

# THE BARONS OF TWELFTH-CENTURY BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

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*This survey of the Buckinghamshire barons has two parts. The first examines the evidence for deciding who qualifies as a baron in this county. The second part focuses on what is known of the barons' activities: the nature of their religious commitments, their concerns for family, their duties to the king and their own barons and finally the limited scope of their local powers. Individually, the Buckinghamshire barons may not have made much of an historical impression. There were great disparities in their fortunes and commitment to the county, but they discharged a variety of responsibilities which warrant historical attention.*

*Study of the English medieval baronage has not traditionally focused on the barons of particular counties. Baronial families commonly held estates scattered over a wide area and cannot be considered as local notables in the manner of the later gentry. Nevertheless, any attempt to assess the character of medieval county society must take account of the barons who held lands within it; those interested in the history of their county cannot ignore its most influential landowners simply because they held properties elsewhere. Nor is focusing on the barons holding lands in Buckinghamshire baronage without interest for drawing attention to aspects of the medieval often not sufficiently taken into account.*

The word baron is of Old French origin, at first meaning nothing more than just a man or a warrior; however, in time it came to imply only a prominent follower of any great man whose opinion and support would be indispensable for carrying forward his business.<sup>1</sup> Although men of this kind could be found in pre-Conquest England, the French word *baro* was obviously not used for them then and they are not now styled barons: in history books, barons only appear in England after the Norman Conquest. Nevertheless William the Conqueror in his documents could address his archbishops, bishops, abbots, earls, sheriffs, barons and servants, French and English, as though he accepted that the powerful Englishmen who acknowledged his authority should be addressed as barons alongside his Norman followers.<sup>2</sup> Barons did not as such discharge specific functions, like sheriffs; they boasted no titles, like earls; nor were they mere minions, like ministers who carried out the king's orders. They were men the king trusted because of their tested loyalty, their sound advice, their military skills and the reputation of their families. At least four of the king's Buckinghamshire barons, Walter Giffard, William de Warenne, Robert de Tosny and Turstin FitzRolf were singled

out by contemporary observers for their military exploits.<sup>3</sup> To reward his barons for their prowess in battle, the king distributed the spoils of war, especially with lands they held directly from the king, owing in return their continual loyalty and service. The first part of this paper considers who should be counted as a baron in this county; the second aims to offer some ideas about their attitudes, interests and activities.

## WHO WERE THE BARONS OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE?

### **The Distribution of Estates in Domesday**

The share-out of English lands after 1066 was far from equitable. Some barons, such as the king's own kinsmen, became very great magnates; others received quite modest estates. However, to be of real consequence to the king, barons had to be sufficiently well rewarded to have lands enough for granting to their own followers. Barons did not hold their lands simply as rewards for past services; their future loyalty was taken for granted and supporting the king in all his affairs, particularly, but not only in military matters, depended on their

being able to muster men willing to stand with them for the king against his enemies. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the term baron was still so unspecialised that it was used of the king's barons' own principal undertenants.<sup>4</sup> Some of these men actually held other lands directly of the king themselves, but others who did not could be called barons all the same. The feudal system is still commonly thought of as a social pyramid, but it was more like a drawing by Escher than a geometrical figure. Nor was it like a wedding cake in several tiers. All the members of the social elite were in this sense barons. Not until the thirteenth century was the term reserved more specifically for the king's own barons.

Twenty years after the battle of Hastings, Domesday Book provides us with the first comprehensive view of how the king's Norman barons had settled into Buckinghamshire.<sup>5</sup> The record is most valuable for those holding directly of the king. Of the barons' own under-tenants it generally notes only their first names and because there were so many Humphreys, Ralphs, Richards, Roberts, Walters and Williams, it is impossible to be sure of correctly identifying them all. Domesday provides the names of 55 direct tenants of the king, quite a large number for a relatively small county. Buckinghamshire was slightly larger than Oxfordshire, itself only a little bigger than Berkshire. Though of similar dimensions, these three adjacent counties differed in character. In Berkshire, for example, the king held nearly 50 estates; in Buckinghamshire he had only seven. Though they were worth more than his four holdings in Bedfordshire, they were less valuable than the eleven he held in Oxfordshire. With the king as a minor holder of land, his tenants in chief loom that much more prominently, but because there were so many of them, individually most had very small interests. Before 1086, the sheriff of Buckinghamshire had been Ansculf, a Picard from Picquigny. The only non-Norman in the whole kingdom appointed to that office, he was not overshadowed by the barons and had taken advantage of his position to acquire an impressive estate for himself, which passed to his son, William FitzAnsculf. The sheriff had no doubt assisted his brother Giles to obtain a foothold in Buckinghamshire where his descendants became prominent.

Preceding the description of the holdings, Domesday lists the names of the tenants in chief,

assigning each a number, thus constituting a useful index to the entries that follow. It included several ecclesiastical institutions and three ladies. The index concludes with an entry (no. 57) for the king's thegns and almsmen, who are not there named. In the record itself under this rubric are described the holdings of ten men, all with English names. Specifically designated as king's thegns, they are thus set apart as though they were not considered tenants-in-chief, or 'barons', like the others. Quite what is meant by this is not clear. It may have something to do with the terms of their tenure. What is obvious is that for the most part, these thegns had land of little value and were in no position to grant out any part of their holdings to others.

The numbered list begins with the king; then follow several ecclesiastical institutions whose holdings antedated the Conquest; the ladies come right at the end. If the English thegns, along with the ecclesiastical and female tenants-in-chief are discounted, as potential military barons, Domesday provides the names of 46 men who could qualify as members of the Buckinghamshire baronage.

They were not all Normans. Amongst them were at least three from Flanders, home country of the Conqueror's queen Matilda. Four came from Brittany and three from Picardy, across the Channel. There were even three native-born Englishmen.<sup>6</sup> In other ways too they were a mixed bunch, particularly with regard to the size and value of their holdings. Only eight had combined assets in the county valued at £78 or more. Walter Giffard's properties were worth well over £200 and both the king's half-brothers, Odo, bishop of Bayeux and Robert, count of Mortain, had been well provided for. These were the really powerful men in the county, but all had substantial interests in other parts of the kingdom and only two of them, Giffard and Maniou, came to be associated with Buckinghamshire in particular. Most of the barons of Buckinghamshire were men of less exalted status.

At the lowest end of the scale, in contrast to the top eight barons, there were six men who were exceptional amongst tenants in chief for holding no property at all in other counties. One of them, Alric, former chef to the Confessor's consort Queen Edith, held as much as 20 hides of land at Steeple Claydon worth £16, but none of the other five had lands worth more than £4. Urso de Bercheres held a manor of two and a half hides in

Shenley Brook End worth a mere thirty shillings, which makes the provision for Alric the chef seem almost princely, but it is still difficult to think of him as baronial material. Another group of six men with modest holdings in this county did have lands elsewhere, but even so their combined assets still remained small. William FitzManni had two hides in Ludgershall worth 20 shillings, one hide in Hampshire worth another 20 shillings and three hides in Oxfordshire worth only £2. These lands seem to have come to him by his marriage to the daughter of Aelfric, the Confessor's chamberlain who had held them before the Conquest. FitzManni's most valuable piece of property was a subtenancy in Sussex, worth just £4. These men all held directly of the king as tenants in chief, but they do not quite measure up to what we might expect for baronial status. In 1086, not all the king's barons were very rich or powerful.

This leaves a middling group of 26, quite clearly distinct from the richest eight. Whereas the least of the great eight, Mainou the Breton, had holdings worth £78, the most valuable properties of the middling group were those of William Peverel at £40, Hugh de Bolbec at £31 and Earl Hugh of Chester and Geoffrey de Mandeville, both at £29. These smaller sums should not be misunderstood: these were men of considerable importance in the kingdom. Most were substantial tenants in chief in other counties. Henry de Ferrers with a mere nine hides worth £10 may look rather insignificant here, but he had property in 14 counties and his descendants became earls of Derby. He had acquired his little Buckinghamshire estates because they had previously been held by Bondi the Staller, whose many lands in Berkshire Ferrers had acquired. The explanation of the link across the counties goes back at least several decades. Ferrers is not the only one in this group whose interests elsewhere were vastly more significant than those in Buckinghamshire. Apart from the earl of Chester, there was also William de Warenne, a major tenant of the king in 14 counties, who became earl of Surrey in the next reign. Peverel, Roger of Ivry, Hascoit Musard, Nigel d'Aubigny and Hugh de Beauchamp all had total assets of about £100. Their modest Buckinghamshire holdings can give a misleading impression of how much these men counted in Norman England.

The English baronage was never county-bound. Even the eight tenants-in-chief best endowed in

Buckinghamshire did not necessarily come to establish their principal base, the so called *caput*, or headquarters of their barony, in the county. In fact only two did so: Giffard and Mainou the Breton. William FitzAnsculf whose properties in Buckinghamshire constituted the most valuable part of all his holdings, was also a tenant in chief of the king in eleven other counties and, even before 1086, he had built a castle at Dudley in Worcestershire which became the headquarters of his barony. Even so, he can hardly on that account be excluded from consideration as a Buckinghamshire baron. His many undertenants in this county inevitably looked on him as their lord.

The Domesday evidence provides the names of the barons and from the details of their holdings enables us to draw some conclusions about their wealth and likely importance. What it does not give is any idea of what barons owed the king in return. It is assumed that in 1086 the barons were expected to perform military services for their lands, but Domesday does not specify how much service was owed or give the impression that military duties were already assigned for performance at specific places, such as castle-guard. The barons themselves may have understood perfectly well what was expected of them, where and when, but Domesday itself was not interested in noting this information and the record was not used, and could not be used, to enforce strictly military obligations. What the county record shows most clearly is that the great landholders were far from limited in their horizons. They mostly had interests in many other places and were at home wherever the king's writ ran, and beyond: five Buckinghamshire tenants in chief in 1086 already had commitments in south Wales.<sup>7</sup> Their men in Buckinghamshire were thereby involved in the affairs of the whole kingdom.

How did so great a number of powerful men come to be provided with comparatively modest stakes in the county? There are three possible reasons. The first is that because of the availability after the battle of Hastings of many Buckinghamshire holdings, a preliminary share out amongst many of the Conqueror's henchmen could have been quickly affected. The defeated Godwinson family is estimated to have dominated one third of the county before 1066, and most of King Edward's 80 thegns here will probably have fought with Harold at Hastings.<sup>8</sup> All these estates

would have been at the king's disposal and promptly distributed as an immediate token of favour. Another factor is that the county was not only close to London, but lay across the main roads north out of London to Oxford and Northampton, both major centres. Tenants in chief would have found few difficulties about reaching their Buckinghamshire estates from different parts of the kingdom, either by the Thames valley route, or along the major highways, Watling Street and the Fosse Way. Third, Buckinghamshire offered a variety of terrains with diverse economic resources: meadows for grazing horses, much woodland where pigs could be fattened before the winter slaughter and a source of wood for building, for fences or for smelting iron. The rivers had many mills and fisheries: eels were in good supply.<sup>9</sup> At Iwer, Robert d'Oilly even had a vineyard; at Chalfont St Giles, Mainou the Breton had a hawk's eyrie in the woodland recorded; at Long Crendon, Walter Giffard enclosed a park for wild beasts.<sup>10</sup> Buckinghamshire was not a county where it was obviously desirable to concentrate military resources in the hands of a few powerful vassals. There were not many very valuable individual estates, but there were enough to go round quite a large number of great men.

### Later Assignments

The variations in the size of baronial holdings in 1086 had lasting importance, but the pattern of settlement did not become frozen in time. Domesday itself is misleading in crediting Bishop Odo with extensive holdings, for in 1086 he was actually in prison and two years later, his estates were confiscated outright on account of his support for Duke Robert of Normandy against King William Rufus. Within a few years other principal tenants in chief also lost their estates. After the death of Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances in 1093, his holdings passed to his nephew Roger Mowbray, who just two years later lost them by his rebellion against Rufus. The same happened to the Domesday holdings of Robert count of Mortain, when William, his son and heir, backed Duke Robert against King Henry I in 1106.<sup>11</sup> Three of the greatest holdings described in Domesday were thus broken up within twenty years of the record. The Domesday tenants in chief had, of course, distributed most of their manors to their own followers, some of whom survived the forfeitures

of their lords, but the main beneficiaries were newcomers whom Rufus or Henry I chose to reward. The fragmentation of these major conglomerations cannot be followed in detail, but enough is known to show that a great many individuals shared the spoils. It is regrettable that for a generation after Domesday it is not possible to follow exactly how the original Norman settlement was modified as a consequence of the upheavals created by disputes about the succession to the crown after 1087. The barons were obliged to choose which of the rival brothers, William Rufus, Duke Robert and Henry they would serve. If they joined the party that failed, they too lost. Only after Henry I's victory at Tinchebrai in 1106 was a new kind of stability imposed, at least in England.

The Domesday settlement in Buckinghamshire was not only upset as a result of warfare and rebellion. Two of the most substantial Domesday estates in the county, those of Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin, were united by Miles's marriage to d'Oilly's daughter. This enormous property came to be known as the Honour of Wallingford, with its *caput* in Berkshire. When Miles died in 1107, the future of the honour depended on Henry I's choice of husband for Miles's own heiress.<sup>12</sup>

These changes to the fortunes of five of the eight greatest estates in Domesday Book may have briefly enhanced the significance of Walter Giffard II. Sometime in Rufus's reign, Walter became known as earl of Buckingham, perhaps with the intention of helping to stabilise the situation there after the disruptions. He supported Henry I on his accession and the king appointed his brother William, the royal chancellor, to the bishopric of Winchester, the richest see in England. However, when Walter died about 1103, the succession of his son Walter III underage did not help to consolidate the Giffard hold on the county. Walter III lived until 1164, but most of what is known about his activities relates to Normandy. The surviving evidence suggests, moreover, that he was more often referred to as Earl Giffard than as earl of Buckingham.<sup>13</sup>

Evidently it was already presumed that a baronial holding would be inherited by one of his sons and not divided. A barony as a military unit needed to be kept together. If a baron died leaving only a daughter, she would inherit but was expected to marry and the barony would thereby pass to another family. This is probably how William FitzAnsculf's barony passed to Fulk Paynel.<sup>14</sup> If a

baron left no obvious heirs at all, his estates reverted to the king, who was free to grant them out again, or not, as he wished. This apparently happened in the case of Turstin FitzRolf. He held only a modest Buckinghamshire estate, but accumulated a very substantial barony based at North Cadbury in Somerset. On his death, Rufus gave all his holdings to the Ballon family from Maine.<sup>15</sup> In various ways, the baronial establishment was subject to fluctuations. It was never a monolithic structure imposed in one fell blow after the Norman Conquest.

From the earliest surviving record of shrieval accounting at the Exchequer in September 1130, a new set of great men can be seen to have moved into Buckinghamshire as a result of Henry I's patronage.<sup>16</sup> The most revealing information comes from the allowances of rebate on the geld tax levied at the rate of 2 shillings to the hide which influential landowners obtained for their estates. In this county some fifty men recovered the geld due on their lands and the sums show for how many hides of land they claimed. More than thirty had estates of less than ten hides and no doubt owed their tax-break to connections with the royal administration. Despite his assets in the county, Earl Giffard is conspicuous for his absence so the sheriff's account cannot be used as a reliable guide to all the king's greatest magnates. But if not totally comprehensive, it is enlightening on its own terms. According to this account, the chief beneficiary of the tax-break was Brian FitzCount who had married Matilda, heiress of Wallingford about 1113. He thereby acquired control of the great Domesday holdings of both Crispin and d'Oilli, not only in Buckinghamshire, but in Oxfordshire and eight other counties. As such Brian overshadowed Giffard in his own power base. Wallingford Castle overlooked and defended the crucial crossing of the Middle Thames. In the next reign with tenants on both sides of the river, Brian was able by his persistent support for the empress to hold up any peaceful settlement for a decade.

Robert earl of Gloucester, Henry I's favourite bastard, the empress's main champion in England after 1139, had also by 1130 acquired lands in Buckinghamshire, this time from the confiscated Domesday holdings of the bishops of Bayeux and Coutances. His tax benefit was, however, less than half the size of Brian's. Geoffrey de Clinton, Henry I's chamberlain, did better than Gloucester from the

Bayeux properties, as did the royal chancellor Geoffrey Rufus, later bishop of Durham.

Within its own limits the reliability of the record can be proved from the fact that William de Warenne received 28 shillings, almost exactly what was due on his family's 15 Domesday hides; likewise William de Mountfichet, who had succeeded to the estate of 20 hides held by Robert Gernon, received 38 shillings. Henry de Fougères actually received his full due on the holdings of his ancestor Ralph. The sheriff's account only occasionally makes it possible to match the names so exactly with the Domesday evidence. Henry I's nephew, Stephen, the new count of Mortain, is not amongst those who claimed rebates on the geld, but he is noted elsewhere in the account as exercising some patronage in the county. This Exchequer record enables us to assert that when Stephen became king, there was hardly any great man of any consequence who did not have some landed property in the county of Buckingham. In this respect the situation in 1135 did not differ significantly from that in 1066: many great barons with small Buckinghamshire interests. Because their greatest estates lay elsewhere, they did not concentrate their energies in Buckinghamshire. This is true of Giffard himself, who preferred in Stephen's reign to keep on good terms with the lords of Normandy. His kinsman, Hugh de Bolbec, a faithful adherent of King Stephen, was probably expected to look after the family interests in England. In 1086 his ancestor, also Hugh, held Crowmarsh Giffard of Walter Giffard, and it was at Crowmarsh that Stephen established his camp when besieging Brian FitzCount at Wallingford across the river.<sup>17</sup>

### **The *Cartae Baronum***

The earliest specific evidence for the English baronage historians must use comes from the returns made to an enquiry instigated by Henry II in 1166, a whole century after the Norman Conquest. The king asked his tenants in chief to send him information in writing about who had been enfeoffed on their estates and what military services they owed. Unlike Domesday, the returns give no information about the holdings of the knights, only the names of those enfeoffed and the extent of their obligations. For the tenant in chief's holding, the term barony (*baronia*) had come into use by the mid twelfth century and several of the king's barons used it in their replies to the king.

Although none of the Buckinghamshire barons did so, it seems legitimate to make use of a word in general currency by that time to describe the nature of their tenancy from the crown. They were responsible for a known quantity of military service and had enfeoffed others to help discharge their obligations. Their barony comprised estates, sub-tenants and military service, all held directly of the king. Their duties are here explicitly recognized and displayed in detail.

The sheriff may have been responsible for distributing the king's instructions amongst the barons of his jurisdiction and the returns were certainly filed by counties, theoretically according to where the *caput* of the barony lay. The returns for Buckinghamshire provide us with ten names.<sup>18</sup> The first and most important was that of Earl Walter Giffard. Since he had actually died two years earlier, the return was supplied by his most substantial sub-tenant, Geoffrey FitzWilliam who had been answering to the king for the profits of what the Exchequer styled the earl's *honor* since 1164 and continued to do so for the next thirteen years.<sup>19</sup> In 1166 the Giffard barony comprised 35 tenants owing overall the service of 96 knights. In Domesday values, the combined value of its Buckinghamshire estates had come to well over £200. In addition the Giffard revenues in other counties amounted to nearly another £200. The Giffard barony was far and away the most important of those connected with Buckinghamshire. The earl had left no direct heirs, but Henry II did not take advantage of this to dismember the inheritance and redistribute its parts. By this time, it was neither so easy nor convenient to dispense with the baronial structure of the military establishment. Only some thirty years later did Richard I accept the claims of two families claiming descent from the sister of the first earl and divide the estates of the honour between them.

The other Buckinghamshire tenants -in-chief who made returns in 1166 were much less eminent. Walter Giffard I had been the son of Osbern de Bolbec and many of the Giffard estates in 1086 had been granted to his kinsman, Hugh de Bolbec. In 1166, a later Hugh de Bolbec was the Earl's second most important sub-tenant, owing him 20 knights. But since in 1086 Giffard's kinsman had also held other lands directly of the king (worth less than £40), the later Hugh was required to make a return for what he owed directly to the king. Hugh had

also recently died, so his return was made by his brother, Walter, on behalf of Hugh's son, another Walter, still technically a minor. Walter acknowledged that the king himself was owed the service of ten knights, making the military liability of his barony, relatively to its size, comparable to that of Giffard: a knight for every £4 worth of land. The *caput* of Bolbec's barony was at Whitchurch which in 1086 Hugh had held from Giffard, not the king. Whitchurch was not even the most valuable of Hugh's 1086 estates but for some reason was preferred: another small sign of how feudal arrangements, far from being laid down rigidly immediately after the Conquest, shifted over the twelfth century.

In 1166 Hamon FitzMeinfelin's 'barony' of Wolverton owed 15 knights. He had enfeoffed 16 men on the estates held in 1086 by Mainou the Breton which in Buckinghamshire were valued at £78. Mainou had also held estates worth £15 in Northamptonshire and Leicestershire. His total assets amounted to less than a quarter of Giffard's, and his military obligations seem comparatively light. William of Windsor, who held the 'barony' of Eton, named 17 men holding lands from him on lands he had inherited from William FitzOther, formerly castellan of Windsor Castle. In 1086, FitzOther's estates in Buckinghamshire had been worth only £25, but his numerous estates in other counties had augmented his resources, so he was worth more than £90 overall. Both his assets and his liabilities in service were thus comparable to Hamon's, though on quite a different basis.

Another tenant in chief who appears in the Buckinghamshire list as owing the service of 15 knights was Gilbert de Pinkenni, whose *caput* was actually at Weedon Pinkeny in Northamptonshire. Gilbert had inherited the Domesday estates of Giles of Picquigny, brother of Ansculf, sheriff of Buckinghamshire before 1086. Giles himself had only a modest property in this county; his real standing depended on holdings elsewhere.

The other Buckinghamshire tenancies-in-chief in the 1166 record were much smaller. William Mauduit, a royal chamberlain, had enfeoffed only seven men, mostly for fractions of a knight's fee, amounting in all to the service of just over four knights. Mauduit's estate at Hanslope, in 1086 valued at £24, had been held by Winemar the Fleming. What happened later is a mystery. Mauduit had obtained the estate by his marriage to

the heiress of Michael of Hanslope, but no connection of Michael with Winemar is known.<sup>20</sup> When set against Hamon's fifteen, the service of four and a half knights owed by Mauduit still roughly reflects the relative values of their properties as they had been in 1086.

The four remaining entries for Buckinghamshire are for men of much less consequence. William of Sherington owed two knights for his estate, but had enfeoffed no one.<sup>21</sup> Richard FitzNigel owed one knight and a half to the king and had unloaded half this burden on his brother, Walter. Gilbert de Bolbec, son of Herbert, owed the service of only one knight and Hugh of Cahaignes that of only two-thirds of one, which he had acquired by marriage. Such fractions indicate that feudal obligations must already have been dischargeable in other than personal military service.

The very uneven obligations of these ten Buckinghamshire tenants-in-chief obviously depended in large measure on the size of the territorial holdings ascribed to their predecessors in Domesday Book. William of Sherington, for example, had clearly obtained his 'barony' by the acquisition of the ten hides held there by the bishop of Coutances in 1086, confiscated by William Rufus. Richard FitzNigel's obligations apparently arose from his possession of lands worth about £10 and held in 1086 by one of the king's thegns, Leofwine of Nuneham Courtney. A connection with land once held by thegnage tenure also appears to lie behind Hugh de Cahaignes's modest obligations of two-thirds of a knight's fee. Hugh explained that he had acquired the property by his marriage to Mabel de Bereville. Her marriage portion had included Milton Keynes, a manor held by Queen Edith before 1066 and twenty years later by Godric Cratel, one of the royal thegns. Thegns were not 'enfeoffed' with their lands which were not inherited. On their deaths, the estates reverted to the crown. Subsequently, when the king did grant the estate out again, it was done on the new 'feudal' terms and so held directly of the king for military service.

Compared with the great number of Domesday tenants in chief, a mere ten baronies in 1166 seems surprising. In fact the surviving returns do not account for all the barons to be found in Buckinghamshire. It is possible that some returns were lost before they were copied into the thirteenth-century Exchequer records, for much seems to be missing

from the records of other counties. It is, however, certain that some Buckinghamshire barons simply failed to send back the answers Henry II asked for. Humphrey de Visdeloup was apparently expected to make an appropriate return. That he did not do so explains why the nature of his barony remains obscure. The fact that he paid scutage in Buckinghamshire in 1161 and 1165 proves that he undoubtedly had assets in the county. However, his ancestor, also Humphrey, had held fifteen hides of the king in Berkshire, which his son Walchelin subsequently lost. By 1166 the *caput* of the delinquent Humphrey was definitely in the county, at Abinton in Lavendon.<sup>22</sup> Visdeloup was only one of several singled out for not having sent *cartas*: Agnes de Bereville, Richard de Somery and others.<sup>23</sup>

The main reason why the Buckinghamshire returns give an inadequate impression of the Buckinghamshire baronage is that so many had their baronial headquarters in other counties. The evidence for them was accordingly filed elsewhere. Just as the Picquigny barony of Weedon in Northamptonshire is entered in the Exchequer record under Buckinghamshire, so the Lavendon barony of five and a half fees owed by the Biduns was filed under Northamptonshire. The holder of Dudley in Worcestershire must, as lord of Newport Pagnell, also be considered a baron of Buckinghamshire, given his substantial land holding there. In 1086 the Buckinghamshire lands of William FitzAnsculf were worth more than three times those in Worcestershire and one in three of the barony's thirty tenants in 1166 had been enfeoffed here. The nature of the returns does make it difficult to identify which of a baron's sub-tenants actually held their fees in Buckinghamshire. Nevertheless, there are some cases where the evidence is suggestive. The William de Orenge who owed one knight's service to the Bedfordshire barony of Simon de Beauchamp in 1166 looks like a descendant of the William d'Orange who held in Lathbury of Hugh de Beauchamp in 1086. The Nigel de le Vast who held Towersey of Nigel d'Aubigny in 1086 appears to be the ancestor of Hugh de S.Vedast who owed the Leicestershire barony of William d'Albini half a knight's service in 1166. Richard FitzOsbert who owed the Essex barony of Mandeville four knights must be a descendant of the Osbert who held of Mandeville at Leckhampstead in 1086. In the Middlesex record,

the abbot of Westminster reported that Angod Duredent owed the service of half a knight in Buckinghamshire, for land at either Denham or East Burnham, the abbey's only holdings in the county. Because Domesday is so sparing with the names of under-tenants, identification of fee-holder families is rarely possible, but it is certain that many barons based outside the county had tenants in Buckinghamshire. Contrariwise, not all the subtenants of Buckinghamshire barons held in the county itself, for the tenant in chief could as easily enfeoff his men from estates he held in other counties. It is rarely possible to pin down just where a subtenant's holdings might be, but Giffard's baron Richard Talbot, enfeoffed for the service of two knights must be the descendant of the Richard Talbot who had held nine hides in Battlesden in Bedfordshire of Giffard in 1086.

From the fragmentary record of a later enquiry (1208–09), it is possible to gain something like a fuller conspectus of the barons in the county. Here thirty-one barons holding by military service are listed, beginning with the earls of Essex, Chester and Arundel, all placed ahead of the Earl Marshal, who had obtained half the Giffard barony divided by Richard I.<sup>24</sup> The Bolbec barony of Whitchurch, which after the recent death of the heiress, had been divided between her two aunts, is represented by the half acquired by Elias de Beauchamp, husband of Constance. From the format of the document it is clear that the names from 1166 enjoyed no special status in the county, and they are anyway heavily outnumbered by all the others. Beside some entries there is explicit recognition that the baronial *caput* is elsewhere (*est alibi*) perhaps to alert Exchequer clerks on the need to check the records of other counties. But the record itself clearly takes it for granted that the barons named were Buckinghamshire barons anyway. That even this list cannot be complete is proved by the lack of any name for the other halves of the divided Giffard and Bolebec baronies. The information that follows in the record about wardships shows that the honours of Gloucester and Leicester as well as the fees of the bishop of Lincoln and the countess of Perche were also considered to be part of the county's baronial tenures. Although the entry continues with the names of those holding serjeanties, not strictly baronies at all, it goes on to give details about escheats in the honours of Wallingford and Nottingham, noting, as if in afterthought, a few

other names: William de Similly, Philip de Gyraud, John of Preaux and Robert de Chetwode, all still part of the enquiry into military baronies. According to this record all these barons belonged in Buckinghamshire on account of the lands they held in the county, wherever their baronial headquarters might be.

As far as the sheriff was concerned, who counted as a baron in his county was clear and when it suited them to do so, barons with their *caput* in other counties rendered such monies as scutage payments for their Buckinghamshire lands to the local sheriff.<sup>25</sup> But baronies did not fit comfortably into the administrative divisions of the Old English kingdom. The estates of a barony were scattered through many counties and the management of the barony could take no account of county boundaries. The barony acquired a coherence of its own through the lordship of the baron and his ability to muster his men when they were called on. After 1100 anyway, even when a baronial family died out or the barony was confiscated for whatever reason, it was not broken up, but managed as a unit, either by the king's own officials or by someone from the barony deputed for this purpose. At the very beginning of his reign Henry II confiscated the properties of William Peverel for the alleged crime of murdering his lord, Ranulph earl of Chester, but the barony of Peverel was thereafter managed as a separate entity and could be given as such forty years later by Richard I to his brother John.

Like the king himself, barons were perpetually on the move around their estates or acting on the king's affairs. Although they can hardly have felt the need of a fixed residence, from time to time a baron might want to assemble his own 'barons' in order to discuss with them how to resolve such problems as might arise amongst them. These meetings cannot always have taken place in a castle, for the earls of Buckingham are not known to have had any castle in England at all.<sup>26</sup> The baron of Eton, originally castellan of the king's castle at Windsor, hardly needed one of his own. The baronial castle might be an imposing edifice where the baron could receive and entertain his dependents in a style befitting his dignity, even, for some great barons, to receive the king himself, but such receptions could take place in nothing grander than a manor house. Brian FitzCount spent at least one Christmas with his *familia* at his estate in Iver;<sup>27</sup> William Marshal, earl of Pembroke, died at



his manor of Caversham, one of the Giffard properties he had acquired from Richard I. In Buckinghamshire, where there was no expectation of chronic warfare, the baronial castle was hardly of military importance and anyway castles served more than military purposes in twelfth-century England. The Mauduit castle at Hanslope served as a safe depository for the chamberlain's treasure chests when they had to be transported between London and Northampton.<sup>28</sup> It is true that when Geoffrey de Turville stipulated what castle duty he required at Weston, he prudently specified that in time of war he would need twice as much service as in time of peace, but since this arrangement was witnessed not only by his barons, but by the local village community, priests, blacksmith, bloodletter *et al*, this was a castle well integrated into local society, not an alien military cadre.<sup>29</sup>

The integrity of the barony meant that although a great many tenants in chief held only modest estates in this county, the fact that most of them had founded baronies somewhere had implications for their Buckinghamshire tenants in quite remote parts of the kingdom. The earls of Chester, Essex, Oxford, Salisbury, Surrey and Derbyshire all had Buckinghamshire tenants who were obliged to keep in touch and on good terms with their lords, as far away, perhaps, as Yorkshire, Cheshire or Devon. The earl of Chester, one of the greatest magnates in twelfth century England, asserted his presence in the county by building a castle on his estate at Shenley. A few undertenants of the bishop of Bayeux in 1086 who had managed to hold on to their estates in Buckinghamshire after his disgrace founded baronies with their bases in Kent.<sup>30</sup> When the Bayeux holdings had been broken up, beneficiaries included the earls of Gloucester, Leicester and Pembroke. The closest ties were inevitably with barons based in the neighbouring counties, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire, Berkshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire. The combined D'Oilli-Crispin honour had Wallingford across the Thames in Berkshire as its headquarters, but this did not diminish its relevance to Buckinghamshire affairs.

The Buckinghamshire returns of 1166 offer no grounds for supposing that by then a tenant in chief needed a holding of a certain minimum size to be liable for military service as a royal baron. A baron might owe a hundred knights; or only two-thirds of one. This is somewhat disconcerting. In the mid-twelfth century, the king's barons were not yet

nobles in any recognisably modern sense. However, in 1215 when King John conceded *Magna Carta*, the term barony did acquire a more precise meaning. *Magna Carta* fixed inheritance tax on a single knight's fee at £20 and on a barony at £100.<sup>31</sup> The implication is that a barony was expected to provide the services of at least five knight's fees. By this measure, only five of the ten Buckinghamshire tenants in chief owing military service in 1166 would have qualified as barons. By the same measure, those five would have obtained very favourable terms financially for their heirs, being liable for only five knights' fees rather than for all. Whereas the greatest barons with the most liabilities certainly benefited from the new fiscal limits, it has to be acknowledged that in practice the Exchequer could still charge inheritance tax on some tenants in chief owing less than five knights' services as though they were barons.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, a line had been drawn between the most substantial barons and the others. In thirteenth-century England the barons were the really great men. Until the establishment of a separate House of Lords in the fourteenth-century parliament, there were no gradations of noble rank. The few earls were themselves royal barons. The protests against Henry III led by the earls of Leicester and Gloucester in 1258 are known to historians as the baronial plan of reform.<sup>33</sup> It was in the thirteenth century that the term 'baron' acquired something of its modern meaning.

#### THE CHARACTER AND ACTIVITIES OF THE TWELFTH-CENTURY BUCKINGHAMSHIRE BARONS.

Little can be known about the characteristics of individual barons, but some ideas about their collective traits are sustainable.<sup>34</sup> First, there is the matter of their names. These come in three forms. Many barons were known simply as sons of their fathers, as represented in modern English by the prefix *Fitz-*. Thus, FitzAnsculf, FitzConstantine, FitzManni, FitzRolf occur as Domesday tenants in chief. Only the name of Ansculf, an early and probably notorious sheriff, now has any resonance at all.<sup>35</sup> Yet in their own day, the fathers must have been well enough known for the sons to insist on their parentage. If not, it becomes a sign of the sons' own respect for their fathers.

Secondly, some barons whose lineage had less

significance than their personal traits, became known by nicknames. These were so distinctive that their descendants clung to them in family loyalty. A twelfth-century writer explained that the Crispin family derived its surname from the nickname given to Gilbert I (the grandfather of Miles Crispin of Wallingford) whose hair from childhood stood up on his head like bristles. Moreover, it was not only the name that his children inherited, for he passed on the distinctive genes as well.<sup>36</sup> Robert Gernon was the one with the moustache; Richard Engaine, meaning ingenious, was an early cleverdick, whose talents may have had something to do with the fact that every one of his Domesday estates was more valuable in 1086 than it had been when received. Hascoit Musard was noted for being absent-minded; Turstin Mantel, the man with the cloak, could have been a dandy unless he suffered so much from the cold he would not take his coat off. The nickname of William Peverel implies that he was either on the small side or had a short fuse. William Passelewe sounds like someone with a weak bladder; Maminot is a pet name for a very big man. The name Giffard itself calls attention either to his chubby-cheeks or his girth.<sup>37</sup> The origin of many such names is surely the military camp with its jocose and disrespectful mockery of personal characteristics.

Thirdly, far and away the commonest way to distinguish the many Ralphs, Richards, Roberts, Rogers, Walters and Williams was by reference to their place of continental origin. Only a few, like Hesdin and the Picquigny brothers, came from Picardy. Flemings and Bretons stood out as sufficiently different in their speech to be treated in generic terms, much as Cockneys, Geordies or Welshmen in later armies. Some strange names point to more distant places, like the William d'Orange who appears to have hailed from Maine, or the thirteenth-century lord from Le Puy who gave his village of Stoke its second half, Poges. But the vast majority came from Normandy and most of the foreign elements in place-names still in use today – Clifton Reynes, Drayton Beauchamp, Milton Keynes, Newport Pagnell, Newtons Blossomville and Longueville, Stokes Hammond and Mandeville, Weston Turville – are derived from the duchy.<sup>38</sup> Was the use of these names merely a matter of local convenience to distinguish one new town or Stoke from another, or did it also represent some wish on the lord's part to commemorate his

Norman roots? Some great men remained so attached to their homeland, that even if they died in England they wished to be buried back in Normandy, as Walter Giffard II was in 1103.<sup>39</sup> In the twelfth century, the great men of England went so often to Normandy anyway for one reason or another that there was little chance of their losing contact with their homeland. In many cases, branches of their families were firmly domiciled only in the duchy. Some Normans rewarded with lands in England often retained lands in Normandy for themselves. In 1204, when King John lost control of Normandy, there were then still a number of men with Buckinghamshire properties whose first allegiance was to Normandy. However reluctantly, they were prepared to forfeit their English estates rather than leave their native land. John had no patience with Norman lords who accepted King Philip of France; from the English records of their confiscated estates, their names are known.<sup>40</sup> About the Buckinghamshire barons of the twelfth century we may be confident that the most important were the least parochial. Because their continental contacts mattered to them, those who owed them services for their lands and the tenants who sustained these interests financially were inevitably caught up in their enterprises.

Although we have no way of knowing anything about their physical appearance, their seals give some idea of how they wished to present themselves. From the middle of the twelfth century, it became common practice for private documents to be sealed, even by quite modest landholders.<sup>41</sup> Several seals such as those surviving from the muniments of Newton Longueville Priory, now at New College, Oxford, show that barons liked to be presented on horseback and to look like warriors, even if they were making gifts to churches. There are also seals for ladies, to prove that women could in certain circumstances act for legal purposes on their own.

### **Benefactions**

Most of the evidence about barons comes from the records either of the crown, or of religious houses. Buckinghamshire, a county without a major religious house, is something of a disappointment for a historian of the baronage. Domesday is not itself very enlightening: only four churches are mentioned in the whole county record. There were obviously many more since some pre-Conquest

churches are still visible today.<sup>42</sup> Churches dedicated to Old English saints, Swithun (at Swanbourne) and Botolph, (at Bradenham) probably date from before the Conquest. There was, nevertheless, plenty of scope for further provision and throughout the kingdom, from the mid-eleventh century, a momentum for establishing village churches was built up in which the new Norman lordship became actively engaged.<sup>43</sup> At Sherington, a manor of the bishop of Coutances in 1086, the church is dedicated to Saint Laud, an early bishop of his see. The most plausible explanation for this unusual dedication, unique in the kingdom, is that the church was first erected and consecrated by the Norman bishop before his death in 1093. William Mauduit built a new church at Hanslope for the parish and was allowed by the bishop of Lincoln to use the old one, probably situated beside his baronial castle, as his private chapel.<sup>44</sup> Churches dedicated to saints whose cults only became popular in the period after the Conquest, such as Nicholas, Lawrence, Giles and Leonard were also probably built under the influence of Norman lords.<sup>45</sup> Evidence about their contribution to parish church building may be sparse but the extent of their patronage should not be underestimated.

They were notably generous in giving to continental monasteries from their English holdings: whole estates, well-endowed churches, tithe revenues and the services of local men to look after such assets on the monks' behalf. Hugh, earl of Chester, for example, gave the monks of St Evroul rights to the tithe of two of his Buckinghamshire lands, along with a rustic at Brickhill to act as their agent.<sup>46</sup> Much of this patronage would not have been of much profit to the monks had there not been village churches with priests and endowments as well as parishioners who discharged their spiritual obligations: all matters then of some importance to Norman lords with the interests of their monasteries at heart. On the other hand, the new Norman lords may also have intended their French monastic houses to help make better provision for the religious life of their acquisitions.

Robert, count of Mortain, acquired the *vill* at Wing, worth £30 in 1086, along with the church, one of the largest early Anglo-Saxon churches in England. Before 1086, he had given an estate in this *vill* to the monks of St Nicholas in Angers, who were at the time rebuilding their monastic church and no doubt seeking financial help.<sup>47</sup> The count is

not known to have had previous dealings with the monks of the Loire valley, but since his brother King William also made a grant, they were probably responding to the monks' appeal about the same time.<sup>48</sup> For the Normans, the monks would have represented the most active promoters in northern France of the cult of Saint Nicholas, a saint very popular in the duchy. The monks retained possession of the estate and the church at Wing long after the dismemberment of the Mortain dominion. Robert also donated properties in five English counties to the Norman monastery of Grestain founded by his father, with two estates in Buckinghamshire at Ickford and Marsh Gibbon.<sup>49</sup> Grestain held land directly of the king in two other counties. The count's honour was dismembered, but the monks kept their lands till the fifteenth century.<sup>50</sup>

The Norman wish to make gifts from their English lands to monasteries in the Loire valley is noteworthy and not, perhaps, stressed sufficiently. No religious house there was more revered than Marmoutiers at Tours. The Conqueror entrusted his own foundation at Battle to the monks of Marmoutiers, and in Buckinghamshire before 1100 Fulk Paynel did likewise for the priory of Tickford at Newport Pagnell, his chief estate in the county. In this he was certainly inspired by his kinsman Ralph, who had already provided for a priory at York dependent on Marmoutiers.<sup>51</sup> Another early benefaction to a non-Norman French religious house came in the form of property at Woolstone, given by Walter Giffard senior to the monks of St Pierre de la Couture at Le Mans.<sup>52</sup> Again it is not known what previous connection he may have had with the monastery, but it clearly mattered to him that it should benefit from his good fortune in England. Promoting good relations between the Normans and the county of Maine moreover served the political interests of the English kings at that time. Not until the 1090s did Walter's son, Walter Giffard II, (confusingly, the first earl) actually found a religious house of his own. Did he think his elevation to comital rank put him under some obligation to be more generous to the church? The foundation at Longueville, his chief Norman estate, comprised a priory dependent on the great Cluniac monastery of La Charité itself on the Loire, even further away than Tours. The Norman priory was endowed with two of Giffard's eight manors in this county, and Norman monks were sent to set up a

small dependent house at Newton Longeville. When the first earl died in England, however, it was to Longeville that the body was taken for burial. The surviving charters for Newton show that throughout the twelfth century, Giffard under-tenants and Buckinghamshire neighbours continued to make gifts to these Norman monks.<sup>53</sup>

Both the Giffard religious houses at Longeville and Newton were dedicated to Saint Faith. How did the Giffards become devotees of this saint, a virgin martyred in the early church and originally venerated at Agen? After her body was stolen and brought to the monastery in the Rouergue, at Conques, this became the chief promoter of her cult. Although far indeed from Normandy, Conques, as an important staging post on the route to Compostella in Galicia, was much frequented by pilgrims. In his youth, the second earl Giffard, Walter III, accompanied by his formidable mother and a crowd of his own barons, went to Conques where he made the monks a gift of tithes from his Norfolk estates.<sup>54</sup> Amongst the witnesses to his gift were men whose descendants are found holding fees from him in 1166.<sup>55</sup> The earl's visit to Conques is clearly in line with his family's earlier devotion to Saint Faith, but sheds no further light on how it had arisen in the first place.

Another Buckinghamshire baron whose strongest religious commitments were in Normandy was Ilbert de Lacy, tenant of the bishop of Bayeux in 1086, for the substantial estate of ten hides at Tingewick which he gave to the Benedictines of the Holy Trinity at Rouen. He had family connections in the city and the property, which his mother Emma had given the convent of St Amand in Rouen on becoming a nun there, was subsequently sold by the convent to the monks of Holy Trinity. A copy of this transaction was entered in the cartulary.<sup>56</sup> Other barons, even those not without adequate resources for establishing a religious house of their own, could demonstrate their piety by assigning revenues, especially tithes from their estates to French monasteries important to them. Miles Crispin who gave some lands in Oxfordshire to the venerated house of Bec also assigned to the monks the tithes of the domain lands belonging to the honour of Wallingford.<sup>57</sup> Under Henry II, when the honour was in the king's hand, the sums due were regularly paid over by the sheriff at High Wycombe. Fontevrault in Anjou benefited in a similar way.<sup>58</sup> Neither monastery

established a religious house in the county. The dues owed to them were collected by the monasteries' agents already established in other counties: Bec's at Ogbourne in Wiltshire; Fontevrault's at Leighton Buzzard across the county border in Bedfordshire.

Religious houses in other parts of England could clearly benefit from the patronage of Buckinghamshire barons. Before the end of the eleventh century, Gilbert de Gant gave his Buckinghamshire church of Edlesborough to the monastery he refounded at Bardney, east of Lincoln.<sup>59</sup> A century later, Gervase Paynel, baron of Dudley gave his church of Ellesborough to the priory founded by one of his knights at Sandwell in Staffordshire.<sup>60</sup> Before 1146, William FitzOther gave land at Shipton Lee to Thame Abbey, where his brother Everard had become its first abbot.<sup>61</sup> At the height of his career, Geoffrey Clinton, the royal chamberlain, granted lands he had acquired from the Bayeux holdings to his foundation at Kenilworth.<sup>62</sup> About the same time, lands of a d'Oilly tenant at Thornborough were given to Godstow nunnery.<sup>63</sup> The d'Oilly connections with the county were responsible for introducing the canons of Oseney into Buckinghamshire where, over the years, they acquired an even more substantial portfolio of interests. According to Gregory IX's papal bull of about 1235, confirming their properties they had rights in nearly a dozen Buckinghamshire churches.<sup>64</sup> By the end of the thirteenth century, the revenues of more than half of all the churches in Buckinghamshire had been appropriated for the benefit of the many religious orders, which necessitated the appointment of 'vicars' to discharge the spiritual responsibilities of the parish.<sup>65</sup> Possibly because the county for long had no major religious house of its own, patrons more happily donated their churches and tithes to communities in other parts of the kingdom where they already had connections.

Eventually some independent new religious houses were set up in Buckinghamshire. Before his death in 1129, William Giffard, bishop of Winchester, founded a Benedictine convent of nuns on his outlying manor of Ivinghoe<sup>66</sup>, and a few years later another priory for Benedictine nuns was founded at Ankerwick by Gilbert de Mounfichet, baron of Stansted Mountfichet in Essex, successor to Robert Gernon's property at Wraysbury.<sup>67</sup> These foundations were on a small scale because most

Buckinghamshire tenants in chief did not have extensive estates in the county for lavish endowments. Setting aside at least something for the promotion of the religious life indicates, however, that baronial piety was sincere. They cannot justly be accused of trying to obtain credit by ostentatious charity.

A more ambitious phase began under the auspices of Robert de Beaumont, earl of Leicester, when provision was made for a Benedictine priory at Luffield, of which Hamon FitzMeinfelin, baron of Wolverton, became a generous benefactor.<sup>68</sup> The priory grew so successfully that it in turn had already spawned another at Bradwell by 1155. Although the first earl Giffard, who did have the means to set up an important religious house, had preferred to do this in Normandy, the second earl towards the end of his long life, with no direct heirs of his body, provided a substantial endowment for a house of Arrouaisian canons at Notley in 1162. This duly became the wealthiest religious house in the county and spawned daughter houses of its own. The details of the foundation refer to the site of Giffard's great park at Long Crendon, the earl's kitchen, the provision of a cart that brought firewood for it from his woodland in Whittlewood, the sheep, cows and pigs kept on the estate, even the place where the earl kept his dogs.<sup>69</sup>

Giffard's patronage of the Arrouaisian order was certainly inspired by the example of one of his own tenants, William de Missenden, who had introduced the order to England thirty years before, when founding a house for them at Missenden.<sup>70</sup> The first canons had arrived not from Normandy but from the priory at Ruisseauville (in the Pas de Calais) set up barely six years before. From the house at Missenden, many daughter houses sprang up in the next few decades. Another order of canons, the Premonstratensians, founded by Saint Norbert, were also settled early in Henry II's reign by John de Bidun, baron of Lavendon, on lands formerly held by the counts of Mortain.<sup>71</sup> In the meantime, Mortain's land at Biddlesden (which had passed to the earls of Leicester in Henry I's early years) had been handed over to Cistercian monks by the earl's steward and forester, Arnold de Bois.<sup>72</sup> That same year, 1147, the crusade for the Holy Land had aroused much enthusiasm in England and was probably responsible for the provision made at this time for the support of the military orders. William Peverel assigned some

lands to the order of the the Hospitallers at Hogshaw, where the knights set up a commandery.<sup>73</sup> The Templars too found benefactors in members of the Bolbec family and in Hamo FitzMeinfelin. Their preceptory was at Bulstrode.<sup>74</sup> The variety of religious life encouraged in the county by these benefactions is impressive and suggests baronial encouragement for religious innovation. Religious patronage cannot be explained away as merely ingrained or conventional.

It is true, nevertheless, that apparently disinterested grants to religious houses may on occasion have been prompted as much by awkward circumstances as spontaneous generosity. The story behind the foundation of Biddlesden acknowledges that Arnold's gift was intended to forestall further dispute about who really 'owned' the land.<sup>75</sup> Lords with isolated estates, not so easily managed by other means, may have been happy to find a religious recipient, even if the service received in return was prayers for benefactors and their kin, rather than military activity or money rents. Canny benefactors holding lands from honours at risk of confiscation or collapse may sensibly have disposed of assets while they still could; they could at least expect some spiritual reward. Religious houses provided places of ultimate rest for benefactors; nunneries offered refuges for unmarried or unmarriageable daughters; sons planning ecclesiastical careers benefited from their families' religious friends.<sup>76</sup> Religious establishments could offer their benefactors hospitality and refreshment. Heirs were expected to maintain good relations with their parents' foundations and refresh the connection with more gifts in every generation. What the surviving charters show is the great number and variety of institutions involved and the wide range, geographically, of these interests, both within the kingdom and on the continent.

The religious commitment of the barons was not limited to giving land or revenues. When the call to the crusade itself was heard, many barons from the county must have discharged their religious obligations directly, as Earl Warenne, lord of Broughton did in 1147. No numbers can be put on those who left, but English participation in the crusades was certainly strongest under Richard I. Among the many dead then listed by the chroniclers are members of families with Buckinghamshire properties: Ferrers, Pinkenni, Mandeville, Saint Valery,

Albini, Camville and Verdun.<sup>76</sup> Even an old man like Gervase Paynel joined Richard I's crusade. He died overseas; some of his knights are known to have been in the Holy Land.<sup>78</sup> The names of other men who had taken the cross are recorded because they were excused scutage payments by Richard I on that account.<sup>79</sup>

### Family Interests

Religious endowments invariably stipulate that the clergy should pray for the souls of the benefactor and his kin, his wife and sons, often specified by name. Concerns for their families and their future lineage weighed heavily with barons. The rule of primogeniture, as imposed by the nature of their military tenures, meant that for all its advantages in preserving the barony's integrity, it made provision for other sons and daughters more of a challenge. Heiresses were sought after for younger sons; husbands of suitable standing had to be found for daughters. Barons who married young, even if they died in their forties, might reasonably hope to leave an adult son able to assume responsibility for the family interests. If there were no sons, a daughter was entitled to succeed to the barony. If a baron left more than one daughter, his barony would be divided equally amongst them.<sup>80</sup> Before 1200, at least nine Buckinghamshire baronies passed by the marriage of heiresses into the hands of their husbands and were lost to the original barons' kin.<sup>81</sup> In some cases, anxious fathers may have been instrumental in choosing sons in law, but often, daughters remained unmarried when their fathers died. It was then the king who chose husbands as it suited his own interests, rather than those of the baronial family. Barons who took pride in their own connections must have done their best to protect their dependents from royal interference.

The controversial issue of baronial relations with the crown is the one most often discussed by historians and the one which has done most to distort assessment of the English baronage. Baronial difficulties with kings began with their efforts to protect what they considered family interests from royal intervention. As early as 1100, Henry I sought to meet their concerns, promising not to exact punitive death duties or claim royal powers to arrange baronial marriages and allow widows to look after surviving children and not force them to remarry if they did not wish it.<sup>82</sup> Henry I may or may not have seriously intended to respect these

concessions; in practice, they counted for little. No proper restraint of the crown's powers over the baronage was effective until Magna Carta defined those powers more precisely.<sup>83</sup>

The way Henry II took relentless advantage of the death of a baron for his own purposes is blatantly exposed by an Exchequer record of 1185, known as the *Rotuli de Dominabus*.<sup>84</sup> No less than 74 Buckinghamshire widows and their children were that year in royal custody. The record is arranged by hundreds and shows that the shrieval bailiffs for each hundred had been charged with collecting the information required by the Exchequer. Its interest was narrowly focused on the actual and potential value of estates of tenants in chief who had died leaving no heir old enough to assume legal responsibilities. In passing, the record recognises the existence of any widows and children, giving their ages and noting whether guardians had already been appointed. The crown took an interest in the widows because their dower lands made them desirable partners and the king expected them to accept new husbands at his behest unless they offered some compensation for refusing his candidates. Widows might also offer money to obtain guardianship of their own children. Otherwise the king could use his powers to find someone, not necessarily a kinsman, who would manage the family's property and eventually arrange the marriage of the heir or heiress, possibly to children of his own. The information about these widows and their children shows how great was the widows' age range, the often surprisingly large number of fatherless children underage and the number of daughters who had entered nunneries. Barons could be remarkably long-lived: William Marshal, earl of Pembroke who had acquired half the Giffard inheritance from Richard I died in his eighties. But, given the nature of a baron's life, with its frequent displacements and military undertakings, no baron could be confident of living long enough to see his children established in life. Concerns for keeping the family's affairs in its own hands were understandably uppermost in baronial minds throughout the twelfth century.

### Discharge of Baronial Duties

The efforts of barons to resist the pressures of royal administration on their personal and local interests have earned them a reputation for being naturally intolerant of royal authority. Given the exactions of

post-Conquest kings, they were rather slow to protest to any effect. Their sense of duty to the crown meant that some Buckinghamshire barons were loyal servants of the king. It was while Bertram de Verdun was abroad in the king's service that Geoffrey de Mandeville and Ralph Taillebois encroached on his rights at Farnham Royal.<sup>85</sup> Walter Giffard II acted as a royal commissioner in the West Country for the Domesday inquest.<sup>86</sup> William Mauduit, baron of Hanslope, was a royal chamberlain who had acquired the barony by his marriage to the heiress of Michael of Hanslope, himself Henry I's castellan of Rockingham.<sup>87</sup> Meinfelin was sheriff of Buckinghamshire under Henry I and left office owing considerable sums to the Exchequer; Gilbert de Picquigny was sheriff of Berkshire early in Henry II's reign; he too left debts.<sup>88</sup> The sheriff usually farmed Buckinghamshire jointly with Bedfordshire and local men often assumed the responsibility: Richard FitzOsbert, William FitzRichard, Simon de Beauchamp and William de Albeni.<sup>89</sup> Hugh de Keynes was royal forester in Whittlewood.<sup>90</sup> Hugh of Cressi, one of Earl Giffard's barons, often witnessed Henry II's charters and must have been frequently in his entourage.<sup>91</sup>

The evidence that the barons owed the king military service does not enlighten us about how and when they were deployed in the field. Edward of Salisbury, lord of Aston Clinton, carried Henry I's standard at the decisive battle of Brémule in 1119, where the second earl of Buckingham distinguished himself on behalf of the king.<sup>92</sup> The same earl was at Exeter in 1136 when Stephen laid siege to the city.<sup>93</sup> In 1194 Hamo FitzHamo FitzMeinfelin was in Normandy with Richard I.<sup>94</sup> William, his brother and heir, went to Ireland with King John in 1210, along with many other knights with names connected with Buckinghamshire – Giffard, Cressi, Vernon, Mauduit, Bolebec, Verdun and Paynel.<sup>95</sup> Records survive to show when barons paid scutage if they did not turn up for royal campaigns; no roll call survives to show when they did serve in person but the implication of the scutage records is that the other Buckinghamshire knights fought as required in Wales, or Ireland or Normandy at the king's command.

What is known about baronial movements and activities depends on the very limited kind of evidence available, such as their attestation of charters. These suggest, for example, that in Stephen's

reign, Hamo FitzMeinfelin did not falter in his loyalty.<sup>96</sup> The same kind of evidence indicates that when Henry duke of Normandy negotiated with Earl Robert at Leicester in 1153, several barons from the north of the county found it expedient to be present. Since the duke then spent time with Payn de Beauchamp at Bedford that year, he must have passed through Buckinghamshire, so that their circumspection was perhaps prudent.<sup>97</sup> On the other hand, their caution must have helped make Henry's progress possible.

Attendance on royal business must in the nature of things have been intermittent compared with the baron's steady commitments to his own principal tenants who were both his assets and the main source of his problems. Most of any baron's estates had been granted out to his followers by 1086. Of the forty Bayeux estates, the bishop had retained in his own hands only three.<sup>98</sup> Of Giffard's forty-seven, he held only eight himself, though these were admittedly amongst the most valuable, worth more than a quarter of his total for the county.<sup>99</sup> The Bayeux holding supported at least 18 subtenants; Giffard's 19; Mortain's, 20. Some of these tenants held other estates in the county and elsewhere, sometimes of other lords. The barons used their assets to build up a network of reliable men whose advice, aid and service would be put at their disposal, either when the baron himself needed it, or when the king summoned support.

These men were not expected to provide a personal bodyguard of henchmen. They were posted out on their domains, but became available as required. Eventually, each property tended to pass into the hands of a family which often adopted the name of its English holding as a surname. The Norman sense of loyalty to place became rooted in England too.<sup>100</sup> The barons' influence in the kingdom depended on the reliability of their tenants. They did not, like later aristocrats, depend entirely on the labours of reliable but subordinate land managers. The undertenants, on their own estates, loomed larger in the lives of the local population than the barons themselves, but the fact that they had obligations to men of even greater social standing than themselves had implications for everyone. When, sometime in Stephen's reign, Reading Abbey was given three and a half hides of land at Lenborough, the gift was ratified, not only by the benefactor's immediate lord, Arnulf of Chelsfield, but also by Gilbert, earl of Pembroke,

who had picked up the overlordship once exercised by the bishop of Bayeux.<sup>101</sup> The baronial lord was not a person to be treated as a distant irrelevance.

The coherence of the barony rested essentially on the baron's provision of effective supervision of its tenancies. Every barony devised its own rules and practices about which almost nothing is known in detail. Matters were settled by discussion in the baronial court amongst the baron's own barons, without need of written records. The barony was an effective unit of government, not in the territorial sense, but of persons subject to the baron's authority in respect of their tenures. These men were originally and for the most part all of foreign extraction who were responsible for the security of the kingdom in peace and war. It is understandable why these men would be disciplined within their own ranks. But they were never an irresponsible army of occupation. From above they were subjects of a king whose exercise of power was built on the traditional authority of the English monarchy; from below, they were constrained by the need to keep the local communities working effectively. On their demesne lands and through their subtenants, barons were in touch with the countryside, but whereas they were masters in their own baronies, in local government they were in no position to dominate.

Their most obvious duty in the county was the obligation on landowners to attend the meetings of the shire moot. There was no possibility of their doing this regularly in person. They would have been represented there by one of their own barons or knights. In time, these were the men who became the stalwarts of local government. Possibly it was in connection with attendance at shire courts that many great landlords held property in the town of Buckingham.<sup>102</sup> Even if their rent-paying burgesses were of no greater interest to them than as sources of additional revenue, it is important to realise that barons were not totally detached from urban life. Aylesbury was the richest of the king's holdings in the county and where the sheriff was most active; his gaol was there.<sup>103</sup> But Domesday notices no burgesses in Aylesbury and Buckingham was probably the site of shire meetings.

In the twelfth century, most people still lived and worked in the countryside and the barons' main assets were their manors. In more than six cases out of ten, the manor in Buckinghamshire was co-extensive with a village. Responsibility for the management of the affairs of such villages may be

assumed to have rested with the lord, but only the most uncontroversial business could ever be settled at village level. Moreover, in nearly four of every ten villages, there were several different tenancies, particularly in the hundreds to the east of the county: Yardley, Cotteslowe, Moulsoe and Seckloe. In 1086, the 20 hides at Lavendon were parcelled out amongst 10 different tenants, themselves holding of four tenants in chief, the bishop of Coutances, the count of Mortain, Giffard and the countess Judith, with Ketel, an old English survivor, hanging on to just half a hide directly held from the king.<sup>104</sup> In this county, no great tenant in chief was well placed to impose his own will.

For the settlement of serious affairs criminal accusations had to be judged, not on the manor or in the village but in the hundred court, which met every three weeks or so.<sup>105</sup> Controversial matters had to be thrashed out in public and resolved by those villagers who attended the meetings on behalf of their *vills*. Neither the baron, nor his local subtenant could have been expected to appear in person at these courts every three weeks. They could at best have helped to see that the courts continued to function regularly as intended. It was in their own interest to do so, not to disrupt its operations.

Buckinghamshire was nominally divided into eighteen hundreds. In many counties, well before the Conquest, kings had granted favoured lords the right to preside at hundred courts and collect the fines imposed as penalties in return for getting judgments of the court enforced.<sup>106</sup> In some areas, an arrangement whereby local lords assumed this responsibility may have worked more effectively in the local interest than supervision by the king's own officer, the sheriff. But this never happened in Buckinghamshire. Earl Giffard, the greatest of the county's landowners, never enjoyed a position of local dominance, although he held lands in as many as thirteen of the eighteen hundreds. In twelve hundreds, there were between ten and fifteen different tenants in chief with estates; even in the poorest hundred, Lamua, the *vills* were shared out amongst nine tenants in chief. Barons were in no better position in the hundred than they might be in the village or manor to settle disputes by diktat.

The situation may be illustrated from the example of Aylesbury Hundred, the most affluent part of the shire. Here 13 *vills* were held under eight different lords with only six named



subtenants. Ellesborough was the only *vill* with more than one lord. This was not a recent development; even before the Conquest, it had been divided between Earl Harold and Leofnoth, a man of King Edward.<sup>107</sup> Before 1066, some sokemen at Wendover had held separate estates from the king that had been subsequently subsumed into the royal manor there; nevertheless, in 1086 they were still held to be distinct.<sup>108</sup> Despite the predominance of single manor-villages in the hundred, it was still not possible for lords to opt out of the hundredal system of local government.

Buckinghamshire was a county with a great many small estates where the public courts remained vigorous. In 1066 there had been at least 80 royal thegns and other thegns of great earls able to settle local affairs.<sup>109</sup> Twenty years later, many of their estates had been combined for the benefit of new Norman tenants, but there were still many small holdings. In nearly every hundred in 1086, a few small landowners who had held before the Conquest were able to provide some continuity in procedure and so reassure the village representatives in hundredal assemblies. The Domesday inquest had extracted the information it sought about tenures from hundred jurors and they had shown no reluctance about testifying that the sheriff had perpetrated abuses of power or that great barons had seized property without authority.<sup>110</sup> Forty years later, the king referred a dispute about land boundaries at Cranfield on the Bedfordshire border between the abbot of Ramsey and King David of Scotland, also earl of Huntingdon, to the jurors of the hundred court (of Moulsoe) whose verdict was then ratified by the king.<sup>111</sup> Historians who approve royal efforts to create an effective central government in the twelfth century tend to overlook the strengths of local government in this period. The role of the baronage in providing for local security and autonomy is, likewise, not sufficiently appreciated.

This survey of the Buckinghamshire barons has aimed to show who they were, the nature of their religious commitments, their concerns for family, their duties and, finally, the limited scope of their local powers. With their scattered possessions across the county and over the kingdom, they could be well informed about local conditions in many places; because of their direct access to the king they were well able to voice grievances and concerns in the highest quarter. Baronial protests

about royal excesses should not be dismissed as serving only their own interests. The barons may not have left much of an impression on the history of Buckinghamshire, but, however great the disparities of their fortunes and commitment to the county, they discharged a variety of responsibilities which warrant historical attention.

## NOTES

1. Changes in the meaning of the term 'baron' are summarised in the Oxford English Dictionary.
2. D. Bates (ed.) *The Acta of William I (1066–1087)* (Oxford 1998), nos 5, 31, 87, 190, 346.
3. Marjorie Chibnall (ed.) Orderic [Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*,] vol. III (Oxford, 1972), 172–5.
4. Bates, *Acta*, no. 30, where Walter Giffard confirms gifts to the monks of Bernay at the request of his barons: *desiderium baronum meorum scilicet Rogerii Porchet, Hugonis de Bolebec, Walterii Siflandt, Willelmi Duncins atque Ade de Raphetot*.
5. A. Farley (ed.) *Domesday Book seu Liber Censualis Wilhelmi Primi Regis Angliae*, 2 vols (London, 1783). There is a translation for Buckinghamshire by E. Teague and V. Saskaran, (Chichester, 1978). Hereafter DB.
6. Flemings: Gilbert, Walter, Winemar; Bretons: Ralph and William de Fougeres, Mainou and Joscelin; Picards: Ansculf and Giles de Picquigny, Gunfrid de Chocques; Englishmen: Edward of Salisbury, Alric, Alsige.
7. Bishop Geoffrey of Coutances, Turstin FitzRolf. Gernon, Joscelin Brito.
8. K. Bailey, 'Who was Who and Who became Whom', *Recs Bucks*, 44 (2004) 51–66.
9. E.M.J. Campbell, 'Buckinghamshire' in H.C. Darby and E.M.J. Campbell, *The Domesday Geography of South-east England* (Cambridge, 1962), 138–85.
10. DB, ff. 149 (Iver), 152 (Chalfont St Giles), 147 (Crendon).
11. B. Golding, 'Robert of Mortain' [*Anglo-Norman Studies*, xiii (1990), 119–44.]
12. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'The devolution of the Honour of Wallingford 1066–1148', *Oxoniensia*, 54 (1989), 311–18.; For the Honour of Wallingford, see H.E. Salter and A.H. Cooke (eds.) *Boarstall Cartulary*

- (Oxford Historical Society 88, 1930), appendix II, 295–327.
13. G.E. C[okayne] revised V. Gibbs, *The Complete Peerage*, vol. 2 (London, 1912), 386–7; C. Johnson and H.A. Cronne (eds.), *Regesta Henrici Primi [1100–1135]* (Oxford, 1956), nos 974, 979, 1102, 1285; L.V. Delisle and E. Berger (eds.) *Recueil [des Actes de Henri II]* (Paris, 1916), nos 36\*, 46, 133, 209, 236, 433.
  14. C.T. Clay (ed.) *Early Yorkshire Charters*, VI, (Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1939), 48. Clay points out, however, that there is no written evidence for this.
  15. J.H. Round, 'The family of Ballon and the Conquest of South Wales', *Studies in Peerage and Family History* (Westminster, 1901), 181–215.
  16. J. Hunter (ed.) *Magnum Rotulum [Scaccarii vel magnum rotulum pipe de anno tricesimo primo regni Henrici Primi]* (London, 1833, rep. 1929), 100–02.
  17. H.A. Cronne and R.H.C. Davis (eds.) *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum 1066–1154* vol. III (Oxford, 1968) nos 4, 874, 958.
  18. T. Hearne (ed.) *Liber Niger Scaccarii* (London, 1774), vol. 1, 189–197; H. Hall (ed.) *Red Book [of the Exchequer]* (Rolls Series, London, 1890), I, 312–19; I. J. Sanders, [*English Baronies*] (Oxford, 1960).
  19. *P[ipe] R[oll] 11 Henry II*, (P[ipe] R[oll] S[ociety] 8, 1887), 25.
  20. E. Mason (ed.) *The Beauchamp Cartulary Charters 1100–1268* (PRS, n.s. 43, 1980), xxvii.
  21. A.C. Chibnall, *Sherington* (Cambridge, 1965), and *Beyond Sherington* (Cambridge, 1979).
  22. W. Farrer, *Honours and Knights' Fees*, vol. I (London), 54–60. The honour owed only half a knight's service.
  23. *PR 18 Henry II* (PRS, 18, 1894), 52.
  24. H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, *Liber Feodorum, the Book of Fees*, part I, 1198–1242 (London, 1920), 19–21: *Nomina tenencium in capite in baronia in Buk' de domino Rege*.
  25. For example, *PR 7 Henry II* (PRS 4, 1885), 11–2; *PR 8 Henry II* (PRS 5, 1885), 42; *PR 18 Henry II* (PRS 18, 1894), 51; *PR 2 Richard I* (PRS n.s. 1, 1925), 143.
  26. D.J. Cathcart King, *Castellarium Anglicanum* (Millwood, N.Y., 1983), vol. I, 26–30.
  27. W. Kennett, *Parochial Antiquities* (Oxford, 1695), under 1143. Brian announced his gift of Hillingdon church to Evesham abbey in a letter to Bishop R. of London and Hugh de Buckland. Hugh appears frequently in documents of Henry I up to December 1115. Since Brian was at Iver on his return from a council in London, this was probably the great assembly in the autumn of 1115.
  28. *PR 14 Henry II* (PRS 12, 1890), 7.
  29. J.G. Jenkins (ed.) *The Cartulary of Missenden Abbey* (Bucks Record Society, vol. 2, 1938), vol. I, no. 248.
  30. Swanscombe, West Greenwich, Aldington.
  31. Magna Carta (1215) clause 2.
  32. Sanders, *passim*. The only Buckinghamshire barony treated in this way was Hanslope.
  33. R.F. Treharne, *The Baronial Plan of Reform 1258–63* (Manchester, 1932); P.A. Brand, *Kings, Barons and Justices* (Oxford, 2003).
  34. J.A. Green, *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997).
  35. J.A. Green, 'The sheriffs of William the Conqueror', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, v (1982), 134; DB f.148.
  36. J. Armitage Robinson, *Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster* (Cambridge, 1911), 13.
  37. G. Tengvik, *Old English Bynames* (Uppsala, 1938), 284–392.
  38. A. Mawer and F.M. Stenton, *The Place-names of Buckinghamshire* (English Place Names Society, Cambridge, 1925), 256: Feudal Names.
  39. Orderic, VI, 36–39.
  40. T. Duffus Hardy, *Rotuli Normanniae in Turri Londoninensi* (London, 1835), 130–31; *Red Book II*, 537–8.
  41. D. Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain 1000–1300* (London, 1992), 282–6.
  42. N. Pevsner and E. Williamson, *Buckinghamshire*, second edition (Buildings of England, London, 1994), 38–39.
  43. K. Bailey, 'The Church in Anglo-Saxon Buckinghamshire c.650–c.1100'. *Recs Bucks* 43 (2003), 61–76; W. Page, 'Some Remarks on the Churches of the Domesday Survey', *Archaeologia* 66 (1915), 61–102.
  44. D.M. Smith (ed.) *English Episcopal Acta, Lincoln 1067–1185* (London, 1980) n.136; p. 202, no. 12.
  45. K. E. Kirk, *Church Dedications of the Oxford*

- Diocese* (Oxford, 1946). Buckinghamshire has 12 churches dedicated to Saint Nicholas, 10 to Lawrence, 5 to Giles and 3 to Leonard.
46. G. Barraclough (ed.), *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester c.1071–1237* (Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1988) no. 1.
  47. DB. f.146
  48. Bates, *Acta* no. 9.
  49. DB ff.146, 146 verso.
  50. B. Golding, 'Robert of Mortain'; D. Bates and V. Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain et la famille d'Herluin de Conteville', *Annales de Normandie* 40 (1990), 5–30; Bates, *Acta*, no. 158.
  51. DB f.149; *English Episcopal Acta, Lincoln 1067–1185*, no. 183; *Victoria County History of Yorkshire* III (1974) 389–90; W. Dugdale, revised J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel *Monasticon [Anglicanum]* vol. V (1825), 203–4; J.H. Round (ed.) *Calendar of Documents in France* (London, 1899), 444, no.1231.
  52. DB. f.147 verso.
  53. H.E. Salter (ed.) *Newington Longeville Charters* (Oxford Record Society, vol. 3, 1921); P. Le Cacheux (ed.) *Chartes du Prieuré de Longeville* (Société de l'Histoire de Normandie, Rouen, 1934).
  54. G. Desjardins (ed.), *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Conques en Rouergue* (Paris, 1879), no. 497; Orderic VI, 36–39, reports that as a widow, Agnes Giffard was consumed with an unbri-dled passion for Duke Robert.
  55. 1166 names: S. Laurentio, Bec, Grainville, Neville, Belnia, and possibly Buivill.
  56. T.H. Turner, *Archaeological Journal* IV (1847) 249–51; A. Deville (ed.) *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de la Sainte Trinité du Mont de Rouen in Cartulaires de France* t. III (Paris, 1840), 403–87, no. 77; *PR 13 Henry II* (PRS 11, 1889). 109; *Taxatio [Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate P. Nicholai IV a.d.1291]* (London, 1802), f.47a.
  57. *Recueil* I, no. 433, p.364
  58. J. Hunter (ed.) *The Great Roll [of the Pipe for the second, third and fourth years of King Henry II]* (London, 1844, reissued 1930), 3.138; *PR 18 Henry II* (PRS 18, 1894), 43,58; *Taxatio*, 33a, 34a, 46a, 46b, 47a, 47b.
  59. *V[ictoria] C[ounty] H[istory of Buckinghamshire]* vol. III (1914), 359–60; *Calendar of Charter Rolls IV, 1327–41* (London, 1912), 239.
  60. *VCH*, vol. II, (1908), 358; *Monasticon* IV (1823), 190–2.
  61. H.E. Salter, *The Thame Cartulary*, (Oxford Record Society vol. 25 1947), no. 99.
  62. *Monasticon* VI, 224; *VCH* III, 58; *Calendar of Charter Rolls III 1300–27* (London, 1908), 277–8; *Regesta Henrici Primi* n. 1527; *Calendar of Patent Rolls 1476–85* (London, 1901), 66.
  63. A. Clark (ed.) *The English Register of Godstow Nunnery* (Early English Text Society, orig. ser. 129, 1905), 63–121.
  64. H.E. Salter (ed.) *Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, vol. 3 (Oxford Historical Society, 1931) 345; *Taxatio*, ff.32b, 33b; *Calendar of Charter Rolls II, 1257–1300* (London, 1906), 69; *VCH* vol. 2 (1908), 64, 309; vol. 3 (1914), 482; vol. 4 (1925), 13, 127–8, 201–4, 232, 234.
  65. *VCH* vol. 1 (1905), 283–4.
  66. C.R. Cheney and B.E.A. Jones (eds.) *English Episcopal Acta, Canterbury 1162–90* (London, 1986), no. 16.
  67. G.W.J. Gyll, *History of the Parish of Wraysbury, Ankerwycke Priory and Magna Carta Island* (London, 1862).
  68. G.R. Elvey (ed.) *Luffield Priory Charters* (Bucks Record Society, vols. 15, 18 (1968, 1975).
  69. *Monasticon* VI (1830) 277–80; *Taxatio* 48b.
  70. J.G. Jenkins (ed.) *The Cartulary of Missenden Abbey* (Bucks Record Society, vol. I, 1938).
  71. *VCH* vol. I (1905), 384–6.
  72. *Monasticon* V (1825), 366–67.
  73. *VCH* vol. I, 390; *Monasticon* VI, 809; *Taxatio* 46b; *Great Roll*, 92, 138.
  74. B.A. Lees (ed.) *Records of the Templars in England in the twelfth century* (British Academy, 1935), 46, 195, 197–8; *Great Roll*, 21,139; *Monasticon*, VI, 821; *VCH* vol. III (1914), 278.
  75. *Monasticon* V (1825), 366–67.
  76. A.C. Chibnall, *Sherington*, 29 offers an example of such a provision.
  77. W. Stubbs (ed.) *Epistolae Cantuarienses* (Rolls Series, London, 1865), 329; W. Stubbs (ed.) *Chronicon Rogeri de Hoveden* vol. III (Rolls Series, London, 1870), 87–89; W. Stubbs (ed.) *Gesta Henrici Secundi Benedicti abbatis* vol. II (Rolls Series, London, 1867), 148–50.

78. Chibnall, *Beyond Sherington*, 43; *Collections for a History of Staffordshire* (William Salt Archaeological Society II, 1881), 17.
79. D. Stenton (ed.) *PR 2 Richard I* (PRS n.s.1, 1925) 200; *PR 3 and 4 Richard I* (PRS n.s.2, 1926), 108, 201.
80. J.A. Green, 'Aristocratic Women in early twelfth-century England', in C.W. Hollister (ed.) *Anglo-Norman Political Culture in the twelfth-century Renaissance* (Woodbridge, 1997) 59–82.
81. Apart from the Giffard barony, those of d'Oilly, Crispin, Gernon, Eton, Bolbec, Hanslope, Lavendon and Keynes, all passed through heiresses.
82. W. Stubbs, *Select Charters*, ninth edition revised H.W.C. Davis (Oxford, 1913), 117–19, clauses 2, 3 and 4.
83. *Magna Carta*, clauses 2–8
84. J.H. Round (ed.), *Rotuli de Dominabus et Pueris et Puellis de donacione Regis* (PRS 35, 1913), 34–44.
85. DB f.151 verso.
86. Bates, *Acta* no. 350; T. Hearne (ed.) *Heming, Chartularium* (Oxford, 1723), 75, 77.
87. *Regesta Henrici Primi*, 743–44, 863.
88. *Magnum Rotulum* 100; *PR 2–4 Henry II*, 123–4; *PR 7 Henry II* (PRS 4, 1885), 11–12.
89. *Lists and Indexes* IX, 1898.
90. *Regesta Henrici Primi* nos 1844, 1847.
91. *Recueil*, nos 308, 311, 385, 405, 407.
92. Orderic VI, 236–37.
93. *Regesta Regum AngloNormannorum* vol. III, no. 284: the form of the document raises doubts about its authenticity, but it may still incorporate reliable information.
94. F. Palgrave (ed.) *Rotuli Curiae Regis* (London, 1835), 106, 108; *PR 6 Richard I* (PRS n.s. 5, 1928), 210.
95. T.D. Hardy (ed.) *Rotuli de Liberate ac de Misis et de Praestitis regnante Johanne* (London, Record Commission, 1844), 183, 184.
96. *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum* vol. III, no. 744.
97. *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, vol. III, nos 104, 582
98. Chesham, Shalstone and land in 'Mow' hundred.
99. Long Crendon, Chalton, Dorton, Pollicott, Lower Winchendon, Great Horwood, Whaddon and Newton Longeville.
100. J.C. Holt, *What's in a Name?* (Stenton Lecture, Reading, 1981).
101. B.R. Kemp, *Reading Abbey Cartularies* (Camden Society, fourth series, vol. 31, 1986) nos 249–50.
102. Bishop Geoffrey of Coutances, Earl Hugh, Robert d'Oilly, Roger d'Ivry, Hugh de Bolebec, Mainou, Hascoit Musard, Ernulf de Hesdin, William de Castellion, Earl Aubrey and Leofwine of Nuneham Courtenay.
103. DB f.143; *PR 12 Henry II* (PRS 9, 1888), 10, 11.
104. DB ff. 145 verso, 146 verso, 148, 152, verso, 153.
105. H.R. Loyn, 'The Hundred in England in the tenth and early eleventh century' in H. Hearder and H.R. Loyn *British Government and Administration* (Cardiff, 1974), 1–15.
106. H.M. Cam, *The Hundred and the Hundred Rolls* (London, 1930), 137; H.M. Cam, *Liberities and Communities in Medieval England* (Cambridge, 1944), 92.
107. DB ff.148 verso, 151 verso.
108. DB f.153
109. Bailey, 'Who was Who'.
110. DB ff. 146 verso (Pitstone); 148 verso (Bradwell); 151 verso (Farnham Royal).
111. W.H. Hart and P.A. Lyons (eds.) *Cartularium Monasterii de Rameseia* (London, 1884) vol. I, nos 69, 167, 176; *Regesta Henrici Primi*, nos 1451, 1505, 1533; Chibnall, *Beyond Sherington*, 23–26, chapter 5.