

The Booths of Dunham Massey

The Vikings and French Connections

1. Origins of the Booth name:

The Booth name comes from the Old English, "both", a cowhouse or a herdsman's hut. The name could refer either to the location or be an occupational name for a cowherd or a herdsman. The word was originally of Scandinavian origin and tended to be found in areas where the Scandinavian influence was most marked. Booth occasionally appears in old records with an "e" (i.e. Boothe).

In England, Booth developed locally as a surname in Lancashire and in the adjacent counties of Cheshire, Derbyshire and the West Ridings of Yorkshire. This pattern was evident in the 14th century and continued in later centuries. Even by the end of the 19th century, roughly 80 percent of the Booths in England were to be found within this region.

The Booths from Dunham Massey in Cheshire have been traced back to Barrowford Booth in Lancashire in the 13th century. This family married well and became part of local Cheshire gentry. George Booth played a part in the national politics of his time, being a member of the delegation which invited Charles II back. A generation later, Henry Booth was tried but acquitted of high treason after James II had lost his throne.

2. Dunham Massey:

The manor of Dunham Massey was originally held by Hamon Massy, first baron of Dunham, under Hugh Lupus, earl of Chester in the reign of William I (William the Conqueror) as a reward for fighting with William I at the battle of Hastings. Hamon de Masci (Massey) was the son of Viscount William de la Ferté-Macé of Normandy, France

The manor then passed successively through a total of five Hamon Massy descendants (all named Hamon Massy) until the last who died without a male heir. The manor was divided among many co-heirs. Henry de Grosmont, first Duke of Lancaster bought out all the co-heirs, re-united the estate and assigned Dunham to Roger le Strange of Knocking. From here the manor somehow became divided again between Fittons, Duttons, Venables and Masseys, until Robert Booth, a younger son of John Booth of Barton acquired several properties from Sir William Venables (died 1421) by marriage to his daughter and co-heir, Dowse Venables. This Robert Booth then laid claim to the Dunham estate, and the matter was finally settled when Sir Thomas Stanley and William Chantrell, his Sergeant-at-Law acquired half of Dunham for themselves (a fourth part each) in 1433, Robert Booth retaining the other half. William's younger brother John married Lucy, sister of Robert Booth.

The Booth family inherited most of the Massey lands in 1409, with Dunham Massey remaining at the heart of the estate. At the time, only four villages were in the Trafford area. By the Elizabethan period, Dunham Massey Castle had been demolished. Probably during the medieval period, Dunham Massey Hall became the home of the manorial lord, and a center of power in the area. The hall was rebuilt in 1616, leaving no remains of the old medieval hall. The mill at Dunham was first documented in 1353, although the mill's present structure dates to the 1860s. It lies on the River Bollin, opposite Little Bollington.

The first record of Dunham's deer park was also in 1353. The settlement of Dunham Woodhouse dates from the 15th century. During the medieval period, the primary source of employment in Dunham Massey was agriculture, mainly arable.

The Grey family (Earls of Stamford) inherited Dunham Massey in 1772 upon the death of Mary (Booth) Grey, daughter and only child of George Booth, 2nd Earl of Warrington. Mary had married Harry Grey, 4th Earl of Stamford in 1736. The estate remained in the Grey family until the death of Roger Grey, 10th Earl of Stamford in 1976 who arranged before his death for the property to go to the National Trust as his nephew did not want it.

2. The Disputed Connection:

While we recognize the long-standing dispute between several well known and respected genealogists regarding the connection of the immigrant ancestor Richard Booth of Stratford, Connecticut to the Booths of Dunham Massey, we find that both of the claimed connections simply appear to connect to different generations of the same Dunham Massey family.

On the one hand, Richard Booth (1607-1687) born in Great Budworth, Cheshire, England is claimed to be the son of Richard Booth (1578-1627) (son of William Booth and Elizabeth Warburton) and his wife Elizabeth Massey (1585-1641).

On the other hand, Richard is claimed to be the son of Edward Booth II (1581-1628) of Great Budnarth, Cheshire, England and his wife Marsia (b, 1585).

Edward II was the son of Edward Booth I (b. 1545) Edward I was the son of William Booth (1525-1548) and his wife Ellen Davenport (b. abt.1522) . William was born at Twemlow, Cheshire, England and died at Dunham Massey.

William's parents were Edward Booth (b, 1507 at Barton, Eccles, Lancashire, England) and Mary Knutsford. (b. at Twemlow, Cheshire, England) daughter of Roger Knutsford.

This information was found on the Royal & Noble Ancestors website (<http://our-royal-titled-noble-and-commoner-ancestors.com/>).

So it can be seen that there are two possibilities for Richard's connection to the Dunham Massey Booths.

Family tradition has it that three Booth brothers from Cheshire came to America in the 1630's; Robert who settled in Exeter, New Hampshire and later in Saco, Maine, John who settled on Long Island, and Richard (mentioned above) who was one of the founding fathers of Stratford, Connecticut. (Donald L. Jacobus's 1952 book Genealogy of the Booth Line recounts this family line).

3. The Viking & French Connections:

Ancestors of the Booths of Dunham Massey include many Viking “kings” dating back to at least the year AD 214. The Viking countries included parts of present day Sweden, Norway and Finland and were home to many individual Pagan clans who raided and terrorized wide areas of Europe from the fifth to the tenth centuries. Each of these clans had a “king”, a male who had the most influence and power in the clan. The Booth connection is with the “Yngling” Clan and derives from the marriage of Sir William Booth (1420-1477) of Dunham Massey to Maud de Dutton (1427-1500) in 1442 and the marriage of Sir William Booth (1540-1579) of Dunham Massey to Elizabeth Warburton (1540-1628) in 1565.

Maud de Dutton was the daughter of Sir John Dutton (1403-1445) of Dutton, Cheshire, England and his wife Margaret Savage (1403-1450) of Clifton, Cheshire, England.

Elizabeth Warburton was the daughter of Sir John Warburton and Mary Brereton.

The Dutton family is descended from Odard de Dutton (1046-1096), born at Cotentin, Normandy, France. Odard de Dutton was the son of Ivon de St. Saveur (1026-1059) of Cotentin, Normandy, France.

The St. Saveur family is descended from Malahule Eysteinsson (840-911) and his wife Maud de Flanders (865-?) of Vermandois, Nuestra, France.

Malahule Eysteinsson was the last of a long line of so-called Viking raiders dating back to Sweden and Norway in the third century.

While some Vikings were establishing themselves in Britain and Ireland, another group did the same in the coastal region of France, around the mouth of the river Seine. In effect, the Vikings in this region allowed themselves to be bought off by the king of France. These Vikings had quite a bit of leverage. Beginning in 896 they had sailed up the Seine and laid siege to Paris several times and were constantly expanding the area they pillaged.

The French kings, even Charlemagne, were unable to stop the plundering. When the French noted the increasing number of Viking settlements along the coast, they feared the worst. But the Vikings were wearying of the raids. French defenses were becoming more effective and Viking losses were increasing. So a deal was struck in 912.

The French would recognize the Vikings possession of the land they had already settled (plus a bit more) and make Malahule's nephew “Rollo” a French noble. In return, the Viking Rollo would convert to Christianity, acknowledge the French king as his overlord and protect France against other Viking clans. Thus was born Normandy.

The Normans were quick to become French, particularly since they were a minority in their new dutchy and a disproportionate number of the new people were young male Vikings who took local women for wives.

After a few generations, the Norwegian language and customs were fading fast and the Normans were French. But they were French with a difference.

Malahule went with his nephew, Rollo, son of Ragnvald I "the Wise" Eysteinnsson, to Normandy. He was the founder of the family of Viscounts of de St. Sauveur in the Contentin, and also the families of Toeni, Conches, and Viscounts of Bayeux, all of whom tie into the Abney family.

William, the Duke of Normandy, known as William the Conqueror, descended from Rollo. Rollo was baptized as "Robert" and became the 1st Duke of Normandy.

During that point in history it was common for families of noble standing to adopt the name of the village, town or county where they settled as the family surname

Thus the Eysteinnsson family became the St. Saveur family in Normandy who after moving to England became the Duttons of Dutton, Cheshire, England.

Some of the Dutton family moved to Warburton, Cheshire, England, seized the Arley estate at Arley, Cheshire, England, and adopted the name of Warburton. Sir Piers Warburton built the family home, Arley Hall in 1469.

4. The Ynglings

The Ynglings were the oldest known Scandinavian dynasty. It can refer to the clans of the Scylfings, the semi-legendary royal Swedish clan during the Age of Migrations, with kings such as Eadgils, Onela and Ohthere. When *Beowulf* and *Ynglingatal* were composed sometime in the eighth to tenth centuries, the respective scop and skald expected his audience to have a great deal of background information about these kings, which is shown in the allusiveness of the references.

Ynglings also refers to the Fairhair dynasty, descending from the kings of Oppland, Norway. According to surviving early sources, such as *Ynglingatal* and *Íslendingabók*, these kings were descended from the Swedish Scylfings of Uppland, Sweden. The House of Munsö, a Swedish dynasty also falls under the definition of *Yngling*. The earliest kings of this dynasty that historians generally agree are historical are Eirik the Victorious and Olof Skötkonung.

Some early kings were likely mythical, whereas others may have been real. Egil, Ottar, Ale and Adils are mentioned in several sources and are very likely to have been real kings.