

ARCHIVAL IDENTITY RECONSTRUCTION

Subject Ambrose Surname Unrecorded

FORM AR 8 RECORD INCOMPLETE BY MORE THAN EIGHT CENTURIES

SUBJECT: Ambrose

SURNAME: None supplied; none located; subject appears genuinely uncertain whether one was ever used

POSSIBLE SURNAMES: Kallistratos; de Veyrac; Békési; Vale; all unverified and potentially descriptive rather than hereditary

CLASSIFICATION: Vampire; scholar; steward of Blackthorn; continuous-residence affiant

BIRTHPLACE: A village in Glamorgan, Wales; village identity narrowed by the Bureau to three adjoining medieval parishes

EARLIEST SECURE PLACEMENT: Mortal childhood in Glamorgan; documentary trail reconstructed from the early twelfth century

MINIMUM DEMONSTRATED AGE: More than nine centuries, based on the subject's own conversational references

RECORD CONDITION: Biographically sparse; intellectually overabundant

NOTICE ABSENCE OF RECORD IS NOT EVIDENCE OF ABSENCE

I EXECUTIVE FINDING

Ambrose remembers being born in Glamorgan. He remembers the neighboring daughter who was his first love, and that she loved him back across a boundary their families guarded more carefully than either hedge. The Bureau knows considerably more. Its reconstruction follows him through nine centuries of libraries, households, ports, hauntings, disputes, and official proceedings before Blackthorn.

Ambrose does not think in files. He thinks in constellations. A question about a date may retrieve a winter wind, the mineral taste of a well, a line of Syriac copied incorrectly in 1189, and the hands of a woman closing shutters against smoke. The requested date may arrive later, usually while someone is discussing soup.

REVIEWING CONCLUSION: Memory unreliable in sequence; exceptional in depth, pattern recognition, sensory retention, and cross-disciplinary inference.

II MORTAL LIFE AND FIRST LOVE

Ambrose was born in a Glamorgan village during the closing years of the eleventh century. The village name he remembers no longer maps cleanly onto a modern place, but the Bureau has narrowed it to three adjoining medieval parishes by matching his description of a tidal stream, a saints' well, and a hill from which two church towers were visible in winter.

His family kept sheep, copied legal and devotional texts for neighboring houses, and possessed enough education to be useful without enough land to be secure. Ambrose learned Latin from an uncle attached to a religious house and Welsh poetry from his mother, who corrected metre while spinning.

The neighboring daughter was Elen ferch Iorwerth. Her family and Ambrose's disputed grazing rights, mill access, and a strip of orchard neither household could profitably use but neither would surrender. Ambrose and Elen exchanged letters through a loose stone in the boundary wall. One surviving fragment reads: "The hedge belongs to our fathers. What is beyond it belongs to us." The hand is hers. Ambrose remembers the sentence.

They expected to marry despite the families. They did not. Bureau chronology places Ambrose's turning between 1114 and 1118, after which he disappeared from local records without burial, marriage, or departure entry. Elen later married a cooper in Cowbridge, raised three daughters, maintained a small household library, and lived into her sixties. Ambrose knows only that she lived. He has never asked the Bureau how much else it knows.

His first decades after turning were spent moving through religious houses and private libraries where night work attracted less comment than it did elsewhere. Surviving catalogues place him at Winchester, Palermo, Ravenna, Chartres, and Toledo before 1200.

MAKER: Unknown. Bureau chronology establishes the window but not the responsible person. Ambrose remembers rain, a bell struck at the wrong hour, and waking with mud beneath both hands.

III DISPUTED NAMES INDEX

The following names refer, with varying confidence, to Ambrose. The Bureau's confidence rests on matched handwriting, recurring annotations, material transfers, and witness descriptions. Ambrose recognizes the work more readily than the names.

AMBROSIUS KALLISTRATOS: A damaged Greek colophon, provisionally dated 1128, credits this copyist with correcting a botanical error and adding seventeen pages on poisons. Ambrose identified both corrections before being shown the attribution. Kallistratos may mean only "excellent soldier" and is inconsistent with the work.

AMBROISE DE VEYRAC: An Avignon apothecary inventory from 1247 lists a silent foreign partner by this name who could read Arabic labels and refused payment in coin. No place called Veyrac can be connected securely to the record.

AMBRÓS BÉKÉSI: A Transylvanian monastic catalogue from 1381 records this donor beside twenty-three books that later appeared at Blackthorn. Békési may be a regional identifier, a copying error, or the surname of the man from whom the books were obtained.

AMBROSE VALE: A seventeenth-century English shipping ledger names an Ambrose Vale as owner of a crate containing manuscripts, two astrolabes, and "one sleeping gentleman, not to be exposed to daylight." The signature does not resemble Ambrose's secure hand. The packing instructions do.

One further candidate has been redacted because the name appears in an active Bureau index. Ambrose described the redaction as “probably sensible,” then asked which index. He was not told.

BUREAU POSITION: Possible aliases only. Do not amend the subject’s record, monogram household linen, or commission bookplates.

IV EVIDENCE OF BRILLIANCE

During the 1804 Blackthorn registration, Ambrose reconstructed a damaged property covenant from six unrelated marginal notes, a parish tithe map, and the pattern of nail holes left in a missing ledger binding. The reconstruction was accepted by the Bureau and then misfiled for one hundred and seventy-five years.

In 1849 he identified a counterfeit grimoire without opening it. The vellum had been stretched in the wrong direction for the region claimed by the seller. The text was later found to contain a summoning error that would have removed every door within approximately three miles.

He can distinguish rag-fibre eighteenth-century paper, nineteenth-century wood pulp, Edwardian bond, and late-twentieth-century toner by scent. He reads palimpsests by noticing where a scribe pressed harder while trying not to remember the erased sentence.

In 1911 he resolved a haunting that had defeated two ecclesiastical teams by determining that the apparition was not repeating a murder. It was correcting the room’s measurements. A sealed stairwell was found behind the north wall.

Ambrose reads languages in families rather than one at a time. When he cannot recall a word, he approaches it through cognates, trade routes, scribal habits, and the probable weather on the day the text was copied. This is inefficient in conversation and devastatingly effective in archives.

He once demonstrated that three supposedly independent prophecies derived from a single lost source because all three mistranslated the same obsolete word for hinge as oath. The Bureau revised two centuries of guidance and did not credit him because the discovery arrived in a letter about roof repairs.

V DOCUMENTED RESIDENCES AND APPEARANCES

GLAMORGAN C 1090 TO 1116: Mortal childhood and youth. First love: Elen ferch Iorwerth. Turning occurred near the end of this period.

WINCHESTER 1120S: Worked after dark in a cathedral-adjacent collection and developed the first of his surviving cross-language indexes.

PALERMO AND RAVENNA 1140S TO 1160S: Translated medical, astronomical, Greek, Latin, and Arabic material. Corrected a poison dosage copied incorrectly for ninety years.

CHARTRES AND TOLEDO 1170S TO 1210S: Studied architectural proportion and translation lineages. A Chartres mason credited an unnamed Welsh scholar with proving why a planned stair could never meet its landing.

AVIGNON AND MONTPELLIER 1240S: Practiced informal archival medicine and appears in the disputed de Veyrac inventory.

HOLYHEAD 1287: Present when Madoc ap Llywelyn the Younger was served the wrong roast chicken at a Welsh-Irish diplomatic conference. The hospitality dispute began here.

PRAGUE AND KRAKÓW 1320S TO 1350S: Catalogued occult and astronomical works; exposed two fabricated saints, one genuine haunting, and a calendar that had quietly acquired an extra Thursday.

TRANSYLVANIA 1381: Connected to the Békési catalogue and the transfer of twenty-three books later found at Blackthorn.

PADUA AND VENICE 1470S TO 1510S: Worked among scholars, printers, and physicians, accompanied by a ghost who corrected punctuation by moving pieces of type overnight.

LONDON AND LEIDEN 1580S TO 1630S: Consulted on collections damaged by religious and political upheaval. Witnessed a Bureau coven audit in 1612; the audited vampire was executed administratively.

RECONCILIATION CONFERENCE 1612: Mediated the 325-year hospitality dispute arising from the 1287 chicken. Ambrose maintains the settlement produced Welsh rarebit. Conventional etymology is filed as a dissenting opinion.

BOSTON AND PHILADELPHIA EARLY 1700S: Visited New World collections and attempted, without success, to acquire a ghost companion.

BLACKTHORN FROM 1779: Acquired the deed, became steward, welcomed the House's emerging consciousness, and established the residence that remains his home.

VI RECOVERED HISTORICAL INCIDENTS

Palermo, 1154. A court translator copied a medicinal quantity as twelve drams rather than two. Ambrose noticed that the ink around the numeral had dried at a different rate, traced the alteration to a physician protecting a profitable remedy, and corrected every known copy. The physician denounced him as a demon. This was accurate but procedurally irrelevant.

Chartres, 1194. After the cathedral fire, Ambrose spent eleven nights separating wet manuscripts with linen and chalk. A mortal canon named Étienne took public credit because Ambrose could not be seen working after dawn. Ambrose later named a particularly effective paper-drying method for him and never explained why.

Toledo, 1217. He produced a four-column translation of an astronomical text in Arabic, Latin, Greek, and Welsh. The Welsh column was included, he said, because a thought should be tested in the language in which one first learned to doubt adults.

Prague, 1348. During a fever season, Ambrose mapped deaths by water source rather than parish. He persuaded three neighborhoods to close contaminated wells more than five centuries before the method became respectable. The municipal record credits "a pale Welsh clerk of tiresome persistence."

Venice, 1496. A printer's apprentice began finding corrected punctuation set overnight in locked rooms. The workshop blamed a ghost. The ghost was responsible for only the commas. Ambrose corrected the Greek and left the door unlocked afterward out of professional courtesy.

London, 1666. He evacuated forty-three manuscripts before the fire reached a private collection near St Paul's. Asked later why he saved an undistinguished household account book before a decorated psalter, he produced the account book's final pages: the only surviving record of wages paid to six women compositors.

Pennsylvania, 1753. Ambrose resolved a territorial haunting by proving that the dead surveyor and the living landholder were using different definitions of a boundary oak. The settlement required one new marker stone, two apologies, and an annual cup of cider poured where the oak had stood. The cider provision remains in force.

VII WORKING METHODS

PRIMARY INSTRUMENT: Association. Subject follows a fact sideways until it consents to be found.

SECONDARY INSTRUMENTS: Marginalia, smell, material composition, etymology, architectural inconsistency, and tea.

DESK CONDITION: Appears chaotic. Removal of any item causes immediate and specific objection.

NOTE TAKING: Writes observations before he knows why they matter. Often knows why several decades later.

ERROR RESPONSE: Delighted when corrected by evidence; uninterested when corrected by confidence.

Ambrose may appear absent during discussion. This usually means he is comparing the present problem to five others, only two of which occurred in the current millennium. Interrupt only if fire is visible. If fire is visible, first determine whether he has already accounted for it.

VIII BLACKTHORN STEWARDSHIP

Ambrose has held the deed to Blackthorn since 1779. In 1804 he lost it in a bowl of velouté. Both facts are true and together provide the most accurate available description of his stewardship.

He ceded household leadership to Valerius in 1851 with the careful gratitude of a scholar handed back his afternoons. He retains the older authority of the person who knows which walls were added, which doors are symbolic, and which rooms should not be encouraged.

The House tolerates Ambrose's cataloguing because he does not pretend that cataloguing is ownership. It has moved books toward him, preserved objects he forgot he owned, and on at least one occasion altered a corridor so that he reached the correct archive while believing he had taken a wrong turn.

DOMESTIC FUNCTION: Keeper of the household's accumulated knowledge, translator of its oldest silences, and frequent cause of its paperwork.

IX MEMORY PROFILE

Ambrose forgets appointments, filing requirements, the locations of objects he personally installed, and whether a guest ever departed. He remembers the emotional temperature of a room after the names have gone.

He may forget a person's title and remember that the person was afraid of bells. He may lose the year and recall that the river froze two nights after the burial. He may fail to recognize his own handwriting until he reaches the sentence he regretted writing.

His memory is not decaying evenly. It is curating without consultation.

KNOWN RISK: Observers may treat retrieval failure as incapacity and make decisions in his presence that they would not make if they understood he was listening.

X ASSOCIATED PERSONS

VALERIUS: Companion since 1851; household leader by mutual arrangement. Ambrose trusts his judgment in danger and corrects his history in pencil.

ZACH: Foundling household member. Ambrose accepted him because he appeared distressed. Thirteen subsequent years have not caused him to reconsider the principle.

AMELIA HARKER: Recognized immediately as a mind that respects evidence. Subject gives her difficult truths in the order he believes they can be carried.

OLD PEMBERTON: Bureau officer first received at Blackthorn in 1884. Ambrose remembered the western crypt, the Geneva Bible, and the absence of farewell tea before he remembered what became of the guest.

XI CURRENT ASSESSMENT

THREAT CLASSIFICATION: Low aggression; extreme informational capability; consequences difficult to model

PRIMARY STRENGTH: Synthesis across disciplines, centuries, languages, and material evidence

PRIMARY VULNERABILITY: Information retrieval cannot be compelled by urgency

RECOMMENDED INTERVIEW PRACTICE: Ask concrete questions. Permit silence. Leave paper. Return tomorrow.

Final note: Ambrose is not a failed archive. He is an archive organized according to principles no modern institution has yet been clever enough to map.

FILE STATUS OPEN INDEXING ATTEMPT 47 INCONCLUSIVE