

Dammartin Counts

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Several decades ago, Charles Evans laid bare the flawed descent typically applied to the Counts of Dammartin, but was unable to provide the Count(s) Aubri with an accurate descent from the earlier Counts. The next development was an ingenious suggestion, that they descended in the male line from the Counts of Mello, who had married the aunt of the last Count of the first line. With the publication of Family Trees and the Roots of Politics, a new solution came to my attention, suggesting a direct male-line descent through a junior branch seated in England. At the time, I said that I would have to see the original article describing this descent before I could pass judgement. Now I can pass judgement.

The work begins with a testament from Michel Bur, indicating that this new work supercedes all previous work on the question.

Mathieu uses source material which in and of itself takes 7 pages to list, and follows the family from their first acquisition of

Dammartin, apparently through the marriage of Manasses, younger brother of Hilduin II of Ramerupt, to Constance reputed daughter of King Robert II of France (a relationship Mathieu is not entirely comfortable with). In so doing, he shows several interesting connections, such as the marriage of Hugh II of Gournay to a probable daughter of the first Count (explaining both the name and seemingly out of place elevation of Manasses, Archbishop of Reims, Hugh's son). While he doesn't dispute a Mello marriage, he places it in a later generation, making it impossible for Chamberlain Aubri de Dammartin to descend from this marriage. Instead, he provides documentary evidence that Aubri was brother of William and Manasses-Walter of Dammartin, who both appear in English records, and hence son of Eudes de Dammartin, who was lord of Norton. If there is a weak point in the interconnections, it is in documenting that this Eudes was son of Count Hugh, but even this would appear to be a reasonable conclusion. Thus, this Eudes of Norton is grandson of Count Eudes, and great-grandson of the first Count, Manasses. Chamberlain (not Count, as some have made him) was father of Count Aubri, husband of Matilda of Bar and through his son Simon, great-grandfather of Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I of England. All in all, this is both well researched and well reasoned, and I find myself in agreement with Michel Bur.

Jean-Noel Mathieu, "Recherches sur le Premiers Comtes de Dammartin", *Paris et Ile-de-France : Memoires . . .*, vol 47 (1996), pp. 7-59 (+5 charts).

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