

**LIONEL GREEN traces a benefactor of Merton priory:**

## **FARAMUS OF BOULOGNE (d.1183/4)**

About 1145 Faramus of Boulogne gave the church of Carshalton to Merton priory. An important gift by perhaps an important person 'of Boulogne'. This article is about the man and the name, and his relationship to the Crown at the time of king Stephen.

The emergence of the Boulogne family in England can be found in Domesday Book of 1086. The Domesday tenant-in-chief of Carshalton was Geoffrey de Mandeville, and he held three manors in Surrey – Clapham, Carshalton and Wanborough.<sup>1</sup> The entry for Carshalton states that "Wesman holds 6 hides from Geoffrey, son of count Eustace, to whom Geoffrey de Mandeville gave this land, with daughter". This daughter of Geoffrey de Mandeville, daughter-in-law of count Eustace II of Boulogne (d. c. 1088), was none other than the grandmother of Faramus of Boulogne. From the records of gifts of land to the abbey of Bec-Hellouin it is possible to give names of descendants. Geoffrey de Boulogne, son of count Eustace, gave a hide of land in Balham, and his grandson Faramus confirmed the grant "made by his grandfather Geoffrey and his father William". About 1145 Sybil, daughter of Faramus, gave further land to Bec and confirmed that "the land she owned in Balham now belonged to Bec".<sup>2</sup>

When a later Geoffrey de Mandeville (d. 1144) came into possession of the Surrey manors, a close relationship already existed between him and Faramus. Geoffrey served in the royal household troops and was the hereditary constable of the Tower of London. Later in 1140 he received further honours from Stephen, including the earldom of Essex. Faramus joined the royal household and travelled with the court.

Faramus was said to be a nephew of queen Matilda,<sup>3</sup> and for his relationship with the Crown it is necessary to see how Stephen became king. In 1102 when Stephen was about five, his father, the count of Blois, was killed. Stephen was brought up in the household of Henry I together with the king's only legitimate son, prince William. The king was devastated when William was drowned in 1120 in the *White Ship* disaster, and thereafter treated his nephew Stephen as his own son. The king arranged a marriage in 1125 between Stephen and Matilda, daughter of the count Eustace III of Boulogne (d. 1125). This brought to Stephen the whole Flemish county, an English honour and an outstanding lineage.

Henry I died in 1135 and Stephen immediately sailed from Wissant for England to claim the throne. He was rebuffed by the citizens of Dover and Canterbury, but welcomed in London, which accepted him as king. His brother Henry was bishop of Winchester and seized the treasury for the king. Stephen and Matilda were crowned separately at Westminster abbey. Queen Matilda is not to be confused with the empress Matilda, who was a cousin of Stephen and the surviving child of Henry I.

The empress also claimed the throne of England, and in September 1139 landed on the south coast with Robert of Gloucester, an illegitimate son of Henry. She had many supporters in the central and west side of England, but Stephen continued to rule in the east. The deadlock was broken in 1141 when Robert of Gloucester was able to march on Lincoln from the north and take the lightly garrisoned castle, and even capture king Stephen on 2 February. Stephen was taken to Bristol and imprisoned in the castle, but his mercenary force of Flemings, led by William of Ypres, managed to withdraw to London. Faramus was placed in charge of the royal household whilst Stephen was in captivity.<sup>3</sup>

Geoffrey de Mandeville quickly sought confirmation of his honours from the empress. She realised that she needed his support, and gave him three castles and made him sheriff and justiciar of London, Middlesex and Hertfordshire. On 8 April 1141 the clergy at Winchester elected the empress to be *domina Anglorum*, and plans were made for a ceremonial entry into London. The Londoners were not so enamoured, and the citizens rang the church bells, which to them was a call to arms. It is thanks to the annalist of Merton priory that we know the date – 24 June 1141.<sup>4</sup> The empress retreated hastily to Oxford, whilst the Londoners entered the lodgings of the 'intruders' and helped to dispose of the prepared feast.

Queen Matilda of Boulogne was keeping up resistance to the empress and demanded the release of Stephen, but to no avail.

At the beginning of August the empress marched her men from Oxford to Winchester, which alarmed bishop Henry, who was wavering in his support for her. She besieged him in his castle, but 1000 men, loyal to Stephen, came down from London and cut off food supplies for the besiegers. William de Ypres burnt Andover, and the empress, in danger of capture, escaped to Ludgershall. Robert of Gloucester fought a rearguard action to save her, but was eventually captured.

Stephen's queen demanded large ransoms for the many magnates who were captured, and Robert was exchanged for Stephen, who was freed on 1 November 1141.

King Stephen's first child was named after his grandfather Eustace, and would have followed Stephen as king. But he was never crowned, and died in 1153. The empress returned to Normandy in 1146, and under the Treaty of Wallingford in 1153 Stephen was recognised as king of England. However Henry of Anjou, the empress's son, born in 1133, was to be heir on the king's death. All foreign mercenaries were banished from England.

About 1149 Stephen's second son William, never destined for the Crown, married Isabella of Warenne and became earl of Surrey. This brought him the county of Norfolk and the honour of Pevensey. With the latter he had "the service of Faramus of Boulogne".<sup>5</sup> In May 1157 Henry II, now king, took away some Warenne land, including Norwich and Pevensey, but allowed William of Warenne (d.1159) to keep land in Mortain and Boulogne.

In 1153 Faramus of Boulogne was holding Dover castle, probably until Henry became king. William of Warenne gave Faramus Martock, in Somerset, which had been part of the honour of Boulogne.<sup>6</sup>

In 1143 king Stephen had arrested Geoffrey de Mandeville and demanded the surrender of his castle. After his release he was killed in battle in the following year. The king seized some of his estates and the Surrey manors were given to Faramus of Boulogne about 1145. He passed on the manors of Clapham and Carshalton to his daughter Sybil, and the manor of Wanborough was given to Waverley abbey. But the church at Carshalton was passed by Faramus to Merton priory, and a house built for the priest about 1148.

The charter of foundation of Faversham abbey, issued in May 1157, was attested by Faramus.<sup>7</sup> Stephen's queen, Matilda, and Stephen himself had been buried in the abbey in 1152 and 1154 respectively, and no doubt Faramus attended.

In 1157 and 1158 Faramus held the manors of Wendover and Eton. Like many men of power and wealth, he borrowed, from moneylender William Cade, in 1165. In this he was following the example of Merton priory, which borrowed "for the works of the church", but at least the priory offered the vineyard at Sutton as security.<sup>8</sup>

Faramus died in 1183/4,<sup>9</sup> and Sybil was his sole heir. She had married Ingelram de Fiennes and brought up a son William, who died in 1241. Ingelram was warden of the Cinque Ports and went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. He was killed in 1189 at Acon (Acre).

1. *Domesday Book (Surrey)* f.36b (25:1,2,3)
2. W Dugdale *Monasticon Anglicanum* (1846) vi pt.3 pp.1016-7, 1068
3. T Arnold (ed.) *The Historical Works of Symeon of Durham* Rolls Ser. 75 vol.II p.310. "Rexit autem familiam Regis Stephani Willelmus d'Ipre, homo Flandrensis, et Pharamus nepos reginae Matildis, et iste Boloniensis." "Moreover, in the household of king Stephen were William of Ypres from Flanders and Faramus, nephew of queen Matilda, also of Boulogne."
4. Corpus Christi College Camb. MS 59 f.163v (Merton annals) "a London expulsa est in die Sancti Johannis Baptiste"
5. O Manning and W Bray *The History and Antiquities of the County of Surrey* (1806) I p.xvi
6. J H Round *Peerage Studies* (1901) p.160
7. J H Round *Geoffrey de Mandeville* (1892) p.147
8. NA Exch. King's Remembrancer Misc. 1/1b line 23; *English Historical Review* 28 (1913) p.223
9. Pipe Roll 30 Hen II 112: The 30<sup>th</sup> regnal year was from Oct. 1183 to Oct. 1184.

