

However, examination of the fragments has enabled a small group of stones to be identified as church-fittings (which presumably, therefore, presuppose a stone building). A baluster-shaft has been found at Eggescliffe, and there are others at Hart and Great-ham. A floral scroll at Billingham, and two stones at Stanwick look like parts of decorative friezes. More difficult to assess are the sundials, said to be Saxon, at Staindrop, Hart, and Middleton St George. A pre-conquest origin has been claimed at various times for the fonts at Aycliffe (now lost) and Ormesby.

Of the types of monument represented, apart from about fifteen church-fittings, a substantial number were grave-monuments: twenty-eight grave-markers and twenty grave-slabs and covers have been distinguished, apart from the twenty-eight hogbacks. Although a number of stones are fragments of indeterminate form, a considerable proportion of the remaining 200 or so must be from free-standing stone crosses. Some of these may well join, so that the total number of crosses represented will be less; even so the impression is that a large proportion of the total number of fragments is from crosses. Since few appear to have an elaborate iconography, it appears that the bulk were probably memorial crosses, although in the area under discussion inscriptions are by no means as common on crosses as they are on grave-markers.

Detailed analysis of the material is beginning to show distinctive features in the forms of the monuments, and in the styles of decoration. Such analysis is beyond the scope and purpose of this note which is simply to draw attention again to this neglected but vital source of information for the pre-conquest period.

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RICHARD FITZ TUROLD, LORD OF PENHALLAM, CORNWALL

In a recent issue of this journal Guy Beresford described the excavation of a medieval Cornish manor house of the late 12th and 13th centuries at Penhallam in the parish of Jacobstow, Cornwall.⁷¹ The site chosen for this manor house, now known as Bury Court, was within the confines of an earlier ring-work which was probably in existence at the time of the Domesday Survey.

The manor of Penhallam was held in 1086 by Richard fitz Turolde⁷² and formed part of an extensive fee which was to become known in the 13th and 14th centuries as the honour of Cardinham. Richard, in turn, held his lands from the king's half-brother, Count Robert of Mortain who, with 1,002 manors valued at £2,000, ranked as the most important secular landholder in the country after the king.⁷³ In Cornwall, particularly, his position was supreme with some 277 estates worth £424 and housing an enumerated population of almost 3,500 persons.⁷⁴ The count appears to have received, in fact, the entire county except for the royal, ecclesiastical and two minor estates.⁷⁵

Analysis of the Mortain fee in Cornwall as recorded in Domesday Book yields a valuable indication of the position of Richard fitz Turolde within the county. For his demesne Count Robert retained twenty-two manors valued at £243 and subinfeudated the remainder among some forty-four tenants. It is unusual that the majority were English (twenty-eight), but collectively their sixty-seven estates rendered a mere £31 and they were evidently of little feudal importance. There were also a few Breton tenants and one Fleming while the Normans numbered only twelve, but their superiority is indicated by the fact that they controlled 155 manors to the value of nearly £123. It can be shown, however, that eight of these Normans were of only minor status, with a

⁷¹ *Medieval Archaeol.*, xviii (1974), 90-145.

⁷² *Domesday Book* (Record Commissioners), III, f. 259.

⁷³ I. N. Soulsby, *The Fiefs in England of the Counts of Mortain*, M.A. thesis, University of Wales (1974), 73.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 183.

⁷⁵ These were 'Forchetestona' and 'Pighesdona': *D.B.*, III, ff. 334b, 397b.

few small estates concentrated in the northern hundreds of Trigg and Wivel. In the final analysis, therefore, we find that the great majority of the tenanted holdings, 107 worth £94, were in the hands of only four men, which represents 43% of all the tenanted estates and 58% of their total value. All four, moreover, were essentially Cornish landholders in that their feudal interests elsewhere were substantially less than those in Cornwall, and between them they controlled only a further thirty-seven manors E. of the Tamar. Hamelin, for example, who held twenty-two manors valued at £15, is always described as being *de Cornubia* in records of the 12th century.⁷⁶ This was also so with Turstin, who was sheriff of Cornwall at the time of Domesday, and the delineation applied long after he ceased to hold that office.⁷⁷ The third major tenant was Reginald de Valletort, who controlled thirty-three estates worth £29 from his castle at Trematon, but the most important Mortain tenant in the county was Richard fitz Turolde whose twenty-nine manors returned an annual income of £33.⁷⁸ Richard also held land in Cornwall from the bishop of Exeter⁷⁹ and in neighbouring Devon he was a tenant of both the count of Mortain⁸⁰ and Baldwin the sheriff,⁸¹ while he held a further four manors there in-chief.⁸²

Comparatively little is known of Richard fitz Turolde's life and career.⁸³ His father, Turulf or Turolde, witnessed a charter of Count Robert in favour of the monastery of Le-Mont-St-Michel in 1075-82,⁸⁴ but the date of Richard's succession to the family lands is not known except that it had occurred before the compilation of the Domesday Survey. He also appears as a grantor to Le-Mont-St-Michel in 1087-90⁸⁵ and in or about 1100 he attested the foundation charter of Montacute Priory which was established by Robert of Mortain's son and heir, Count William.⁸⁶ Richard witnessed the gifts to Montacute of Alured, *pincerna* to the comital household,⁸⁷ and again in 1103-4 he was present when Henry I granted a confirmation charter to the abbey of Marmoutier at Tours concerning Count William's gift for the foundation of a dependent priory at Winghall in Lincolnshire.⁸⁸ We find no further reference to him until c. 1120 by which date he was evidently dead, as an entry in the cartulary of Merton Priory included the *terram de Trethu de feudo Willelmi filii Ricardi*,⁸⁹ son and heir, who is also mentioned in 1123.⁹⁰ Richard was in possession of Trethewey at the time of the Domesday Survey.⁹¹

Although biographical information is scanty, Richard fitz Turolde was evidently a man of considerable importance in Cornwall, and the core of his estates became moulded in the extensive honour of Cardinham which was held by his lineal descendants until well into the 13th century. He was Robert of Mortain's principal steward in the county and it is probably more than coincidence that while the lands of the three other principal Norman tenants were markedly concentrated in particular areas those of Richard were

⁷⁶ *The Cartularies of the Augustinian Priory of Bruton and the Cluniac Priory of Montacute* (Somerset Rec. Soc. viii, 1894), no. 1; H. A. Cronne and C. Johnson (eds.), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, II (1956), no. 680.

⁷⁷ J. H. Round, *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland* (P.R.O., 1899), 437.

⁷⁸ *D.B.*, III, ff. 225, 226, 228b-9, 247-8b, 259-60b.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, f. 199b.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, ff. 216b, 217b, 220, 221.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, f. 305.

⁸² *Ibid.*, I, f. 113b.

⁸³ It has been maintained (Canon T. Taylor, *Celtic Christianity of Cornwall* (London, 1916), 41) that Richard was in fact a Breton but there is no evidence in support of this view.

⁸⁴ P. L. Hull (ed.), *The Cartulary of St. Michael's Mount, Cornwall* (Devon and Cornwall Rec. Soc., n.s., v (1962)), no. 1.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, no. 62.

⁸⁶ *Montacute Cartulary*, op. cit. in note 76, no. 1.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, no. 169.

⁸⁸ *Regesta*, op. cit. in note 76, II, no. 680; op. cit. in note 77, no. 1210, p. 437.

⁸⁹ BL, Cott. MS., Cleop. c.vii, f. 99; J. H. Round, *Eng. Hist. Rev.*, xiv (1899), 418; A. Heales (ed.), *The Records of Merton Priory* (London, 1898), 8.

⁹⁰ *Regesta*, op. cit. in note 76, II, no. 1391.

⁹¹ *D.B.*, III, f. 260.

evenly distributed from Week St Mary in the very N. of Trigg to Kelynack near Land's End. This would make good feudal sense for one who would play a major part in the supervision of the count's demesne and in the overall administration of the whole Cornish fief. It is not surprising, therefore, to learn that ring-works have been located within several of Richard's manors, at Restormel in Polscoe, at Week St Mary where he held one hide in 1086,⁹² and at Penhallam which has recently been excavated. None of these fortifications are mentioned in the Domesday Survey, where the only Cornish strongholds were Count Robert's castle of Dunheved at Launceston, and Reginald de Valletort's at Trematon.⁹³ Archaeological investigation, however, has ascribed all three ring-works to the early Norman period.⁹⁴ There is some evidence to suggest that Penhallam was the most prominent from the earliest days and there are indications of this in Domesday itself where its enumerated population was greater than that of Polscoe and Week combined. This was also the case in all the various categories of livestock, which points to the existence of a larger and more productive estate. That Penhallam was chosen above the others in the late 12th century as the site of a manor house⁹⁵ confirms this importance and no doubt it became the temporary *caput* of the family's lands before Cardinham, which did not exist as a manor in 1086, was chosen as the location of a new castle (*c.* 1200) and gained the ascendancy.

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BARTON BLOUNT: CLIMATIC OR ECONOMIC CHANGE?

The changes that occurred within the English village in the later middle ages have in recent years increasingly preoccupied students of medieval agrarian history. Historians have documented a trend towards pastoral farming and the disintegration of many village communities in the 14th and 15th centuries. It is now also recognized that many villages enclosed by the early 16th century had experienced a declining population for a century or more before enclosure. Archaeologists through excavation have also identified these changes; Guy Beresford has presented the most recent and complete evidence for these developments.⁹⁶ Although historians and archaeologists are united in recognizing the same phenomena, they differ in their explanations; on both sides, these tend to be restricted to one cause. Historians propose an economic interpretation whereas some archaeologists, including Beresford, have adopted the thesis of climatic deterioration. Beresford stresses in his monograph that "the climatic changes of the medieval period affected not only the building of houses, but the entire ecology of settlements", but it may be thought that the issue is prejudged, for this interpretative element is interwoven with the presentation of the actual evidence. A number of innovations are attributed almost wholly to climatic deterioration: not only changes in house construction — the introduction of eaves trenches, cobbled thresholds and internal drains — but also broader economic changes: the abandonment of arable in favour of pastoral farming (especially on unworkable, waterlogged clay soils), and as a consequence the appearance of crew-yards for cattle; and the abandonment of clay-land settlements for those which had, fortunately, been "depopulated by the Black Death", and where "the soil was easier to cultivate".⁹⁷ This note is not intended to reopen the

⁹² L. Alcock and D. J. Cathcart, 'Ringworks of England and Wales' in A. J. Taylor (ed.), *Château Gaillard; European Castle Studies*, III (London, 1969), 103.

⁹³ *D.B.*, III, ff. 263b, 256.

⁹⁴ *Op. cit.* in note 71, 95, 97.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 90.

⁹⁶ G. Beresford, *The Medieval Clay-land Village: Excavations at Goltho and Barton Blount* (Soc. for Medieval Archaeol., monograph series, VI, London, 1975). I am grateful to C. C. Dyer and P. A. Rahtz for their helpful suggestions.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 50-4 and *passim*.