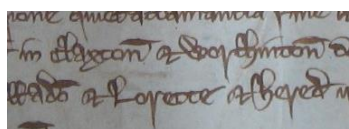


The Bozons of Clawson, Orston, Screveton, Syerston, Barrowby & Fulbeck

A study by Revd Simon Shouler MA (Cantab), August 2021

The Bozons of the East Midlands flourished from 1250 to 1525 but piecing them together as a family has been regarded as too difficult. This study sets out to tell their story as a family and as knights of the shire, and to trace their Clawson interests back to Domesday.

Sir Ralph Bozon first appears on record around 1250 in his charter, wherein he describes himself as a knight and records his father as Roger.¹ In 1262 he and his wife **Loretta** surrendered to Robert of Kirkton a house and land at Elsham, north of Brigg, together with all their claims to land in Grimsby, Owersby, Ropsley, and other places in Lincolnshire. In return, Robert surrendered his interest in lands and tenements in Claxton (as Clawson was known until the 19th century and will be referred to hereinafter) and Worthington, Leicestershire, to be the



right of Loretta, and the heirs of Ralph and Loretta for ever. They made their home in a moated manor house north-east of Claxton church, in Castle Field.²

Their descendants gained influence and amassed manors until Sir Richard Bozon, the last male heir, died in 1525, by which time he had lands and manors in Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Huntingdonshire.

The main sources of information about the family are the Savile of Rufford papers in the Nottinghamshire Archives,³ feet of fines⁴ and other legal records in the National Archives, and the Duke of Rutland's manuscripts. Secondary sources are the county histories of Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, published around 1800 by Nichols and Thoroton, each of which offers a pedigree for the Bozons, but they markedly disagree.⁵ Sadly, there is no equivalent published history of Lincolnshire.

The 1262 exchange was a compromise on an assize of *mort d'ancestor*.⁶ Medieval inheritance was simple: it all went to the eldest son. Where there was no son, it was divided equally between any daughters. At least thrice the manor of Claxton has fallen to be divided between three daughters, and litigation followed to try to stick it back together. The plea for a parallel case brought by Ralph and Loreta in 1271, concerning six tofts and 11

¹ MSS of the Duke of Rutland (Rutland MSS) Vol IV p117, giving 10/- yearly rent to Belvoir Priory out of 6 acres at Alverton for the weal of Agatha Trussbutt d.1247, second wife of William d'Albini. From 1268, 4/- of this was distributed as farthing loaves to the poor on St Valentine's Day. The name is transcribed Bogun, and the editor assigns it to Bohun, but the witnesses are in Ralph Bozon's circle.

² Scheduled Ancient Monument 1012560 – Moated site NE of St Remigius's Church; William Burton per Nichols (see note 4) p134

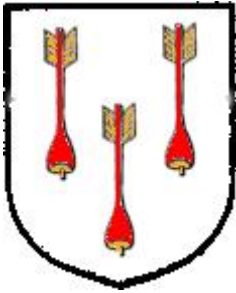
³ Because Henry Savile acquired the chief manor of Barrowby by marrying Dorothy, the widow of Richard Bozon. The general reference in the Notts and National Archives is DD/SR

⁴ A fine is a final legal compromise, and a foot of fine is the court's archival copy. They often followed a fictitious lawsuit, used as a means to break an entail and convey land. An entail otherwise entitled the heir to eject the buyer from land that his forbear had sold. Feet of Fines can be accessed on medievalgenealogy.org.uk, with links to scans at AALT and either transcriptions or further links to printed collections. Reference is still by Nat Arch numbers.

⁵ The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester Vol II Part I (Nichols); Thoroton's History of Nottinghamshire: Volume I, republished with large additions by John Throsby, available on British History Online. Mainly pp242-252: Screveton ([Thoroton](#)). Nichols sowed confusion by suggesting that Ralph Bozon obtained the manor of Claxton by marrying a daughter of Peter de Goldington, and by making that daughter the widow of Robert Bardolf. It was Robert that married Ralph's widow, not the other way round.

⁶ Final Concords of the County of Lincoln 1244-1272 Case 131, File 43, no30

bovates at Claxton, contains a pedigree showing Loreta's father, Alan, to be one of three cousins, each the son of three sisters through whom the estates of their brother Simon de Ropsley fell to be devolved.⁷ A third of the manors of Claxton and Worthington descended thereafter through Peter de Goldington, the senior cousin, whilst the other two thirds in due course became the property of the Bozons. To complicate the matter further, the 1271 pedigree shows that Alan's estate fell to his three daughters, Elizabeth, Loretta and Margery. Margery had married Robert de Kirketon, and their son was the Robert de Kirketon who under the 1262 concord got the Lincolnshire lands; Elizabeth was the wife of William de Neville, parties mentioned in both cases; and Loreta was married to Ralph.⁸



Ralph's arms were *argent three birdbolts gules*. Of the eight references found in medieval rolls of arms to named members of the family, four are to Ralph and three to John. Piers, of the Norfolk family, based round Whissonsett, is once recorded with the same, but otherwise the Norfolk version is the reverse: *gules three birdbolts argent*. The Devon and Somerset family bear *azure three birdbolts argent*.⁹ In medieval times heraldry was not regulated. Arms were born and inherited by custom; it was only in later times that the

Court of Chivalry presumed to decide who could bear what, and they sent out glamorously titled officials on visitations to make sure everything was in order, from 1530 onwards when the whole purpose of arms and shields in battles was largely redundant; at which point it became a point of honour to trace one's family back to the Norman conquest. The Bozons of Whissonsett accordingly traced themselves back to a Herbert Bozon who supposedly came over with William the Conqueror,¹⁰ but the Bozons of Clawson, Screveton, Fulbeck etc, had died out, and needed to prove no pedigree. In reality, the Norfolk family could trace themselves only to the time of King Stephen. In the time of Edward I, three Bozons are listed among the knights: Sir Peter of Whissonsett, Sir Robert, bailiff and custos of the castle and honour of High Peak, and Ralph, who somehow avoided being listed as a knight and is recorded merely an armiger. It seems likely that the three were connected, but how remains a mystery. Ralph is noted as "against the King"; he may in old age have accompanied Robert de Roos, his feudal overlord, to the battle of Evesham, but otherwise seems to have kept his head down and enjoyed consolidating his wife's inheritance.¹¹

In 1275 Ralph Bozon of Claxton and Lora his wife gave land at Worthington to Garendon Abbey, some of which the abbey had previously rented from them for ½lb of cumin and one pair of white gloves a year.¹² In

⁷ Plea Roll Cty Leics Fol 16 Trin 55 Hen III, per Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica. See Appendix 1 for pedigree.

⁸ CP 25/1/123/43 no303 shows how Isabel and Maud, two of Peter of Goldington's daughters dealt with their share of the two manors; CP 25/1/125/60 no129 and Nichols record the subsequent devolution of the Goldington share over the years. C 60/41 28H3(1244) 11/485 has Peter of Goldington, Peter of Lekeburn (the middle cousin, whose town house on Steep Hill, Lincoln still stands) and William de Neville and Elizabeth settling another Lincs dispute. A further rumpus between Lora and her co-heirs occurred over the presentation of a parson at Ropsley in 1284: Rolls & Register of Bishop Sutton, Lincs Record Soc, Vol 1 p52. See Appendix 2 for an improvement upon Nichols's printed pedigree.

⁹ Dictionary of British Arms, Medieval Ordinary, 1992 p11

¹⁰ G A Carthew: The Hundred of Launditch &c, pp274, 276, discussed further by Andrew Lancaster on Wikitree.

¹¹ The Knights of Edward I. Vol 1 p130, Harleian Soc 1929

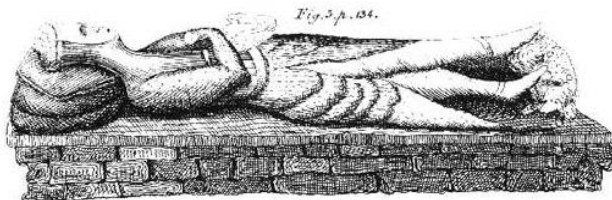
¹² CP 25/1/123/31 no14

1274 Ralph and Laureta held land in Claxton and Ropsley, and at some time they gave land to Croxton Abbey.¹³ These gifts suggest that Ralph was feeling his age, and he died shortly after, for in 1281 Lora had become the wife of Robert Bardolf, and they were selling for 4 silver marks a 17-shilling rent out of 7 bovates of land in Claxton and Hose they had just acquired from Roger II Bozon the son of Ralph Bozon.¹⁴ Robert also acquired the reversion of 10 bovates of land in Claxton in 1290.¹⁵

Sir Roger (I) Bozon held land in Screveton, Car Colston, Staunton, Orston, Scarrington and the lost village of Dallington by 1242.¹⁶ He was a courtier of William d'Albini Brito III and IV, Lords of Belvoir, and witnessed several of their charters from as early as 1232, when he is identified as a knight. He interceded for Isabella and Robert de Roos, the next Lord of Belvoir, in their dispute with the Prior of Belvoir over the advowson of Redmile in 1258.¹⁷

Loretta, named for her grandmother, brought Claxton to the Bozons. Her maiden name eludes us, but she inherited her interests from her first cousin once removed, Simon de Ropsley.¹⁸ His family like many another was named for the place where they held land, and his grandfather was known as Robert de Claxton as well as Robert de Ropsley, and had a younger brother Hugh likewise going under both names. Hugh was parson of Ropsley, and after the death of his brother he confirmed the gift of his father Ivo of the church of Claxton and various lands in both villages to Belvoir Priory. Ivo de Claxton was also Ivo de Tegervila, which is Ticheville, in middle Normandy.¹⁹ According to Domesday Book (1086), Ivo held his lands from Robert de Todeni, who founded Belvoir Priory in 1076. A Norman priory also survives at Ticheville.

A foot of fine of 1282 records dealings between **Roger (II) Bozon** and his wife Joan over some land at Gate Burton, near Gainsborough. This Roger is recorded as being Ralph's son, and the document is endorsed by Robert Bardolf and his wife Lora, to whom Roger owed 80 marks in 1280, and had to give surety over his lands and chattels in Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.²⁰ He sold the soke or manor of Scarrington to Robert and Lora.²¹ Robert also acquired land at Screveton and a share in the advowson.²² Robert Bardolf of Kirkton should not be confused with Robert de Kirketon, for his was Kirton in Holland, near Boston, whereas Bardolf's Kirkton



¹³ Croxton registers per Nichols p131. Precision about names was not essential in medieval documents, and clerks indulged in fanciful Latinising, so for Loreta we also get Lora, Laureta etc. Claxton and Ropsley churches also contain unusual and identical fonts circa 1340, suggesting some ongoing common history.

¹⁴ CP 25/1/284/21 no99 & CP 25/1/123/33 no70

¹⁵ CP 25/1/123/38 no191

¹⁶ CIPM Hen III p4 no 11 (C 132/1/11) William d'Albini, and held of him for half a knight's fee.

¹⁷ Long Clawson and Belvoir Charters, some in Rutland MSS Vol IV, others in Nichols, appendix pp8ff

¹⁸ Note 8 above

¹⁹ Rutland MSS Vol IV pp129 & 149. Hugh it seems was a married parson, and at first opposed his brother's gift of Ropsley tithes to Belvoir Priory, but was firmly put in his place by King Henry and the Bishop of Lincoln in 1123, after which he appears to have put away his wife and complied.

²⁰ CP 25/1/133/54 no27; Close Rolls Edw I, Oct 1280

²¹ CIPM Edw I p185 no 269 (C 133/116/19) Robert Bardolf; Thoroton on Scarrington. The manor reverted to the Bozons through Alice wife of John (IV), see note 51.

²² CIPM ibid

was another name for Screveton, being the part of the parish where the church stands in isolation from the village. In that parish were two manors, Screveton being where the village stands, and Kirkton around the church, but references are not always that careful. In 1282 Robert Bardolf agreed with the Abbot of Welbeck to take turns with the advowson of Kirkton, Robert having first turn and promptly installing one William Bardolf.²³ By 1290 Roger II Bozon was petitioning for the appointment of an arbitrator for an inquisition for another sort-out of land holdings between the Bozons and the Bardolfs.²⁴ In 1292 he obtained of the King four oak trees for timber from Sherwood Forest.²⁵ Roger and Joan obtained a licence for a chantry in Elkington church from the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln, probably the lost church of St Helen, North Elkington, Louth.²⁶ The Bozons also had a chantry chapel at Claxton where the vestry now stands, and this became the chosen resting place for most of the family, in which once stood an effigy of a mailed knight, now in the north transept, bearing the three birdbolts of Bozon on his shield, the identity of whom more anon.²⁷

Robert and Lora transferred lands in several parishes just south of Caistor, Lincolnshire to John Bozon and Ida his wife, renting it back for “one sore sparrowhawk” or 12d a year. In 1306, Lora, now the widow of Robert Bardolf, who died in 1304, quitclaimed the same land in favour of “John Bozon, her son”.²⁸ The same John, whom we will call **John I**, is also identified as Ralph’s son, and had been acquiring land in Screveton in 1295.²⁹ He and Ida are referred to shortly after as being of Kirton, and as early as 1289 he was letting out the manor of Kirton.³⁰ John I is said to have succeeded to his brother Roger II’s entire Screveton estate.³¹ Ralph probably had an earlier wife by which he had Roger, as Lora seems to favour John I, maybe her only son.

In 1305 Lora sold the manor of Claxton with some bits and pieces in Ropsley, Lincolnshire where Ralph had also owned land in 1274, to John I and Ida for £100, but in 1307 rented it back for life for one rose on midsummer’s day.³² In 1308, John I is referred to as Sir John Bozon, knight, when quitclaiming some lands at Staunton, Alverton and Flawborough (which had absorbed Dallington) which he had from 1293.³³ In 1312 John I and Ida transferred the Caistor estate to his son **William (I) Bozon**, to whom they also gave Claxton in 1324 but rented it back for life for one pair of gloves at Easter.³⁴ John I also had a second son **John II**, to whom he transferred land in Orston and Bottesford in 1314, and a holding in Screveton and Car Colston in 1318, the latter making very clear the family relationships back to Ralph.³⁵ The following year John, son of John Bozon, was

²³ CP 25/1/183/15 no64 and Southwell & Nottingham Church History Project ([SNCHP](#)) Screveton list of incumbents

²⁴ SC 8/174/8652

²⁵ CCR Edw I, June 1292. The use of oak trees from the royal forests was closely controlled, see e.g. repeated grants to Nottingham Greyfriars from 1230 to 1272 (Victoria County History of Nottm Vol 2 p 144).

²⁶ C 133/116/19

²⁷ Nichols pp132, 134 and plate XXXI fig.3

²⁸ DD/SR/12/4 and 19. On names see note 8; Ida also appears as Idonie, Idonea, Edonia and Edania. A sore sparrowhawk is not one requiring the attention of the RSPB, but one that has yet to moult.

²⁹ DD/SR/12/15. Most records are dated by the year of the king’s reign, here 1295/6. For simplicity, the earlier date is always quoted in this study.

³⁰ DD/SR/208/73

³¹ According to Sir Peniston Whalley, per Thoroton

³² CP 25/1/123/43 no319 and CP 25/1/285/26 no339

³³ DD/SR/12/38 and CP 25/1/183/16 no18

³⁴ DD/SR/12/21 and CP 25/1/124/54 no234

³⁵ DD/SR/12/18 and CP 25/1/184/23 no159

appointed the Archbishop of York's bailiff for Southwell.³⁶ Either father or the son had received a royal pardon in 1307 for being indicted of divers trespasses before the justices at Lincoln.³⁷ John II acquired a house and land at Morton near Southwell in 1317, and five years later had a dispute with a priest there. Another five years later, he is complaining to the justices that he had been assaulted at Morton. The following year he made a will, and Agnes his wife and William were his executors.³⁸

William I in 1326 had risen to the rank of joint guardian of alien religious houses of the King of France in Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, with the job of smoothing the ruffled feathers of priors whose priories had been seized by Edward II from the French.³⁹ William was granted land at Screveton in 1317, and the Savile papers thereafter refer to William as parson of Stubton, Lincolnshire from 1332 to 1334, and it appears he also collected property in that area.⁴⁰ He also gained in 1348 the advowson of Kirkton and a goodly estate in Screveton for life, remainder to John III.⁴¹ Whether he lived at Screveton or Stubton, he probably came back to Claxton to be buried, for he had a memorial stained-glass window on the north side of the church, now lost.⁴²

John I and Ida are last recorded in action in 1329, dealing with land at Westhorpe, Lincolnshire, when he was recorded as a knight, probably the same John who is referred to as a knight in 1308.⁴³ His widow was recorded as "keeping court" at Screveton in 1336 and was still there in 1348. She is identified as "the Lady Gunnora", which could be a misreading of Idonea or Edonia, by which Ida was also known, but is more likely to be a new second wife. A foot of fine of 1333 records the settling of the manor of Screveton, then the property of John I alone, upon himself and his wife Gunnora for life, then to Agnes Bozon for life, then to John's son John Bozon and Margaret his wife.⁴⁴ Agnes was the widow of John II of Orston, she is recorded as being the wife of John Bozon in 1309 and 1314 over land first at Flintham then at Car Colston, and in dealings with an estate in Wiltshire between 1312 and 1332, by the end of which time she is John's widow.⁴⁵ They bought the Car Colston land in exchange to sustaining the former owner for 12 years, the sustenance specifically excluding doctors!⁴⁶ Although unclear in the document, it is likely that John the husband of Margaret in 1333 is the son of John II rather than John I. We will call him **John III**.

John Bozon of Claxton (John III) and John's manor of Claxton turn up in records from 1342 to 1351, by which time he is Sir John, knight, with a brother called **Henry (I)**, who had a son called **Hugh**, who was parson of Hawksworth from 1365 to 1400, and then parson of Fulbeck.⁴⁷ Hawksworth lies next to Screveton, and by 1358

³⁶ Abp of York's Register 8, folio 57 (recto) no 6

³⁷ CPR Edw I 1306/7

³⁸ Morton is jst north of the Trent via the Stoke to Fiskerton ford or ferry. CP 25/1/184/22 no 137; Abp of York's Register 9A, folio 96 (recto) no 8; CPR Edw III 1327/8; DD/SR/208/67 – English transcription at Appendix 4

³⁹ DD/SR/12/37

⁴⁰ DD/SR/12/30, 36 and 41 to 44. The title "Sir" did not mean he was a knight, it was a common title for a parson or gentlemen.

⁴¹ 25/1/185/31 no283

⁴² Nichols p134

⁴³ DD/SR/12/39

⁴⁴ Thoroton and CP 25/1/185/27 no93. See also note 29, where Gunnora is mentioned in the document.

⁴⁵ E 40/8100. Also DD/SR/12/22, 23,29 and 40, dealing with land in Wiltshire, but the fact that these deeds are in the Barrowby bundle of the Savile papers suggests they are the same John and Agnes

⁴⁶ DD/SR/12/24 & 25

⁴⁷ DD/SR/12/45; DD/SR/12/53/27; DD/SR/12/49; St Nicholas Church, Fulbeck (Wikipedia); [SNCHP](#) – Screveton

we have references to Sir John Bozon of Screveton, who in 1359 suffered a serious robbery at the hands of Sir Nicholas Goushill of Hoveringham, in which he lost not only large quantities of plate and jewellery, but also his wife Margaret, who was abducted, ravished, and kept prisoner.⁴⁸ This did not stop Sir Nicholas finally lying down under a fine tomb in Hoveringham church, nor his son becoming an MP.⁴⁹ Likewise, John III was MP for Nottinghamshire 1357-1358. A record of 1361 has Sir Hugh Hose (Sir Hugh Hussey of Flintham) settling the manor of Screveton, which was Henry Bozon's, on Margaret widow of Sir John, remainder to Sir John son of Sir John, remainder to Hugh.⁵⁰ Henry I died around 1350, when John III got the wardship of Hugh and gradually control of Henry's lands.⁵¹ There was a window in the north aisle of Screveton church with the Bozon arms in it, now lost, and in 1388 Margaret, as patron of Kirkton, negotiated an exchange of livings to bring Arnold de Wyke, vicar of Claxton, to Kirkton.⁵² John III must have been previously married to Alice, for an undated document records his request for masses to be said for him and for Lady Margaret and Lady Alice his wives, by the Abbot and convent of Newbo.⁵³

In 1362 **John IV** appears as the son and heir of Sir John, knight, presumably John III.⁵⁴ Records of 1371 to 1384 concerning land at Newark and near Southwell, Nottinghamshire, and to Hugh, refer to Sir John and Alice his wife, as does a record of 1349 of an inheritance by right of his wife Alice from Robert Belet, whose grandparents were Robert Bardolf and Laura.⁵⁵ The latter cannot relate to John III as Margaret was his wife by then. This Sir John was also knighted, in 1377 according to the History of Parliament, and died in 1402.⁵⁶ Usually referred to as of Barrowby, he is also of Claxton, as revealed by two different documents about arrangements for the marriage of his daughter Elizabeth to John of Saltby, the latter being the transfer to her of the manor of Barrowby in his dying days.⁵⁷ In 1394 described as being of Claxton he is dealing with land at Barrowby belonging to Newbo Abbey.⁵⁸ Parliament records him as of Fulbeck, which links nicely with his cousin Hugh's appointment there as parson. It also reveals a son, **John V**, who in 1383, as a young scoundrel went on a spree round Lincolnshire with a gang of friends, burgling the house of Alan, the squire of Nocton, of gold, silver, raiment and bedclothes, stealing two horses worth 30/- and 25/- and other goods out of a field at Gipple Grange, Syston, and finally burgling the vicarage at Honington of two beds, five pairs of sheets (value 40/-) five shillings cash and other goods. He was found guilty and condemned to die in Lincoln gaol by *peine and fort dure* but released after John of Gaunt obtained the king's pardon.⁵⁹ John IV is in 1364 identified as being of Scarrington, part of the Bozons' Screveton estate. He served as Sheriff of Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire in 1381/2, actively putting down the Peasants Revolt, and was MP for Lincolnshire 1383 to 1386, a

⁴⁸ DD/SR/12/53/10; History of Parliament Online: Sir John Bozoun of Fulbeck; Military Pardon - CPR 1358-61 p542; and <http://www.nottshistory.org.uk/articles/doubleday/brinsley.htm>

⁴⁹ [SNCHP](#) – Hoveringham. This says the effigy is of his son Robert, others say it is Nicholas.

⁵⁰ In 35 Edw III, according to Sir Peniston Whalley, per Thoroton. Previously just leased to him -DD/SR/12/53/10

⁵¹ DD/SR/12/53/1 & 2; and preceding note.

⁵² Thoroton; Abp of York's Register 14, folio 7 (verso) no 2; SNCHP – Screveton.

⁵³ DD/SR/12/53/26

⁵⁴ DD/SR/12/53/14

⁵⁵ CP 25/1/185/34 no444; DD/SR/12/53/23 and DD/SR/12/48

⁵⁶ CIPM vol 12 no 231, 424

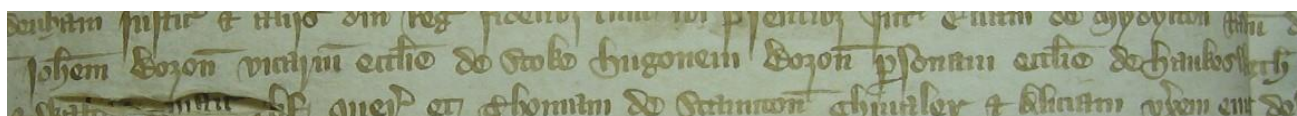
⁵⁷ DD/SR/12/53/27 and 29

⁵⁸ DD/SR/12/53/28

⁵⁹ CPR 1381-5 pp386 & 7

magistrate in Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire.⁶⁰ John IV represents the apogee of the family, and it seems likely that he was the one who gave four bells to Claxton church, cast by John of York in the late 14th century, one of which survives.⁶¹

Two records, of 1357 and 1395, are difficult to place. The former has John Bozon the brother of John Bozon, knight (ie John III) dealing with land at Flintham,⁶² and the latter John Bozon with a wife Elizabeth daughter of John de Bolingbroke, as holding the manor of Ordsall and some land for the life of Elizabeth.⁶³ Maybe in the first, “brother” is a scribal error for “son”, which seems likely as few brothers share the same Christian name. The other could be John IV with a second wife, or more likely John V as the deed gives him no title, nor any hope of staying there after Elizabeth dies. A third record of 1389 or 1390, concerning a manor at Stoke, has Hugh as parson of Hawksworth and John Bozon as vicar of Stoke as co-purchasers with others. John exchanged



his living of Stoke for that of Kirk Sandall near Doncaster, in 1393.⁶⁴ He could be John V made good, or yet another John. John IV appears also to have had a young son William II, who is referred to as an uncle in the will of John’s grandson, possibly by Elizabeth if she was his second wife.⁶⁵

Enough Johns; let us consider the identity of the effigy at Claxton. Evicted from the chantry chapel when it became the village school, he lay in the chancel, the graveyard, the south transept and the north aisle, before his present resting place. The engraving in Nichols shows him in much better condition than he now is. Whether



“sadly mutilated, owing to many years of bad usage by children,” as an Edwardian antiquary claimed, or merely by general wear and tear when he was outside, enough remains to compare him with others.⁶⁶ The pair of pillows

and the folds on his surcoat on his right thigh are very similar to an effigy in Staunton church, dated to around 1300 and identified as Mauger or Geoffrey



⁶⁰ History of Parliament Online: [Sir John Bozoun of Fulbeck](#);

⁶¹ Francis Peck per Nichols p134. The surviving bell is the 7th of a peal of eight.

⁶² E 40/11527

⁶³ CP 25/1/186/36 no 67. See also [R. Bevan: Lost in Time the other daughter of Hamelin de Baron](#), identifying John Bolingbroke with the manor of Ordsall and his daughter Elizabeth marrying John Bozon, and CP 25/1/185/27 no 62

⁶⁴ East Stoke, near Newark. CP 25/1/186/36 no 42; Abp of York’s Register 14, folio 41 (verso) nos 2 & 3

⁶⁵ Appendix 5

⁶⁶ Memorials of Old Leicestershire, Alice Dryden, 1911. The use of redundant chantry chapels as schools reflects the desire of Edward VI but led to problems by the late 18th century, when successive visiting archdeacons first ejected the schoolchildren from the chancel because of ink-spatter on the altar, confining them to the chapel, then noted that the children were soiling the churchyard, and commanded that a privy be built, or that the school be moved to new premises. A commodious new privy was finally converted from the north porch in 2000, but the school had gone by 1840.

de Staunton, Roger II's and John I's neighbours. It looks to be of the same stone and by the same mason. A very different memorial is inscribed to another knight of the Staunton family who died in 1326.⁶⁷ The Clawson effigy was at times associated with William I Bozon, but he seems not to have been a military man and have died too late. It is probably Ralph, but it could be John I. A mark on his left arm shows where his armorial shield may have once been attached. The many references to Ralph's arms in the heraldic rolls also help to identify him with the effigy.

Around the time these effigies were being created, the writer **Nicholas Bozon** was active. He is known only for his instructive religious work, allegories, moralising tales and lives of the saints, all written in Anglo-Norman and mainly in verse, sometimes displaying a wicked sense of humour. In passing he identifies himself as a friar minor, specifically *ordeynours*, meaning maybe a steward of his friary or that he was ordained priest or deacon. Given references in his works to the confluence of the Trent and Derwent, and the use of some East Midlands dialect, it is reasonable to place him among the Nottingham Greyfriars,⁶⁸ whose buildings lay under the recently demolished Broadmarsh shopping centre, and to suggest he may have been a kinsman of William I.

Of the fifteenth century Bozons there is little to tell. By 1411, **Thomas (I) Bozon** was in receipt of rents for land around Newark, Nottinghamshire.⁶⁹ In 1415 he was petitioning about the alien priory of Long Bennington, the following year he granted the Manor of Screveton to Gerald of Surfleet, and in 1419 he is described as Thomas Bozon of Claxton.⁷⁰ His use of the arms of Bozon was confirmed in 1408 and 1424, the same year that he died, when his inquisition referred to him as of Syerston, a manor and chapelry in the parish of Stoke, leaving **Henry (II)** his son and heir.⁷¹ Agnes is identified his widow in 1425, when dealing with a holding of his at Tickhill near Doncaster. An old History of Parliament, in the biography of Henry Bozon (II), also calls him Thomas Bozon of Syerston.

Henry II also married an Alice, became King Henry VI's Squire in 1446 and was MP for Nottinghamshire 1449-50, by that time very ill, he obtained a papal licence for a portable altar for him and his wife, and made his will at Usflete (Ousefleet) in 1451, leaving instructions that he be buried at Claxton, and a legacy to **William (II)** Bozon as his uncle, probably he who died incapacitated and intestate in 1469 in the care of the Vicar of Newark.⁷² Henry appears to have had a son **Henry (III)**, of Syerston and Cotham, who on 14th December 1485 was pardoned, presumably for his previous loyalty to King Richard III.⁷³ **Thomas (II)**, whom Thoroton suggests was another son, had his use of the arms of Bozon confirmed in 1485, suggesting Henry III was dead or in reality one and the same as Thomas II.⁷⁴ He married Anne, the eldest of the daughters and heirs of Sir Gerard

⁶⁷ [SNCHP](#) – Staunton. For more discussion on the dating of effigies see H A Tummers: Early Secular Effigies in England, which mentions the Clawson effigy and suggests it is late 13th century.

⁶⁸ <https://anglo-norman.net/entry/ordenour> The reference is in his poem Le Char d'Orgueil. For Nottingham Greyfriars see note 21

⁶⁹ DD/SR/12/53/31

⁷⁰ SC 8/268/13357; DD/SR/12/53/32; DD/SR/12/53/33

⁷¹ DD/SR/12/65

⁷² History of Parliament 1439 to 1509 HMSO 1936: Henry Boson; Appendix 5

⁷³ C 139/14/11

⁷⁴ DD/SR/12/65. This concerns land near Doncaster, but is found among the Savile Barrowby papers, so is likely to be the same Thomas.

Usflete III who fought at Agincourt.⁷⁵ They had a son **Henry (IV)** of Screveton who was knighted, and married Katherine Markham of Cotham. He appears to have led a quiet life and his only record seems to be the supervision of the will of William Staunton, Rector of Staunton, in 1504, though he is also listed in the extensive retinue of Sir Thomas Lovell as prepared to fight in the King's war in 1508.⁷⁶ Their son **Richard Bozon** of Claxton and Barrowby was the last of the line. He administered the estate of William Sherrard of Stapleford and of the eponymous street in Melton Mowbray, he is noted as a farmer in Thoroton, afterwards he was also knighted, then he took a bond for £100 from his brother **Thomas (III)** Bozon, gent of Screveton, for performance of covenants in an indenture.⁷⁷ Richard died in 1525, leaving five under-age daughters as his heirs, after which there seems to be no record of any more Bozons in the East Midlands.⁷⁸ Bishop Sanderson of Lincoln noted in 17th century "forasmuch as the pedigrees of Dene and Bozon are untrue, I have sat down so much thereof as may be certainly proved out of authentic writings". He limited himself to the last three generations.⁷⁹ A tentative improvement is offered at Appendix 2, from Richard back to Ivo de Ticheville, the earliest known sub-infeudated holder of the manor of Claxton from Robert de Todenii of Belvoir, which links in everyone mentioned, apart from Nicholas.

The family rose to prominence in the 14th century, so much so that another family pretended to be Bozons, namely the successors of Sir Alexander "Bozon" de Kirkton-in-Holland, another son of the above-mentioned Margery and Robert, chiefly in their efforts to hold on to the manor of Sibthorpe adjoining the Bozon estates in Nottinghamshire. This Alexander would be the Alexander Bozon who witnessed the settlement charter for the Redmile advowson dispute involving Roger II.⁸⁰ Another descendant styled himself Ralph Bozon as rector of Aisthorpe and died in 1341 with illegitimate issue, another as John Bozon who decamped to Saxton in Elmet never to be heard of again.⁸¹ The Norfolk branch died out in the 17th century, but the Devon family, with their roots in Bozomzeal on the River Dart, survived past 1900.

⁷⁵ Harleian MS 1550 per Lincolnshire Pedigrees Vol I p167, though certainly earlier than 1485 as stated therein. Some say that Anne was sister to Gerald III, but that would make her improbably old to marry Thomas II at any date. See also Walker's Yorkshire Pedigrees pt 3 1944.

⁷⁶ Testamenta Eboracensia Vol 5 p85; Rutland MSS Vol IV p561

⁷⁷ DD/SR/231/20; DD/SR/12/91; Oct 14th 1513 - Rd Bossum made Knight Bachelor (Knights of England, W A Shaw Vol 2 p 42); DD/SR/231/19. For identity of Thomas (IV) see preceding note.

⁷⁸ CIPM 17 Hen VIII in The Genealogist, Vol 10, 1894; DD/SR/12/93

⁷⁹ See note 72 above

⁸⁰ See note 16 above

⁸¹ Pedigrees from the Plea Rolls p54: 20 Edw III (1346/7) memb 164, attributing Bozon to Alexander; Thoroton – Sibthorpe; C 44/2/6; IPM Vol 2 p181 no 13a & p189 no 3; see also unfinished research of John Grenville Kirton dec'd at medievalgenealogy.org.uk .

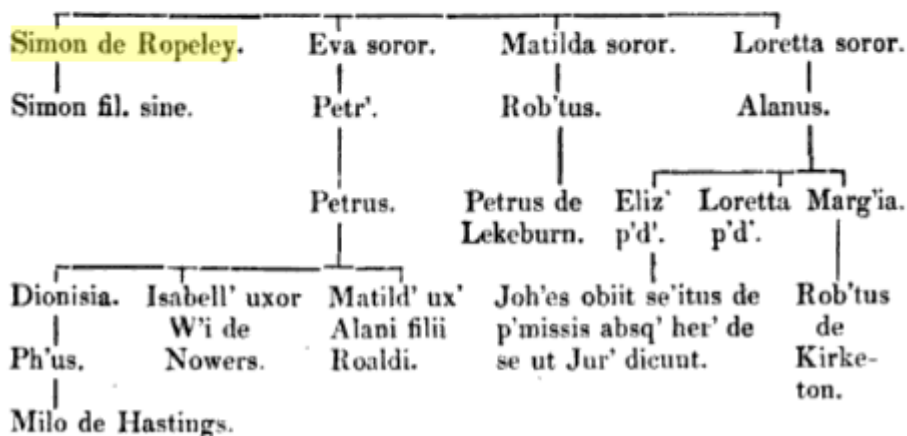
Appendix I – Pedigrees in Plea Rolls: Leics Fol 16 Trin 55 Hen III, and Northants 8 Edw III memb 288.

They contradict, and neither is likely to be fully accurate; the nearer relationships to the plaintiffs will be nearer the truth. Many sources agree that Peter of Goldington was the father of Matilda, Dionisia and Isabel.

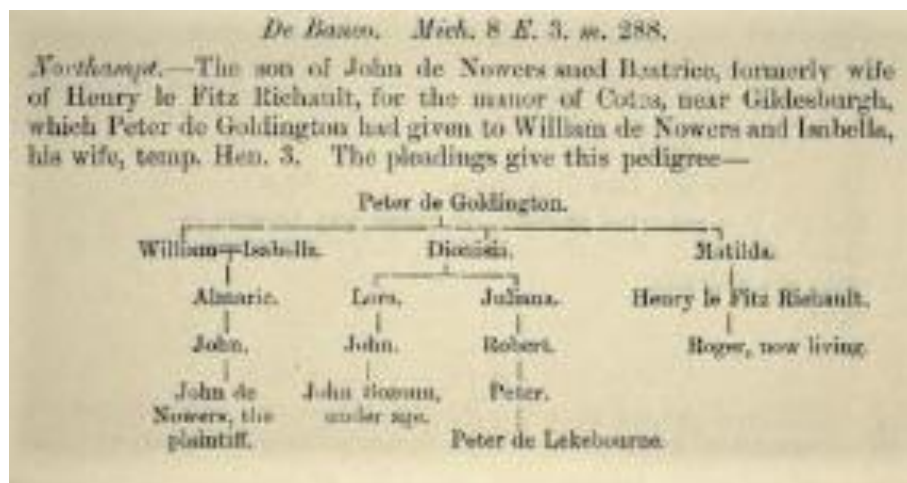
[Fo. 16.] *Trinitatis, anno lv^{to} H. 3.*

Leic. 3. Radus Bozun et Loreta uxor ejus r' sciam suam de vi. toftis et xi. bovat' terre in Claxton, v' W^m de Neville et Eliz' uxorem ejus.

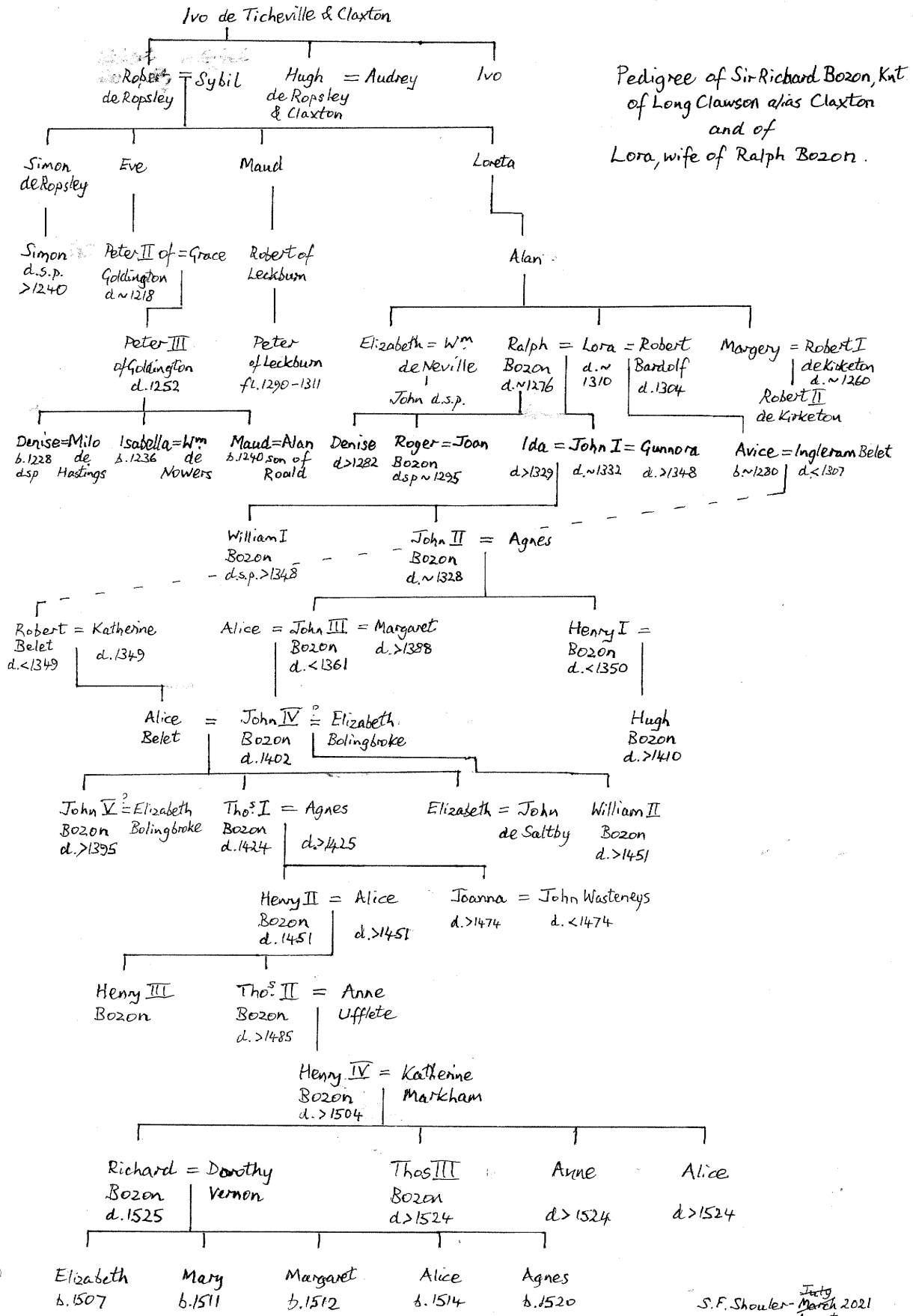
[This pedigree will be found to furnish a very different account of the introduction of the family of Bozun to Claxton (where they resided until the reign of Henry the Eighth), to that given in Nichols's Leicestershire, vol. ii. pp. 131, 132.—J. G. N.]



This second pedigree perhaps explains the misplacing of Ralph Bozun's wife among the progeny of Peter of Goldington.

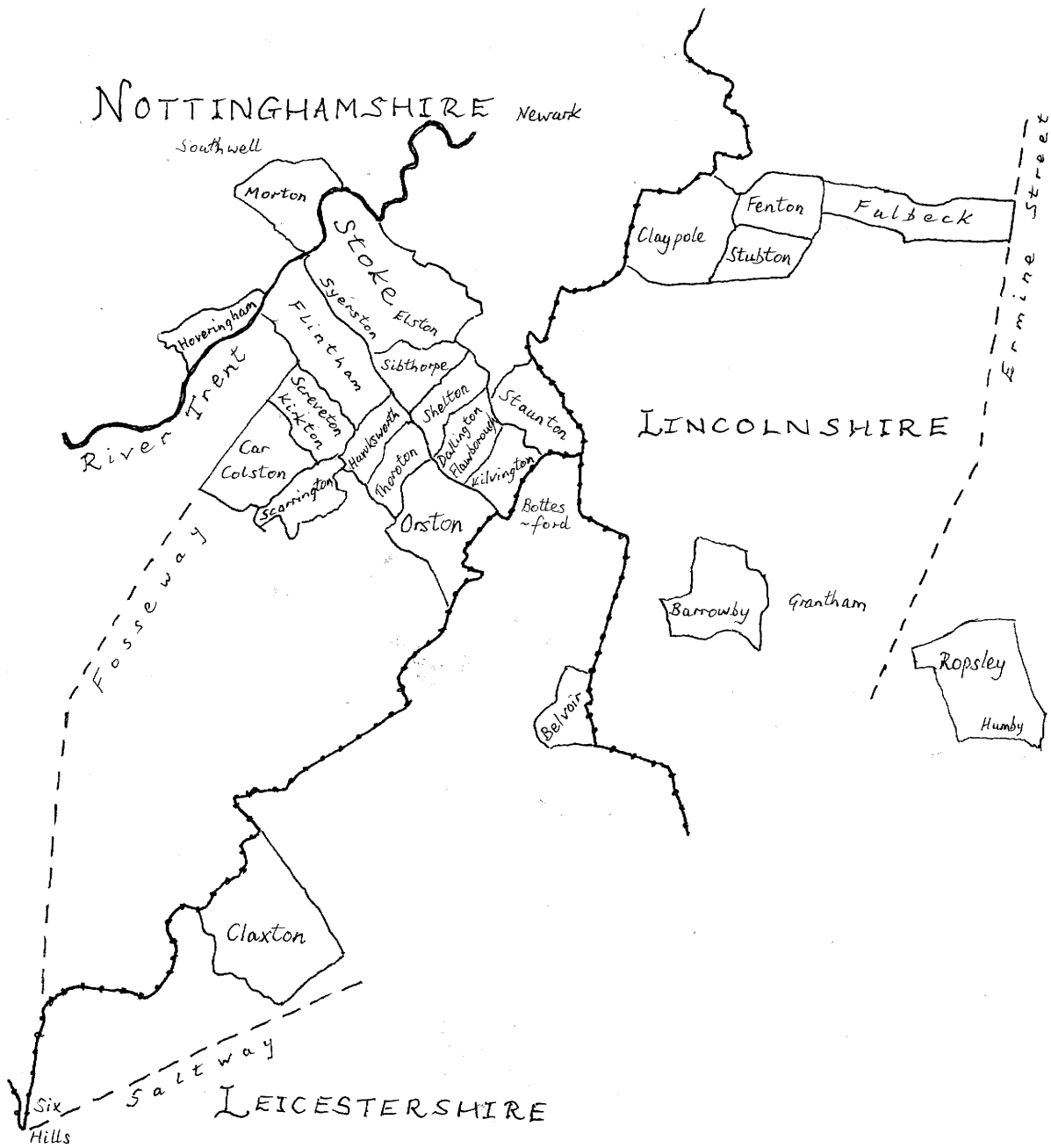


Appendix 2



S.F. Showler - ^{July} March 2021
August

Appendix 3 ~ Map of the seats of the Bozons and most of the local parishes in which they held property or had connections.



Appendix 4 – The Testament of John Bozon of Orston, 28th August 1328

The Lord's Day next after the feast of St Bartholomew the Apostle in the Year of Grace 1328. I John Bozon settle my testament in this manner: Firstly, I bequeath my soul to God and the Blessed Virgin and my body to be buried in the graveyard of the church at Orston and my best beast in the name of payment. Likewise, I bequeath to the performance of my funeral obsequies viz from the first day to the seventh 40 silver shillings; I bequeath to the lighting of the church of Orston 3s 6d, viz at the altar of Blessed Mary 2 shillings and for trappings 6d and at the altar of St Katherine 6d and at the altar of St Lawrence 6d, in silver; and I wish that my debts be settled first and foremost out of my goods, and if there shall be any residue, all that residue into the good hands of Agnes my wife. Thus I bestow, and that this testament be executed and faithfully proved suchlike I appoint my executors viz Sir William Bozon, Rector of the church of Stubton and Agnes my wife and Roger Fitz Mather of Louth

In the name of God, Amen. Proved is this testament before us the judicial sequestrators of Nottingham, and the administration of goods put into the hands of Agnes the wife of the deceased and Roger Fitz Mather of Louth executors herein nominated in full satisfaction of these provisions, Sir William Bozon having been absolved from all administration. Sworn at Orston 3rd March in the Year of Grace 1[329?]

Note: Around 1295, one Roger Fitz Mather, with Richard le Vener and others, raised hue and cry, and chased and caught Philip Fitz Walter of Blakeneye, who had escaped from St Briavel's Castle and was poaching deer in the Forest of Dean, and beheaded him. They were pardoned by the King, as they were held to have been acting in the suit of his peace.

Appendix 5 – The Testament of Henry Bozon of Syerston, 18th February 1451

In the name of God Amen. I Henry Bozon of Syerston, having control of my mind and in sound memory, still alive on the Wednesday next before the feast of the Chair of St Peter in the year of our Lord one thousand fourteen hundred and fifty, settle my testament in this manner.

In the first place I bequeath my soul to God, the blessed Mary & all the saints, & my body to be buried in the parish church of Clawson in the County of Leicester, next to the body of my ancestor, with my best horse viz Hard-Routh in the name of my payment. Thus, I give and bequeath another horse, called Greyhard, to the Abbot of Selby in the name of my payment to the church at Whitgift. Thus, I give and bequeath another horse of mine, called The Tronk to the Vicar of the church of Stoke, in the name of my payment, where I lived. Thus, I give and bequeath for the building of the church at Clawson aforesaid 40 shillings. Thus, I give and bequeath to Joanna Wastnes my sister a mazer called The Note bearing a shield carved with my arms. Thus, I give and bequeath to William Bozon my uncle 40 shillings. Thus, I give and bequeath to John Draper of Flintham 20 shillings. The true residue of all my goods not bequeathed I give and bequeath to Alice, wife of mine, William Bozon aforesaid, & John Draper aforesaid, whom I appoint and constitute as my executors.

So that the said persons may well and faithfully arrange things according to my will, and to the full satisfaction of my heirs, I give the care of them as to them it seems better and ready at hand for my age & faculties certainly requires what has been assigned to them to be extended and shared with the supervision of Nicholas of Worthley whom I appoint supervisor.

In testimony of which things, I have affixed my seal to this aforesaid testament. As witnessed by Thomas Hilton chaplain, the scribe of this testament, Thomas Mitford, Sir Richard Winckley chaplain, Sir John Dale chaplain, Robert Forster of Alyngflete, Robert Kemme of [O]Usflete, William Alman of Re[e]dnes[s] and many others. Given at Usflete the day and year above written.

Proved was the above testament on the 25th day of the month of February in the said year of our Lord per Robert Forster and William Alman above-written witnesses and the same published the day following the proving of the said testament by the Dean of Newark commissioner for putting the administration into the hand of the said executors, who certified on the 17th day of the month of March in the said year of our Lord that he had put into the hands of the properly sworn executors the said testament and proceeded in due form of law.

Notes: The testament is dated 1450 as at that time the new year did not start until March 25th.

The body of his ancestor is obviously Ralph de Bozon. The mention of ancestor in the singular suggests, pace Nichols, that the intervening ancestors were maybe not buried at Clawson, but is more likely to have been a scribal error by Thomas Hilton, for evidently Henry survived merely days or hours as his will was proved only a week later. The will would have been dictated by Henry, probably in English but set down in Latin by his scribe. The use of Latin to set down testaments was declining along with the ability to understand it, as shown by this floundering polyglot example from a will made in Beverley five years earlier: Item lego eidem Nicholao j. standyng counter existentem in aula juxta introitum a le parlur.

The legacy to an uncle is unusual; he may have been “a poor tool” and the William Bozon who died incapacitated and intestate at Newark in 1469, but was significant enough to have his administration recorded in the Archbishop’s registers.

Ousefleet, where the will was made, along with Reedness, were in the chapelry of Whitgift, in the parish of Snaith, whose ecclesiastical patron was the Abbot of Selby. Adlingfleet is just outside. His sojourn at Ousefleet was on account of (or the cause of) his son Thomas being married to Anne daughter of Sir Gerard de Useflete, and we can speculate that he and his wife were being looked after by Anne in their declining days. Henry’s sister Joanna married John Wasteneys of Headon, near Retford, and survived him as patron of the Rectory of Headon.