

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN
SOCIETY

(INCORPORATING THE CAMBS & HUNTS ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)



VOLUME LIII

JANUARY 1959 TO DECEMBER 1959

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DEIGHTON BELL

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE CAMBRIDGESHIRE DOMESDAY

R. WELLDON FINN, M.A.

WITH the exception of the south-western counties, where we have the material of the *Liber Exoniensis* available, we can evaluate Domesday Book nowhere better than in Cambridgeshire, for here alone we have a copy, though admittedly a late and imperfect copy, of what seems to be most of the initial Inquest material, the *Inquisitio Comitatus Cantabrigiensis*, and three slightly varying copies, at times giving more information than either the above or Domesday Book, of the material so far as it concerned the Abbey of Ely, the *Inquisitio Eliensis*. The latter is followed by Summaries of the Abbey lands and of the estates of three of the leading laymen who had obtained holdings to which the Abbey laid claim; a short list of demesne property giving the plough-teams and population on each; then what is headed *Nomina Villarum*, giving a similar list, but with the tenants' teams only recorded; a schedule of lands claimed by the Abbey but which had passed out of its possession; and (in one manuscript only) notes of property and rights claimed at an inquiry held between 1071 and 1075 into the illegal acquisitions of Ely lands.¹ Round discussed these at length, stressing the imperfections of each.² Magnificent contribution to the study of the Domesday Inquest and of Domesday Book though Round's work was, it is not without its defects; for example, examination of IE shows MS. B to be the most accurate of the three texts, not MS. C.³

When William of Normandy was crowned king of the English on Christmas Day 1066, among the rights he acquired by their acceptance of his conquest of England was that of disposing of the estates of his new subjects. Their transference to his adherents was effected largely in accordance with definite principles. As a faithful son of Holy Church, whose support he needed in an England still far from generally willing to accept his mastery, he ordained that ecclesiastical organizations should retain the lands they were legitimately holding at King Edward's death; the Abbot of Croylund, for example, was to keep the estates which were of St Guthlac's demesne. There would be no difficulty about discovering who before the Conquest had been the leading thegns of a province, and redistribution could most easily be effected by transferring the estates of each to a supporter of his successful venture and regarding the newcomer as the heir of an Englishman dead or displaced and as

¹ The texts were edited and printed by N. E. S. A. Hamilton (London, 1876). Hamilton did not attempt a critical edition, and in his printed text there are numerous omissions and mis-readings. The manuscripts are hereinafter referred to as ICC and IE, and Domesday Book as DB; Hamilton's edition is given as H.

² J. H. Round, *Feudal England*, pp. 1-54, 118-38, 459-61 (London, 1895).

³ See R. Welldon Finn, 'The Inquisitio Eliensis Re-considered', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* vol. LXXV (1960).

succeeding to all the privileges and responsibilities of his pre-Conquest *antecessor*. So we find William of Warenne acquiring the lands of King Edward's thegn Thorkill ('Tochi'), and Aubrey de Ver those of Wulfwine ('Wlwin'). Some natives were allowed to retain at least a portion of their former estates, though as a rule they held them, by the time Domesday Book was compiled, from a foreign tenant-in-chief, and he of the king; thus we find a certain 'Almar' in possession of some of the holdings which had been his in 1066 (fol. 195*ai*). But it is only in a small minority of instances that we find an English or Anglo-Danish subtenant recorded in 1086.

But the settlement and transference of estates, in the eastern counties at least, was not altogether a simple proceeding, though there must have been available lists of pre-Conquest landholders and of their property—perhaps in the form of records of payment of geld or land-tax.¹ King Edward's manors naturally passed to the Conqueror. But in Cambridgeshire, in contrast to the system adopted in most shires, King William did not take to himself all the manors of the House of Godwine, which were his by right of conquest. Though he kept Earl Harold's berewick of Shelford (190*ai*), Bottisham (196*ai*) passed to Walter Giffard, and in DB we find the Countess Judith in possession of Kirtling (Harold's) and Whittlesford (Gyrth's, 202*az*). The difficulty was that here the lands were not composed of a number of large manors, many the demesne manors of the English or Danish aristocracy or plutocracy, and without subtenants, as in the west and south. The eastern shires were rather a region of small proprietors, often virtually peasant proprietors, who had sought the protection of, had 'commended themselves to', declared themselves 'the men of', some more influential landowner. Where, then, one of these lesser men was holding under Earl Harold, or was the man of his brother Tostig, devolution could not be straightforward. For many a minor landowner was commended to different magnates in respect of different estates, or was indeed commended to more than one man for a single holding. A magnate, moreover, though his tenant was his 'man', might not have jurisdictional rights over him—what was known as the 'soke' or 'sake and soke'. Over and over again we find that someone was the man of Y, but that Z had soke over him, and that if he had the power to sell or bequeath his land, Z normally retained the soke over him (or his land) when he did so.

But there were some whose possessions were too great to take overmuch account of tenurial ramifications. Edith ('Ediva') the Fair, very possibly Earl Harold's mistress, the 'Swan-necked', had held vast estates in the shire. To bestow them as a whole on a single lesser baron would endow him with overmuch local importance, and so the majority of them were given to the king's trusted Breton supporter Earl Alan of Richmond. But they did not pass in their entirety to him. We find Hardwin holding land which had been hers at Kingston and Caldecote (198*b2*), Aubrey de Ver at Great Abington (199*b2*), John son of Waleran at Fulbourn (201*b2*). But DB

¹ There must, too, surely have existed records of those who, as DB informs us, were liable to the sheriff for the duties of transport or of finding a guard when the king visited the shire. Sheriffs of 1066 or earlier seem to have survived the Conquest and may even, as in some other shires, have continued in office for some years. We hear of three pre-Norman sheriffs of the county, Ælfric, Orgar, and Blacuin (189*ai*, 197*az*, 201*bi*).

sometimes notes that Earl Alan claims the land in right of his predecessor, Edith, and the Hundred-jury supports his claim, for Edith's man could transfer his land to whom he would.

Indeed, it is rarely apparent from casual inspection of DB that there had been any underlying principles of distribution. Robert fitzWymarc, sheriff of Essex before the Conquest, had had ten Cambridgeshire men commended to him. He seems to have been dead by 1086, and the lands in which he had an interest had passed thus:

Fol. 193 <i>bi</i>	1 at Arrington, on a manor held by Ælfric, a thegn of King Edward	Earl Roger
Fol. 197 <i>bi</i> , 2	2 at Hatley St George and 1 at East Hatley	Eudes the Steward
Fol. 198 <i>bi</i>	1 at Wratworth and 1 at Whitwell	Hardwin
Fol. 199 <i>bi</i>	1 at Papworth (Ornod)	Eustace of Huntingdon
Fol. 200 <i>bi</i> , 2	1 at Croyden and 1 at Whitwell	Picot the sheriff
Fol. 200 <i>ai</i>	1 at Hatley St George	Picot the sheriff

As only once is the pre-Conquest tenant named, it may be that the anonymous holders were in some instances the *antecessores* of the Normans who became possessed of their lands.

As we look through the folios of DB, we shall rarely find indication of organized succession. For this there are reasons additional to the above. One is because in the score of years preceding the Inquest there had been many inevitable changes in tenancies, coupled with the fact that DB often does not name the immediate predecessor of the holder in 1086. Frequently Earl Ælfgar of Mercia is said to have held an estate, or the holder had been his man. But the Earl died in 1062, and possibly his sons, Eadwine and Morkere, inherited his lands, and retained at least some of them after the Conquest, since King William needed their support, until their rebellion against him.¹ So with Earl Waltheof, on excellent terms with the king until his revolt in 1075, but whose estates did not as a whole pass to his widow, the Countess Judith. Earl Ralf II of East Anglia was certainly holding Whaddon (196*b2*) until the day he 'offended against the King' and forfeited his estates. Many a lesser local man surely lost his lands for complicity in Hereward's campaign in and about Ely in 1070, or in the revolt of the Earls in 1075, or as a result of other unrecorded incidents. To bestow on the individual the entire fief of Waltheof would have meant a grant of overmuch power, and we find his manors and the holdings whose tenants were his men in the hands of fourteen different tenants-in-chief.

A second reason is the division of the great majority of the villages between a multiplicity of tenants. Even after the Conquest, four tenants-in-chief had an interest in Eversden: in 1066 twenty-seven sokemen had shared its eight hides and forty acres. A sokeman of Earl Ælfgar had held a virgate; in 1086 his land was held by Durand of Hardwin d'Eschalers (198*b2*). Two who were the Fair Edith's men

¹ This is, however, no more than supposition. Ælfgar was Earl of East Anglia until 1057, when on his obtaining his father's earldom of Mercia Gyrth, Harold's brother, succeeded him, and so Ælfgar's sons may not have inherited his Cambridgeshire lands, especially as the county was included in the earldom given to Waltheof in 1065.

had owned one hide; they may be the two Englishmen who, with a certain Robert, held the estate after the Conquest, of Earl Alan (194*b*2). Another hide had been held by Edwi, the man of the Abbot of Ely, but over whom Earl Ælfgar had the soke; this was being held by Hugh de Berners of the King (199*a*2). Fourteen who were King Edward's men, one who was Edith's, six of Earl Ælfgar's, and two of the late Archbishop Stigand's, holding jointly estates of varying sizes, had not passed to the customary successors of each, but their land was in part the sheriff's, in part a certain Humphrey's, in each case held from Guy de Raimbeaucourt (200*a*i). Moreover, the sheriff's holding is half a hide, and none of the four groups possessed this quantity in 1066. It would be easy to select villages with even more complex pre-Conquest tenancies and subsequent devolutions.

What governed such redistributions we cannot deduce. To retain undisturbed all the divisions of 1066 would have been foreign to the Norman mind, for this appreciated the administrative and economic inefficiency of numerous small estates, and endeavoured to combine them into more workable ones. Also, who, where one lord had a man's commendation, but another his soke, was his lawful successor? There seems never to have been any agreed principle as to the possession of which, commendation or soke, gave clear title, or the better right, to the land. What indications we possess suggest that to have only the soke over a man was not regarded as very good reason for inheriting his land.

We are not always told whether men had possessed the privilege of transferring land or not; where we are, rather more than 75 % had this right. Is it, then, possible that after the Conquest many men, their former lords dead or disgraced or impoverished, became of their own seeking the men of the newcomers, and for this reason appear in a particular individual fief in which no evidence of normal descent is displayed? It is equally possible that in the turmoil of the Conquest a sokeman who had been the man of the dead Earl Gyrth or of some lesser man turned for protection to Earl Waltheof or to the potential stability of the Abbey of Ely. To whom a man commended himself might well have been a matter of to whom a neighbouring estate had legitimately descended. Who had possessed a man's commendation was obviously of moment to the organizers of the Inquest, for they rarely failed to note whose man a tenant had been. It seems probable, from Earl Alan's claim and its support by the Hundred, that a newcomer might expect to succeed to the lands of the men of his duly recognized predecessor, even though they might have possessed the power of selling their land.

But undoubtedly the newcomers used the opportunities presented to extend their estates without proper sanction. For example, Thorkill, the *antecessor* of William of Warenne, had held two estates, in Weston Colville and Trumpington, which he could not sell without the Abbot of Ely's leave, but which had passed to William—the latter, previously, to William's brother-in-law Frederick, killed in 1070/1, so that it must have been acquired early in the occupation (196*a*2, *bi*). Not unnaturally, Ely protested at William's occupation of what she claimed was Abbey demesne land.

DB itself indicates some of these illegalities. Twice we are told that the predecessor of Aubrey de Ver did not have certain land, but according to the testimony of the Hundred jury occupied it despite the King's arrangements (199*bi*). Earl Ralf had been holding part of Whaddon when he rebelled and lost his lands; in 1086 Richard fitzGilbert had it, though the Hundred reports that Richard's predecessor never had it nor was seized of it (196*b2*). The Ely claims to land in lay hands are extensive, and for all we know some of these may have been acquired by aliens as a result of the Ely tenants' share in the rebellion of 1070. It is impossible to doubt that many an unscrupulous newcomer, backed by a far from scrupulous sheriff who seems himself to have acquired numerous estates by no authority but his own, swelled his holdings without the licence of the king and in defiance of his principles of inheritance. Aubrey de Ver is convicted by DB of having acquired illegally a holding in Abington which in 1066 had been held by a sokeman of the king, and which three years before the Inquest Picot the sheriff had proved was not properly Aubrey's and had recovered (199*b2*).

Evil though Picot's reputation became, it may be that the arrangement and language of DB suggest usurpation on his part when in fact there was none. We are frequently told that both he and another apparent usurper, Hardwin d'Eschalers (who from his position could well have been a deputy-sheriff), are holding land which is 'of the King's fee', 'is in the King's hand'.¹ The implication may very well be that lawful ownership of these estates had not been determined, and that as the royal representatives they were administering them until it should please the king to grant them. Some of the former holders, for example, at Dullingham, had been Earl Ælfgar's men; at Quy two had been men of the Abbot of Ramsey, five King Edward's; a Fulbourn estate had been shared by as many as twenty-six sokemen, and it is listed under *Terra Regis*. There is in neither DB nor ICC any indication that the existing arrangements had been challenged.

All through his reign, indeed, the king had displayed anxiety that all should be done in accordance with his orders. The records of his reign show his concern to ensure that Bishop Remigius of Lincoln should not exact new dues within the Isle of Ely, and that Ely should possess all the lands to which she could prove her title; investigation after investigation had been held, especially after the 1070 rebellions, and at the great inquiry at Kentford in 1080.² Individual writs demand the surrender of Ely property unjustly acquired, and DB and IE show that some at least had been recovered.³ If men cannot prove that they had received by the king's gift lands claimed by Ely, the abbot is to have sake and soke in them and receive all customary dues as his predecessor in King Edward's day had them; those who

¹ Picot: Fulbourn, Babraham, Great Abington (190*ai*), Quy, Pampisford (200*a2*), Long Stanton (201*ai*); Hardwin: Dullingham (197*b2*), West Wrating, Babraham (198*ai*), Melbourn (198*bi*). At Clopton (200*bi*) Picot has a garden-close which is 'of the King's soke'.

² King William's orders for the holding of these inquiries are printed in H, pp. xvii-xxi. See also E. Miller, 'The Ely Land Pleas in the Reign of William I', *Eng. Hist. Rev.* vol. LXII (1947), pp. 438-56.

³ For example, Hugh de Montfort is to give back Barham in Suffolk, which seems to have been recovered, for it appears as an Ely demesne manor in DB and IE (II, 383*b*; 63*a2*, 250, 201*a*).

have acquired the Abbey thegnlands are to make the best arrangements they can with the abbot regarding their possession.

The king's view of the complications seems to be a completely definite one. What in 1066 were the Abbey demesne lands ought under no circumstances to belong to anyone else. Where Ely had had soke over men, she was to retain it. But he had ordained that the Abbey owed him the service of forty knights, and he could not afford to have his military strength diminished by inability or failure to supply the quota. In 1066, some of these thegnlands—land leased to a tenant who might not transfer it—were being held by priests, and despite the militancy of certain English churchmen, it would suit the king well, provided it left the abbot with no legitimate grievance, to have these thegnlands in lay hands, and a trained soldier furnished by Picot or Hardwin or Guy on behalf of the Abbey.¹ But it is made quite clear in DB that these thegnlands, which for the most part seem to be alienations from the former demesne land of the Abbey, are still to be regarded as Abbey property, and that their lay tenants are serving the abbot, and do not hold them as tenants-in-chief. The king seems to have ordered men such as Picot and Hardwin to administer Ely thegnland and sokeland, while admitting Ely's superiority over it. For we find both of them holding 'under the abbot', and Picot 'serving the abbot and holding of him by the king's command'.² The position is made even clearer (though we must remember that IE is a series of documents drawn up in the Abbey's interests) in the Summaries which follow the Cambridgeshire section of the IE.³ The property claimed to be Ely's but held in and before 1086 by Picot, Hardwin, and Guy is said to be held 'by the grant and order of King William', about which 'they have made agreement with the abbot by the king's permission' and for which 'they do service to the abbot', while where the former tenant could sell the land 'the sake and soke and commendation and service is to remain the Church of Ely's'. To the fact that sometimes IE says the estates are held 'of' or 'under' the abbot, but DB and ICC 'of the king' we need attach no great importance, for 'of the king' may be no more than the equivalent of 'by the king's orders'. One estate remained in dispute: at Thriplow (191*ai*, 199*a2*) Hardwin was holding a hide of the demesne by the abbot's permission 'until he can discuss the matter with the king'. It is perhaps significant that we do not find Normans holding Abbey land in the Two Hundreds of Ely; perhaps because it was so clearly Ely demesne and had been little sub-infeudated, perhaps because strategically and physically the Isle was of less importance than the south.

Ely was not alone in losing land. The nunnery at Chatteris had lost a small estate at Barrington to Robert Gernon, and a portion of St Guthlac's demesne (the land of the abbot of Croyland) had been appropriated by Picot.⁴ But Ely was by far the greatest sufferer. The justice of her claims is in many instances apparent. But, despite the royal commands, it cannot have been easy for the sheriff to restore to her

¹ For discussion of Ely thegnland and sokeland, see Round, *op. cit.*; E. Miller, *The Abbey and Bishopric of Ely* (Cambridge, 1953), and L. F. Salzmann in the *Victoria History of Cambridgeshire* (London, 1938), vol. 1.

² Harston (191*a2*, 200*a2*); see also Hauxton (198*ai*).

³ H, pp. 121-4.

⁴ Barrington (197*ai*), Cottenham (201*bi*).

lands appropriated by another baron, often far more influential than himself, and the little we know of Picot makes it certain that he would be reluctant to yield what he had acquired. It is, on the other hand, clear that in some instances Ely's claims were but slender ones. A number of the estates claimed had been held by sokemen who were men of the king, or of Edith, or of Earl Waltheof, and the only interest the Abbey had in them, it seems, was that the abbot had soke over their holders.¹

Despite these *placita* and writs, there was much which Ely had failed to recover by 1086. Indeed, if we compare the memorandum of the *placitum* of 1071/5 with the schedule of losses attached to the IE and with DB, we find that in some instances the newcomers seem to have increased their initial possession of Ely lands. It is of course not impossible that after the revolt of the Earls in 1075, in which Ely tenants may have lost lives and lands, lay magnates seized the opportunity to extend their estates. The schedule of Ely claims and the notes on the *placitum* have not yet been adequately considered; it is probable that the latter is far from being a complete record of the facts. Many instances of losses recorded in the schedule do not appear in the earlier document (for example, Babraham, Pampisford, Hauxton), but it is not necessarily legitimate to deduce that they passed out of Ely's control after 1075. The schedule does not include loss of demesne land, much of which is recorded in the earlier document, but all the thegnland and sokeland is noted therein. It is noteworthy that many of the holdings named in the schedule of claims—for example, Snailwell, Woodditton, Trumpington, Weston Colville, Madingley, Rampton, Lolworth, Harston, Quy—were not recovered by Ely subsequent to the Inquest.

As numerous entries in DB demonstrate, a tenant did not lawfully possess an estate unless he had the king's writ granting it to him, or the king's representative had been instructed to 'deliver' it to him, to 'seize' him of it, and the Hundred was notified of the grant. It is clear that the king's officials, including his half-brother Bishop Odo of Bayeux, regent during his frequent absences in Normandy, did not strictly adhere to his commands. Odo had delivered two Barton estates (201b2) to William of Cahagnes, and the Hundred testifies to the fact, but it did not know on what grounds this land of Waltheof's was so delivered.² The Staploe Hundred jury had seen no royal writ or king's messenger, nor any other evidence, as to why Geoffrey de Mandeville should have a Chippenham estate (197a2), though Orgar, King Edward's sheriff, who had held it, had become the man of Geoffrey's predecessor, Ansgar.

Now it is one of the curiosities of the Inquest that despite the fact that in every Cambridgeshire instance recorded of a claim against illegal tenancy the Hundred testifies to its justice, the estate is invariably entered in the fief of the usurper. This suggests two things: first, that the king's Commissioners did not here pronounce judgement on any of these claims which were contested (or, if they did, not until after DB had been inscribed); secondly, that the governing principle was that as a

¹ For example, at Willingham (195ai—Earl Alan's land), Melbourn (200ai—but here most of the sokemen had also been the abbot's men), Westwick (202ai).

² William had no other land in Cambridgeshire, and obviously no local thegn was his *antecessor*.

rule land should be credited to the *de facto* holder, which might imply that the Hundreds' lists of holdings took no account of disputes, though they are recorded in ICC, or that one of the bases of the Inquest was a return for each tenant-in-chief's fief. But in a few instances, all concerned with Ely claims, the entry is duplicated. The information is given not only in the account of the Ely fief, but also at the close of that of Hardwin (199a2) and, sometimes marginally or as a postscript, in that of Picot; once in that of Guy de Raimbeaucourt. From the positions of the duplicates, it is perhaps improbable that they originated in the use by the clerks of an independent return for each fief.

DB, then, is misleading in listing a holding as in a fief whose owner had no real right to it. But then DB is here no more adequate than it is for other shires. Seven times each the name of the Hundred or the place-name was omitted, once the wrong Hundred-name was inserted, and once what does not seem to have been a Hundred is named as such. Once the clerk wrote *in eadem villa*, referring to Melbourn, when the holding was at Meldreth (200ai), and two holdings are said to lie in Ickleton when they actually lay in Litlington (190ai, 198a2).¹ The statistical errors, demonstrated by the IE and ICC, were listed by Round. The indexing was very badly done; in the text, fief 25 follows no. 14, after no. 28 we have another numbered 25, then two fiefs were left unnumbered, and the next is numbered 20: in the prefatory list, that of Peter of Valognes was misplaced, but a correction made to show its right place. It may be that in the draft from which the condensation we know as the Exchequer Domesday was made the fiefs were in a different order, and the compiler put them in the approved sequence but forgot to adjust the numbering. Like the rest of DB, the text gives the impression of having been written under extreme pressure, and under the necessity of keeping to a time-limit. After all, so far as we can tell from the scanty surviving records, the Domesday Inquest was decided upon at Gloucester at the Christmas Council of 1085, and the 'writings' (which on internal evidence imply Domesday Book as we possess it) were brought to King William before he finally left England late in 1086, probably when he was at Salisbury in August of that year. To obtain the required information, reduce it to writing, reshape its form from that of a return for each Hundred to one for each fief, and condense this provincial recasting into the form of the Exchequer Domesday, eight months must have been inadequate time.

While it is plain that in other parts of the country the Inquest's unit was the manor, it does seem that here (and probably, therefore, in the group of shires served by the same body of clerks and/or royal Commissioners) the village was the unit. This was perhaps inevitable in a largely unmanorialized district.² There are indeed only ninety-one manors recorded, though probably many another holding was, though

¹ For example, the rubric for Wetherley Hundred should have been inserted before the first entry for Shepreth on 198bi; ICC shows that the unnamed holding after Carlton on 195b2 was Weston Colville; Babraham (199a2) is ascribed to Flendish Hundred when ICC shows it was in Chilford; 'Weslai' Hundred (199a2) is otherwise unknown.

² But in equally unmanorialized Norfolk and Suffolk the manor, and not the vill, was clearly the unit. Manorialization had however developed largely since the Conquest.

not so styled in DB, a manor. What the term 'manor' meant to an Inquest clerk is problematical. From the Summaries included in the *Liber Exoniensis* it is plain that in these every pre-Conquest holding counted as a manor; that is, if two men held in 1066 what in DB is a single holding, this counted for two manors.¹ So, it seems, the count was reckoned in the Summaries of the IE. In DB only one of Hardwin's estates (Caxton, 198b2) is styled a manor. But in the IE Summary (H, pp. 123-4) he is said to have thirty manors in demesne, and his subtenants a further thirty (these must represent his whole fief), four in the thegnlands, and four in the sokelands. But MS. C (fol. 188b) gives twenty-eight in the thegnlands and eighteen in the sokelands, and these figures more or less correspond with the Summaries' statistics. For where Hardwin holds Ely lands and the previous tenants could not sell, twenty-seven sokemen are mentioned as having held them, and their holdings total $8\frac{3}{4}$ hides, as in the Summary. But twenty-three, not eighteen, sokemen are recorded for the sokelands, who are said to have six acres more than the Summary gives them. These Summaries agree so well with the DB and IE figures that small discrepancies, the inevitable result of addition sums in Roman figures, need cause no concern.

For those numerous petty holdings which had been held, and often still were held, by sokemen, it is probable that the village elders and the bailiffs of the fiefs of which they were part answered. Something of the same order as the ICC seems to have been the ultimate origin of DB, for in every fief the villages are mostly entered in the same order as they are in the ICC. There are indeed a few exceptions: for example, in the Ely record Harlston precedes Hauxton instead of following it. But Hauxton may at first have been missed in the initial draft, added postscriptally, and the divergence from the proper order not noticed, or troubled about, in compiling DB. In Earl Alan's fief, too, Soham comes in sixth place among the holdings in Staploe Hundred, whereas it is fourth in ICC. But there are in all only about half-a-dozen changes from the ICC order of villis. The Hundreds do not always come in the fiefs in their ICC order, and perhaps we must suppose that the return for each Hundred formed a separate document.

The tragedy of the Cambridgeshire material is that where we have so much we are lacking just those documents which would enable us to finalize our judgements. If there had survived a complete ICC, the original of this and of the IE instead of twelfth-century copies, and the 'provincial Domesday' which must have intervened between 'original returns' and Domesday Book as we have it, we should know so much more than we do. It is a sobering thought that if that copy of ICC had not been preserved, and the IE existed in one version only, not only should we have known a great deal less about eleventh-century England than we do, but the accuracy of the deductions of commentators would have reached a standard far lower than that which has been attained.

Still, it need hardly be said, there remain problems to be solved. We are given no clue as to why the assessment of six of the sixteen Hundreds had been reduced before

¹ See *Victoria History of Wiltshire*, vol. II, pp. 218-20.

1086.¹ It may be because the district had suffered severely in a military campaign, probably that of 1070-1, since the Hundreds concerned mostly lie between the royal base of Cambridge and the rebellious Isle of Ely. Whether something like the ICC was the sole ultimate source of DB, or whether there were individual returns for fiefs also, must remain uncertain. Since the expression *in breve* appears in the ICC (Soham, 77*bi*), it can hardly refer to the *breves* or 'chapters' giving the accounts of the various fiefs which make up DB, and it may refer to a return for the king's land. Further, in the Summaries of Ely lands, the thegnlands and sokelands held by Picot and Hardwin and Guy are said to be 'written and valued in the abbot of Ely's *breve*'. They are not all recorded in the Abbey fief in DB, but they were in the original of the IE, and the IE might be, not a copy of the relevant extracts from the ICC, supplemented by special knowledge of Ely lands, but of the Abbey's own return to the Inquest. What makes this somewhat improbable is that IE frequently includes, as does the ICC also, the expression 'as the men of the Hundred testify', which is inappropriate to a pre-Inquest feudal return, and it looks rather as if IE and ICC may be documents combining 'original returns' and Inquest proceedings. But about the actual procedure of the Inquest we unfortunately know singularly little.

¹ Probably we should add Chesterton to their number. As it is missing from the ICC, we cannot be certain of this, but geographically it is in the midst of the group which obtained a reduction.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CAMBRIDGE ANTIQUARIAN SOCIETY

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