

Lords, castellans, constables and dowagers

THE RAPE OF PEVENSEY FROM THE 11TH TO THE 13TH CENTURY

by Kathleen Thompson

The history of Pevensey, its castle and its hinterland from 1066 until the end of the 13th century can conveniently be divided into three phases, punctuated by two definitive changes of lordship. The first phase lasted until 1102 when William, Count of Mortain, son of the Conqueror's half-brother Robert, forfeited Pevensey together with all his inheritance in England. In the second, much longer, phase the lords of Laigle in southern Normandy held property around Pevensey, which came to be known as the honour of Aquila or the Eagle. Their association with the area continued, despite several temporary losses of their property, until the family died out in the male line in 1231. The third phase, during which Pevensey was granted to a number of royal favourites, dates from the death of the last Laigle until around 1270, when the honour of the Eagle, Pevensey castle and much local property came into the possession of Henry III's queen, Eleanor. During all three phases it has been assumed that the history of the honour of Pevensey and of the castle are identical, but there is clear evidence that for much of this time the castle and the honour were in different hands. In each phase a major siege of the castle illustrates the continuing strategic importance of the area, and a royal grant of property around Pevensey was often an indication of particular confidence in the recipient and always an important commentary on the changing needs and capacities of English royal power.

In the 200 years following the battle of Hastings the history of the town and castle of Pevensey is inseparable from the hinterland or rape which took its name, or at least so most historians have assumed.¹ That is not to say, however, that the history of the castle and the rape are identical. The great castle dominated the history of the rape, but the castle and the rape do not share precisely the same history because they have not always shared the same masters. In fact there is clear evidence that for much of the 200-year period following the Conquest successive kings of England were careful to keep the castle and the honour in separate hands. During that time the nature of the rape changed, beginning as a military expedient, but evolving with each new royal grant. The history of the various lords of the rape and its castle is therefore a matter of more than local interest — it is also an important commentary on the changing needs and capacities of English royal power.

The history of Pevensey and its hinterland during those 200 years can be conveniently divided

into three phases, punctuated by two definitive changes of lordship. The first phase lasted until the opening years of the 12th century during which time the rape was successively in the hands of the Conqueror's half-brother and nephew, the counts of Mortain. In the second much longer phase, which lasted until 1231, the lords of Laigle in southern Normandy held extensive property in Sussex, which came to be known as the honour of Aquila or the Eagle. Their association with the area continued, despite several temporary dispossessions, until the family died out in the male line. The third phase dates from the death of the last Laigle in 1231 until around 1270 when the honour of the Eagle, Pevensey castle and much local property came into the possession of Queen Eleanor, consort of Henry III. Throughout the period possession of the castle was an important consideration for the crown and each phase is marked by a major siege of the castle, which demonstrates its continuing strategic importance.

In the very earliest days of Norman occupation,

as William made his way towards London by a circuitous route though Kent and the southern home counties, there are no direct references to Pevensey. Like the rest of Sussex it was left under what must have amounted to martial law and was subject to the authority of Humphrey of Tilleul, who was based in a castle at Hastings.² It is possible, however, that some prominent Sussex families had their origins among Humphrey's troops, who remained with him to keep the peace behind William's lines. The proximity of Humphrey's Norman home at Tilleul in the Pays d'Auge to that of the Dive family, for example, which took its name from Dives-sur-Mer, near modern-day Cabourg, suggests that the family had been founded by one of Humphrey's followers.³

The new king did not return to Pevensey for some months, but it was obviously the focal point of William's communications with Normandy and its importance is demonstrated by the events of early 1067. Once he had made his remarkably speedy pacification of southern England, William prepared to return to Normandy and he made Pevensey his point of departure. The king's biographer, William of Poitiers, tells us that on that occasion it formed the setting for a telling demonstration of Norman power.⁴ According to William, the Conqueror used the opportunity of his departure from his new kingdom to reward richly his returning Norman followers and he did so in the presence of a number of the most important Englishmen to survive the battle of Hastings.

The current consensus of scholarly opinion is that the rapes of Sussex were established in response to William's need to secure his communications and that the arrangements were made after the triumphal progress around Normandy which William enjoyed in 1067. It may well have been, however, that the king chose to give the impressive walled site at Pevensey and the castle, which the Normans had erected within those walls, to his half-brother, Robert, Count of Mortain, in the early spring of 1067 before he returned to Normandy.⁵ A Domesday Book reference to the period when Earl William de Warenne received the Rape of Lewes also seems to imply that Robert was, at that point, already installed in part, at least, of his rape: *Quando Willelmus recepit nisi LVIII hidae quia aliae fuerunt intra rapum comitis Morit.*⁶ Domesday Book declares that when Robert received Pevensey only 27 of the 52 pre-Conquest burgesses remained and such an exodus might well have occurred in the uncertain

months immediately after the Conquest. It perhaps seemed appropriate to the king that the Normans' first foothold in England should be granted to his brother, who had made a conspicuous contribution to the campaign.⁷ Certainly the town seems to have prospered by its subsequent association with Robert. By 1086 the number of burgesses had risen to more than double the 1066 figure and a mint had been opened, bringing not only commercial benefits, but increased status. Under the new Norman regime Pevensey was the king's brother's town and the opening of the mint indicates that it had been raised to parity with the other minting centres in Sussex at Chichester, Arundel, Lewes and Steyning.⁸

By the time that Domesday Book was compiled in 1086, there was a conspicuously successful lordship centred on the town. Robert of Mortain had kept in his own hands the most valuable property in the surrounding area — King Edward the Confessor's estates of Eastbourne and Beddingham, the major properties at Willingdon and Ripe, which had belonged to the Godwinson family, and even the lucrative holding at West Firlie, which had belonged to Wilton Abbey. The Domesday description suggests that Robert was in fact the classic absentee landlord and it is apparent that he regarded his new property as a means of enriching himself and his favoured religious foundations at home in Normandy.⁹

It is, in fact, Robert's underlings who are most in evidence in the Rape of Pevensey in the late 11th century. His butler, Alvred, received payments from the town of Pevensey; his sheriff, Gilbert, also had interests in the town and one of Count Robert's substantial tenants in Northamptonshire, William of Cahaigues, can also be found in Sussex.¹⁰ Robert seems to have left them pretty much to their own devices, but was then obliged to intervene if they abused their powers. Some time before the mid-1090s, for example, it is recorded that Robert's sheriff, Walter of Ricarville, seized property belonging to the priory of St Mary of Mortain in Normandy, and the monks had to bring an action in Robert's court to recover it.¹¹ It is a point worth making, however, that even within the first generation of the Norman occupation the individual rapes of Sussex were never completely closed societies. Boscelin of Dives, a knight of the archbishop of Canterbury, received revenues from the town of Pevensey; Robert de la Haye, the son of Robert of Mortain's seneschal (steward) Ranulph, was to become an important tenant in the Rape of Arundel, and Robert's sheriff,

Walter of Ricarville, was also a tenant of the Counts of Eu.¹²

Lucrative though the rape may have been for Robert in 1086, its original purpose was military and that is still apparent in Domesday Book.¹³ Lands were assigned in the manors of West Firlle and Eastbourne for the maintenance of the guard at Pevensey castle, where Robert established a chapel within the fortifications.¹⁴ His arrangements were tested in the early summer of 1088 when an attempt was made to replace King William II Rufus with his brother, the Norman Duke Robert Curthose. Control of the Sussex coast was crucial, for Duke Robert might choose to invade England along the same route as his father had taken more than 20 years before.¹⁵ The chief architect of the plot was Robert of Mortain's brother, Odo, bishop of Bayeux, and Robert was drawn into the rebellion. When Odo joined his brother at Pevensey, William Rufus quickly drew up forces against them and a lengthy siege ensued. Little is known about the conduct of the siege beyond the fact that Robert's neighbour, the lord of the Rape of Lewes, was fatally wounded during its course, but it demonstrated the effectiveness of the fortifications at Pevensey. After six weeks the castle remained untaken, and it was only shortage of food which eventually led its garrison to seek a truce. Although Bishop Odo surrendered to the king, Robert of Mortain was able to negotiate and King William permitted him to retain his lands.¹⁶

Robert died in 1095 and within ten years of his death his son William had lost all his English lands through opposition to King Henry I.¹⁷ It was the second providential increase to crown resources to have occurred since Henry had become king in 1100, for in 1102 the Montgommery family had lost their English property which included the westernmost Sussex Rape of Arundel. The subsequent history of these properties tells us much about the changing nature of Norman rule in England. Where the Conqueror's military preoccupations are indicated by his division of Sussex into the rapes, Henry's failure to make an immediate regrant of those rapes in their entirety suggests a new approach and reveals the changed priorities of a second-generation ruler.

The man to whom Henry eventually granted Pevensey was the Norman lord, Gilbert of Laigle. There is no contemporary evidence relating to this grant and its circumstances have to be deduced. Orderic Vitalis tells us that Gilbert possessed lands in England, which were subsequently inherited by

his eldest son, and we might assume that these lands were confined to the properties Gilbert held in Domesday, but for the records of a 13th-century lawsuit. The case related to Beddingham in Sussex and evidence submitted to the court indicates that Beddingham (and presumably the other Sussex property subsequently held by the family) was granted to Gilbert after the count of Mortain had abandoned King Henry I.¹⁸

Gilbert represents the almost perfect example of what French historians describe as the castellan. He came from a family of experienced fighters, whose lands lay on the very borders of southern Normandy in an area of uncertain lordship, where the Norman marches merge into the forested uplands of the Perche. Here at Laigle (Orne), on a site where one of Gilbert's ancestors was reputed to have found an eagle's nest, the family had established a castle from which they dominated the locality. Their castle was at once their home, the symbol of their power and the means of enforcing it. The lords of Laigle were often caught up in the conflicts between the dukes of Normandy and their neighbours, especially the counts of Anjou, and their support in such a vulnerable area was particularly valuable to the Norman dukes. Gilbert's family had served them well.¹⁹ His grandfather, Engenulf, had been killed at the battle of Hastings while his father Richer had lost his life in William the Conqueror's wars in northern France. Gilbert himself had displayed conspicuous loyalty to the ducal family and fought with some distinction in Norman campaigns of the 1090s.

According to Domesday Book the Laigle family already possessed two valuable manors in England, at Witley in Surrey and Mildenhall in Norfolk, but the lands which Gilbert now received represented a far more substantial stake in England.²⁰ The forfeited Mortain lands gave Gilbert an interest in ensuring that England and Normandy continued in association under one ruler, King Henry. It was a technique which Henry was to use with other families, often extending the offer of a marriage alliance with one of his illegitimate daughters as an additional inducement. Thus Gilbert's brother-in-law, Rotrou of Mortagne, whose lands lay to the south of Normandy, received an illegitimate daughter and two manors in Wiltshire. The best illustration of Henry's technique, however, was the package of inducements offered to the lords of Beaumont-sur-Sarthe. They received not only an illegitimate

daughter and a manor in Devon, but also an endowment from the Sussex lands of the Montgommerys for a younger son of the family, Savaric fitz Cana, the ancestor of the Bohuns of Midhurst.²¹

Henry's strategy in disposing of the Mortain lands is, therefore, clear: they were used to promote support for his rule in Normandy. Unfortunately, the nature of the property which Henry gave to Gilbert is unknown, but by looking at the holdings of his son, Richer, it is possible to make some deductions. Richer controlled, for example, much of the former property of the Counts of Mortain because he confirmed a number of benefactions made to monasteries by tenants who had held their land under the lordship of the counts.²² Unlike the Counts of Mortain, however, Richer did not hold the great pre-Conquest royal manor of Eastbourne, because the king had reserved that for himself, and the service of some of the former Mortain tenants, notably the Dive and the Cahaigues families, was assigned to the Earl of Leicester, who confirmed their benefactions.²³ Most telling of all, Richer did not control the castle at Pevensey.²⁴ In 1130 its garrison was funded from royal revenues and the land which Robert of Mortain had assigned to the castle guard was at farm to a local man, William fitz Alvred.²⁵

It is of course possible that Gilbert had been granted the rape in its entirety and that the king had withdrawn some of the property, when Gilbert was succeeded by his son Richer in the late 1110s. However, the Anglo-Norman historian, Orderic Vitalis, a remarkably well-informed source on this matter since his monastery was a matter of some 12 kilometres from Laigle, states that Richer inherited 'all his father's lands in England and Normandy' (*totam in Anglia seu in Normannia terram patris sui*).²⁶ The indications are, therefore, that the integrity of the Domesday Rape of Pevensey had been eroded with its grant to the Laigle family. While Gilbert was a man the king wished to cultivate, he was not a great lord like Robert of Mortain, the Conqueror's half-brother, who could expect significant favours, and Henry could afford to be economical with his largesse.

With the change of personnel in Pevensey, then, it is possible to discern a new role for the rape. Where the Conqueror had granted complete authority to Robert in return for the security of his communications with Normandy, Henry's priority was to secure Gilbert's support in Normandy by

extending his landed resources in England. Such a purpose could be achieved by the grant of the some of the Mortain property in the rape, while permitting the king to recover a foothold there. That foothold was represented by Eastbourne, but most importantly by Pevensey castle, whose potential Henry would have had an opportunity to gauge in the summer of 1101. A ruler as astute as Henry I could not have failed to grasp the implications of the long siege of Pevensey in 1088, so when Robert Curthose threatened yet another invasion in 1101, Henry made his way straight to Pevensey where he spent the summer waiting for his brother. In the event, the invasion attempt was deflected towards Portsmouth, but Henry had had some time to observe the strengths of the castle at Pevensey.

Now, just as the purpose of the grant of Pevensey to Gilbert differed from that to Robert of Mortain, so did the nature of the lordship of the two men. Robert's grant had a military purpose and he accomplished that purpose by settling knights and tenants, but the grant to Gilbert did not involve a military settlement. The impact of the Laigle family's lordship on Sussex is in fact quite difficult to determine. There is no great survey like the Domesday Book to assist us in the 12th century and we are forced back on the information which can be gleaned from charters, but their evidence suggests that it is all but impossible to trace families whose names link them to Richer's lands in Normandy in the same way that it is possible to find tenants, such as the Cahaigues, who had pre-Conquest links with the Mortain family. Men with southern Norman toponymics such as Anshetill of Rai (Orne, ct Laigle), Hugh of Crulai (Orne, ct Laigle) and Berner of Bâlines (Eure, ct Verneuil-sur-Avre) certainly witnessed Richer's Sussex acts, but they appear to have had no other connection with the county.²⁷ The attestation of a mid-12th-century act in favour of Lewes Priory by Sara the wife of Fulk of Aube (Orne, ct Laigle) is the only indication that Richer of Laigle's followers made any attempt to bring their families to England, and one attestation is no evidence for a settlement.²⁸ More significant is the fact that a number of Richer's English acts were witnessed by a man called Gilbert Lovell, who appears to have been Richer's agent in Sussex, and the conclusion, therefore, is that the relationship between the Laigles and their Sussex lands was financial rather than residential.²⁹

At some stage in the 1140s Richer and his English

possessions parted company. Although he had supported King Stephen in the late 1130s, Richer and his uncle Rotrou, Count of Mortagne, did not resist the invasion of Normandy by the Empress Matilda's husband, and King Stephen took exception to their inactivity.³⁰ The precise date of Richer's dispossession is unknown, but late 1141 seems most likely, at the point when King Stephen was re-establishing his credibility after his release from captivity at Bristol. Richer's Sussex property was a substantial addition to King Stephen's resources; it lay in the eastern part of England where his authority was more readily acknowledged and, like his uncle Henry I before him, he used it to promote support. Unfortunately, Stephen's grasp of the political power-game was not as sure as Henry's and his attempt to use Pevensey as an inducement was not so successful.

The evidence for Stephen's disposal of Pevensey is an act in which Gilbert fitz Gilbert of Clare, Earl of Pembroke, grants to the monks of Lewes whatever they hold in the Rape of Pevensey.³¹ Evidently then he had power in the area, but unlike Richer of Laigle, Gilbert of Clare had also been granted the castle of Pevensey. The sequence of events which followed is a vindication of Henry I's policy of keeping the rape and the castle in separate hands, for apparently no sooner had Gilbert of Clare received the grant than he went into open rebellion against King Stephen. The *Gesta Stephani* is the sole narrative source for these events. It describes Gilbert's rebellion against King Stephen late in 1146 or early in 1147, and the second great siege of Pevensey castle which ensued.³² Unfortunately, the account of the siege is incomplete, but an act in the cartulary of Lewes provides confirmation that it took place. It describes how a local knight, William Malfed, was obliged to dispose of some of his interests to the priory in order to raise 20 marks of silver for his ransom when he was captured at Pevensey.³³

King Stephen was careful thereafter not to make the same mistake again, and Pevensey and its castle passed into the direct control of the royal family. Stephen's eldest son and heir, Eustace, was given control of the honour and a local man, Roger of Fraxineto, whose family had interests in Seaford, was appointed the king's constable.³⁴ After Stephen's death in 1154 Pevensey and all the lands which had formerly been Richer's were used to make provision for William, King Stephen's surviving son. Under the terms of the treaty of settlement made between

Stephen and the future King Henry II in 1153 the old honour of the Counts of Mortain was largely reconstituted and given to William, who held it in conjunction with the vast inheritance of his wife, Isabelle de Warenne, which included the Rape of Lewes.³⁵ Clearly, on previous experience, this was a state of affairs which no able king could allow to continue, and it comes as no surprise therefore that Henry II soon took action. Early in 1157, on the grounds that he wished to forestall conflict between Prince William and his great rival Hugh Bigod, Henry demanded that William return his castles of Norwich and Pevensey to the crown.³⁶

In the meantime the fortunes of Richer of Laigle had mended somewhat and by 1157 he had recovered his family estates in Surrey.³⁷ When Prince William died without heirs in 1159 Richer's prospects brightened still further. He had already in 1158 improved his standing with King Henry II by restoring to the crown the important border fortress of Bonsmoulins in southern Normandy, which he had been granted by King Stephen, and he must have looked for the restoration of his Sussex lands as compensation.³⁸ It is impossible, however, to date that restoration with precision. King Henry may have returned them to Richer as soon as William died in 1159, but it is rather more likely that they remained in the king's hands until the spring of 1161. At that particular time the allegiance of Richer of Laigle would have been worth purchasing, for his Norman interests lay in the vulnerable border zone between the lands of the French and English kings. Just as Pevensey had been an inducement to sustain Henry I's rule in Normandy, so Henry II used it to secure support in the area where he and his great rival King Louis VII of France were mustering their troops.³⁹

While the return of the Sussex lands bound Richer to the king, Henry's generosity to Richer still did not extend to the outright grant of the entire rape. The king retained Eastbourne and Beddingham, the land traditionally associated with the garrison of Pevensey, and Compton in West Firle.⁴⁰ Like his grandfather before him, Henry also retained the castle and, as with many other castles in his realm, he put it into good order. In 1161, 63s. 8d. was spent on works at the castle and again in 1166/7, £5 10s. 5d. Further work was undertaken in 1177/8 and repairs were made to the palisades in 1188.⁴¹ The castle's situation on the southern coast would have made it particularly useful to the king in the early

1160s when he fought almost annual campaigns in France, and during those years there was considerable expenditure on the knights of the castle, who may have been en route for the wars.⁴² Subsequently the castle may have functioned as an administrative centre for in 1178/9 one mark was spent on the gaol.⁴³ Richer himself continued much as he had done before, as a largely absentee landlord and his return to the king's enquiry about knight service in 1166 states that Richer had made no changes to his personnel. All the knights who had been established on his property in 1135 or their descendants were still there in 1166.⁴⁴

The Laigle family was to remain in control of their Sussex property for the next 40 years, apart from a brief interval in 1173 when Richer was involved in the rebellion of Henry II's eldest son, the Young King.⁴⁵ The family's interests remained essentially Norman, however.⁴⁶ Cases in which they were involved in the English courts were frequently postponed owing to their absence abroad, and their regular scutage payments imply that they did not serve in the king's English army.⁴⁷ When Normandy was lost to the English crown in 1204, Richer's grandson, Gilbert of Laigle, opted to stay on his Norman holdings, and King John seized his English lands along with those of other Normans.⁴⁸ For more than ten years Gilbert stayed out of England, but by 1207 he had found a means of securing some, at least, of the profits of his Sussex lands. For in that year his brother-in-law, Earl William de Warenne, fined 3000 marks for custody of Gilbert's lands in Sussex, which he was to hold on behalf of his sister, Gilbert's wife, Isabelle.⁴⁹

With Gilbert's return to England, which probably took place in 1215, the final phase of the family's connection with England began. It is impossible to date that return, but the most likely period is during the summer of 1215, when King John was openly seeking support from the Continent.⁵⁰ It is a story which, by now, is familiar to us. Gilbert had been much in John's favour before the loss of Normandy in 1204 and, as the baronial unrest continued after Runnymede, the king turned again to a trusted associate from the early years of his reign, granting Gilbert tenure of the Pevensy property as the price of his support.⁵¹ Several Sussex barons were involved in the siege of Rochester in the autumn of 1215 and with the increasing threat of a French invasion, John's old friend, Gilbert of Laigle, would be a useful resident in Sussex.⁵² By the time that the Sussex

landholder, William of Avranches, was negotiating his ransom after the end of the siege of Rochester, Gilbert was firmly installed as master of his Sussex lands and witnessed an act by which William raised money, presumably for that ransom.⁵³

It may also be that Gilbert's return was associated with the appointment of Hubert de Burgh as justiciar in the summer of 1215, for Gilbert's career has an interesting correlation with that of Hubert.⁵⁴ Like Gilbert, Hubert had been successful in the household of Prince John and became royal chamberlain when John became king. Although he fell from favour with the loss of Chinon in 1205, Hubert recovered his position after 1206, just as the arrangement for Gilbert's property to be administered by his Warenne brother-in-law must have been under negotiation, and in 1210/1 Hubert married Beatrix de Warenne, a cousin of Gilbert's wife, Isabelle.⁵⁵ Subsequently Gilbert's most successful period as an Anglo-Norman magnate was to coincide with the period of Hubert's greatest power in the 1220s.

Gilbert celebrated the recovery of his Sussex property by granting a rent from the manor of Willingdon to the Fontevraudine priory of La Chaise-Dieu-du-Theil, which his grandfather had founded in the forest near Laigle, but all too soon, it seems, there was a breach with the king.⁵⁶ In September 1216 King John wrote to the men of Seaford thanking them for their loyal service to the crown despite the pressure put upon them by their lord, Gilbert of Laigle. The letter makes it clear that John himself had restored Gilbert's rights, and expresses annoyance at Gilbert's subsequent conduct. 'We owe you abundant thanks' the king wrote to Seaford 'that you have faithfully and steadfastly kept faith with us and our rule and that you have remained in our service. Although we had earlier restored his rights to your lord Gilbert of Laigle, we did not do so in order to have him rebel against us and do us harm.'⁵⁷

The context for the king's annoyance is plain. His letter is one of several which he addressed to the leading men of Sussex and Kent in September 1216 and it relates to his loss of control of the south-east of England after the invasion of Prince Louis of France in May 1216. Gilbert's motives for his early desertion of the king who had restored his English property are nowhere made explicit, but a letter which survives from the earliest months of the reign of King John's son, Henry III, suggests that control of the castle of Pevensy had probably been the

issue.⁵⁸ In this letter which was sent in the child-king's name, but was witnessed by and presumably drafted for William Marshal, the regent, Gilbert is encouraged to return to the king's party. The second part of the letter, however, deals specifically with Pevensey castle. It justifies King John's failure to entrust the castle to Gilbert and the slighting of the castle, which King John had undertaken in the early summer of 1216 after he had failed to repel Prince Louis' invasion.⁵⁹ John evidently feared that because Gilbert had property in Normandy he would be compromised when faced by an invading army under Prince Louis of France and might surrender the castle. Whatever John's failings as a king, he clearly appreciated the value of castles and had been prepared to dismantle important sites, rather than risk them falling into the hands of those whose loyalty might be questionable.

Pevensey was therefore still a fortification of major importance in the opening years of the 13th century. It had remained in royal hands since the late 1150s and in the 1190s under Richard I it had again become an key military installation.⁶⁰ Payments had been made for the transport of arms from the castle, building works were undertaken and there was considerable expenditure on knights and sergeants, again suggesting it may have been the embarkation-point for wars in France.⁶¹ It has even been suggested that Richard's building work at Pevensey in the early 1190s, which was supervised by Ellis the engineer, was a precursor of the work which was later undertaken at Château Gaillard.⁶² During the barons' war King John had been well aware of its strategic importance and had complained about the inadequate manning of the castle.⁶³ Gilbert of Laigle may well have tried to take the opportunity presented by the discomfiture of the crown to demand custody of the castle at Pevensey as a further price for his support, but he was ultimately unsuccessful, and a succession of letters patent dating from the 1220s indicate that the castle never came into Gilbert's hands, but was controlled by royal constables.⁶⁴

Gilbert did, however, retain his lands in Sussex apparently from the point of his return around 1215 until his death in 1231. There is evidence to suggest that it took some time for him to re-establish himself with the king's party after the withdrawal of Prince Louis in 1217, for his manor of Greywell was given to Peter des Bois, but signs of reconciliation are apparent in 1218 when Gilbert settled a long-

standing debt to the crown and was granted a stag in the king's forest.⁶⁵ From the early years of Henry III's reign he was one of a small group of magnates who held lands in both England and France.⁶⁶

It was not an easy position to maintain and Gilbert and his family often had to seek safe passages between England and Normandy as hostilities between the two kings led to frequent closures of the ports.⁶⁷ The family worked well for its two masters, however. Gilbert's knights served with the King of England's forces against the Welsh at Montgomery in 1223 and Gilbert himself was probably with Louis VIII in his great push into the south of France in 1226.⁶⁸ While Gilbert was abroad in the service of the French king, however, King Henry seems to have had doubts about the loyalty of his Anglo-French magnates and seized much of their property.⁶⁹ Substantial fines had to be paid to repossess them. On 6 December 1226 Gilbert fined 500 marks for the seisin of his English lands and shortly thereafter another licence to travel was issued to him.⁷⁰ At this time Gilbert ceded his manor of Wynford Eagle in Dorset to the king's justiciar, Hubert de Burgh, and the cession of this property which puzzled the modern authority on Hubert's lands, is perhaps explained as another instance of Gilbert exploiting his connection with the powerful justiciar.⁷¹

During the remaining years of his life Gilbert was at some pains to convince the King of England of his loyalty and his commitment to England. In May 1230 he joined King Henry's expedition to France, taking with him a substantial following of troops, and he returned to fight the Welsh.⁷² Most significant of all, however, was perhaps Gilbert's foundation of the Augustinian house at Michelham.⁷³ Gilbert and his ancestors had been prudent in their benefactions to religious houses. They had supported a number of communities in England: the Cistercians at Waverley, the Cluniacs at Lewes, the Benedictines at Wilmington and the Premonstratensians at Bayham/Otham, and they had granted property in England to their family foundations of Saint-Sulpice-sur-Risle and La Chaise-Dieu-du-Theil in Normandy, but no Laigle foundation had been made in England. In the late 1220s, perhaps because the resources available to him were growing, Gilbert remedied that situation and he gave the prior of Hastings a substantial amount of property which was to form the endowment of the new priory of Michelham.⁷⁴ He assiduously notified the king of his intention

and received royal approval in the form of letters patent in May 1229 in which the king itemized his gifts.⁷⁵

But for all the military ability Gilbert displayed in the service of his kings and for all the dexterity he mustered in serving two masters, the Laigle connection with Sussex came to an end with Gilbert's death in December 1231. Three sons and at least one daughter predeceased him and the eventual heir of his Norman property, which he seems to have retained until his death, was his nephew.⁷⁶ Gilbert's English property, however, was taken into the hands of the king's agents, the sheriffs of Surrey and Sussex.⁷⁷ An assessment was made in January 1232 for the purpose of assigning dower to Gilbert's widow but essentially the property was again at the disposal of the king.⁷⁸

The final phase of the history of the castle and Rape of Pevensey is that of a succession of grants to royal favourites, as first one party then another secured ascendancy at Henry III's court. In 1232 Henry selected as his chief advisers, the bishop of Winchester, and his nephew Peter of Rivallis.⁷⁹ In his enthusiasm for the new arrangements the king conceded to Peter what his ancestors had always withheld from the Laigle family, namely tenure of most of the Rape of Pevensey and custody of the castle.⁸⁰ Once that link between the Laigle lands and the castle at Pevensey had been reformed it was to prove unbreakable. When Peter of Rivallis fell from favour in 1234⁸¹, all the lands of Gilbert of Laigle, together with the castle of Pevensey, were given to Gilbert Marshal, the third, but eldest surviving son of William Marshal, and a man of prodigious wealth.⁸² Again the tenure was brief lasting only until June 1240,⁸³ and in July 1246 the king granted the honour and the castle at Pevensey to Peter of Savoy.⁸⁴ It was to be the last major grant of the Rape of Pevensey, and it secured for the king, not military security as represented by the Mortains, nor political support as given by the Laigles, but the personal ability of its recipient.

This Peter was a younger son of the Count of Savoy and in 1236 his niece, Eleanor of Provence, married Henry III, thus opening for Peter a considerable career opportunity. He arrived in England in the early 1240s and proceeded to make himself useful to the king. The extent of his usefulness, particularly in the diplomatic field where his connections and experience made him invaluable, is indicated by the steady acceleration of royal

favour. In the early 1240s he was made lord of Richmond and by 1246 he was in possession of the Sussex lands of John de Warenne, the honour of the Eagle and Pevensey castle.⁸⁵ Peter took his responsibilities as master of the castle seriously and used his access to the resources of the crown to ensure its maintenance. In June 1250, for example, the sheriff of Sussex was ordered in royal letters close to force those who owed service at the castle to perform it and in 1254 royal agents were used to secure contributions to the castle's upkeep.⁸⁶ Originally that contribution had been to repair the wooden palisade of the castle, but by the mid-13th century it had been replaced by a money-payment. Peter was prepared in the early 1250s to release many of those who owed this service in return for a substantial payment, and it is tempting to suggest that some of the proceeds were used to erect the curtain wall which still surrounds the castle.⁸⁷

King Henry's favour to his foreign favourites such as Peter was, of course, one of the factors which led to the conflict with his barons and Peter was among the casualties of the mid-1260s. His estates were attacked and he left the country. During his absence royal power was eclipsed, and between the battles of Lewes and Evesham the last of the great sieges of Pevensey castle took place. A number of the king's supporters escaped through Pevensey after the battle of Lewes and the constable of the castle, Hanekin of Whitsand, continued to hold out for many months.⁸⁸ In comparison with the sieges of 1088 and 1146/7 we are remarkably well-informed about the events of winter 1264/5. We know, for example, about the terms which were offered for surrender,⁸⁹ we know about the financial resources directed to the conduct of the siege⁹⁰ and about the tactics⁹¹ including the precautions taken to avoid siege-breaking ships gaining access to the harbour.⁹²

As soon as the royalist party recovered control, Peter's lands were restored to him and when he died in 1268 he was in full possession.⁹³ A codicil to Peter's will indicates that he wished to leave his Sussex property to his nephews, the sons of his brother, Thomas of Savoy, but he had made an agreement in 1259 that Henry III's queen, Eleanor, should hold it for her life, nominating her own heir, and the terms of that agreement were followed.⁹⁴ When the great inquest which produced the hundred rolls was conducted for King Edward I in 1274/5 the jurors were quite certain that the dowager queen held the barony of the Eagle and the castle of Pevensey, but

they maintained that the castle pertained to the crown.⁹⁵

At the end of the 13th century, then, much of the Rape of Pevensey and its castle lay in Queen Eleanor's hands and would pass from her to later Queens consort.⁹⁶ As part of the queen's dower lands the area would remain important to the crown, but its role was far removed from that which it had played in the 11th and 12th centuries. From a key position as the beachhead of invasion and a vital role in communications before 1100, Pevensey became an important tool in the Norman and Angevin kings' designs to hold together their cross-Channel empire in the 12th century. Under the Conqueror military expediency had led to its grant to Robert of Mortain, but in the 12th century it was the desire to hold together England and Normandy

which dictated the continued lordship of the Laigles. The collapse of the Anglo-Norman union with the loss of Normandy in 1204 inevitably led to a decline in Pevensey's strategic importance, although that decline would not become completely obvious until the Treaty of Paris in 1259. Nonetheless, Pevensey continued to be held by some of the most influential men in England. The castle remained potentially important in the defence of the realm, but as the sea receded even that role would be considerably diminished.⁹⁷ By the late 13th century English relations with the Continental mainland were closely focused on trade with the low countries and Pevensey's historic importance as a link with the Norman duchy which had been the homeland of the ruling dynasty could no longer be sustained.

Author: Kathleen Thompson, Sheffield Hallam University. Correspondence regarding this article should in the first instance be addressed to Dr Thompson c/o Sussex Archaeological Society, Bull House, 92, High Street, Lewes, Sussex, BN7 1XH.

NOTES

¹ See the comments of L. F. Salzman, 'Documents relating to Pevensey castle', *Sussex Archaeological Collections* (hereafter SAC) **49** (1906), 1–30, especially 3; C. Peers, 'Pevensey castle', SAC **74** (1933), 1–15, but contrast J. H. Round, 'Sussex in the pipe rolls under Henry II', SAC **71** (1930), 100.

² Orderic Vitalis (hereafter OV), *Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1969–80), **2**, 220. On Pevensey as the beachhead, B. S. Bachrach, 'Some observations on the military administration of the Norman Conquest', *Anglo-Norman Studies* **VIII** (1985), 21–3.

³ L. C. Loyd, *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families*, ed. C. T. Clay & D. C. Douglas. Harleian Society **CIII** (Leeds, 1951), 37.

⁴ William of Poitiers, *Gesta Guillelmi ducis*, trans. R. A. Brown, in *The Norman Conquest of England: Sources and Documents* (Woodbridge, 1984), 40.

⁵ J. F. A. Mason, 'The rapes of Sussex and the Norman Conquest', SAC **102** (1964), 68–93.

⁶ DB, i, 26. I am indebted to Pamela Combes for drawing my attention to this reference.

⁷ For Robert's contribution, C. W. Hollister, 'The great Domesday tenants-in-chief', in J. C. Holt (ed.), *Domesday Studies* (Woodbridge, 1987), 221–6; E. van Houts, 'The ship list of William the Conqueror', *Anglo-Norman Studies* **X** (1987), 159–83.

⁸ I. Stewart, 'The Sussex mints and their moneyers', in P. Brandon (ed.), *The South Saxons* (London, 1978), 89–137.

⁹ B. Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', *Anglo-Norman Studies* **XIII** (1990), 130–31. He gave the manor of Wilmington, for example, to the Benedictine abbey of Grestain, which had been founded by his father, Herluin of Conteville and the priory which was founded at Wilmington was to hold

property at Beddingham and Frog Firl. The priory of Mortain at the centre of Robert's Norman lands also received property in the rape, DB, i, 20b.

¹⁰ On Robert's tenants, I. N. Soulsby, *The Fiefs in England of the Counts of Mortain, 1066–1106*, unpubl. M.A. thesis, University of Wales (University College Cardiff), 1974, 113–82; L. F. Salzman, 'Sussex Domesday tenants, iii: William de Cahagnes and the family of Keynes', SAC **63** (1922), 180–207.

¹¹ J. H. Round (ed.), *Calendar of Documents Preserved in France* (hereafter CDF) (London, 1899), no. 1205.

¹² For Boscelin, D. C. Douglas (ed.), *Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury* (London, 1944), 37–8 and DB, i, 20b; for Robert de la Haye, CDF, no. 921; for Walter, Loyd, *Origins of Anglo-Norman Families*, 41–2, CDF, no. 1205.

¹³ The question of Robert's allocation of knight-service and the so-called 'small fees of Mortain' is beyond the scope of this paper. It rests on the highly technical analysis of the tax assessments of Mortain lands in the 12th century, Soulsby, *Mortain*, 75–6. It has been suggested that the fees represent an assessment appropriate to the Domesday period which was never updated to 12th-century norms, S. Harvey, 'The knight and the knight's fee in England', *Past & Present* **49** (1970), 36. It seems unlikely, however, that no subsequent holder of Mortain property should have updated the assessments, if such updates had taken place everywhere else in the kingdom. The association of the small fees with the Mortain name and their presence throughout the Mortain lands in England implies that they date from the period of the Mortain tenure and possibly indicate the parsimonious nature of the original allocation.

¹⁴ For the castle guard, DB i, 20b, 21; W. Budgen, 'Pevensey castle guard and Endlewick rents', SAC **76** (1935), 118–23. M. Gardiner & C. Whittick, 'Some evidence for an

- intended collegiate church at Pevensey', *SAC* **128** (1990), 261–2.
- ¹⁵ For Duke Robert's attempts to secure sea power, F. Barlow, *William Rufus* (London, 1983), 74–5, 80.
- ¹⁶ *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, ed. and trans. G. N. Garmonsway (London, 1953), 224. *OV*, **5**, 208. For the death of William of Warenne, E. Edwards (ed.), *Liber Monasterii de Hyda* (RS, **45**, London, 1866), 299.
- ¹⁷ For a consideration of William's fall, C. W. Hollister, 'Henry I and Robert Malet', *Viator*, **viii** (1977), repr. in *Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions in the Anglo-Norman World* (London, 1986), 134–5.
- ¹⁸ *OV*, **6**, 250; *DB*, i, 36, 263; *Curia Regis Rolls* (London 1923), **14**, no. 1450.
- ¹⁹ K. Thompson, 'The lords of Laigle', *Anglo-Norman Studies XVIII* (1995), 176–99.
- ²⁰ *DB*, i, 36, 263.
- ²¹ K. Thompson, 'Dowry and inheritance patterns: some examples from the descendants of King Henry I of England', *Medieval Prosopography XVII* (2) (1996), 45–61. For Savaric fitz Cana, *OV*, **6**, 32. *CDF*, no. 669; *Chartulary of the Priory of St Pancras of Lewes*, ii (Sussex Record Society **38**, 1934) (hereafter *Lewes*), 79.
- ²² *Lewes*, i, 159–60. Richer also confirmed property to the Mortain foundation at Wilmington, *Monasticon*, vi, 1091.
- ²³ For the king's tenure of Eastbourne, *Pipe Roll 11 Henry II 1164/5*, 93. On the tangled history of this manor, W. Hudson, 'The manor of Eastbourne, its early history with some notes about the honours of Mortain and Aquila', *SAC* **43** (1900), 166–200; J. H. Round, 'Descent of the manor of Eastbourne', *SAC* **55** (1912), 307–10. *Lewes*, i, 138, 158 for Robert, Earl of Leicester. I am grateful to Richard Dace for discussing with me his as yet unpublished work on the Cahaigues.
- ²⁴ J. Johnson & H. A. Cronne (eds), *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* (hereafter *RRAN*) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1956), **2**, no. 1404 (1119–23).
- ²⁵ J. Hunter (ed.), *Pipe Roll 31 Henry I* (London, 1833), 142.
- ²⁶ *OV*, **6**, 250.
- ²⁷ *Lewes*, i, 159–60. PRO E40/15499.
- ²⁸ *Lewes*, i, 140.
- ²⁹ Archives Départementales Loir-et-Cher 11 H27/1, AD Eure Dom Lenoir transcripts, vol. 23, Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Lire, p. 475, *Lewes*, i, 108.
- ³⁰ For the context of Richer's apparent change of sides, Thompson, 'Laigle', 190.
- ³¹ *Lewes*, i, 130–31.
- ³² K. Potter & R. H. C. Davis (eds), *Gesta Stephani* (Oxford, 1976), 202–4.
- ³³ *Lewes*, i, 117.
- ³⁴ *Lewes*, i, 176–7 for Roger the constable. M. A. Lower, 'The hospital of lepers at Seaford', *SAC* **12** (1858), 112–16, and W. Budgen (ed.), *Abstracts of Sussex Deeds* (Sussex Record Society **29**, 1924), no. 331 for Roger's Seaford interests. For Eustace's grant, *Lewes*, i, 109.
- ³⁵ H. A. Cronne & R. H. C. Davis (eds), *RRAN*, **3**, no. 272. J. H. Round, *Studies in Peerage and Family History* (London, 1907), 147–80.
- ³⁶ Robert of Torigni, *Chronique*, ed. L. Delisle (Rouen, 1872–3), **1**, 304–6.
- ³⁷ *PR 2-3-4 Henry II 1156–8*, 163.
- ³⁸ Torigni, i, 315.
- ³⁹ W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (London, 1973), 91.
- ⁴⁰ *PR 11 Henry II 1164/5*, 93. Henry was later to grant Eastbourne to Maurice of Craon, *PR 14 John 1212*, 84; *Calendar of Inquisitions Miscellaneous*, **1** (London, 1916), no. 188. Bourne disappears from the pipe rolls after *PR 20 Henry II 1173/4*, so Maurice must have received it around that time. For the Earl of Leicester's interests in Sussex, *PR 2-3-4 Henry II*, 61. At a Danegeld rate of 2s. per hide, Robert's exemption of £8 7s. indicates a holding of 83½ hides.
- ⁴¹ *PR 7 Henry II 1160/1*, 14; *PR 13 Henry II 1166/7*, 14; *PR 24 Henry II 1177/8*, 89; *PR 34 Henry II 1187/8*, 148.
- ⁴² 1161, £26 13s. 4d. from the farm together with small sums, *PR 7 Henry II 1160/1*, 13–14; 1162 £97 8s., *PR 8 Henry II 1161/2*, 30, 35, 45. I am indebted to Prof. Tom Keeffe for discussing the implications of the Sussex pipe roll entries with me.
- ⁴³ *PR 25 Henry II 1178/9*, 35.
- ⁴⁴ *Lewes*, i, 159–60; H. Hall (ed.), *Red Book of the Exchequer* (RS **99**, London, 1897), i, 203–4.
- ⁴⁵ *PR 19 Henry II 1172/3*, 28; Thompson, 'Laigle', 191–2.
- ⁴⁶ Thompson, 'Laigle', 192.
- ⁴⁷ *PR 33 Henry II 1186/7*, 111; *PR 34 Henry II 1187/8*, 3; *PR 6 Richard I 1194*, 230; *PR 8 Richard I 1196*, 86. *Curia Regis Rolls*, **1**, 455–6, 460, **3**, 22.
- ⁴⁸ For Gilbert's departure, *Book of Fees* (London, 1921–31), 65: *abiit in Normanniam contra voluntatem domini regis ut dicitur*; T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Clausurarum in turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1833–44), **1**, 9; S. Ayscough & J. Caley (eds), *Calendarium Rotulorum Patentium* (London, 1803), 8b, 9b, 10, 11b for seizure of his estates.
- ⁴⁹ T. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de Oblatis et Finibus in turri Londinensi asservati*, 1201–1205 (London, 1835), 401.
- ⁵⁰ W. Stubbs (ed.), *Memoriale Walteri de Coventria* (RS **58**, London, 1872–3), ii, 222; T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium* (London, 1835), 152, 153.
- ⁵¹ After King John's coronation Gilbert had been pardoned the first scutage, *PR 1 John 1199*, 128 and two successive tallages, *PR 1 John 1199*, 240, *PR 2 John 1200*, 219. The king gave him the proceeds of an aid from his lands in the district of Caen and Bayeux, T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae* (London, 1835), 90. He was with the king at Le Mans in 1199, E. Mason (ed.), *Beauchamp cartulary charters 1100–1268* (PRS NS **43**, London, 1980), no. 360.
- ⁵² Walter of Hartfield and William fitz Richard of Cahaigues, both landholders in the Rape of Pevensey, *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, i, 268, 317. The Count of Eu also received lands of the king's enemies in Sussex, *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, **1**, 241.
- ⁵³ *Abstracts of Sussex Deeds*, nos 343, 345; BL Add. Ms. 6344, f. 48; *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 198b. For the eventual release in November 1218 of William's daughter Matilda, who was hostage for the payment of William's ransom, *Patent Rolls 1216–25* (London, 1901), 158.
- ⁵⁴ For what follows, F. A. Cazel, 'Intertwined careers: Hubert de Burgh and Peter des Roches', *Haskins Society Journal* **1** (1989), 173–4; M. Weiss, 'The castellan: the early career of Hubert de Burgh', *Viator* **V** (1974), 235.
- ⁵⁵ C. T. Clay (ed.), *Early Yorkshire Charters* (Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series, Extra series **VI**, Leeds, 1949), viii, 26–7.
- ⁵⁶ For Gilbert's gift, BL Add. Charter 47388.
- ⁵⁷ *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 196.
- ⁵⁸ *Patent Rolls 1216–25*, 17.

- ⁵⁹ For John's letters, *Rot. Litt. Pat.*, 196. John's itinerary is printed in unpaginated sections of T. D. Hardy, *Description of the Patent Rolls* (London, 1835). For the slighting of Pevensey, H. Luard (ed.), *Annales Monastici* (RS 36, London, 1864-9), iii, 46. For resistance among the natives of the area, G. R. Stephens, 'A note on William of Cassingham', *Speculum* XVI (1941), 216-23.
- ⁶⁰ PR 3 Richard I 1191, 58. For Joscelin fitz Reinfrid the constable, *Lewes*, i, 158.
- ⁶¹ PR 2 Richard I 1190, 127; PR 3 Richard I 1191, 58; PR 4 Richard I 1192, 204; PR 5 Richard I 1193, 149, 150, 153; 6 Richard I 1194, 229; 7 Richard I 1195, 240.
- ⁶² D. F. Renn, 'The turris de Penuesel: a reappraisal and a theory', *SAC* 109 (1971), 55-64.
- ⁶³ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 217.
- ⁶⁴ Letters to the constable in 1215, *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 236, 239, 241b, 244, but when dealing with property in Pevensey in May 1216 John communicated with Fulk of Cantilupe, presumably because the constable and garrison had been withdrawn, *Close Roll 17 John 6-18 May 1216*, printed with PR 10 John 1208, 142. In 1221 Ralph Tirel is named as constable of Pevensey and in 1224 and 1226 William of Monceaux, *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 451, 631b, 2, 132b.
- ⁶⁵ *Patent Rolls 1216-25*, 70; PR 3 Henry III 1219, 136; *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 369b.
- ⁶⁶ For English lands: *CRR*, 8, 221, 312, 9, 36, 53-4, 124-5; for French lands: AD Eure H319, fo. 65v; Le Prevost, *Mémoires et notes . . . pour servir à l'histoire du département de l'Eure*, eds L. Delisle & L. Passay (Evreux, 1862), 363; AD Loiret D668 Cartulaire de Saint-Sulpice-sur-Risle, fo. 3v.
- ⁶⁷ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 518 (1222), *Patent Rolls 1225-1232* (London, 1903), 8 (1225), 26 (1226); *Patent Rolls 1216-25*, 498 for licence to W. of Laigle, nephew of Earl Warenne, Gilbert's son. For closures of the port, *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 1, 451, 570.
- ⁶⁸ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 2, 36; C. Petit-Dutaillis, *Etude sur la vie et le règne de Louis VIII (1187-1226)* (Paris, 1894), 294-5.
- ⁶⁹ C. Roberts (ed.), *Excerpta e rotulis finium in Turri Londinensi asservatis, Henry III, 1216-1272* (London, 1835-6), 1, 147. F. M. Powicke, *Henry III and the Lord Edward* (Oxford, 1947), 178-9.
- ⁷⁰ *Rot. Litt. Claus.*, 2, 160b; *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 95.
- ⁷¹ *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 60; S. H. F. Johnstone, 'The lands of Hubert de Burgh', *EHR* 50 (1935), 426.
- ⁷² *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 361; *Calendar of Close Rolls, Henry III* (London, 1902-75), 1, 544.
- ⁷³ *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 248-9; *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 145.
- ⁷⁴ Gilbert's prosperity is indicated by a number of religious benefactions in the late 1220s: AD Loiret D668, Cartulaire de Saint-Sulpice-sur-Risle, fos. 3v., 9v., 4v.; AD Eure H1438, p. 9; G. Fleury (ed.), *Cartulaire de l'abbaye Cistercienne de Perseigne* (Mamers, 1880), no. CCCLXVIII. He seems to have had mercantile interests, for he and a consortium of London citizens sued men of Dunwich for payment of a bad debt, *CRR*, 9, 124, xiii, 1985.
- ⁷⁵ *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 248.
- ⁷⁶ There is no evidence that Gilbert was deprived of his Norman property because of his service to the English king and his nephew, Henry of Avaugor, inherited without challenge, M. Bouquet (ed.), 'Querimonia Henrici de Avaugor anno 1247', *Recueil des Historiens de Gaule et de France* (Paris, 1869-1904), 24, 729.
- ⁷⁷ *Excerpta e rotulis finium*, 1, 219.
- ⁷⁸ *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 458.
- ⁷⁹ For Gilbert's lands in the king's hand, *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 470, *Close Rolls 1231-4*, 59. D. Carpenter, 'The fall of Hubert de Burgh', *Journal of British Studies* XIX (2) (1980), 1-17.
- ⁸⁰ Initially Peter's tenure seems to have been that of a royal agent, for the king wrote to John of Gatesden, telling him to surrender the castles of Hastings and Pevensey to Peter and to hand over the lands of Gilbert of Laigle, *Patent Rolls 1225-32*, 486. A year later the outright gift of the castle of Pevensey is recorded in a charter to Peter of Rivallis who had to render a sparrowhawk at Michaelmas, *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 175.
- ⁸¹ *Close Rolls 1231-4*, 462.
- ⁸² D. B. Crouch, *William Marshal: Court, Career and Chivalry in the Angevin Empire, 1147-1219* (London, 1990), 62-4. D. Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London, 1990), 92. The Marshals, like the Laigles, were one of a few families which had managed to retain their holdings in France when Normandy had been recovered by the French king in 1204. These arrangements had lapsed in 1231 on the death of Gilbert Marshal's eldest brother and the Rape of Pevensey was intended to compensate, *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 191.
- ⁸³ *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 252.
- ⁸⁴ *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 296. Peter received the honour with the exception of certain alienations, made by Gilbert Marshal as family marriage portions.
- ⁸⁵ That grant was further enhanced in 1252 when Peter received rights of warren in the Rape of Pevensey and he also held the manor of Eastbourne, which had formerly been in the possession of the Craon family, *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 410, 411.
- ⁸⁶ *Close Rolls 1247-51*, 291, *Close Rolls 1252-3*, 27. Margaret of Etchingham was one of the co-heiresses of the family founded by Robert of Mortain's butler, Alvred, L. F. Salzman, 'Some Domesday tenants; Alvred Pincerna and his descendants', *SAC* 57 (1915), 162-79.
- ⁸⁷ *Cal. Charter Rolls*, 1, 436. On the obligation to maintain the palisade, Salzman, 'Documents', 3-4.
- ⁸⁸ J. R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge, 1994), 282.
- ⁸⁹ The constable and his associates were summoned to London under the safe conduct of the Sussex landowner, William Malfed, and generous terms were offered for their surrender, *Calendar of Patent Rolls Henry III, 1258-66* (London, 1910), 333, 363.
- ⁹⁰ *Close Rolls 1264-8*, 80, *Liberate Rolls*, 2, 145, 164; *CPR 1258-66*, 386.
- ⁹¹ *Liberate Rolls*, 2, 152.
- ⁹² *CPR 1258-66*, 393.
- ⁹³ *CPR 1258-66*, 452.
- ⁹⁴ L. Wurstemberger, *Peter de Zweite, Graf von Savoyen, Markgraf in Italien: sein Haus und seine Lande* (Berne, 1856-8), 4, no. 751: *Rogamus autem regem et reginam Anglie et dominos . . . filios regis ut . . . dictos nepotes nostros benigne recipiant ad predicta et seisia eorum eis tradi faciant. An abstract of feet of fines relating to the county of Sussex from 34 Henry III to 35 Edward I*, ed. L. F. Salzman (Sussex Record Society 7, 1907), no. 637 for the 1259 agreement and no. 743 for Eleanor's choice of heir. I am indebted to Christopher Whittick for drawing my attention to these

references.

⁹⁵ W. Illingworth & J. Caley (eds), *Rotuli Hundredorum* (London, 1812–18), **2**, 204–5.

⁹⁶ For Eleanor in control of Pevensey, PRO, SC6/1089/21. There was considerable precedent for the Queens of England's interests in Sussex. Queen Adeliza had held Arundel as her dower and had passed it on to her descendants. King Stephen had granted the chapel of Pevensey castle to the Bishop of Chichester on the understanding that the bishop and his successors would be chaplains to the Queen, and Henry II had confirmed the arrangement. Torigni, *Chronique*, **1**, 215; *RRAN*, **3**,

184; *Cal. Charter Rolls*, **1**, 31.

⁹⁷ Some indication of relative prosperity among the ports of Sussex may be derived from the amounts rendered in 1204, when merchants were taxed at a fifteenth. Pevensey paid 21s. 11¹/₂d., while nearby Seaford rendered £12 12s. 2d., Rye £10 13s. 5¹/₂d., Chichester £23 6s. 7d. and Winchelsea £62 2s. 4d. Economic stagnation may also be suggested by Pevensey's attempt to found a settlement on the shingle, *Cal. Charter Rolls*, **3**, 220–21; *PR 9 John 1207*, 41. For a consideration of Pevensey's topography, A. J. F. Dulley, 'The level and port of Pevensey in the middle ages', *SAC* **104** (1966), 26–45 and references given there.
