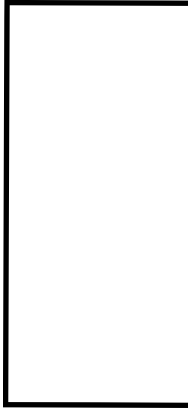




Vol. 11, No. 2 — Dec. 2004



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December 2004 "An International newsletter for Denbows" Vol. 11, No. 2

**Tenth Anniversary Reprint**

**From Radulfus and Eudo to John –  
Denbows from the 12th to the 15th Centuries.**

**By James Denbow**

Editor's Note: In celebration of the 10th Anniversary of *The Denbow Diaspora*, we have decided to reprint a few articles from our very first year. In the last issue, we reprinted two such articles: "The Clan of Soloman: an unexpected reunion," by James Denbow; and "Early Devon," by Margaret Denbow. In this issue you will be treated to another of these early articles by James Denbow, one of the foremost scholars of Denbowgensis. Nick Denbow, of Alresford, England, kindly looked over this manuscript with an eye to what new knowledge might have been unearthed in the last decade. His insightful comments appear in brackets throughout.

To keep up the international flavor of our newsletter I thought I would include information from early English documents that shed light on the origins of our family. My starting point will be a footnote to my last article where, in *A Dictionary of British Surnames* by P. H. Reaney (1958: 93), the names Eudo, Philip and William Denebaud are mentioned early in the 13th century. Reaney says that Denbow derives from the Old English name Denebeald. Unfortunately, the meaning of this compound word he lists as 'unknown.'

A possible clue to the original derivation of the name, however, can perhaps be found in a book titled *The Anglo-Saxon Heritage in Middle English Personal Names, East Anglia 1100-1399* written by Bo Selten. On page 73 he lists translations of some of the common



Nick Denbow, of Alresford, England, poses in front of the "Denbow Crossroads" signpost five miles east of Exeter. Near here is Denbow Farm, on which are two dwellings known, respectively, as Denbow House and Denbow Thatch. This replaced a metal pole that had removed the Denbow name from this spot from 1986 to the late 1990s.

compound elements used in Old English surnames. Of interest to us are “*Beald-*” or “*-beald*” occurring either at the beginning or the end of a name and meaning “bold” or ‘brave,’ and “*Dene-*” found only at the beginning of compound words and meaning



Photo of Denbow Crossroads east of Exeter by Nick Denbow. This photo was taken in 1970. In 1986 this wooden post was replaced for a time by a metal pole, and the Denbow name was lost. The more recent photo, also by Nick, shows that the Denbow name has again been associated with this place, as it had for more than 800 years previously.

“Dane.” If these are the only Old English or Saxon possibilities (and I am not a linguist) then one could conclude that the original meaning of the name was something like “Bold Dane.” Since Danes and other Vikings are known to have raided and settled in southern England during the 8th and 9th centuries, it may be that our name comes from this time.

Selten cautions, however, that it is not always easy to determine the original meaning of an Old English or Saxon name. He gives an example of the Old English name *Wulfgifu*. While the two elements in the name certainly signify ‘wolf’ and ‘giver’,

it is not certain that the two separate elements, when put together, carry the meaning “giver of wolves.” So all we can really conclude is that the meaning of the two words making up Denbow may be ‘bold’ and ‘Dane,’ without really knowing whether the original intention or meaning of the compound term *Denebeald* was the same.

Up through the year 1246, all the early English documents reproduced in our library are in Latin. Luckily, Dr. Paul Murphy, professor emeritus at Ohio University and Cynthia Kaldis, Latin teacher at Alexander High School, Albany, Ohio, agreed to translate these references for us. The main sources are the “*Curia Regis Rolls*,” the “*Close Rolls*,” and the “*Patent Rolls*.” Rolls are records of letters sent out by the King. Closed rolls had a seal and were more private and official. A patent roll was an open parchment, but with a seal attached. Other information was found in “*Inquisitions post mortem*” held to settle estates, and “*Fine*” rolls.

Who were these earliest recorded Denbows? The story begins in the reign of Richard I (Lion Heart) who ruled from 1180-1199. A man named Radulfus Denebaud died at this time. In the year 1211 Radulfus’ son, Eudo Deneboud, began a series of disputes over the rights to tenancy and obligations to pay taxes (a quarter of a knight’s fee, or the amount needed to support a knight in armor for a year). This property was in a place called Middleton, Somerset Co. in southern England. Disputes were still being heard in 1220 because it would appear that heirs were liable for the debts of their deceased elders and relatives. To get a flavor for the times, let’s peek in on the conclusion of this affair:

## Denbow Reunion in Parkersburg, W.Va. — A smaller, but enjoyable affair!

Due to some unavoidable conflicts, several folks who had planned to come to the reunion were unable to, but those who did attend had a great time. We started out with a great dinner at the Harnett House in Parkersburg’s historic district. This district also includes a number of other extremely interesting homes with unusual 19th Century architecture. One of these is the home of U. S. Senator Peter Godwin Van Winkle, who was one of a few swing Republican votes that acquitted President Andrew Johnson during his impeachment trial.



cents in period costumes who supervise guided tours of the main building and the separate kitchen and library structures. The reconstructed mansion also contains much period furniture. Everyone greatly enjoyed the trip to the island, the tour, and the fellowship during our time together in this singular spot.

Those in attendance at one or more of the events were: Joe and Pat Denbow, Ashland, Ohio; Larry, Kay and Pat Denbow, Zanesville, Ohio; Stefania Denbow, Athens, Ohio; Bill Denbow, Athens, Ohio; Betty Riley, Davis, W.Va., and her friend Carol from Florida; and — of course — our delightful hostess: Gilda Haddox, Parkersburg, W.Va.



Pictures (r to l, counterclockwise): Restored Blennerhassett Mansion, Van Winkle House; Harnett House.

## Breakthrough in Maryland Research on Indentured Servant John Denboe?

The following email was received recently from co-editor James Denbow. It's hoped that this insight into a probable transcription error may yield more information on this progenitor of the Maryland Denbow clan:

Hi Carl,

Just a very quick note. I have a student who will be doing some archaeological and archival work on the eastern Maryland shore at a place called Wye, and since she was going to be in the archives there anyway, I asked if she could look up the original paper on John Denboe. I sent her the info I had and then, being curious, tried to figure out why old "George Hursfurl" never showed up in any web searches I made. I figured there was probably a problem with the transcription of old writing, and I believe I have worked out that this man was actually "George Horsford," who did live in Somerset County at the right time, and had dealings with Richard Britaine, among others. The final Miles Gibson was evidently the sheriff of Baltimore County and constructed the town hall or something there. I'll send this "correction" on to Jenn and see what she comes up with in her spare time.

Have a good Christmas.

Jim

**Curia Regis Roll, 72. Hilary term. 4 Henry III. Somerset, year 1220.** "The court convened to determine if Radulfus Denebaud the uncle of Robert Denebaud was in legal possession of his tenancy as regards the fee for the farm estate at Middleton with appurtenances on the day he dies, [over 20 years earlier during the reign of Richard I]. This being land which Alfred de Bendevill holds. He came and said that the court ought not to be held on this matter since a final agreement had been made between Alfred de Bendevill, the father of Alfred himself, and Eudo Denebaud about this same piece of land [as reported in **Curia Regis Rolls** 58, for the year 1214]. Then he showed the deed which stated that the same Eudo the tenant recognized that the land was legally that of Alfred himself and he returned it to him and sought waiving of claims for

himself and for his heirs from Alfred himself, etc. for 10 marks [about 6 Pounds]; whence it seems to him that the court ought not to have been held about this matter.

And Robert said that deed ought not to work against him to keep the court from proceeding since he himself at that time was in Scotland [Pictavia]; and furthermore he himself claimed nothing on behalf of the afore-mentioned Eudo. And he produced a sufficient body of witnesses that he had then been in Scotland, namely at a place called Roche Armoines."

During these early years the Denbow name was spelled worse than the computer-generated mail of today, so the first reference actually talks about Eudoni **de Einebut!** Before you throw our paper down in disgust, however, as including people who could not possibly be any relation to good old Denbows I should add that in the index to surnames at the back of each volume, these variations are all listed under the name "Denbow." In the years 1211, 1212, and 1214 Eudo was also referred to as: Eudo de Enebaud, Eudonem de Enebaut, Eudonem Deneblod, and Eudo Denebaud! In some cases, early scribes insisted on putting a *de* in front of our name (sometimes also as *de Denebald* and *de Deneband*) which should not occur in Old English personal names, *de* being used exclusively before a name derived from a place name. Such errors were apparently common up to the end of the 13th century and Fagersten, in his **Place-Names of Dorset** (p. 98) calls this "a mere blunder" in the case of the Denbow name.

Does the name Eudo hold any clues



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This newsletter is published two or three times a year by the co-editors, who are proud to claim that it is the only newsletter in the world "For Denbows by Denbows."

to our origin? In the *Oxford Dictionary of English Christian Names* by E.G. Withycombe one finds this name as coming from Old German *Eutha*. It is also related to Old Norse *jōdh* meaning 'child.' The name was introduced into England by the Normans and appears as well in Old French as *Eudes* and *Eudon*. Since early English documents were written in a form of Latin, however, the name also appeared as *Eudo!*

Eudo had a brother or nephew named Philip (Philippus) whose name becomes more prominent in the years after 1225 when he held title to lands in Somerset and Devon. He is also listed as pledging support for Robert in the Radulfus dispute. In

*Collin's Somersetshire*, vol. 1 (p. 166) it is recorded that this Philip inherited property at Henton [Hinton] St. George through his marriage to Alice, only daughter and heir of one John Giffard. Mention of other properties occurs in the following record dating to the year 1225. I would welcome any suggestions as to where these places might be.

[Nick Comments: Sir John Deneband was Lord of Posrcewett in Wales. In other words he was in charge of the garrison occupying that town, on behalf of the then English King presumably. He is the one who is entombed in Hinton St George Church, because he married Alice Gifford of Hinton St George, heir to the estates. He retained those lands/estates, had son William, who

had son Phillip, around 1296. Philip at Hinton St George is very much involved in Exeter, being quoted as bailiff/clerk to the town and MP for Exeter during years between 1303 and 1309. Hinton St George is nowadays in Somerset, but on the borders between Somerset, Dorset and Devon. It is between Crewkerne, Ilminster and Chard, West of Yeovil but on the main route London to Exeter. Any trip to Exeter (about 40-50 miles) would pass by the hamlets of Faringdon and Denbow on the way, but possibly Philip would have



The Lord Poulett Inn at Hinton St. George. Note the coat of arms, which is also on the village sign. It's a small village with sandy-colored stone houses, one manor house, one Alms house and about 30 other houses — but apparently no Denbows at present.

based himself at any property he owned at Denbow, 3 miles from Exeter, when he was on business in the town. Philip had son William (~1317) who had son Thomas (~1346). Thomas married Jean, daughter of Sir Robert de Brent, who died in 1351, having previously married Elizabeth Deneband, Thomas's sister. So that line goes into a BRENT family. But Thomas and Jean carry on in Hinton St George, have son John circa 1376. John marries Florence, daughter of Richard Archdeacon. They have 2 sons called John, one is still alive around 1428, but both are quoted to die in infancy, plus they have a daughter Elizabeth. It is her who marries Sir William Paulet (Poulet) and the Hinton St

George estates pass to the Paulet descendants. Note: All dates quoted could be either birth, marriage or death! A lot of this is quoted below in your text, but I have pulled it all together to make it follow the lines of Hinton St Geo ownership.]

his wife who were granted a license for a private chapel there in 1386.

[Nick Comments: The current owners of Denbow Thatch, which is the original thatched building that was once the farmhouse, dairy, stable etc., but has been considerably added to over the years, recently found a part of a stone bowl, similar to a church font in shape, when clearing debris from the stream bed, in or from what looked like the remains of an ancient rubbish tip: or maybe this was where the oratory once stood even?]

From the information outlined above this would probably be the property John inherited from his father Thomas Deneboude, knight, when he came of age — and so on back into the ancient Denbow past. I doubt the building shown in the photo can date from that distant time, but who knows?

[Nick comments: The Denbow Thatch kitchen and room above I would maintain is the old house that was the farm house: I think the current owners would agree. The ceiling beams are fire blackened, and the whole appears to have been a one up one down room arrangement, with the upstairs room/roof open to the fire below, i.e. a sort of



Hinton St. George village sign. Note the Poulett coat-of-arms on the top of the sign-bearing rock. This is the same coat-of-arms that is seen in other photographs in this article, including one which combines the Poulett and Denbow monikers to signify the marriage of Sir William Poulett (Paulet) to Elizabeth Denebaud (Denbow) circa 1430. Hinton St. George is a "must stop" for any North American Denbows making the trek across the pond to Merry Ole England!

hayloft. The whole little area known as Denbow was the site of Denbow Farm, but the modern farm has new buildings slightly to the east. The main old dwellings are Denbow House and Denbow Thatch, Denbow House is obviously added when the owner needed a fine looking mansion. It is brick built, three floors high, with a central doorway and rooms either side. Very imposing from the outside, and undoubtedly it had a door through into the older house to the west now known as Denbow Thatch. There are tall chimneys up the back, but the back view shows the unexpected: Denbow House is only one room deep, and has a plain back wall. Behind the house are some outbuildings, and my impression from a visit in 2004 is that some further outbuildings have been converted to homes, and new buildings added — maybe: some of them retain the Denbow name, such as Denbow Barton, Denbow Barn and I believe Denbow Paddock.]

ety of the manor of Chaftcombe."

This John Denebaud or Donebawed, also owned property at Henton St. George. That he must have been a man of importance is suggested by his appointment as constable of 'Chirburgh' (Cherbourg) in France.

After 1429 references to the Denbow family become rarer and more disjointed, possibly because John seems to have died without a male heir, and his property was therefore transferred through the marriage of their daughter Elizabeth [original article erroneously said Margaret] to Earl William Poulett. This was also the period of the enclosure acts when, between 1455 and 1607, it is estimated that some 50,000 people were forced off the land. The Encyclopaedia Britannica says of this period that: "the 15th century knight of the shire was changing from a desperate and irresponsible land proprietor, ready to support the baronial feuding of the Wars of the Roses, into a respectable landowner desiring strong, practical government."

From the mid-1400's there are only brief mentions of other Denbows that include Henry Denbold (1431, 1434); John Denbawede "of the king's household, 'yoman,' (1451); John Denbaud, "late of Launceston, co. Cornwall, 'yonian.' (1484); Michael Denbolde, clerk, vicarage of Trenglos and Warbustowe, Exeter Diocese (1565); Richard Denbow and wife Elizabeth, St. Dunstan parish (1559); Michael Denbold, alias Denbolt of Toppisham co., Devon, 'yoman' (1559); and Richard Denbolde, 'citizen of London' (1562). A Catherine Denbowe of Little All Hallows church is also recorded as having married Thomas Gardener of St. Christopher-le-Stock on 27 June, 1566. This church was located on

"Upper Themes Street", Dowgate ward, London. The church was destroyed in the "Great Fire" of London in the 17th century and never rebuilt.

To this list of early Denbows of note I can now add our first college graduates, thanks to a letter from Nick Denbow of Alresford who wrote in response to our first newsletter that "William Denbaud was admitted as a pensioner (undergraduate) at the age of 15 to Sidney college Cambridge in 1698. He was the son of William Denbaud, Rector of Oakford, Devon. Oakford is due North of Exeter, by 20 miles, up near Exmoor. His father, William, had previously attended Exeter College, Oxford starting in 1660." From Margaret's article in our last issue, it would seem that Denbows have been active in the Church of England for many centuries!

[Nick comments: Also in a recent holiday to the west country Nick visited the villages and churchyards of Modbury, Holbeton and Ermington. These three villages are on the Southernmost part of Britain, the headland between Plymouth and Exeter, close to Plymouth: Denbows were very numerous in these villages from 1640 onwards, and there are many gravestones with ancestors names still visible there dating up to the 1890s.]

Nick also sent pictures of the Denbow coat of arms [which is on show in Tor Abbey in Torquay] in the process of being 'impaled' by those nasty Pouletts, allowing me to correct our version of it in the last newsletter. [this does imply, I think, the two coats of arms were joined together into one family group]. In addition, he included some very welcome shots of Denbow crossroads, and Denbow farm near Exeter in Devon. In the **Place Names of Devon**, ownership of this farm is traced to John Denbaude and

**Curia Regis Roll, 88, Michaelmas term, 9-10 Henry III. Somerset, year 1225.** "The court convened to decide if Philippus de Enebaud unjustly and without just cause dispossessed Gaufridum de Furnell of his freehold in Liboness' Whatleg' [is this Welsh or what?] and in Monhell after his death, etc. and Phillipus through his attorney came and said that the court ought not to sit on this matter since the same Phillipus had recovered that land in the court of Earl Marescalli [this is probably Earl Marshal, of whom we will learn more in a moment] through the judgment of that same court through a writ (to correct something) against the same Gaufridus, since the same Gaufridus had placed himself in the great court of his lord King and had not pursued his writ of peace; then he called the court to warrant."

In 1226, the matter was settled as Galfridus gave half a mark for a license of agreement with Philip Denebaud for "half a measure of land (80-120 acres) with appurtenances in Libenhesse," recognizing that the entire plot was by right that of Galfidus, to be returned to him after payment to Philip of 12 1/2 marks.

I'm not sure why Galfridus had to pay Philip to have his own land returned, but these land disputes – claims and counter-claims, liability for taxes, etc. – cover a turbulent period in British history when the balance of power between the king and other nobles was being re-negotiated. King John's series of wars in Normandy had gone badly and the result was that the barons and other nobility were being taxed excessively to pay for it. In the Year 1215, right in the middle of Eudo's dispute, rebellious English

barons met King John and forced him to sign the Magna Carta. This document, among other things, tried to provide protection against tyranny from the king not just for the barons, but for some freemen as well. John signed to stave off impending rebellion and civil war. Unfortunately, the ancient laws and customs regarding feudal rights and liabilities over land can be quite confusing and difficult to interpret today. King John died in 1216, with Henry III taking the throne.

In 1233, another baronial revolt was led by Richard, son of Earl William Marshal mentioned above. Philip Denebaud appears to have been closely involved in this, siding with Marshal against the King. As punishment, Philip had his lands in "Henton St. George" and "Wudiat" [Nick comments: I bet this is Woodyate or Woodyeat. I have seen this referred to before, it's near Hinton, but I think in Dorset, so it was not listed in the Devon/Somerset records I was searching.] seized by the sheriff. They were returned to him in 1234 by the following order:

**Close Rolls, 18 Henry III, year 1234.** "For Philip Enebaud. "The king to Sheriff of Sumerset and Dorset sends his greeting. You should know that we have received into our favor Philip Enebaud, who was with R[ichard]. Earl Marescallo [Marshal] against us and we have returned his lands to him. Therefore we entrust to you to see to it that all the lands and feudal holdings (houses) which Philip himself possessed in your bailiwick on the day when the war began between us and that same Earl and from which time he was dispossessed on the occasion of the aforementioned war, that Philip have full possession."

Philip died in 1246 and a series of court orders were issued to regulate the division of his estate between his wife, Alice, and his sons. One of the Inquisition documents provides the following record of the family and their properties at this time:

**Inquisition Post Mortem, 30 Henry III, year 1246.**

“For Thomas the son of Philip Deneboud and his brother. It has been entrusted to the bailiff of Netherwent concerning land which belonged to Philip Deneboud in Portechiwet and which the same Philip Deneboud had given to his son Matthew and had restored him into the possession of this same land at the time when he had been able to give or sell the land to whomever he wished because the King has learned about this through an investigation which the king ordered to be made to see to it that as much ownership be given to him as heir as he had at the time when the King ordered it to be taken into royal possession on the occasion of Philip’s death; by the possessory right of Philip it should become the inheritance of William Deneboud the first born son of the aforementioned Philip.” [Nick Comments: Portechiwet I think is Porskewett in Wales., This is by/near Chepstow, on the Bristol Channel. It is where the current roadbridge crosses the Severn Estuary to Wales, and it is literally a border point between England and Wales, so that would have been his function there, to keep the Welsh from invading Monmouthshire. So Sir John obviously had acquired some property while he was with the garrison there.]

In the post mortem inquiry the following is added:

“William Denebaud was the elder son of Philip and according to his father’s wish he married a woman, to whom Philip gave half of his land to maintain himself and his wife, and from his wife he had 4 sons in his father’s home; later, William died before his father. But the aforementioned William had two brothers, Matthew and Hammo, the younger one. The wife of William has all the land which Philip gave to William. Also witnesses say that Philip, after William’s death, gave to Hammo his younger son, that half which formerly remained in his own possession, in consideration of his homage and service, on the feast day of St. Peter in Chains in the 24th year of the reign of King Henry. They also say that the elder son of the aforementioned William is 7 years old and is named Philip, wherefore the witnesses do not know who would be the closer heir.”

After Philip’s death, “one feudal soldier which Philip Denebaud held from the

(Continued on page 8)

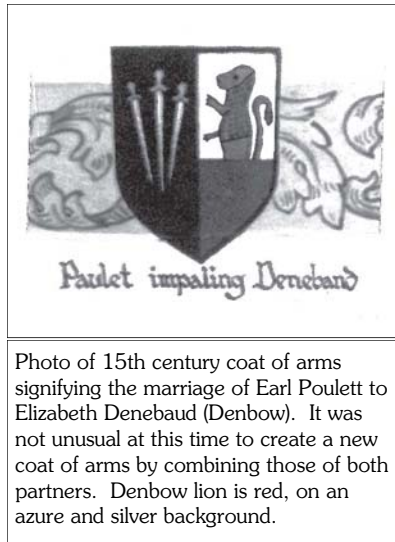


Photo of 15th century coat of arms signifying the marriage of Earl Poulett to Elizabeth Denebaud (Denbow). It was not unusual at this time to create a new coat of arms by combining those of both partners. Denbow lion is red, on an azure and silver background.

(Continued from page 9)

plaint of John Denebaud that Thomas Rofour and John his son and other evildoers at Chafcombe, co. Somerset, drove divers oxen and other beasts across a several field of his sown with divers corn, containing 20 acres and more, so that the corn was consumed, and after that he with his servants after the departure of the greater part of the evildoers had taken and impounded the beasts there. The said Thomas and John his son and others broke the pound and took away the beasts, cut down his trees, caused divers

‘dagger’ worth 12s and 3s, 4d in money of his and threatened the said John Denebaud and his tenants and servants at Chafcombe. “

[Nick adds: CHAFFCOMBE: See: <http://www.geocities.com/Hearthland/Cabin/1066/13devon.html#A%20Brief%20History%20of%20Chaffcombe>. This village is NE of Chard, in Somerset, its Chaffcombe, and it’s about 6 miles west of Hinton St George, the ideal place to buy a house for a second son or similar! Another website of interest, with histories of the families from there: [http://www.geocities.com/Hearthland/Cabin/1066/117WKW\\_Chafy\\_Excerpts.html](http://www.geocities.com/Hearthland/Cabin/1066/117WKW_Chafy_Excerpts.html)]

There was similar trouble in 1419 when:



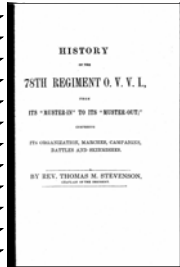
'Denbow Farm' is marked on even the oldest maps, and dates from the 12th Century: the brick building shown is called Denbow House, and was built as a much more imposing residence than the original small cottage to the left: part of this cottage was the original Denbow Farm, but is now called Denbow Thatch, and has recently been much restored and extended. These buildings face 'Denbow Wood', which is alongside the lane that leads to Denbow crossroads

**Miscellaneous Inquisitions, 7 Henry V, 30 Nov., 1419.** “. . . Thomas Beauchamp, ‘chivaler,’ and Robert Rews with no small number of people went in warlike array to the town of Chafcombe, co., Somerset, on Sunday before St. Bartholomew last and forcibly entered the several land of John Denebaude, esquire, on the king’s service in the office of the constable of Chirburgh in Normandy, and Florence his wife called ‘Rokewode’ and ‘Ryvelhose’ there and expelled them unjustly, and that the said Robert and John Cayk, John Gay, John Chepman and John Cler, servants of the said Thomas, and others unknown of

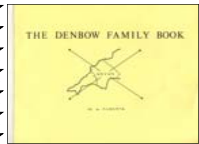
servants of theirs and others to lie in ambush to maim and kill him and his servants, assaulted John Purye his servant at Northeryket and left him for dead and carried off a sword and a knife called

Friday after the said feast by precept of the same Thomas disturbed the said John Denebaude and Florence of common pasture in 7 acres of meadow called ‘Millemorismedewe’ pertaining to a moi-

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*The Denbow Diaspora* Bookstore . . .



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The Denbow Family Book, by W. A. Roberts, also a reprint, sells for \$18.00. This book contains more information than is available in any other one source on the Denbow family in England.

Both prices include postage and handling. To order, send a check or money order to the editorial offices, payable to: *The Denbow Diaspora*.

## Upcoming issues will feature:

1. **Studies by David Denbow, of Michigan, of his family and conjecture of where they fit into the Denbow family tree.**
2. **An article by Nick Denbow, of England, with more detail about his most recent findings relevant to medieval Denbow happenings.**
3. **Information on the findings of the Denbow DNA Project, and analysis of their meanings.**

## DNA Project Almost Ready to Start

We have now collected enough money to begin the Denbow Diaspora DNA project. There are several firms that offer these services, and I'm now trying to determine which company will offer us the best "bang for our buck." I'm hoping to do this within the next couple of weeks. I'm also still trying to fill in the few remaining blanks in the volunteer list (see below) so that we have one male representative from each identified clan, or family group.

We will be using the Y-chromosome test. Samples are obtained from volunteers through at-home test kits. Each volunteer simply takes a painless swab of his cheek, puts the swab in a supplied container and mails it to the lab.


The Y-chromosome test in the Denbow DNA project is based on the fact that the nuclear DNA of every living man resembles that of his father and his paternal grandfather, on back through his male lineage. The other possible DNA test, that looks at mitochondrial DNA passed one to each person from his or her mother, is not of much use to genealogists.

The test we are using will look at tiny chemical markers in one part of the Y-chromosome that does not change much over time. This will reveal the man's haplogroup, one of 28 shared by all humans. Then tests of other markers in another part of the Y-chromosome that changes more rapidly will reveal the man's haplotype, the numeric pattern of their individual DNA. Combined together the two tests can accurately distinguish one male-to-male lineage from another and reveal a 'DNA signature' for each man. Thus, we should be able to tell if, for instance, the co-editors of this newsletter are actually related. In other words, does Jim Denbow in Texas, who hales from the Iowa Denbow line, have a common male Denbow ancestor (progenitor) with Carl J. Denbow in Ohio, who has traced his roots back to the Maryland Denbow clan.

The Y-chromosome test will also reveal the degree of relationship between the different Denbow clans. That is, we should be able to tell if the Iowa clan has a earlier or later progenitor with the Maryland clan or with the Maine clan or with the English family line of Bernard Denbow. This will lead to some interesting new hypotheses, but our questions will now be guided by some new scientific evidence. We live in interesting times!

**Confirmed Male Volunteers for DNA Testing (as of 12/20/04):**

Robert Bruce Denbo, Lindenhurst, Ill. – Indiana clan  
 Carl J. Denbow, Athens, Ohio – Ohio clan  
 James Denbow, Round Rock, Texas – Iowa clan  
 Needed – representative of Maryland clan  
 Gene Bauer – Maine clan  
 Bernard Denbow – Devon, England clan  
 Needed – representative of African-Caribbean Denbow clan



(Continued from page 6)

mentioned Earl in Henton St. George has been assigned to the Duchess of Warwick," sister and only heir of the Earl.

Unfortunately, in these early documents one meets our earliest ancestors and relatives only in spotty vignettes that are difficult to pull together into a coherent story. It is probably Philip, the son of William, for instance, who is reported to have



Tomb of Sir John Denebaud (Denbow) in the Church at Hinton St George, Devon. Sir John married well, and inherited the lands and Manor of Hinton St George (on marriage to Alice Gifford in circa 1230). Many generations of Denbows lived at Hinton St George, until finally Elizabeth was the only heir in around 1430, and she married Sir William Paulet. The Paulet family are well represented in the Church records and tombs after that date.

gone to Ireland with a John Mautravers on some sort of official business in July, 1280. [Nick adds: Travel to Ireland would have been by ship from Bristol probably: Sir John when at Porskewett was a rowing boat or ferry ride across the Severn estuary from Bristol.] Philip in turn must have named one of his sons William, after his father so that, in 1303, there are references to William, Philip's son, giving land at "Middetuna" and at "Heantuna" (probably Middleton and

Hinton St. George) to the "monks of Ferleia." The connections with John Mautravers seem to have been on-going and he nominated William Denebaud to be his "attorney in Ireland" for a period of two years on April 28th, 1308.

The next references to the Denbow family occur in the years after 1346 when a Thomas Denebaud is mentioned as a land-owner in Somerset. Thomas could be William's son, but I have found no direct

record of this. Like William, he was also some sort of attorney and tax collector. A knight, he died about 1362. Ten years later, in 1372, his son, John, came of age and took control of his father's properties. This John also held "knight service" to the Earl of March, one Edmund de Mortuo Mari. The coat of arms on the cover of our newsletter could date to this time, though it could also go back even earlier to the crusades and Richard I. [Nick Comments: One thing I have not looked up is that my dad told me that if a tomb like Sir John's showed him with ankles crossed he had been on the crusades, but I do not know this is true. Sir John's are not crossed.] Its

simple design is certainly in keeping with other early coats of arms that were meant to be used for quick identification on the field of battle. They are thus different from coats of arms in the 16th and 17th centuries that are more complex.

**Close Rolls, 45 Edward III, 2 April, 1371.** "To William Cheyne, escheator in Somerset. Order not to meddle fur-

ther with the lands of Thomas Denboude, tenant by knight service of the heir of William Kayle, tenant in chief, a minor in the king's wardship, which lands were taken into the king's hand by the death of the said Thomas and by reason of the nonage of his heir, and are so in the king's hand; as John Denboude son and heir of the said Thomas has proved his age before the escheator, and on the 15 July in the 43rd year of the reign the age of John son and heir of the said Thomas was proved and the king took his homage and fealty, and commanded livery to be given him of his father's lands."

Possible brothers, sons, or other relatives of Thomas are briefly mentioned by name in documents from the 1360's. These include: Matthew Denebaud (1363); Philip Denebaud (1366); and another Thomas Denebaud, clerk (1378) and John Denebaud, tailor, of Dartmouth (1394).

John, Thomas' son, married a woman named Margaret and, like his father, died at an early age in about 1390, leaving an infant son too young to inherit.

**Close Rolls, 22 Richard II, Westminster, 8 July, 1398.** "To Walter Clopton and his fellows, justices appointed to hold pleas before the king. Order by writ of nisi *pru* to cause an inquisition which remains to be taken between the king and John Denebaud, son and heir of John Denebaud, whether John the father at his death held a moiety of the manor of Henton St. George in chief by knight service or of Margaret countess of Norfolk, not holding the same nor any other lands in that county or elsewhere in chief by knight service, to be taken before the said

justices or one of them, before one of the justices of the Common Bench or the justices of assize in the said county."

By 1405 this son, John, was old enough to inherit his father's property and the following note is recorded for December of that year:

**Close Rolls, 7 Henry IV, Westminster, year 1405.** "To the escheator in Somerset. Order to take the fealty of John son of John Denebaude, and to give him seisin of 40 acres of land and a meadow and a mill in Ivleigh; as it is found by inquisition, taken before Edward Bokelonde the late king's escheator, that at his death John Denebaude held the same by knight service of the heir of John Cayl, a minor in ward of that king, and that John his son is his next heir; and John the son proved his age before Richard Shyppe the late king's escheator in Kent." [Nick comments: This is interesting, because it is just before the Paulet's took over at Hinton: this was on the death of John. I cannot find Ivleigh, there is an Eveleigh in Somerset.]

During the 15th century, John Denebaud with his wife Florence, owned a number of small properties. The following account gives us a vivid picture of law and life in southern England at that time.

**Patent Rolls, 11 Henry iv, Westminster, Feb. 25, 1410.** "Commission of over and terminer to Robert Hill, Humphrey Stafford, 'chivaler,' (knight or 'chevalier'), William Stourton, John Wyke of Nyenhyde and John Jewe, on com-

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