

THE ARCHBISHOPS OF DOL AND THE ORIGIN OF THE STEWARTS

by Paul A Fox¹

ABSTRACT

It is over a hundred years since J Horace Round discovered through his work on French medieval chartularies that the ancestors of the house of Stewart were Breton. His research is of fundamental importance to the subject, but the pedigree which he produced is no longer tenable, and a substantial revision has been made. In order to gain a better insight into the motivations of a family whose own survival in the records has been slight, the political and genealogical framework of the nobility of the county of Rennes has been re-examined. It is evident that the barons of the north-eastern Breton march were very much inter-related, and that the Stewart ancestors, as stewards of the Archbishop of Dol, married into that group. Their earliest male line progenitor has been identified as Hato, a knight presumed to be of Frankish descent. He was probably brought into Brittany by Rivallon of Dol, the vidame of the Archbishop, to assist in the defence of the bishopric. His son Flaald became the first hereditary steward of Dol, and probably married Rivallon's niece. Hato's grandson Alan fitz Flaald, following his participation in the capture of Jerusalem in 1099, went on to become an English baron.

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J Horace Round loved to de-bunk the somewhat fanciful genealogical accounts of earlier historians, and he was able to shed great light on the Stewart origins in a most amusing manner (Round, 1901). His work drew heavily on notes taken from the manuscripts of the monasteries of France, and revealed the long lost truth that the Stewarts descend from the stewards of Dol in Brittany. While we owe a great debt to Round, his use of the resources available even in his own day was by no means exhaustive, and he overlooked important material in the very chartularies from which he made his abstracts. It is not surprising therefore that his pedigree of the early Stewarts has not withstood modern scrutiny. The aim of this paper is to understand the broader context, and in particular the personal relationships of these shadowy Stewart antecedents.

The stewardship which they held was created by Archbishop Junkeneus of Dol (enthroned by 1008, died c.1039), a man whose wise counsels were much valued by Duke Alan III of Brittany, and whose family controlled the strategically important border lands with Normandy (Fig.1). The Archbishop's father Hamo was viscount of Alet, a title inherited by Hamo's eldest son and namesake, while the second son Josselin was established as the first lord of the castle of Dinan. Junkeneus further strengthened the strategic position by setting up his youngest brother Rivallon as the vidame of the archbishopric. His role would have been to defend the bishop, to represent him, to administer justice in his absence, and to control the temporalities of the see during an interregnum. To support this position he created twelve knights' fees from the see of Dol. There were two sets of fortifications to defend, the citadel of Dol itself, and a new castle at Combourg. Apart from extensive lands, income came from the burgesses of Dol, from whom the vidame was granted the right to draw upon a thousand sous of credit should the need arise (Allenou, 1917, p.38).

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Fig 1. Map showing locations in Brittany and adjacent regions

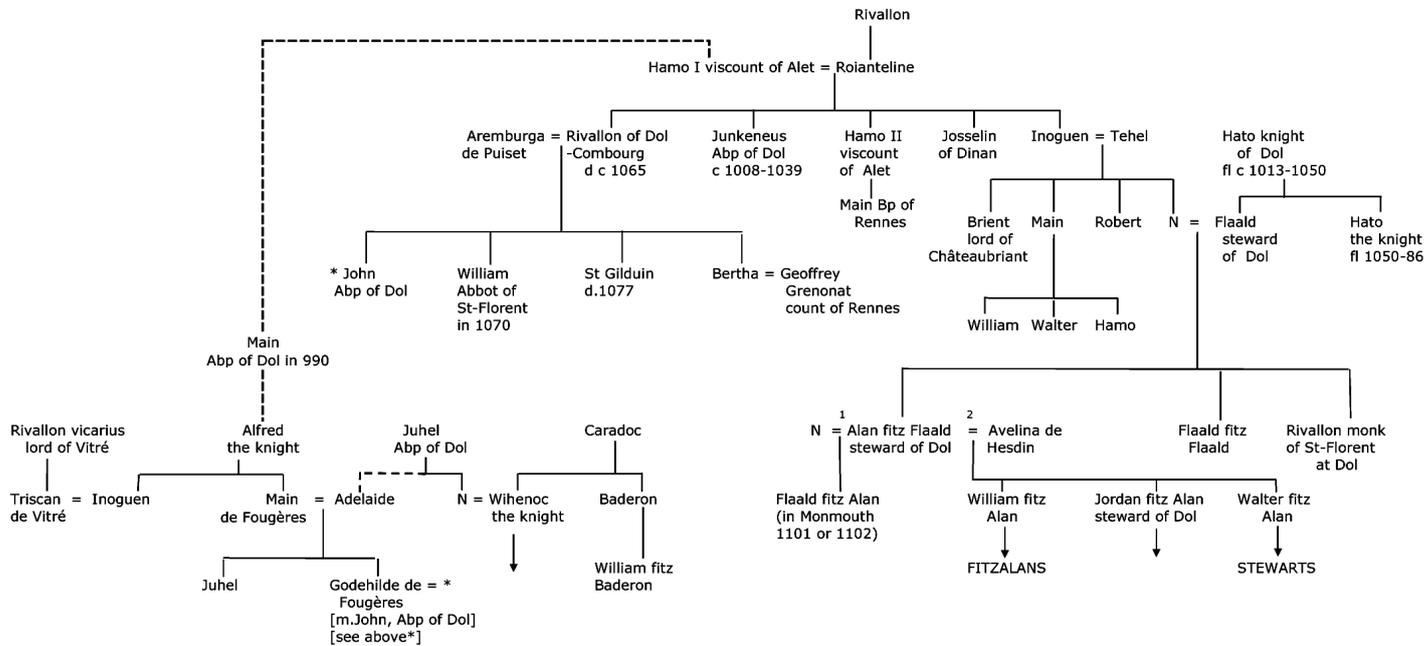


Fig 2. Proposed pedigree for the ancestors of the Stewarts and their extended family

These strategic developments were the second phase in the strengthening of eastern Brittany following numerous attacks by the Vikings, most seriously in the period 996-999 when Dol itself was taken and Solomon the vidame was killed.² The first phase of military organisation had taken place a little before this cataclysm, in the time of Junkeneus' predecessor (and probably uncle), Archbishop Main II of Dol, with the establishment of the baronies of Fougères and Vitré (Guillotet, 1988). The barony of Fougères comprised fifty parishes and was constituted c.990 for Main son of the knight Alfred, and grandson of Main.³ Clerical celibacy was not the accepted norm in Brittany at that time and it is distinctly plausible that the grandfather Main was the Archbishop himself (Fig.2).

The barony of Vitré was even larger than Fougères, comprising more than eighty parishes (Borderie, 1899, pp.57-58). Its first baron was Rivallon vicarius who was there before 1008, and married to one Junargande. Rivallon is believed to have come from the county of Vannes (Borderie, 1899, pp.110-111). His eldest son Triscan married Inoguen sister of Main de Fougères. The name Inoguen is of some interest because Archbishop Junkeneus had a sister of that name who was married to Teuharius/ Tehel and was mother of Brient first lord of Châteaubriant (Keats-Rohan, 2006, p.237).⁴ It was into the context of this extended family of Breton aristocracy that Rivallon lord of Dol-Combouurg introduced a soldier with the frankish name of Hato to serve as one of his knights. As such he must frequently have belonged to the retinue of the Archbishop.

Rivallon of Dol possessed lands in Normandy, in the Cotentin peninsula, including at least two carucates of land in Céaux, on the coast east of Mont-Saint-Michel.⁵ These and other lands in Normandy probably explain why Hato the knight came to sign two charters of Duke Richard II of Normandy in the period 1013-1024.⁶ Relations with Normandy became strained after 1027 when Richard II died and Duke Alan III of Brittany forged a marriage alliance with Bertha daughter of Odo count of Chartres and Blois. It must have been around the same time that Rivallon of Dol married Aremburga de Puiset, daughter of Evrard count of Bretueil, viscount of Chartres and a vassal of Odo (Guillotet, 1997). In 1029 Duke Robert of Normandy invaded Brittany at Dol, and although peace was restored fairly swiftly, thereafter Hato made no further attestations of Norman charters. When Hato witnessed a charter of Junkeneus in the period 1029-1037 as a knight of the bishopric he was referred to as

² Borderie (1899, p.3) places this assault in the context of Duke Richard II of Normandy's war with Count Odo of Blois.

³ Borderie (1899, p.57, with reference to Morice, 1742a, p.351). Mazel (2006, p.111) gives a pedigree of Fougères. Alfred was still living in 1010, and clearly a fidelis of the Counts of Rennes, many of whose charters he signed.

⁴ Brient of Châteaubriant founded the abbey of Béré in Châteaubriant as a cell of Marmoutiers, confirmed by Airard Bishop of Nantes in 1050. The foundation charter mentions Brient's parents Teuharius (Tehel) and Inoguen, his wife Adelaide and his sons Teuharius and Geoffrey. Châteaubriant was another key frontier castle, lying within the territory of the Counts of Nantes.

⁵ As demonstrated by his son John's gifts to St Florent from here around 1082, see Marchegay (1880). The charter reserved from the donation the land held by John of Dol's knights. It is also noteworthy that Ralph de Fougères shared the land, and thus his consent was required.

⁶ These are two out of 50 surviving charters of the duke. In the first of these dating 1013-1020 Richard gave land in the Cotentin to Marmoutier: the lordship of Helleville, part of Quetteville, a quarter of Biville and a quarter of Héauville, (Fauroux, 1961, no.23, pp.108-109. In the second, dating 1017-1024 Duke Richard gave land in Rots near Caen to Rouen, other witnesses included Robert, King of France and Maugisius, Bishop of Avranches, (Fauroux, pp.150-151).

“our man Hato”, and possibly by this time he had risen to a position of authority in the bishop’s household.⁷ The mill of Hato was an important landmark in the vicinity of Mount Dol, mentioned various times in the 1181 inquest as being part of the bishopric.⁸

Archbishop Juhel

The successor of Junkeneus around 1039 was Juhel, and it was later claimed that he had bought the see from Duke Alan III. Like many Breton priests Juhel was married, and is known to have had at least one daughter who was married to the knight Wihenoc. The family connections of Juhel represent an extremely important and long neglected topic. He must have come from a wealthy family if it was later believed that he purchased his bishopric. A second daughter of Juhel was probably Adelaïde the wife of Main de Fougères, who was stated in a charter to have been the daughter of Juhel (Morice, 1742a, pp.393-394). Their eldest son was named Juhel, a clear confirmation that his maternal grandfather was a man of some consequence. From the 1181 inquest it is clear that Juhel followed the established practice of settling his kinsmen on episcopal lands, and Juhel’s son in law Wihenoc son of Caradoc was a prime beneficiary.⁹

The question of Juhel’s own antecedents is an important one. The archbishops of Dol from Main II in 990 to John II a hundred years later were all kinsmen, with the exception of Even, who owed his installation to direct papal intervention, and Juhel, whose origins are unrecorded. We can almost certainly add to this list Main’s predecessor Archbishop Wicohen (Juthuouen) who served from 944 until 970 or later. He was the dominant figure in north eastern Brittany during his day, and was a great temporal lord, with a fief comprising the northern part of the county of Rennes (Borderie, 1891). This fief was inherited by Main II and Hamo of Alet, and it is a reasonable assumption that these men were sons or nephews of Wicohen.¹⁰ Wicohen’s parentage is not known, although Morice (1742b, p.62) believed him to have been a brother or a near kinsman of Berenger, Count of Rennes. The name Juhel was popular in the family of the Counts of Rennes. Conan I of Rennes (d.992) himself had two sons called Juhel, one of whom became bishop of Vannes (c.1008-1037) while the other was a natural son who is known to have had issue. Du Paz, an early scholar of Breton genealogy, stated that one of these Juhels was the father of Wihenoc, who was viscount of Porhoët in 992.¹¹ Wihenoc’s territories lay within the bishoprics of Alet and Vannes (Guillotet, 1988, p.207). The other great landholder in the territory of Alet at this time was Hamo, Viscount of Alet, father of Archbishop

⁷ Morice (1742a) 383. Redon cartulary no 289 fol 138v.

⁸ This was probably in the parish of Roz-Landrieuc, see Allenou (1917) p.32.

⁹ Allenou (1917, pp.40-41, 62). These pages also reveal that Wihenoc’s possessions in 1181 were in the hands of Alan fitz Brient. Morice (1742a, p.701) shows that this Alan was descended from the viscounts of Alet, confirming that his ancestor Brient was the same who was son of Inoguen of Dol. See also Duine (1916, p.8). It is probable that these lands were bestowed by Archbishop John of Dol on his kinsmen after they were surrendered by Wihenoc.

¹⁰ As suggested by Borderie.

¹¹ Morice (1742b, p.976, and pedigrees xvii, xx). Du Paz in fact invented a third son of Conan called Juhel of which there is no trace in the historical record, but his recording of the name of Wihenoc’s father may well be based on lost evidence. In 992 Viscount Wihenoc made a gift to Mont-Saint-Michel with his wife Allarun (sister of Alan Cagnard, Count of Cornouaille) and his sons Josselin, Maingui, and Tutgual, see Keats Rohan (2006) no.22 and pp.223-224. The succession of Wihenoc’s son Maingui to the see of Vannes in 1066 gives support to a descent from Juhel bishop of Vannes.

Junkeneus of Dol, and probable brother of Archbishop Main II. The very name of Archbishop Juhel, his reputed wealth prior to his elevation, and his undoubted status as a nobleman, all point to a likely descent from the house of Rennes or the house of Porhoët. The usage of the names Main and Josselin in the family of the viscount of Alet, names which were also used in the same period and in subsequent generations by the family of Porhoët, suggests that the two houses shared a common descent which would in turn explain how Juhel attained his position as prelate.

In 1050 Juhel was excommunicated, with all his fellow Breton bishops, by Pope Gregory VII at the council of Rheims for failing to respond to a papal summons (Fougerolles, 1998). The archbishopric had been created two centuries earlier without papal approval as a manifestation of Breton nationalism, but Brittany nominally remained under the suzerainty of the Archbishop of Tours. The Breton nobility could not have been entirely indifferent to this excommunication. They frequently travelled to provinces which were controlled by the see of Tours, where as supporters of an excommunicate bishop they might themselves have been refused the sacraments. The established practice of founding priories in Brittany as cells of abbeys outside continued with renewed vigour following the excommunication. This is particularly evident in the leading baronial families most directly linked to the see of Dol, and might have been a religious insurance policy: they could expect to receive the valid sacraments from their own priests who answered to the Archbishop of Tours.¹²

Duke William the bastard of Normandy saw in this situation an opportunity to diminish the authority of Tours while at the same time winning for himself supporters in Brittany. He made common cause with Juhel, promising to use his influence over the Pope in return for an alliance which protected his own western borders. This strategy was highly successful, and Duke William's popularity with the Breton nobility is evidenced by the large numbers who joined in his invasion of England. According to Wace the lords of Dinan, Vitré and Fougères were all represented at Hastings (Keats-Rohan, 1999, p.52). Juhel would have used Rivallon of Dol as his envoy to Duke William, and this probably explains Rivallon's attendance at the court of the Norman duke at Dromfront in 1063-1064.¹³

Quite apart from the policy of his lord the archbishop, Rivallon's possession of lands in Normandy gave him the divided loyalties which were so typical of the region in this era. Duke William and the Breton Duke Conan II were avowed enemies, and it became necessary for William to neutralize Conan before he could invade England. Exactly why Conan besieged Rivallon in his citadel of Dol in 1064-1065, sending him into exile, is not known. Presumably Conan had learnt that Rivallon was negotiating with his adversary. The outcome is famous from the Bayeux tapestry: Duke William took Dol with the assistance of Harold Godwinson, Conan retreated to Rennes, the Normans then took Dinan. The last action has been interpreted to mean that

¹² The abbeys which benefited were predominantly Marmoutiers at Tours and the nearby St Florent de Saumur. Adelaide de Fougères founded an abbey at Fougères, Robert de Vitré an abbey at Vitré (Morice, 1742a, pp.403-404, 424), and Rivallon of Dol a priory at Combourg, all as cells of Marmoutiers.

¹³ Round (1899, no.1172) and Fauroux (1961, no.159). The charter was dated 22nd September. The best fit year would be 1063, when Duke William was actively campaigning in Maine. This was a charter of Duke William to Marmoutiers concerning a dispute between the monks of Le Mans and Marmoutiers.

Rivallon's kinsmen of Dinan remained loyal to Conan, but it is equally possible that Conan had taken the town, so William was restoring it to his ally.¹⁴

Subsequently Conan focussed his military energies on Anjou and Maine. While Duke William was preparing to cross over to England, Conan was re-taking Château Gontier in Anjou. It was essential for Duke William that the problem of Conan be resolved. Orderic Vitalis told an extraordinary story to explain how he did this. Conan's chamberlain, a man who also had property in Normandy, was asked to place poison on Conan's war horn, reins, and gloves. The poison was effective after Conan touched his hand to his mouth, and he died soon afterwards.¹⁵

Rivallon of Dol died before his duke, having founded in great haste the priory of the Trinity at Combourg as a cell of Marmoutiers, signed in the presence of his wife and sons at the castle of Combourg and later ratified by Conan II in the presence of Abbot Bartholomew at the Priory of Béré in Châteaubriant (Corson, 1899; Morice, 1742a, p.425).¹⁶ An earlier gift by Rivallon to Marmoutiers of half the church of St Machut in the castle of Combourg had been witnessed by Flaald (Fledald) the steward.¹⁷ Around 1050 Flaald and his father Hato witnessed a charter of Rivallon of Dol and Josselin of Dinan giving the tithes of St Pern to the new priory of St Pern, a cell of St Nicholas of Angers (Borderie, 1887).¹⁸ Flaald and his father themselves made a donation to the same priory.¹⁹ Flaald was the first man to be given the important position of hereditary steward of the Archbishop of Dol, the most important official in his household apart from that of vidame. It is widely assumed that the post, together with that of butler, was created by Junkeneus, a supposition made certain because all of Juhel's land grants were later revoked, while the hereditary stewards and butlers managed to hold on to theirs.²⁰

¹⁴ There is no evidence that Conan drove Rivallon into exile for a second time. At his death Rivallon was still in possession of his castle of Combourg.

¹⁵ Douglas (1966, pp.408-415) has dismissed this story as fabulous, but the details of this poisoning are very specific. The main objection to the poisoning is that the necrology of Chartres commemorates Conan's death on December 11th, a date after the battle of Hastings. It has been shown that such dates might be entered when news of death reached a particular monastery, see Constable (1986). Another possibility is that the funeral was delayed and that this is the date of his interment. A good candidate for the poisoner is Aubrey de Vere. He can be placed in the entourage of Conan on a visit to Tours, had links with Normandy, participated in the conquest of England, and was well rewarded by King William. Intriguingly, Henry I made Aubrey II de Vere his chamberlain, supporting the possibility that his father might have served Conan in the same capacity, cf. the creation of Walter son of Alan fitz Flaald as seneschal of Scotland, perhaps with the encouragement of Henry I of England.

¹⁶ The witnesses at Combourg included John of Laval, those at Châteaubriant included Geoffrey and Tehel sons of Brient and Brient son of Tehel. John of Laval was son of Guy of Laval, whose donations to Marmoutiers were confirmed by Duke William of Normandy and witnessed by Rivallon of Dol on 22nd Sept 1063/4.

¹⁷ This was in the time of the previous abbot, Albert (1034-1064). The charter is printed in Washington (1962) and in Martène (1875, p.241).

¹⁸ This charter was based on a 17th century extract from the lost chartulary of St Nicholas in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (MS franc 22.329 vol.45, p.530).

¹⁹ Keats-Rohan (2006, p.221), citing Archives Ille-et Vilaine IF 510. It is here stated that the donation was made by Flaald and his brother Hato, but on reviewing her sources, Katherine Keats-Rohan informed the author that father is the correct reading.

²⁰ To the butlership was attached the seigneurie of Chesnaye-au-bouteiller in the parish of Roz-Landrieuc, see Allenou (1917, p.64). Lands attached to the stewardship included those at La

The great need of Rivallon to found a new priory with his dying breath might have reflected terror at his excommunicate status. That his family shared these fears is supported by their haste to make further gifts to the church in his memory. Only eleven days after his death his eldest son William made a gift to Mont-Saint-Michel signed at Dol and witnessed by Hato, brother of Flaald (Flotald) (Keats-Rohan, 2006, no.18 and notes pp.219-221).²¹ Soon afterwards William took the cowl. The subsequent election of William to the abbacy of St Florent de Saumur in 1070 is explicable in terms of his maternal descent from the high nobility of the Touraine.

Another witness of William's charter to Mont-Saint-Michel was Main son of Tehel, an individual who was evidently a kinsman of Flaald. In 1070-1082 Main and his father made a gift of the church of Cuguen, in the barony of Combours, to Marmoutiers (Morice, 1742a, p.492). This followed an incident in which Abbot Bartholomew of Marmoutiers had personally, and apparently miraculously, cured Main's two sons Hamo and Walter of illness on a visit to his priory at Châteaubriant. The gift of Cuguen was made with the consent of Alan son of Flaald, who shared the advowson, and ratified by their lord John of Dol. In 1095 Hamo son of Main made a gift to the Priory of Combours with the consent of his wife Basilia, and his brothers William and Walter, to which Alan the steward was the first witness.²² The two families also had a common interest in the church of La Fresnaie, which can hardly be coincidental. Hamo son of Main gave the tithes of this place to St Florent de Saumur for the souls of his parents and of his uncle Robert, confirmed by his brother William and witnessed by Baderon.²³ In 1130 Jordan son of Alan fitz Flaald possessed the cemetery of La Fresnaie (Allenou, 1917, p.15 footnote; Round, 1899, no.1220).

Clearly Alan son of Flaald was connected to the family of Main. They must have shared a common descent, and only explanation which presents itself is that Flaald the steward was married to Main's sister. In other words she was the daughter of Tehel. This was an uncommon name, and one shared by the father of Brient of Châteaubriant, the husband of Inoguen. She was daughter of Hamo of Alet and sister of Rivallon of Dol. This is exactly the sort of match which might be expected for a steward of Dol. The postulated link with the house of Alet is strengthened by the use of the names Hamo and Main, while both Main and Alan fitz Flaald had sons named William and Walter.

The ousting of Juhel

In 1076 an event took place which is generally termed the siege of Dol, the sole objective of which appears to have been to eject Juhel from his see. There was a military occupation of the citadel by an unlikely alliance of top level Breton magnates including the former adversaries Count Eudo of Penthievre and Count Geoffrey Grenonat; together with Ralph de Gael, who had recently been expelled from England by King William (Borderie, 1899, pp.26-27). This was a carefully orchestrated two pronged attack on Juhel, which begs the question who planned it, and why? Abbot

Fresnaye, northwest of Dol held by Jordan son of Alan in 1130 (Allenou, p.15). In 1076-1082 Alan son of Flaald had rights to the advowson of Cuguen in the lordship of Combours, but this presumably came from Rivallon of Dol, (Morice, 1742a, p.492).

²¹ This charter was also ratified by Conan II and by Archbishop Juhel.

²² Morice (1742a, p.486) omits any mention of Alan, this information comes from Round (1901, pp.122-123).

²³ Liber Albus of St-Florent de Saumur. Archives départementales de Maine-et-Loir, Angers, MS H3713 [AML] f 78v, cited in Borderie (1871). Another witness was Rainald son of Constantine, for more of whom see below.

William and his brother John lord of Dol must at the very least have collaborated in the scheme. Simultaneously with the occupation of Dol a deputation of Breton clerics was dispatched to Rome with the objective of asking the Pope to confirm Juhel's deposition, and to inform him that the citizens of Dol wished to elect Abbot William's youngest brother Gilduin as their archbishop.

There must have been a serious falling out between Juhel and the family of his most important vassals, the sons of Rivallon, and it is not difficult to conjecture the cause of this. Abbot William had become an influential and reformist church leader, who must have been appalled that his own father had died an excommunicate. He doubtless had been trying to persuade Juhel to accept papal authority, and it seems that Juhel had blocked the foundation of the new abbey at Dol as a cell of St Florent because he realized it would undermine his own authority. In an attempt to circumvent Juhel, direct papal approval had been sought for the foundation of the priory at least six months before the coup (Morice, 1742a, pp.433-434).²⁴ As a churchman William had ready access to the three barons who took part in the coup, and indeed Geoffrey Grenonat, Count of Rennes, was his brother-in-law, being married to his sister Bertha (du Paz, 1619; Borderie, 1899, p.13).²⁵ Ralph de Gael for his part would have jumped at any opportunity to annoy Juhel's ally William the Conqueror, who subsequently made strenuous efforts to have Juhel reinstated both by direct military intervention and by appeal to the Pope.

Pope Gregory VII willingly acquiesced to Juhel's deposition, but felt the saintly Gilduin to be too young for the job, and instead he nominated another member of the embassy, Abbot Even of St Melanie in Vannes, originally a monk of St Florent who had been appointed by Geoffrey Grenonat when he re-founded the abbey. Gilduin took with him the foundation charter for the new abbey at Dol.²⁶ With Juhel deposed there was no longer any obstacle to its approval. Alan son of Flaald, who by this time had inherited the stewardship of Dol, witnessed various charters associated with the foundation, and himself donated his bakehouse and shop in the village of Mezvoit where the priory was to be built, with the consent of his brother Flaald (Fledald), on condition that his brother Rivallon was received into the monastery (Morice, 1742a, pp.433-434).

The Life of Wihenoc the knight.

Of Juhel's household it appears that only his son-in-law Wihenoc stood beside him and shared his exile. His story is an extraordinary one, and warrants recounting here because of his close association with the stewards of Dol. His first mention in the historical record occurs before 31st July 1055 when as Wihenoc son of Caradoc of La Boussac he witnessed the gift by his lord Robert de Vitré of the church of Montreuil-sur-Pérouse to the abbey of St Serge at Angers (Guillotet, 1976, citing Morice, 1742a, pp.412-413). Wihenoc was probably already married to Juhel's daughter by this time, and was part of the bishop's pro-Norman inner circle. As such he would have been with Rivallon of Dol in the events of 1064-1065. After 1076 he was forced to relinquish his extensive lands in the see of Dol given to him by Juhel because those who failed to do so remained excommunicate (Allenou, p.52).

²⁴ The initial approach was through Milo Cardinal Archbishop of Benevento who may have met Abbot William in Paris. The cardinal was elected in 1074 and died on 23rd February 1076. The siege of Dol took place in September 1076.

²⁵ Geoffrey was a bastard son of Duke Alan III.

²⁶ Gilduin died not long afterwards in January 1077 at Chartres, and was later canonised.

King William compensated him with a barony recently forfeited by the rebellious Roger son of William fitz Osbern (Keats Rohan, 1999, pp.487-488). Roger had become embroiled in the machinations of his brother-in-law, Ralph de Gael. Soon after becoming lord of Monmouth castle Wihenoc, with his brother Baderon, founded Monmouth Priory, endowing it with lands in the marches of Wales and Gloucestershire. Baderon gave lands from his patrimony in Brittany at Epiniac, and the mortgaged lands of La Boussac (Round, 1899, no.1134).²⁷ Baderon was also a benefactor of St Georges Rennes, giving the village of Beren and a daughter to the abbey with the assent of his son William and in the presence of Ralph de Fougères, his overlord, witnessed by Alan son of Flaald (Villeneuve, 1875).²⁸ The Welsh church which the monks used while Monmouth Priory was being constructed fittingly bore a dedication to St Caradoc, the name of the founders' father (Fenn, 2002). The religious imperative of Wihenoc's declining years was perhaps at least in part driven by a desire to catch up for the many years of invalid communion received from an excommunicate bishop. By 1083 he had become a monk of St Florent de Saumur, leaving his English possessions to his nephew William fitz Baderon. Wihenoc gave Monmouth Priory to St Florent de Saumur on his admission as a monk, the instrument being confirmed by William son of Baderon, by his tenant Main de La Boussac, and by Brient the old. Another witness of some interest was Raterius son of Wihenoc (Round, 1899, no.1133). King William agreed to these donations in a charter signed at Salisbury and witnessed by Count Alan Rufus, the most senior Breton noble in England at that time, and a man who had also benefited hugely from the fall of Ralph de Gael (Round, 1899, no.1135).²⁹ The choice of St Florent de Saumur was a natural one. Wihenoc as one of the archbishop's knights had served Rivallon of Dol. Abbot William knew him well, understood his demons, and clearly held him in high esteem, using Wihenoc as a travelling plenipotentiary of the abbey. The first datable instance was in 1083, when he was sent to King William to ask him to intervene in a dispute with the monks of Mont-St-Michel. Abbot William's brother, John of Dol, had granted land in Céaux in Normandy on the coast east of the abbey to St Florent. Passing the mount, Wihenoc and his colleague were able to persuade their fellow Benedictines they were in error in laying claim to these lands, and they signed a quitclaim on the feast of Stephen (26th Dec 1083) (Round, 1899, no.1117).

After this success Wihenoc was made responsible for resolving claims on lands given to all three of the other English cells of St Florent, those at Sele in Sussex, Andover in Hampshire and Sporle in Norfolk. By this time he was a relatively old man. He visited the abbot of Fécamp to reach an agreement over territorial rights in Sussex, and c.1095-97 he visited Philip de Braose at Radnor and received for his pains confirmation of all of William de Braose's gifts to Sele (Marchegay, 1879, nos 3+4, pp.165-167; Round, 1899, nos.1120, 1131). He even persuaded Philip to make a gift to Monmouth Priory. Philip de Braose later visited St Florent and made a pledge to uphold his donations with a symbolic knife which was placed on the priory altar (Round, 1899, no.1121). Wihenoc obtained a confirmatory charter for Andover from King William Rufus which was signed before him in the New Forest, and witnessed by Count Alan Rufus (Marchegay, 1879, no.31, p.192; Round, 1899, no.1150).³⁰ On 18th

²⁷ Wihenoc gave lands in Siddington, Tibberton and Cirencester. Further donations of Baderon were recorded in a separate charter, for which see Marchegay (1879, no.15 p.177).

²⁸ The charter is here incorrectly dated 1040. Epiniac and La Boussac are both south of Dol.

²⁹ Davis (1913) cites this charter twice, first of all at no.46 dating it impossibly to 1069-70, and secondly at no.225, with the correct date range.

³⁰ The date of 12th March 1100 when it was entered into the pancarte cannot be the date of signing as another witness was Ivo Taillebois, another opponent of Ralph de Gael, who died c.1093. The Andover charter is Davis (1913) no 687.

March 1101 or 1102 with Abbot William he visited Monmouth Priory for its dedication, and before a great gathering of marcher lords William son of Baderon placed a knife on the altar and attested to all the family donations to the monastery (Round, 1899, nos.1136, 1138). Present at the ceremony was Flaald son of Alan the steward. Twenty-five years earlier Baderon had witnessed Alan the steward's own gifts to St Florent.³¹ Also there was the Breton tenant in chief, Hascoit Musard from East Anglia, who later became a monk of Ely. Another charter in which William son of Baderon gave land near Goodrich castle during the visit of Abbot William was also signed by Flaald son of Alan the steward (Marchegay, 1879, no.15, p.178). Wihenoc's final task was to obtain a charter confirming Alan son of Flaald's foundation of Sporle Abbey (Marchegay, 1879, no.30, p.191; Round, 1899, no.1149).³²

Abbot William took Wihenoc with him at the dedication of another cell of St Florent, this time in Brittany, the Priory of the Magdalene of the bridge of Dinan (Morice, 1742a, p.439). It was founded by Abbot William's kinsman Geoffrey, castellan of Dinan (1065-1123). Wihenoc's presence here at the dedication was required because the territorial rights of his son Alan were in question: a vineyard had been donated in the town which was in the fee of Alan son of Wihenoc. Another witness was Richard son of Rivallon, nephew of Wihenoc the monk.

Alan son of Flaald

Meanwhile, back in Brittany the stewards of Dol continued in their traditional role. Archbishop Even was succeeded in 1082 by John lord of Dol, brother of Abbot William. Flaald, the first steward, had died by 1076 and was succeeded by his eldest son Alan, while his younger son Flaald possibly occurs as the knight Flaald in the necrology of Mont-Saint-Michel (Keats-Rohan, 2006, p.243). This is an intriguing connection because Alan fitz Flaald became a close friend of Henry, later King Henry I of England, during the period when Henry controlled Mont-Saint-Michel as Count of the Cotentin. Henry purchased western Normandy and the title of Count from his brother Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy, in 1088, and when in 1091 his brother reneged on the arrangement he fortified Mont-St-Michel. Although forced to flee the Mount via Dol in March 1091, he was able to re-establish his authority between 1092 and 1094, making a great impression on the local nobility, some of whom joined his cause.

Alan the steward left Brittany on the first crusade in 1096 (Forester, 1853, vol.3, p.99).³³ It has usually been assumed that he did not return, and that the Alan fitz Flaald who was created a baron in England a few years later was his nephew, but a new look at the evidence leads to the conclusion that the English baron was the crusader. It is necessary at this juncture to consider why Round made Alan fitz Flaald the nephew of Alan the crusading steward. In his pedigree, which was followed by

³¹ AML f 76r [see footnote 23 above]

³² A charter which he witnessed together with Rivallon, a familiar of the monks, and Rivallon the foreigner, who witnessed a gift of Alan fitz Flaald to Castle Acre Priory, see British Library MS Harley 2110 fol 20.

³³ Alan as steward witnessed various charters, the two most significant being as follows: Firstly in 1092 he witnessed the gift of Ralph de Fougères of the church of St Mary in the castle of Fougères to Marmoutiers, (Borderie, 1851; Morice, 1742a, p.423). Secondly in 1093-96 he witnessed in Brittany a gift of Count Stephen of Richmond to St Mary's Abbey York. In it he was explicitly stated as being steward of the Archbishop of Dol. The reason for this was that the charter was also signed by Roland Archbishop of Dol, as well as by a monk of Mont-St-Michel (Clay, 1915).

Washington (1962), Flaald son of Alan the steward who witnessed at Monmouth in 1101 or 1102 was made the father of the English baron. This error was presumably based on a belief that Alan died in the crusades, but is strangely inconsistent because his death would have given Flaald son of Alan the position of steward in his own right. Round knew that Alan the steward had a brother called Flaald, so he assumed this man must have been the father of the English baron. This interpretation required the invention of an earlier steward called Alan as father to both Flaald and the historical Alan the steward. Flaald the brother of Alan the steward was not the son of Alan, however, but of Flaald the steward. A charter of January 1087 giving land in Mezvoit to the abbey of Dol was witnessed by Flaald son of Flaald.³⁴

The correct chronology is that Flaald the steward flourished in the 1050s and later, by 1076, was succeeded by his son Alan. In the period 1070-1076 Alan son of Flaald witnessed at least four charters in his capacity as heir apparent, perhaps because Flaald was infirm. These were: firstly the gift of the church of Cuguen; Baderon's donations to St George Rennes before he went to England; the gift by Rainald son of Constantine of a mill in Mezvoit in the territory of Alan son of Flaald (Fredald) to St Florent; and finally, the gift by Abbot William of the church of Lanrigan to St Florent which was witnessed by both Flaald (Fredald) and by Alan.³⁵ This last charter presumably dates to 1070. From 1076 when Alan the steward witnessed various foundation charters of the abbey of St Florent at Dol, there is no further mention in Brittany of Alan son of Flaald. The obvious inference is that Alan son of Flaald and Alan the steward were the same person, a conclusion drawn by Round himself (Round, 1902).³⁶ This means that the Flaald who attested at Monmouth can only be his son, providing evidence that the crusading steward was indeed still living in 1101 or 1102.

This still leaves the open possibility that the English baron might have been the grandson rather than the son of Flaald the steward, but it seems unlikely that King Henry I would have esteemed an obscure younger son so highly as he did. Following his surprise accession in August 1100 Henry very quickly invested Alan with a barony, the honour of Mileham in Norfolk, then in the king's hands. At the great court held at Windsor on 3rd September 1101 Alan witnessed two charters for Norwich Cathedral Priory, one of which confirmed his previous donation of the church and tithes of Langham within the honour of Mileham (Johnson & Cronne, 1956, nos.547,548; Harper-Bill, 1990, nos.11,12). There is an earlier version of this charter which could potentially date as early as November 1100 (Harper-Bill, no.11). Alan was further favoured with marriage to a wealthy heiress, Avelina de Hesdin, and around 1103, when the great fief of the hereditary sheriffdom of Shropshire escheated to the crown on the death of Hugh, son of Warin the Bald, the king gave it to Alan (Keats-Rohan, 2002, pp.886-887).³⁷ This fief made him the second man in the county of Shropshire,

³⁴ AML fol 88v.

³⁵ Morice (1742a, p.492); Villeneuve (1875. Pp.251-252); AML f 80v-81r and 87r-87v. In the last charter neither Flaald nor Alan were distinguished with any other name or title, but the Flaald here is likely to have been Flaald the steward.

³⁶ Despite making this connection it did not occur to Round that two men he had created called Alan fitz Flaald might in fact be the same person.

³⁷ At the time of Domesday it was held by Rainald de Balliol as step father of Hugh, then in his minority.

with more than 70 manors, together with further manors in Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Sussex (Eyton, 1858).³⁸

If Alan was the son of an impoverished younger brother, for him to have been vested in a barony would have been unprecedented, even had he performed some quite exceptional service for Henry in Brittany. Rather more likely the king would have added to his own prestige by associating himself with a man who was both a crusader and a man of rank in his own country, and a man who as steward to the Archbishop of Dol had been well placed to aid Henry when he was besieged by his brothers at Mont-St-Michel in 1091. This solution has the additional attraction of explaining what became of Alan the steward. There is no record that he died in the crusade, and there is every reason to suppose that Orderic Vitalis, who recorded the campaign in great detail, would have mentioned his heroic death. After the capture of Jerusalem on 15th July 1099 many knights returned home, including Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy. Curthose was still on his way back when Henry seized the throne. Although Alan clearly survived the crusade, no more is heard of him in Brittany. The reason why he reverted to his previous name can easily be explained. In England to be a steward was commonplace, but there was only one Alan son of Flaald. Moreover, Alan had become a baron, a position far above that of steward.

Alan signed eight authentic royal charters from the early part of Henry's reign, and they indicate his presence at court for certain major functions. When in 1109 the monks of Norwich asked the king to provide a charter to confirm property promised to them by Alan, the king replied that he would do so when Alan next came to court (Dugdale, 1817; Cronne & Davis, 1968). Flaald, Alan's son and heir by his first marriage, came to England in his father's wake, but after visiting Monmouth in 1101 or 1102 he disappears from history.

Alan and Avelina had three sons, the eldest William, born c.1105, became the ancestor of the Fitzalans; next was Jordan, who in 1129 and 1130 held Tuxford in Nottinghamshire and Broughton-on-Brant in Lincolnshire, but by this time had already returned to Brittany as hereditary seneschal of Dol, in which capacity he witnessed a charter of Mont-Saint-Michel in 1128-9 (Round, 1899, no.722). The youngest son Walter was granted the Sussex manor of Stoke by his brother William, went into the service of the king of Scotland, and was ancestor of the Stewarts. The last charter which Alan is known to have signed probably dates to 1114, but might be as late as 1116 (Johnson & Cronne, 1956, no.1051).³⁹ His death in this period is very much in keeping with the supposition that he was the crusader, and would thus have been around fifty years of age when he arrived in England.

The earliest antecedents of the Stewarts.

To recapitulate what is known of the ancestors of Flaald, seneschal of Dol, his father Hato occurs as an archbishop's knight in the 1020s and was still living c.1050, when he witnessed, with Flaald, a gift of Rivallon of Dol to St Pern. He probably gave his name to the mill at Hato, a local landmark in the see of Dol, and had another son, also called Hato who can probably be equated with Hato of Miniac who witnessed a

³⁸ The Fitzalan fee in 1166 consisted of 5 fees in Norfolk, 14 knight's fees and 34 muntator's fees in Shropshire and Staffordshire (the total being equivalent to 39 knight's fees) plus 8.5 fees in Wiltshire from the Hesdin inheritance which also gave 3 fees in Gloucestershire.

³⁹ Eyton's contention that Alan died before 1114, based on a misreading of the Burton Cartulary, is not correct, see Round (1901, pp.128-131). He was certainly dead by 1121, when his widow Avelina settled a claim concerning her dower lands, (Johnson & Cronne, no.1284).

charter of John of Dol in 1086.⁴⁰ There is a Miniac only 4km from the abbey of St Pern. Jordan, son of Alan, later gave his consent to a gift of a quarter of the church, tithes and cemetery of Miniac.⁴¹

Can anything be said of Hato's origins? His name is Frankish, like Flaald (short for Fladald), and also in common with Flaald, is relatively rare. It is a warrior's name, being derived from hath, meaning war/combat, and is to be met with in this period in the counties of Anjou, Maine and Blois. Early examples of its use are found in the Touraine, including a seventh century lay abbot of Marmoutiers and a viscount who in 893 witnessed a charter of Robert the Great concerning land near Tours (Martène, 1874, pp.160,187). A later Hato miles witnessed a charter of Geoffrey count of Anjou in 960-964 giving land near Jarze in Anjou to St Aubin Angers (Bertrand de Broussillon, 1903, vol.1, p.321).

Hato the knight might have been recruited from any of these territories, even though the counties of Rennes, Maine and Blois at this time were allies against Normandy and Anjou. In 1027 Count Alan III of Rennes acted in concert with Odo of Blois to liberate Count Herbert of Maine from the clutches of Fulk of Anjou (Barton, 2004, p.87). The counts were constantly trying to expand their territories and influence at the expense of their neighbours. Many knights and barons had interests in more than one county, thus owing nominal allegiance to counts who were rivals. They would sell their services to whichever magnate seemed to offer the most advantage.

A knight from Maine has been identified who might be the same as Archbishop Junkeneus' man. In 1045-1051 Guy son of Guy de la Roche donated to St Florent of Saumur half a mesnality in Belin, near Le Mans, with the consent of his tenant Hato, Hato's wife Hildelinde and their three sons Hato, William and Walter (Marchegay, 1878, vol.3, pp.355-357).⁴² The charter was witnessed by Count Hugh IV of Maine and his wife Bertha, daughter of Odo II of Blois, and recently widow of Duke Alan III of Brittany. Subsequently "the lord Hato" senior himself became a monk at St Florent. Hato junior gave land and vines at Tazay to St Florent on the occasion of his brother Walter becoming a monk there, and with his wife Aremburga and brother William gave half the tithes of Courcillon, later adding property in Belin (Marchegay, 1878, vol.3, pp.357-359).⁴³ These donations were made in the time of Abbot Sigo (1056-1070), and it is possible that William of Dol was already a monk there. Hato of Courcillon was still living in 1071, when he witnessed a charter of St Vincent of Mans with his son William (Menjot d'Elbenne, 1886). He might be the same man as Hato the brother of Flaald the steward, also known in Brittany as Hato of Miniac, who was alive in 1086. Hato senior and junior in Maine were exact contemporaries of those in Brittany. The shared association with St Florent is also suggestive, but there is no conclusive evidence that they were the same individuals, and the connection is weakened by the absence of any mention of Flaald in the charter of Guy de la Roche. This is not in itself an insurmountable obstacle since it was by no means invariable for

⁴⁰ AML f 87r.

⁴¹ AML f 79r. Geoffrey son of Oliver of Dinan also gave his consent. The charter dates before 1123 when Geoffrey died.

⁴² Geoffrey Martel Count of Anjou was in effective control of Maine by 1049, having invaded Maine as a result of this very marriage. In 1051 on the death of Hugh IV of Maine the citizens of Le Mans opened their gates to Geoffrey of Anjou who thus gained effective control of most of the county.

⁴³ Tazay is probably Tasse, south west of Le Mans, Courcillon is Dissay sur Courcillon south east of Le Mans in the direction of Tours.

all the sons to be cited in such charters, and younger sons who had moved away to another county would probably not have warranted a mention.

Hato might just as easily have come into the service of the lords of Dol from another direction. A knight of this name, for example, is to be found in the necrology of Chartres,⁴⁴ a place with strong links to Dol and the counts of Rennes. The only fact approaching certainty about his origins is that on linguistic evidence he came from outside Brittany from one of the territories under the nominal suzerainty of the kings of France. The dearth of information which survives for this class of men before the year 1000 make it improbable that the line will ever be traced back any further.

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⁴⁴ For 21st August: Lépinos & Merlet (1865).

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