

THE ROBESSART TOMB IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY

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ABSTRACT

Cecil Humphery-Smith first examined the tomb of Lewis de Robessart, which forms part of a screen to St Paul's chapel on the North aisle of Westminster Abbey, more than 50 years ago. What then remained inspired him to attempt to reconstruct the heraldic display. The resulting panoply illustrates the wide-ranging intermarriages between the free-booting Hainaulter families and the Houses of Lancaster and their incursions into the Iberian peninsula.

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Sir Lewis Robessart² KG³ was born in Hainault and succeeded his brother Sir John Robessart, knight of Hainault, in the captainship of St Saviour le Viscount in Normandy. In 1418, he was granted a free denizen by King Henry V of England and was created a knight of the Bath two years later. He was constituted Standard Bearer to King Henry V by Letters Patent at Troyes in Champagne in 1421. As second husband of Elizabeth, *suo jure* Baroness Bouchier, he was summoned to Parliament from 24th February 1424/5 until 3rd August 1429 as Lord Bouchier⁴. He was one of the executors of the will of King Henry V. Sir Lewis was killed in action at Amiens on November 26th 1431 and was buried in Westminster Abbey. His tomb forms part of the richly ornamented Gothic freestone screen of the chapel of St Paul on the North side of the Abbey church.

My investigation of the tomb began when I was asked to identify some related arms formerly in the windows of the parish church of Syderstone in Norfolk and previously described in *Ashmolean MS 792*. I am indebted to the Rev N D Fourdrinier, sometime vicar of Syderstone, for his collaboration. When I examined the tomb at intervals between 1950 and 1962, nearly every trace of colouring had disappeared from the carvings and paintings. My reconstruction of the original state of the heraldry was based on careful personal observation and on various sources⁵. I originally published my

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² Since the name is fairly consistently written Robessart in English records, that spelling has been used here.

³ Nominated 3rd May 1421.

⁴ *Complete Peerage*, II: 247; IX: 40 (Cokayne, 1910-1998); Banks (1807-1837 I: 402); *The Gentleman's Magazine* (1859); Collins (1779, iii: 476).

⁵ The state of the heraldry of the tomb was described (somewhat inaccurately) by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England) (1924, p.37). An earlier account of the state of the monument is given by Gough (1788, p.97). Chiefly, however, I have relied on the notes left by Thomas Willement, sometime herald-painter to King William IV, including his coloured illustration, which I acquired in a manuscript collection. Nicholas Charles' Manuscript in Lansdown 932 and the description and sketches by William Camden in Lansdown 874, fo 136b (140b) have also proved useful. In the latter, row 2 No.7 (my 13) is shown with spikes on the wheels (i.e. Catherine wheels); row 4 No.2 (my 28) with the impalement as Azure, three hop-buds, pineapples or acorns Or; row 5 between Nos.4 and 5 (my 40 and 41), Bouchier *impaling* Barry (8) Gules and Argent and the Stafford impalement (44) is not shown. The arms illustrated may be compared with the description given by Neale and Brayley (1823) and with the notes of Keepe (1684).

description of the tomb in a paper published in *Family History*, journal of the Institute of Genealogical and Heraldic Studies, where I included a colour facsimile of the manuscript painting by Thomas Willement, which shows the arms and badges from the north side of the monument (Humphery-Smith, 1964).

Details of the Tomb in its Original State

In each of the five quatrefoils carved on the tomb itself is a shield within The Garter:

Vert, a lion rampant or (Robessart)

(Robessart) *impaling Argent, a cross engrailed Gules between four water bougets Sable* (Bourchier)

- Robessart and Bourchier *quarterly*
- Bourchier
- Robessart

At the foot of each of the four columns that support the arch of the canopy over the tomb is carved a beast supporting a banner. On the left is a lion and the banner is carved with Robessart and Bourchier *quarterly*, the Robessart *lion gold being 'wounded' on the shoulder Gules*⁶. On the right a *silver eagle also wounded on the shoulder* supports a banner *Quarterly: 1. Robessart; 2. Bourchier; 3. Gules, three round buckles or (for the Seignury or lordship of Canoun or of Bruille)*⁷; 4. *Per bend Or and Argent, a wreath of laurel spriging into the cantons with four trefoils Vert* (for the Seignury of Rocquier).

Both sides of the monument appear to have been similarly decorated. The evidence visible pre-restoration indicated that the screen formed by the monument had a top row

⁶ I would query the identification of this mark as a *wound*, in spite of this being its usual description in other works. More likely, in my view, is the use of the *rake*, which was a Robessart badge, as a mark of difference, alluding to the family's ancient seignury. This badge occurs in Wrythe's *Garter Armorial*, 155 where, incidentally, the crest is shown as a gold Catherine wheel only without the Saracen's head. (Compare the seal at PRO E40-A6960). In all examples of the arms, the so-called wound is drawn, carved or painted similarly to the rake badge.

⁷ According to Bain (1889), Sir Theodore de Robertsart, Knight, a leader of Free Companions in the fourteenth century served Ingelram de Coucy Earl of Bedford at Soisson and in Bohemia. There is some nonsense about his 'canonry' in Sir Walter Scott's *Quentin Durward* and in an early number of *Notes and Queries* the remarks of a well-known antiquary are best forgotten. The name of the family is taken from the little village of Robersart about eighteen miles south of Mons in the County of Hainault, The Canon Theirry (Terry or Theodore) de Robersart (Robessart or Robsart) was perhaps a lay canon in the local church, but, in fact, his title appears to be in no way connected with offices in the Church; he was simply Lord of Canoun. The family is described with some genealogical notes in the following works from which much of the tables have been compiled: *Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels, MS 13070-13072; Recueil Genealogique concernant les Comtes de Flandre et de Hainault, 75; Annuaire de La Noblesse de Belgique* (p. 860) 215; Ch. Poplimont, *La Belgique Heraldique* IX (1867) 209-223; Le Carpentier's *Histoire de Cambrai*, II, 950; De Saint-Genois, *Monuments* II, 337; Francois Vinchant *Monuments* (1648); Kervyn de Lettenhove, *Ouvres de Froissart* xxiii, 25-29, 59, 66, 145 & 157; *Froissart's Chronicles* (Berner's bk I ch.47); *Annales de la Province et Comte d'Haynau*; Blomefield's *Norfolk* (Edn Parkin 1807) VII, 181. These add to the general history of this family of Hainault freebooters in the service of England. Thus, it would appear that this is the correct identification of this coat for one or other seignury. Like so many arms at this period, which were territorial rather than personal, this coat is found for several individuals who held the same lordships at various times.

of nine carved shields alternating with water bougets and falcons, or eagles. There was then a second row of twenty painted shields, which were accompanied by some inscriptions. A third row of painted shields showed very little evidence of what was originally present and a fourth row of six shields was, in 1962, entirely indecipherable. Over the centre arch above the tomb is a carved complete achievement; below, on the tomb itself, the five shields within their Garters and the beasts and banners already described. All were practically devoid of colour.

The Appearance of the Tomb after Restoration

Following the publication of my paper in 1964, the Dean and Chapter of the Abbey began an extensive programme of refurbishing monuments in the Abbey. Using my conclusions, and under the guidance of the late Sir Lawrence Tanner FSA and the late Nicholas MacMichael FSA, the Robessart tomb was completely repainted.

The main achievement consists of a boldly carved shield, crest and mantling. It is tilted and fashioned similarly to the stall plate of Sir Lewis Robessart in St George's Chapel at Windsor. The crest is a curious one, similar to that of Roet and other Hainaulters: *a saracen's head Sable with tresses Or and on a cap Gules issuing out of a coronet Or a Catherine wheel Or (or Gules)*. William St John Hope suggests vanquishment by St Catherine. St Catherine was generally recognised as patron saint of Hainault. Her device, the wheel, which symbolises her spiritual triumph over Maximilian, figures widely in the heraldry of that region, much of which has become well-known to us in the arms and crests of those who served England's kings and military leaders in France and Spain in the 14th and 15th centuries.

There are three painted shields in the spandrels of the open lights above the canopy over the tomb and three further painted shields on each side of the figure of the crest. The same six shields are repeated on the other side of the monument. With these and the carved achievement, it would appear that 'heraldic courtesy' has been observed, and the lions are *contourny* on the south side of the monument.

All of the six shields have Robessart, the first is undifferenced, the second bears a *red rose or cinquefoil*, the third a *red mullet*, the fourth and fifth have *silver labels*, the fifth is charged on each pendant with a *cross engrailed Sable* and the sixth has the *wound* on the shoulder of the lion. The separate marks of difference clearly relate to the cadency of the brothers and kin of Sir Lewis shown on the detailed pedigree that follows (but that is more narrative in form than my original charts in *Family History*).

The tomb has several inscriptions. The inscription formerly visible on the fascia between the falcons and bougets, which appears twice in gold letters, reads:

Non nobis D'ne, non nobis sed N'ni tuo da gloriam

On the fascia below the frieze of the ten angels holding their shields is a further inscription, repeated four times:

L'honneur a Dieu, a nous Merci

And, on the lower fascia is the motto:

Learn to Die to Live ever

Identification of the Arms on the Tomb

It is clear that the arms have previously been misidentified by a number of writers. This is not surprising in view of the similarity of many of the Hainaulter's coats to English ones. Reference to the pedigrees makes the identifications given here the most likely. I have unfortunately not been able to account genealogically for all of the arms that appear on the tomb but it seems quite clear that they were brought in by Bourchier, Sutton, Siderstone, and, of course, by Robessart during the Iberian campaigns.

The coats of arms may be blazoned as follows⁸.

The six shields are carved and between each there is the bird and the water-bouget alternately:

- 1 *Vert, a lion rampant Or* (Robessart)⁹
- 2 Quarterly: 1 & 4 (Robessart); 2 & 3, *Or, three frying pans Sable* (Padilla)¹⁰
- 3 (Robessart) **impaling** *Gules, a fess and in chief a dance Or, a mullet Sable on the fess* (Oisy)¹¹
- 4 Robessart and Oisy quarterly
- 5 *Barry Argent and Azure, a bendlet Gules* (Pottes) **impaling** (Robessart)¹²
- 6 Robessart and Pottes quarterly
- 7 See shield 46

Every two of the following shields are held by an angel. Each one is painted only:

- 8 *Per pale emanchy Argent and Gules* (the lordship of Canoun)¹³

⁸ The blazons of the arms refer to the facsimile of Willement's illustration in the *Family History* article, and to the chart pedigrees shown later.

⁹ Ashmole gives Sir Lewis's lion an escallop on the shoulder. This is not a known difference in the Robessart family. In St John Hope's *Stall Plates of the Knights of the Garter* Plate XXIX, the lion is shown with the wound or rake. His father's seal of about 1379/80 with the legend S LE CANOVNE DE ROBIERSART bears Quarterly *a lion rampant* and *Per pale indented* and the crest of a Catherine wheel (PRO seal cit.). In the British Museum collection (*Birch* 13, 18), the seal attached to *Harleian charter* 43 H 9 dated 1429, shows only remains of the crest bearing *an old man's head in profile, bearded and with long hair, couped at the shoulders, habited, collared, ducally crowned and wearing a tall conical hat*. On each side of the crest is a *water-bouget* and above is a *Catherine wheel*.

¹⁰ See also the note for blazons 29 & 30. Heraldry is sometimes described as "*the study of fools with long memories*" rather than "*the handmaid of history*." A Basque girl who had exchanged with one of our daughters asked for a *padilla* in which to prepare a Spanish omelette for our family. It took a while to determine what she required but then, in a flash, I identified this coat of arms after ten years

¹¹ De Stein, *Annuaire*, VI, 245; X, 175; Azevedo, *Genealogie van de Noot*; Poplimont, *Noblesse Belge*, II, 59; Geothals, *Dictionnaire genealogique*: L'Espinoy, *Recherches*, 271. There is also a remote possibility that this coat could be identified with Hanchatt, a family which in turn was probably derived from the same root as Oisy.

¹² There is no alliance with Grey of Rotherfield to account for this coat nor could it be for Gaunt in the Kerdestone pedigree, both Grey and Gaunt bearing arms similar to this. The coat is undoubtedly for Pottes. Jeane de Pottes married Arnould du Chasteler, Grand Master of the Court of the Count of Hainault in 1362. (*Memoires genealogues pour servir a l'histoire des Familles des Pays Bas*, 141). Jean de Pottes married Gertrude de Robbesart. (Du Mont, *Fragments genealogiques*, IV 35).

- 9 *Azure, a cross Argent and a label Gules* (Aylesbury)¹⁴
- 10 *Argent billety, a lion rampant Gules crowned Or* (de la Planke)¹⁵
- 11 *Azure crusilly, two organ pipes in pile Or* (Pype)¹⁶
- 12 *Gules, six eagles displayed Or* (Broxbourne)¹⁷
- 13 *Gules, three wheels Or* (Roet)
- 14 *Argent, on a chevron Sable three boars' heads close couped Or* (Swinford)
- 15 *Per pale Argent and Gules, a bend counterchanged* (Chaucer)
- 16 *Ermine, three hamards Gules* (D'Abringecourt)¹⁸
- 17 *Quarterly, 1 & 4, Argent, a cross engrailed Gules between four water bougets Sable* (Bourchier), *an annulet Or* on the cross; *2 & 3, Gules, a fess Argent between ten billets Or* (Louvaine)
- 18 *Or, three chevrons Sable* (Sutton)
- 19 *Argent, a cross between four escallops Sable* (Coggeshall)
- 20 *Quarterly: 1 & 4, Gules, on a dance between six lions rampant Or three martlets Sable* (Griffiths); *2 & 3, Barry Or and Gules a bordure Sable* (Merlay)¹⁹
- 21 *Quarterly and a label Gules: 1 & 4, Or, a tower triple towered Azure* (Sanchez); *2 & 3, Barry nebully Or and Sable* (Blount)²⁰

¹³ The familiar coat, associated as it is with Gelre, Montfort, Birmingham and the honours of Almeric, Earl of Gloucester and Evereux, appears to be entirely territorial in origin. It appears here for the seignery of Canoun and for the same purpose on the seal of 'The Canon Robsart' referred to above. Several vassals of Gelre and the counts of Holland bore this same coat for their lordships. In the *Armorial de Gelre*, Kannernic van Robzart is given this same *Per Pale indented vel Party emanchy Argent and Gules*. (see also J-Th. De Raadt, *Sceaux armories des pays-bas*, III, 235).

¹⁴ It has not been possible to get a proper identification for this coat by use of Papworth or Renesse. There is no explanation from the pedigree nor does an alternative identification seem possible. It is possible that Aylesbury enters the pedigree through the ancestry of the Chaucers.

¹⁵ In England, Elizabeth, daughter and eventually sole heir of William de la Plaunche, who died in 1423, married, firstly, John de Bermingham (bearer of the territorial coat of arms No.8 in respect of the Honour of Hinckley). He died in 1393 and she married secondly, as his second wife, Robert Lord Grey of Rotherfield (bearer of a similar coat to No.5). She married thirdly, as his second wife, John Lord Clinton, and fourthly, Sir John Russell. Her daughter Joan, by Lord Grey, who was heiress of her parents, married Sir John Deincourt. Their daughter Margaret married Ralph, Lord Cromwell, who was uncle of Joan, daughter of Sir Richard Stanhope. Joan was the wife of Sir Humphrey Bourchier, third son of Henry Bourchier, Earl of Essex, by Isabel, daughter of Richard Earl of Cambridge. Ralph Lord Cromwell's daughter, Avicia, bore William Bardolph a daughter, Joan, a co-heiress who married Sir William Phelip. Sir William was a descendant of the Sir John Phelip who married Alice Chaucer. The intermarriages of these families is complex. There are several connections with the Hainault families because de la Plaunche or Planke originated in that country. (Goethals, *Dictionnaire genealogiques*).

¹⁶ It has not been possible to fit Pipe into the pedigrees, although it seems most likely that it could be related since it is East Anglian. Alternatively, Williams of Thame could connect with the lines related to Chaucer. One must remember that some coats of arms may be mourners rather than family members.

¹⁷ No explanation of this coat has been found as yet, but it definitely appeared on the tomb and no other reasonable identification can be made.

¹⁸ No connection has been found between D'Abringecourt and either the English, Hainault or Flemish families.

¹⁹ This coat probably ties in with the Sutton or Blount families. The actual link has not been established.

- 22 *Vert bezanty* (Lyston)²¹
- 23 Quarterly and a *bordure Sable*: 1 & 4, *Or*, two lions passant *Azure* (Somery); *Argent*, a cross patonce *Azure* (Sutton)
- 24 Swinford, a label *Gules*
- 25 *Gules*, three round-buckles *Or* (the lordship of Bruille)
- 26 *Per bend Or and Argent*, a chaplet issuing forth into each canton a trefoil *Vert* (the lordship of Rocquier)

The following shields were painted flat:

- 27 *Per pale Azure and Sable*, a catherine wheel *Or* (Robessart badge)
- 28 *Gules*, three lions passant *Or* (Hennin) **impaling**, three buds *Or* (unidentified)²²
- 29 (Padilla) **impaling** *Azure*, three crescents *Or* (Rider or Thorpe)
- 30 Padilla **impaling** Hennin²³
- 31 Planke **impaling** *Azure*, two bars *Or* (Burdett or Venables)²⁴
- 32 (Robessart) **impaling** *Argent*, a cross engrailed *Sable* (Escaillon)
- 33 Robessart **impaling** Planke

²⁰ No genealogical connection with the related families represented on the monument has been shown, although one or more may exist, but Sir Walter Blount was one of the companions of John of Gaunt in Spain. John of Gaunt, fourth but third surviving son of Edward III by Philippa daughter of William Count of Holland and Hainault, claimed the Kingdom of Castille and Leon in right of his second wife, Constance. (For an account of the followers of John of Gaunt and the freebooters who supported him, see P E Russell *The English Intervention in Spain and Portugal in the time of Edward III and Richard II*). The connection between Blount and Ayala (a noble family of Spain and the Netherlands) is well known ("The Blount Quarters", *per me* in *The Coat of Arms*, Vol. 4 (1957) pp.224-227; compare G.D.Squibb, "The Heirs of Beauchamp of Hatch", pp 275-277) and there may also have been a connection between Ayala and Padilla which would account for the arms of Sir Walter Blount appearing on the tomb quite apart from the fact that he was an old-campaigning friend of Sir Lewis Robessart.

²¹ No other identification can be found for this coat. It has not been linked with the pedigrees but being for an East Anglian family, no doubt ties in with the Robessart's or Bourchier's Norfolk and Essex connections. This is perhaps another prominent mourner.

²² The arms impaled with Hennin do not appear to be very clear in any of the old descriptions of the heraldry of the tomb. Likely coats are Van Manmacher (*Azure*, three acorns *Or*) and Dichfield (*Azure*, three pineapples *Or*). The field colour appears to have been blue, but no other suggestions come to light for the arms and none so far fit the pedigrees of the Hennin family. (For further reading on this family see Huyttens, 1865.)

²³ John Padilla, Lord of Villa Gera and ancestor of the Counts of Sancta Gadea, who died in 1362 was the father of Mary Padilla, the first wife of Pedro I ("the cruel"), King of Castille, whose daughter, Constance, married John of Gaunt, Earl of Lancaster. Don Juan di Padilla was also father of Don Gomez de Padilla, Grand Master of the Order of St James, whose daughter, Joan, was the wife of Sir Thierry de Robessart. Don Juan di Padilla had other sons and daughters accounting for the marriages with the English and the Hainaulters. A sister of Joan di Padilla married Sir William Rider and it is presumed that precedence was given to the more noble coat, thus upsetting the usual significance of the impaling.

²⁴ The coat is quite clear in all renderings of the heraldry of the tomb. The identification is not so easy and it is difficult to say whether the alliance relates to the English or the Flemish family. Since the de la Plauanche or Planke family were prominent in England at the time of Lewis's death, and no doubt among his friends, it seems most likely that the impalement refers to the marriage of a then living representative of the English family.

- 34 Robessart *impaling* Padilla
- 35 Padilla
- 36 Robessart
- 37 Bourchier
- 38 Sutton
- 39 (Bourchier) *impaling* two coats per fess: 1, (Sutton); 2, *Per chevron engrailed Sable and Ermine* (Lovey)
- 40 (Bourchier) *impaling* *Gules, a fess double cotised Argent* (Prayers) [Camden's MS shows Bourchier *impaling* *Barry of Eight Gules and Argent* (Munchensi)²⁵]
- 41 Bourchier *impaling* Coggeshall
- 42 Bourchier *impaling* Lyston
- 43 Bourchier, Coggeshall, Prayers and Lovey quarterly
- 44 Robessart *impaling* Bourchier
- 45 *Or, a chevron Gules and a mullet Sable fimbriated Argent on the chevron* (Stafford) *impaling* (Bourchier)
- 46 *Per pale Azure and Sable, an eagle displayed contourny (here No 7 is not) Argent beaked and legged Or* (probably another Robessart badge)

The Robessart Pedigree

Some explanation of the presence of the coats of arms on the Robessart tomb is given by the following early history of the family and investigation of the more recent family tree helps to account for others. In the following text, a full description of the Robessart family and families associated with it by marriage are given. Links between the genealogy and the coats of arms on the tomb are shown in [brackets]²⁶.

The Early Robessarts

Hugues de Robertsart, second son of Anselm, Castellan of Valenciennes, was the first Seigneur de Robertsart. He was living in the year 1089; his wife was a daughter of Wautier, Seigneur de Chievres. Two early members of the family were his brother, Godefroi, who was also living in 1089, and a Charles, who took part in the First Crusade. A reliable pedigree of the subsequent descent down to the end of the 13th Century has yet to be compiled. Mentions of members of this family that permit us to have some idea of how the descent proceeded from this early record are still to be found.

In 1180, Thierry de Robertsart was a benefactor of the Church of St Aubert in Quesnoy. A Thierry de Robertsart, knight, who may have been a direct progenitor, had his inquisition proved in 1130. Jean le Carpentier gives a descent to Louis de Robertsart, knight, and

²⁵ Landsdowne 874, folio 136: this is indeed painted on the restored monument. There is an IPM 14 Edl for William de MonteCaniso (Published Rolls Series Vol. p. 370-3. On page 371, referring to Stansted, Robert le Burser is deceased and his son and heir John is aged 24 years or more. All so complicated.

²⁶ For fuller and more descriptive genealogical charts, which could not be reproduced here, please refer to the original article in *Family History*.

his brother Thierry, who was surnamed le Canone, seigneur d'Escaillon du Bruille, and le Borgne de Robertsart. Both brothers are mentioned in charters of the Abbey of St Aubert in 1373, 1376, and 1387. Anseau de Robertsart, knight, was Seigneur de Ribecourt in 1203 and appears to have been father of Theiry de Robertsart, knight. This Theiry, Seigneur de Ribecourt, married Agnes de Cuvillers de Hennin [this association could account for tomb coat of arms 28]. Their son, Amand de Robersart was probably the father of Gerard de Robersart (called le Borgne de Robersart) who was killed at the battle of Cassel in 1328, and of Simon de Robersart who appears to have succeeded his brother Gerard as Seigneur de Robersart and Borgne.

The descendants of Simon de Robessart

Coats of arms 5 and 6 appear on the Roberssart tomb probably because Simon de Roberssart married an heiress of the house of Pottes (Figure 1).

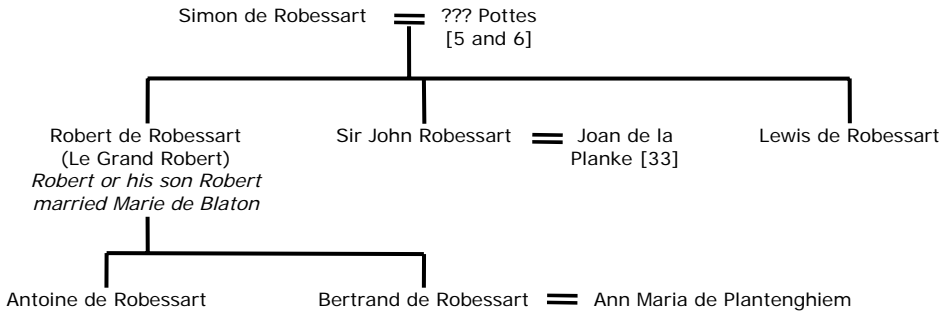


Fig 1. The Direct Descendants of Simon de Robessart

Simon de Roberssart's son, Robert de Robessart, called Le Bourgne de Robessart and 'Le Grand Robert', sold his feoff of Robessart to Hans von de Gruyce, Bourgeois of Amiens. He or his son, also Robert de Bourgne, married Marie de Blaton, daughter of the Viscount de Blaton. She was Dame d'Escaille and was the mother of Antoine and Bertrand. Both sons took Robert (Robertsart) for a surname and assumed the arms of their mother. Bertrand de Robessart married Anna Maria de Platenghiem. 18th century descendants of Antoine and Bertrand were ennobled as Counts of Robersart and Barons Symphorion.

Simon de Robessart had two other sons by a member of the family of Pottes. Jean or Sir John Robessart took part in the raid on Montay in 1340 (see Anstis's *Register of the Garter*, p.87) and married Joan de la Planke [tomb coat of arms 33]. The third son was Lewis de Robessart.

Sir John had five known children:

- Sir Lewis de Robessart was taken into the English service by King Edward III in 1366. He married Margaret d'Oisy, Dame of Rocquier [tomb coats of arms 3 and 4], who was living in 1387. Sir Lewis died about 1389;
- Adele, who became Abbess of Gluslonghien;
- Gerard, who was an esquire to the body of Edward III in 1373;

- Constance, who was a canonness of the noble Chapter of St Waudru at Mons;
- Thierry de Robessart, Baron of Canoun, Seigneur d'Escaillon, and du Bruille, who was born about 1330 and taken into the service of King Edward III of England in 1365. He fought in France, Spain and Portugal with John of Gaunt and died in 1390. His first wife was Joan, the Dame d'Escaillon [tomb coat of arms 32], and his second wife was Joan the daughter of Don Gomez di Padilla [tomb coats of arms 34 and 35], first cousin of John of Gaunt's wife, Constance. It is possible that after the death of her husband she remarried a member of the family of Hennin [tomb coat of arms 30].

Thierry de Robessart and his first wife had a son, Thierry de Robessart, Seigneur of Escaillon and du Bruille, Lord of Canoun. This younger Thierry lived in Flanders; his daughter and heiress was Catherine, Dame of Escaillon and du Bruille, who married Sance de la Laing, Grand Bailiff of Cambresis 1439 [tomb coat of arms 25]. He also had two other daughters; Joan who married Siger de Heetvelde in 1376 and Gertrude who married Jean de Cruplent. With his second wife, Thierry the elder had four sons:

- Sir John Robessart (see below);
- Gerard de Robessart, a priest in Hainault;
- Sir Thierry de Robessart, Captain of Hambyein in Normandy and of Caudbec;
- Sir Lewis Robessart, who was killed in battle in 1431 – the subject of the Tomb.

Descendants of Sir Lewis Robessart's brother, Sir John Robessart

Sir John Robessart, born about 1372, was taken into the service of King Richard II of England and of Henry IV. He was principal commander under Henry V and Henry VI. He was naturalised in the second year of the reign of Henry VI and became a Knight of the Garter and Keeper of the Great Seal of the Order. He died on 24th December 1450 and was buried in the Chapel of St Francis in the Greyfriars Church of London (*Stowe*, 346).

He married Ida de Sanchez de Jorce-Gommequiez and they had three sons:

- Sir John Robessart, Captain of Valognes in Normandy, who died in 1447, having married Jane Kerdeston (see Figure X for the Kerdeston pedigree);

William Robessart, nephew of Sir Lewis Robessart, who died without issue on 12th October 1484;

Sir Thierry de Robessart, Lord of Siderston or Kerdeston, Co. Norfolk, heir of his uncle of the same name. He died in 1497, having married Catherine Kerdeston, sister of Jane (see Figure X for the Kerdeston pedigree and page X for an explanation of the pedigree).

Sir John Robessart had two sons, Sir Thierry Robessart, born 1443, a ward of Alice Chaucer, Duchess of Norfolk. Sir Thierry was knighted on the field at Tewkesbury by King Edward IV in 1471 and died on the 9th December 1496. He was buried in the Chancel of Siderston/Kerdeston Church. Sir John's other son was William Robessart of Minster in Kent, a benefactor of the Convent of St Sixborough on the Isle of Sheppey. His will was proved at Canterbury on 19th August 1499. His wife's name was Cecilia.

The descendants of Sir Thierry Robessart, born 1443 are shown in outline in Figure 2 and are described in the next section.

Sir Thierry Robessart, 1443 – 1496

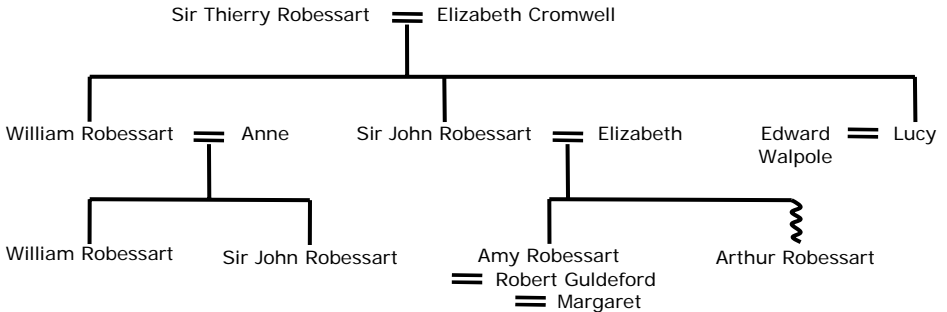


Fig 2. Descendants of Sir Thierry Robessart

Sir Thierry Robessart married Elizabeth Cromwell, who died on 20th November 1535 and who is buried beside her husband. They had two sons, William and Sir John, and a daughter Lucy, who was buried at Houghton on 1st February 1559/60. Lucy married Edward Walpole, the son of Thomas Walpole of Houghton, Co. Norfolk, who was born in 1483 and who died 2nd January 1558/9.

William Robessart was born in 1486. He married Ann, daughter of Sir William Carew of Bury St Edmonds. After her husband's death in Cambridge on 14th November 1503, Ann married, secondly, Philip the son of William Barnard of Rous Hall, Akenham, Co. Suffolk. William Robessart had two sons by Ann; William, who died without issue in 1517 and Sir John Robessart, whose Inquisition Post Mortem was proved at Ipswich on 14th November 1554.

Sir John Robessart, was born about 1494. He was Sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk for 1547 and died on 8th June 1554. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Scott of Camberwell, Co. Surrey, and widow of Robert Appleyard of Stanfield Hall, Co. Norfolk. They had a daughter, Ann, otherwise Amy, who was born about 1532 and married in the Chapel of the Palace of Sheen, Co. Surrey, on 4th June 1550 to Robert Guldeford, Lord Dudley, born about 1531, son of John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland. He was Master of the Horse to Queen Elizabeth I, a Knight of the Garter and Earl of Leicester. He died on 5th September 1588 and is buried in the Beauchamp Chapel at St Mary's in Warwick. Amy died on 8th September 1560 from a fall, which was the subject of considerable controversy at the time. She is buried in the Chancel at St Mary's at Oxford. The ancestry of Robert Guldeford (see Figure 4) accounts for the presence of shield 21 on the tomb (see also page 182 above).

The Kerdeston Link

Sir Lewis Robessart's two nephews, Sir John Robessart (- 1447) and Sir Thierry de Robessart, Lord Kerdeston (- 1497) both married sisters from the Kerdeston family and this association accounts for some of the coats of arms that were placed on Sir Lewis' tomb, as the Kerdeston pedigree in Figure 3, and the text that follows illustrates.

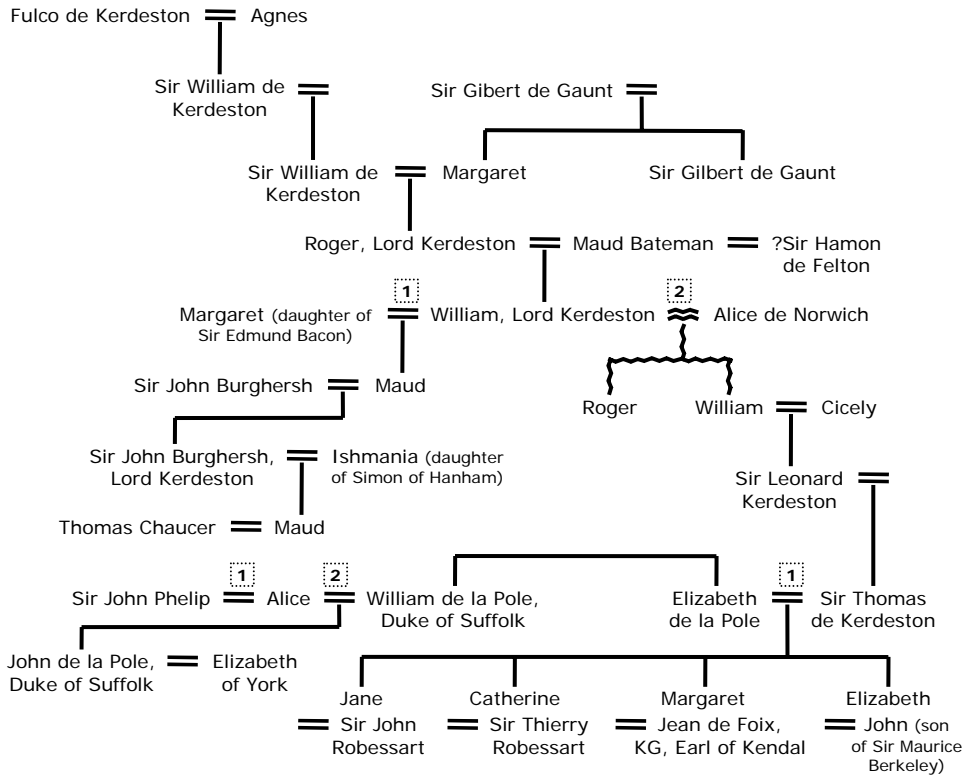


Fig 3. The Kerdeston Pedigree

Fulco de Kerdeston was enfeoffed in the Lordship of Kerdeston by Brian Fitzalan. By his wife Agnes he had Sir William de Kerdeston, who was the father of Sir William de Kerdeston who died about 1324, having married Margaret, the daughter and co-heiress of Sir Gilbert de Gaunt, having outlived her brother, Sir Gilbert de Gaunt [tomb coat of arms 5], who died without issue in 1296.

Sir William Kerdeston and Margaret had a son Roger, Lord Kerdeston, who married Maud Bateman, who subsequently married Sir Haymon de Felton. Roger was the father of William, Lord Kerdeston, who died without legitimate male issue in 1361, but had, by Alice de Norwich, two illegitimate sons, Roger and William. This William married Cecily and they were the parents of Sir Leonard de Kerdeston who had a son, Sir Thomas Kerdeston, who married Elizabeth de la Pole as his first wife and, as a second wife, Philippa, daughter of Sir John Trussel. By his legal wife, Margaret, daughter of Sir Edmond Bacon or Ewelme (see H. Napier, *Swyncombe and Ewelme* p.42). William, Lord Kerdeston, had a daughter Maud who married Sir John Burghersh. Their son, Sir John Burghersh became Lord Kerdeston and died in 1411, having married Ismania, daughter of Simon of Hanham. Their daughter, Maud, a co-heiress, married Thomas Chaucer of Ewelme who died in 1434. This Thomas Chaucer was the son of Geoffrey Chaucer [tomb coat of arms 15] by Philippa, sister of Catherine Roet, the Guienne King of Arms. Catherine married first Sir Hugh Swinford [tomb coat of arms 14] and was mistress of John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, mother of his Beaufort children, and, subsequently, his

third wife. Thomas Chaucer of Ewelme had by his wife, Maud Berghersh, a daughter Alice who married, firstly, Sir John Phelip, and, subsequently, William de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, brother of the aforesaid Elizabeth de la Pole, wife of Sir Thomas de Kerdeston. William de la Pole was the father of John de la Pole, Duke of Suffolk, who married the Princess Elizabeth of York.

Sir Thomas de Kerdeston and his wife Elizabeth de la Pole had a daughter, Jane, who married Sir John Robessart. Their other daughter, Catherine, married Sir Thierry Robessart. The other two sisters also married; Margaret to Jean de Foix, Earl of Kendal and a Knight of the Garter; Elizabeth to John, son of Sir Maurice Berkley.

Thomas Chaucer bore the arms of his mother, Philippa Roet, *Gules, three wheels Or*. Alice Chaucer bore the arms of her mother, Maud Burghersh, *Argent, a chief Gules and overall a lion rampant double-queued Or*.

The Ancestry of Robert Guldeford

Robert Guldeford, Lord Dudley's descent from the Sutton family explains the presence of shield 21 on the Robessart tomb. Going eight generations back from Robert Guldeford, Sir Richard de Sutton was the father of John de Sutton, as Figure 4 shows:

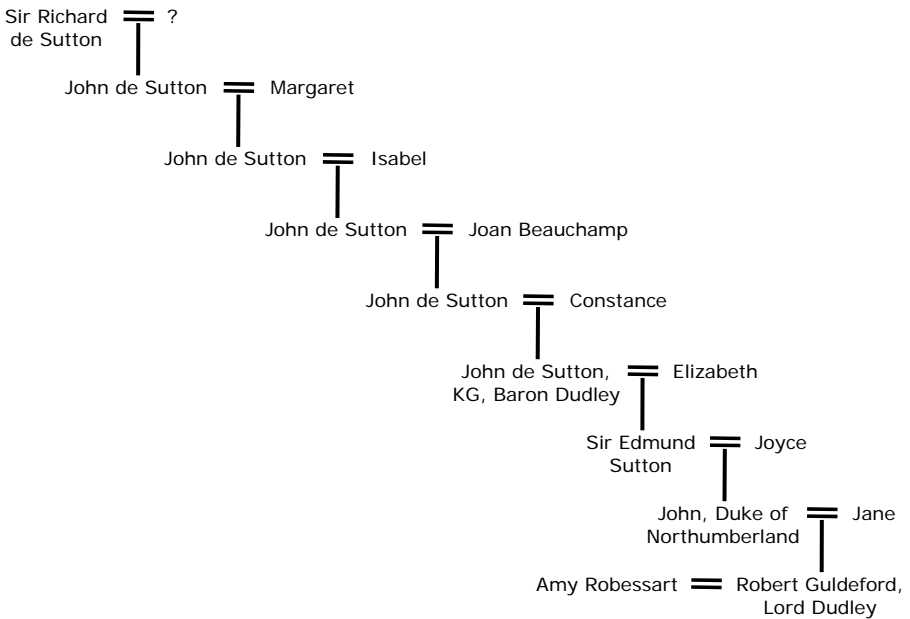


Fig 4. The Ancestry of Robert Guldeford

As Figure 4 shows, John de Sutton married Margaret, daughter of Margaret and granddaughter of Roger de Someri. Margaret was also co-heiress of John Baron Sutton of Dudley. John de Sutton was the father of another John de Sutton who married Isabel, daughter of John de Cherlton, Lord of Powys. John de Sutton had John de Sutton who married Joan Beauchamp, daughter of William, Earl of Warwick, and Margaret, daughter of Roger de Mortimer. John de Sutton had John de Sutton who died in 1407, having married Constance, daughter of Sir Walter Blount [tomb coat of arms 21]. John de

Sutton had John de Sutton, Knight of the Garter and Baron Dudley, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Berkeley, thus providing the Kerdeston de la Pole link.

John de Sutton, Baron Dudley, had Sir Edmond Sutton who married Joyce, sister of John, Earl of Worcester. Sir Edmond had John, Duke of Northumberland, who married Jane, the daughter of Sir Edward Guldeford. These were the parents of Robert Guldeford, Lord Dudley, who married Amy Robessart.

The Bouchier Connection

Finally, the connection between the Robessart and Bouchier families, through the marriage of Sir Lewis and Elizabeth, widow of Sir Hugh Stafford, K.G., Lord Bouchier, explains the addition of seven of the tomb shields.

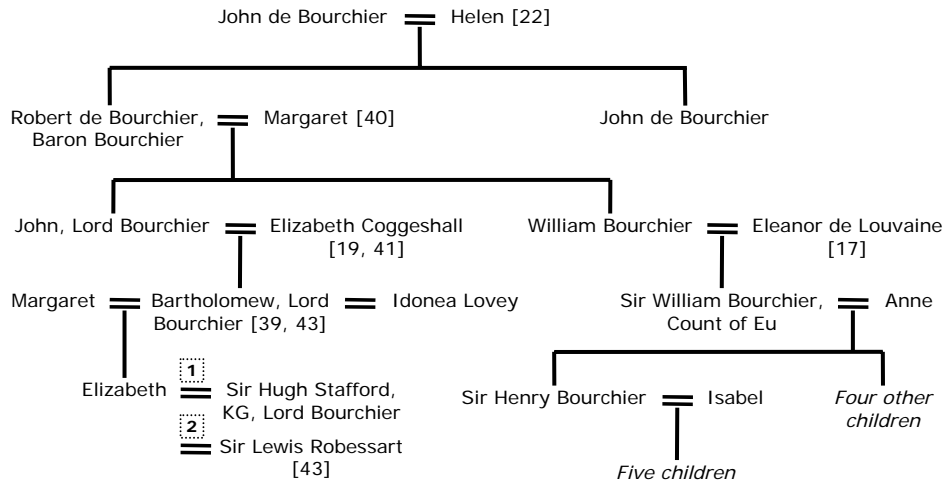


Fig 5. Pedigree of the Bouchier Family Showing the Link with Sir Lewis Robessart

John de Bouchier married Helen, daughter and heiress of Walter de Colchester or de Lyston. Her mother was Joan, daughter of Roger de Munchensi of Stanstead [tomb coat of arms, 22]. John de Bouchier and Helen had two sons; John de Bouchier and Robert Bouchier, the elder son and heir. Robert was summoned to parliament as Baron Bouchier (16 E III), and he died in 1349. He married Margaret, daughter and heiress of Sir Thomas Prayers [tomb coat of arms 40]. Their sons were:

- John, Lord Bouchier, Knight of the Garter, who married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir John Coggeshall [tomb coats of arms 19 and 41],
- William Bouchier, who married Eleanor, daughter and heiress of Sir John de Louvaine [tomb coat of arms 17].

John Lord Bouchier K.G. and his wife Elizabeth had Bartholomew, Lord Bouchier [tomb coats of arms 39 and 43] as an only son, who died in 1408/9. He had married twice, firstly to Margaret, daughter of Sir Roger de Someri, widow of Sir John Sutton (see Figure 4) and secondly, Idonea Lovey, who died on 12th September 1410. Bartholomew had an only daughter, Elizabeth, who died without issue in 1433, having married first Sir Hugh Stafford, Knight of Garter, Lord Bouchier (Hope Plate XXVI) died 1420, and, secondly, Sir Lewis Robessart, whose tomb is the subject of this paper.

William Bouchier, the younger son, was the father of Sir William Bouchier, Count of Eu, who died in 1420, having married Ann, only daughter of Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester and Earl of Essex. She became the Countess Dowager of Stafford. They had five children:

- Sir John Bouchier, Lord Berners (who was their fourth son). This Sir John was a Knight of the Garter in 1485 (see William St John Hope, *Stallplates of the Knights of The Garter*, plate LXIII) and he died in 1474. Sir John had married Margery, daughter and heiress of Sir Richard Berners of West Horsley, Co. Sussex,
- Thomas Bouchier, Bishop of Ely,
- William Bouchier, Lord Fitzwarine,
- Anne, who married John, Duke of Norfolk,
- Sir Henry Bouchier, Count of Eu, Lord and Viscount Bouchier, Earl of Essex, Knight of the Garter (Hope LXI) married Isabel, daughter of Richard, Earl of Cambridge. He died in 1483.

Sir Henry Bouchier also had five children:

- William Bouchier, Earl of Essex, who married firstly, Elizabeth, daughter of John de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and, secondly, Anne, daughter of Richard Widville, Earl of Rivers,
- Henry Bouchier who married Elizabeth daughter of Thomas Lord Scales,
- Humphrey Bouchier, Lord Cromwell, who was killed at Barnet in 1471, having married Joan, daughter of Sir Richard Stanhope, and niece and heiress of Ralph, Lord Cromwell,
- John Bouchier who married Elizabeth, daughter of Henry, Lord Ferrers of Groby,

Thomas Bouchier who married Isabel, daughter of Sir John Barre.

Finally, I must stress that the pedigree and charts outlined here and based upon the charted tree in Family history (pp.144/145) were compiled from private documentation in the hands of the Rev Norman Fourdrinier, the manuscripts and printed works cited, manuscript notes by Thomas Willemet in my possession and from works on the Order of the Garter as well as *The Complete Peerage*.

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