

The Identity of Rauf de Boun, Author of the *Petit Bruit*

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The chronicle called the *Petit Bruit* was written by *meistre* Rauf de Boun in 1309.¹ The *Petit Bruit* is preserved in full in only one manuscript: London, British Library, MS Harley 902, ff. 1^r – 11^v.² It recounts the history of England from the arrival of legendary Trojan founder Brutus down to Edward I, interspersed with legendary characters such as King Arthur, Havelok and Guy of Warwick. This might sound like a familiar pattern for a late medieval chronicle of England, but despite this the identity of the *Petit Bruit*'s sources have remained unclear.³ Many details of Rauf de Boun's account differ greatly from the legendary history familiar from Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae* and its descendants, and the *Petit Bruit* sometimes also distorts more factual material, as when Edward the Confessor is succeeded by his brother, the imaginary Miles, who in turn is murdered by Harold, who has also become Edward the Confessor's (and Miles's) brother.⁴

It has to be said that Rauf's grasp of the span of English history does not seem very firm, and he has been much criticised for this, most memorably by Sir Frederic Madden who in 1828 referred to him as a 'miserable History-monger'.⁵ The anomalous nature of the *Petit Bruit* has perhaps led historians to undervalue the work, however. After all, playing fast and loose with Geoffrey of Monmouth's confection of British legends hardly disqualifies Rauf de Boun from being a capable chronicler of more recent history. In his prologue Rauf expressed the intention to honour Edward I by giving 'a full account' of his 'whole life' ('playne procès de tout sa vie'),⁶ and the *Petit Bruit* ends with an apparently quite accurate account of Edward's reign. Despite being written just over two

years after Edward's death, this chronicle has been almost completely ignored by historians working on the period.⁷ The *Petit Bruit* is due for a reappraisal as a contemporary view of Edward I's reign: the following identification might help to provide a context for such an evaluation, as might the discussion of two additional manuscripts containing parts of the text.

If the content and the sources of the *Petit Bruit* have long puzzled scholars, the identity of its author has also been something of a mystery. Most of what has been known about him comes from his introduction: he names himself as 'meistre Rauf de Boun',⁸ and says that he wrote the *Petit Bruit* at the request of 'monseigneur Henry de Lacy', Earl of Lincoln (1249-1311),⁹ 'en l'an du reigne nostre seigneur le roy Edward de Carnarvan le tiers an entraunt' ('at the beginning of the third year of the reign of our lord King Edward of Caernarvon').¹⁰

Until recently this is all that was known about Rauf de Boun. In 1987 the editor of the *Petit Bruit*, Diana Tyson, declared:

Nothing is known about the author. He may well have belonged to the Bohun family who settled in England after the Conquest and in 1199 became hereditary earls of Hereford, but I have not found any evidence of this nor any mention of his name.¹¹

In 1998, however, Professor Jean-Claude Thiolier referred in passing to a 'un chanoine de St-Paul de Londres nommé Ralph de Bohun' of the 1290s. Thiolier stated that he must have been the author of the *Petit Bruit*, 'car Henry de Lacy fut benefaiteur de cette cathédrale et s'y fit enterrer le 28 février 1311'.¹²

This is all that Thiolier has said, but I have surveyed a good number of printed record sources for the period, and I can present some additional evidence here which I believe supports Thiolier's identification and gives some new insights into Rauf de Boun and his work. Using this evidence, I will argue that in the second half of the thirteenth century, there were two Ralph de Bohuns, descended

from the Bohun earls of Hereford, who began their career in the diocese of Lincoln. One of these became a canon of St Paul's and, as Professor Thiolier has stated, wrote the *Petit Bruit* for Henry de Lacy in 1309. I will also discuss new discoveries about two other manuscripts which contain parts of the *Petit Bruit*, and consider some of the implications of this research for an understanding of Rauf de Boun and his chronicle.

Between the beginning and the middle of the thirteenth century, the Bohun family who were Earls of Hereford used the name Ralph for one of the younger sons of an earl. Henry de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, is said in the chronicle of Walden Abbey to have had a younger son called Ralph.¹³ It is the son of Humphrey de Bohun the fifth, however, a 'Ralph de Bohun, clerk, son of the earl of Hereford and Essex, constable of England', who appeared in the registers of Pope Alexander IV on 12 November 1256, being granted an indult to hold more than one benefice with cure of souls.¹⁴ A few months later, on 6 May 1257, 'Ralph de Bohun', the rector of Debden in Essex, was 'appointed a papal chaplain' by Pope Alexander: this was almost certainly an honorary title, but it was nevertheless a huge status symbol for a minor cleric (three other clerics were made honorary papal chaplains on the same day; they were all abbots).¹⁵ This may have reflected Ralph's noble blood. Ralph appears also to have had help from his family earlier in his career: according to the rolls of Richard Gravesend, Bishop of Lincoln, 'Ralph de Boun, subdeacon' had been made rector of Thoresby in Lincolnshire, and Humphrey de Bohun the fifth (presumably his father) was the patron of this church. Ralph had resigned this rectory by 1259.¹⁶ It may also have been this Ralph who served Henry III: on 4 February 1262 a master 'Ralph de Bohun' was made king's proctor along with a number of other clerics in a lawsuit brought against Henry III in King Louis IX of France's court;¹⁷ and on 10 June 1264, Henry III made a gift of three deer to a 'magistro Radulfo de Bohun' (which he immediately followed with a gift of four deer to Humphrey de Bohun the younger).¹⁸ So Ralph was an established name for younger sons of

the Bohun earls of Hereford by the mid-thirteenth century.¹⁹

I think it is a different Ralph de Bohun who appears in the record from 2 June 1278 which records that a *magister* 'Ralph de Boun', subdeacon, was made rector of Kimbolton in Huntingdonshire on the death of the previous incumbent, by Lady 'Joan de Boun', who had recovered the advowson from 'Humphrey de Boun', the seventh earl of Hereford.²⁰ Joan de Bohun (*née* Quincy) was the second wife of Humphrey de Bohun the sixth (who predeceased his father, Humphrey the fifth). Humphrey's son by his first wife Eleanor de Briouze was Humphrey the seventh, who inherited his grandfather's earldom in 1275.²¹ Humphrey the seventh and his stepmother Joan seem to have had some legal skirmishes over who controlled the manor and advowson of Kimbolton.²² I would hypothesise that when she regained the advowson, she presented a younger half-brother of the new earl to the rectory: her son by Humphrey the sixth, named (in accordance with family tradition) Ralph. This seems to fit the facts as we know them, and seems more likely than the alternative hypothesis, that she presented the rectory to the aforementioned Ralph de Bohun who was her late husband's brother. However, either is possible, and the main point is that this Ralph was again a member of the Bohun family who were earls of Hereford.

The mentions of Ralph de Bohuns in connection with the family of the earls of Hereford form one discrete group of records.²³ A second consists of the records which mention a canon of St Paul's Cathedral, London, named Ralph de Bohun. Records for St. Paul's in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries are scarce, but a Ralph de Bohun had apparently occupied the prebend of Willesden at some point in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century, according to one list of the prebendaries which survives in a mid-fourteenth century copy.²⁴ A Ralph de Bohun also appears as the prebendary of Willesden in a post-medieval transcript from a lost muniment book of St. Paul's, a record which was originally written in 1294 or 1295.²⁵ More precise evidence of the date by which Ralph de Bohun had occupied the prebend comes from his

presence in a record which names the canons of St Paul's Cathedral, and which dates from 11 April 1295,²⁶ but it seems likely that he was already a canon at St. Paul's by 1291, when a *magister* Ralph de Bohun received two marks from Northolt Church in Middlesex: Northolt had been supposed to pay twelve marks a year towards the maintenance of St. Paul's Cathedral since the 1250s.²⁷ 'Ralph de Bouhan, canon of St. Paul's church, London' also appears in the Close Rolls in 1298 as being in debt to the prominent figure of William Hamilton, deputy Chancellor of England at the time.²⁸ After this, information concerning the prebendaries of Willesden is lacking until the 1340s,²⁹ but it certainly seems possible that this Ralph de Bohun could still have been alive and in place in 1309, the date of the *Petit Bruit*'s composition. It certainly makes sense that a canon of St Paul's would have written a chronicle for Henry de Lacy, since, as Thiolier noted, he had apparently been one of the greatest benefactors of the cathedral in the years before his death, helping to fund the building work on the eastern end of the cathedral.³⁰

There is not sufficient evidence to prove that the canon of St Paul's is one of the Ralph de Bohuns mentioned earlier from the diocese of Lincoln, but the record in the Close Rolls suggests that this is the case. When in 1298 'Ralph de Bouhan, canon of St. Paul's church, London' is referred to along with two other debtors, reference is made, collectively, to their lands and goods in the counties of Leicester, Northampton and Bedford.³¹ Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire were all part of the diocese of Lincoln,³² and the other two debtors were both priests from the diocese of Lincoln: John de Dovorria was the parson of the church of Liddington in Bedfordshire, and is mentioned as such in other records of the period,³³ while Iterius, although he does not appear in any records I have seen, was parson of the church of Rushden in Northamptonshire.³⁴ Therefore this entry on the Close Rolls connects the Ralph de Bohun who was a canon of St Paul's with the diocese of Lincoln in three ways.³⁵

So, I would argue, these records are sufficient evidence for us to conclude that Rauf de Boun was a younger son from the Bohun

family of the earls of Hereford; that early in his career he held a post in the diocese of Lincoln; that he was a canon of St Paul's Cathedral by 1294; and that he wrote the *Petit Bruit* for one of the cathedral's chief patrons, Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln, in 1309.

However, this is not the end of the record evidence. There remains a reference to the death of Ralph de Bohun in 1307, two years before the *Petit Bruit* was written. In 1293 a 'Master Ranulph (*alias* Ralph) de Bohun, parson of the church of Eynho', in Northamptonshire, admitted owing 'Sir William de Sweningtone, parson of the church of Quidenham, 20 marks; to be levied in default of payment, of his lands and chattels in co. Northampton'.³⁶ As mentioned above, Northamptonshire is in the diocese of Lincoln, and in the absence of other evidence, it might be assumed that this record could refer to the future author of the *Petit Bruit*. However, an entry in the one of the episcopal registers of John Dalderby, Bishop of Lincoln 1300-1320, records that in 1307 Walter de Plessetis was made parson of the church of Aynho, the position having become vacant 'per mortem domini Radulphi de Boun'.³⁷

If all the records I have identified from the 1250s to the 1290s, from the dioceses of Lincoln and London, refer to a single Ralph de Bohun, then he clearly cannot be the author of the *Petit Bruit*. Yet the canon of St. Paul's seems the only plausible candidate for the work's authorship; and his connection to the diocese of Lincoln seems real.

Above I hypothesised that the records from the diocese of Lincoln might refer to not one but two Ralph de Bohuns, uncle and nephew. If this is true, then either uncle or nephew died in 1307, and the survivor wrote the *Petit Bruit* in 1309. There is no way of knowing which of them might have survived, but the biographical facts that I have argued for would remain the same: Rauf was a member of the Bohun family who were earls of Hereford and Essex; he held one or more clerical positions in the diocese of Lincoln; and he became the prebendary of Willesden at St Paul's.³⁸

Having searched documents for information about Rauf de Boun, I also examined two medieval manuscripts containing parts

of the *Petit Bruit* which have not attracted attention in earlier discussions of the chronicle. One of these in particular has a bearing on the biography of Rauf de Boun. London, British Library, MS Additional 47170 is a genealogical roll-chronicle on twelve skins, recounting the history of the kings of England in Anglo-Norman on its recto (it also recounts the kings of Mercia and England in Latin on its dorse).³⁹ A rubric, written upside-down at the bottom of the recto of this roll, states that both this French chronicle and the Latin one on the dorse are the work of a Walter de Witteliseye (or Whittlesey), monk of Peterborough, but it seems that Whittlesey was a compiler, scribe or illuminator of the manuscript, rather than an author.⁴⁰ It has long been recognised that much of the Anglo-Norman text on this roll corresponds closely with other Anglo-Norman roll-chronicles such as the British Library MSS Additional 21368 and Lansdowne Charters Roll 3, both of which were edited by Thomas Wright, under the sobriquet of 'feudal manuals', in the nineteenth century.⁴¹ What is not well-known, however, is that sections of the Anglo-Norman text on this roll are virtually identical with parts of the *Petit Bruit*.

The first is the reign of 'Adeluf le tierce', where the extant part of the roll begins. In the *Petit Bruit* Adeluf III is the son of King Arthur and appears in the midst of a series of English kings, while in the 'feudal manual' tradition the historical king Ethelwulf is one of the earliest figures to appear and is only the second king of England described (the first is his father Aethelbert).⁴² In MS Additional 47170, the text of this reign corresponds almost exactly, with only spelling variations and a number of small discrepancies, to the equivalent passage in MS Harley 902. Crucially, the medieval roll here includes the phrase in which Rauf refers to himself by name, for the third and final time in the *Petit Bruit*, as 'le auandit autour R. de Boun'.⁴³ This eliminates the possibility that MS Additional 47170 is drawing on a source shared by the *Petit Bruit* and establishes it as a second manuscript witness to Rauf's text. W.H. Monroe first identified this passage in 1989 as belonging to the *Petit Bruit*.⁴⁴

I have discovered two more passages from the *Petit Bruit* on this roll. The first is the confused account of the reign of Henry II and the fictitious reign of Henry the Young King. These are copied into the manuscript alongside a separate account of Henry II's reign which is closer to those edited by Wright, and it is clear from this part of the manuscript that the text of the *Petit Bruit* has been added after the roll was originally made: while the original text has space set aside in the design, the passages from the *Petit Bruit* are squeezed into gaps between the lines of the genealogy. Looking back at the first skin with this in mind, it is clear that it has been drawn later and added on to the second skin, replacing an earlier account, as indeed Monroe has pointed out.⁴⁵ The later illuminator has drawn genealogical links which connect his roundels of Ethelbald, Ethelberd and Alured (i.e. Alfred) to the links which lead to their roundels on the second skin, but he has used a light yellow ink for all three links, not the red ink which was used in the original illumination for Ethelbald and Alfred's links. The hand of the later scribe is very similar to that of the earlier scribe – it may indeed belong to the same person – but it is slightly larger and less careful.

The final portion of the *Petit Bruit* found in this manuscript is the account of Edward I's reign on membranes 8-10, where the text again corresponds extremely closely to that of MS Harley 902, although here in particular MS Additional 47170 does contain many additional phrases and clauses not present in the later manuscript, as well as numerous alternative readings for individual words. Early in this passage, the roll-chronicle mentions how 'le vantdit Leulyn de Gales' refused to pay the homage to Edward I which the English king was due, 'com auant est dit'.⁴⁶ However, Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (*d.* 1282), prince of Wales, is not mentioned in the roll's account of Henry III's reign, and nor is the question of homage.⁴⁷ In MS Harley 902, however, the *Petit Bruit*'s description of Henry's reign contains a summary, albeit brief and simplistic, of Llywelyn's relationship with this English king:

[...] Lewlyn, a primer entré a son heritage, countredit a son seignur le roy Henry le homage qe ly devoit. Meis cel roy Henry ly prist si ly mist a raunson, dount cely Lewlyn se obliga en mil marce d'anuel rent a la coronne d'Engleterre pour la principalté de North Gales a toutz jours.⁴⁸

[Llywelyn, on first receiving his inheritance, denied to his lord, King Henry, the homage he owed him. But this King Henry captured and ransomed him, for which reason Llywelyn was obliged to pay a thousand marks in annual rent for the principality of North Wales to the English Crown forever.]

This is further evidence that the roll-chronicle is no way an earlier version of the *Petit Bruit*. Rather, the reviser of MS Additional 47170 has excerpted parts of Rauf de Boun's chronicle in order to create a new compilation.

MS Additional 47170 does not provide any new biographical information on Rauf de Boun. However, the attribution of the manuscript to Walter de Whittlesey, a monk at Peterborough Abbey, is of interest. Located in the diocese of Lincoln, directly between Lincoln itself and London, Peterborough lies within the sphere of activity I have described for the canon of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Shortly before this article went to press, I discovered that another manuscript from the 'feudal manual' tradition, London, British Library, MS Harley 1348, ff. 9^r-18^v, also contains substantially the same text for the reign of Edward I (on ff. 16^r-17^v) as that of the *Petit Bruit*. In this manuscript, however, there is no mention of Rauf de Boun, and the phrases 'le vantdit Leulyn de Gales' and 'com avant est dit' are not present. The existence of this copy raises the question of whether Rauf was the author of this passage, or whether he took the account from somewhere else, but this lies outside the scope of this article.

I believe the identification of Rauf de Boun I have suggested here can add to our understanding of his chronicle in particular, and

to the tradition of Anglo-Norman historical writing more generally. With regard to the *Petit Bruit* itself, *meistre* Rauf de Boun's connection back to the diocese of Lincoln helps us, for example, to understand his inclusion of the story of Havelok into his chronicle: this legend of a Danish king who also became king of England circulated primarily in and around Lincolnshire from the twelfth to the early fourteenth century.⁴⁹ Rauf's position as a canon of St Paul's, meanwhile, adds to our knowledge of a vital tradition of historical writing from this cathedral. The *Petit Bruit* was preceded by the works of Ralph Diceto (canon and later dean of St. Paul's) in the late twelfth century and the anonymous *Annales Sancti Pauli* in the second half of the thirteenth, and followed later in the fourteenth century by parts of the *Annales Paulini* and the chronicles of Adam Murimuth (a canon of St Paul's) and Robert of Avesbury (who used the cathedral's archives).⁵⁰

As for its wider implications, this identification of Rauf de Boun provides additional evidence for the importance of the interaction between the nobility and the clergy in the production of historical works during this period: for instance, in Edward II's reign the monk John of Canterbury apparently wrote his chronicle, the *Polistorie*, for a layman named John, while in the 1330s or 1340s, Walter de la Hove, the Cistercian Abbot of Newenham, wrote the *Mohun Chronicle* for John de Mohun, lord of Dunster, and his wife Joan.⁵¹ Rauf de Boun, descended from the Earls of Hereford and Essex, yet writing as a cleric for one of the most important nobles in the land, embodies this development in an especially striking fashion. Perhaps this identification of Rauf de Boun will enable us to stop seeing his *Petit Bruit* only as a curious oddity, and to consider it more fully in its historical and literary contexts.⁵²

NOTES

¹ The author refers to himself in the third person three times, once as 'meistre Rauf de Boun' (Rauf de Boun, *Le Petit Bruit*, Diana B. Tyson ed., Anglo-Norman Texts Society Plain Texts Series 4, London, privately printed, 1987, p. 5) and twice as 'Rauf de Boune' (pp. 6, 13). Rauf states that the chronicle was written 'en l'an du reigne nostre seigneur le roy Edward de Carnarvan le tiers an entraunt' (*Le Petit Bruit*, ed. Tyson, p. 5): Edward II's third regnal year began on 8 July 1309 (*A Handbook of Dates for Students of British History*, ed. C. R. Cheney, rev. Michael Jones, Royal Historical Society Guides and Handbooks 4, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000; first edition 1945, p. 34), so if Rauf's statement is true the *Petit Bruit* was written in the second half of 1309. Tyson gives 1309 as the date of composition (*Le Petit Bruit*, p. 1), but *Havelok*, G. V. Smithers ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987, p. xxvii, states that the *Petit Bruit* was written in 1310. Maria Luisa Meneghetti (*I Fatti di Bretagna*, Padua, Editrice Antenore, 1979, p. liv, n. 100), states that the *Petit Bruit* ends by describing the events of 1310: it is unclear to which events she is referring.

² Diana Tyson dates the handwriting of this manuscript to 'the second half of the 16th century' (*Le Petit Bruit*, ed. Tyson, p. 2), and Meneghetti (*I Fatti di Bretagna*, pp. liii, 46) to the seventeenth century, but *Havelok*, ed. Smithers, p. xxvii, claims that the hand is 'of the later fifteenth century (commonly but mistakenly described as a seventeenth-century one)'. An examination of the watermark on folios 1, 9 and 11 of MS Harley 902 does not support Smithers' assertion. The paper's watermark is no. 2862 in C.M. Briquet, *Les Filigranes. Dictionnaire Historique des Marques du Papier dès leur Apparition jusqu'en 1600* (4 vols, London, B. Quaritch, 1907, I, 201. Briquet found no examples of paper in use with this watermark until 1544). I am very grateful to Dr. Andrea Clarke, Curator of 16th and 17th Century Historical Manuscripts at the British Library, who has advised me that the handwriting appears to date from between the late-sixteenth and the mid-seventeenth century (email, 18 June 2003). The handwriting is not that of Dr Nicholas Wotton, Dean of York and of Canterbury, whose hand appears elsewhere in the manuscript (as stated in Sir Thomas Gray, *Scalacronica*, Joseph Stevenson ed., London, privately printed for the Maitland Club, 1836, p. xxxv). For other manuscripts, see below.

³ *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 1.

⁴ Diana Tyson, 'Problem People in the *Petit Bruit*', *Journal of Medieval*

History 16 (1990): 351-61 (pp. 355-7).

⁵ *The Ancient English Romance of Havelok the Dane*, F. Madden ed., London, privately printed for the Roxburghe Club, 1828, p. xx.

⁶ *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 5; translated in Diane Speed, 'Havelok's Predecessor', in *Medieval Codicology, Iconography, Literature and Translation: Studies for Keith Val Sinclair*, Peter Rolfe Monks and D. D. R. Owen ed., Leiden, New York and Cologne, E. J. Brill, 1994, pp. 176-93 (p. 191).

⁷ Frederick Madden also concluded that the *Petit Bruit* was one of the sources for Henry Knighton's chronicle: *Havelok*, pp. xxxv-xxxvi.

⁸ The title *meistre* may indicate that Rauf was a university graduate. His name does not appear in A. B. Emden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500* (3 vols, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1957-1959), nor in Emden's *A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1963).

⁹ As well as being a prominent figure in accounts of Edward I's reign, several short biographies devoted to Henry de Lacy exist: C. L. K[ingsford], 'Lacy, Henry de, third earl of Lincoln [...]', *Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. Leslie Stephen *et al.*, 66 vols, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1975; first edition 1885-1900, XXXI, pp. 373-5; George Edward Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, Extant, Extinct or Dormant*, rev. Vicary Gibbs *et al.*, 12 vols, London, The St. Catherine Press, 1910-1959, VII, pp. 681-7; Joseph McNulty, 'Henry de Lacy, Earl of Lincoln (1251-1311)', *Transactions of the Lancashire and Cheshire Antiquarian Society*, 51 (1936): 19-43; J.S. Hamilton, 'Lacy, Henry de', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison ed., 60 vols, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2004, XXXII, pp. 181-3. Henry de Lacy was involved in the composition of at least one other Anglo-Norman work (edited by Suzanne Thiolier-Méjean, 'Croisade et registre courtois chez les troubadours', in *Études de philologie romane et d'histoire littéraire offertes à Jules Horrent*, Jean Marie D'Heur and Nicoletta Cherubini ed., Liège, printed for the Comité d'hommage au prof. J. Horrent, 1980, pp. 295-307, at pp. 305-7), a debate-poem which is described as 'la plainte par entre mis sire Henry de Lacy, counte de Nychole et sire Wauter de Bybelesworth pur la croiserie en la terre seinte' in the rubric introducing the unique copy (p. 305). Whether or not Henry was actually a co-author, this poem was presumably intended for an audience familiar with him and which was to include the earl himself. J. C. Thiolier ('Pierre de Langtoft:

Historiographe d'Edouard Ier Plantagenet', in *Anglo-Norman Anniversary Essays*, Ian Short ed., Anglo-Norman Text Society Occasional Publications Series 2, London, Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1993, pp. 379-94) suggests that Henry de Lacy may have been one of the continuators of Langtoft's *Chronique* (pp. 389-90), but this is only one among several possible attributions of this material advanced by Thiolier in the article, none of which so far have been further substantiated.

¹⁰ Rauf de Boun, *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 5; translated in Speed, 'Havelok's Predecessor', p. 191.

¹¹ *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 1; see also *Havelok*, ed. Smithers: 'the unpublished AN prose chronicle *Le Petit Bruit* [...] was composed [...] by Meistre Rauf de Bohun, of whom nothing more is known' (p. xxvii). M. D. Legge (*Anglo-Norman Literature and its Background*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, p. 283) speculated that 'Ralph may have been a member of the de Bohun family, Earls of Hereford and Essex and Constables of England, who must often have been associated with de Lacy. He may have been some kind of cousin, who had perhaps taken orders', but admitted that '[e]fforts to trace Ralph de Bohun have failed'.

¹² 'a canon of St. Paul's in London called Ralph de Bohun'; 'because Henry de Lacy was a benefactor of this cathedral and was buried there on 28 February 1311'. 'L'Itinéraire de Pierre de Langtoft', in *Miscellanea Mediaevalia: Mélanges offerts à Philippe Ménard*, J. Claude Faucon, Alain Labbé and Danielle Quérueu ed., 2 vols, Paris, Champion, 1998, II, pp. 1329-53 (p. 1346 and n. 76). I am very grateful to Professor Thiolier for bringing this to my attention. Rauf de Boun does not appear in the new *Oxford DNB*.

¹³ William Dugdale, *The Baronage of England*, London, Thomas Newcomb, 1675-1676, sig. Aa2^v (p. 180), says that Henry de Bohun had a son called Ralph. His source for this is the chronicle of Walden Abbey (edited in William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, rev. John Caley, Henry Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel, 6 vols, London, Joseph Harding; Harding and Lepard; Longman, Rees, Orme, Brown and Green, 1817-1830; first ed. 1655-1661, IV, p. 139). The claim was repeated in J. R. Planché, 'The Genealogy and Armorial Bearings of the Earls of Hereford', *The Journal of the British Archaeological Association* 28 (1871): 179-91 (p. 186); however, the only documentary source cited by Planché seems to refer to another Ralph: see n. 38 below. There is no way of knowing whether Henry de Bohun's son was the 'Radulfus Boun' mentioned on 4 November 1230 as the owner of the boat *La Nicholette* (*Calendar of Patent Rolls*

1225-1232, London, HMSO, 1903, p. 413), though it is possible.

¹⁴ *Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland. Papal Letters, vol I*, London, HMSO, 1893, p. 339. Humphrey de Bohun V was Earl of Hereford from 1220 until his death in 1274, and became the first Bohun to hold the title of Earl of Essex after the death of William de Mandeville in 1227 (E. M[aunde] T[hompson], 'Bohun, Humphrey V de', *DNB*, v, pp. 308-309) so this Ralph must have been his son.

¹⁵ *Calendar of Papal Registers, vol. I*, p. 345. The record refers to 'Dependen', ie. Debden: the earls of Hereford were the patrons of this church (*VCH Essex*, 10 vols (with 3 vols of bibliographies), II, p. 106 and n. 1). For Ralph and the three abbots who were made papal chaplains on the same day, see *Les Registres d'Alexandre IV: Recueil des Bulles de ce Pape ...*, C. Bourel de La Roncière, J. de Loye, and A. Coulon ed. (3 vols, Paris, Ancienne Librairie Thorin et Fils, 1902-1959, II, p. 582, nos. 1891-1894). On honorary papal chaplains, see Charles Burns, 'Vatican Sources and the Honorary Papal Chaplains of the Fourteenth Century', in *Römische Kurie. Kirchliche Finanzen. Vatikanisches Archiv. Studien zu Ehren von Hermann Hoberg, Erster Teil*, Erwin Gatz ed., *Miscellanea Historiae Pontificiae* 45, Rome, Università Gregoriana Editrice, 1979, pp. 65-95, at p. 65; and Pierre Jugie, 'Chaplain, Papal', in *The Papacy: An Encyclopaedia*, Philippe Levillain ed., 3 vols, New York and London, Routledge, 2002, I, pp. 300-1.

¹⁶ *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend, Diocesis Lincolnensis*, F. N. Davis, C. W. Forster and A. Hamilton Thompson ed., Canterbury and York Society, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1925, p. 2; the original record is in Lincolnshire Archives, Richard Gravesend Roll I, m. 1^r. No record of Ralph's presentation to the rectory is found in the calendars of the Lincoln episcopal registers.

¹⁷ The suit was brought against Henry III by 'Reynold de Pontibus and Margaret his wife': *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1258-1266*, London, HMSO, 1910, pp. 198-9 (p. 198).

¹⁸ *Calendar of Close Rolls 1261-1264*, London, HMSO, 1936, p. 345. A further mention of Ralph de Bohun appears in government records around this time: on 24 August 1265 a letter patent of simple protection which extended until Michaelmas was written for 'Ralph de Bohun': *Cal. Patent Rolls, 1258-1266*, p. 444.

¹⁹ If this *magister* Ralph de Bohun was already rector of two benefices by

1256, it seems reasonable to assume that he would be at least around 20 years of age, and, if he was the author of the *Petit Bruit*, this age would make him at least 75 when he wrote it. However, this is not without parallel: the fifteenth-century chronicler John Hardyng lived to the age of at least 87, and only began writing his 19,000-line chronicle in his sixties (*A Manual of the Writings in Middle English*, Albert E. Hartung ed., VIII, Edward Donald Kennedy, *Chronicles and Other Historical Writing*, New Haven, Connecticut, Archon Books, 1989, p. 2646), while Adam Murimuth was still writing his Latin chronicle in his seventies (John Taylor, *English Historical Literature in the Fourteenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1987, p. 50). P. Paris noted in 1877 that 'les rois de notre historien vivent fort longtemps' ('Rauf de Boun, historien', *Histoire Littéraire de la France* 27 (1877): 406-10, at p. 407) – perhaps this was also true of the historian himself.

²⁰ *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend*, ed. Davis, Forster and Hamilton Thompson, p. 186; the original record is preserved in Lincolnshire Archives, Richard Gravesend Roll VII, m. 11^f. 'Kynebauton' is the parish of Kimbolton in Huntingdonshire. Joan (daughter of Robert de Quincy) had married Humphrey de Bohun, son of Humphrey V and brother of papal chaplain Ralph de Bohun: see *VCH Huntingdonshire*, 3 vols and index, III, pp. 79-80. Joan held the advowson from at least 1275 until her death in 1283. I have not found any information in the Lincoln episcopal registers about how the rectory of Kimbolton left Ralph de Bohun's possession.

²¹ Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, rev. Gibbs *et al.*, VI, pp. 462-6. Eleanor was alive on 5 June 1252 (*Calendar of Close Rolls, 1251-1253*, London, HMSO, 1927, pp. 221-3), but had died before 7 December 1264, when Joan is first mentioned as Humphrey's wife (*Calendar of Close Rolls, 1264-1268*, London, HMSO, 1937, p. 5).

²² These are described in *VCH Huntingdonshire*, III, pp. 79-80. This discussion refers to Joan as the mother of Humphrey de Bohun VII. In fact he was her stepson.

²³ Another record, from 8 February 1287, also belongs in this group, in which 'Master Ralph de Bohun, staying at Paris for one year', nominated 'Hugh Russell as his attorney' in England; at the same time Humphrey de Bohun VII, Earl of Hereford and John de Bohun also nominated attorneys (and one of Humphrey's attorneys was 'Andrew de Kenebauton'): *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1281-1292* (London, HMSO, 1893), pp. 262-3.

²⁴ London, Guildhall, MS 25502, formerly held at Library of the Dean and

Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, as WD 2 (Liber C), f. 117^v (formerly foliated as 110^v), cited in John le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300, I: St. Paul's, London*, compiled by Diane E. Greenway (London, The Athlone Press, 1968), p. 88; John le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1300-1541, V: St. Paul's, London*, compiled by Joyce M. Horn (London, The Athlone Press, 1963), p. 70. This record appears to be the basis of the list printed in Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium ecclesiasticum parochiale Londinense ...*, 2 vols, London, Benj. Motte, 1708-10, I, sig. Gg2^v (p.228), where 'Boun' is mis-transcribed as 'Bonn'.

²⁵ See Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1066-1300, I*, pp. 88-9; see also Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1300-1541, V*, p. 70. The transcript was made by the antiquary Matthew Hutton (for whom see n. 37 below), and it is on f.89^r (p. 173) of London, British Library, MS Harley 6956: 'Radulphus Boun' is listed as holding the prebend of 'Wilesdon', the value of which is recorded as £6 3s. 8d. Thiolier, 'L'Itinéraire', p. 1346 n. 76, cites Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1066-1300, I*.

²⁶ London, Guildhall, MS 25502, formerly held at Library of the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's Cathedral, as WD 2 (Liber C), f. 109^r (formerly foliated as 102^r), cited in Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1066-1300, I*, p. 89; Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1300-1541, V*, pp. 70, 73. This record has been published in *Registrum Statutorum et Consuetudinum Ecclesie Cathedralis Sancti Pauli Londinensis*, W. S. Simpson ed. (London, Nichols and Sons, 1873), p. 94: 'Boun' is again mis-transcribed as 'Bonn'.

²⁷ *VCH Middlesex*, 12 vols, IV, p. 119 and n. 22. For the record, see *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliæ et Walliæ circa A.D. 1291*, London, printed by command of King George III, 1802, p. 17; another payment to *magister* Ralph de Bohun is recorded at p. 188.

²⁸ *Calendar of Close Rolls 1296-1302*, London, HMSO, 1906, p. 205 (7 April 1298); cited in Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1066-1300, I*, p. 89; *Fasti ... 1300-1541, V*, p. 70. In 1298 William Hamilton was a long-serving chancery clerk and had been Archdeacon of York since 1288; he had served as deputy chancellor of England 1286-1289; he was elected Dean of York by 12 December 1298 and was chancellor of England from January 1305 until his death in April 1307: see J. A. H[amilton], 'Hamilton, William de (d.1307)', *DNB*, XXIV, pp. 217-18; T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England* (6 vols, London, Longmans, Green & Co, 1920-1933, II), pp. 12, 63; Sir Charles Travis Clay, *York Minster Fasti* (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series 123-4, 2 vols, Wakefield, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1958-1959, I), pp. 10 - 11, 37. Hamilton had been profiting from moneylending since 1285: A. J.

Musson, 'Hamilton, William, d. 1307', *Oxford DNB*, xxiv, p. 911.

²⁹ Le Neve, *Fasti ... 1300-1541*, V, pp. 70, 73.

³⁰ Thiolier, 'L'Itinéraire', p. 1346 n. 76, cites Cockayne, *Complete Peerage*, rev. Gibbs, vii, pp. 683 – 684, who cites William Dugdale, *The History of St Paul's Cathedral in London ...* (London, Thomas Warren, 1658), sig. E2^r, p. 15. Dugdale himself cites MS Cotton Otho B.III (now in the British Library), which was badly damaged in the fire at Ashburnham House, Westminster, on 23 October 1731: *A Report from the Committee Appointed to View the Cottonian Library* (London, published by order of the House of Commons, 1732); Andrew Prescott, '“Their Present Miserable State of Cremation”: The Restoration of the Cotton Library', in *Sir Robert Cotton as Collector: Essays on an Early Stuart Courtier and his Legacy*, C. J. Wright ed. (London, The British Library, 1997), pp. 391 – 454 (p. 448 n. 169). However, before the manuscript was damaged, parts of it were transcribed on behalf of the antiquary John Bridges. The transcript is now London, British Library, MS Additional 5444. Most of this has been edited as the *Annales Londonienses* in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, William Stubbs ed. (Rolls Series, 2 vols, London, Longman, 1882-1883), I, pp. 3 – 251. After the notice of Henry de Lacy's death (p. 174) the annalist states: 'sepultus quidem in ecclesia Sancti Pauli, in novo opere, quod ipse nobiliter ditavit'. On the *Annales Londonienses*, see Antonia Gransden, *Historical Writing in England c. 550-1307* (London, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1974), pp. 508-9.

³¹ *Cal. Close Rolls 1296-1302*, p. 205 (April 7 1298).

³² A map of the diocese c.1300 is printed in Nicholas Bennett and David Marcombe, *Thomas de Aston and the Diocese of Lincoln* (Lincoln, Lincoln Cathedral Publications, 1998), p. 4.

³³ *VCH Bedfordshire*, 3 vols and index, II, pp. 305 – 307. This John of Dover was installed at Lidlington on 28 March 1283: *The Rolls and Registers of Bishop Oliver Sutton 1280-1299*, 8 vols, Rosalind M. T. Hill ed., (Lincoln Record Society 76; Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 1986), VIII, p. 97; see also *VCH Bedfordshire*, II, p. 283 and nn. 68-70; *Rolls and Registers of Bishop Oliver Sutton*, III, p. 109.

³⁴ However, he is perhaps the same individual as the Lothair of Florentia who was presented to the rectory on 4 November 1285, and the 'Lothair, rector of Rushden' for whose arrest the king had issued a request by 9 February 1296: John Bridges, *The History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire*, Peter Whalley ed. (2 vols, Oxford, no publisher named,

1791), II, sig. Bbb2^v, p. 192; *Rolls and Registers of Bishop Oliver Sutton*, II, pp. 46-7; *Rolls and Registers of Bishop Oliver Sutton*, V, p. 126.

³⁵ The Bishop of Lincoln from 1258 was Richard Gravesend, and he had a relative (possibly a nephew), also called Richard Gravesend. The younger Richard held benefices in the diocese of Lincoln from 1263, was a member of the elder Richard's household from this period, was Archdeacon of Northampton (in the diocese of Lincoln) from at least 1273 and acted as executor after the elder Richard died on 13 Dec 1279; the younger Richard had also been a canon of St. Paul's and the archdeacon of Essex; he was the treasurer of St. Paul's 1272-1278; and by the end of 1280 he had become Bishop of London: C. L. K[ingsford], 'Gravesend, Richard de (d. 1279)', in *DNB*, XXII, pp. 441-2; C.L.K[ingsford], 'Gravesend, Richard de (d. 1303)', in *DNB*, XXII, pp. 442-3; *Rotuli Ricardi Gravesend*, pp. v, xxxiii, xlv; John Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae 1066-1300*, III: *Lincoln*, p. 32; Roy Martin Haines, 'Gravesend, Richard of (d. 1279)', *Oxford DNB*, XXIII, pp. 402-3; and Philippa Hoskin, 'Gravesend, Richard of (d. 1303)', *Oxford DNB*, XXIII, p. 403. So there were strong connections between the diocese of Lincoln and St Paul's Cathedral in the person of Richard Gravesend junior.

³⁶ *Calendar of Close Rolls 1288-1296*, London, HMSO, 1904, p. 320 (13 June 1293). 'Eynho' is Aynho in Northampton: J. E. B. Gover, *The Place-Names of Northamptonshire* (English Place-Name Society 10; Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1933), p. 48. 'Quidenham' is Quiddenham in Norfolk, in the diocese of Norwich: *Cal. Close Rolls 1288-1296*, p. 632. There is no record of Ralph de Bohun being presented to this rectory in the calendars of the Lincoln episcopal registers.

³⁷ Dugdale, *Monasticon*, IV, p. 133. This record is printed in the *Monasticon* from London, British Library MS Harley 6951, which consists of extracts from the registers of the bishops of Lincoln copied by the antiquary Matthew Hutton (1639-1711) who, like Ralph, was rector of Aynho (see W[arwick] W[roth], 'Hutton, Matthew', in *DNB*, XXVIII, p. 358; Jan Broadway, 'Hutton, Matthew', *Oxford DNB*, XXIX, pp. 73-4). He transcribed this from John Dalderby's register: the original record is Lincolnshire Archives, Lincoln Cathedral Register III, ff. 121^r - 121^v. This register is also cited as the authority for the claim that 'Rad. de Boun' was rector of Aynho in Bridges, *History and Antiquities of Northamptonshire*, I, p. 138.

³⁸ There is a mention from 1340 in the Charter Rolls (*Calendar of Charter Rolls 1327-1341*, London, HMSO, 1912, p. 476) of another Ralph Bohun, from Claxton, Leicestershire, who with his wife Lora is named among many

who have in the past made gifts to the Cistercian abbey of Garendon in Leicestershire. This document is printed in Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v, pp. 331-4 (p. 332). However, elsewhere this Ralph's surname is given as 'Boson' (Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v, p. 328; John Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester* (4 vols, London, John Nichols and Son, 1795-1811; repr. Menston, Yorkshire, Scolar Press for S. R. Publishers, 1971, III, p. 789), 'Bozun' (*VCH Leicestershire*, III, p. 31), 'Bozon' (G. F. Farnham, *Leicestershire Medieval Village Notes*, 6 vols, Leicester, privately printed, 1929-1933, II, p. 27, where a 1276 entry on one of the De Banco Rolls is cited; *Rotuli Hundredorum temp. Hen. III & Edw. I...*, 2 vols, no place, printed by command of King George III, 1812-1818, I, p. 238), 'Buzun' (on 27 October 1262: *Final Concords of the County of Lincoln*, volume 2, C. W. Foster ed., Lincoln Record Society 17, Horncastle, W. K. Morton & Sons, 1920, p. 184), or even Bugun (for Bu₃un? *Placitorum in Domo Capitulari Westmonasteriensi asservatorum abbreviatio*, no place, printed by command of King George III, 1811, p. 153). If this Ralph died in 1275 (as stated in *VCH Leicestershire*, III, p. 31 n. 12), he cannot have been the author of the *Petit Bruit*; in any case, the spelling of his surname as 'Bohun' in the Charter Rolls seems to have been an error, and it is worth noting that even here his surname is 'Bohun', not 'de Bohun', nor is he ever described as *magister* or *meistre*. This Ralph was confused with the son of Henry de Bohun by J.R. Planché ('Genealogy and Armorial Bearings', p. 186).

³⁹ For a description of the manuscript, see *The British Library Catalogue of Additions to the Manuscripts, 1946-1950: Part 1, Descriptions*, London, The British Library, 1979, pp. 242-3. The manuscript is included in a comparative analysis of similar roll-chronicles: Diana B. Tyson, 'The Manuscript Tradition of Old French Prose *Brut* Rolls', *Scriptorium* 55:1 (2001): 107-18.

⁴⁰ Whittlesey was also the creator, and one of the authors, of an historical manuscript, written in Latin c. 1322-1329, which is now London, British Library, MS Additional 39758. Whittlesey was apparently still alive in 1349. See Janet D. Martin, *The Cartularies and Registers of Peterborough Abbey* (Northamptonshire Record Society 28, Kendal, Northamptonshire Record Society, 1978), pp. 17-19. *BL Cat. Add. MSS. 1946-1950: Part 1*, p. 242, prints the rubric to MS Additional 47170: '[C]ronica rotulata Latine et Gallice conscripta cum regibus Anglie ex utraque parte depicta fratris Walteri de Witteliseye monachi mon[a]sterii de Burgo Sancti Petri. Anime cuius propicietur Deus. Amen.' This supports the idea that Whittlesey's role was primarily that of an illustrator.

⁴¹ *Feudal Manuals of English History*, Thomas Wright ed. (London, privately printed for Joseph Mayer, 1872), pp. 38-60, 61-87.

⁴² *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 13; compare *Feudal Manuals*, pp. 65-6, for the text of this reign from London, British Library, MS Lansdowne Charters Roll 3.

⁴³ Compare *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 13: 'ly avantdit Rauf de Boune'.

⁴⁴ W. H. Monroe, '13th and Early 14th Century Illustrated Genealogical Manuscripts in Roll and Codex: Peter of Poitiers' *Compendium*, Universal Histories and Chronicles of the Kings of England', 3 vols, PhD dissertation, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London, June 1989, I, pp. 294, 349 n. 107.

⁴⁵ Monroe, 'Genealogical Manuscripts', II, p. 537.

⁴⁶ Compare *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 21, where the phrase 'com avant est dit' is used, although in this text Llywelyn is not referred to as 'le vantdit'.

⁴⁷ For the historical Llywelyn ap Gruffudd, see J. B. Smith, 'Llywelyn ap Gruffudd (d. 1282)', *Oxford DNB*, xxxiv, pp. 185-91; R. R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000; first ed. 1987), pp. 308-30; J. Beverly Smith, *Llywelyn ap Gruffudd: Prince of Wales* (Cardiff, University of Wales Press, 1998). The account of Henry III's reign in MS Additional 47170 corresponds word-for-word with the version in the lost roll-chronicle which had belonged to Joseph Mayer when it was edited in *Feudal Manuals*, ed. Wright, pp. 1-37 (35-7).

⁴⁸ *Le Petit Bruit*, p. 21.

⁴⁹ See most recently Scott Kleinman, 'The Legend of Havelok the Dane and the Historiography of East Anglia', *Studies in Philology* 100 (2003): 245-77.

⁵⁰ Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, pp. 230-6, 508; Taylor, *English Historical Literature*, pp. 26-8; H. G. Richardson, 'The *Annales Paulini*', *Speculum* 23 (1948): 630-40.

⁵¹ Diana B. Tyson, 'French Vernacular History Writers and their Patrons in the Fourteenth Century', *Medievalia et Humanistica* n.s. 14 (1986): 103-24, at pp. 106-7; H. C. Maxwell-Lyte, 'The Mohun Chronicle at Hacombe', *Devon Notes and Queries* 4 (1906-1907): 249-52.

⁵² I am grateful to Dr Martin Brett, Yu-Chiao Wang, Dr Judith Weiss, and the editors and readers of *Reading Medieval Studies* for their help with this article.