotherfield, VI, 147.<sup>3</sup>

The shields may now be taken in order, according to Lee's arrangement of them in his notebook. From this it is clear that he first copied ten coats on the tomb of the Duchess of Suffolk, then the four on the flat top of the Chaucer tomb, next the two at the west end, which he brackets together as a reminder of the fact, then those on the front, presumably taking the top row first, and lastly the four at the east end. This is the order followed by the restorers in 1843; and it agrees with Speght's drawing (PLATE XIV) at least as far as the ends and the top are concerned.

That only two shields are placed at the west end shows that the tomb is in its original position where a pier obscures the northern half of that face: it must thus be later than the fabric of the chapel, built, presumably, after the grant of the chantry licence in 1437.

### 1. *Gules three wheels gold, Roet for Chaucer.*

This is the punning coat impaled by John of Gaunt (No. 5) for his third wife, Catherine, daughter of Sir Paon Roet of Hainault, Guienne King of Arms, whose tomb in Old St. Paul's bore the inscription recorded by Weever in his *Antient Funerall Monuments*: 'Hic jacet Paganus Roet miles Guyenne rex armorum pater Catherine ducisse Lancastrie . . .' As it obviously here represents Thomas Chaucer he must have adopted it as son and heir of Catherine's sister, Philippa, co-heir of Sir Paon. That he was also the son of Geoffrey is proved by the evidence given in a suit of 20 Rich. II, 1396, Michaelmas, in which Ralph Barton, citizen and skinner of London, sues Thomas Chaucer Esquire son of Geoffrey Chaucer Esquire with others for £40 22d.

<sup>1</sup> *Complete Peerage*, II, 388.

<sup>2</sup> *Monasticon*, VI, 732.

<sup>3</sup> They reveal too, as Dr. Salter observes in a letter to the writer, 'what a narrow oligarchy England had become by 1440.' This would become even more strikingly apparent if the rest of the Neville alliances had been represented on the tomb. There is also a conspicuous disregard of the Church's ban on marriages within the prohibited degrees.

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which they owe and unjustly detain. There is further, the contemporary testimony of Thomas Gascoigne, D.D., of Oriel, Chancellor of the University in the year of Thomas Chaucer's decease and in subsequent years until his own death in 1458, who in speaking of Geoffrey's death-bed regrets for his lascivious writing (*Dictionarium Theologicum*, Lincoln College MS. 118, p. 377), adds 'Fuit idem Chawserus pater Thomae Chawserus qui Thomas sepelitur in Nuhelm juxta Oxoniam.' And that he also used his father's arms is clear from his seal on a deed by which he conveyed his manor of Gresham to John, Duke of Bedford, 5 Henry VI, 1427,<sup>1</sup> and by Wood's testimony that he saw in the windows of Woodstock church shields of Thomas Chaucer, as lessee of the manor under Joan of Navarre, Queen of Henry IV, on which both Chaucer's coat and Roet impaled Burghersh.<sup>2</sup>

That the name of Geoffrey's wife was Philippa is proved by contemporary documents, e.g., the grant of a pension to her on 12 September, 1366, as 'Philippa Chaucer una Domicellarum Camerae Philippae Reginae';<sup>3</sup> and the subsequent issue rolls recording its payment through Geoffrey; the arms at Ewelme seem to exclude any other hypothesis than that she was the sister of John of Gaunt's wife. This was the accepted belief at least as early as the 16th century. Besides Speght's assertion on the authority of Glover there is a verse of Hugh Holland's quoted by Dingley in describing Sir Paon Roet's tomb in Old St. Paul's:

That Astrophill of Arts the life  
A Knight was and a Poet;  
So was the man who took to wife  
The Daughter of La Roet. . . .<sup>4</sup>

A problem less easily disposed of is the occurrence of these arms on three bosses, and, in Lee's record (*Visitation Oxon.*, 1574), in the windows, of the Divinity School, in one place contiguous to the shield of the See of London. Dingley in his notes on St. Paul's, *History from Marble* (Camden Society, 1868), p. 455, shows a drawing of the Roet arms impaled by the See, which he says was one of twelve shields painted on the roof of the transept. Among them are Bishops Kemp, 1450-1489, and FitzJames, 1506-1522, and Henry Deane, Prior of Llanthony, afterwards Primate, ob. 1503, which also occur in the Divinity School, and Savage, Bishop of London, 1496-1501. The shield of John de la Pole, 2nd Duke of Suffolk, son of Thomas Chaucer's daughter Alice, who was

<sup>1</sup> Letters from John Manly and Oswald Barron to the *Times Literary Supplement*, August 3 and 10, 1933.

<sup>2</sup> *Oxfordshire Record Society*, xi, 354.

<sup>3</sup> Rot. Pat. 40 Edw. III.

<sup>4</sup> The lines are addressed 'To his friend T.H.' i.e. Thomas Hawkins, 'of the Tribe of Ben.' D.N.B.



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Steward of the University when the Divinity School vault was made, are on one of its bosses ; but it is not near the Roet shield, and it is unlikely that he would be responsible for thrice repeating a discarded quartering. No bishop of London nor dean of St. Paul's bore the name of Roet, and none is known to have borne the arms ; but it is much more likely that the shields in the vault refer to some contemporary dignitary of St. Paul's of the Roet family than to Thomas Chaucer who had been dead for fifty years.

2. *Silver a chief gules with a double-tailed lion gold over all, Burghersh of Ewelme.*

This, as its position above the lady's effigies attests, is the shield of Maud Burghersh, *ob.* 1436, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Burghersh of Ewelme, 1343-91, by his wife Ismania, *ob.* 1420, daughter of Simon Hannap of Gloucestershire. Speght (PLATE XIV), shows three stag's faces on a chief as the arms of Hannap, but Maud's maternal, like her husband's paternal, ancestors are left out of account in selecting the arms for inclusion on the monument. The shield of the barons of Burghersh, *i.e.*, Burwash (locally 'Burrish'), Sussex, bore the double-tailed lion on a field gules;<sup>1</sup> the chief by which the Ewelme branch differenced it was perhaps derived from the arms of Bacon from whom they inherited that manor. But on all the shields at Ewelme on which the Burghersh arms appear the coat of the cadet branch is made to do duty for the baronial house ; and this, as Lee's sketches show, was so originally. William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, husband of Maud's daughter Alice, made it in turn do duty for Chaucer, as in his quartered shield, No. 18 ; Thomas Montagu, Earl of Salisbury, her previous husband, impaled it in preference to Chaucer, as in No. 13. So it came to be regarded as the coat of Chaucer and in Randle Holmes's book it is given as a second coat for Geoffrey himself.<sup>2</sup> Sir John Burghersh had inherited two fees in Ewelme, one from his grandfather, Sir William Kerdeston, which had descended to him from the Gant family, and one from his grandmother Maud Bacon, purchased by her uncle from the Despensers.

3. *Roet, for Chaucer, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*
4. *Quarterly Roet, for Chaucer, and Burghersh of Ewelme.*

Both 3 and 4 refer to the marriage of Thomas Chaucer, *ob.* 1434, and Maud Burghersh, *ob.* 1436. Speght's drawing of 3 is an obvious error.

<sup>1</sup> *Complete Peerage*, II, 426 ; *Knights of Edward I*, Harl. Soc. LXXX, 163.

<sup>2</sup> *Ancestor*, V, 178.

5. *France and England quarterly with a label ermine, John of Gaunt, impaling Roet.*

This represents the marriage of John of Gaunt, 4th son of Edward III, with Catherine Roet, sister of Philippa, wife of Geoffrey and mother of Thomas Chaucer. Their children, the Beauforts, were thus cousins of Thomas, and it is natural enough that their arms should appear on his tomb, especially as he had no armigerous relations of his own to be crowded out by them. Though it has been made an argument for the view that Thomas Chaucer was Gaunt's son, it can be no more than a coincidence that the original arms of the Beauforts before their legitimization bore a marked resemblance to Geoffrey Chaucer's, being a bend on a party field with England and a label of France on the bend. John of Gaunt in his lifetime, of course, bore Old France in the first quarter, as may be seen on his seal in Sandford, *Genealogical History of the Kings of England*, p. 238; but alike on the tomb and in the glass of the east window his shield is made to conform with the change in the royal arms adopted by his son, Henry IV. His difference of an ermine label is intended to refer to his earldom of Richmond and its descent from the Dukes of Brittany who bore an ermine shield (*op. cit.*, p. 243). Catherine's tomb is in Lincoln cathedral. Her husband's, in Old St. Paul's, was destroyed in the Fire of London, but there is a drawing of it in Dugdale, *History of St. Paul's*, and of his effigies and arms in Dingley, *History from Marble*, p. 437. His picture, in glass of 1441, is in a window of the ante-chapel at All Souls.

6. *France and England quarterly and a label silver with three roundels gules on each file, York, impaling gold a cross engrailed sable, Mohun.*

This is the shield of Edward, Duke of York, son of Edmund, 5th son of Edward III, who married Philippa, daughter and co-heir of John, Lord Mohun by Joan, daughter of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, brother of John Burghersh of Tythrop and Ewelme, grandfather of Maud Chaucer. The relationship is clear from a suit of 1408 in which Maud Chaucer and her sister Margaret sue and recover as 'co-heirs of John, son of John, heir of Henry Burghersh' who was Bishop of Lincoln and brother of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, by the purchase of Maud's marriage by John, Lord Mohun, for £100 paid to the receiver-general of the Duchy of Lancaster, and by the grant to Lord Burghersh and subsequently to his daughter Joan Mohun of the keeping of the manor of Ewelme during the minority of the heir of John Burghersh.<sup>1</sup> Philippa and Maud were thus second cousins; and Thomas Chaucer's aunt, Catherine Roet, was aunt by marriage to Edward, Duke of York. Philippa was buried in Westminster

<sup>1</sup> Cal. Pat. Rolls, 1354-8, p. 322; D.N.B., s.n. Thomas Chaucer.

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Abbey, where her tomb, bearing these arms and her parents' (No. 20) remains. It is illustrated in Sandford, *op. cit.*, p. 364. The Burghersh arms are there correctly drawn without the chief. The choice of the red roundels awaits explanation.

7. *France and England quarterly in a bordure gobony silver and azure, Beaufort.*

Lee's sketch shows a cardinal's hat above this shield, and Wood also asserts that there was 'a hatt over it.' If so it was clearly for Henry Beaufort, Cardinal Bishop of Winchester, 2nd son of Catherine Roet and John of Gaunt; but as it stands it would represent the eldest son, John, Earl of Somerset.<sup>1</sup> Speght's drawing shows ermine for silver in the border, duplicating No. 19. The Cardinal's tomb is at Winchester, his brother's at Canterbury. Both are figured in Sandford (*op. cit.*, pp. 255 and 302).

8. *York as in 6 impaling Gules a saltire silver, Neville.*

Richard, Duke of York, nephew and heir of Edward and Philippa (No. 6), married Cecile, daughter of Ralf Neville, Earl of Westmoreland (No. 21), by Joan, daughter of John of Gaunt and Catherine, and were parents of Edward IV, Richard III and Elizabeth, wife of John de la Pole, son of Thomas Chaucer's daughter Alice.<sup>2</sup> They were cousins in the fourth degree by a common descent from Edward III. As their marriage did not take place until 1438, the tomb could not have been completed until two years after Maud Chaucer's death in 1436, and four after Thomas Chaucer's in 1434.

9. *France and England quarterly in a border gobony ermine and azure, Beaufort of Exeter.*<sup>3</sup>

Thomas Beaufort, K.G., Earl of Dorset, Duke of Exeter, 3rd son of John of Gaunt and Catherine, *ob.* 1427.

10. *England with a label silver, Brotherton for Mowbray, impaling Neville as in 8.*

John Mowbray, K.G., Duke of Norfolk, married Catherine, daughter of Ralf Neville by Joan Beaufort and sister of Cecile, Duchess of York (No. 8). As heir of Thomas of Brotherton, son of Edward I, his father had discarded his paternal arms of Mowbray and assumed those of Brotherton.<sup>4</sup> His sister married Michael de la Pole, Earl of Suffolk, brother-in-law to Alice Chaucer. This shield and the next do not appear in Speght's drawing, duplicates of Nos. 19 and 4 taking their places.

<sup>1</sup> Sandford, *op. cit.*, p. 253.

<sup>2</sup> Sandford, *op. cit.*, p. 369.

<sup>3</sup> Doyle, *Official Baronage*, 1, 615.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 11, 583.



11. *As 9.*

This represents Edmund Beaufort, K.G., Duke of Somerset, *ob.* 1455, son of John (No. 7), who married Elinor Beauchamp, daughter of Richard, 5th Earl of Warwick, whose shield appears unimpaled as No. 14. Sandford says that he used the same border as his father, but Doyle<sup>1</sup> quotes a contemporary ms. which describes it as 'blewe and ermyne' like that of his uncle, Thomas, Duke of Exeter (No. 9). He and his wife appear as weepers on his father-in-law's tomb at Warwick. Their daughter married the son of Humphrey Stafford (No. 12).

12. *Gold a chevron gules, Stafford, impaling Neville as in No. 8.*

Humphrey, 6th Earl of Stafford, K.G., Earl and Duke of Buckingham, *ob.* 1460, married Anne Neville, daughter of Ralf, Earl of Westmoreland (No. 21), sister of Cecile, Duchess of York (No. 8), and Catherine, Duchess of Norfolk (No. 10).<sup>2</sup> He and his wife are seen as weepers on the tomb of Richard Beauchamp at Warwick, where, as Earl of Buckingham, he quarters Woodstock and Bohun with his paternal arms in the fourth quarter. As he assumed this style in 1439, the Ewelme tomb must be before that date. A shield in the east window of the chapel represents the marriage of his aunt Catherine to Michael de la Pole, father of William, Duke of Suffolk, who married Alice Chaucer (No. 18).

13. *Silver a fesse indented of three points gules, Montagu, quartering gold an eagle vert beak and legs gules, Monthermer, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme as in No. 2.*

Thomas Montagu, K.G., 4th Earl of Salisbury, *ob.* 1428, married Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer and of his wife, Maud Burghersh.<sup>3</sup> Whether he impaled the Burghersh arms for Chaucer in his lifetime is unknown, but Alice Chaucer's second husband and their son quartered Burghersh instead of Chaucer, as the shields on her tomb attest.

The Salisbury monuments at Bisham Abbey were swept away at the Dissolution. It is said that some of the effigies remained for many years in the great hall of the manor. Two are now in the church of Burghfield, Berks.

14. *Gules a fesse and six crosslets gold, Beauchamp of Warwick, quartering Checky gold and azure a chevron ermine, Newburgh.*

Elinor Beauchamp, *ob.* 1468, daughter of Richard, 5th Earl of Warwick, and co-heir of his first wife, married Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset

<sup>1</sup> *Official Baronage*, III, 346.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* III, 389.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 242; D.N.B.

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(No. 11), son of John, Earl of Somerset (No. 7), eldest son of John of Gaunt by Catherine Roet (No. 5). Speght's drawing shows the shield of Clare quartering Despenser charged in pretence; but these were the arms of Warwick's second wife who was not the mother of Elinor;<sup>1</sup> which again suggests that his draughtsman was not working from the tomb itself. Skelton copies the error. Beauchamp's tomb at Warwick is the finest in England outside Westminster Abbey.

15. *Gold three roundels gules and a label azure, Courtenay, impaling Beaufort as in No. 7.*

Thomas Courtenay, 5th Earl of Devon, *ob.* 1458, married Margaret Beaufort, daughter of John, Earl of Somerset (No. 7), and sister of Edmund, Duke of Somerset (No. 11). This shield does not appear in Speght's drawing, its place being taken by a duplicate of Nos. 9 and 11, a meaningless repetition. Thomas died at Abingdon Abbey.<sup>2</sup>

16. *Montagu and Monthermer quarterly as in No. 13, impaling Mohun as in No. 6.*

William Montagu, K.G., 2nd Earl of Salisbury, *ob.* 1397, married Elizabeth, sister of Philippa, Duchess of York (No. 6), and Maud, Lady Strange (No. 24), daughter and co-heir of John, 9th Lord Mohun, by Joan Burghersh (No. 22), who was daughter of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, brother of John Burghersh of Ewelme, grandfather of Maud Chaucer. As the tomb was made at least forty years after William Montagu's death, it was apparently forgotten that he did not quarter Monthermer, which was brought into the Montagu shield by his brother's marriage to Margaret, daughter and heir of Thomas Monthermer, son of Ralf, Earl of Gloucester.<sup>3</sup>

17. *Montagu and Monthermer quarterly, quartering Neville with a label of Beaufort, i.e. gobyony silver and azure.*

Richard Neville, K.G., Earl of Salisbury, *ob.* 1460, 2nd son of Ralf Neville, Earl of Westmoreland by Joan Beaufort (No. 21), daughter of John of Gaunt and Catherine Roet (No. 5). He married Elinor Montagu, daughter and heir of Thomas, 4th Earl of Salisbury (No. 13), by his first wife, Elinor Holand, and step-daughter of Alice Chaucer.<sup>4</sup> In token of the earldom she brought him he advanced her arms to the first quarter, and differenced his own with a label of Beaufort in reference to his mother's parentage. His effigies, recognisable by

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale, *Baronage*, I, 226.

<sup>2</sup> Dugdale, *Baronage*, I, 218, 650.

<sup>3</sup> *Complete Peerage*, IV, 327.

<sup>4</sup> Doyle, *Official Baronage*, III, 242.

this bearing on his cuirass, are now lying in the church at Burghfield, Berks., having been brought there from Bisham Abbey in unknown circumstances at some date between the Dissolution and the mid-17th century, when Ashmole noted without identifying them.<sup>1</sup> He appears also, with his wife, as a weeper on the tomb of Richard Beauchamp, whose son married his daughter Cecile.

18. *Azure a fesse between three leopards' faces gold, De la Pole, quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.*

William de la Pole, K.G., Duke of Suffolk, *ob.* 1450, married Alice, daughter and heir of Thomas Chaucer by Maud, daughter and co-heir of Sir John Burghersh of Ewelme (Nos. 1 and 2).<sup>2</sup> Like her previous husband, Thomas Montagu (No. 13), he prefers her mother's arms of Burghersh to her father's, as his son also did in his shield on his mother's tomb.

19. *Quarterly silver and gules fretty gold a bendlet sable over all, Despenser, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

Edward, Lord le Despenser, K.G., *ob.*, 1375,<sup>3</sup> married Elizabeth, *ob.* 1409, daughter and heir of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, K.G., who was cousin of Sir John Burghersh of Ewelme, father of Maud Chaucer, and brother of Joan, Lady Mohun (No. 20), and Maud, Lady Grey of Rotherfield (No. 23). She was thus cousin to Philippa, Duchess of York (No. 6), Elizabeth, Countess of Salisbury (No. 12), and Maud, Lady Strange (No. 24). Her father's arms were gules a lion doubletailed gold,<sup>4</sup> but he is represented here by the differenced arms of his cousin of Ewelme. Painted on the stonework of their tomb at Tewkesbury are portraits of the pair, drawings of which were reproduced by Lysons and in the *Gentleman's Magazine* of November, 1849. The statue of Edward shows him kneeling above the tomb. This family were hereditary dispencers to the Lacies, Constables of Chester, as their arms suggest, and had no connexion with the Despensers of Ewelme, from whom the Bacons acquired the manor inherited by Maud Chaucer<sup>5</sup>; their arms were ermine a chief.

20. *Mohun impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

John, Lord Mohun, K.G., *ob.* 1375,<sup>6</sup> and his wife Joan, daughter of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, and sister of Maud, Lady Grey of Rotherfield (No. 23). Again the arms of Burghersh of Ewelme are made to do duty for the undifferenced arms of the elder line. Joan's tomb and effigies are at Canterbury. There is a picture of them in Maxwell Lyte's *History of Dunster*.

<sup>1</sup> Ashmole ms. 850, p. 25, in the Bodleian Library; *V.C.H. Berks.*, III, 403.

<sup>2</sup> Doyle, *op. cit.*, III, 438.

<sup>3</sup> *Complete Peerage*, IV, 275.

<sup>4</sup> *Knights of Edward I*, Harl. Soc., LXXX, 163.

<sup>5</sup> *Complete Peerage*, IV, 259, 287; Round, *King's Serjeants*, p. 191.

<sup>6</sup> *Complete Peerage*, IX, 24.

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### 21. *Neville as in No. 8, impaling John of Gaunt as in No. 5.*

Ralf Neville, Earl of Westmoreland, *ob.* 1425, married Joan Beaufort, daughter of John of Gaunt by Catherine Roet (No. 5), and cousin of Thomas Chaucer. Her father's arms were used by her half-sisters by his previous marriages but Sandford ascribes to her the Beaufort arms of her brother John (No. 7). Both here, however, and in the glass of the east window of the chapel she is represented by the coat of her father. Her children, first cousins once removed of Thomas Chaucer, account for five of the shields on his tomb,<sup>1</sup> Nos. 9, 13, 14, 17, 23.<sup>2</sup> In two shields in the east window the impalement is reversed. The royal coat may here have been intentionally given preference: John of Gaunt himself so impaled his second wife's arms of Castile; more probably, since the glass has been moved, the halves of various shields have been wrongly re-leaded together. With red roundels for the ermine spots the shields would correctly represent Richard, Duke of York, and Cecile Neville (No. 8).

Ralf Neville's tomb, 'the finest sepulchral monument in the north of England' (D.N.B.), is in Staindrop church. Joan was buried at Lincoln, 'in a Monument of grey Marble built Altar-ways, contiguous to the Tomb of her mother Katherine,' as we learn from Sandford and others and may see at this day.

### 22. *Gold a lion azure, Percy, quartering gules three luces rising silver, Lucy, impaling Neville as in No. 8.*

Henry Percy, K.G., Earl of Northumberland, *ob.* 1455, and Elinor Neville, daughter of Ralf, Earl of Westmoreland, by Joan Beaufort, and sister to Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, Katherine, Duchess of Norfolk, Anne, Duchess of Buckingham, and Cecile, Duchess of York. He quarters the arms of Lucy not by inheritance but by bequest. Maud, heiress of the Barons Lucy, second wife of Henry Percy, Earl of Northumberland, dying without issue 1398, settled her estates on Henry Percy, her husband's son by his first marriage, stipulating that the arms of Lucy were to be quartered with those of Percy.<sup>3</sup> In the *Ancestor*, v, 44, J. H. Round discusses a similar settlement.

### 23. *Barry silver and azure a bendlet gules, Grey of Rotherfield, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

This shield is of special interest and importance as providing contemporary evidence, hitherto unnoticed, for the suggestion in the *Complete Peerage*, vi, 147, that Maud, wife of John, 2nd Lord Grey of Rotherfield, *ob.* 1375, was

<sup>1</sup> The editors of the *Complete Peerage* remark that thirteen of Ralf Neville's relations (and thus of Chaucer's) sat together in the House of Lords, *viz.*, 4 sons, 4 sons-in-law and 5 grandsons.

<sup>2</sup> Sandford, *op. cit.*, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup> *Complete Peerage*, viii, 254.





daughter of Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, and sister of Joan, Lady Mohun (No. 20). The barry coat serves as a reminder that an heraldic pun may be concealed not merely, as Planché noted, in out-of-the-way charges but even in the simple ordinaries: the bars are intended to suggest steps, Latin *gradus*; and the leaning bendlet adopted as a difference by the Rotherfield branch of the Greys emphasizes the allusion. In the crest, a scaling ladder, French *gré*, the pun is more obvious.

24. *Gules two leopards (for lions passant) silver, Strange, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

The impalement here must be a slip of the draughtsman who drew the original shields or the craftsman who executed them; the leopards are a mistake of the Victorian restorer, as Lee's sketch shows.

The shield refers to John, Lord Strange of Knockyn, who married Maud, daughter and co-heir of John, Lord Mohun, by his wife Joan, daughter of Lord Burghersh senior (No. 20).<sup>1</sup> Maud was sister to Philippa, Duchess of York (No. 6), and Elizabeth, Countess of Salisbury (No. 12), and as the only sister to leave issue she brought her father's barony to her son Richard, Lord Strange.<sup>2</sup> But she was not heir to her mother's family, for her brother Bartholomew, Lord Burghersh, K.G., left a daughter Elizabeth (No. 18), who carried his barony and arms to the Despencers. John, Lord Strange, had no more right nor reason than her sisters' husbands to impale the Burghersh coat instead of Mohun. In any case the arms impaled are not those of Lord Burghersh but of his cousin, Sir John of Ewelme.

Lee ends his list with the note 'Thes IIII be cute in stone,' referring to the shields of Roet and Burghersh with their crests on the piers above the tomb. The unicorn crest of Chaucer must have lost its horn for he makes it an ass's head.

The shields on the tomb of Chaucer's daughter, Alice, Countess of Salisbury and Duchess of Suffolk, are less numerous and varied. For the most part they merely repeat some of those on her parents' tomb. For the sake of completeness, however, they may be added to this record.

Taking the south front first and reckoning on each from the west end they are:

1. *De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme, impaling France and England quarterly.*

John de la Pole, 2nd Duke of Suffolk, ob. 1491, son of William de la Pole by Alice Chaucer, and his wife, Elizabeth of York. The label of York is missing

<sup>1</sup> Dugdale, *Baronage*, 1, 498, 665.

<sup>2</sup> *Complete Peerage*, ix, 25.

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but the shield is complete in contemporary glass at Iffley. By the marriage of John's natural daughter Joan to Thomas Stonor the Stonors descend from Geoffrey Chaucer.

2. *De la Pole impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

William, Duke of Suffolk and Alice Chaucer, the coat of Burghersh being used to represent Chaucer.

3. *De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.*

William and Alice as parents of John, or John as son and heir of William and Alice.

4. *Burghersh of Ewelme.*

5. *Montagu and Monthermer quarterly, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

Thomas, Earl of Salisbury, first husband of Alice. Burghersh again does duty for Chaucer.

6. *Roet, for Chaucer.*

7. *France and England quarterly with traces of a label, impaling Roet.*

John of Gaunt and Catherine Roet, uncle and aunt of Alice.

8. *Roet for Chaucer, impaling Burghersh of Ewelme.*

Thomas Chaucer and his wife Maud Burghersh, parents of Alice.

9. *As 8.*

10. *De la Pole impaling Stafford, as in the east window.*

Michael de la Pole, 2nd Earl of Suffolk, *ob.* 1415, and his wife Catherine, daughter of Hugh, 2nd Earl of Stafford, parents of William, Duke of Suffolk, husband of Alice Chaucer. (Their elder son Michael, 3rd Earl of Suffolk, who was killed at Agincourt, is said by Dugdale (*Baronage*, II, 186), to have been buried at Ewelme, and a grey marble slab, though bearing another name, is actually pointed out as his gravestone in the church. But his brother's marriage to Alice Chaucer did not take place until twenty years after his death, so that Weever is much more likely to be right in saying in his *Antient Funerall Monuments* (2nd ed., p. 485), that he was buried in the Priory Church of Butley, to which he had been a benefactor, in his own county of Suffolk).<sup>1</sup>

11. *Montagu and Monthermer quarterly impaling Mohun, the sable of the cross gone.*

William Montagu, 2nd Earl of Salisbury, and his wife Elizabeth Mohun. She was cousin to Alice and he was uncle to her first husband.

12. *De la Pole quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.*

<sup>1</sup> *Monasticon*, vi, 379. See also *Arch. Journ.*, xc (1934), 248 f. where the problem is discussed in connexion with excavations at Butley.

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13. *Roet for Chaucer quartering Burghersh of Ewelme.*
14. *Burghersh of Ewelme.*
15. *De la Pole.*
16. *De la Pole impaling France and England quarterly without a label.*

Lee's notebook shows only ten of the shields : he did not trouble to repeat the duplicates. Wood's list gives the same ten, which looks as if he had copied Lee's record instead of making his own from the tomb.

NOTE ON THE EARLY MANORIAL HISTORY OF THE PARISH

Since Napier (*Parishes of Swyncombe and Ewelme*, 1858), ignores the early manorial history of Ewelme, its records may be summarized here.

The 20 hides at which Ewelme was assessed in Domesday Book were unequally divided among three great Norman lords, connexions of the Conqueror's, and one of his ministers or 'serjeants':

*Gilbert de Gaunt*, 8 hides, held by Ulf before the Conquest, held now of Gilbert by Robert (of Armentiers who held largely under him in Lincolnshire where most of his lands lay).

*Walter Gifard*,  $5\frac{1}{2}$  hides, held by Hugh (Bolebec, his kinsman, who held many manors under him in Bucks. of which his son became Earl).

*Ranulf Peverel*,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hides. The relationship of Ranulph to William Peverel and of both to William the Conqueror has been much discussed but never elucidated. The bulk of their holdings lay in Notts.

*Robert FitzRalf*,  $4\frac{3}{4}$  hides, held by serjeanty, duties not stated.

By the first half of the 13th century, when the *Testa de Neville* was compiled, some of these holdings had been united and others subdivided.

*Thurstan le Dispenser*, descended from Robert FitzThurstan who had held a manor in Great Rollright in D.B. by serjeanty as Dispensator Regis, now held Robert FitzRalf's manor by serjeanty, *viz.*, as dispenser to the king (p. 118), and half a knight's fee of Isabel Bolebec, Countess of Oxford, to whom the lands of Hugh Bolebec had descended, and one-tenth of a knight's fee of the Honour of Nottingham, to which the Peverel lands now belonged (pp. 102, 106, 113, 118).

*William Wase* held one knight's fee of the Countess (pp. 102, 106, 113); as she died in 1245 and her husband in 1221, the record must be between those dates.

*Henry FitzRobert* held one knight's fee of Geoffrey of Armentiers and he of Gilbert de Gaunt (pp. 101, 106).

*Robert Haltested* held one-third of a knight's fee of Geoffrey of Armentiers (p. 106).

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*Organ Pippard* held one knight's fee of Gilbert de Gaunt (pp. 113, 117).

*Gilbert Sandford* held one-quarter of a knight's fee of Gilbert de Gaunt.

*Henry Ivodoci* held one-quarter of a knight's fee of Gilbert de Gaunt (p. 113).

A generation later, when the Hundred Rolls were compiled at the beginning of Edward I's reign, c. 1275 :

*Adam Dispenser* held 5 virgates and the advowson by serjeanty of the King (p. 759), half a knight's fee of the Earl of Oxford, Isabel Bolebec's heir (p. 760), and one-tenth of a knight's fee of Magister Ralf de Nebaton, 'of the fee of Fancelin' (p. 760).

*William Was* held one knight's fee of the Earl with other lands 'of the fee of Armentiers' (p. 760).

*William Mountsorel* held half a knight's fee of Robert, Lord of Hamsted (p. 760).

The heirs of *Henry FitzRobert* held three hides 'of the fee of Pippard' (p. 761).

The heirs of *Walter Bedefont* and others held various virgates of the fee of Milo de Sandford and he of the Earl (p. 761).

It is clear that what Adam Dispenser and his son Aymer sold to the Bacons in 1295 was 'Spencer's Fee' with the advowson, and that 'Wace's lands' and most of the other holdings were acquired subsequently by Sir John Burghersh and/or Thomas Chaucer. The documents of their later history are given by Napier. By descent through Kerdeston from Gaunt the Bacons had become overlords of the lands held of that family.

It is interesting to note that the Hospital of God's House at Ewelme is only one of the famous and wealthy charitable foundations with which the Chaucer family were connected. Thomas Chaucer was a member of the Gild of Holy Cross which in 1441 built the Long Alley Almshouses of Christ's Hospital in Abingdon.<sup>1</sup> As lord of the manor of Donnington, Berks., he was also patron of the Hospital, God's Poor House, founded there in 1393 by his predecessor in title, Sir Richard Abberbury, and endowed with the manor of Ifley which it still holds.<sup>2</sup> His cousin, Cardinal Beaufort, enlarged and re-endowed the best-known of all almshouses, that of St. Cross at Winchester.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. E. Preston, *Christ's Hospital, Abingdon*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> *Monasticon*, vi, 715; *Berks., Bucks. and Oxon. Archaeological Journal*, iv, 58. The Hospital has no coat, but a local public house has been named The Donnington Arms and has lately been embellished with a sign bearing the quartered shield of Clifton, Baron of Donington in Leicestershire, a Victorian creation.

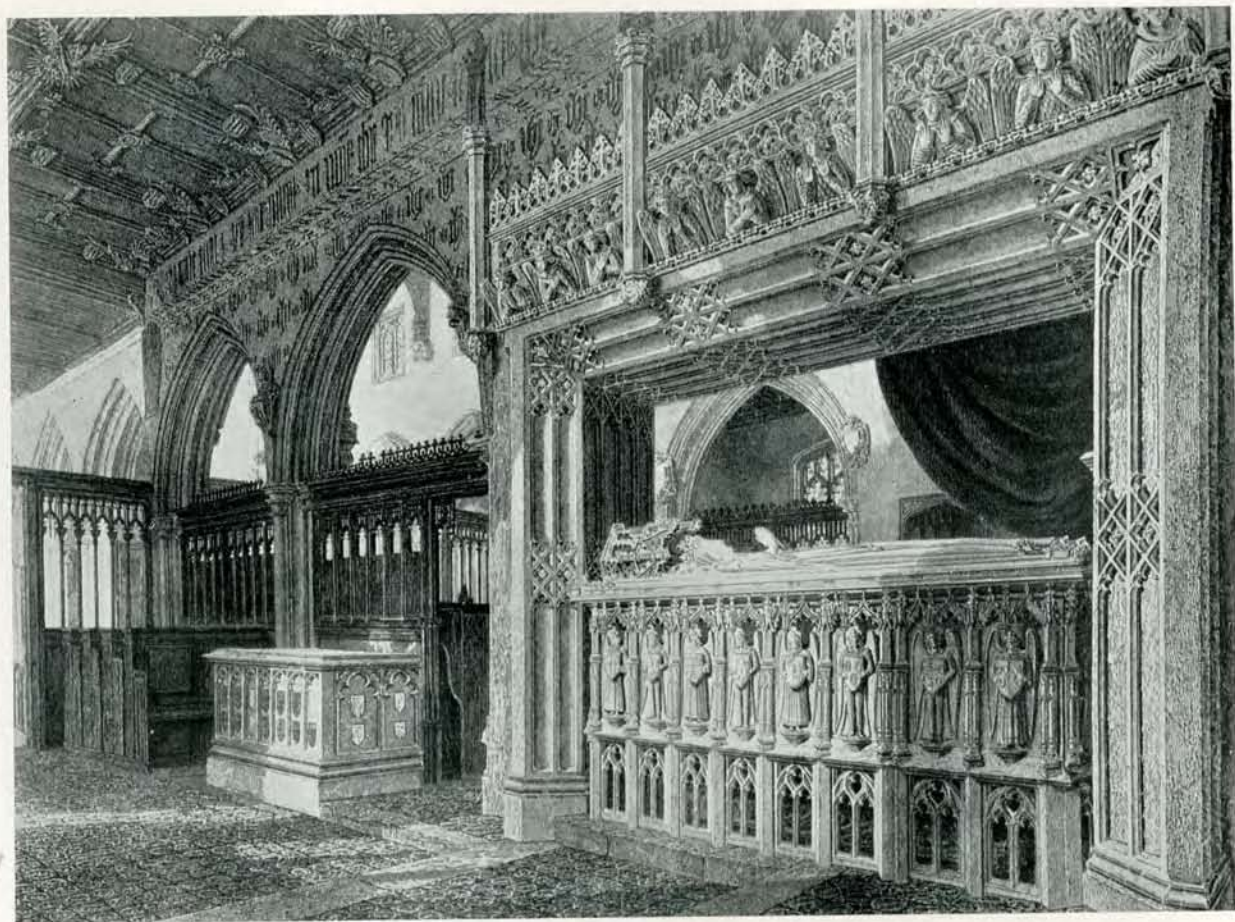
<sup>3</sup> *Monasticon*, vi, 721.





Frontispiece of Thomas Speght's Edition (1598) of 'The Workes of our Antient and learned English Poet Geffrey Chaucer' (p. 78).





The Chaucer Tombs, Ewelme, drawn by Mackenzie for Skelton's *Antiquities of Oxfordshire*, 1823 (p. 79).