

king, he might well have become crucial to the process of accommodation and, perhaps, this accounts for his appellation as Adam Gwent.<sup>15</sup> This significance may also account for the marriage of his son, Reginald, with Joan de Knoville and the adoption, by that family at least, of ap Adam as a surname in accordance with Anglo-Norman practice. Equally, Reginald's mother could have been from an important English family. As we have seen, although Reginald appears to have been illegitimate, he could still inherit from his father and his given name supports the idea of an Anglo-Norman mother. In the light of this, speculation as to the mother(s) of all Adam the Steward's sons could reasonably include women from the Anglo-Norman establishment. Life as a prominent member of the Welsh upper classes at this period would have been fraught and Adam might well have been relieved that this process of settlement seemed to be nearing some kind of completion. His status and role would probably have changed much, and the way these changes worked out is a subject for some of the research that the One Name Society would like to see carried out. Thus, we have an influential family in which we know an ap/ab Adam surname came into use. As Michael Powell Siddons puts it in the context of the end of the thirteenth century, 'Sir John ap Adam had already taken ap Adam as his permanent surname and become a member of the English nobility'.<sup>16</sup> He reached this status very much because of his marriage to Elizabeth de Gurney and a document of 1 August 1300 has survived in which he and Elizabeth exchange land and buildings in Beverstone with the son of one of the local clergy.<sup>17</sup> The acquired land was next to the garden of John and Elizabeth, so perhaps they were extending it or increasing their privacy.

The document is of great interest, however, because it carries two well-preserved seals, the hexagonal impressions of which are about 1.5 cm and 2 cm across. Baron John's seal is straightforward, showing his cross with five mullets as borne at the Battle of Falkirk (Figure 3). The second seal shows six shields, with three of Baron John's and three with the paly of eight (eight vertical stripes), coat of the Gurney family denoting Elizabeth's interest in the affair (Figure 4).<sup>18</sup> In the calendar entry of this deed it was sealed at Lanlovel, but I think this is Lanlouel or Llanllowell as the current Ordnance Survey spells



**Figure 3** Seal of Baron John ap Adam, 1300

<sup>15</sup> But see reservations about this appellation in Chapter 5, p. 78.

<sup>16</sup> Siddons, vol. 1, p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> Gloucestershire Archives, Hicks family deeds, D1866/T14.

<sup>18</sup> J Foster, *The Dictionary of Heraldry* (Bracken Books, 1989), p. 101.

## ORIGINS AND DISTRIBUTION



**Figure 4** Joint seal of Baron John ap Adam and Elizabeth née Gurney, 1300

it in the English version. At the time, Baron John and Elizabeth must have been in Wales. In the same collection of deeds is one in which Hamo ap adam (Hamund) confirms the sale of Beverstone and some other properties to Thomas, Lord Berkeley, and his wife, Katherine, and their sons.<sup>19</sup> His seal (Figure 5) shows the familiar cross and five mullets but with an heraldic label of three points denoting that he was the eldest son and heir. Other information suggests that there was an older son, Robert, who must have died by the time this seal was made. In fact, Hamund may not have inherited

as the succession went through his brother, John, whose son, also John, was last of the baronial line and Lord of Llanllowell. Figure 5 shows this John ap Adam's seal on a document in which he conveys land.<sup>20</sup> This John died in 1424 nearly 200 years after Adam Gwent had confirmation of his lands. The family thus survived long enough in the legitimate male line to retain influence and patronage for several generations.



**Figure 5** Seal of Hamund ap Adam, grandson of Baron John, circa 1350



**Figure 6** Seal of John ap Adam, Lord of Llanllowell, in the reign of Henry V, 1413–1422

<sup>19</sup> Gloucestershire Archives, Hicks family deeds, D1866/T18.

<sup>20</sup> Gwent Record Office, D43/5231.