

*The Barony of Castelnau, in the Médoc,
during the Middle Ages.*

THE numerous and scattered possessions of some of the great houses in South-Western France involved the collection of a vast quantity of documents—conveyances, leases, feudal *reconnaissances*, records of homage, &c.—concerning their property. From time to time inventories were made of these masses of material to facilitate an examination of the estates, and such inventories have often been rendered extremely valuable owing to the total or partial disappearance of the original documents themselves. Two such records exist, in private hands, concerning the estates of the house of Foix, in the Médoc.¹ One of these, evidently compiled at the close of the sixteenth or early in the seventeenth century (judging by the writing and by the notices which it contains), is headed ‘*Inventaire des titres qui sont dans les Archives du Château de Castelnau concernant les anciens titres de la Maison de Candale, N° 16,*’ and it contains a list and short analysis of documents from the thirteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The other, in writing of rather later date, and in much better preservation (the former being faded in parts), bears the title ‘*Inventaire des titres concernant la baronnie de Castelnau en Médoc,*’ and is also headed ‘*Castelnau, Lamarque et autres Seigneuries en Médoc.*’ This is rather smaller and has nothing dating earlier than 1356, nor later than 1602. From the two can be gathered a good deal concerning the nature and extent of these possessions, especially from the fourteenth century, since the notices before that time are rather scanty.²

Early in the fourteenth century we find that the seignory of Castelnau³ was shared between the De Graillys and the lords of Castillon en Médoc.⁴ In 1330 the inhabitants made an agreement

¹ Castelnau and the other estates in the Médoc were not in the hands of the counts of Foix of the first race. (This family ended with Mathieu, comte de Foix.) In the thirteenth century they were in the possession of the house of Bordeaux. In 1307 Assalhide, the last of the family, married Pierre de Grailly; and in 1367 Archambaud de Grailly, their son, became comte de Foix, and his descendants in all branches adopted the name. The house of Candale, or Foix-Candale, began in the fifteenth century with the marriage of Jean de Foix to Margaret of Suffolk, countess of Kendal; and it was this branch of the family which succeeded to the possessions of the house of Foix in Guyenne. In 1587 by the marriage of Marguerite de Foix-Candale to Jean Louis de Nogaret de la Valette, duc d’Epernon, most of these possessions passed into his hands, there being no male heir of the Candale family. See Léo Drouyn, *Guyenne Militaire* (Bordeaux, 1865); Anselme, *Histoire de la Maison de France*.

² The inventories are not arranged chronologically.

³ Castelnau, arrondissement Bordeaux, chef-lieu du canton.

⁴ Castillon en Médoc, commune St. Christoly.

with the two lords Jean de Grailly⁵ and Pons de Castillon,⁶ co-seigneurs de Castelnau. In 1388 the men of Salaunes owed to both together for the right of pasturing their beasts on *le paduentage des dits seigneurs*; and the jurisdiction with its valuable proceeds was held jointly, a contract being made in 1412 between Gaston de Foix⁷ and the lady of Castillon *sur la juridiction commune de Castelnau*. This co-seignory seems to have involved the holding of different portions of the barony rather than actual co-partnership, except for such things as above mentioned, which were bound to concern both lords; otherwise homage and rent were paid from some places to Jean de Grailly, from others to Pons de Castillon. Thus in 1318 Marie de Castillon and the inhabitants of Listrac treated separately touching the rent due for lands and houses there; while the inventory of fourteenth-century documents concerning Lamarque,⁸ Pauillac,⁹ Soulac,¹⁰ St. Julien,¹¹ St. Christoly,¹² Cussac,¹³ St. Germain,¹⁴ St. Laurent,¹⁵ Moulis,¹⁶ &c., contains chiefly lists of *cens* and *esporle* due to Pons de Castillon alone. In 1424 a fresh arrangement was made as to the sharing of the barony. The heiress of Pons de Castillon, who had married the seigneur of Lescun,¹⁷

⁵ Probably Jean de Grailly II, captal de Buch, son of Pierre de Grailly and Assalhide de Bordeaux.

⁶ For the family of Castillon see Drouyn, i. xxxv. This was probably the Pons de Castillon who was seneschal of Saintonge in 1307.

⁷ Captal de Buch, a second son of Archambaud de Grailly and successor to all the Guyenne possessions. He was the father of Jean de Foix, comte de Candale, who headed that branch of the family.

⁸ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau. Part of Lamarque was held by Hugues de Castillon (1273). Other rights in it came into the possession of the first Pons de Castillon by his marriage. The second Pons de Castillon had his possessions confiscated by the king of England, but they were restored to his widow in 1353. Both Castillon and Lamarque were occupied by the English in the fifteenth century and granted to the duke of Gloucester. On his death in 1447 they were given by Henry VI to Jean de Foix, comte de Candale.

⁹ Arrondissement Lesparre, chef-lieu.

¹⁰ Arrondissement Lesparre, canton St. Vivien.

¹¹ Arrondissement Lesparre, canton Pauillac.

¹² Arrondissement and canton Lesparre.

¹³ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau.

¹⁴ Arrondissement and canton Lesparre. ¹⁵ Arrondissement Lesparre, chef-lieu.

¹⁶ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau.

¹⁷ I cannot identify this lady with certainty. The only daughter and heiress of Pons III of Castillon was called Bourguine, and married Bertrand de Pardailan, seigneur de la Motte and de Gondrin, who does not appear to have had any connexion with the seignory of Lescun. There was, however, some connexion between the seigneurs of Lescun and these possessions in the Médoc, and the claim may have been started by a marriage with some member of the house of Castillon. Odet Deydie, seigneur de Lescun (made comte de Comminges in 1472), also called himself seigneur de Castillon. His daughter married Jean de Foix, vicomte de Lautrec, and to them the parliament of Bordeaux adjudged Castillon and Lamarque, &c., which, on the other hand, Henry VI in 1447 granted to Jean de Foix, comte de Candale. The dispute on the question between the two branches of the family was ended by a marriage between Gaston de Foix, son of Jean, and Magdeleine de Lescun (Drouyn, ii. 341 seq., 388; Anselme, ii. 672).

yielded up to Jean de Foix, captal de Buch,¹⁸ all her inheritance in the land and jurisdiction of Castelnau and various other places, being given in recompense a fourth part of the jurisdiction of Lamarque, Bequey,¹⁹ and the *prévôté* of St. Julien. Meanwhile, however, it appears that Pons de Castillon had really lost a good deal of his property, which had been confiscated by the king of England and handed over to Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, who in 1441 was given the title of 'seigneur de Castillon, Lamarque, and Castelnau,' and received various *csportes* from the same in 1446. We hear, however, no more of any active management of the property by Duke Humphrey, who himself ceded his rights to the house of Foix, a cession confirmed by letters patent of Henry VI.²⁰ In 1497 a *vidimus* of this confirmation states that *Henri, roi d'Angleterre, donne à Jean de Foix, son cousin, Castillon, Lamarque, Moton,*²¹ *Saussac,*²² *Castelnau, Milhou,*²³ *Budos,*²⁴ *Cussac, Listrac*²⁵ *et Montignac,*²⁶ *lesquelles seigneuries le dit roy avait donné auparavant à Humfred, duc de Gloucester, oncle du dit roy, 5 Oct. l'an de son regne 25.* By the fifteenth century the comtes de Foix-Candale were among the largest landholders in this region, possessing as they did the captalat de Buch and much property in the Médoc. Besides the seignories confirmed to them above by the English king they had lands in the parishes of Moulis, St. Laurent, Pauillac, Avensan,²⁷ Bernones,²⁸ Salaunes,²⁹ Sainte Hélène de la Lande,²⁹ Lacanau,²⁹ Le Porge,²⁹ and Donissan, sharing the latter with the lords of Blanquefort. Seignories were constantly shared in varying proportions. In 1430 three parts of Listrac were in the possession of Isabel, wife of the seigneur³⁰ of Montferrand³¹ and Langoiran,³² and the inhabitants took the oath of fealty to the lady as well as to Gaston de Foix, captal de Buch. In some cases this division of property must have caused much inconvenience, and from time to time we find the chief seigneurs buying off other claimants and gradually acquiring complete control over their possessions. Thus in 1430 this same Gaston de Foix bought from the seigneur of Blanquefort all the rights which he held in Castelnau; in 1436

¹⁸ This must be the first comte de Candale.

¹⁹ Possibly Beguey, arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Belin.

²⁰ 1447. These lands were given to Jean de Foix, comte de Candale (Rymer, v. 171, third edition).

²¹ Mouton, commune Pauillac.

²² Commune St. Laurent-en-Médoc.

²³ Possibly Millau, in the Landes, commune Tartas.

²⁴ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Podensac.

²⁵ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau.

²⁶ Possibly in the arrondissement La Réole, canton Targon.

²⁷ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau.

²⁸ Commune Cussac.

²⁹ Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Castelnau.

³⁰ Possibly this seigneur was a son of Bertrand de Montferrand, seigneur de Langoiran, who married Rose d'Albret, 1408.

³¹ At Bassens, arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Carbon-Blanc.

³² Arrondissement Bordeaux, canton Cadillac.

300 francs were paid to the seigneur of Montaubon for certain rents in St. Sauveur ; and in 1498 as much as 4,000 francs of gold to J. de Jordan for dues he claimed in the seignories of Castillon, Lamarque, Motte,³³ and Castelnau.

Concerning the nature of this property, as far as can be judged from the summary notices given by an inventory, the Médoc was not in the fifteenth century so completely the land of vineyards as it has since become ; far less so indeed than other parts of the Bordelais—the Graves, for example—which by this time were almost exclusively given up to the culture of the vine. Vineyards existed, however, in some parts in the fourteenth century. In 1354 this is implied by the duty of certain tenants at St. Laurent, who had to provide material for the hoops of barrels and to carry them to St. Sauveur.³⁴ In 1364 half the ‘*Far de Castelnau*,’ let out at rent, was said to consist of ‘lands, *vines*, woods, meadows, and pastures :’ in 1390 at St. Laurent a tenant paid part of his rent in wine, and in 1393 another held 8 *réges* of vine in the seignory of Lamarque. In the following century vineyards and wine rents are mentioned at Moulis (1407), at Pauillac (1437), at Senensan (1420), and at Cussac (1477). In the sixteenth century rents of barrels of wine became distinctly more common, and were given by tenants in the above-mentioned places, with the addition of Donissan and Listrac. On the whole, however, corn rents were more numerous than wine rents, and the holdings of the tenants must have comprised a considerable portion of arable land. (This is not often certain from the description of the soil : the vague term *terre* or *terrain* is so frequently used ; or the *mayne* is said to be held at so much rent, which in the majority of cases was paid in money alone, or in part of the produce without stating its nature.) Bushels of oats were paid most constantly, but at Listrac, in return for pasture rights, wheat and millet were also given (1318), wheat and oats at Bernones (1327), barley at Langlade in the parish of Moulis (1356), and also at St. Laurent (1455) ; all kinds of corn from the inhabitants of Castelnau (1441) and oats alone from various other places.

Meadows are not very often mentioned : one known as ‘Prat Lauret’ appears constantly in the seignory of Lamarque, and there were some spoken of in Castelnau and elsewhere ; but of waste land, moor, and wood for pasture there was evidently abundance. Castelnau still stands in the centre of large woods, and to the south and east extend the vast *landes* of Bordeaux, in those days doubtless still more extensive and uncultivated. All the surrounding villages, as well as Castelnau itself, depended on its

³³ Probably La Mothe, commune St. Laurent-en-Médoc.

³⁴ St. Sauveur is only a few kilometres from Pauillac, celebrated for the two ‘grands crus’ Château Lafitte and Château Latour.

pastures for their beasts ; Moulis, St. Julien, Listrac, and St. Laurent had their own pasture grounds, and the men of Le Porge and Lacanau sent their flocks on to the *landes*. Whether many sheep were included among the *bestail* fed on these waste lands it is difficult to judge, but there were sheep rents paid at Donissan (1390), and at Castelnau and Listrac *moutonage* was one of the dues owed by several of the inhabitants. The chief feature about pasture in all these parts is that it was always spoken of as belonging to the lord, and was paid for by the tenants, not claimed by them as a natural right even for their plough beasts. Occasionally a piece of pasture land might be granted out as a private possession ; thus in 1551 a *sol de paduen* in the parish of St. Julien, *contenant 40 lates de longueur et 30 de largeur* was let out at rent for 25 sous³⁵ a year : as a rule, however, the waste lands and woods were used in common, each inhabitant paying the lord so much for his privilege of so doing. A great deal of this pasture rent was paid in corn and hens. Some men for the use of the *paduantage de Castelnau* gave a measure of oats, a bundle of straw, a hen and a *bian* (*corvée* of man or beast) each year (1337). In 1405 one tenant declared that he owed 2 bushels of oats for the pasture, *comme tous les autres de Castelnau*. This might be reduced or varied in individual cases : in 1479 J. de Foix gave permission to one of his men to *pescher son bestail sur tout le padourage de Castelnau* for one bushel only of oats. It was at St. Laurent that the rent for pasture comprised laths for the hoops of barrels as well as wheat and oats (1554). In Lacanau and Moulis only hens were paid, in Le Porge a bushel of oats, and so on. These rights of pasture generally included the privilege of taking firewood and fodder, such as heather and bracken, &c. This is described in a declaration of the inhabitants of Listrac in 1361, who owed a measure of oats, a hen, and a bundle of straw *pour les paduantage et paturage, caulx, sostre* (bracken), *le bruc* (gorse), *le bran* (heather) *et chalitz à faire le feag* (feu), *leu que losdits habitants ont accoustumé de fer en la Seigneurie de Castelnau, avec un bian chacun tenant feu vif* (that is, every resident was bound to a *corvée*) ; and in 1388 the men of Salaunes paid 3 sous and a hen for pasture and had to cut *bruc, bran, jaugar* (reeds) *et sostre avec daily et bigots* (scythe and hoes),³⁶ *de quy les dits seigneurs lur on fait baillette*.

Among all these scattered territories the *seigneur* certainly had some private demesne, since a good many labour rents were due to him, but the greater part of the soil was naturally in the

³⁵ Prices were reckoned in sous and deniers, 12 deniers to a sou and 20 sous to a pound. The payments were probably made in deniers, the sou being merely a standard of value.

³⁶ *Bigot* is translated by Mistral as a fork, or a hoe, or a sort of spade used especially for vines.

hands of the usual classes of sub-tenants—nobles owing homage and *esporle*, free *censitaires* owing rent in money and kind and occasionally in labour, and *questaux* (the villeins of these parts), bound to varying degrees and amounts of base services. Nothing very new appears in the list of those doing homage for their lands. All owed *esporle*, the name in Gascony for a due paid from all fiefs and censives in recognition of feudal overlordships, owed as a rule at the change of lord, occasionally at the change of tenant also. For nobles this was usually some fancy article, though occasionally they gave money. At Castelnaud a few paid twelve deniers of *esporle*, but the majority rendered pairs of white gloves and one at Castillon a pair of gold spurs. As a rule no special mention is made of military service, but only of homage. Amongst the homagers of Castillon one curious instance occurs. Bernard de Casaux is said to owe a horse of the value of 100s. each year, and is bound to follow the count of Poitiers should he ever come into Gascony, on condition that he received a fortnight's notice beforehand from his *seigneur*.

The free non-noble lands were here, as elsewhere, the most numerous; they owed in many cases rent in money alone, or corn from time to time, although the majority of corn rents seem to have been paid for pasture rights; but a great many holdings were given in return for part of the produce. The most usual quantity owed in this way was one-fifth, though it varied from one-third to one-sixth, and sometimes a little money might be paid as well; arable land, vineyards, willow plantations, osier beds, and even moorland were let out on this method. In the sixteenth century, at Sainte Hélène, payment in kind was commuted to eight francs annual rent, but the sharing of the produce was generally continued unchanged; wine rents, as has been already seen, increased during the later period. Every now and then *manœuvres* were owed, but not often except by the *questaux*, and only amounted to a few boon-days in the year; one or two *bians* were fairly common, being found, as a rule, among the pasture dues. Probably the annual rent was supplemented by dues of various kinds. The inventory only mentions in a very summary manner from time to time such things as *fromentage*, *civadage*, *millage*, *garbage*, *moutonage*, *pailhade*, &c. (dues of corn, sheaves, straw, and sheep), very probably owed at times of harvest or in return for pasture rights. In 1457 whenever their corn was being thrashed they promised to feed two men, one from each of their joint lords, men doubtless sent to see that the proper corn due was rendered in fair weight and good quality.

The most interesting part of the 'Inventaire,' however, is that concerned with the servile tenants. A whole section in one document is devoted to 'Des questaux et affranchissements d'iceulx,'

and there are scattered notices, sufficient to show the considerable number of these serfs, the usual conditions of their tenure, the methods of enfranchisement, and the differences between the position of bond and free. The original and principal difference between *questaux* and *censitaires* was the payment of an arbitrary *queste* instead of a fixed *cens*; but many other conditions followed, which also became typical of unfree tenants, and often survived after the *queste* had been converted into a definite sum. There were degrees of *questalité*. Some serfs were of actually servile status, not merely holders of land which owed base services; they could be bought and sold, given and pledged (not as actual slaves without their land, but as part and parcel of the soil, although instances can be sometimes found in which men seem to have been given very much as absolute chattels). They were bound in their bodies to their lord and had no methods of defence against him. Others, on the contrary, were barely distinguishable from free men who, having taken up *questal* property, had bound themselves to the conditions inherent in the same. Of these, besides the arbitrary character of their dues, the chief were inability to leave the land, to buy, sell, or bequeath their property, to make contracts of any kind, to marry their daughters without the licence of the lord, and as a rule they were bound to labour services, heavier and, originally at least, more uncertain than those of the free tenants. Most of these characteristics can be illustrated from the servile tenants on the Castelnau estates. Both in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries examples occur of the sale of serfs. In 1374 four *hommes questaux* of St. Sauveur were purchased for the sum of 319 golden nobles, in 1420 two at Avensan cost 200 of the same, and in 1425 four men, together with their rent of a *tonneau* of wine, were valued at 336 *guianes d'or*.

Arbitrary *queste* is mentioned in 1313, when several men of Cussac-Donnisan and St. Laurent confess that they are *hommes questaux et taillables à mercy*; but often *queste* is simply entered without any explanation (i.e. in the inventory; the original documents may have been more explicit, but very often this is not the case, judging from other instances, since the nature of these payments was understood at the time and therefore explanation was unnecessary. When *queste* was fixed at a definite sum, as frequently happened even when the payers of it were not freed, the amount would of course be entered). Thus in 1393 a *questave*, consisting of house, land, and garden, was bestowed by Archambaud de Grailly and the seigneur de Blanquefort on their *homme questal*, *à la charge de queste, taille, manœuvres, bians, aubergages* (duty of feeding the lord and his followers, very often unfixed in amount and liable to be a terrible burden), *fromentages, civadages, et autres droits de questalité*. Sometimes *questal* lands were bestowed at

nominally very slight payment and services, but this might leave the uncertain quantity still due. For example, in 1361 Martin de Boscau confessed to be a *questal* and to owe each year a measure of oats, a hen, a bundle of straw, and a *corvée* for the pasture; but the *queste* and other services are left unnamed. *Questalité* was attached sometimes to the land alone, sometimes to the person of the serf, and this also appears in the inventory. In most enfranchisements it is 'person and goods' which are freed; but in 1387 a *mayne* is said to have been freed whilst in the hands of the new tenant's father and is now let out at rent. One or two entries contain notices of permission given to serfs to make contracts of sale, showing their inability to do so without leave; but the greater part of the documents inventoried are either *questal reconnaissances*—unfortunately too briefly analysed to give details of the services rendered—or *enfranchisements*, which are always interesting.

From the fourteenth century onwards the serfs were constantly obtaining freedom, as a rule by purchase, but it is in the sixteenth century that these grants of freedom become most numerous. Several facts can be learnt from them—*first*, that many *questaux* had considerable sums of money at their disposition; *secondly*, that the lords were quite ready to get money in return for services doubtless burdensome to exact and not worth the trouble they occasioned; *thirdly*, that from these freed serfs labour services were still often exacted, although now fixed in amount, showing, however, that there was still private demesne to cultivate; and *fourthly*, that even when free, promises of permanent residence were constantly exacted, the lords being naturally anxious not to lose their tenants, nor to have the lands left vacant on their hands, and the services of cultivation unpaid until new holders were found. In 1390 a serf at St. Laurent paid 500s. for his freedom, besides binding himself to pay each year 40s., a couple of hens, a bushel of oats, and 7 boon-days; in 1403 Armand Martin gave to Archambaud de Grailly 60 *guyanes d'or*, and owed in future 20s. *cens* and 12d. *esporle*. Some of the notices of these enfranchisements are rather fuller and are worth quoting. In 1470 a whole family at Listrac was made free,

qui souloient estre questaux du dit Sieur, le quel droit de questalité est converti au devoir d'ung tonneau de vin fust³⁷ et ung paire de poules a la feste de St. Michel ou l'ans qu'il ne se recuellerà du vin donneroient lvi frans bourdelois pour le dit tonneau de vin: et en outre, dix journaux de manœuvre avec bœuf, charrette, et homme: et ceulx qui n'auront de bœufs avec les personnes, pour raison desdits maisons contentz maynes et autres lieux qui sont en la paroisse de Listrac à Boudan et à Pudos.

³⁷ I.e. in the barrel: occasionally wine dues did not include this, but were carried in vessels of some kind to be deposited in the lord's receptacles; or the wine was owed by the tenant but the barrel provided for him and sent to him by the lord.

In 1536, also at Listrac, the person and goods of a serf were freed and his duties converted into the rendering of 2 barrels of wine and 4 labours—2 with oxen and carts, 2 with his arms only. In 1569 certain inhabitants of Mussan were freed, but had to continue to pay their old rents, dues in kind and service, with the addition of a pipe of wine and 10 boon-days a year as rent. Many instances might be cited, but they are all very similar in character. The tenants have evidently shaken off servile conditions and disabilities, but have to pay rather more heavily in return, and are generally bound to some amount of labour. The benefit of certainty, however, must have more than compensated, as a rule, for some slight increase of fixed work and payments. The lords, doubtless, made sure of their own profits; a good sum of money was generally paid down for the grant, and they could always impose the conditions and services which suited them best. In the seignory of Castelnau alone, between 1563 and 1569, 35 contracts of enfranchisement were made, and 531 francs (no mean sum at that date) were gained by the lord in return.

Such, in very brief outline, is the nature of the material contained in these inventories, which in default of the original documents themselves form an invaluable source of information in regard to the property of the house of Foix and the conditions of landholding in the Médoc.

E. C. LODGE.

Legal Proofs of Age.

THE interesting details given in sworn evidence of age have been frequently quoted and accepted as genuine; but the consideration of a remarkable group of such proofs from Essex shows that even so early as the first part of the fifteenth century they present features which forbid our receiving them as literal statements of fact. There is an element of 'common form' which leads us to infer that the particulars sworn to were fictitious. The particulars had to be supplied, and a conventional pattern was provided for the purpose.

The proof of age of Walter Fitz Wauter, *chivaler*, brother and heir of Humphrey, son and heir of Walter Fitz Wauter, knight, and Joan, late his wife, deceased, tenants in chief, was made before John Kirkeby, escheator in the county of Essex, at Braintree, on Monday, the morrow of Holy Trinity, 1 Henry VI.¹

John Pechard of Hengham at the Castle, of the age of sixty years and more, sworn and separately examined, says that the said Walter, the son,

¹ Inquisitions Post Mortem, 1 Henry VI, no. 54.