

Chapter 7

The Boileau de Castelnau

You will recall from Chapter 5 that my father's G-grandmother was Ellen Leah Boileau, the wife of Reginald John Graham of the Elms, and of Edmond Castle. The Boileau de Castelnau were a Huguenot family based at Castelnau, in Languedoc. The official pedigree goes back to the Crusades but the details are almost certainly nonsense, in much the same way that Sir Adam Newington, Knight, is likely nonsense also. The Boileau were tradesmen who got wealthy, got pretensions, got a coat-of-arms, and got a castle. They then got the noble ancestors. Anyway, at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (in 1685) most of the family were booted out of France and fled to England, where they established themselves in London and Dublin, making another fortune as wine merchants. (A younger brother remained in France, converted to Catholicism, and continued rich and famous.) They were closely involved with the British Empire in India, and many of the family, both male and female, lived and died there.

One branch of the family (not mine) made the lofty heights of a Baronetcy, much as a branch of the Grahams of Edmond Castle did (page 108), but the Boileau Baronet line has persisted to the present day. I believe there exists a Boileau Baronet still, in Australia of all places. I must say that one doesn't naturally associate Australia with Baronets, but who am I to complain? It takes all sorts to make a world, or so sayeth the wise.

Along the way the Boileau married into all sorts of other families; French nobility, French Huguenots, other refugees in England and Ireland, British families in India. Many of these other families have detailed pedigrees of their own, so the whole thing rapidly gets out of hand. In this chapter, and the ones following, I'll basically just concentrate on some of the more interesting and lesser-known families. Once the lineage gets into the upper reaches of the European aristocracy (which is all well known, well documented, common to very many people, and thus rather dull from my point of view) I won't bother tracing the lines in detail. I'll leave all that to any interested reader with time to spare. It's pretty much a matter of reading the relevant books, such as *Europäische Stammtafeln* [55].

Nevertheless, all the various families and lineages can be highly confusing. It's not possible to put them all into one big chart – well, not easy anyway. Some years ago I actually did prepare an enormous chart that contains quite a lot of these families, and I even got some copies printed. I went to a special printing place who, in hindsight, must have thought I was doing a prepress run for Auckland University and they were very helpful, no doubt seeing lots of university dollars on the horizon. Eventually I said, yes, that's good, I'm happy now. How many copies do you need, they asked. Three, said I. What, said they, surely you jest. Nope, said I, three copies. Can I pay by Eftpos? Oh, they said, no we can't do small retail sales, you can only pay by Auckland University purchase order. Oh, said I, really? I can't get one of those. Oh, they said. Oh, said I. Silence ensued. Oh, bugger it, they said, take them for free. It's not worth the hassle. Thank you, said I, and hightailed it out of there clutching my prizes, one of which is now hanging on my wall, another of which I gave to Mum and Dad. It's worth doing once, but never again. Of course it's well out of date by now, but it still looks pretty.

At any rate I've broken up the genealogical charts into bite-sized chunks as best I can, and I shall

discuss them bit by bit over the next few chapters. I encourage you to refer to the charts often. I'll do my best to guide you through, but it won't be easy.

The first question that any serious genealogist will always ask is "How do you know all this?" Well, my grandmother, Catherine Bond (page 85), was interested in family history and wrote down a brief history of the family in a little red book, which I call the Little Red Book, because I'm very clever and good with names. In the Little Red Book she wrote down details of the Grahams of Edmond Castle and of the Boileau de Castelnaud; the Boileau details were clearly copied from the famous Boileau chart [11] (to be discussed later). Everything in the Little Red Book agrees with all other sources I have been able to find, including Lart [46] and the Big Book of Boileau [10] (to be discussed shortly), so there is no doubt of the lineage, at least for the most recent generations.¹ The Little Red Book is a genealogist's dream; very few are lucky enough to have such a convenient grandmother, and those of us who do thank our lucky genealogical stars each and every day.

My luck doesn't end there, either. Many of the Boileau de Castelnaud, as it turns out, were keen genealogists themselves, and have collected and preserved enormous amounts of information about the family. Not only that, but there are enormous numbers of people connected to the family, and they have collected information also. So all in all, being related to the Boileau de Castelnaud is the genealogical equivalent of finding a gold field where all one has to do is wander around picking up nuggets.

Of all the information collected by the various Boileau, two pieces stand out. Some years ago, Vince O'Grady sent to me a copy of a wonderful family history of the Boileau de Castelnaud, which I call the Big Book of Boileau, or BBB [10]. This document has been written by at least two recent generations of Boileau (Digby Whicher Boileau, Thomas Whicher Boileau, and Peter Mudie Boileau), is over 200 pages long, and contains a wealth of priceless information; a detailed discussion of the Boileau armorial bearings, a description of the castle, biographies of just about every known Boileau, and so on. Not only is the document comprehensive, it also appears to be carefully researched by people who cared about their sources.²

BBB is not, let me add, entirely without fault. Or rather, I should say that I do not always entirely agree with its method of presentation, which, I suppose, does not necessarily constitute a fault in anybody's eyes except mine. It concentrates very much on matters male and military, and ignores, for the most part, all the girls. Military actions, regiments, and battles are described in loving detail, while most females are dismissed in a line or two. At one stage the authors even seem to express surprise that someone had traced a Boileau pedigree, including the female lines! How silly! Tracing females! In this the authors are no worse than most genealogical compilers. Even in this book that you're reading now the females receive less attention, purely as a result of the fact that I know less about them. Nevertheless, one could at least try.

Anyway, despite my niggles, the Big Book of Boileau is the *sine qua non* of Boileau genealogy. Unfortunately, it is not properly published, and is available only in the form of a Microsoft Word file that is circulated around family members. All one has to do is ask for it, but one must first discover its existence. I hope that one day the authors will see fit to publish it formally, so that it could be more easily available and widely known.

The second major work is what I call the Big Boileau Chart, or BBC [11]. In December 1867 a Boileau relation called Jane Alicia Innes compiled a genealogical chart of the Boileau pedigree, including all known Boileau descendants. It has handwritten additions from the 1890s on.³ The original copy of this chart is now owned by Chris Read, yet another Boileau descendant, and he was kind enough to photograph the whole bloody thing and send it to me (see the photo on page 143).

Actually, there's a neat story about how I learned about the Big Boileau Chart. Some years ago I typed out the whole of Granny's Little Red Book and put it on the web. A while after doing this,

¹I remind the reader that any lineage that goes back more than a few generations is always subject to doubt, and the more the generations, the greater the doubt.

²See page 143.

³BBB refers once to something it calls "The Innes chart". It's hard to believe that this refers to something other than this chart, but no more detail is given. Furthermore, the reference in BBB to the Innes chart seems to be referring to something quite different. Unlikely though this might seem, it's possible that BBB didn't refer to this chart at all. However, in BBB there is another oblique reference made to an attempt to list all the descendants, including those in the female line, and this almost certainly refers to this chart.



The famous Boileau wall chart, compiled by Jane Alicia Innes and now in the possession of Chris Read, who sent me these photographs. The two photos are taken from about the middle of the chart looking in two different directions along the chart. You can see how bloody huge the thing is!

Leigh Boileau contacted me from Australia, and said how she had the original copy of the chart from which Granny had copied her information. Wonderful, said I. So Leigh very kindly sent me a copy of her chart; sure enough, the agreement with the Little Red Book was word for word. No doubt at all where Granny had got her information.

However, a few years later, Chris Read contacted me, saying the same thing, that he had the original chart from which the Little Red Book was copied. Very nice, I replied, I've already got a copy of the original. Er... no you don't, was the answer; the original is 1 m wide and over 15 m long, and you don't have a copy of it. My jaw just about hit the floor. 15 m long?! What on earth was in it? So Chris painstakingly photographed the whole chart, piece by piece, and emailed me a vast number of photographs, which I pieced together into a single pdf file. Sure enough, the chart that Leigh Boileau sent to me was itself a copy of only a small part of the Big Boileau Chart. I can only assume that the Big Boileau Chart is the original of all these charts; if it's a copy of a part of a larger earlier chart, then I'm not sure I want to know. Fifteen metres long is bad enough; anything more would just be ridiculous.

The sources for many of the French families into which the Boileau married are, I fear, just as unreliable as Burke's massive works of fiction. I've referred often to Chesnaye-Desbois [21] but this has a reputation of being completely unreliable. However, I have nothing better. I'm not conversant enough with French, particularly not old French, to search the records myself, so I am somewhat restricted in what I can do. I've also used Artefeuil [5] and d'Hozier [42], but they are just as unreliable as Chesnaye-Desbois.

It remains to discuss in slightly more detail the sources used by BBB. Almost all of the original family documents are now lost; most importantly a detailed account of the family that had been compiled by Charles (ii) (page 157) was lost in the fire that followed the great earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, and others are thought to have perished when the family residence in Dublin burned down some time before 1811. Despite this, an account of the family that was written in 1754 still survives; the author clearly referred to many of the original documents, and there's no reason to distrust it

in any important respect. There is also surviving a copy of the Certificate of Nobility (page 152) granted to the family in 1668, which contains a list of all the documents produced in proof of the descent. The existing 1811 story of the Boileau family, produced by Bluemantle Poursuivant, of the English College of Heralds¹, is based almost entirely on the 1754 document. BBB recognises that the accounts of the family in Debrett's *Peerage and Baronetage*, and in Burke's, are mostly a pile of nonsense. No surprise there. Interestingly, BBB doesn't like Lart much either, although it's better than Burke. Then there is a long list of other documents used to establish family facts; family letters, the *Gentleman's Magazine*, regimental histories, various books about French history, Proceedings of the Huguenot Society, etc. All in all, I trust BBB implicitly. They did their homework.

So, to begin.

Boileau mythology: Etienne and the Crusaders

I've decided to start the story of the Boileau with **Etienne**, the Grand Provost of Paris in 1250, even though there is no evidence that links him to any later Boileau. He is traditionally considered to be the first known member of the family, and who's to say, this might even be true. Stranger things have happened. At any rate, it makes for a nice story. Just as long as we keep in mind we are really discussing a work of imaginative fiction we won't go too far wrong. (Well, Etienne's existence *per se* is quite certain – it's just the descent to later Boileau that is the work of a more creative mind.)

According to Joinville [45]

There were moreover so many malefactors and robbers in Paris and round about, that the whole country was overrun with them. The King, who was very zealous for the protection of the common people, found out the whole truth; so he would no longer allow the provosty of Paris to be sold, but gave secure and high wages to those who for the future should hold it. And he put down all the evil customs whereby the people might be oppressed; and made inquiry throughout the whole kingdom and country where a man might be found who would administer sound and strict justice, and spare the rich no more than the poor. And then Stephen Boileau was pointed out to him; and he upheld and kept the provosty so well that no malefactor, nor robber, nor murderer, durst abide in Paris but he was presently hanged or ruined: neither kith nor kin, gold nor silver could protect him. The King's territory began to improve; people came thither for the sake of the good justice that was done there.

To commemorate this wonderful occasion in 1250 there is a statue of Etienne outside the Hôtel de Ville in Paris.

To continue with the fable, **Robert** Boileau, the son of Etienne, accompanied Louis IX on his expedition to the Crusades in 1270, and perished at the siege of Tunis. Family documents claimed that Robert went with Louis to the Holy Land, where he died, but since Louis IX's crusade never got there, this is somewhat unlikely. Louis's army was decimated by disease, among the victims being the King himself; it is claimed (by the Boileau family) that he was shriven on his deathbed by a priest named Geoffroi Boileau, a story just as believable as all the other stories about the early Boileau.

After Robert come a string of Jeans. Even the originators of these tales couldn't decide how many Jeans there were, two or three. The first, **Jean (i)**, is supposed to have been born in 1270 which is possible, I imagine, even though his claimed father died that same year while on Crusade. His son, Jean (ii) was ennobled by Charles I in 1341, in an event that actually is probably historical, as a certificate of the Patent of Nobility still exists. The Patent, from the Register entitled *The Register of Documents of the Chamber of Accounts of the Lord the King*, begun at All Saints, 1362, and finished at 1st January, 1388, reads: "Master Jean Boileau, Notary to the King, by the favour done to him by his [i.e., the King's] letters, given in the month of September AD 1371, concerning his [i.e., Jean's] nobility and that of Master Jean, his son, together with their posterity. Issued and delivered

¹Don't you just love the name?

on payment of the sum of 119 livres, 4 sous, 1 denier, which must be recovered by the Treasury, according to the schedule of the said Treasury given the 27th of October 1372, and returned to the said Master Jean.”¹ Below this is written: “Compared with the original, signed, made an extracted as above by me, Conseiller, Secretary to the King, House and Crown of France, and his finances and Writer in the Chambre des Comptes, signed, Richer. This fact is pronounced by the Notaries of the King at the Chatelet of Paris. Undersigned the 12th April 1667: Le Boucher, Levesque”, and is signed with their official signatures.

So it seems there really was at least one Jean Boileau who was ennobled. It was either this Jean, or his son Jean, who went with 2000 other gentlemen, and the Duc de Nevers, to help the Emperor Sigismund, and was killed at the battle of Nicopolis, on the 28th of September, 1396. According to Chesnaye-Desbois, he was ordered by the Duc de Nevers to carry on his arms *trois croix en sautoir*, but he never did this.

This is all very interesting actually. It’s likely that this Jean Boileau existed, and may even have fought at Nicopolis, but he seem to have had quite a different coat-of-arms from the Boileau de Castelnau; there is no evidence at all for a direct link between the Jean and the later Boileau, and the different coat-of-arms is evidence that there was no link. It’s a nice example of how a family that bought into the nobility would invent its own noble ancestors, grabbing them from wherever they could. If they had the same name, so much the better.

The earliest historical Boileau

The first Boileau to live in Languedoc was **Regnaud** (d. 1400), supposedly the son of Jean (ii) or (iia). He first lived in Montereau-Fault-Yonne, close to Paris, but was commissioned by Charles VI to build a castle at Nîmes. So he sold his house for 4,500 livres – it is said that his coat-of-arms was carved above the door of this house – and moved down to Languedoc, being the first of the family to live there, and thus beginning the long association of the Boileau family with this region.

Regnaud’s name first appears in the records in 1390, as Treasurer of the Domain of the King in the Seneschalship of Beaucaire and Nîmes. Chesnaye-Desbois says how he dropped the arms of Etienne Boileau in favour of his own – the tower denoting the castle he was commissioned to build, presumably, and the crescent denoting the bravery of his father at the battle of Nicopolis. This appears to be merely a transparent attempt by Chesnaye-Desbois to cover up the uncomfortable fact that the coat-of-arms had suddenly changed, and he had no idea why. The new coat-of-arms of Regnaud was *D’azur, au château d’argent, maçonné de sable, au croissant de même en point. Le caïque: ouvert d’argent. Cimier: un Pélican d’or, donnant son sang à ses petits. Devise: de tout mon coeur*. That is, a blue background with a silver castle, trimmed in black, and a silver crescent below; silver helmet, and the crest is a pelican giving its blood to its children. Motto: with all my heart.

Regnaud’s son, **Antoine (i)**, is pretty much an unknown. There is little doubt of his existence, and it’s likely he lived at Montpellier at some stage, but little more can be said; BBB claims he was definitely never Treasurer, as some accounts claim.

Antoine’s son was **Guillaume (i)** (1420-1494). We know nothing of him until, on the 20th of October 1469 he was commissioned by the then Treasurer, Mathieu Picot, to receive the payments on his behalf; he continued doing this for 15 years.

In 1470 he married **Etiennette Bourdin** (daughter of the Receveur Général des Finances de Poitou), and in the marriage contract he is described as keeper of the salt barns at Montpellier, an appointment connected with the gabelle². On the 24th of June 1484, he took over the appointment of

¹Sounds to me a bit like the cash for honours scandal.

²From Wikipedia: “The gabelle was a very unpopular tax on salt in France before 1790. In France, Gabelle was originally applied to taxes on all commodities, but was gradually limited to the tax on salt. In time it became one of the most hated and most grossly unequal taxes in the country, but, though condemned by all supporters of reform, it was not abolished until 1790. First imposed as a temporary expedient in 1286 in the reign of Philip IV, it was made a permanent tax by Charles V. Repressive as a state monopoly, it was made doubly so from the fact that the government obliged every individual above the age of eight years to purchase weekly a minimum amount of salt at a fixed price.” Isn’t Wikipedia great?

Treasurer from Jean Berri. As part payment he was obliged, by Michel Gaillard, Chancellor-General of France and the husband of Marguerite Bourdin (probably a relation of Guillaume's wife) to make over to Picot's children his inheritance of Argenteuil, near Paris. This consisted of a strong house, with battlements, lands, vineyards, fields and gardens, and 120 to 140 livres of income. As far as it is known, this marks the severance of the last tie of the family with the north of France.

In 1487 he appears in an incident involving his wife's brother Antoine, who was Receiver of the poll-tax in the Diocese of Nîmes and who had arrested two men for debt on a market-day, contrary to the privileges of the town. The Consuls made representations to the Seneschal, whose Lieutenant sat to adjudge the dispute, with the Judge of the Criminal Court, the King's Advocate, the public prosecutor and Guillaume Boyleaue, the Treasurer of the Seneschalship. The Lieutenant took the advice of these officers and, on their unanimous opinion, he upheld the petition. Guillaume is recorded as having agreed with the decision, but also as having spoken on his brother-in-law's behalf.

The following year, the Commissioners of Account in Paris addressed an instruction to him as the Commissioner for the investigation of francs-fiefs, or noble heritages. The original of an order directed to him as Treasurer in 1493 is among the Boileau family papers. In the previous year, he had obtained from the King letters of reversion of the Treasurership to himself and to his son Antoine. I think this means that the office of Treasurer was just passed directly from him to his son.

He died on the 6th of September, 1494, and his tomb, in the family house at Nîmes, was to be seen as late as 1754, with the following inscription, translated from the Latin original:

IHS¹ To the blessed memory of Lord Guillaume Boileau
Treasurer of our most serene King, Lord Antoine Boileau,
his son and Treasurer, caused (this tomb) to be erected
with a chapel for himself and his (family)
in the year of our Lord 1499, in September.

'Pray for the dead, that they may rest in peace'.

He had 11 children.

Of those eleven children, only seven appear in the records. The oldest male, Antoine (ii), I deal with below. Guillaume (ii) became the Prior of St. Nicholas, near Uzès, Jean Guillaume was a councillor at Montpellier, Madeleine married Pierre de Rollot, Treasurer of Provence in 1491, Nicholas was a councillor in the Grand Council (whatever that was) and is believed to be the ancestor of the famous poet Boileau Despreaux, Agnes was the second wife of Pierre de Rochemore (who is actually my 12G grandfather through his first wife, Jeanne d'Orjolet; see page 283. It all gets a little complicated), while Jeanne Catherine didn't marry the Chancellor of France, as is sometimes claimed. I don't know whom she did marry, but it wasn't him apparently.

It was Guillaume's son, **Antoine (ii)**, who first bought lands at Castelnaud, thus becoming the first Boileau de Castelnaud; he purchased the estate of Castelnaud-de-la-Garde, and of St. Croix de Boiriac (or Boirac)², from the Comte Secoudin de St. Felix, for £400 and in 1500 took possession of the property. This was a very significant purchase, as it provided the Seigneurie by which the Boileau could be classed as noble. It appears that, no matter how important or rich you were, you couldn't be officially classed as a Noble until you had the estate to prove it. It should, however, be noted that the Seigneurie de Castelnaud did *not* constitute a Barony, and thus none of the Boileau de Castelnaud were Barons, contrary to the claims in some sources.

It's maybe useful to say a few things about the French system of nobility, to help us understand better where the Boileau came from. The first important thing to realise is that nobility in France was quite specific, carrying as it did a number of legal rights and privileges, particularly exemption from taxation. There were three ways nobility could be acquired; by birth, by office, or by letters

¹An abbreviation of the Greek spelling of Jesus.

²We know where Castelnaud is – it's called Castelnaud-Valence in the map on page 241 – but I have no idea where St. Croix de Boiriac is, and I don't think anybody else does either. Its precise location seems to have disappeared into the historical mists. I can't even find it on Google maps.

patent from the Sovereign. Typical offices that conferred nobility were things like municipal offices (aldermen, mayors, that kind of thing), judicial offices, fiscal offices (senior tax collectors, state auditors, members of the tax courts, etc), administrative offices (positions in the King's household for instance), or military commissions. You could lose nobility by failing at your feudal duties or practising forbidden occupations: commerce, for example, or manual crafts were to be avoided. Medicine, glass-blowing, exploitation of mines, maritime commerce, and wholesale commerce were acceptable, for some strange reason. Tilling your own land was acceptable, but farming someone else's (except the King's) was not.

Titles (such as Duc, Comte or Baron) were quite different from nobility, and were attached to specific pieces of land. One had to be noble to have a title, but most nobility had no title. To complicate things further, as I understand it commoners could become Seigneurs, or Lords, of estates, merely by buying them. Although a commoner who bought estate X could then be known as the Seigneur de X, they could not take over any title associated with that estate, to become, say, the Comte de X. There was thus no simple correspondence between Seigneurs and the nobility, or the nobility and titles. As far as I can see, Seigneurs were pretty much rich farmers, with a variety of legal rights over their tenants in addition to the rights of a landlord.

It seems clear that the Boileau de Castelnau acquired their nobility through the acquisition (presumably the purchase) of financial offices, and became the Seigneurs de Castelnau upon purchase of that estate. They were not originally titled, as the Seigneurie de Castelnau carried no title, although I believe they became so later, after my ancestors had split off and gone to England.

Like his father, Antoine (ii) was Treasurer, the office being granted to him by Charles VIII in 1494. He appears in July 1496 as Treasurer in an order to pay certain fees, and is described as a 'licencie-en-lois', a grade of lawyer between 'bachelier' and 'docteur'. Upon the accession of Louis XII in 1498, Antoine was confirmed in the office, at Senlis. For some unknown reason, however, he was suspended from office from August 1511 to April 1512; this may account for his obtaining yet another confirmation of office in 1513, in Valence, while yet another was necessary on the accession of François I (this must have been quite a familiar procedure by now).

The suspension evidently did not affect his reputation, for in 1516, when the Duchesse d'Alençon (Marguerite de Valois, the King's sister) visited Nîmes, he was taken into her service; his wife Françoise was appointed Marguerite's Dame d'honneur, and their son Jean (iv), described as Seigneur de Sainte-Croix, was made an officer of the Household. These honours probably indicate the high esteem in which the family was held. Marguerite was always favourable to the Protestant religion, and this may ultimately have influenced the family into becoming Protestants.

In 1525, one Noble Marcelin Doumergue appears as Treasurer so commissioned by the King. The circumstances of this appointment are not known, but it may have been under a new system of financial administration introduced by the King in 1523. It did not last very long, for Antoine reappears in June, 1526, as Treasurer and Receiver-Ordinary, and again in 1531 and 1533. Letters of survival were issued on the 21st of August, 1534, to Antoine and his son, Jean (iv), continuing the office to the latter on his father's death, which took place at some date before Jean's marriage in 1538.

In 1497 he married **Françoise Troussellier**, daughter and heiress of Dr. Jean Troussellier (councillor and principal physician to Charles VIII) and by her had four children. Pope Leo X, in an indulgence dated August 1516 recognised Antoine and his descendants as Noble, and this document remained among the archives of the family till the year 1755.

In addition to their son, Jean (iv), Antoine and his wife had three daughters, Catherine, Magdelaine and Etiennette. I know nothing about them except the names of their husbands, which is pretty typical in a sad sort of way.

Antoine and his wife were devout Catholics, and in 1516 Pope Leo X granted indulgences for them and their family. These documents have the additional interest in that Antoine's Noble status was recognised in them. However, their Catholicism had a rather more interesting consequence than merely some indulgences. The earliest Boileau family portrait is a painting of Antoine and Françoise (page 150) from 1519. The sit facing each other, hands in prayer, he with an elegant pageboy haircut and chubby cheeks, she demurely covered up. He looks heavenwards, like a good Catholic I imagine, while she stares straight ahead, with an expression that could be interpreted by



Antoine (ii) Boileau and his wife, Françoise Troussellier. This is the earliest Boileau family portrait, and the earliest picture of the Boileau coat-of-arms. The caption reads "1519 Antoine de Boileau Cher Seigneur de Castelnaud Senechat de Nimes et de Beaucaire Trésorier du Roi et Françoise de Trosselliere sa Femme, mariées en 1497."

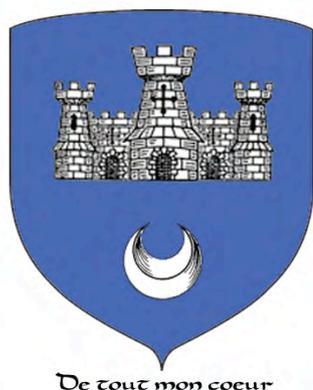
an uncharitable person¹ as somewhat sour. Behind them is this rather strange background, with a child in one corner. It's not until you look closely that you realise that the child is being held by a pair of hands, but the body to which those hands belong has been deliberately obliterated. This background was originally a representation of the Madonna and Child; this evidently caused one of their Huguenot descendants to fear that this might be a temptation to worship the Virgin, and he therefore erased her figure from the picture, leaving the Child and her hands only. Nothing like a bit of religious bigotry to enliven the dry and dusty family history. Don't worry, there will be plenty more.

Interestingly, the painting displays the earliest known emblazonment of the family coat-of-arms, which are also shown dimidiated with those of Françoise, an unusual way of combining coats-of-arms.

The next Boileau was **Jean (iv)**, the son of Antoine (ii) and Françoise, who succeeded his father both as the Seigneur de Castelnaud, and as Treasurer. He did homage for this office in 1535. He was almost certainly the first of the family to turn Protestant. There's no direct evidence of this, but he married into a well-known Protestant family, the Montcalm, and at least three of their children married Protestants.

It's claimed that Jean was imprisoned, tortured and beheaded in 1560, but reports of his death

¹i.e., me.



Two versions of the Boileau de Castelnau coat-of-arms: *D'azur, au château d'argent, maçonné de sable, au croissant de même en point. Le caïque: ouvert d'argent. Cimier: un Pélican d'or, donnant son sang à ses petits. Devise: de tout mon coeur.* My version is on the left, and on the right is the version carved above the door of the Boileau mausoleum at Ketteringham church. This photo was sent to me in September, 2008, by Mary Parker, the churchwarden of Ketteringham.

were greatly exaggerated; he was definitely alive on the 31st of May that year, when he was confirmed as Treasurer, and appears to have survived quite well without his head for a number of years thereafter.

Jean (iv) married **Anne de Montcalm**, a family with a long pedigree of its own (page 207), and they had five children that I know of. Jean (v), and four girls. As usual I know nothing about the girls except the names of their husbands. The only interesting one was the husband of Claudine, a charming gentleman by the name of Jean Jacques de Lageret, who is said to have been responsible for the 'Michelade', the massacre of Catholics, including 24 Catholic priests and monks, by Protestant rioters in Nîmes on Michaelmas (29 September) 1567.

The religious wars in France

And on that happy note of massacre, it is time for me to detour a little and write about the French religious wars. They had an enormous impact on the Boileau de Castelnau, and thus, although not genealogical in the strict sense, are crucial¹ for a proper understanding of the family history.

After the introduction of Protestant ideas to France around 1520 or so, there followed a period of about 80 years that were essentially a continuous civil war, sometimes sleeping, sometimes pursued with vigour, but always there in the background. It wasn't just a conflict between Catholic and Protestant, it was also fuelled by dynastic squabbles; the Catholic House of Guise and the Protestant Bourbons struggling desperately to maintain their own power and diminish that of their opponents. Indeed, once the political squabbles were ended by the accession of Henry IV (who switched to the Catholic faith with the famous remark "Paris vaut bien une messe" – "Paris is well worth a mass") it's remarkable just how quickly the extreme religious violence died down.

These religious wars were punctuated by a series of truces and atrocities, the most famous of which was the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre of 1572. Started by the Duke de Guise, who led a band of thugs to murder the Admiral de Coligny (a Bourbon), the anti-Protestant violence spread first through Paris and then to other cities; it's estimated that about 10,000 people were killed, 2,000 in Paris alone.

In 1589 Henri de Navarre became King of France, after the assassination of Henry III. Henry IV was a Protestant and, financed by Queen Elizabeth of England (among others) he won a series

¹People have been known to mock me for my overuse of the word crucial. However, I think it's OK here.

of battles against the Catholic league, but was unable to take Paris, whose Catholic citizens were strongly opposed to a Protestant King. However, Henry's conversion to the Catholic faith in 1593 allowed a resolution of the situation, and Henry became one of the best-loved, and probably most human, of the French Kings (who were, in general, a bunch of complete twats). Of all monarchs I have ever read about, Henry IV is undeniably one of my favourites. A close second, maybe, to Queen Elizabeth I, but right up there with the best of them.¹

His major effort to defuse religious tension was the Edict of Nantes, not a sign of genuine toleration, more of an armed truce. However, without the political will driving the conflict, open violence was more or less avoided. Until, of course, Henry IV was assassinated by an angry Catholic on the grounds that Henry had betrayed the Catholic religion. How typical it all seems, how very unsurprising. Politics hasn't changed from that day to this.

Over the next century, genuine religious toleration remained a thing unheard of, and there was increasing trouble between the factions, until in 1661 Louis XIV, who was a particularly rabid anti-Protestant, introduced a number of harsh policies aimed at scaring Huguenots out of the country, or persuading them to convert. Finally, in October 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked (by the Edict of Fontainebleau) leading to the emergence once again of open violence against the Huguenots. Their response this time was not, in general, to fight back in any organised way. Instead, they left the country in droves.

And among those droves, as we shall see, was a branch of the Boileau de Castelnau.



The Patent of Nobility of the Boileau de Castelnau. I've never seen a transcription or translation of the writing, but that's what I'm told this is. I'm not even sure what date this is from.

¹This is not setting the bar very high. Monarchs are and were, practically without exception, idiots.

The Huguenots: flight from France

Although we're not sure whether or not Jean (iv) was a Huguenot (although we think he probably was), there is no doubt about his son, **Jean (v)**, (1545–1618), the next Seigneur de Castelnaud. He married twice, and both of his wives came from rabid Protestant families. Both of his fathers-in-law were implicated in the Michelade, and were fined.

In spite of the Michelade, when the news of the St. Bartholomew's Day massacre reached Nîmes, the townspeople of both religious factions met in council to consider measures to avert disorder, and the orders from Paris for the Catholics to retaliate and kill the Protestants were not carried out. Peace was maintained by mutual accord, and a guard of both religions was placed on the gate. A joint delegation was sent to the Seneschal to ask for his support, and Jean is on record as having been among those present and consenting.

Later he appears as Syndic of the Diocese of Nîmes, no doubt in its secular administrative character, i.e., he was its representative in its affairs. In 1586 he was summoned as a Noble to join the Constable Duc de Montmorency, the Governor of Languedoc, in his journey through the upper part of the province, and in 1594 he presented himself for service on the call-up of the *arrière-ban*, or feudal levy.

In 1600, the people of Nîmes asked him to represent them at an assembly at Montpellier for putting into effect the provisions of the Edict of Nantes. In the same year he was a deacon in the Consistory, or Presbytery of the Reformed Church at Nîmes, the duties of the office being to collect and distribute the alms for the benefit of the poor, the prisoners and the sick, to visit them and to care for them.

By 1605 he was 1st Consul of Nîmes. The consuls were the municipal magistrates of the towns in the south of France, forming the executive council. They were elected annually. In Nîmes there were four, of whom the first was a Noble or advocate, alternately; the second, a bourgeois or merchant; the third, a notary or artisan, and the fourth, a labourer.

Jean's first wife, **Honora de Blanche** was the daughter of Robert Blanc, Juge-royal ordinaire de Nîmes, and his second wife was the daughter of Nicholas Calvière de St. Cosme, a distinguished Huguenot. Jean's eldest son, Jacques (i), was the son of Honora de Blanche. He is the ancestor of the branch of Boileau based in Uzès; he became a doctor of medicine, and was the 1st Consul of Uzès in 1619 and 1625, playing a leading role in the affairs of that town. BBB gives a lot more detail about the Uzès branch of the family, but since anybody interested can read it there, I shall not repeat the information here.¹

From his second marriage with **Rose de Calvière**, Jean (v) had at least nine children (I believe he had thirteen in total, between both his wives). The eldest son, Nicholas (ii) inherited the Seigneurie of Castelnaud; the next son, Guillaume, was a doctor of law; the next three sons, Jean (vi), Claude, and Daniel, all went off to fight and die young in completely unimportant and meaningless wars in various places around Europe, while I know nothing about the other children.

Next to come was **Nicholas (ii)** (1578–1657), the eldest son of Jean (v). He was a doctor of law, having taken his degree at Geneva, and was received as an advocate at Valence in 1598. He was Advocate to the Seneschal at Nîmes. According to BBB, "he was regarded as one of the cleverest of his time in his profession, his advice and writings having been followed eagerly in all the courts. He settled innumerable cases of litigation, not allowing his clients to go to court, if at all possible. His competence, ability and integrity were so well known, and his reputation was so well established, that he was still often asked for as Advocate as long as ten years after his death. Although he took no money from poor litigants or from Nobles, he earned nevertheless more than 100,000 francs."

Hmmm.... well, I have to say that I remain unconvinced. This noble Robin Hood act is somewhat implausible to me. After all, if he never took any money from either poor *or* rich people, how on earth did he get so wealthy? This reads more like something somebody wrote for his funeral oration.

It was probably Nicolas who is mentioned as 'de Boileau', as one of the five gentlemen who, in 1619, at a time when civil war was threatening, went to tell Louis XIII how loyal his subjects in

¹One thing I don't entirely understand is why the eldest son didn't become the Seigneur de Castelnaud, but ended up as a mere doctor of medicine in some other place connected with his mother's family (Robert Blanc was from Uzès).

Languedoc were. It's unlikely that Louis was convinced. He didn't like Huguenots, and I doubt he liked Nicholas much.

In 1620, Nicholas represented the Consuls at a meeting of the leaders of the community and of the Protestants, called to deal with the town affairs at a time of civil disturbance. In 1621, he was asked to represent Nîmes in the matter of a levy for supplies to the Huguenot forces. Later that year, he represented the Town Council in discussion with the magistrates when the Protestants were causing trouble by trying to demolish the Catholic cathedral. In 1625 he was present at an assembly of leading citizens called by the Duc de Rohan, a Huguenot leader, to establish a council of direction for the conduct of the affairs of the Town. Two years later, the Duc de Rohan, then general of the Languedoc Protestant forces, set up in Nîmes a council of sixteen with powers to take such action as they thought fit for the security and welfare of the town; Nicolas was one of the first to be nominated.

Before his marriage in 1619, he travelled widely in western Europe, including a visit to England. According to the Little Red Book: "In his profession he rose to great eminence and having amassed the sum of £1400 Sterling, he resolved to visit foreign countries". Good for him. How very broadening.

He married his cousin, **Anne de Calvière-Boucoiran**, and they had eleven children. The eldest, François (i), a professional soldier¹, was drowned on a voyage to Naples in his father's lifetime, and so Nicolas was succeeded by his second son, Jacques (ii).

And so, finally, to **Jacques (ii)** (1626–1697), the last of the Huguenot Boileau de Castelnaud to live in France. The poor fellow didn't have a happy life. He certainly started off well, training as a lawyer in Orange, and becoming a doctor of law on the 28th of October, 1642; he was admitted as advocate at Nîmes on the 31st of that same month. He became the Seigneur de Castelnaud somewhat unexpectedly, his brother having died young (as often happens to military men one supposes), and he capped it all off by marrying a super-duper heiress from a super-duper important Huguenot family, **Françoise de Vignolles**. Her contribution to the marriage was 20,000 livres and 22 children; I presume her husband spent the money and let her raise the children. The de Vignolles, as we shall see later (page 203) had antecedents similar to those of the Boileau de Castelnaud, but the mother of Françoise was a Baschi d'Aubais, one of the very old, very rich, and very noble families of southern France, a descendant of the *crème de la crème*.

Jacques was as prominent in local politics as his father had been. In 1652, Louis XIV allowed the Protestant inhabitants of Nîmes to elect the most qualified of their number to the council, to balance the voice of the bishop, and Jacques Boileau was chosen to do this. Then in 1668 he was examined by the Royal Commissioners, who verified his letters of nobility, and confirmed him and his descendants in the nobility.²

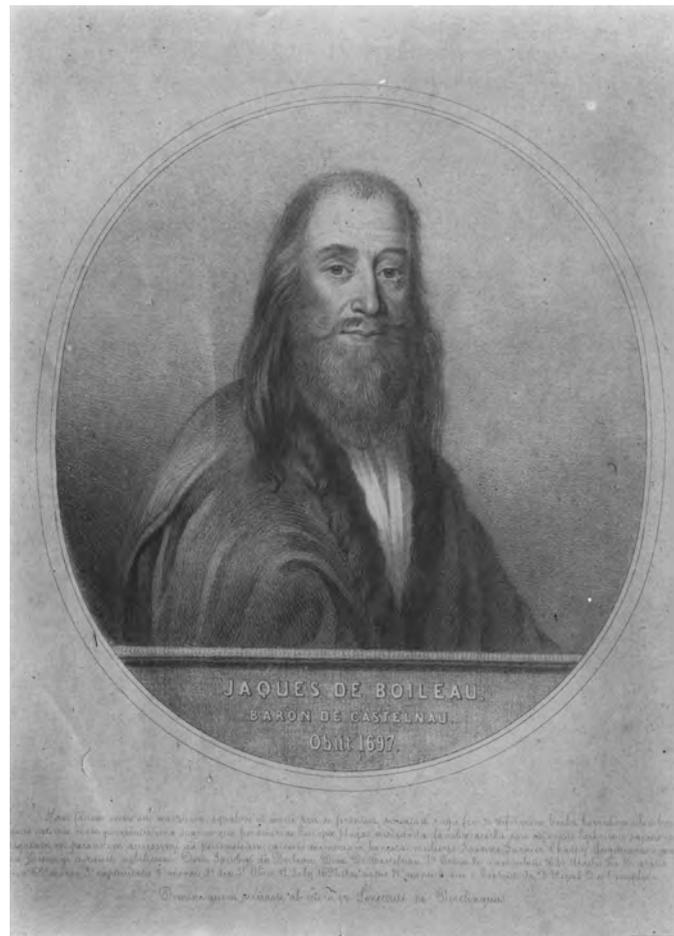
However, Jacques' luck didn't last. In 1685 the Edict of Nantes was revoked and life for the Boileau de Castelnaud, as prominent Huguenots, quickly became very difficult indeed. Jacques initially made plans with some friends to flee the country, but they were caught before they could do so. On the 12th of January, 1686 Jacques was arrested in Nîmes, all his property was confiscated, and he was imprisoned without trial in the castle of Pierre-Encise, near Lyons. He never saw his family again.

Persecution was gender-neutral.³ Françoise also refused to convert to Catholicism, and was locked up in a convent in 1686. Two years later she was transferred to a convent in Nîmes, but by

¹BBB gives a long and loving description of his military honours. "Capt. in the Regt de Rousillon, his father having been given a King's commission of a company of 100 foot-soldiers in the regt. of M. le Comte de Rousillon, dated 10th January, 1642. The regt. was disbanded in 1645. During the period 1642-45, it was engaged in Catalunya 1642-43, with the Army of the Rhine 1644, including the battle of Fribourg and the siege of Philipsburg, and in Catalunya again in 1645. In 1648 he was Capt.-Major in command of the Regt. de Ste Cecile, and was certified as having served throughout the campaign of that year in Catalunya. He is known to have become later a Lieut. Col. in the Cavalry Regt. of Destrigi, but nothing can be learnt about this unit." This is pretty typical BBB-speak; it's all very interesting information, I agree, but one wishes a little more information was given about the girls.

²A peculiarly French thing, these periodic examinations to make sure you can pass the nobility test. Wouldn't want to have imposters, you know. It happened in Britain also, as the Heraldic Visitations are somewhat similar (see the footnote on page 140), but to a lesser extent I think. I could be wrong. Of course, nobility in France carried much more specific legal rights, such as tax exemption, than in Britain, so it's understandable they tried to keep track of who was what.

³I use this expression solely to annoy my father.



Jacques (ii) Boileau (1626–1697). A translation of the writing below the picture is given on page 156.

1690 she had escaped and made her way to Geneva, where she lived until 1692. It's tempting to think of imprisonment in a convent as a kind and gentle thing, with holy nuns floating around in white habits, ministering piously to the poor benighted heathen. Think again. Two of Françoise's daughters, Marguerite and Madeleine, were also imprisoned in convents. Marguerite didn't survive. She was 17 when she died in prison. Madeleine managed to escape but died very shortly afterwards, aged 16. Convents were clearly lethal.

Jacques didn't have it any better, of course. In 1687 he and his friends wrote to the King:

Sire: Esperandieu, Castelnaud, Riffard, the brothers Baudan, of Nîmes and Uzès in Languedoc, detained by your orders in your castle of Pierre-Encise at Lyon, since 19th January, 1687, appeal to your clemency, and pray you very humbly to have the charity to order that the subsistence which it has pleased your Majesty to accord since the month of April 1693, may be regularly paid to them. They have until now, Sire, lived by the help of their friends, who being no longer willing to continue this for fear of losing what they have lent, they thus see themselves reduced to the state of wanting for bread, if your Majesty does not take pity on them and has not the charity to provide it. It is, Sire, that they have reason to expect justice and kindness from your Majesty, who has always taken care to give needed relief to the miserable; the suppliants who find themselves of this number will have the happiness of obtaining the favours that they ask with all possible respect in this submission, and by the vows and prayers which they address unceasingly for the continued good health of your sacred person, for that of all the Royal Family, and for the prosperity of your State and of your Arms.

Not surprisingly, the King paid no attention.

After becoming paralysed in August, 1696, Jacques was allowed to go to the baths at Balaruc on the south coast, but this obviously didn't help a great deal. He died at St. Jean de Vedas, near Montpellier, on his way back, one presumes, to his prison cell, where he died after more than ten years in captivity, on the 7th of July, 1697. A late portrait of him (page 155) shows a gaunt, bearded man, with the inscription (in Latin):

In lasting memory of his hard imprisonment at Pierre-Encise the most Noble Jacques Boileau, Seigneur de Castelnau et de Sainte-Croix, &c had painted by the hand of the worthy woman, Joanne Garnier Charpy, of Lyon, in the year of salvation 1694, the 15th day of April; of his age, 68 years and 3 months; of his captivity, 8 years and 3 months and 3 days; he died 17th July, 1697, in the 71st year of his life, the 6th month and the 2nd day, and of his captivity, 11 years, 6 months and 5 days; this portrait, showing the sadness of his heart, by the dirt and leanness, the ugly wrinkles on his furrowed brow, the bristly beard, his face watered by copious tears drawn forth by the bitter fate of his exiled and best beloved wife and unhappy family scattered through various parts of Europe. O Lord, he whom thou hast kept from the womb, forsake him not in his old age.

The Lord didn't pay any attention either.

Of the 22 children of Jacques and Françoise, I know the names of only 17, and at least four of them died very young. I've already described how two of the daughters were imprisoned in convents, one dying there and the other dying very soon after her escape. The fate of Maurice, one of the younger sons, and of at least one of the younger daughters, is particularly interesting. By the Edict of Fontainebleau it was decreed that young Protestant children should be removed from their parents and forcibly raised as Catholics; such was to be Maurice's fate. He was only seven in 1685, and was removed from the care of his parents to be brought up Catholic. It's not known who brought him up, or where, but he ended up inheriting the Seigneurie of Castelnau, marrying Eva de Guiran, the daughter of the President of the Parlement d'Orange, and having 12 children. The Seigneurie of Castelnau continued in this line for many generations; BBB [10] has a lot more details about them, if anybody is interested.

The youngest daughter, Louise, suffered the same fate as Maurice. She ended up marrying Abel de Ligonier, and their descendants are described in *Miscellanea Genealogica et Heraldica*, New Series, vol. IV (1884), p. 219. The Ligonier family were 'new converts', i.e., recent converts to Catholicism.

Since they were too old to be taken away from their parents so easily, and they had no prospects in France, the elder sons of Jacques and Françoise left France and took military service abroad, fighting with various Protestant armies across Europe. Henri (iii) and Jean-Louis (i) first joined one of the 'Compagnies des Cadets', established in France for the sons of Nobles who didn't have any money but still considered themselves much more important than everybody else. After the Edict of Fontainebleau they escaped France (their unit was stationed at Besançon, near the border, making for an easy exit) and went to Brandenburg, where the Elector was making the Huguenots welcome. After all, why wouldn't he? They would have made excellent army officers, one imagines, particularly for fights against Catholics. Henri was first a gentleman-cadet and then a Captain in the *grenadiers-a-cheval* of Brandenburg. He was killed at the siege of Tournai in 1709. According to Smiles [56], he was "killed by a blow from a fusil on the head, in the trenches before Tournay, whilst watching the attack of General de Saxe Schuberbourg, and was interred before the standard." I can't help feeling that it was unwise to be standing around watching a battle. You can get killed that way, it seems.

By 1702 Jean-Louis was fighting for the Hanoverians, and in April 1704 he and his regiment were in the great march of Marlborough's army from Holland to the Danube which ended in the battle of Donauworth, or the Schellenburg, on the 2nd of July. This victory was followed on the 13th of August by the defeat of the French and Imperial armies at Blenheim, or Hochstedt. According to BBB [10] "The Hanoverian brigade, including de Luc's, was at first engaged in the attack on



Charles (ii) Boileau (1673–1733).

Blenheim. It was then moved to the centre, where three of its battalions met the advance of nine French and defeated them. Jean-Louis was mortally wounded by a musket ball through the chest. He lived long enough to be promoted Captain by the Prince he served.” Further details can be gleaned from Smiles [56], who informs us that “He had been pierced from his chest to his spine, and two of his ribs were broken.” An almost-posthumous promotion always seems like a bit of a waste to me. Like attending someone’s deathbed when you haven’t bothered to visit them for the past 20 years. It’s bad timing at the very least.

Our tale turns now to **Charles (ii)**, the only son of Jacques and Françoise to have left France and then survived long enough to leave descendants. By default, almost, he thus became the ancestor of the British Boileau. Like his older brothers, Charles initially fled France to Brandenburg, where he joined the Musketeers. However, his uncle, Charles de Vignolles, bought him a commission in the British army, which he joined as an ensign, on the 25th of May, 1694. He would have been just over 20 years old according to some dates, 24 according to others. Take your pick. In 1698 he was an ensign with Farrington’s Regiment, and a Lieutenant by 1703.

Just to put this into slightly more context, the so-called “Glorious Revolution”, where William of Orange invaded Britain to kick out James II, happened in 1688. However, William’s position remained highly insecure for some years after that, and so an influx of Huguenot soldiers was a god-send for him. His position at home was precarious, his English subjects couldn’t always be trusted to support him all that strongly, and he had numerous martial commitments abroad, particularly in Ireland and Holland. Farrington’s Regiment was not one of the Huguenot Regiments formed around 1688 (see page 187), but was formed by Colonel Thomas Farrington, a well-known soldier of the time, in 1694.

In 1704 Charles was taken prisoner at Lunengen¹ by the French but was exchanged at Valenciennes on the 1st of February, 1709. This, to my mind, is supreme irony. If he had been caught trying to flee France as a Huguenot, he would have been executed. But when he’s caught *after* he leaves France it’s OK, no problem, even though he’s fighting against the French and presumably killing a few of them. This doesn’t make a lot of sense to me. The military mind is a weird one, for sure.

On the 30th of December, 1703, in Dublin, Charles married **Marie Madelaine Collot d’Escury**, the daughter of Daniel Collot d’Escury (page 198), Seigneur de Landauran, and a Major in Lord Galway’s French regiment of cavalry. He was then foolish enough to get caught by the French, and so spent the first five years of his married life a prisoner in France. Marguerite, the eldest child, wasn’t born until December, 1710.

In 1711, a couple of years after his release from captivity, Charles sold out of the army and settled

¹At least according to [56], but I have no idea what place is meant by this. I even tried to look it up, and found nothing.

in Southampton, where he and Marie raised their family of ten or twelve children (the sources differ, and the names of only ten are known). He was known as the ‘Gallant Refugee’, in reference to his social, not his military, prowess. In 1717 he came to a formal agreement with his younger brother, Maurice, and renounced his right to the Seigneurie de Castelnau. Presumably he got paid for it. Although Charles was no longer the Seigneur de Castelnau, he continued to call himself Charles Boileau de Castelnau, as did his descendants.¹

Charles’s business ventures were not initially successful and he lost an enormous fortune, £20,000, in the South Sea bubble in 1720. So he sold up and moved to Dublin in 1722, where he established himself as a wine merchant and retrieved the family fortune. He died in Dublin, in 1733, aged 60, two years after Marie, who died aged 51.

The British Boileau

Charles (ii) had innumerable descendants. BBB tries to cover many of them, and gets through a fair number of those with the Boileau name (of which there were plenty), but pretty much ignores any girls who weren’t married to a Boileau. The Innes chart [11] (page 143) enumerates a lot also, this time including the females, thus showing an admirable liberality of mind, but gives no details at all. I am not as ambitious as either. I shall merely describe, relatively briefly, the Boileau who are my direct ancestors, with only passing glances at any others. I omit, therefore, an enormous amount of Boileau information, but this is the price of having a book of reasonable length.

The oldest child of Charles (ii) and Marie, Marguerite (iv), married the Reverend John Peter Droz; as it happens he was also the minister who officiated at the wedding of Marguerite’s sister, Marie Boileau, to Henry Hardy. Marguerite and John Droz had, as the saying goes, issue. Lots of issue; well, they had only two children themselves, but quite a few grandchildren and so on. Some of their progeny went out to India, and thus the references to the Droz cousins in India, which are sprinkled through the sources.

Similarly, the youngest child, Marie, married Henry Barthelemy Hardy, and they also had issue, almost all of whom died young. Six died before their first birthday, another two died before the age of 25, one died when she was 33, and the last one, Simeon Henry, survived to the age of 62. There are still lots of descendants from this Boileau/Hardy marriage, and I’ve corresponded with a number of them (Vince O’Grady, for example, springs to mind immediately).

However, from my point of view, the most interesting child of Charles (ii) and Marie was **Simeon (i)**, (1717–1767) who carried on his father’s wine business in Dublin, in partnership with his brother, Charles-Daniel. In 1741 he married **Magdalena Elizabeth Desbrisay**, a scion of another old Huguenot family (see Chapter 9), and they had 16 children (at least six died young), many of whom also reproduced with abandon. All of a sudden there were a lot of Boileau.

Magdalen. I know nothing interesting about her at all. Neither BBB [10] nor Lart [46] say anything about her apart from the fact she was born in Dublin.

Solomon (i). The eldest son, and thus the founder of what BBB [10] calls the elder branch. First he was a soldier, then the cashier of the Dublin bank. What a comedown that must have been. He married Dorothy Gladwell first and Lucy Slater second and had a lot of children. And I mean a *lot* of children. Seventeen by my count.

Simeon (ii). He died when only a year old.

John Peter (i), the third son of Simeon and Magdalena and my 5G uncle, was the first of the family to go out to India, in 1764, thus beginning a connection with that country that lasted over a number of generations. He started out, aged 16, as a mere Writer² for the Honourable East India Company, but after nine years he was appointed as a member of the Company’s council at Masulipatam. In this position he was able to steal a lot more freely, and possibly even legally

¹One separates oneself from the common herd however one can.

²The lowest grade; the hierarch was, in increasing order of importance, Writer, Factor, Junior and Senior Merchant. A person would typically spend about 5 years as a Writer before being promoted to Factor.



Sir John Peter Boileau, Bart., and his wife, Lady Mary. They are just cousins, but these are such lovely paintings I can't resist including them. Lady Mary was a complete hypochondriac, as you can almost tell from the painting.

(according to British Law, that is), and he managed to amass quite a fortune. Even BBB [10] admits obliquely that his money was most likely not always obtained with the strictest honesty. Being a good sort of chap¹, he used his position to obtain appointments or rich husbands for his siblings and cousins, and so a steady stream of Boileau went out to India to make fortunes in their turn. Most of them, like John Peter himself, eventually returned to England to spend their ill-gotten gains, building estates, wielding political influence, and buying titles. John Peter's eldest son, John Peter (iv), was the only member of the family ever to become a Baronet (see the paintings on page 159), a title which still exists today, I believe. Sir John Peter (iv) Boileau Bart. is the subject of a delightful book by Owen Chadwick [20], 180 pages devoted to the doings of Sir John, his hypochondriac wife, his good-for-nothing, drunken, wastrel son (who "struggled against temptation with repeated earnestness and total failure", to quote Chadwick's immortal line), his religious psycho-nutter daughters, and the annoying vicar who didn't know his place. It's a great read, whether you're a Boileau descendant or not.

Anne Charlotte. She married a Peter Friell in Dublin, where they lived for the duration, and had lots of progeny. Many of her children went out to India.

Bonnie went out to India, fell in love with the ship's captain, Captain Lestock Wilson, and married him in Madras as soon as they arrived. He became an agent for the East India Company and made a pile of cash. As usual with the Boileau, she had a pile of progeny.

Philip Daniel was the first of John Peters many siblings to come out to India, as a cadet in 1771. After he had visited his brother at Masulipatam, the ship in which he took passage to Calcutta was lost with all on board.

Mary Magdalena. Nothing at all known. Not a sausage. Very likely she died young.

Henrietta (i). She went out to India with her sister Bonnie, stayed with her brother, John Peter (i), for a year, and then went to visit the Droz cousins in Bengal. There she married John Peach,

¹Only to anybody with a white skin, one presumes.

a Senior Merchant, but he died a few years later and she returned to England. Another sister, Margaret, reached India with two Friell girl cousins, but she died soon after arriving.

Thomas (i). My 4G grandfather. I'll discuss him properly below.

John Theophilus (i). The brother that stayed in Dublin, becoming a rather dull druggist. In 1781 he married Jane Wilson, daughter of one George Wilson and his Huguenot wife, he being the head of a wholesale druggist's business in Bride Street, Dublin. A few years later he became a partner in the firm, the name of which then changed to 'Wilson and Boileau', and on Mr. Wilson's death to 'John Theophilus Boileau, Druggist'. In 1799, John's three sons were made partners while still very young, and in due course they took over the business as 'Boileau Brothers'. As usual, he and Jane Wilson had a pile of children – at least 15.

In or before 1811, John suffered a severe paralytic stroke, supposed to have been caused by extreme anxiety over the destruction of his property by fire, in which a lot of family documents and pictures were lost, apparently. In spite of his illness and loss, however, John was not strapped for a dime. Far from it.

On Dec 8th, 1845, page 7, the *Times* of London has a couple of lines saying how Messrs. Boileau, the "eminent druggists of Bride-street" have gone bust, paying 10s in the pound. But this was well after John Theophilus had died.

Marguerite. Nothing known at all. Probably died young.

Sarah. Ditto.

Gaspard Francis. Almost ditto, except that it's known he died young, less than a year old.

Elizabeth married a Michael Carter and had at least eight children, but I don't know anything else about her. BBC [11] lists the children.

Margaret. Presumably the sister Margaret who went out to India with her sister Henrietta and promptly died.

However, let me not get distracted from the main star of the show, who is, in this case, **Thomas (i)**, (1754–1806), the fifth son of Simeon and Magdalena, and my 4G grandfather. Thomas started out as an attorney in Dublin, but, when he was 25, his brother John Peter persuaded him to go out to India, where he was admitted as an attorney of the Supreme Court at Fort William in Bengal, on the 23rd of October, 1780. He became the under-sheriff of Calcutta in 1791, a post which seems to have had extensive opportunities for self-enrichment, in 1794 he was appointed one of the four JP's, whose function it was to administer the municipal affairs of Calcutta, and in 1800 he was appointed Police Magistrate of the City. Thomas was one of the ones who didn't make it back to England, dying in Calcutta in 1806, at the age of 52.

Leah Jessup, who married Thomas (i) Boileau in 1796, has a most interesting history herself, being descended from a well-known early immigrant to the east coast of the United States [44]. She herself was born in America, probably in Albany County in the Colony of New York. When her parents were kicked out of the U.S.A. she went with her parents to England. It's possible she met Thomas Boileau there, but more likely that she met him in India, where the family went because they didn't have enough money to live in England.¹ I shall leave further discussion of her family to Chapter 8.

Thomas and Leah had ten children, all born in Calcutta, with the last, Henry Alexander Edmonstone, being born posthumously. After Thomas (i) died, (which you will recall happened in 1806), Leah took her children back to England on board the ship *Hugh Inglis*, which sailed from Calcutta in February, 1807. Her sister, Deborah, who was in failing health, returned to England at the same time. In 1813 Leah was living at Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, which seems to be where the children were raised. Her sister writes of her the following year that she is "well situated and much respected

¹ Presumably this means that they didn't have enough money to live as wealthy people in England without doing any work.

for her good care and management of her family; for having had a good education she teaches them a great deal at home”.¹ After the battle of Waterloo she went over to France with a portion of her own family, together with some of her nieces and nephews, the children of her sisters Elizabeth and Sarah.

Leah died in London in 1845, almost 40 years after her husband. In her will she left various precious family items to her children, with the request that some were to be treated as family heirlooms – her husband’s silver inkstand was to go to Thomas Ebenezer and thereafter to his eldest son, Alfred; a gold watch to Thomas Ebenezer; a gold pencil case to Simeon John; a gold-headed cane, a snuff box, and “the different little things . . . that belonged to their dear father” to John Theophilus and Alexander; Leah Anne got a special thing which is completely indecipherable to my untrained eye, and she and her sister Elizabeth got the furniture, plate, servers and other household items, including the wine, to be divided between them equally “share and share alike”.

Just for interest, here’s what I know about the children of Thomas and Leah.

Thomas Ebenezer John. My GGG grandfather, and described in more detail below.

Elizabeth Magdalen married John Ives Bosanguet of the Bengal Civil Service, joint magistrate of Nuginah, a district in Rohilcund. He died on the river Ganges on his way to Calcutta in 1820, leaving a daughter who died unmarried. Elizabeth herself didn’t die until almost 50 years later, in 1869, and spent most of this time in London.

Simeon John practised as a barrister in Warrington, and at Compton in Lancashire, but doesn’t seem to have been too successful. He went to Madras in 1840, at the age of 41, but didn’t get any work there either, so came back to England, dying at Egton Rectory in 1863, at the house of his father-in-law. He left a surviving daughter, who married a Major James Bond Clarke, apparently, of the 90th Regiment. See what I mean? We’re not even told the daughter’s name, but we’re told her husband’s name, and even his bloody regiment’s name. I got this information from [44], so Henry Griswold Jesup must take the blame for this.

Leah Ann resided chiefly in London (according to [44]) and died unmarried.

John Peter died young, in 1816, when he was only 13. His death is mentioned in a letter which his aunt wrote in 1816, the full text of which is reproduced on page 184.

John Theophilus worked as an architect and engineer in many parts of India, and must have been an interesting person. He helped to repair the Taj Mahal, for example, and was clearly an excellent astronomer; he was put in charge of the observatory at Simla and in 1840 was elected a Fellow of the Royal Astronomical Society and a Fellow of the Royal Society. He also wrote a number of books on astronomy, land area computation, rents and wages, and logarithms. He had the soul of a mathematician and was all the better for it. He gave a lot of help to Henry Griswold Jesup in the writing of [44], and so that book has a lot of information about him, including a long obituary from the *Royal Engineers Journal*.

After their education in England, it is interesting to see how most of the children of Thomas and Leah returned to India. I’m guessing their mother had fond memories of the place, and possibly the eldest, **Thomas Ebenezer John**, (1796–1853) did also. After all, he was almost 12 when they left. Whether he did or not, Thomas Ebenezer, my GGG grandfather, was back in India before he was 20, working as a Writer in the Madras Civil Service. He then worked in a series of judicial posts; Assistant Registrar, Provincial Court, S. Division, Madras Presidency, 1818; Acting Judge, 1824; Assistant Judge, Canara, 1827. He retired in 1851, as Civil & Sessions Judge, Northern Circuits, at which time he presumably returned to England, as he died in Brighton in 1853.

Thomas Ebenezer married three times. His first wife was **Mary Anne Millar** (d. 1831), the daughter of an army surgeon, and they had two children. The original authors of the Big Boileau Book, Digby Whicher Boileau and Thomas Whicher Boileau, are descended from the second son,

¹The full text of these letters is given in Chapter 8.

Archibald John Maddy Boileau. Thomas's second wife was **Ellen Eliza Neale**, the widow of Lt. Col. Conry, but she can't have lasted very long, as less than three years after his first wife died, Thomas Ebenezer married **Elizabeth Hannah Norgar**, my 3G-grandmother, on the 3rd of March, 1834, in Cuddalore, India. Her father was a Captain Master Attendant¹ at Madras. I'm guessing that true love for all eternity held little place in the life of Thomas Ebenezer; his wives were often and easily replaced, it seems. Mind you, in his will, Thomas Ebenezer left everything, without exception, to his wife: "... I hereby will & bequeath to my devoted wife Elizabeth Hannah Boileau the whole and every portion of my Property [?] and so to be retained or disposed of by her as best suited to her views and interests leaving her sole Executrix ...". It's a very simple will, this one.

Elizabeth was still alive in 1887, more than 30 years after the death of her husband. An account of her in Jesup's book [44] says: "The third wife, a widow, resides at Eastbourne, and had one son only – Despreaux John Boileau, who held a commission in the 90th Regiment and died in the Punjab, 24 July, 1864. One daughter, unmarried, resides with the mother. All the others are married." The daughters' names are not even given, while the *son's* name is given in loving detail, and even the name of his bloody regiment. Damn it's annoying.

For the information of Henry Griswold Jesup, the daughters' names were Mary Elizabeth, who married George Elliot Clark, Sarah Anne, about whom I know nothing, Hannah Amelia, about whom I know nothing, Alice Upton, about whom I know nothing, and Ellen Leah, my GG grandmother, who married Reginald John Graham (page 114). Reginald John Graham was living at Eastbourne at the time, and this is presumably where he met Ellen Leah Boileau, who would have been either living there, or nearby in Brighton. They married on the 30th of April, 1856, three years after her father's death, but a long time before her mother died. Since her mother died in Eastbourne, it's possible that Elizabeth Norgar lived with Ellen Leah and Reginald in her later years.

BBB [10] makes a passing comment that Despreaux John Boileau was an excellent artist, and used to send back sketches of his adventures in India. Luckily, my parents found an example of one of these letters home; it was being used in Granny and Pop's house on Ewen St. – as a drawer liner! It's now rescued and preserved as well as may be. Since it's such a cool letter I reproduce it in full in Appendix II (page 265). Despreaux John never saw active service, but died young anyway, of disease, at Mian Mir, the new name for the Lahore cantonments. What a terrible pointless waste of a life, for which we can, yet again, thank the military.

Questions: It is a bit silly that I know more about the earlier Boileau than I do about Thomas Ebenezer, my GGG grandfather. There must obviously be extensive records existing about him in the British Indian Archives, but I've never done any research to find them. Pure laziness on my part. Probably his life was entirely uneventful, one judicial post to another, ho hum, but there still has to be more that can be said. It is possible that Digby Whicher Boileau (being a direct descendant of Thomas Ebenezer) has already done a great deal of digging in the archives and found all there is to be found, but I think this unlikely. What about his children? I know their names, and practically nothing else.

Castelnau

Now that we have a Boileau de Castelnau married to a Graham of Edmond Castle, our account of the Boileau family comes to an end. However, just for interest, I shall include as a final word some details about the castle at Castelnau. I know there's no connection any longer, but I like castles, and I'm writing this book so I can put in anything I like and you can't stop me.

Map 7 (page 241) shows the general environs of Castelnau, which is now called Castelnau-Valence. It is situated almost directly west of Uzès, off the road between Alès and Nîmes. It perches high on a hillside, a romantic battlemented medieval castle, so like those one finds dotted all over

¹The Master Attendant was in charge of the dockyard, and held the position of Captain presumably to make it easier to deal with stropky naval captains.



The castle of Castelnaud, the traditional home of the Boileau de Castelnaud. The photo above was taken by my uncle Alfred in 2005, the one below by sister Mary, in 2008.

the European countryside. Of course, I've never been there. Monique and I went on holiday to Languedoc some years ago, but at that stage I was not very interested in family history at all, and I had no idea that we were holidaying close to Castelnaud. Yet another opportunity missed. I feel like such an idiot. However, I made up for this by sending various relatives to take photographs (page 163) whenever they visited Languedoc. Uncle Alfred and Fiona of the Red Hair took some photos in about 2005, as did sister Mary in 2008.

The Seigneurie of Castelnaud was an ancient one. It figures in *Gallia Christiana*¹ for the year 1211 under the name of "Castrum de Castro Novo" and it is later found in the possession of different families, until passing to Antoine. The fief was held direct from the King of France, as is proved by the verdict of a lawsuit in which Charles (ii) Boileau was involved with the Duc d'Uzès who claimed that the property of Castelnaud owed him feudal service; the courts decided that he had no such claim, Castelnaud having always been held of the Crown *in capite* and owing service to no feudal superior but the Sovereign.

The full title of the family was Boileau de Castelnaud de la Garde et de Sainte Croix de Boiriac. Nobody seems any longer to have any idea of where all these names came from. A nearby river is called the *Gard*, or *Gardon*, which might explain the de la Garde bit², but then again it might not. Similarly, Sainte Croix lies about one mile northwest of Castelnaud, but the addition of Boiriac to this also cannot be explained.

No matter. It's a neat castle.

Digby Whicher Boileau was shown an account of the castle written in French in 1865; it's not clear who wrote this account, but a copy was given to Digby by the Comte de Valfons, the then current owner. Because I like reading old things like this, I give it in full below. I presume the translation is due to Digby.

The Chateau of Castelnaud, situated on the top of a hill which dominates the left bank of the Gardon, halfway between Alais and Nîmes, is still, in spite of the modifications which it underwent in the 17th and 18th centuries, a curious enough specimen of the medieval strong chateau.

The period of its foundation is uncertain. Examination of its walls shows very considerable remains of masonry bosses, which by their position in relation to the whole building, are evidently anterior to all other parts of the chateau, but a definite date cannot be assigned to them. There is just one thing, that a local tradition says that Castelnaud was taken and devastated in the year 800 by the inhabitants of Brignon, a neighbouring village, formerly a Gallo-Roman town; the dressing in rustic bossage being found besides in some ancient monuments, it might be inferred from this that this chateau was built in the first ages of the French Monarchy, maybe at the time of the last Merovingian Kings.

However, facing with rustic bossage seems to have been much in use at the end of the 13th century, under the reign of Philip the Bold, who had several strong places, in the Midi of France, repaired or built. It becomes, in consequence, more likely if one places the foundation of Castelnaud in this period. The following fact supports this opinion; in the neighbourhood, one notices the keeps of Moussac and Boucoiran, also with rustic bossage, dating unquestionably from the same period as the chateau. Now these two keeps, which have not undergone any essential modification since their origin, are in a state of preservation, which does not allow in any way this origin to be carried back to the Merovingian period.

The tradition mentioned above could then apply to an older chateau, whose traces have disappeared, or are today hidden under the thick whitewash with which the chateau of today was covered towards the end of the 18th century.

¹A list of all the Catholic Abbeys and Dioceses in France, from the earliest times. It was first compiled in 1621.

²But then one would expect Castelnaud du Gard

The little fort, built in rustic bossage, was lower and much less extensive than the existing chateau. Under the whitewash which covers it, is distinguishable the stone work, today very dilapidated, of its northwest and south-west curtains. Also to be seen is its primitive entry, placed towards the middle of the SW curtain at the level of the first storey.

The defensive postern, which still today gives access to the interior of the chateau, is evidently of later date than the wall in which it has been pierced.

In the 14th Century, to the first building was added the SE part of the existing chateau. The absence of bossage, several gargoyles representing animals on their forefeet, and a stone course which crowns the rampart, distinguish this part from the early building. These two buildings are, otherwise, of the same height.

Subsequently, the chateau grew yet more by the addition to the NW face of a new building, to which was given a greater height than that of the previous constructions. A little later, the latter were brought up to the level of the new building all along the SSW face. The curtain was raised, and to it was added, for two-thirds of its length, a defensive gallery, abutting on the buildings of the NW. In addition, the south-tower was given an elevation proportionate to that of the new curtains.

From the character of a big appointed overhung arcade, and from some other architectural details, the NW building appears to belong to the 15th century. The upper gallery, and the curtain which shelters it, could date from the end of the same century, or the beginning of the 16th.

Today, the chateau forms a quadrilateral, of which the sides measure 131, 121, $65\frac{1}{2}$ and 49 feet long. It is flanked by a tower at each of its angles. The main buildings surround a courtyard, into which one penetrates from the outside by way of a postern, which was defended by a portcullis, and upper trap-door, and a machicoulis.

The most vulnerable points of the walls were also provided with machicoulis, of which only the corbels remain.

In the interior court is seen a well cut in the rock, 65 feet deep. It gave a pure and healthy water to the garrison, which was accommodated in three galleries, built one above the other. They still exist, and are against the longest face of the surrounding walls, that of the SW.

The outer walls of the chateau, about two metres thick, were, and still are, crowned by a path running round, covered from the outside by a parapet which is itself surmounted on the whole perimeter by battlements pierced by loopholes.

The north tower used to enclose in its upper storey a windmill, whose millstone was put into operation by a paddlewheel placed horizontally inside the tower. Eight little windows pierced obliquely in the circular wall which forms the tower, admitted the wind, which, striking the paddlewheel at an angle, conveyed to it a rotary movement which it communicated to the millstone.

Castelnaud dominated a vast countryside, even more remarkable for its picturesque views than for its extent. From the top of the towers can be seen 68 villages, and a much greater number of isolated houses.

At the foot of the hill, and in the SE and SW directions, the eye follows the course of the river Gardon, over a stretch of 11 miles. The river flows slowly in the midst of a long forest of poplars, and runs through a beautiful and fertile valley, whose rich cultivation is everywhere shaded by mulberry and chestnut trees. Its waters, stretching in wide sheets, sometimes reflects the blue of the sky, sometimes shines with the brilliance of the sun, like an immense mirror capriciously broken up.

Towards the NW beyond a long succession of hills and cultivated valleys, the horizon is, in the distance, limited by the ascending and blueish summits of the Cevennes.

To the east are outlined the mountains of Provence and the Dauphine, above which, when the clearness of the air allows, can be seen, at a distance of 50 or 60 leagues the great chain of the Maritime Alps, and the tops of the Pelvoux Mountains, crowned with eternal snows.

During the absence of the family (after the Revocation) Castelnaud was often the asylum of the Camisards, and became in 1704 the scene of one of the most remarkable events of the little war which these insurgents sustained against the Royal Troops.

They were then commanded by a Chief aged 29, whose name was Roland, and family name La Porte. His paternal uncles were a master-smith, and two pastors of the Protestant Church who had given him a liberal education. His studies finished, he had taken service in the dragoons, and had returned home after the Peace of Ryswick, 1697. He had then taken part in the insurrection of the Cevennes.

Endowed with a grave, silent, imperious character, he hid under an impassive exterior an ardent mind and heart; his speech was brief and forceful. These qualities had soon brought him much influence in the minds of his co-religionists. Also, when Cavalier, who commanded the insurgents, had laid down his arms after having obtained an honourable capitulation from Marshal de Villiers, Roland was called to succeed him by the unanimous vote of the Camisards, who placed all their hopes in him.

But love and an imprudent confidence caused his loss. Mlle. de Cornely, daughter of a Protestant gentleman of the Cevennes, full of zeal for the cause of the insurgents and of sympathy for their chief, was the object of a sentiment which did not find her insensible.

Lamoignon de Basville, Intendant of Languedoc, informed of their mutual attraction, thought to profit by it. Mlle. de Cornely having been arrested for giving asylum in her house to some of the rebels, he secretly permitted her to escape, in the hope that the steps which Roland would take to see her again would lead to his capture. The better to attain this end he made a secret agreement with a young man of Uzès, called Malatte, who was one of Roland's friends and had a great part of his confidence. Malatte consented to deliver up his friend for the sum of a hundred louis, which was promised him.

Roland had formed the project of going with eight of his lieutenants to the Chateau of Castelnaud, situated 11 miles east¹ of Uzès. He was due to meet Mlle. de Cornely there, who had advised him to accept the conditions of the capitulation of Cavalier, and was doubtless coming to find him to renew her pleadings on this subject.

The traitor Malatte, hearing of this, and of the day of its execution, came the evening before to warn the Brigadier de Parate, who commanded the garrison of Uzès; this was on the 14th August, 1704. On the following night, Parate made Lacoste-Badre, Commandant of the 2nd Brigade of Charolais, go with all the well-mounted officers to be found in Uzès, and two companies of dragoons from St. Sernin. All of this troop was so anxious to catch Roland, that it parted with extreme speed to Castelnaud, where it arrived before dawn. The Camisard chief and his companions still slept. They trusted to the vigilance of one of their number, Grimaud, who was posted high on the chateau on the path which runs around the top of the surrounding wall.

Unhappily, the troops arrived from the side of the village of St. Dezery and in this direction the shelter of some hills hid their march from the view of the chateau, so that Grimaud only saw them when there was no longer time to give the alarm. Already the dragoons were proceeding to invest the chateau, when he came in all haste to warn his commander of the peril which threatened him.

Roland, awakened with a start, put on some clothes and seized his arms. His companions did the same, and all sought to gain the stables to get their horses, but only three of them, Bason, Bourdalie and Marchand, quicker or better served by circumstance, could get there and ride away.

¹Sic. He means west.

Deprived of this means of evasion, Roland and his remaining five lieutenants, had no other course to take but that of saving themselves on foot, by a side door of which the dragoons had not yet made themselves masters. From the inner court of the chateau, it gave access to the countryside, across escarpments impassable by horses; but its obstacles were turned by the dragoons, who soon reached the fugitives in spite of all their efforts.

Roland, putting his back against a tree, defied the boldest approach, and his proud bearing disconcerted his adversaries for the moment. Their chiefs, who much wanted to take him alive, did not know in what way to arrest him, when one of the dragoons, who was following them, named Soubeiran, terminated their indecision by a shot which stretched Roland dead on the spot.

The five officers who had accompanied him, Souteran, Grimaud, Guerin, Mallie and Raspal, dumbfounded at the sight, let themselves be arrested without resistance. The group returned to Castelnaud, which was still surrounded. Mlle. de Cornely was no longer there. It is probable that she left it some moments after Roland, and that the officers who commanded those surrounding the chateau did not trouble to hinder her escape.

The body of Roland was taken up, carried in triumph to Uzès and then to Nîmes, where it was tried. It was dragged on a hurdle, burnt, and the ashes were thrown to the wind. The five chief Camisards remaining were broken alive on the wheel, and the traitor Malatte received his promised reward.

There are brief records of other Boileau visits to Castelnaud, but the only particularly interesting comment was that of Thomas W. Boileau, who visited in 1954. He noted the stained glass windows of the Long Room, which are portraits of the Boileau ancestors. I wonder if they are still there.