

LORDLY POWER AND LORDSHIP:  
EARL RANULF III OF CHESTER, A CASE  
STUDY,  
1181-1232

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## Abstract

Earl Ranulf III of Chester was one of the leading figures in the Angevin period. However, our understanding of his life is limited. Existing biographical accounts provide only a narrow perspective on the earl's life. This thesis aims to provide a wider outlook on the earl's life through examining him in relation to the theme of power.

Power is also a unclear topic in this period. Understanding the basis of the power of lords, of course, has a central role to play in understanding Angevin England. However, in recent years historians have investigated and overturned a great many of the established beliefs surrounding our understanding of Angevin society in general. These arguments have led to a great deal of uncertainty and incoherence in our understanding of the source of the lords' power in that period. The secondary aim of this research is, therefore, to examine the impact of these various debates and provide a coherent assessment of the basis of lordly power within the Angevin period through an analysis of Earl Ranulf.

The approach taken to power herein is based upon a historiographical analysis, which points to power being created through a variety of personal relationships. Lordly power, consequently, in this study is presented as being based upon the lord being able to manage a population that is termed a lordship. This study identifies the key relationships Earl Ranulf creates in his lordship and by doing so also draws out common themes in his methods in order to provide a more model like approach to discuss lordly power. Throughout the study, Earl Ranulf is also compared to his contemporaries in order to provide a wider context to the discussion.

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## Abbreviations

- Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester* .... James W. Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester, a Relic of the Conquest* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1983)
- Ambrose, 'L'estoire' .... Ambrose, *L'estoire De La Guerre Sainte; Histoire En Vers De La Troisieme Crusade, 1190-1192*, ed. by Gaston Paris (Paris: Ministre De L'Instruction Publique, 1847)
- Annales Cestriensis* .... *Annales Cestriensis: or Chronicle of the Abbey of St Werburgh at Chester*, ed. by Richard Copley Christie (Chester: The Record Society for the Publication of Original Documents Relating to Lancashire and Cheshire, 1886 for 1887)
- 'Annales Monasterii de Burton' .... 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', in *Annales Monastici*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864), i. pp. 181-510
- 'Annales de Margam' .... 'Annales de Margam Sive Chronica Abbreviata', in *Annales Monastici*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts, and Green, 1864), i. pp. 1-40
- 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia' .... 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', in *Annales Monastici*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1864), i. pp. 41-180
- 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia' .... 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', in *Annales Monastici*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), ii. pp. 127-411
- 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia' .... 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', in *Annales Monastici*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard (London: Longman, Green, Longman, Roberts and Green, 1865), ii. pp. 3-125
- BC .... *The Charters of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester, c. 1071-1237*, ed. by Geoffrey Barraclough (Chester: The Record Society for Lancashire and Cheshire, 1988)
- Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici* .... *Benedictus, Abbas Petroburgensis, Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi Benedicti Abbatis. The Chronicle of the Reigns of Henry II And Richard I. A.D. 1169-1192; Known Commonly under the Name of Benedict of Peterborough*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London: Longman & co., 1867)
- Canterbury, 'Chronica' .... Gervase of Canterbury, 'Chronica', in *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London: Longman & co., 1879-80), i. pp. 84-594.



Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation'	....	Gervase of Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with Its Continuation', in <i>The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury</i> , ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London: Longman and Co, 1879-80), ii. pp. 3-324.
<i>Chronica de Mailros</i>		<i>Chronica de Mailros</i> , ed. Joseph Stevenson (Edinburgh: Typis Societatis Edinburgensis, 1835)
CChartR	....	<i>Calendar of the Charter Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office Vol. 1; Henry III A.D. 1226-1257</i> (London: HMSO, 1908)
Coventry, <i>Memoriale</i>	....	Walter of Coventry, <i>Memoriale Fratris Walteri De Coventria: The Historical Collections of Walter of Coventry</i> , ed. by William Stubbs, 2 vols. (London: Longman & Co., 1872-73)
CR	....	<i>Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III Preserved in the Public Record Office, 1227-72</i> , 14 vols. (London: HMSO, 1902-38)
Coggeshall, <i>Chronicon Anglicanum</i>	....	Ralph of Coggeshall, <i>Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum</i> ed. by Joseph Stevenson (London: Longman, 1875)
Crouch, <i>The Acts and Letters</i>	....	<i>The Acts and Letters of the Marshal Family</i> , ed. by David Crouch, Camden Fifth Series (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015)
Crouch and Dacie, <i>The Newburgh Earldom</i>	....	<i>The Newburgh Earldom of Warwick and Its Charters 1088-1253</i> , ed. by David Crouch and Richard Dace (Stratford-upon-Avon: Dugdale Society in association with the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, 2015)
Crouch, <i>William Marshal</i>	....	David Crouch, <i>William Marshal: knighthood, War and Chivalry, 1147-1219</i> (London: Longman, 2002)
Devizes, 'De Rebus'	....	Richard de Devizes, 'De Rebus Gestis Richardi Primi', in <i>Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I</i> , ed. by Richard Howlett (London: Longman & co., 1886), pp. 379-454
DNB	....	The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
Diceto, 'Opera Historica'	....	Ralph Diceto, <i>Opera Historica</i> , 2 vols. ed. by William Stubbs (London: Longman & co., 1876)
Dugdale, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i>	....	William Dugdale, <i>Monasticon Anglicanum</i> , ed. by James Bohn, John Caley, Henry Sir Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel, 6 vols. in 8 vols. (London: 1817-30)
EHR	....	<i>The English Historical Review</i>

<i>Gesta Stephani</i>	...	<i>Gesta Stephani</i> , ed. by K. R. Potter (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976)
Gransden, <i>Historical Writing</i>	...	Antonia Gransden, <i>Historical Writing in England c. 550 to c. 1307</i> (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974)
<i>Henry of Huntingdon</i>	...	Henry of Huntingdon, <i>The History of the English People</i> , trans. Diana Greenway (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)
<i>HKF</i>	...	William Farrer, <i>Honors and Knights Fees</i> , 3 vols. (London: Spottiswoode, BallIntyne & co., 1923-25)
Howden, <i>Chronica</i>	...	Roger of Howden, <i>Chronica Magistri Rogeri de Houedene</i> , 4 vols. ed. by William Stubbs (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1868-71)
HMSO	...	Her/His Majesty's Stationary Office
'Itinerarium Peregrinorum'	...	Richard canon of St Trinity of London, 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum Et Gesta Regis Ricardi; Auctore Ut Videtur, Ricardo, Canonico Sanctae Trinitatis Londoniensis', in <i>Chronicles and Memorials of the Reign of Richard I</i> , ed. by William Stubbs (London: Longman, Green, Roberts, Longman and Green, 1864) i.
<i>Liber Feodorum</i>	...	<i>Liber Feodorum: The Book Of fees, Commonly Called Testa De Nevill</i> , ed. by Henry Churchill Maxwell Sir Lyte, Alfred Edward Stamp, Charles G. Crump, Anthony St John Story-Maskelyne and Office Great Britain. Public Record, 3 vols. (London: HMSO, 1920)
Malmesbury, <i>Gesta Regum</i>		William of Malmesbury, <i>Gesta Regum Anglorum: The History of the English Kings</i> , 2 vols. ed. and trans. by R. A. B. Mynors, R. M. Thomson, M. Winterbottom (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998)
Malmesbury, <i>Historia Novella</i>		William of Malmesbury, <i>Historia Novella: The Contemporary History</i> , ed. Edmund King, trans. By K. R. Potter (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998)
Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia'	...	Richard Morins, 'Annales Prioratus De Dunstaplia, Ad 1-1297', in <i>Annales Monastici</i> , edited by Henry R. Luard (London: Longman, Green, Reader and Dyer, 1866), iii. pp. 1-420
Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum'	...	William of Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', in <i>Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I</i> , ed. by Richard Howlett, 4 vols. (1884-85), pp. 1-583
Ormerod, <i>History</i>	...	George Ormerod, <i>The History of the County Palatine and City of Chester</i> (London: Printed for Lackington, Hughes. Harding, Mavor, and Jones, 1819)

- OV .... Orderic Vitalis, *The Ecclesiastical History*, ed. and trans. By Marjorie Chibnall, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1973-1980)
- P&P .... *Past & Present*
- Paris, *Chronica Majora* .... Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. by Henry Richards Luard, 7 vols. (London: Longman, 1872-1883)
- Paris, *Chronica Minora* .... Matthew Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis, Monachi Sancti Albani, Historia Anglorum, Sive, Ut Vulgo Dicitur, Historia Minor ; Item, Ejusdem Abbreviatio Chronicorum Angliae*, ed. by Frederic Sir Madden, 3 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, Reader, and Dyer, 1866-69)
- Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III* .... *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III Preserved in the Public Record Office*, ed. by J. G. Black (London: Printed for H.M. Stationery Office by Mackie, 1901)
- PR, Henry II .... *The Great Roll of the Pipe (for the fifth year of the reign of King Henry the second, A.D. 1158-1159...for the thirty fourth year of the reign of King Henry the second, A. D. 1187-1188)*, Pipe Roll Society, 30 vols. (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1184-1925)
- PR, Richard I  
PR, John  
PR, Henry III .... *The Great Roll of the Pipe (for the second year of the reign of Richard the first,...)*, Pipe Roll Society, new series (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1925-)
- RChart .... *Rotuli Chartarum in Turri Londinensi Asservati: Pars. 1. ab anno mcxcix ad annum mccxvi*, ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Record Commission, 1837)
- Red Book .... *The Red Book of the Exchequer*, ed. by Hubert Hall, 3 vols. (London: Printed for HMSO, by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1896)
- RLC .... *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum in Turri Londinensi Asservati, 1204-27*, 2 vols., ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: George Eyre and Andrew Spottiswoode, 1833-34)
- RLP .... *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium in Turri Londinensi Asservati, 1201-1216*, ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Record Commission, 1837)
- ROF .... *Rotuli de Oblatis Et Finibus in Turri Londinensi Asservati, Tempore Regis Johannis*, ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Printed by G. Eyre and A. Spottiswoode, 1835)

- Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon* .... Keith J. Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon 1152-1219: A Study in Anglo-Scottish History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1985)
- Thacker .... *The Earldom of Chester and It's Charters; a Tribute to Geoffrey Barraclough*, ed. by A. T. Thacker (Chester: Chester Archaeological Society, 1991)
- Torigni, 'Chronicle' .... Robert de Torigni, 'The Chronicle of Robert of Torigni', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. by Richard Howlett (London: Longman & co., 1889) iv., 3-315
- TRHS .... *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*
- VCH .... Victoria County History
- Wendover, *Flores Historiarum* .... Roger of Wendover, *Rogeri de Wendover Chronica : Sive, Flores Historiarum*, 4 vols. ed. by Henry O. Coxe (London: Sumptibus Societatis, 1841-44)
- Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book* .... *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*, ed. and trans. by Ann Williams and G. H. Martin (London: Folio Society, 2003)

# Introduction

Earl Ranulf III of Chester, often called de Blundeville, although the history of the epithet Blundeville itself is uncertain,<sup>1</sup> was the sixth earl to inherit the earldom of Chester.<sup>2</sup> He held the earldom from 1181 to 1232,<sup>3</sup> and is now regarded, as he was in his own lifetime, to have been one of the most powerful individuals in the period.<sup>4</sup> Yet while historians have investigated certain aspects of the earl's life, his contemporaries, especially Earl William Marshal c.1147-1219, have overshadowed him. In part, this is because the sources were more favourable for the discussion of other earls, for instance, William Marshal had the good fortune of having a contemporary biography.<sup>5</sup> However, Earl Ranulf has also had the misfortune to gain the reputation of being a traditionalist.<sup>6</sup> In a period where the emphasis of research has often been on how things changed over time, rather than how it stayed the

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<sup>1</sup> B. E. Harris, 'Ranulf III, Earl of Chester', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, 58 (1975), 99-144.

<sup>2</sup> The history of the earldom can be found in brief A. T. Thacker, 'The Earls and Their Earldom', in *Thacker*, 1-22 (pp. 9-19).

<sup>3</sup> He inherited the earldom on his father's death in 1181, but wasn't to gain full control of it until his majority c. 1187-88 which he then held until his death in 1232. For the earl's wardship and his father's death see, Howden, *Chronica*, ii. p. 265; Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici*, i. p. 277; the date of the earl's majority is uncertain, but there are some clues his minority may have come to an end by 1187 or 1188, possibly due to King Henry's desire to marry Ranulf to Constance of Brittany. The date of the marriage is somewhat confused, but Richard Eales thinks that it likely took place in 1188-89 following the knighting of Ranulf by the king, see Eales, R., 'Ranulf (III) [Ranulf de Blundeville], sixth earl of Chester and First Earl of Lincoln (1170-1232), magnate', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); and for the marriage, *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 40. Eales, R., 'Ranulf (III)'; Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici*, ii. p. 29; Robert William Eyton, *Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II* (London: Taylor & co., 1878), p. 278; Howden, *Chronica*, ii. p. 325; Wilfred Lewis Warren, *Henry II* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), p. 613.

<sup>4</sup> David Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, (London: Methuen London, 1990), pp. 16-17; Richard Mortimer, *Angevin England, 1154-1258* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), p. 78; Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 257.

<sup>5</sup> Paul Meyer, *L'histoire de Guillaume Le Maréchal, Comte de Striguil et de Pembroke*, 3 vols (Paris: Libraire de la Societe de la Histoire de France, 1891-1901); new edition, *History of William Marshal*, edited by A.J. Holden, with English translation by S. Gregory and historical notes by D. Crouch, 3 vols., Anglo-Norman Text Society, Occasional Publications Series, No. 4, (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2002).

<sup>6</sup> The earl has always been thought of as one who could rely on the traditional form of lordly power, the service of knightly tenants, even in a period when that was on the wane, see Holt, *The Northerners: A Study in the Reign of King John* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 45; for the most recent view of the earl's traditional nature, see David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 180-82.

same, this has perhaps made the earl a less interesting figure.<sup>7</sup> This thesis is in part an attempt to rectify this situation, not only providing a more in-depth look at Earl Ranulf, but also illustrating the earl cannot be merely seen as a traditionalist. The originality of this research will be in its manner of investigating the earl's biography through the topic of lordly power.

### Earl Ranulf III

There are, of course, some existing studies of Earl Ranulf III. However, these studies are limited. They primarily consist of narrative histories of his life. There are three main studies of Earl Ranulf III, one was written in 2015, by an archaeologist called Iain Soden, the second by a historian named James Alexander in 1983, and the third, an article, by the historian B. Harris in 1975.<sup>8</sup> Where these biographies do get to grips with more thematic issues, they are limited in their scope. Soden's biography, for instance, provides more information on the earl's continental exploits, but it is not presented in the same manner as, for instance, Keith Stringer's analysis of the Anglo-Scottish lordship of David Earl of Huntingdon.<sup>9</sup> The concern of Soden is to merely describe the earl's movements. Alexander and Harris, meanwhile, examine themes such as the earl's relationship to the Church. However, their methodology suffers as their studies also lack the context of comparison with other lords, and are therefore more biographical rather than thematic studies.

The aim in this research is to provide a more thematic understanding of the earl, building upon the narrative biographical knowledge established in these earlier studies. To examine the earl in the context of a more thematic approach is, however, more difficult than it was, for example, in the case of Earl William Marshal. There is a lack of the same biographical evidence for Earl Ranulf, which allowed the discussion of themes such as the Earl Marshal's relationship with

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<sup>7</sup> The thirteenth century is seen in numerous works as a period of great change, notably in the nature of lords and lordship, see Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*.

<sup>8</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*; Harris, 'Ranulf III, Earl of Chester'; Iain Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville: The First English Hero*, (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2013).

<sup>9</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*.

chivalry.<sup>10</sup> However, the modern biographer of William Marshal does present a way forward. David Crouch's analysis of the charters of Earl William Marshal changed the discussion of William from narrative concerns and themes developed by analysis of his contemporary biography, such as his chivalry, to concerns of administration and power.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Keith Stringer in his biography of Earl David of Huntingdon, used the analysis of David's charters to gain much greater understanding of how and why the earl was able to do what he did.<sup>12</sup>

A large number of Earl Ranulf's charters fortunately survive as originals and copies in cartularies and allow the earl to be examined in a similar way to his contemporaries. The known charters of the earl have been collected and edited by Geoffrey Barraclough, who published them in 1988.<sup>13</sup> As one of the main uses both Crouch and Stinger made of the charters when examining their earls was looking at the nature of lordly power, to look at Earl Ranulf in terms of the theme of power seems logical. It is also the earl's source and use of power through which he gained the reputation of being a traditionalist. Analysing the earl in terms of the theme of power therefore also enables this misconception to be challenged, as well as enabling a comparison to be made between the earl and his contemporaries.

Earl Ranulf in regards to the theme of lordly power also presents an interesting figure and there is a trove of general information about his earldom which will enable a more rounded picture to be provided. Earl Ranulf's ancestors are known, for instance, to have had at times a tempestuous relationship with the crown, and this can only have influenced their power during their lifetimes. Of particular interest in this regard are the numerous studies looking at the relationship the earl's ancestors had to the honours Lancaster and Lincolnshire, especially Earl Ranulf II who sought to claim them for himself.<sup>14</sup> More targeted studies of Ranulf II

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<sup>10</sup> L. Ashe, 'William Marshal, Lancelot, and Arthur: Chivalry and Kingship', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 30 (2008), 19-40.

<sup>11</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*.

<sup>12</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*.

<sup>13</sup> *BC*.

<sup>14</sup> H. A. Cronne, 'The Honour of Lancaster in Stephen's Reign,' *EHR*, 50. 200 (1935), 670-80; Paul Dalton, 'Aiming at the impossible: Ranulf II Earl of Chester and Lincolnshire in the Reign of King Stephen', in *Thacker*, 109-134; Judith Green, 'Earl Ranulf II and Lancashire', in *Thacker*, 97-108.

and his actions during Stephen's reign have also been written, which fill out how the earl and crown interacted prior to Earl Ranulf III's tenure.<sup>15</sup> By looking at this inheritance and comparing it to Earl Ranulf's actions this study can help to provide some insight on how the past can influence future power.

Another key element of lordly power which will be discussed is the earl's claims to lands. There have also been numerous studies identifying the earldom's lands such as those by William Farrer and George Ormerod whose works trace the earl's tenancies.<sup>16</sup> More recently C. P. Lewis has also tried to identify the origins of the earldom.<sup>17</sup> Such studies allow the history of the earl's earldom and tenancies to be considered in more detail. This thesis will build upon them to provide a discussion of how tenancies helped the earl to create a powerbase.

Earl Ranulf is also now regarded as a traditionalist as he had closer relationships to his tenants. This was perhaps because his lands stood slightly outside the developments of lordship. The earldom of Chester is often regarded as having been a palatinate. David Crouch most recently suggested that by 1150 the earldom of Chester was a quasi-principality.<sup>18</sup> Such a view, however, is not universal. Other historians looking at this topic, including Geoffrey Barraclough and James Alexander, are more uncertain about what status Cheshire had.<sup>19</sup> This thesis will build upon these studies to address what Cheshire was, re-considering the different perspectives and bringing a different approach to the problem. Indeed, the existence of palatinate status is a question which goes beyond Cheshire to include Lancaster and Durham as Alexander showed, and therefore the results of such an investigation will have wider significance.<sup>20</sup> In addressing the nature of the earldom

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<sup>15</sup> H. A. Cronne, 'Ranulf de Gernons, Earl of Chester, 1129-1153', *TRHS*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, 20 (1937), 103-34; R. H. C. Davis, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester Revised', *EHR*, 75. 297 (1960), 654-60; J. H. Round, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester', *EHR*, 10. 37 (1895), 87-91.

<sup>16</sup> *HKF*; Ormerod, *History*.

<sup>17</sup> C. P. Lewis, 'The Formation of the Honor of Chester', in *Thacker*, pp. 37-68.

<sup>18</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 180-82.

<sup>19</sup> James W. Alexander, 'New Evidence on the Palatinate of Chester', *EHR*, 85. 337 (1970), 715-29; Geoffrey Barraclough, 'The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 103 (1952 for 1951), 23-57.

<sup>20</sup> James W. Alexander, 'The Alleged Palatinates of Norman England', *Speculum*, 56. 1 (1981), 17-27.



Stewart-Brown's account of the end of the earldom is also important as this event may hold the key to why the earldom was different.<sup>21</sup>

Similarly, the earldom's administration has been examined by David Crouch, and Teresa Webber, through her analysis of the original charters, has helped uncover the role of clerical officers therein.<sup>22</sup> Such studies also have an important bearing on understanding the earl's power and what role officers had within it and will be built upon to show how Earl Ranulf exercised power.

There are also other elements of the earldom which have been examined and will have bearing upon this study. These include the discussion of the earl's seals by T. A. Heslop.<sup>23</sup> Seals are of course a visual representation of the earl's authority and this thesis will look at how they and other factors such as the earl's piety helped the earl establish his power. The studies by Andrew Abrams of the earls' pilgrimage, alongside Alexander's discussion of Earl Ranulf's ecclesiastical patronage, are also built upon in this thesis in this regard.<sup>24</sup>

However, to use such studies in analysing Earl Ranulf's power, this study requires power to be approached in a particular way. Yet the history of how lordly power has been approached is convoluted.

## The Historiography of Lordly Power: Feudalism and Bastard Feudalism

Medieval power is a concept about which historians have only recently sought to rationalise the discussion.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, clear and comprehensive studies of English lordly power are rare. In addition, those that do exist, like David Crouch's case study of the earls of Leicester, only analyse themes traditionally identified with lordly

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<sup>21</sup> R. Stewart-Brown, 'The End of the Norman Earldom of Chester', *EHR*, 35. 137 (1920), 26-54.

<sup>22</sup> David Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom' in *Thacker*, pp. 69-95; Teresa Webber, 'The Scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', in *Thacker*, pp. 137-51.

<sup>23</sup> T. A. Heslop, 'The Seals of the Twelfth-Century Earls of Chester', in *Thacker*, pp. 179-97.

<sup>24</sup> Andrew Abram, 'The Pilgrimage and Crusading Activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. by Kathryn Hurlock and Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2015), pp. 125-38.

<sup>25</sup> Robert F. Berkhofer, Alan Cooper and Adam J. Kosto, 'Introduction' in *The Experience of Power in Medieval Europe: 950-1350*, ed. by Robert F. Berkhofer, Alan Cooper and Adam J. Kosto (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), pp. 1-9 (pp. 1-7).

power, and are therefore limited by what tradition identifies and places emphasis upon.<sup>26</sup>

The traditional approaches to lordly power, which held sway to almost the present day in the historiography of English history were the concepts of feudalism and theories resulting from its perceived decline. Feudalism, or what has become to be known as feudalism, is an approach to a perceived development in society. It was traditionally thought that there was a decline in central government in the early medieval period that called for an increasing reliance on local government, and the recruitment of a new type of mounted warrior to defend against external attacks.<sup>27</sup> This warrior was recruited by local lords through grants of lands, to which his service was then tied. It is possible around the year 1000 that a revolution in lordship happened, which further decreased centralised power.<sup>28</sup> These were, it is argued, largely continental, and primarily French developments, arising from the decline of the Carolingian empire and the failure of the French crown as a result of raiding.<sup>29</sup> However, these developments then spread to England through the Norman Conquest in 1066.<sup>30</sup>

In England, and abroad, by the end of the twelfth century it was argued royal governments were starting to assert more control and began to undermine the feudal approach to power.<sup>31</sup> However, this may not have been an antagonistic development for the lords involved, as Frank Stenton suggests, lords recognised the need for a strong king or government.<sup>32</sup> It must also be remembered that the

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<sup>26</sup> David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), especially pp. 213-15.

<sup>27</sup> For the disintegration of society see, Joseph R. Strayer, *Feudalism* (London: Van Nostrand, 1965), especially pp. 34-42; Joseph R. Strayer, *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1971), pp. 63-89. for the recruitment of followers see, François Louis Ganshof, *Feudalism* (London: Longmans, 1960), pp. 14-61.

<sup>28</sup> Dominique Barthelemy and Stephen D. White, 'The Feudal Revolution,' *P&P*, 152 (1996), 196-223; T. N. Bisson, 'The "Feudal Revolution"', *P&P*, 142 (1994), 6-42; T. N. Bisson, 'The "Feudal Revolution": Reply', *P&P*, 155 (1997), 208-25; Timothy Reuter and Chris Wickham, 'The "Feudal Revolution"', *P&P*, 155 (1997), 177-208.

<sup>29</sup> Ganshof, *Feudalism*, pp. 14-61.

<sup>30</sup> F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166: Being the Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in Hilary Term 1929*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 7-41.

<sup>31</sup> Bisson, 'The "Feudal Revolution"', (pp. 34-39); Strayer, *Feudalism*, pp. 43-50.

<sup>32</sup> Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 218-57.

crown, whether in thirteenth century France or twelfth century England, was still seen as the head of a feudal pyramid.<sup>33</sup> One of the key changes in England in this period of decline was the extension of royal courts through reforms in 1166 and 1176, which many historians have suggested undermined the lords' control of their knightly tenants, as the personal nature of the feudal bond between knight and lord had been eroded.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, it is perhaps no surprise it was shown there was gradually a greater monetary element to a theory that had emphasised service in its classic accounts.<sup>35</sup> Although some historians argued feudalism's decline and the change in society was much slower than others.<sup>36</sup>

The decline of feudalism in England was seen to have created a second model of lordly power: bastard feudalism. Bastard feudalism was seen as a degradation of feudalism until the 1940s.<sup>37</sup> At this time K. B. McFarlane supplanted the traditional view of bastard feudalism, defining the term in relation to indenture, or the retaining of individuals through money contracts rather than tenure of lands. Such new tenures were not a degradation, but a development, and therefore not inherently wicked as previously believed.<sup>38</sup> As the period progressed, such bastard feudal sources of patronage, were seen to have become more important and with them, the ability to create ties outside of the feudal structure.<sup>39</sup> This shift was presented as a gradual shift in methods rather than a dramatic change from feudal to non-feudal lordship.<sup>40</sup> Yet the fact there was a change was deemed certain, as it

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<sup>33</sup> Ganshof, *Feudalism*, pp. 160-67.

<sup>34</sup> For a brief description of this approach see, Hugh M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders, and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 15-16. Thomas himself would argue for a more rounded approach, pp. 16-17.

<sup>35</sup> J. M. W. Bean, *The Decline of English Feudalism, 1215-1540* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1968).

<sup>36</sup> D. A. Carpenter, 'The Second Century of English Feudalism', *P&P*, 168 (2000), 30-71; for a similar view, see also Peter R. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *P&P*, 125 (1989), 27-64; Peter R. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised: Reply', *P&P*, 131 (1991), 190-203.

<sup>37</sup> Michael A. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 12-16.

<sup>38</sup> K. B. McFarlane, 'Bastard Feudalism', in *England in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays*, ed. by K. B. McFarlane (London: Hambledon Press, 1981), pp. 23-43.

<sup>39</sup> David Crouch and D. A. Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *P&P*, 131 (1991), 165-89 (pp. 185-88).

<sup>40</sup> Caroline Burt, 'A 'Bastard Feudal' Affinity in the Making? The Followings of William and Guy Beauchamp, Earls of Warwick, 1268-1315', *Midland History*, 34. 2 (2009), 156-80; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised'; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised: Reply'; Crouch and Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *P&P*, 31 (1991), 165-89 (pp. 165-77).

is supported by studies such as that by David Crouch and the biography of the Earl of Huntingdon by Keith Stringer, in which they found the earls rarely rewarded their household staff with lands.<sup>41</sup> Hugh M. Thomas also showed the earls of Richmond might have sought to retain their demesne in the thirteenth century rather than grant it out as creating tenancies had resulted in a drastic decrease in the revenues available from the honour.<sup>42</sup>

However, by the latter part of the twentieth century, the theory of feudalism was coming under attack. Elizabeth A. R. Brown wrote one of the most influential papers on why the theory was inadequate.<sup>43</sup> The main issue Brown raised with the concept of feudalism was that its meaning was too diffuse. Frederick Ganshof, one of the leading exponents of feudalism, had originally stated in his work that many historians used the term feudalism to refer to two types of feudalism.<sup>44</sup> Feudalism could be defined as 'feudal society', where feudalism is the sum of its parts, as found in studies such as Marc Bloch's, who states, 'what we are attempting here is to analyse and explain a social structure and its unifying principles.'<sup>45</sup> Others understand the term feudalism as a defined legal term relating to lordship and the fief, as found somewhat in the opinion of Sally Harvey who states '...it is on obtaining specialised service, essentially military, by granting support in land (known as the fee or fief) that the characterization of feudalism and feudal society hinges'.<sup>46</sup> In addition, to these approaches, Joseph R. Strayer and Thomas Bisson suggest feudalism encompasses the devolution of central power to local individuals.<sup>47</sup> Such a variety of approaches to the same term presents problems, as it can be used to mean anything. Brown's article essentially argues that feudalism

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<sup>41</sup> Crouch and Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', (especially pp. 168-169); Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 172-73.

<sup>42</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, 'Subinfeudation and Alienation of Land, Economic Development, and the Wealth of Nobles on the Honor of Richmond, 1066 to C. 1300', *Albion*, 26. 3 (1994), 397-417.

<sup>43</sup> Elizabeth A. R. Brown, 'The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe', *The American Historical Review*, 79. 4 (1974), 1063-88

<sup>44</sup> Ganshof, *Feudalism*, p. xvi.

<sup>45</sup> Marc L pold Benjamin Bloch, *Feudal Society*, (London: Routledge, 1989), p. xx.

<sup>46</sup> Sally Harvey, 'The Knight and the Knight's Fee in England', *P&P*, 49 (1970), 3-43 (p. 3).

<sup>47</sup> Thomas N. Bisson, 'The "Feudal Revolution"', *P&P*, 142 (1994), 6-42; Thomas N. Bisson, 'The "Feudal Revolution": Reply', *P&P*, 155 (1997), 208-25; Joseph R. Strayer, *Feudalism*, especially pp. 34-42; Joseph R. Strayer, *Medieval Statecraft and the Perspectives of History*, pp. 63-89.

has too diffuse a meaning and she suggests that either the term is restricted, or it should be disregarded as unhelpful.

Brown also identified that the theory was distorting how historians approached the period. She also states that feudalism is an oversimplified modern model when medieval history would be better served by analysing the actual period rather than looking for an ideal type.<sup>48</sup> The second problem she saw can be seen clearly in the debates surrounding the perceived introduction of feudalism to England. There were some who believed it wasn't a Norman introduction, but existed in Anglo-Saxon times, while others argued it was a Norman introduction in 1066.<sup>49</sup> One way to decide this problem was to identify a key criterion of feudalism which could be examined to see if they were present before or after the invasion. Many looked at the figure of the knight.<sup>50</sup> The problem with this debate was that it essentially shifted analysis of the knight away from looking at the knight in evidentiary terms, to trying to make that figure fit into an ideal based upon a modern theory of lordly power.

Brown did not attack the term bastard feudalism, however, there are a number of her arguments that have resonance for this theory. The first is the lack of a reliable meaning for bastard feudalism. K. B. McFarlane's definition of bastard feudalism related specifically to money indentures, and he saw the origins of the bastard

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<sup>48</sup> Brown, 'The Tyranny of a Construct', (pp. 1063-88).

<sup>49</sup> For those arguing it was an Anglo-Saxon development see, Marjory Hollings, 'The Survival of the Five Hide Unit in the Western Midlands', *EHR*, 63. 249 (1948), 453-87; Frederic William Maitland, *Domesday Book and Beyond: Three Essays in the Early History of England*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1907), pp. 160-61, 300-12; for those arguing it was as a result of the circumstances of 1066, see C. Warren Hollister, 'The Norman Conquest and the Genesis of English Feudalism', *The American Historical Review*, 66. 3 (1961), 641-63; C. Warren Hollister, 'The Significance of Scutage Rates in Eleventh- and Twelfth-Century England', *EHR*, 75. 297 (1960), 577-88; C. Warren Hollister, 'Two Comments on the Problem of Continuity in Anglo-Norman Feudalism', *The Economic History Review*, 16. 1 (1963), 104-13; for those who see it as a Norman introduction see, J. C. Holt, 'Anglo-Norman Feudalism', *The Economic History Review*, 16. 1 (1963), 114-18; J. C. Holt, 'Feudalism Revisited', *The Economic History Review*, 14. 2 (1961), 333-40; John Horace Round, *Feudal England: Historical Studies on the XIth and XIIth Centuries* (London: S. Sonnenschein, 1895), pp. 225-314; F. M. Stenton, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 3rd edn (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1985), pp. 680-83; Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 7-41.

<sup>50</sup> R. Allen Brown, *Origins of English Feudalism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973); John Gillingham, 'Thegns and Knights in Eleventh-Century England: Who Was Then the Gentleman?', *TRHS*, 5 (1995), 129-53 (pp. 135-44); Hollings, 'The Survival of the Five Hide Unit in the Western Midlands', pp. 467-73; Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 115-51.

feudal relationship in the reign of Edward I.<sup>51</sup> This defined term has since become more diffuse. Historians such as J. M. W. Bean suggested bastard feudal connections involve more than indentured retainers. He argued that the household is a key element with a hierarchy of relationships involving bachelors as the most trusted group.<sup>52</sup> David Crouch, by investigating the biography and charters of Earl William Marshal also found evidence for what could be considered a bastard feudal affinity.<sup>53</sup> The evidence he found showed that individuals of landed wealth had visible ties to the earl, but not via tenancy. For Crouch, bastard feudalism was defined by the establishment of relationships through non-tenure contact, mainly through the theme of locality.<sup>54</sup> Michael Hicks also redefined bastard feudalism to include the entirety of relationships outside those relating to the fief, those including the household, office holders, and servants.<sup>55</sup> Peter Coss, meanwhile, proposed that it was the scale of the lords' need to undermine the centralised public government through the retaining of government officials that provides the degree of separation between the bastard feudal and the feudal era.<sup>56</sup> However, these various approaches to bastard feudalism suggest that, like feudalism, it was not a well-defined term.

Yet Brown's attack was only the first main attack on the traditional approach to lordly power. Following on from her, Susan Reynolds has questioned the understanding of the *feudo-vassilic* (lord-tenant) relationship, in terms of its evidentiary basis. Essentially, she argued that the only evidence for the relationship involving the fief, as defined in the classical view of feudalism, is to be found in the thirteenth century, when increasing prominence on written law led to the feudal laws to be written down. In effect, feudal law was a thirteenth century creation by the then governments and, with the possible exclusion of England, all influenced

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<sup>51</sup> McFarlane, 'Bastard Feudalism'; see also Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 27-28.

<sup>52</sup> J. M. W. Bean, "'Bachelor" and Retainer', *Medievalia et Humanistica*, new series, 3 (1972), 117-31; J. M. W. Bean, *From Lord to Patron: Lordship in Late Medieval England*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989).

<sup>53</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 169-170.

<sup>54</sup> Crouch and Carpenter, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised'.

<sup>55</sup> Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, pp. 43-68.

<sup>56</sup> Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', p. 39; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised: Reply', pp. 193, 202-03.

by academic law from Italy. These laws furthermore represent a break with the previous regional custom and terminology, and in effect, she argues that historians of feudalism have been guilty of using later material to understand earlier events. Feudalism is therefore presented as an anachronism, which, as Brown argued, distorts our interpretation.<sup>57</sup>

A similar issue with the evidence can also be found in bastard feudalism: McFarlane's view of lordly power was based upon an analysis of John of Gaunt c. 1340-1399, whose indentures can be found in the royal records.<sup>58</sup> However, indentures are rarer survivals for other lords. Christine Carpenter, when she examined the affinity of the earls of Warwick, c.1401-1439 primarily used household accounts and associations found within legal records etc. to identify bastard feudal connections rather than looking at indentures.<sup>59</sup> There are clear issues of whether one lord's lordship, namely John of Gaunt, should be used to inform our knowledge of another lord and a picture of a whole society when the evidentiary basis is different.

### The Historiography of Lordly Power: The Modern Context

Since the criticism of feudalism and bastard feudalism many historians have moved away from these models. Feudalism has disappeared almost completely as a useful term in modern scholarship, except perhaps in its more Marxist sense as the exploitation of peasants.<sup>60</sup> New contexts have been proposed for investigating lordly power which go beyond the much more restricted view of it as linked to law.

Recent historiography looks at lordly power, or more accurately power, in much more sociocultural terms. David Crouch, for instance, proposed that ties established through

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<sup>57</sup> Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), but note her approach is summed up on pp. 1-16, and see also pp. 73-74; Susan Reynolds, 'Fiefs and Vassals in Scotland: A View from Outside', *Scottish Historical Review*, 82. 2 (2003), 176-93.

<sup>58</sup> Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, pp. 16-19. but see also McFarlane, 'Bastard Feudalism'; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', pp. 27-28.

<sup>59</sup> Christine Carpenter, 'The Beauchamp Affinity: A Study of Bastard Feudalism at Work', *EHR*, 95. 376 (1980), 514-32 (pp. 514-32, especially pp. 15-16).

<sup>60</sup> See for instance studies such as, D. Turner, 'The Manor and the Feudal Construction of Space', *Surrey History*, 6. 5 (2003), 293-303.

locality would be a better way to approach lordly power.<sup>61</sup> His arguments for local control being central to lordly power were further echoed within his most recent work, that suggested locality was a place where social ties, among others, could be formed, which were more permanent than the feudal tenurial connections.<sup>62</sup> The constitutional feudal connections had therefore obscured the realities of power.

For Thomas Bisson, power is also somewhat based upon sociocultural phenomena. Bisson states:

Power meant lordship and nobility, the precedence of one or (very exceptionally) a few, in the twelfth century. It was realised in submission, alliance, paternity, friendship and ceremony; in petition, oath, or witness; in one's lords presence, in his castles, his districts (our very word evokes the *distringere* of seignurial constraint). It was felt mysteriously in the priested rituals of promise, bonding, festivity, consecration, ordeal, and rejection. It was felt as violence: seizure, rape, intimidation, extortion, arson, murder; felt painfully that is in the prevailing weakness of protection and justice. Power was not felt, nor was it imagined as government.<sup>63</sup>

In this description it can be seen like for David Crouch power extends beyond legal connections.

Within Bisson's account, power in this period was tied to a nobility. He returns to the earlier timelines of feudalism to explain why this is so by suggesting that power had once been public royal power, but after 1100 became tied to the aristocracy. At this time power became lordly and is termed by Bisson lordship. Lordship for Bisson by 1000 was preeminent and widespread, it had God as its justification, and its strength as its ability to control, but was tempered by a morality and desire to be seen in a certain light. Lordship was based upon the solidarity of dependents, followership was a major part of the culture, and from it counsel.<sup>64</sup>

However, Bisson by contrasting lordly power or lordship to the state does thereby move away from the more flexible approach engendered by a sociocultural approach to power. For Bisson government or the state is a viable entity, and lordly power can only be understood in context with it. The result of this approach dictates the way Bisson views the

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<sup>61</sup> Most especially see, David Crouch, 'From Stenton to Mcfarlane: Models of Societies of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *TRHS*, 5 (1995), 179-200.

<sup>62</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, Ch. 8.

<sup>63</sup> Thomas N. Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship, and the Origins of European Government* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), p. 12.

<sup>64</sup> Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century*, pp. 68-83; for his view of lordship in England see, pp. 168-81.



changes characterising the thirteenth century, which are to be summed up as *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century: Power, Lordship and the Origins of European Government*. The emphasis of this work is that central public power eventually returns. This should also underline why power for Bisson is also hierarchical and linked to order.<sup>65</sup>

However, there are problems with such a limited approach. The contrast of lordly power and governmental power is too stark. It emphasises power as it functions within a state above other ways power can arise and be used. Power should be considered more broadly. Indeed, even the idea of government or the state within this period has been criticised by Rees Davies.<sup>66</sup> In his article Davies had initially presented a case for its use, the state can be divorced from its modern and classical meaning, it can also be shown that medieval people had their own concept for it, and documentation can support their view of it. However, its usage does raise issues of conflation with modern terminology. Susan Reynolds is perhaps more positive in outlook that these issues can be overcome.<sup>67</sup> But it is clear the idea of the state can skew perceptions and give undue importance to documentation which should be analysed in itself. Davies pointed here to the study of Ireland by Robin Frame, which showed that despite having an overlay of English royal administration, Ireland was regional in structure and different from England.<sup>68</sup> The medieval state does not necessarily have the same qualities as a modern state. Instead Davies put forward a case for considering the medieval period in terms of lordships of which the crown was one. These lordships interacted with each other and gradually the crown subsumed more public power with their cooperation.<sup>69</sup>

A more flexible approach is therefore required. The different and more flexible approach David Crouch takes to power can be seen in his most recent work *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272*.<sup>70</sup> Power is the defining feature of lords in this period for Bisson. For Crouch the aristocracy had power, but they were also part of society, and a developing part of society, which expanded gradually as new ranks of individuals were subsumed within them.<sup>71</sup> The aristocracy in this period are characterised by him as

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<sup>65</sup> Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century*, pp. 17-19.

<sup>66</sup> Rees Davies, 'The Medieval State: The Tyranny of a Concept?', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 16. 2 (2003), 280-300.

<sup>67</sup> Susan Reynolds, 'There were States in Medieval Europe: A Response to Rees Davies', *Journal of Historical Sociology*, 16. 4 (2003), 550-55.

<sup>68</sup> Robin Frame, 'Power and Society in the Lordship of Ireland 1272-1377', *P&P*, 76 (1977), 3-33 (pp. 3-5)

<sup>69</sup> Rees Davies, 'The Medieval State', pp. 293-97.

<sup>70</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 37-61.

becoming more self-aware as a distinct nobility.<sup>72</sup> In other words power can be seen as being derived from the society in which they live. This follows more closely the way in which aristocracy is now more widely being approached. Arie van Steensel writes regarding the aristocracy in the Low Countries:

The legal-political understanding of nobility has gradually been replaced by a sociocultural perspective, reflecting the growing importance of cultural history in general. Whilst noble status became legally defined in the Middle Ages, it still depended primarily on lifestyle and public acceptance. In the Low Countries, the social status of the nobility was likewise based on social recognition, privileges and deference, which were rooted in social practice and customary law. In other words, nobles were to uphold a lifestyle in accordance with their status, thereby avoiding embarrassing themselves in the eyes of their social environment. Hence, the sociocultural representation of nobility through conduct and lifestyle is now at the forefront of historical research, instead of the customary or formal rule systems that defined the legal status and rights of nobles.<sup>73</sup>

The interaction between lord and crown for historians like Crouch is therefore seen in terms of politics and the theatre of the court. This required the aristocrats to find a voice in the kingdom during the twelfth century. In the thirteenth, they gained greater strength and solidarity in this regard and were able to force the king to listen to their views, such as the rebellion resulting in *Magna Carta* and the 1258 rebellion against King Henry III.<sup>74</sup> Indeed, even Bisson admits the crisis of 1215-17 resulted in the desire for a consultative role in the running of the kingdom.<sup>75</sup> That lords were involved in a complicated relationship with the crown is also shown more widely as other studies have shown royal authority was not total. An examination of the French crown has shown that it had to negotiate its ability to control violence in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>76</sup> Therefore, power in this period is coming to be seen as a negotiation between lordships much as Davis suggested.

There were of course certain means that the crown could use to extend its power and did so over this period. One of these was accounted for in earlier models, such as an increase in bureaucracy. For Bisson, for instance, accountability in office and constraint of lordship began developing in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century. In this bureaucracy played its part as a notable

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<sup>72</sup>Ibid, xiv-xviii;

<sup>73</sup> Arie van Steensel, 'Noble Identity and Culture. Recent Historiography on the Nobility in the Medieval Low Countries III', *History Compass*, 12. 3 (2014), 287–99.

<sup>74</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, Chs. 4-5.

<sup>75</sup> Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century*, pp. 514-29.

<sup>76</sup> Justine Firnhaber-Baker, 'Seignorial war and royal power in later medieval Southern France', *P&P*, 208 (2010), 37-76

method.<sup>77</sup> Michael John Jones has also sought to show that the creation of the Exchequer and an accounting system helped enable the crown to extend its power within England.<sup>78</sup> Such developments would imply the crown was acting as a state to obtain control.

However, other studies point out that in English history we have concentrated too much on the central offices of state, that power was more local and was decentralised and negotiated in assemblies. This means that it was not always hierarchical, nor directly accountable.<sup>79</sup> Thus despite such advances there is still a tension between royal and lordly power, and this raises the concerns of seeing power related to the state rather than a royal lordship. Bisson himself finds that an understanding of political power, distinct from coercive power, only arose in 1200.<sup>80</sup>

However, if for the time being the state or governmental power is ruled out as a means through which to understand lordly power, at least before 1200, how can lordly power be understood? Power for Bisson was also linked to violence when tied to lordship. Through violence one could gain power as well as exercise it. Power was felt by Bisson to be experienced in many ways in the twelfth century, but one key way was by suffering and this is why government was created in reaction.<sup>81</sup> This presents a particularly negative view of lordly power.

Alternatively, for David Crouch locality and local control was a key driver for aristocratic power. For Crouch this follows the constitutional path of dominating the honour. However, its failure led to a shift to locality and neighbourhood as the source of recruitment for support. Thus, lords were forced to establish social ties with their neighbours.<sup>82</sup> One factor supporting the honour community was the honour court. It acted as a means to enact one's power over others. Its power declined, but was, Crouch suggests, still seen as a useful way to display one's power with its attendant ceremonies and officers into the thirteenth century.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century*, pp.328-69.

<sup>78</sup> Michael John Jones, 'Sources of power and infrastructural conditions in medieval governmental accounting', *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 35 (2010) 81–94

<sup>79</sup> Nicholas Karn, 'Centralism and Local Government in Medieval England: Constitutional History and Assembly Politics, 950–1300', *History Compass*, 10. 10 (2012), 742–51.

<sup>80</sup> Bisson, *The Crisis of the Twelfth Century*, pp. 492-93.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 578-79

<sup>82</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, Ch. 8.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 9.

The development which gave more local power for the lords was the ability to obtain liberties and mete out capital punishment.<sup>84</sup> Control of areas is also shown through a range of features, including forests. Rollanson has shown that kings and aristocrats in Germany had bureaucratic power over forests, personal power over the people who they allowed to collect resources from the forests, and ideological power by being the only ones able to hunt in the forest.<sup>85</sup> This would seem to suggest power came from not only bureaucracy and law but also ideology and identity and interaction with society.

Debate therefore has opened up concerning what lordly power exactly was. In Marjorie Chibnall's conclusion to her analysis of the literature of feudalism and lordly power, there is a direct line now being drawn between the study of lordly power and the relationship the lords had with their peasants, traditionally termed lordship.<sup>86</sup> Rosamond Faith in a recent work charting the changing relationship between lords and peasants also uses the term lordship in this way.<sup>87</sup> Lordship has been seen as a coercive element in the formation of concentrated settlements through the manorial system in England, if coercion is not seen as the only way communities were formed. However, it must be remarked even at this level some suggest that the drive came from below, suggesting that lordly power even over peasants was not total.<sup>88</sup> Lordship as a theme has also been suggested as acting alongside local society in the formation of towns. Ben Jervis, has presented towns as being constructed socially by having distinct urban social relationships develop within them, with which the lord can interact by acts of foundation or granting of rights.<sup>89</sup> This would imply lordly power was negotiated with local society in various ways.

Part of being aristocratic however, was also to be seen as being aristocratic. The visual aspects of aristocracy help provide the justification for the power they wield. The visual

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, Ch 10.

<sup>85</sup> David Rollason, 'Forests, parks, palaces, and the power of place in early medieval kingship', *Early Medieval Europe*, 20. 4 (2012), 428–49

<sup>86</sup> Marjorie Chibnall, 'Feudalism and Lordship', in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World* ed. by Harper, Bill C., and E. van Hout (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), pp. 123-34. For some there was a stark division between lordship and the feudal relationship with knights see Guy Fourquin, *Lordship and Feudalism in the Middle Ages* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1976), this division was also critical for Marxist historians as feudalism was seen to represent seigneurie, see Rodney Hilton, 'Feudalism of Feodalite and Seigneurie in France and England', in *Class Conflict and the Crisis of Feudalism: Essays in Medieval Social History*, ed. by Rodney Hilton (London: Hambledon Press, 1985), pp. 227-38.

<sup>87</sup> Rosamond Faith, *The English Peasantry and the Growth of Lordship* (London: Leicester University Press, 1997), for the fief see pp. 255-59

<sup>88</sup> Daniel R. Curtis, 'The emergence of concentrated settlements in medieval western Europe: Explanatory frameworks in the historiography', *Canadian Journal of History*, 48 (2013), 221-51.

<sup>89</sup> Ben Jervis, 'Assemblage Theory and Town Foundation in Medieval England', *Cambridge Archaeological Journal*, 26. 3 (2016), 381–95.

culture illustrates that medieval people would be familiar with the fact that their society was unequal and that lords claimed physical, through military aspects in this visual culture, as well as ideological rights of legitimate authority to be part of an elite with the right to command.<sup>90</sup> It has been remarked particularly that Earl Ranulf of Chester was stamping his position on the local area in regard to his building of Beeston castle.<sup>91</sup>

Historians have also pointed out that the foundation of religious settlements can also stamp a lord's authority on an area. It has been shown by Paermentier and Vanderputten that religious patronage required political networking. Indeed, the act of patronage or foundation, they found, can provide the founder, in this case Countess Clemence of Flanders, with a degree of importance and power in an area, and for an institution, despite the fact that her political power might otherwise have diminished.<sup>92</sup> In the Welsh Marches meanwhile R. R. Davies has suggested that the marcher lordships were underpinned by 'ecclesiastical subjugation' suggesting ties to the Church can have wider implications for a lord's power.<sup>93</sup> It is also important to be seen as pious. Noble piety let their status be linked to the sacred.<sup>94</sup> It also gave the aristocracy ideological rights of legitimate authority to be part of an elite with the right to command.<sup>95</sup>

The historiography therefore points towards a more social approach to lordly power rather than a constitutional or legal one. Power is also negotiated, as even in the relations between lord and crown power interplays are not fixed but individual. Berkhofer, Cooper and Kostov, when talking about power in this period were reliant on a brief definition of power by Michael Mann which was the ability to pursue and attain goals through the

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<sup>90</sup> Peter Coss, 'Knighthood, Heraldry and Social Exclusion in Edwardian England', in *Heraldry, Pageantry, and Social Display in Medieval England*, ed. by Peter Coss and Maurice Keen (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2002), 39-68; Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy*, pp. 344-47.

<sup>91</sup> D. J. C. King and M. H. Ridgway, 'Beeston Castle, Cheshire', *Journal of the Chester and North Wales Architectural, Archaeological, and Historic Society*, 46 (1959), 1-23; David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London: Routledge, 1992); R. McGuichen, 'Castle in Context? Redefining the Significance of Beeston Castle, Cheshire', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, 81 (2010 for 2006), 65-82.

<sup>92</sup> Els De Paermentier and Steven Vanderputten, 'Aristocratic patronage, political networking and the shaping of a private sanctuary: Countess Clemence of Flanders and the early years of Bourbourg Abbey (c.1103-21)', *Journal of Medieval History*, 42. 3 (2016), 317-37.

<sup>93</sup> R. R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 180.

<sup>94</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, 240-45; see also J. Van Engen, 'Sacred Sanctions for Lordship', in *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Thirteenth Century Europe*, ed. by Thomas N. Bisson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 203-30.

<sup>95</sup> Susan Reynolds, 'Secular Power and Authority in the Middle Ages', in *Power and Identity in the Middle Ages: Essays in Memory of Rees Davies*, ed. by Huw Pryce, John Lovett Watts and R. R. Davies (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11-22.

mastery of ones environment.<sup>96</sup> In the context of the discussions of power above this seems like an ideal definition as it can also be used in a sociocultural view of power.

This approach to power, however, returns the concept of lordly power to the idea that it was based upon relationships and upon personal service. J. M. W. Bean had previously suggested that there was great continuity between the relationship of lord and man, based upon a relationship of loyalty and reward, from Anglo-Saxon times to the late medieval retainer.<sup>97</sup> In essence, therefore the current historiography is leaning towards presenting lordly power as being based upon managing a population, which will be termed a lordship in this thesis, which is often typified by relationships of varying types. A model of lordly power would therefore be understood as a system of these relationships.

The second aim of this thesis was to provide a model of lordly power. Having a model of lordly power does provide certain benefits. M. Postan identified that feudalism operated as a model of history, but as a model it was increasingly vague. He saw issues with this, but still argued for the theory despite them. The reason for that was because he thought such models help build a more general understanding and enable us to look at societies problems. The current situation in regards to our understanding of lordly power leans to favour history in terms of individual actions, which were specific to the events and people involved<sup>98</sup> Lordly power understood in this second way has no distinct boundaries, nothing to compare it with, and has little ability to answer any general questions about the period. This thesis aims to help provide means by which it can.

### The Methodology: Case Study, Prosopography, and Biography

This research uses a mixture of methods dictated by its aims. The primary aim of this research is biographical, which is meant in terms relating to understanding Earl Ranulf in more detail rather than in terms of providing a narrative. The secondary aim of this research is, however, more general in its aim and thematic, the understanding of lordly power. The methods employed, both biographical and

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<sup>96</sup> Berkhofer et al., 'Introduction', p. 1

<sup>97</sup> Bean, *From Lord to Patron*, pp. 146-47.

<sup>98</sup> M. M. Postan, 'Feudalism and its decline' in *Social Relations and Ideas: Essays in Honour of R. H. Hilton*, ed. by T. H., Aston, P. R. Coss, C. Dyer, J. Thirsk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 73-87.

those used to undertake the thematic aim, do have certain advantages, issues and a historiography of their own.

Biographies, for instance, are not an uncontroversial method for examining the past, especially those which concentrate upon the narrative. Michael Prestwich, an author who contributed to the Yale English Monarchs biographies, suggested that many historians would avoid biography for other methods. The reason for this was that biography was not seen as being widely applicable to the period, more thematic approaches were seen as being necessary to further knowledge. However, Prestwich argued biography does have its place, as thematic studies cannot always provide answers.<sup>99</sup> However, there is a difference between thematic and narrative biographies.

Narrative biography can be found especially within what are called collective biographies such as the *Dictionary of National Biography*. A collective biography is a work which collects together biographies about a general group. The purpose of these biographies is to provide a description of that person's life. The use of such information can help historians to understand the period as they provide an understanding of the people involved. However, generally such biographies do not help towards understanding underlying themes.

A biography which approaches the individual's life to understand wider themes provides more justification for utilising biography as a method. Recently historians have sought to justify biography as a method, namely to examine the individual and how it interacts with groups.<sup>100</sup> Indeed, others historians have also identified that while personal information in the period can be limited, the biography of individuals can be grasped through the study of structures and roles.<sup>101</sup> That

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<sup>99</sup> Narrative biography and its place within modern scholarship is discussed in Michael Prestwich, 'Medieval Biography', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 40. 3 (2010), 325-46.

<sup>100</sup> Robert F. W. Smith, Gemma L. Watson, 'Introduction', in *The Lives of People and Things, AD 500-1700: A Multidisciplinary Future for Biography Writing*, ed. by Robert F. W. Smith and Gemma L. Watson (Farnham; Ashgate Publishing, 2016), pp. 1-10 (pp. 1-4); see also D. Bates, J. Crick and S. Hamilton, 'Introduction', in *Writing Medieval Biography: Essays in Honour of Frank Barlow*, ed. by D. Bates, J. Crick and S. Hamilton (Woodbridge; Boydell Press, 2006), pp. 1-13.

<sup>101</sup> Pauline Stafford, 'Writing the Biography of Eleventh Century Queens', in *Writing Medieval Biography*, pp. 99-109.

biography is constructed from examining wider themes suggests it also has wider significance.

There are a number of ways that biography can be used to understand themes, utilising special methodologies. One of these is prosopography. Prosopography entails the collection of biographies relating to a defined theme, usually typified as a group. These biographies are then examined to provide evidence about the theme. It is a method which is seen to be particularly useful at arriving at conclusions where sources are scarce. It is often used in classical history, but has been used for other eras as well. Indeed as this method has become more prominent, handbooks like that of Keats Rohan have been written to encourage its use.<sup>102</sup>

Social network analysis is another type of study that is tied to biography and is gaining a great deal of ground in recent scholarship.<sup>103</sup> Social network theory collects biographical data together and analyses it to uncover the social networks that link individuals together. Such studies can be built upon prosopographical databases and can be an interesting addition to the prosopographical analysis.<sup>104</sup>

The problem with the prosopographical method and that of social network analysis, however, lies in the nature of their requirement initially for comprehensive accumulation of biographical data. This can raise issues if the group you wish to study is large, requiring a considerable effort in the accumulation of data. There are publications of these studies such as Keats-Rohan's *Domesday People*.<sup>105</sup> This study therefore avoids a pure prosopographical or social network theory methodology to enable the concentration on the analysis of the earl's lordship rather than the collection of data.

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<sup>102</sup> *Prosopography, Approaches and Applications; a Handbook*, ed. by K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

<sup>103</sup> Matthew Hammond, Cornell Jackson, John Bradley, and Dauvit Broun, *Social Network Analysis and the People of Medieval Scotland, 1093-1286 (PoMSO Database)* (Glasgow: The University of Glasgow, 2017), pp. 3-9.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 9-18.

<sup>105</sup> K. S. B. Keats-Rohan, *Domesday Descendants: A Prosopography of Persons Occurring in English Documents 1066-1166* (Woodbridge, 2002).



However, this thesis does borrow some of the methodologies from prosopography and social network analysis, namely the emphasis on the collection of biographies to analyse but does not seek to do this in as comprehensive manner. A more flexible approach is therefore used which has also been advocated by others.<sup>106</sup> Instead this study will rely on another methodology which is intimately tied to the biographical approach, namely the case study.

A case study is a study which looks at one example or individual and from their examination makes general inferences for others in the same situation. Such a method allows the examination in the same level of detail as a prosopography, but due to the lack of a requirement to collect all biographies of all the group, will also allow the analysis of the individuals chosen within this case study to be analysed with regard to the main theme in detail. However, this favourable aspect of case studies is also its main problem, as it can also lead to misconceptions. Andrew Wareham in his investigation of East Anglia made the point that case studies need to be representative, 'although there is never an "average" case study'.<sup>107</sup> For this research, the problems with the case study method have distinct repercussions. The case study method is still viable, but it will nevertheless suffer from problems of being representative. Earl Ranulf III of Chester, was not a typical lord; he was a very wealthy and powerful individual. Cheshire is also regarded as having been a palatinate. The research must therefore take account of this, notably by allowing that Earl Ranulf III will provide, in many respects, a counter-point to the existing studies of the earls of Pembroke and Huntingdon, as a more traditional earl who succeeds to his family's lands and has no royal relative.

This is also why this case study is going to be a comparative case study. It will allow the earl's life and dealings to be put into context with his contemporaries. Of course, it is important that these contemporaries are chosen to afford a good comparison with the earl to allow the common features of lordship in the period to be shown and also the differences each lordship has. This will enable the widest

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<sup>106</sup> Kitrina Bevan, 'Writing the Lives of Legal Writers: The Use of Prosopography in Medieval Legal History', in *Writing the Lives of People and Things*, 29-46 (pp. 29-32).

<sup>107</sup> Andrew F. Wareham, *Lords and Communities in Early Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. xiii-xiv.

possible generalisations to be made and give this study greater influence. A second concern in the choice of the comparators is that by their comparison this study challenges the existing understanding in the historiography, thereby ensuring this study has influence upon current knowledge.

Earl Ranulf will therefore be compared to earls within three other earldoms. Earl William Marshal of Pembroke and David Earl of Huntingdon and their heirs have been chosen as two of the subjects, as they have been so essential in the discussion of lordly power so far in this period. The earls of Warwick have also been chosen as they have previously been analysed in terms of lordly power.<sup>108</sup>

The Earls of Huntingdon, Pembroke and Warwick while being alive during the same period as Earl Ranulf are also strikingly different individuals with different approaches to lordship. David earl of Huntingdon was a Scottish lord who was granted lands in England through his connection to the Scottish crown. He is therefore somewhat of an outsider to English politics, but has power through his connection to the Scottish royal family. The comparison of David and his heir John to Earl Ranulf will allow the examination of how Ranulf's lordship differs from, or is similar to, a lord with limited existing connections to his lordship, and who is at a slight distance from the English crown. This will be important as Earl Ranulf acquires new lands and his relationship to the crown fluctuates and changes over the period.

Earl William Marshal was a close confidant of the English crown, receiving his earldom as a reward for his service. His heirs followed a similar path of loyalty and service to the crown. The Pembrokes have been a prime source of evidence for David Crouch's view that tenancy diminished in importance, to be replaced by locality. The comparison with Earl Ranulf will therefore serve to show how Ranulf's connections to the crown differed and that lords still recruited from their hereditary contacts and tenants.

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<sup>108</sup> There have been two studies on the lordships of the Warwicks published in the *Midland History Journal*, David Crouch, 'The Local Influence of the Earls of Warwick, 1088-1242: A Study in Decline and Resourcefulness', *Midland History*, 21. 1 (1996), 1-22; Burt, 'A 'Bastard Feudal' Affinity in the Making?'

The earls of Warwick, meanwhile, are more akin to Earl Ranulf in that they inherited their lands in England as hereditary lords. However, unlike Ranulf they were not as visible in the politics of the period. Their comparison to Ranulf will show the difference between Ranulf's lordship which was expanding and driven by political events compared to a more withdrawn lordship. Such comparisons will allow the earl's life and dealings to be put into context with his contemporaries.

### The Methodology: A Model of Lordly Power

Another problem of this research is how to approach lordly power as a model when it is understood as a system of relationships. There are three principles that can be taken from the historiography, which should be addressed in forming the model. The first is to show that lordly power was based upon lords having relationships with different individuals. Secondly, that these relationships extend to a range of individuals from different areas of society. A guiding principle for the research is that a lord's power cannot be based solely upon their relationship to a single group of individuals in isolation. The final principle is that circumstances affect the relationships a lord creates whether these are external circumstances or those created through the interplay of different relationships they have.

However, these principles raise certain issues. The first of which is whether there is a need to contrast the new with the old approaches to models of lordly power or lordship. In effect, should this model take account of the feudal and bastard feudal relationships? There is some justification that they should and this thesis will, therefore, be a synthesis of existing approaches.

Brown's and Reynold's criticisms did not immediately stop the use of the terms feudalism nor of bastard feudalism. Indeed, while Reynold's book was received with acclaim, it was not without some criticism. D. J. A. Mathew suggested that the later feudal laws, which Reynolds argued were being interpreted anachronistically into earlier periods, were unlikely to have represented a dramatic change. Frederic Cheyette, while not as critical, also highlights that Reynolds does not sufficiently

account for the mechanics of such a radical change in the later period.<sup>109</sup> On a more methodological ground this would suggest that there is some semblance of validity to use later sources to understand earlier evidence.

Another methodological issue, when considering charter material, was presented by Fredric Cheyette, who is most interested in the suggestion that earlier evidence is customary and thus terminology varies in meaning by region, usage, or scribe. The implications are, as Cheyette suggests, that there would be wariness over the meaning of a text, which can lead to paralysing scepticism. Reynolds' only solution was to suggest that historians must consider the context.<sup>110</sup> However, as Cheyette asked, what is context? Comparison of different texts is the most obvious context available, but this evidently may lead back to feudalism, as feudalism was not based merely upon legal texts of the thirteenth-century, but also narratives and various records of the preceding centuries.<sup>111</sup> For example, charters especially were important to Frank Stenton's view of feudalism.<sup>112</sup> Cheyette suggests an alternative explored by Barbara Rosenwein and Stephen D. White, is to try and understand the social relations this document illustrates, to determine what people are doing to understand what it says.<sup>113</sup> However, it is clear that tenancy is not ruled out as having a place in society once more, it is just a question of what role the evidence supports.

Tenancy relationships, while included in this study, are not, however, called feudal. For it is clear that the arguments of Elizabeth Brown have undermined that theory as a model. The same may be said for bastard feudalism. However, the relationships bastard feudalism was deemed to hold as central are just as important to this new model of lordly power. A lordship in this model would therefore also include

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<sup>109</sup> Fredric L. Cheyette, 'Review: Fiefs and Vassals', *Speculum*, 71. 4 (1996), 998-1006 (pp. 1002-03); D. J. A. Matthew, 'Review: Fiefs and Vassals', *EHR*, 110. 439 (1995), 1209-12 (p. 1211).

<sup>110</sup> Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 115-23.

<sup>111</sup> The sources for feudalism have often been collected, often in relation to a specific theme and examples include, R. Allen Brown, *Origins of English Feudalism* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973); Strayer, *Feudalism*; and *The History of Feudalism*, ed. by David Herlihy (London: Harper and Row, 1970).

<sup>112</sup> David Bates, *Re-Ordering the Past and Negotiating the Present in Stenton's First Century*, (Reading: University of Reading, 2000): Stenton, *First Century*, Ch. 2.

<sup>113</sup> Cheyette, 'Review: Fiefs and Vassals' (pp. 1000-02).

relationships held up in the bastard feudal model of lordship, that is the establishment of relationships, transient and intransient, based upon anything but the fief. Peter Coss has also made an interesting point regarding the lords relationship to royal officials and it will be necessary to look into the nature of contact between the lords and recruitment from the royal administration.<sup>114</sup>

Another concern raised by the above principles is the need to widen the sphere of lordly power to include other groups. If lordly power is based not upon one single legal connection, but a series of relationships, the relationships the lord has to other groups in society must also be considered as important to his power. The first of these are the lord's relationships to members of the secular and regular church. A number of works have sought to identify the nature of those ties. Some concentrate upon the piety of the lord. The Clare family has been investigated by R. Mortimer and J. C. Ward for knowledge of their tenants and monastic endowments as an example for the developments in tenure and the fashions of ecclesiastical patronage.<sup>115</sup> Others examine the role that religious houses have within a lord's lordship as his property.<sup>116</sup> There are a number of services that such institutions can provide the lord, which would have added to his power, which need to be investigated with regard to Earl Ranulf.

In addition, there are the relationships the lords had to urban centres. The existence of these relationships has not been considered in detail in the more traditional investigations of lordship or lordly power.<sup>117</sup> Originally, as Rodney H. Hilton has shown, this was because urban communities were regarded as outside the traditional feudal structure of lord and vassal relationships, although this view

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<sup>114</sup> Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', especially p. 39; Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised: Reply', especially pp. 193, 202-03.

<sup>115</sup> R. Mortimer, 'Land and Service: The Tenants of the Honor of Clare', in *Anglo-Norman Studies, VIII*, ed. by R. A. Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985), pp. 177-97; J. C. Ward, 'Fashions in Monastic Endowment: The Foundations of the Clare Family, 1066-1314', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 32 (1981), 427-51.

<sup>116</sup> Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955).

<sup>117</sup> For instance, the role of cities and their citizens is somewhat absent from the analysis made of lordship by Stenton, (Stenton, *The First Century*) and is lacking in Earl Ranulf's biographies.

was challenged.<sup>118</sup> A more recent study of town and country by Peter Coss has, however, shown that lordship had a direct influence not only upon the country, but within the urban sphere as well. He discovered that the honour, the collection of lands, which the earl controlled directly or granted out in knights fee, was while a declining force, was still a force which provided social cohesion in the locality of Coventry and actually within the city itself.<sup>119</sup> Meanwhile, some lords entered into business as merchants, especially towards the end of the thirteenth century.<sup>120</sup> The question for this research is whether urban relationships also had an effect on lordship.

There then follows the question of how to understand the term relationship? A relationship must be defined as more than a mere connection, but beyond that is an indistinct term. There are a number of ways to overcome this. The first is to approach relationships not from the perspective of the relationship, but the type of individual to whom the earl was connected. By examining the relationships the earl had with specific groups of people, it will be possible to discover the nature of relationships he establishes in his lordship as a whole. The main groups of individuals with whom the earl can be shown to have been connected include, the crown, counsellors and officers, tenants and locals. The main way to identify an individual who has a relationship to the earl from these groups is through a connection in the sources, but to establish the existence of a relationship the context of this connection must also be investigated.

### Sources: The Earl's Charters

One of the main sources of information for identifying Earl Ranulf's connections and also providing the context of those connections are his charters. This is a source commonly used to identify people that were followers of a lord.<sup>121</sup> The analysis of

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<sup>118</sup> Rodney H. Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 6-9.

<sup>119</sup> Peter R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - c.1280*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), especially Ch. 2.

<sup>120</sup> Pamela Nightingale, 'Knights and Merchants: Trade, Politics and the Gentry in Late Medieval England', *P&P*, 169 (2000), 36-62.

<sup>121</sup> See for instance, John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 59-60.

medieval charters has also been a good source of information for historians and they have been used in various ways, from the formation of social theories, to investigations of the actions of lords so they will provide a fruitful resource for discussing lordly power.<sup>122</sup> Earl Ranulf created a number of such documents, and these can provide a good indication to what the earl was doing and the relationships he had.

In many modern histories there is an assumption of a standard type of document named a charter, and in many respects there are common factors to many. They are often found to be conveyances of property, and originally written in Latin on parchment with a seal attached.<sup>123</sup> The wording or diplomatic of charters has also been shown to contain common elements, including a title and address, which is usually to the community rather than the beneficiary, notification or descriptive element of what the charter is about, and a witness list.<sup>124</sup> Yet there is a great deal of ambiguity to what charters are, and the exact contents of these documents can vary and are in reality non-standard.<sup>125</sup> This raises issues about their use generally and for this study.

This ambiguity begins with the fact that a number of documents called charters do not fit the standard pattern of a straightforward property conveyance. Those involved in the DEEDS project have analysed a large selection of charters and classified 16 different types of documents, with those concerned with property grants representing only about a third.<sup>126</sup> Michael Clanchy meanwhile in his work has divided the documents into charters, chirographs, certificates, letters, and writs.<sup>127</sup> Charters therefore can have a range of purposes. The relationships of

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<sup>122</sup> Among numerous works see, Crouch, *William Marshal*; Stenton, *The First Century*; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*.

<sup>123</sup> Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 84-87, 197-223.

<sup>124</sup> Compare the categories of charter elements found in, *English Episcopal Acta 17: Coventry and Lichfield 1183-1208*, ed. by M. J. Franklin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. lxiii-lxxx; J. Hudson, 'Diplomatic and Legal Aspects of the Charters', in *Thacker*, pp. 153-78; Smith, (ed.) *English Episcopal Acta 4*, pp. xxx-xlii.

<sup>125</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 85-87.

<sup>126</sup> Keats-Rohan, K. S. B., (ed.) *Resourcing Sources* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp. 164-207, especially p. 164.

<sup>127</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 81-92.

those involved with them must therefore be understood by examining what the document's purpose was.

However, even within the text of charters, there is also a great deal of room for ambiguity. For instance, it is common in conveyances to grant lands with no description other than size, or by naming the previous owner, or in reference to a place without any details. This ambiguity also ranges to understanding the terminology that was used regarding liberties or rights. For instance, David Crouch when he examined the rights of jurisdiction, which are often granted in charters, found them to become specific only after 1220.<sup>128</sup>

Yet, it is clear that documents recording legal procedures of the late twelfth century suggest that charters were used as evidence in courts.<sup>129</sup> This provides some level of concrete purpose for the documents. Indeed, the inclusion of a witness list and a seal, acting as a signature, additionally suggests that the charter may be leaning towards a legal purpose. The fact that the need for seals had spread even to craftsmen and possibly peasants in the Angevin period also suggests such documents were becoming more necessary and common.<sup>130</sup> That charters predated the centralised royal courts, which would utilise them as proofs in this period, can explain some of the ambiguity in their content.<sup>131</sup> Charters also represented a physical element of a ceremonial or publicly spoken act.<sup>132</sup> The fact that charters were written in Latin on the Continent, and in England after the Conquest, would also seem to suggest that the document still had a communal purpose. Not all individuals could be expected to understand Latin even though knowledge of that language was becoming more widespread over the Angevin

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<sup>128</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 185-89.

<sup>129</sup> *Tractatus de legibus et consuetudinibus regni Anglie qui Glanvilla vocatur: The Treatise of the Laws and Customs of the Realm of England Commonly Called Glanvill*, ed. and trans. by G. D. G. Hall (London: Nelson, 1965), pp. 125-129, 176-77.

<sup>130</sup> This is the view to be found in P. D. A. Harvey, and A. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), pp.77-88

<sup>131</sup> J. Hudson, *The Formation of the English Common Law: Law and Society in England from the Norman Conquest to Magna Carta* (Harlow: Routledge, 1996), Ch. 7

<sup>132</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 35-43.



period.<sup>133</sup> Although the charter was therefore a written legal document it was still also a symbol of an event.

The nature and purpose of the charter obviously has implications for how the participants' relationships are viewed. That the charter records a public event would seem to argue that the beneficiary and grantor met at some point to enact the ceremony, whether or not the charter was produced before, at, or after that time. The separation of charter and transaction is apparent as the transaction, the physical ceremony, changes to be the gift of livery during this period, without the need for the charter. The charter was required for livery in the past. The two parts of the ceremony are however indelibly linked together.<sup>134</sup> Some historians are therefore uncertain that grantor and beneficiary were present together when the document was written.<sup>135</sup> Yet it still seems reasonably certain that a relationship between the grantor and beneficiary can be deduced by the existence of the document itself and the implied ceremony.

In terms of what the relationship between grantor and beneficiary was this can only be construed by further context. Charters can provide some insights through the types of grants and the choice of terminology. For instance, whether a charter confirms, gives, or donates can provide a clue to what the relationship between the donor and subject was and how the clerk viewed it.<sup>136</sup> However, other sources can help to understand the relationship.

The relationship of the earl to the witnesses of the charters is more uncertain. There are a number of ambiguities. The status of witnesses in charters is unclear, for instance, and it is only in the thirteenth century that *milites* as a title become

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid, Ch. 7.

<sup>134</sup> For the production of charters and their relationship of the charter to the transaction see Dauvit Broun, 'The presence of witnesses and the writing of charters', in Broun, D. (ed.) *The Reality Behind Charter Diplomatic in Anglo-Norman Britain* (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 2011), 235-290 (pp. 261-273).

<sup>135</sup> D. Bates, 'The Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters', in *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics: The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to Twelfth Century*, ed. by K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), pp. 89-102 (p. 92).

<sup>136</sup> A discussion of how the verbs used can indicate different relationships was shown in John Reuben Davies, 'The donor and the duty of warandice: giving and granting in Scottish charters', in *The Reality Behind Charter Diplomatic in Anglo-Norman Britain*, ed. by D. Broun (Glasgow: Glasgow University Press, 2011), pp. 120-65.

more frequent.<sup>137</sup> Even if status can be derived from a title, such as in the case of officers, there is still ambiguity for their purpose of witnessing. David Postles has discussed the ambiguity of how the clerks named in witness lists may relate to the charter: are they writer or merely witness, or both?<sup>138</sup> If a witness is just acting as a witness there also a difficulty identifying how they are tied to the other participants. Some historians who have examined witness lists have sought to suggest that they are parties who are tied to the beneficiary or grantor, while others suggest that the choice of witness was linked primarily to the best testimony.<sup>139</sup> It is clear from original charters that occasionally seals of significant individuals or institutions could be added for a price to improve the validity of the document.<sup>140</sup> That the witnesses relationship to the other participants is uncertain is clear and is undoubtedly as a result of the personal nature of these documents. Indeed, David Bates has shown that charters are very much products of their day and the specific concerns of the individuals concerned.<sup>141</sup>

In terms of the witnesses actually attending the transaction ceremony there is also a great deal of ambiguity. There are a number of studies which suggest that witnesses to charters may not have attended the creation of a charter and formed a relationship via their attendance at the ceremony the charter describes with the participants.<sup>142</sup> Indeed, David Bates suggests that it is uncertain that the named witnesses were present when the charter was written as well.<sup>143</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> D. Fleming, 'Milites as Attestors to Charters in England, 1101-1300', *Albion*, 22. 2 (1990), 185-98.

<sup>138</sup> D. Postles, 'County Clerici and the Composition of English Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Charters', in Heidecker, K., (ed.) *Charters and the Use of the Written Word in Medieval Society* (Belgium: Brepols, 2000), 27-42; Webber, T., 'The Scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', in Thacker, pp. 137-151

<sup>139</sup> Studies that have relied upon the idea witnesses are tied to the main parties involved tend to use charters to look for households, examples include, Crouch, D., *William Marshal*, pp. 143-146; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, Ch. 8; Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders, and Thugs*, Ch. 1, especially part II; however David Bates has raised the possibility witnesses are related to the main participants as the best witnesses, although of course there is not exclusivity between the two ideas, see Bates, 'The Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters', pp. 89-96, especially p. 92

<sup>140</sup> Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp. 84-87.

<sup>141</sup> Bates, *Re-Ordering the Past*.

<sup>142</sup> *English Episcopal Acta. 2, Canterbury, 1162-1190*, ed by Bridgett E. A. Jones and C. R. Cheney (London: Oxford University Press, 1986), p. xxix.

<sup>143</sup> Bates, 'The Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters', p. 92.

However, such scepticism regarding the attendance of witnesses goes against common opinion and usage of charters. Most studies of lordly power have used witness lists to identify a lord's court or household and deem witnesses to have been in the presence of the lord when witnessing.<sup>144</sup> One particular study has also show that those identified in the charters were also those named in their contemporary biography as part of their *mesnie* or household.<sup>145</sup> Some also believe it is the witnesses whose testimony would have provided more secure evidence to the claim held within the document than the document itself.<sup>146</sup> In a recent study Dauvit Broun has combined these approaches to suggest that witnesses witnessed the charters based upon the idea that the proven exceptions evidenced by absentee witness letters, and different handwriting found in some witness lists to the main texts, can be addressed by the fact they are limited and are therefore exceptions, or that they can be answered by the need to create a draft of the document before the ceremony. He also argues that the legal requirement to have witnesses witness the charters gives the grantor and beneficiary a vested interest in choosing people who can stand present witness of the transaction and provide evidence if required.<sup>147</sup> Therefore, in this study it is assumed that the witnesses will have a relationship to the contents or parties involved.

There are also clues in Earl Ranulf's charters, which suggest that there is good reason to believe that witnesses were often present at the transaction itself, as the charter was clearly written before the ceremony these documents describe:

Just as by my father's charter, which they have, ...and which, in the presence of my father's body to remember him I placed [my own] in ratification of the grant on top of the altar of St Werburgh<sup>148</sup>

Therefore this, my donation and concession, I make public and solemnly in the church of Coventry in the third year of the reign of King Richard

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<sup>144</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 60.

<sup>145</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 145.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 144-45.

<sup>147</sup> Dauvit Broun, 'The presence of witnesses and the writing of charters'.

<sup>148</sup> *BC*, no. 229. My own translation of the Latin: *sicut carta patris mei, quam ipsi inde habent, ...quam mihi oblatam presente corpore patris mei meminet me in ratihabitionem super altare sancte Werburge posuisse.*

in the month of July during the feast of St Abdon and Sennes, and [by] my charter being put on top of the altar with a golden ring...<sup>149</sup>

These two charters were clearly written before the ceremony and were used as a symbolic offering along with the gold ring, to display that the earl was granting something to the respective institutions. Michael Clanchy has also pointed out that while charters were increasingly used, more material symbols of conveyances were often still necessary in this period. The written word was inadequate on its own.<sup>150</sup> Therefore, it seems reasonable to suggest that charters were often prepared in advance and, as current opinion suggests, to see the witnesses as being present at the ceremony the charter records, and thus present with the earl as it is the symbolic event which is important and not the written document. This would also indicate that the witness lists identify connections that were meaningful to some degree, which can be looked into through further research into the individuals involved.

### Sources: Narratives and Records

Various other sources also need to be consulted to identify other connections and to establish the context of those connections and if it was a meaningful relationship. These include the narrative histories, which include chronicles, annals and some biographies, of which in E. B. Grave's assessment, there are 44 relevant to the period, and in A. Gransden's study, 50 relevant works.<sup>151</sup> Narrative histories are, however, an uncertain resource regarding their reliability and usefulness. As a narrative, they are more open to the authors' creativity and personal interests than some of the other types of documentation. Problems of accuracy of content and bias are significant problems for the historian.<sup>152</sup> Yet the most problematic field is

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<sup>149</sup> Listed in *BC*, no. 219; to be found transcribed in *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter R. Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), no. 13. My own translation of the Latin: *Hanc ergo donacionem et concessionem meam feci publice et solempniter in ecclesia Coventr' tercio anno regni regis Ricardi mense Julii in festo sanctorum Abdon et Sennes et cartam meam super altare ponens anulo aureo de donacione ista ecclesiam Coventr' investivi et imperpetuum confirmavi.*

<sup>150</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 254-60.

<sup>151</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 526-29; Edgar B. Graves, *A Bibliography of English History to 1485* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1974), p. 390.

<sup>152</sup> For the medieval chroniclers' view of accuracy and truth see, Chris Given-Wilson, *Chronicles: The Writing of History in Medieval England*, (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), pp. 1-20.

perhaps that authors tend to edit their contents to what is deemed important to them.

Yet the narrative histories are essential in tracing the earl's alliances with the crown. There are a handful of narratives which provide useful information in this period. Within this thesis the narratives which have original information about the period under question, and which were written near the time they are recording, wherever possible, have been prioritised as sources.

For the history preceding the earl's life use has been made of Orderic Vitalis. C. Warren Hollister regards Orderic as a trustworthy guide to the reign of Henry I even if he sometimes makes mistakes.<sup>153</sup> The biographer of William II is more critical of his relevancy for earlier periods.<sup>154</sup> However, Antonia Gransden also identifies that he was a scholar, well read and well-travelled, and his work reflects this.<sup>155</sup> Other works of use for the period before Ranulf's tenure are William of Malmesbury's works the *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and *Historia Novella*. William was alive c. 1095-c. 1143.<sup>156</sup> The *Historia Novella* is regarded as being written by someone extremely well read, travelled and well connected.<sup>157</sup>

During the reign of King Stephen there were also other relevant works for this thesis. The author of the *Gesta Stephani* is unknown,<sup>158</sup> yet his work is seen as a valuable source on the period that is thought to have been written soon after the events.<sup>159</sup> Henry of Huntingdon's, *Historia Anglorum* is also of use for understanding the period before Ranulf's birth. This work was written in around 1133 with a continuation written later.<sup>160</sup> His history of Stephen's reign is deemed a contemporary account.<sup>161</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> C. Warren Hollister, *Henry I* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2003), pp. 5-6.

<sup>154</sup> Emma Mason, *The Life and Murder of William II of England* (Stroud: The History Press, 2008), p. 15.

<sup>155</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 151-65.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 9.

<sup>157</sup> William of Malmesbury, *Historia Novella*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.

<sup>158</sup> Edmund King, 'The *Gesta Stephani*', in *Writing Medieval Biography*, pp. 195-206.

<sup>159</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 188-93.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 193-99.

<sup>161</sup> *Henry of Huntingdon*, p. xviii-xxii.

The histories of King Henry II's reign, which include pertinent information about Ranulf's father include the work of Robert of Torigni. Robert's *Chronicle* runs through until 1186.<sup>162</sup> Robert based his work on the Anglo-Norman era on Henry of Huntingdon, therefore it is from 1154 that his chronicle is original.<sup>163</sup> The chronicle often known as by Benedict of Peterborough, although he was not the author, is also a useful source.<sup>164</sup> Jordan of Fantosme's work written in around 1175, is also a valuable work for the period, despite or perhaps because it borrows from the *chanson de geste* in style.<sup>165</sup>

There are a number of histories which also straddle Ranulf's father's lifetime and his own. One of these is by William of Newburgh who is thought to have been born in 1135-36. He began his chronicle in 1196 and it ends in 1198. His chronicle is deemed to be useful for the history of the period and he can present a nuanced view of the main participants.<sup>166</sup> Roger of Howden's chronicle is also an important work over a similar period. Roger is known to have been a royal clerk who was in Henry II's service. He is therefore seen as a good chronicler of the royal court.<sup>167</sup>

Ralph Diceto provides an important account of King Richard's reign. Ralph was born around 1120 to 1130 and became canon of St Paul's in London in the 1140s. He was close to events and has been shown to be close to key figures in the period.<sup>168</sup> Another important work of Richard's reign is the *Chronicle* of Richard of Devizes. Despite the fact Richard has been accused of representing key characters as villains and heroes, his chronicle is still regarded as valuable as a historical resource.<sup>169</sup>

There are also some chronicles of Richard's crusade, and those which are most useful to this study are Ambrose's metrical chronicle and the *Itinerarium*

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<sup>162</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 261-63.

<sup>163</sup> Hollister, *Henry I*, p. 11

<sup>164</sup> For a discussion of the authorship of the chronicle see, Doris M. Stenton, 'Roger of Howden and Benedict', *EHR*, 68. 269 (1953), 574-82; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 222-30.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 236-38; see also Anthony Lodge, 'Literature and History in the *Chronicle* of Jordan Fantosme', *French Studies*, 44. 3 (1990), 257-70.

<sup>166</sup> John Gillingham, 'The Historian as Judge: William of Newburgh and Hubert Walter', *EHR*, 119. 484 (2004), 1275-87; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 263-68.

<sup>167</sup> For a biography of Roger see, John Gillingham, 'Writing the Biography of Roger of Howden, King's Clerk and Chronicler', in *Writing Medieval Biography*, pp. 207-20.

<sup>168</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 230-36.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 248-52.

*Peregrinorum et Gesta Regis Ricardi*. It has been suggested that the *Itinerarium* borrowed from Ambrose, however there are events in that work which aren't present in the other. Making this work useful as an additional account of the crusade.<sup>170</sup> The *Itinerarium* also has use outside of just the crusade.

Another important writer for Earl Ranulf's early years is Gervase of Canterbury who began writing history in 1185. In 1188 he began his *Chronica* and following this his *Gesta*. The *Chronica* covered until 1199 and the *Gesta* until 1210. The writings are coloured by a local dispute, which spurred him to start writing, and led to a negative view of the kings in this period. Yet his record is still deemed to be historically relevant.<sup>171</sup>

Key historians of King John's reign include Ralph of Coggeshall, abbot of the abbey of Coggeshall from 1207 to 1218. His chronicle is contemporary and his knowledge of events was based upon proximity to London and communication between the Cistercian houses, and with other guests whom he names in his chronicle.<sup>172</sup> Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* was also a contemporary chronicle for the period. It was written between 1204 and 1231. Roger was prior of a cell of Belvoir although little else is known about him. His chronicle relies on Diceto until 1202, but from then on utilises lost annals or his own knowledge, and therefore is an invaluable source for the reigns of King John and King Henry III.<sup>173</sup>

Another leading historian for John's reign is Matthew Paris. Matthew was born around 1200 and was a monk at St Albans in 1217. He has been described as writing history for most of his life and his most famous works are his *Chronica Majora* which he began in 1240 and his *Historia Anglorum* in 1250. The *Chronica* borrowed from Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum* till 1234 but he also edited and added to it in that period. As such the *Chronica* has utility as much for the period before 1234 as afterwards. Matthew was able to collect a range of information and documents and was familiar with men at court to obtain them. He had a wide range of interests

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., pp. 239-42.

<sup>171</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 254-60.

<sup>172</sup> D. A. Carpenter, 'Abbot Ralph of Coggeshall's Account of the Last Years of King Richard and the First Years of King John', *EHR*, 113. 454 (1998), 1210-30; Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 322-31.

<sup>173</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, p. 359.

and was able to collect a large amount of data in his *Chronica*. The *Historia* also acts, not just a shorter version of the *Chronica*, but has its own interpretations.<sup>174</sup>

In the early thirteenth century annals became a more common form of writing and these provide a good source of information for both John's and King Henry III's reigns. These include the annals of Dunstable, Margam as well as Waverley. The annals, with the exception of Dunstable are largely anonymous, and succinct in their record of events, however, they are not regarded as impartial accounts.<sup>175</sup> To these can also be added the annals of Burton, Winchester, Tewkesbury, and Osney, which provide details for the reign of Henry III.<sup>176</sup> The Chronicle of Melrose is also useful. Begun in 1236 it forms a contemporary account for English and Scottish history.<sup>177</sup> The history of St Werburgh's also provides a good deal of detail about the earl and Cheshire, so although a later history it cannot be discounted.<sup>178</sup>

Finally a thirteenth century poem, the *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal* is another useful source. It takes the form of a biography and is invaluable to understand the history of Ranulf's contemporary William Marshal as well as contemporary events. It was composed in around 1225 and was written in the romance style, but like Fantsome before is still useful for the historian.<sup>179</sup> Recently, historians have accorded the author the instincts of the historian.<sup>180</sup>

These narrative sources among others are also of especial importance to understand the earl's relationship to leading royal counsellors or magnates. While the relationship between the crown and the earl can also be identified through the growing number of royal records which will be examined herein as well, there is limited record evidence for the earl's ties to these individuals. There is perhaps only one exception to the need to consult narratives for leading lords, which were the

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid., Ch. 16; Björn Weiler, 'Matthew Paris on the writing of history', *Journal of Medieval History*, 35. 3 (2009), 254-78.

<sup>175</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 331-38.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., pp. 408-17, 429-32.

<sup>177</sup> Graves, *A Bibliography*, p. 412.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., pp. 396-97.

<sup>179</sup> Gransden, *Historical Writing*, pp. 322, 346-55.

<sup>180</sup> David Crouch, 'Writing Biography in the Thirteenth Century: The Construction and Composition of the 'History of William Marshal'', in *Writing Medieval Biography*, pp. 221-35.



bishops. As their lordships often overlapped with other lords they were more often found in each other's charters whereas lay magnates were not. The most comprehensive collection of edited episcopal charters is that of the *Episcopal Acta* series and of particular relevance to this research are those of the bishops of Coventry and Lichfield, and Lincoln.<sup>181</sup>

The context of the connections between the earl of Chester and his tenants, are perhaps the most well researched element in the earl's lordship. Yet to identify his tenants, knightly, ecclesiastic, and urban, requires different sources for each. To identify ecclesiastical tenants and understand the nature of their relationship with the earl is dependent on the charters of the earl or his family, as is the relationship he had to urban tenants. The earl's knightly tenants, however, have a broader range of sources. The charters provide a means of identifying a closer relationship, but the exchequer surveys provide the main source to identify the individuals involved. These include *Domesday Book*, the *Red Book of the Exchequer*, which provides a breakdown on the 1166 *Cartae Baronum*, and the *Book of Fees* or *Testa de Nevill* which contains feudal surveys in the thirteenth century.<sup>182</sup> These documents contain as accurate data as was likely then possible to be gained, but they were created intermittently and are therefore to be regarded as out of date soon after they were created. There are also some modern studies, which pull information from these sources together to provide an over view of the earl's lands in Cheshire, the honour of Chester and honour of Lincoln. These are Ormerod's history of Cheshire and Chester, and Farrer's *Honors and Knights Fees*.<sup>183</sup>

The context of the tenurial relationship is most easily examined through the various legal documents, including King Henry I's coronation charter and *Magna Carta*. The

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<sup>181</sup> *English Episcopal Acta Volume 43: Coventry and Lichfield, 1215-1256*, ed. by J. H. Denton and Philippa M. Hoskin (Oxford : Published for The British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2014); *English Episcopal Acta 16: Coventry and Lichfield, 1160-1182*, ed. by M. J. Franklin (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1998); *English Episcopal Acta 17: Coventry and Lichfield, 1183-1208*, ed. by M. J. Franklin (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1998); *English Episcopal Acta 1: Lincoln, 1067-1185*, ed. by David M. Smith (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1980); *English Episcopal Acta 4: Lincoln 1186-1206*, ed. by David M. Smith (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1986).

<sup>182</sup> *Liber Feodorum; Red Book*; Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*.

<sup>183</sup> *HKF*; Ormerod, *History*.

earl's charters also provide some context, and are especially helpful in understanding the county of Cheshire's nature as a palatinate. It is clear in examination of the earl's tenants that a vast array of secondary information will also be available, and this research will utilise those whose interpretations fit within what is found within the sources.

The earl's charters also identify his officers and any locals with whom he came into contact. The context of their relationships can be assessed by looking at royal administrative records to identify, for instance, who was employed by the crown. It is also important when analysing locals to look at other relationships to understand these and what is meant by the term locality.

Finally, ecclesiastical cartularies and the earl's charters will be the primary source to understand the earl's relationship to ecclesiastical institutions, and others through them. Cartularies are copies of charters held in book form.<sup>184</sup> The production of cartularies was to provide ease of reference to the documents of the primarily religious institution which wrote them.<sup>185</sup> Cartularies began to be written in England around the Conquest, but began slightly earlier on the Continent.<sup>186</sup>

While there is therefore a great deal of primary source evidence, it is also realistic to say that some individuals and their relationships are easier to research than others. Indeed, Keith Stringer in his analysis of Earl David's household cannot reliably place the origin of the leading household knight of the earl, Robert Basset.<sup>187</sup> Therefore, our understanding of the context of a relationship will vary with each individual case. This will not necessarily affect the creation of a model of lordly power, but may have repercussions for our understanding of the earl as conclusions must in certain cases be tentative.

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<sup>184</sup> Clanchy, M. T., *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 101-102, and regarding books and rolls pp. 135-144.

<sup>185</sup> C. B. Bouchard, 'Monastic Cartularies: Organising Eternity', in *Charters, Cartularies, and Archives: The Preservation and Transmission of Documents in the Medieval West*, ed. by A. J. Kosto and A. Winroth (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval studies, 2002), pp. 22-32.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 22-24; Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 101-02.

<sup>187</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, p. 158.

## The Structure

As the methodology of the research requires the identification of Earl Ranulf's relationships through the analysis of various groups, the thesis is divided into five chapters relating to five different groups. The first examines the earl's relationship to the kings of England and their substitutes, the justiciars. The role of the crown in establishing and authorising lordly power has often been overlooked in traditional models. David Crouch in his most recent works has, however, argued lords created a new culture, called courtliness, which helped them gain advantage with the king and which stressed the need to do so.<sup>188</sup> The questions addressed in this chapter are whether Ranulf was part of this new cultural development? What relationship did he have with the various kings and justiciars he met? And how did those relationships affect his power?

The second chapter looks at the earl's relationships to the honorial baronage. This includes the magnates, or men like himself. The main concern of this chapter is whom did the earl choose to ally himself with? And what relationships did he establish with these individuals? Another concern of this chapter will also be to understand the role of the earl's own baronial counsellors and the relationships he establishes with them. The fact that these individuals existed is clear but requires some justification for why they should be seen as separate from individuals in other groups, as they are more often linked with other knights than counsellors in terms of their relationship to the lord.

The third chapter considers the relationship the earl had to *curials*. *Curials* are men who provide administrative service for the crown and the earl himself. The aim of this chapter will be to uncover the men whom the earl recruited and how he went about doing this. In the first instance, this is to assess whether as Peter Coss suggested, the lords began to subvert the royal administration in this period. However, the second aim of the chapter is to show that the earl gradually recruited a professional administrative body to run his own lordship more effectively.

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<sup>188</sup> Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, Ch. 2.

The fourth chapter considers the relationship the earl had to his tenants. This chapter will aim to show whether tenancy still has a role in understanding lordly power. This chapter will also address the nature of the earl's palatinate powers. This assessment of the role of tenants is however, broader than in previous models. It looks at tenancy as a relationship based on custom or law that can be seen not only in terms of knights, but also religious houses and urban settlements. Traditionally they have been studied quite separately, but there are a number of parallels between these relationships.

The fifth chapter considers the earl's relationship to locals, individuals tied to the earl based upon geographic factors. David Crouch put forward a new theory of lordly power which was based upon recruiting local knights, namely non-tenants.<sup>189</sup> However, this is a limited approach. This chapter therefore, also contains an investigation into the role other groups have in forming a focal point for the earl's local connections. These groups include his tenants, such as his towns, which can form an economic locality. This is a factor in lordly power that has not been considered previously in detail, although there are a few relevant studies.<sup>190</sup> The fifth chapter also looks at the earl's religious connections and the role they had for forming relationships in a cultural locality. These relationships were built with religious houses, but also with the wider community through his piety. By the end of the research a broader knowledge of the earl will be gained and a more interconnected and model like way to understand lordly power will be presented.

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<sup>189</sup> Crouch, 'From Stenton to Mcfarlane'.

<sup>190</sup> Coss, *Lordship*.

# Chapter 1

## The Crown:

### The Importance of Earl Ranulf's Relationships to the Kings of England and their Leading Officers.

In order to establish that relationships are the cornerstone of lordly power, this first chapter will examine one of the most important relationships Earl Ranulf or any lord had for their lordship, namely that with the crown. It is clear, furthermore, that the relationship the earl had with the crown would also be individual. Gerald of Wales (1147-c.1221) states:

For what prince is there, of the present day, who does not indiscriminately use the power granted to him from above for the gratification of every inclination of his mind, of every carnal desire and luxury, for every atrocity of a depraved despotism?<sup>1</sup>

Clearly for Gerald royal government in this period is personal and often governed in the interests of the crown itself. Gerald, however, is well known for perhaps a slightly partisan view.<sup>2</sup> Yet even if his estimation is exaggerated, it does have at its heart some truth. This chapter therefore follows a tried and tested chronological structure to better understand the relationships Earl Ranulf III of Chester had with the various kings and their regents over the period.<sup>3</sup>

Earl Ranulf had to form relationships with four different kings during his lifetime shown in the figure below, and these rulers had different personalities, which engendered different relationships. The earl's ties to the crown will therefore also

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<sup>1</sup> Translated in, Giraldus Cambrensis, 'Concerning the Instruction of Princes', in *The Church Historians of England*, ed. and trans. by Rev. Joseph Stevenson (London: Seeley's, 1858), v. pp. 133-241 (p. 133), for the original Latin see, Giraldus Cambrensis, 'De principis Instructione Liber', in *Giraldi Cambrensis Opera*, ed. by John Sherren Brewer, James Francis Dimock and George Fredric Warner (London: Longman, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1861-1891), viii., p. 5 (*Quis enim hodie princeps, qui non indultam desuper potestatem ad omnes animi motus, ad omnem carnis libitum ac luxum, ad omnem pravae tyrannidis atrocitatem..*)

<sup>2</sup> Cambrensis, 'Concerning the Instruction of Princes', pp. ix-x.

<sup>3</sup> This is a structure used profitably by Colin Veach to look at the relationship between Kings Richard and John and the de Lacys, see, Colin Veach, 'King and Magnate in Medieval Ireland: Walter De lacy, King Richard and King John', *Irish Historical Studies*, 37. 146 (2010), 179-202.

be compared to his contemporaries' relationships to the crown to provide context for the relationships.

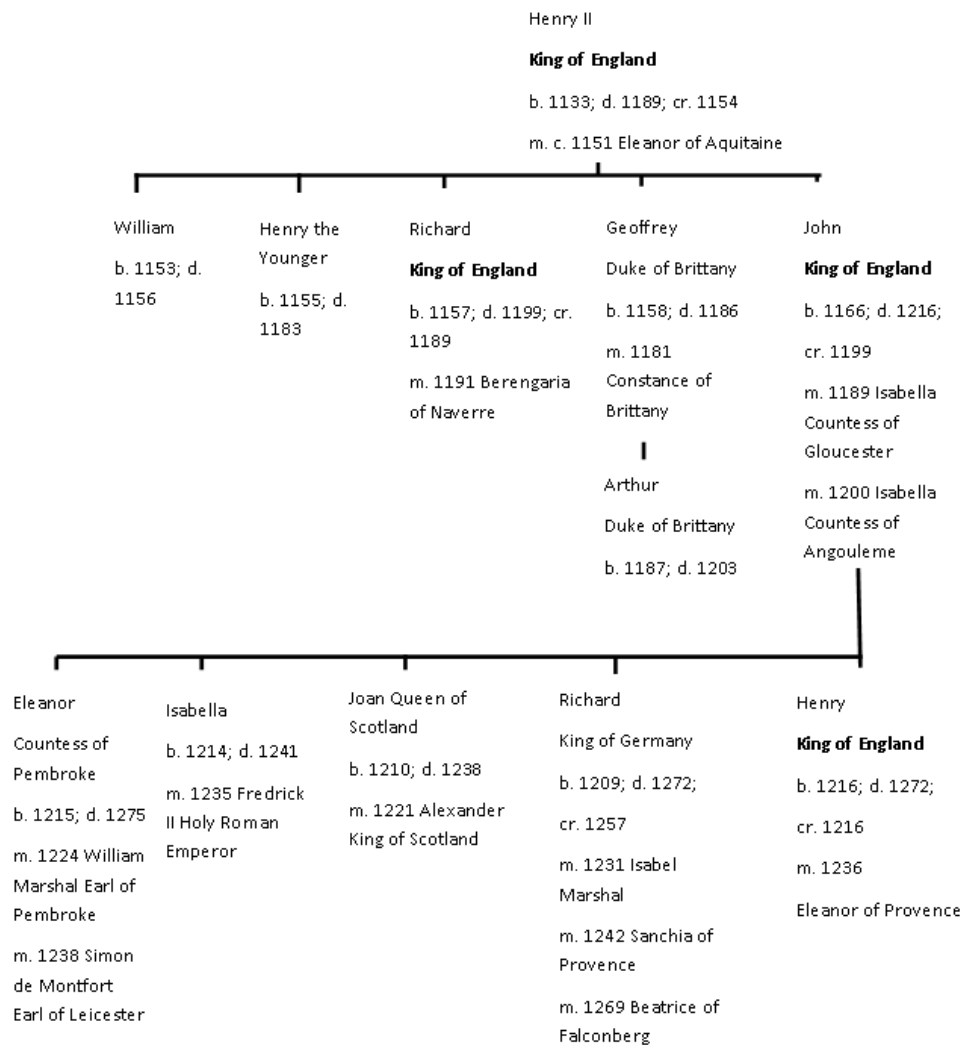


Figure 1 Kings of England

However, there were other more general changes over this period which affected those relationships as well that also need to be addressed. During this period the king's place at the pinnacle of society was gradually being reinforced by an expanding bureaucracy and the professionalization of government offices. There were, therefore, fewer opportunities for the earls to serve in royal government. Indeed, Ralph Turner suggests the earls and other great lords had a shifting role in

the twelfth century, moving from administrators and advisors to counsellors.<sup>4</sup> One side effect of these changes was that the earl also had to interact with royal officers, chief of which were the justiciars who will be considered alongside the earl's relationship to the crown in this chapter.

Yet, the main consequence of these developments in the royal government was that the lords' relationships with the crown became more standardised, more refined, and less volatile.<sup>5</sup> The royal court and politics gained more significance as lords became counsellors. The Anglo-Norman court is always understood to have drawn individuals for political, social, and economic advantage. Patronage was a key resource that could be gained by attending.<sup>6</sup> However, such courts and the behaviours of individuals in them were not rigid in form. The court was reformed by each Anglo-Norman king to their own needs.<sup>7</sup> However, standard expectations and relationships did arise over the Angevin period. David Crouch argues that a civilised behaviour called courtliness developed during the early part of this period and there were standard elements to this behaviour, which he terms a *habitus*, by 1180. In the Angevin period these behaviours would also formalise into a code called chivalry.<sup>8</sup> Courtliness is seen as much as a cause as a symptom of the social changes in this period. Historians now believe that courtliness, or courtly culture, was the main civilising element on a militaristic culture.<sup>9</sup> However, these ideals should also inform our understanding of the earl's relationship to the crown. Was Earl Ranulf, a courtier?

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<sup>4</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust: Administrative Service and Upward Mobility in Angevin England*, (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 4-15.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Jones sees this as one reason why rebellions were becoming less feasible, especially in regard to the reign of Henry II, see Thomas M. Jones, 'The Generation Gap of 1173-74: The War between the Two Henrys', *Albion*, 5. 1 (1973), 24-40 (pp. 39-40).

<sup>6</sup> C. Warren Hollister, 'Courtly Culture and Courtly Style in the Anglo-Norman World', *Albion*, 20. 1 (1988), 1-17 (p. 5).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 6-17.

<sup>8</sup> Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300* (Harlow: Routledge, 2005), Ch. 2, and also, pp. 15-16.

<sup>9</sup> Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, pp. 21-27. Maurice Keen was one of the first to suggest chivalry was created from two different forces, less influentially the influence of the church, and secondly and most influentially the need for knights to interact in their lords courts, Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*, (London: Yale University Press, 1984), Chs. 1 and 2.

## Earl Ranulf's Inheritance

Before examining the nature of Earl Ranulf's relationships to the various kings it will be necessary to consider any pre-existing influences that would have influenced how these relationships developed. One key influence is that of his family inheritance and his family's relationship to the crown.

The figure below provides a good outline of the descent of Earl Ranulf and the honour of Chester. The honour and earldom came into the family's hands through its grant to Earl Hugh d'Avranches. However, as C. P. Lewis has shown this was the result of chance. The lands had previously been held by Gerbod the Fleming. Gerbod had, however, abandoned them, though the reason he did so is uncertain.<sup>10</sup> Hugh d'Avranches was an heir to a leading Norman family and it can be presumed that the grant of Chester was made to him due to this.<sup>11</sup> William's replacement of the English aristocracy with a Norman one was a well known part of the invasion.<sup>12</sup> The creation of the honour under Hugh, has however, been deemed to have been created to also secure the northern end of the Welsh border.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, at its outset the earl's family had a relationship to the crown which was based upon existing power and the prospect of war.

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<sup>10</sup> C. P. Lewis, 'The formation of the honor of Chester, 1066-1100', in *Thacker*, pp. 37-54; for the grant and Gerbold's departure see OV, ii, p. 260; iii, p. 216.

<sup>11</sup> C. P. Lewis, 'Avranches, Hugh d', first earl of Chester, (d. 1101)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>12</sup> David Bates, *William the Conqueror* (Stroud, The History Press, 2008), pp. 183-84.

<sup>13</sup> Lewis, 'The formation of the honor of Chester', p. 61.



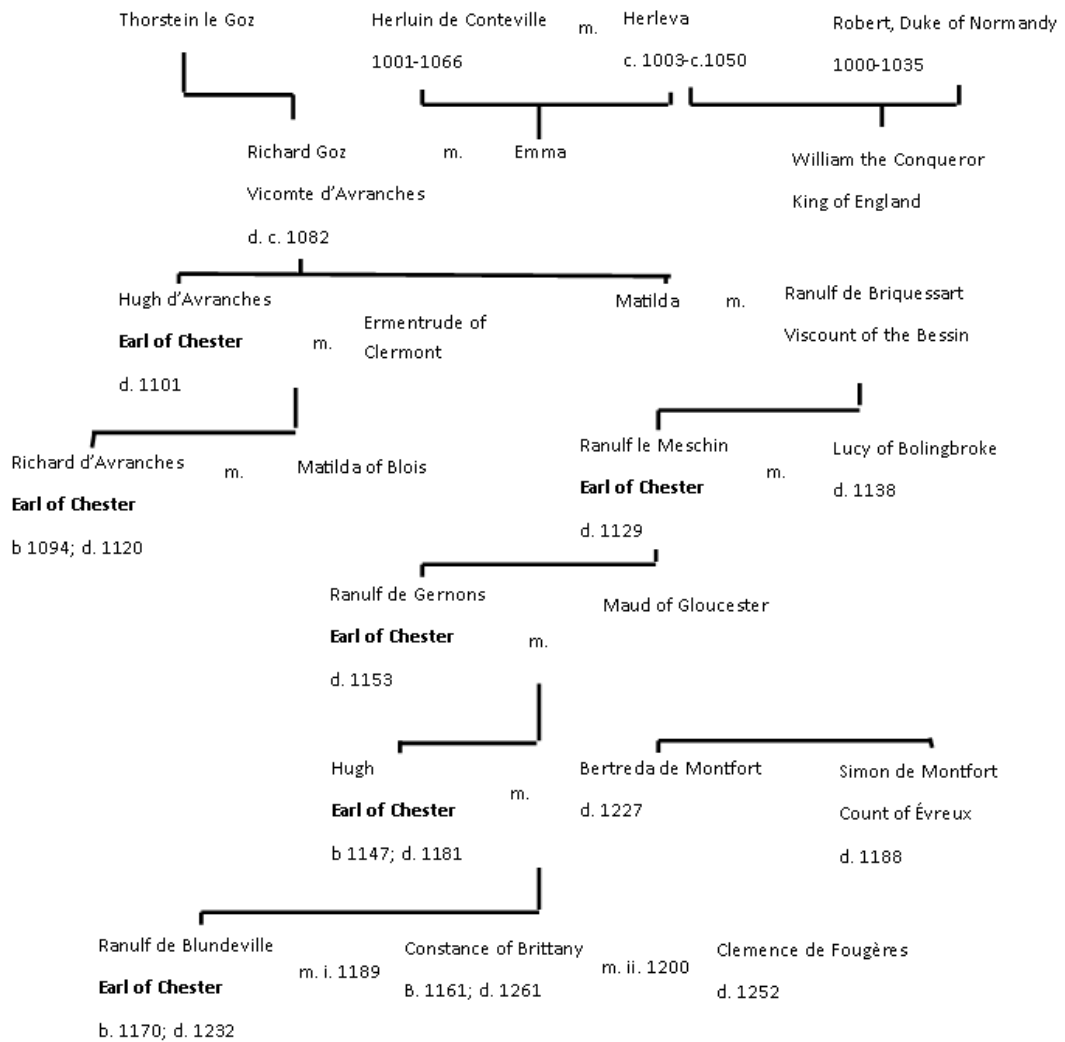


Figure 2 The Earls of Chester

Hugh as a royal appointee was unsurprisingly a royal supporter. It also helped that he had a familial relationship to King William in this regard. This support had immediate consequences for Hugh. After the conquest King William returned to the Continent, but his hold on England was unsteady and many barons rebelled in the North and there was rebellion in Wales. David Bates implies that while William saw to the matters personally on his return, he then left Hugh and other marcher lords thereafter to subdue the rebelling Welsh.<sup>14</sup> Hugh was remarked upon by William of Malmesbury as also supporting King William by fighting the Norse who

<sup>14</sup> Bates, *William the Conqueror*, p. 124; for a description of the entire period of turmoil see pp. 120-24.

also tried to land in Anglesey in the 10<sup>th</sup> year of William's reign.<sup>15</sup> His loyalty and the military purpose of his estates had therefore drawn him into the king's service.

In 1082 Hugh succeeded to his father's estates in Normandy, making his concerns cross Channel and raising his importance to the crown.<sup>16</sup> His political leanings were, however, to become more clouded due to this expansion in interests. In 1088 he initially remained loyal to King William II during the rebellion in which Robert, William's elder brother, attempted to obtain England as well as Normandy.<sup>17</sup> During the struggles between William and Robert, however, Emma Mason believes Hugh's loyalty shifted to their younger brother Henry. This was due to the fact Henry had become overlord to Hugh's lands in Normandy.<sup>18</sup> His loyalty was later to return to William, however, when William and Robert allied together to attack Henry in 1090-91.<sup>19</sup> However, this division of loyalties was probably made easier for Hugh when William called on Hugh along with his brother Henry, when fighting Robert Duke of Normandy in 1094.<sup>20</sup> Hugh would also fight for the crown against the French king in 1097.<sup>21</sup> Hugh, however may not have viewed himself as a subordinate at this time, and Emma Mason notes that he refused to act as a servant and a sword bearer for the crown wearing of William II in 1099.<sup>22</sup> This suggests he had begun to view himself with some independence.

King William II died in what is largely thought to have been an assassination.<sup>23</sup> Henry I his younger brother succeeded in 1100 and Hugh returned from the Continent to give him homage, and was deemed by Orderic Vitalis to be a royal counsellor.<sup>24</sup> Hugh is regarded as being one of the key supporters for Henry to

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<sup>15</sup> Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, no. 329 (pp. 570-71).

<sup>16</sup> Lewis, 'Avranches, Hugh d',

<sup>17</sup> For a description of these events see, Emma Mason, *The Life and Murder of William II of England* (Stroud, The History Press, 2008), Chs. 3-4; for Hugh's role see, p. 55, 60; OV, iv, p. 128.

<sup>18</sup> Mason, *The Life and Murder*, p. 82; for the grant see OV, iv. p. 221.

<sup>19</sup> Mason, *The Life and Murder*, pp. 90-91.

<sup>20</sup> C. Warren Hollister, *Henry I* (Yale: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 96-97

<sup>21</sup> OV, v. p. 215

<sup>22</sup> Mason, *The Life and Murder*, p. 204-05.

<sup>23</sup> For a discussion of the assassination see, Mason, *The Life and Murder*, pp. 221-31.

<sup>24</sup> OV, v. p. 298

obtain the crown over his elder brother Robert.<sup>25</sup> In this regard Hugh acts in accordance with his previous actions.

Unfortunately, Hugh d'Avranches died in 1101, but his son Richard d'Avranches was to succeed him.<sup>26</sup> C. Warren Hollister was to record that Richard retained Henry I's favour that was given to his father. He received Henry's niece Matilda in marriage.<sup>27</sup> Like Earl Ranulf III was to be, he was also initially raised in the royal court.<sup>28</sup> However, Richard was to die young in the White Ship disaster of 1120 when sailing back to England from Barfleur.<sup>29</sup> The White Ship disaster was particularly unfortunate for the kingdom as many aristocrats joined Richard, including the king's son and heir.<sup>30</sup>

Richard's inheritance passed to his cousin Ranulf Meschin.<sup>31</sup> Ranulf was a supporter to the crown and he had fought for Henry in the battle of Tinchebray and during the crisis of 1118-19.<sup>32</sup> His immediate family, like Hugh and Richard, had also been supported by the crown. During William II's reign they gained the lordship of Carlisle, undoubtedly as his ancestor Ranulf supported the king's campaign to secure the North.<sup>33</sup> Ranulf, however, is regarded as becoming a landed force in England on his marriage to Lucy, the heir of Ivo Taillebois sheriff of Lincoln.<sup>34</sup> His acquisition of the earldom of Chester also undoubtedly shows the crown's trust in him. However, to receive these lands the earl had to divest himself of lands in Cumberland and probably Lincolnshire.<sup>35</sup> Hollister accounts Ranulf as a loyal if not often present member of Henry's court, which is also echoed by Edmund King.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> For a discussion of Henry's acts to claim the throne see, Hollister, *Henry I*, Ch. 3, for Earl Hugh's part see, pp. 115-16, 132.

<sup>26</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 16-17; OV, v. p. 314.

<sup>27</sup> Hollister, *Henry I*, p. 57; for the marriage see *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 18-19; OV vi, p. 304.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, p. 236.

<sup>29</sup> Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, no. 419 (pp. 760-63); OV, v. p. 314; vi, p. 304.

<sup>30</sup> Hollister, *Henry I*, pp. 276-279

<sup>31</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 18-19.

<sup>32</sup> OV, vi. pp. 84, 88, 222-24.

<sup>33</sup> Mason, *The Life and Murder*, for the campaign see pp. 98-102

<sup>34</sup> OV, vi. p. 308.

<sup>35</sup> Hollister, *Henry I*, p. 342; see also Edmund King, 'Ranulf (I) [Ranulf le Meschin], third earl of Chester, (d. 1129)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>36</sup> Hollister, *Henry I*, pp. 342-343; King, 'Ranulf (I) [Ranulf le Meschin]'.

Ranulf died in 1129 leaving his wife and his son Ranulf de Gernons as successor to the earldom of Chester.<sup>37</sup>

Ranulf de Gernons was perhaps, unlike any previous member of the dynasty, the first to have a significant disagreement with the crown. The loss of the Cumbrian and Lincolnshire estates clearly rankled him. J. A. Green suggests that it must have been galling that King David of Scotland had captured Cumberland in the 1120s, and was beginning to push south into Lancashire by at least 1141. Green also suggests Ranulf may have seen Lancashire as his, due to the fact that his father had held these lands at some point between 1102 and 1113. In the civil war that was to come in Stephen's reign as King David is known to have supported Matilda, Ranulf naturally remained loyal to Stephen, at least initially.<sup>38</sup> This war however, would have a dramatic impact on the loyalty of the earl.

The year 1140 seems to have been Earl Ranulf's breaking point with regard to his loyalty to Stephen. Ranulf in 1140 seized Lincoln castle and despite initially being granted the castle was subsequently besieged by King Stephen. In the resultant battles Stephen was captured by Ranulf and his allies.<sup>39</sup> David Crouch believes that Stephen may have regretted his earlier grant to Earl Ranulf which included lands in Lincolnshire, Derby, but also notably the honour of Lancaster.<sup>40</sup> Ranulf's attack is, however, now seen as more territorial in purpose than political. Ranulf fought in alliance with his half-brother, the heir of Countess Lucy, William de Roumare.<sup>41</sup> P. Dalton has suggested that the half brothers even viewed Lucy's inheritance as a whole and fought to preserve its integrity.<sup>42</sup> Dalton argues Ranulf and his brother sought to dominate the area and obtain regalian-like powers.<sup>43</sup> Ranulf's biographer has suggested Ranulf and his half brother had a close relationship so this would not

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<sup>37</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 18-19; Hollister, *Henry I*, p. 343.

<sup>38</sup> J. A. Green, 'Earl Ranulf II and Lancashire', in *Thacker*, pp. 100-04; see also J. H. Round, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester', *EHR*, 10. 37 (1895), 87-91 (p. 87).

<sup>39</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, pp. 75-80; *Gesta Stephani*, (pp. 110-115); Malmesbury, *Historia Novella*, pp. 80-87; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', pp. 39-40; David Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2000), pp. 137-43

<sup>40</sup> Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 138-9

<sup>41</sup> Graeme White, Ranulf (II) [Ranulf de Gernon], fourth earl of Chester, (d. 1153)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>42</sup> P. Dalton, 'Ranulf II and Lincolnshire', in *Thacker*, pp. 110-11.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

be unbelievable.<sup>44</sup> Therefore, it is possible, to see the attempt here to be to create a cross-country consolidated lordship.<sup>45</sup> This incident does however show how past rights have influenced current actions and these rights will also feed into how Earl Ranulf III will later understand his claims.

King Stephen was released by the end of 1141, and the Empress Matilda had failed to secure her position in the interim.<sup>46</sup> Ranulf at this time returned to Stephen's allegiance and Crouch suggests that from then on he supported Stephen passively.<sup>47</sup> Round characterised it as armed neutrality.<sup>48</sup> Others are less certain and suggest he was still in revolt.<sup>49</sup> However, whichever side he was on Ranulf was concerned with local affairs during this period. Green notes that he was actively involved in Lancashire at this time, granting four charters.<sup>50</sup> But the earl also began undertaking local campaigns including against royal supporters, which would bring Stephen's wrath so that an accord would need to be made.<sup>51</sup> This may have been as a result of Stephen granting the king of Scotland areas of Lancaster that he had claimed by force.<sup>52</sup>

Earl Ranulf, however, was to become a leading part of Matilda and her son Henry's claim to the throne. Despite fighting for Stephen in 1146 in Cronne's view as Stephen's power looked to be waxing, he is suspected of treachery by the barons and imprisoned. On his release he attacked Lincoln and Coventry, drawing others to his cause.<sup>53</sup> Stephen in Huntingdon's view had taken back Lincoln castle in 1146 where he had failed in 1144.<sup>54</sup> In 1149 Ranulf was still in revolt and had joined

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<sup>44</sup> H. A. Cronne, 'Ranulf de Gernons, Earl of Chester, 1129-1153', *TRHS*, 4<sup>th</sup> Series, 20 (1937), 103-34 (pp. 108-09).

<sup>45</sup> Round, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester', p. 87.

<sup>46</sup> Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, Ch. 10.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 225-26.

<sup>48</sup> Round, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester', p. 89.

<sup>49</sup> Cronne, 'Ranulf de Gernons, Earl of Chester, 1129-1153', pp. 122-23; R. H. C. Davis, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester Revised', *EHR*, 75. 297 (1960), 654-60 (p. 658).

<sup>50</sup> J. A. Green, 'Earl Ranulf II and Lancashire', p. 105.

<sup>51</sup> For these events see Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 225-29; for the persecutions see *Gesta Stephani*, pp. 166-69.

<sup>52</sup> For an account of Lancaster in this period see, H. A. Cronne, 'The Honour of Lancaster in Stephen's Reign', *EHR*, 50. 200 (1935), 670-80.

<sup>53</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, p. 84-85; *Gesta Stephani*, (pp. 196-203); Cronne, 'Ranulf de Gernons, Earl of Chester, 1129-1153', pp. 126-27.

<sup>54</sup> Henry of Huntingdon, pp. 82-84.

Prince Henry making to attack York, then Lincolnshire.<sup>55</sup> In 1153 he was to receive a charter granting him rights that Crouch suggests would make him the most powerful man in England.<sup>56</sup> Green notes that it seems probable that Ranulf held Lancashire until his death.<sup>57</sup> These gains came, in Round's view, as a result of playing both sides in the dispute but Davis has suggested were to encourage more active support.<sup>58</sup> However, Ranulf's gains were soon to come to an end. In 1153 Stephen and the young Henry reached an accord. The outcome of which meant that earlier grants were much less secure. Ranulf's death in that year therefore led to his grants in Lincolnshire, Lancashire, and elsewhere to be divested from his sons inheritance.<sup>59</sup>

Earl Hugh was a minor on his inheritance. Born in 1147 he assumed his majority in 1162.<sup>60</sup> In 1173-74 like his father he seems to have felt betrayed by the crown and rebelled against King Henry II in support of Prince Henry the Younger.<sup>61</sup> He was supported in this action by a number of barons some of whom would later support his son.<sup>62</sup> One of the most defining events of Hugh's life which would have lasting importance for his son Ranulf III, however, was that he had married Bertrada de Montfort in 1170.<sup>63</sup> Bertrada was daughter to the earl of Leicester. The family had previous contact through a treaty in 1148 between Ranulf and Robert.<sup>64</sup> Bertrada would grant charters throughout Ranulf's lifetime, but it would be her connection to the Leicester earldom which would provide the largest impact on the earl's

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<sup>55</sup> *Gesta Stephani*, pp. 214-217, 220-221,

<sup>56</sup> Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, p. 263

<sup>57</sup> J. A. Green, 'Earl Ranulf II and Lancashire', p. 106.

<sup>58</sup> Davis, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester Revised', p. 655; Round, 'King Stephen and the Earl of Chester', pp. 89-91; see also in support of Round's view Cronne, 'Ranulf de Gernons, Earl of Chester, 1129-1153', p. 133.

<sup>59</sup> For a modern account of the peace and Ranulf's situation see, Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 270-280; for Ranulf's death see, *Gesta Stephani*, pp. 238-239; Torigni, 'Chronicle', p. 177.

<sup>60</sup> T. F. Tout, revised by Thomas K. Keefe, 'Hugh [Hugh of Cyfeiliog], fifth earl of Chester (1147-1181)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>61</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum', (p. 249); Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 18; *Chronica de Maillros*, pp. 85-87; Jordan Fantosme, 'Chronique de la Guerre', (pp. 214-15, 220-223); Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', (p. 176); Torigni, 'The Chronicle', (pp. 256-267).

<sup>62</sup> Tout and Keefe, 'Hugh [Hugh of Cyfeiliog], fifth earl of Chester'.

<sup>63</sup> Torigni, 'Chronicle', p. 247.

<sup>64</sup> *BC*, no. 110; see also an argument for dating 1149 in Crouch, *The Reign of King Stephen*, pp. 238, 253-54.

lordship. This dynastic connection would have as much influence on the earl as the connections that his ancestors had to Normandy, Lincolnshire and Lancashire.

## King Henry II

Earl Ranulf's first contact with the English crown was as a child. In 1170 Ranulf had been born to Earl Hugh of Chester and his wife Bertrada de Montfort.<sup>65</sup> However, by 1181 Earl Hugh was dead and Ranulf was a ward of King Henry II.<sup>66</sup> This experience must have meant the crown had a great impact on the earl's life during his childhood.

King Henry, of course, was not beyond using such situations to his advantage. In 1153 when the then earl of Chester died, his son, Ranulf's father, Earl Hugh was placed in the wardship of the crown. This wardship ensured that the grants Henry had made to the former earl could be ignored.<sup>67</sup> In addition, the king could also use the earl's lands for his own ends, thus in 1157 he used Chester as a base of operations to campaign against the Welsh.<sup>68</sup> In Ranulf's minority the earldom was also used as a base for campaigning against the Irish, as King John's expedition to Ireland used Pembroke and Chester as its departure points.<sup>69</sup> Yet the exploitative nature of Henry's rule should not be overestimated. Thomas Keefe has shown the king did not financially exploit the earls despite a reputation for doing so.<sup>70</sup> It is perhaps better to see such interventions as the expected practice of the time.

Earl Ranulf is perhaps fortunate that he starts his life within the court as from the king he was to obtain a prestigious and wealthy marriage. In around 1187 to 1189,

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<sup>65</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 24-25; the location of his birth is uncertain, some have argued due to his later surname de Blundeville that it was in Normandy at Blanville near the earl's lands of Avranches, see, B. E. Harris, 'Ranulf III, Earl of Chester', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society*, 58 (1975), 99-144.

<sup>66</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 28-29; Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici*, i. p. 277; Howden, *Chronica*, ii. p. 265.

<sup>67</sup> Wilfred Lewis Warren, *Henry II* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 364-65.; for the grant see *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum, 1066-1154*, ed. by Henry W. C. Davies et al., 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), iii. pp. 365-66.

<sup>68</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, pp. 69-70.

<sup>69</sup> For the expedition see Canterbury, 'Chronica', (p. 390); Torigni, 'Chronicle', (pp. 311-12); for Chester as a staging point see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>70</sup> Thomas K. Keefe, 'King Henry II and the Earls: The Pipe Roll Evidence', *Albion*, 13. 3 (1981), 191-222.

when his minority came to an end, King Henry married Ranulf to Constance of Brittany and thereby imposed Ranulf as a guardian over Constance's heir Arthur.<sup>71</sup> Arthur's father Geoffrey, King Henry's son, had died in 1186.<sup>72</sup> By this act, King Henry reinforced his claim to the lordship of Brittany, which the king of France had been trying to claim, and tied the earl to him.<sup>73</sup> The date of the marriage is somewhat confused, Warren believes it was in 1187, but Richard Eales thinks that it likely took place in 1188 to 1189 following the knighting of Ranulf by the king.<sup>74</sup> The earl's view of the marriage is uncertain, but it did bring him further lands and a place of power, and Geoffrey Barraclough suggests the earl may have been close to Henry.<sup>75</sup> It is unlikely that the marriage was anything other than political to the earl as his later actions would lead historians to characterise it as a loveless affair.<sup>76</sup>

There was therefore a mixture of a personal and an institutional connection between Earl Ranulf and King Henry II. Yet it is clear for the earl his relationship with the crown began by bringing him greater influence on the continent and in England. Ranulf undoubtedly received his rewards as part of his station, and perhaps was perceived by the king as a youngster who could be controlled.

Another side effect of the close contact of Earl Ranulf with the crown was that he was also drawn into contact with the burgeoning royal administration and the justiciar. Ranulf de Glanville was the last justiciar in King Henry's reign following Richard de Lucy's retirement in 1178. During his tenancy in the office it gained more stature and definition in the workings of the exchequer and courts.<sup>77</sup> He served after a period as a royal administrator, serving as a justice and sheriff before

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<sup>71</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 40-41. states the marriage was in 1188; Richard Eales, 'Ranulf (III) [Ranulf de Blundeville], Sixth Earl of Chester and First Earl of Lincoln (1170-1232), Magnate', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004) is a little more vague, while Warren suggests 1187 like Howden, see Warren, *Henry II*, p. 613.

<sup>72</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 336.

<sup>73</sup> Warren, *Henry II*, p. 613.

<sup>74</sup> Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici*, ii. p. 29; Eales, 'Ranulf (III)'; R. W. Eyton, *Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II* (London: Taylor & co., 1878), p. 278; Howden, *Chronica*, p. 325.

<sup>75</sup> *BC*, no. 229.

<sup>76</sup> Michael Jones, 'Constance, duchess of Brittany (c. 1161-1201)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>77</sup> Francis James West, *The Justiciarship in England, 1066-1232*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 45-63.



obtaining the justiciarship.<sup>78</sup> He is most well known as an administrator and is regarded as the author of the laws and customs of England.<sup>79</sup> His relationship to the young Earl Ranulf is limited, but there is evidence they knew each other in the royal court. The justiciar witnessed a royal charter with the young earl in 1189, which dealt with a dispute between the bishops of Hereford and Worcester.<sup>80</sup> Ranulf de Glanville was also a witness to a charter of Earl Hugh, Ranulf's father, and was therefore known to the family in some small way.<sup>81</sup> As Ranulf de Glanville was also the king's leading administrator it is probable he was also involved in the arrangement of the earl's marriage to Constance; he was certainly involved in John's expedition to Ireland and wars with the Welsh during Ranulf's minority.<sup>82</sup> His influence may have been to encourage the loyalty to the crown, which the earl was later to show. Russell suggests that Ranulf de Glanville viewed 'Henry II as a hero'.<sup>83</sup> However, the ties the young earl had established with the crown were soon to change. King Henry II died in 1189 and a new king and administration took charge.<sup>84</sup>

## King Richard I

Earl Ranulf's main entrance into political affairs began with his involvement in the coronation of King Richard I on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1189 at Westminster.<sup>85</sup> Yet Richard's initial concerns were preparing for a crusade, upon which he embarked in 1190.<sup>86</sup> Richard had taken the Cross in 1187 along with his father, King Henry, and the King

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<sup>78</sup> S. J. Bailey, 'Ranulf de Glanvill and His Children', *The Cambridge Law Journal*, 15. 2 (1957), 163-82 (pp. 163-66); John Hudson, 'Glanville [Glanvill], Ranulf de, (1120s?-1190)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Josiah Cox Russell, 'Ranulf de Glanville', *Speculum*, 45. 1 (1970), 69-79 (pp. 74-78).

<sup>79</sup> There is some dispute regarding his authorship, see, Russell, 'Ranulf De Glanville', (pp. 69-71); Ralph V. Turner, 'Who Was the Author of Glanvill? Reflections on the Education of Henry II's Common Lawyers', *Law and History Review*, 8. 1 (1990), 97-127.

<sup>80</sup> Geoffrey Vaughn Scammell, *Hugh du Puiset: A Biography of the Twelfth-Century Bishop of Durham*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 284.

<sup>81</sup> *BC*, no. 186.

<sup>82</sup> Hudson, 'Glanville [Glanvill], Ranulf de,'.

<sup>83</sup> Russell, 'Ranulf de Glanville', p. 71.

<sup>84</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 449; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 278-79; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 26.

<sup>85</sup> For the date of the coronation see, Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 457; Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 383; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 293-94; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>86</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 385-86.

of France, who also took the Cross in 1188, but the discord between Richard and his father prior to King Henry's death had delayed their departure.<sup>87</sup> Ranulf did not go with Richard in 1190, which left him for the first time at a distance from the crown.<sup>88</sup> This detachment was extended as King Richard was captured by Duke Leopold in Vienna and sold to the King of Germany who put him up for ransom.<sup>89</sup> The earl's loyalty to the king, however, cannot be doubted as he remained in the king's party when unrest was fomented. The earl therefore displayed his first practical choice as a courtier, loyalty to the crown, and in many respects followed his ancestors in doing so.

The royal party was made up of new officials chosen by King Richard, and there is evidence that the earl began ingratiating himself with the new regime from the very beginning. The chief justiciar Ranulf de Glanville had been replaced in 1189 along with Henry II's seneschal of Anjou.<sup>90</sup> Some have said that he was replaced as he was part of the old regime and King Richard wished to start anew, others that Ranulf was old and simply retired.<sup>91</sup> It is clear, however, that he went with the king on crusade.<sup>92</sup> King Richard had appointed both William de Mandeville, count of Aumale and earl of Essex, and Hugh du Puiset, bishop of Durham, jointly as justiciars.<sup>93</sup> William had been a loyal supporter of King Henry, however of the two Hugh had more contact with Earl Ranulf and the most potential to have been an ally.<sup>94</sup> Hugh had pursued a successful ecclesiastical career in England, first as

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<sup>87</sup> For the taking of the cross see, Ambrose, 'L'estoire', pp. 3-4; Canterbury, 'Chronica', (pp. 389, 406); 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', p. 32; *Chronica de Mailros*, pp. 96-97; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 272; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 23-24. For the discord see, Canterbury, 'Chronica', pp. 432-36, 438-39, 446-48; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', pp. 140-41; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 276-78; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 24-26.

<sup>88</sup> For the Kings departure see, Ambrose, 'L'estoire', p. 7; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 306-07.

<sup>89</sup> John Gillingham, *Richard I* (London: Yale University Press, 1999), pp. 230-39.

<sup>90</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 384-85.

<sup>91</sup> For a contemporary view of his retirement see Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', (pp. 302-03); see also Russell, 'Ranulf de Glanville', p. 70.

<sup>92</sup> He left with Ricard in 1191 and died while on crusade, see Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 396; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', p. 93; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 99; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 29.

<sup>93</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iii., p. 16; Newburgh only names Hugh du Puiset, see Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 303; see also Gillingham, *Richard I*, p. 109.

<sup>94</sup> For William see, Thomas K. Keefe, 'Mandeville, William de, third earl of Essex, (d. 1189)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

archdeacon of Winchester from 1139, and then bishop of Durham from 1153.<sup>95</sup> He had fought for the defence of Blois interests against King Henry in the civil war in King Stephen's reign, but had served King Henry until the young king's rebellion wherein he was seen to pick nobody's side and therefore fell afoul of the king.<sup>96</sup> In the first instance, he had shown loyalty in the second none. Yet the end of Henry's reign saw Hugh receive a reprieve and some official offices as an itinerant justice in 1188 to 1189 in Yorkshire, Cumberland and Northumberland.<sup>97</sup> It is at this time, March 1188, that the earl is known to have had contact with the bishop as they witnessed a royal charter together concerning a dispute between the bishops of Hereford and Worcester.<sup>98</sup> This early alliance was perhaps seen as a boon by Earl Ranulf as King Richard saw the bishop's rise, including granting him the earldom of Northumberland for 2000m. and the office of justiciar.<sup>99</sup> Ranulf's engagement with Hugh was undoubtedly due to the fact that he was, as G. W. S. Barrow describes him, a force to be reckoned with in the north whilst also being a presence at court.<sup>100</sup>

However, in November or December 1189, William de Mandeville died and a replacement to hold his portion of the office of justiciar was sought.<sup>101</sup> In March 1190 William Longchamp, bishop of Ely, was made justiciar of all of England excepting the lands north of the Humber.<sup>102</sup> Longchamp had been granted the bishopric of Ely by Richard, and had gained the chancellorship from him as well.<sup>103</sup> William soon outmanoeuvred Hugh du Puiset, and gained supreme control as Richard's chancellor, justiciar, and papal legate.<sup>104</sup> A small rebellion on Hugh's part

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<sup>95</sup> Scammel, *Hugh du Puiset*, pp. 5-21.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 27-28, 35-44.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid*, p. 284.

<sup>99</sup> Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', for the office of justiciar see p. 303, for the earldom pp. 304-305; see also Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 386; Scammell, *Hugh du Puiset*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>100</sup> G. W. S. Barrow, 'Puiset, Hugh du, earl of Northumberland, (c. 1125-1195)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>101</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 389; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum.*, p. 26.

<sup>102</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iii., p. 32.

<sup>103</sup> For the chancellorship see, Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 387; for the bishopric see, Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 458; Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 387; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum' p. 145; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 300; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>104</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 389; for the office of legate see *ibid.*, pp. 391-92; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 331; see also West, *The Justiciarship in England, 1066-1232*, p. 67.

failed and left the chancellor supreme.<sup>105</sup> The tentative ties Earl Ranulf had made would come to naught.

However, Prince John, with the aid of Hugh of Nonant, bishop of Coventry, was able to stir ill feeling towards Longchamp and forced his fall.<sup>106</sup> John is regarded as being one of the main obstacles to Longchamp, and possibly felt antagonised by the bishop as William sought confirmation from the Scottish king for his cousin, Arthur's, succession to the throne if Richard died on crusade.<sup>107</sup> Earl Ranulf had established a good relationship with the bishop of Coventry assisting him with his move against the priory of Coventry. Hugh ejected the monks of Coventry in early 1190 and began building to replace them with canons in 1193.<sup>108</sup> The earl's collusion in this matter can be seen in his charter of 1192 but may have begun earlier than this. This charter granted his recognition of the right of the new cathedral of Coventry in the chapel of St Michael (Coventry), and his gift of the other chapels pertaining to it.<sup>109</sup> Ranulf had therefore shown his support of the new institution, and by doing so, was manoeuvring to obtain an alliance with the instigator of that change. In this regard he was seeking to re-establish alliances with the new political party. These alliances also possibly extended to Prince John as John granted two charters to Chester as a prince, which included a confirmation of the rights of the city.<sup>110</sup> The originals of these charters are held at the Chester Record Office.<sup>111</sup> These show John's interest in the area, even if their exact date is uncertain, and perhaps a tentative link to Earl Ranulf.

Longchamp's ministrations eventually brought war with Prince John in 1191, outwardly in support of Gerard de Camville whose custody of Lincoln castle was

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<sup>105</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 390-91.

<sup>106</sup> Gillingham, *Richard I*. pp. 227-29.

<sup>107</sup> Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 335-36; King Richard had nominated Arthur as his heir before he left on crusade, see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 25.

<sup>108</sup> The ousting of the monks was quite significant event for the clergy and therefore appears alongside other events prominently in the chronicles, see, Canterbury, 'Chronica', pp. 461-73, 488-89; Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 392, 440-43; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 393-96;

<sup>109</sup> Listed in BC, no. 219; to be found in *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), pp. 20-1 (no. 13); see also *English Episcopal Acta 17: Coventry and Lichfield, 1183-1208*, ed. by M. J. Franklin (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1998), p. xl.

<sup>110</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 2-3.

<sup>111</sup> Images of these grants can be found in Appendix 3.

being contested.<sup>112</sup> Gerard can later be shown to have had ties to Earl Ranulf further indicating how he may be linked to John in this period.<sup>113</sup> This initial revolt ended in a truce, however John retained the castles he had taken at Nottingham and Tickhill.<sup>114</sup> The truce did not last long though, as the bishop arrested John's brother on entry to the kingdom.<sup>115</sup> This sparked a larger controversy, and many barons joined John's side. Ralph Turner suggests the baronage were critical of Langton in part as he was a foreigner.<sup>116</sup> Longchamp was thrown out of office and the country, which he left in 1192.<sup>117</sup> It is uncertain what role Ranulf played in these events, but it is feasible he joined John and Hugh du Nonant along with the other barons in opposition to Longchamp due to his earlier alliances.

With Longchamp out of office, Walter of Coutances, an Englishman and man with administrative experience, was invested as Longchamp's replacement by the council of barons and Prince John.<sup>118</sup> At this time the burgeoning alliance Earl Ranulf had formed with Prince John and Bishop Hugh seems to have collapsed. Richard was captured on his return from crusade in 1192 by the Duke of Austria and ransomed by the King of Germany.<sup>119</sup> By mid-January 1193 rebellion and invasion was brewing, as with Richard captured and put up for ransom, the French king was readying for war with the help of the Count of Boulogne and Prince John.<sup>120</sup> Richard, who had heaped rewards on his brother after his coronation was

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<sup>112</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 406-07; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 337-38; Gerard had received confirmation of custody of the castle in 1189, see, *Ancient charters, Royal and Private, Prior to 1200*, ed. by John Horace Round (London: Pipe Roll Society, 1888), no. 55.

<sup>113</sup> See below pp. 151-52, 253-54, 296-97.

<sup>114</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 407-10; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 338-39;

<sup>115</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', pp. 504-07; Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 410-13.

<sup>116</sup> Ralph V. Turner, 'Longchamp, William de, (d. 1197)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>117</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', pp. 507-08; Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 413-19; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 340-43, 346.

<sup>118</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 421; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 344- ; for a discussion of Walter see, West, *The Justiciarship in England*, pp. 74-78.

<sup>119</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 513; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' i. pp. 382-383, 386-388; Ambrose, 'L'estoire', pp. 329-32; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 53-60; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', pp. 441-44); for the king's movements while in captivity see, Hans Eberhard Mayer, 'A Ghost Ship Called Frankenef: King Richard I's German Itinerary', *EHR*, 115. 460 (2000), 134-44.

<sup>120</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', (pp. 514-15); Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 61-62; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' (pp. 389-91); see also Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp. 235-36.

therefore betrayed.<sup>121</sup> This time John was not trying to remove a royal officer, but was instigating a move to gain control of the kingdom. The Council of England declared John's estates forfeit and the bishops excommunicated him.<sup>122</sup> Prince John was now no longer an advisable ally.

By Christmas 1193, Hubert Walter was named justiciar to succeed Walter de Coutances.<sup>123</sup> Hubert like Walter had experience in government and his ministrations and royal support were to give the office its importance as he would impress new methods of government to meet the monetary requirements of the crown.<sup>124</sup> Upon his assumption of the role of justiciar, however, Hubert was first pressed with a revolution. Therefore, he was extensively involved in conquering John's castles. In this endeavour, Earl Ranulf assisted him. In 1194 at the same time of Richard's release from captivity, Earl Ranulf can be found besieging Nottingham castle with Hubert Walter. This siege ended with the capitulation of the castle as the king, having returned from captivity, joined the assault.<sup>125</sup> The earl therefore for the first time acted as a military leader in the king's army, and helped secure, and enforce Richard's legal rights to the crown.

With Richard's return, Earl Ranulf's support of the regime continued. Earl Ranulf once more participated in the king's crown-wearing procession: a procession that provided a visible display of royal control. Yet, unlike at Richard's first coronation, Earl Ranulf, rather than carrying the crown, carried one of the three swords of state emphasising his military support of the crown.<sup>126</sup> Ranulf also had a more practical role following the end of the rebellion, as he was also present at court witnessing

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<sup>121</sup> For the rewards Richard gave John, see Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 385; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', pp. 301-02

<sup>122</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iii., pp. 236-38.

<sup>123</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 523.

<sup>124</sup> West, *The Justiciarship in England*, pp. 78-96.

<sup>125</sup> For the King's release see, Canterbury, 'Chronica', (p. 523); *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 42-43; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 62-63; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', pp. 445-46; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', pp. 404-06; for the battle of Nottingham and at the other strongholds of John see, Canterbury, 'Gesta regum', pp. 523-24; *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 42-43; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 63; Howden, *Chronica*, pp. 238-39; 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', p. 446; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' i. pp. 406-08;

<sup>126</sup> For the coronation see, Canterbury, 'Gesta regum', pp. 524-27; *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 42-45; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' i. p. 408; for Earl Ranulf's role see, Howden, *Chronica*, iii, p. 248.

royal charters, and therefore standing as guarantor for their contents.<sup>127</sup> He had in effect now become a royal counsellor.

The revolt against Richard in England had also been mirrored in his lands in France. The French king had returned from crusade in 1192.<sup>128</sup> Seeing opportunity he began capturing lands and castles in Normandy prior to Richard's return and following his capture in 1193.<sup>129</sup> Such endeavours were redoubled when it was certain Richard was to be released.<sup>130</sup> Following the subjugation of the rebellion in England, Earl Ranulf followed King Richard to Normandy to continue the fight against the remaining rebels and address the French incursions, likely as part of the large English force he had raised.<sup>131</sup> In summer 1194 Richard campaigned into the Touraine and Loire valley.<sup>132</sup> However, peace was eventually made with the French king and a truce was declared in August 1194 for one year.<sup>133</sup> John who had fled to the Continent soon returned to his brother's side along with his compatriot Hugh, Bishop of Coventry.<sup>134</sup> Earl Ranulf joined the king once hostilities resumed in 1195 as he was excused from a scutage in England and Normandy as he was serving in person.<sup>135</sup> It is also possible that he met Richard at his castle in St-James-de-Beuvron in Normandy in the same year.<sup>136</sup> His military capabilities like those of his ancestors were again put to the service of the crown. Such service would also become useful to the king soon after, for while war was interrupted by another

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<sup>127</sup> L. Landon, *The Itinerary of King Richard I: With Studies on Certain Matters of Interest Connected with his Reign*, (Lincoln: printed for the Pipe Roll Society, 1935), pp. 88-91.

<sup>128</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', pp. 429-30; Ambrose, 'L'estoire', pp. 140-143; Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 513; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' pp. 357-59.

<sup>129</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 100; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 61-62; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' i. p. 389-90; see also Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp. 240-43.

<sup>130</sup> Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. pp. 402-03.

<sup>131</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, pp. 101-02; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. p. 417; for the reconquest from the king's perspective see, Gillingham, *Richard I*, Chs. 16 and 17.

<sup>132</sup> For the campaign see, Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' ii. pp. 418-20; for Ranulf's role see, Iain Soden, *Ranulf de Blondeville: The First English Hero* (Stroud: Amberley Publishing Limited, 2013), p. 27.

<sup>133</sup> For the peace treaty of 1194 see, Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' ii. pp. 420-22.

<sup>134</sup> 'Itinerarium Peregrinorum', p. 449; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum' ii. pp. 423-24.

<sup>135</sup> Pipe Roll, Richard, v. pp. 119, 210, 258; Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 7.

<sup>136</sup> V. Menard, *Histoire Religieuse Civile et Militaire de Saint-James de Beuvron* (Avranches: Alfred Perrin, 1897), p. 32.

brief period of peace it was sparked once more in the New Year, notably including a Breton revolt.<sup>137</sup>

The Breton revolt was a personal issue for Earl Ranulf. His wife Constance, the Countess of Brittany, had had a great deal of independence, having had custody of her son Arthur, future heir to Brittany, but also King Richard's designated heir and nephew. In 1196, King Richard decided to take more personal control of Brittany and its heir, so he summoned both to court.<sup>138</sup> As Constance and Arthur were travelling to Rouen at the summons of the king, Ranulf took control of the situation and ambushed them at the Couësnon capturing Constance.<sup>139</sup> Iain Soden believes this was a plan made between the earl and the king.<sup>140</sup> However, John Gillingham suggests that he may in fact have interfered in royal plans; other historians such as Richard Heiser and Ralph Turner are more undecided on this point.<sup>141</sup> The earl was certainly consistently at the king's side from this point onwards, as he witnessed royal charters between 1196 and 1199.<sup>142</sup> In addition, he was present at the king's court on the Continent from 1196 and at Chateau Gaillard in 1197, probably to defend the building works of Richard's prize castle.<sup>143</sup> Therefore, it is less likely that he would actively fight against the king's interests. However, Arthur was not captured, and fled to the French king and revolt broke out in Brittany.<sup>144</sup> In 1197, King Richard, probably along with Ranulf, led an army into eastern Brittany forcing the rebels to capitulate.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> For an account of the period see, Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 455-64.

<sup>138</sup> Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 463-64; Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp. 297-98.

<sup>139</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iv. p. 7.

<sup>140</sup> Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, pp. 28-29.

<sup>141</sup> John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), p. 260; Ralph V. Turner and Richard R. Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart: Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189-1199* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 234.

<sup>142</sup> *Calendar of Documents preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 1, 918-1206*, edited by John H. Round (London: Printed for HMSO by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1899), p. 495.

<sup>143</sup> Landon, *Itinerary of King Richard I*, pp. 113, 118-19, 134.

<sup>144</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iv., p. 7.

<sup>145</sup> For the invasion see, Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. p. 491; F. M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy, 1189-1204: Studies in the History of the Angevin Empire*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1961), p. 111.



The earl received in 1198 a significant reward for the services he had done for Richard. Ranulf's cousin the earl of Lincoln had died, and he received his lands by the grant of the king.<sup>146</sup> It is perhaps at this stage that we can see the earl begin to enter more directly into the political sphere.

## King John

King Richard died in 1199, in unclear circumstances.<sup>147</sup> His brother John reacted quickly to the news gaining the dukedom of Normandy and then the crown of England.<sup>148</sup> Ranulf supported Richard's brother John over his own step-son Arthur as heir. He swore fealty to John in 1199 and attended John's coronation.<sup>149</sup> Ralph Turner implies that John may have bought him and others over with promises, but the family dimension would have some influence for Earl Ranulf.<sup>150</sup> It is evident that there was no strong bond between Ranulf and his wife, as following this development she divorced him.<sup>151</sup> However, as Iain Soden suggests, Ranulf may still have been uncertain of John.<sup>152</sup>

John, unlike Richard was known to have been more unscrupulous. The earl's relationship to the new king could not have been helped by the fact that Arthur's fortunes had increased. John had recognised him as Duke of Brittany and Earl of Richmond.<sup>153</sup> These were territories Ranulf had some control of until this point. It is apparent that John may equally have been suspicious of Ranulf and his actions against him during Richard's captivity. It is known that Ranulf had to re-state his allegiance for a second time that year at Northampton.<sup>154</sup> However, Ranulf did

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<sup>146</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 7.

<sup>147</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 94-96; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 103; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia, Ad 1-1297', p. 27; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 503-04; for a commentary on Richard's death see, John Gillingham, 'The Unromantic Death of Richard I', *Speculum*, 54. 1 (1979), 18-41.

<sup>148</sup> 'Annales de Margam', p. 24; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', pp. 198-99; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 99-100; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 103; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 27; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 504-05.

<sup>149</sup> For the coronation and Earl Ranulf's role see, Howden, *Chronica*, iv. pp. 88-90; *RChart.*, p. 31.

<sup>150</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 50-51.

<sup>151</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 46; Howden, *Chronica*, iv. p. 97

<sup>152</sup> Soden, *Ranulf de Blondeville*, pp. 34-35.

<sup>153</sup> Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. p. 506; Richard Eales, 'Ranulf (III)'; Warren, *Henry II*, p. 613.

<sup>154</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 198-99.

stand surety for the king's alliance with the count of Flanders, suggesting some level of trust.<sup>155</sup>

The earl's concerns in the initial years of King John's reign remained on the Continent. Following his divorce from Constance, Ranulf searched for a second wife. Ranulf found a match in Clemence sister of Geoffrey de Fougères a neighbouring family to his lands in Normandy. William de Humet, Clemence's uncle, paid the king £200 to ensure his goodwill and for the wedding to proceed.<sup>156</sup> The marriage went ahead and Ranulf was re-married in 1200.<sup>157</sup> There is some sense that difficulties arose over the dowry as an agreement had to be made between Ranulf and the family.<sup>158</sup> Yet in this alliance we can see that the king's attitude had thawed as he did give Ranulf the castle of St Pierre de Semilly near St Lô, held then by the de Humets.<sup>159</sup> This grant was undoubtedly given due to the earl's recent marriage and Alexander suggests that it shows the earl and king were on good terms in this period.<sup>160</sup>

Ranulf was also with the king's court in 1200 as John toured his continental domains.<sup>161</sup> He followed the court back to England as well in 1201.<sup>162</sup> This would suggest that he had taken up a similar role to his position under Richard, which he was to show in the following year. War broke out in 1202 between King John and the king of France over John's refusal to appear at court.<sup>163</sup> The earl once more supported the crown and, for instance, witnessed King John's truce with the Count of Tours in November.<sup>164</sup> However, it seems unlikely, as Iain Soden believes, that Ranulf may have been complicit with the king in some of the more despicable elements of the war: namely the murder of Arthur.<sup>165</sup> Arthur had revolted following

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<sup>155</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 30-31.

<sup>156</sup> *ROF*, p. 43; the debt was still unpaid by 1205, *Pipe Roll, John*, xix., p. 203; however, by 1206 it was only 75m. *Pipe Roll, John*, p. 91.

<sup>157</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 46-47; Howden, *Chronica*, iv. p. 97.

<sup>158</sup> *BC*, no. 318.

<sup>159</sup> *Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae Sub Regibus Angliae*, ed. by Thomas Stapleton, 2 vols (London: Society of Antiquaries of London, 1840-44), i. pp. ccxlii-ccxliii; *RLP*, pp. 1, 7.

<sup>160</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, pp. 14-15.

<sup>161</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 57, 69, 71, 73-74.

<sup>162</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 84 at Lincoln, p. 89 at Broilton.

<sup>163</sup> For the war, see, Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 135-141, 143-144.

<sup>164</sup> *RLP*, p. 21.

<sup>165</sup> For the murder of Arthur see, 'Annales de Margam', p. 27; Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, p. 41.

his mother's death, and joined with the French king. He was captured by King John in 1203 and is believed to have been killed soon after perhaps even by the king's own hand.<sup>166</sup> Soden's argument that the earl was involved in the murder rests on the attitude of Delapré Abbey. He suggests that the members of the house were hostile to Earl Ranulf in 1220 when he was deciding the advowson of Barton abbey.<sup>167</sup> Soden points out Delapré Abbey was founded out of St Marie du Pré the place where Arthur's body was reputedly buried and suggests that this may be the reason why.<sup>168</sup> It is a slightly flimsy argument however, and does not tie in with how the earl was generally treated. Indeed, on 11 April 1203 Ranulf was charged with treason along with Fulk Paynell.<sup>169</sup> King John took back his castle of Semilly.<sup>170</sup> This shows that the king had become distrustful of the earl.

Yet the earl must have been able to convince the king of his loyalty as on 8 May 1203 John reversed the confiscation.<sup>171</sup> John also finally confirmed the earl's dowry holdings in Long Bennington and Foston (Lincolnshire).<sup>172</sup> In addition, in May 1203 he granted Ranulf the royal castle of Avranches to defend.<sup>173</sup> Ranulf also again began to attend the king's court in May and in August 1203.<sup>174</sup> The war did not go well however, and Ranulf probably returned to England with John later that same year. From the beginning of 1204 to August of that year Ranulf was with the royal court in England again.<sup>175</sup> Before the end of 1204 Ranulf was also one of the few individuals to have his court case brought before the barons rather than have the

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<sup>166</sup> Michael Jones, 'Arthur, duke of Brittany, (1187–1203)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>167</sup> *Rotuli Hugonis de Welles, episcopi Lincolniensis, 1209-35*, edited by W. P. W. Phillimore, and F. N. Davis, 3 vols. (London: issued by the Lincoln Record Society by W.K. Morton & sons, 1907-14), ii, p. 109.

<sup>168</sup> F. M. Powicke, 'King John and Arthur of Brittany', *EHR*, 24. 96 (1909), 659-74.

<sup>169</sup> *Rotuli Normanniae in Turri Londinensi Asservati: Johanne Et Henrico Quinto, Angliæ Regibus*, ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Printed by G. Eyre and A. Spottiswoode, 1835), pp. 96-97.

<sup>170</sup> *RLP*, p. 28. *Rotuli Normanniae*, pp. 96-97.

<sup>171</sup> *RLP*, p. 29.

<sup>172</sup> *Rotuli de Liberate ac de Misis et Praestitis: Regnante Johanne*, ed. by Thomas Duffus Hardy (London: Printed by G. E. Eyre and A. Spottiswoode, 1844), p. 44.

<sup>173</sup> *RLP*, p. 30.

<sup>174</sup> *RChart.*, p. 104, 110, 113, 114.

<sup>175</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 118, 122, 125-128, 131, 134-35.

case more arbitrarily decided by the king as usual, which would suggest that the crown was trying to maintain his loyalty in this period.<sup>176</sup>

It was only in late 1204 that Ranulf returned to the Continent, but the French king conquered all of Normandy.<sup>177</sup> As a cross border landowner Earl Ranulf felt himself in a perilous position at this juncture. Ranulf clearly wanted to try to retain his Norman lands but also needed to assure the English king of his loyalty. John was suspicious of Ranulf and on 14 December seized all Ranulf's estates in England.<sup>178</sup> Such seizures were common in the period and seem to have progressed in line with suspicion of treason by the king.<sup>179</sup> Ranulf was perhaps suspected, as Ralph Turner suggests, because his brother-in-law, Fougères, had deserted.<sup>180</sup> At this time, it was thought that the French king may invade so there was some immediacy to the threat.<sup>181</sup> King John obviously found the earl's conduct suspicious, yet Ranulf succeeded in obtaining safe passage to see the king on 6<sup>th</sup> January 1205.<sup>182</sup> He was slightly late meeting John on the 16<sup>th</sup> but must have re-professed his allegiance for he was back witnessing charters while the court was at Lambeth that day, and continued to stay with the court until at least April.<sup>183</sup> That the earl was again being courted is also shown by the fact that in May 1205 King John granted Ranulf most of Richmond honour in Yorkshire.<sup>184</sup> It is possible that this grant was also due in part to aid John's mustering of a force to invade France, which in the end came to naught.<sup>185</sup>

Following the loss of Normandy, Ranulf received numerous gifts. His loyalty and experience in war undoubtedly placed him in a favourable position. He was granted

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<sup>176</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 200.

<sup>177</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 144; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 105.

<sup>178</sup> J. C. Holt, *The Northerners: A Study in the Reign of King John*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 205.

<sup>179</sup> For a detailed look at how English lands owned by Norman lords who had changed allegiance were treated see, Tony K. Moore, 'The Loss of Normandy and the Invention Of "Terre Normannorum," 1204', *EHR*, 125. 516 (2010), 1071-1109.

<sup>180</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 123

<sup>181</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with Its Continuation', p. 96; Wilfred Lewis Warren, *King John*, (London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 110-11.

<sup>182</sup> *RLP*, p. 48.

<sup>183</sup> *RChart.*, p. 148.

<sup>184</sup> *RLP*, p. 51; 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 393.

<sup>185</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 256; see also Warren, *King John*, pp. 111-13.

full receipt of all the confiscated Norman lands in his earldom of Lincoln, in April 1207 the honour of Lancaster, and in July 1207 the lands of Simon de Montfort Earl of Leicester.<sup>186</sup> This represents a reversal of the attitude of the king who now relied upon the earl, and as a result massively increased the size of the earl's lordship. The earl's interest in these lands undoubtedly came from his ancestors and mother's claims showing the influence of his past on his present.

Such royal favour, however, required the earl to attend the king at court. Between 1205 and 1207 Ranulf is found at the royal court witnessing royal charters.<sup>187</sup> It is perhaps at this point that the earl was truly beginning to become the courtier again and comes to know the leading officials in the new royal government. Ranulf witnessed 33 royal charters with Geoffrey fitz Peter, the new justiciar, between 1201 and 1209.<sup>188</sup> Yet war was also brewing once more and this is possibly the reason why Ranulf was kept so close. In March 1206, the king ordered the annual timber quota for the royal forest of Salcey (Northamptonshire) to be granted to the earl, probably for a royal building project.<sup>189</sup> In the same year, the earl joined the king on his expedition to Poitou.<sup>190</sup> The earl's role as military leader was thus recognised once more. This would of course also have an impact on his own holdings, as recruitment for the war would have meant taxation or recruitment of men for fighting.

The earl's relationship to his ecclesiastical ties at this time would, however, have been tested by his relationship to the crown. Following Archbishop Hubert's death in 1205, King John interfered in the election of the new Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton, which led to the Pope imposing an interdict in 1208.<sup>191</sup> Many still

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<sup>186</sup> *Calendarium Rotulorum Patentium in Turri Londinensi*, ed. by Samuel Ayscough and Thomas Astle (London: Printed by G. Eyre and A. Strahan, 1802), p. 6.

<sup>187</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 141-143, 148 (1205), 165 (1206), 167-68, 170-175 (1207); *RLP*, p. 61-62.

<sup>188</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 84, 89, 112-13, 118, 122, 125-28, 131, 135, 142-43, 148, 165, 167-68, 172, 173-74, 183, 185-86.

<sup>189</sup> *RLC*, i, p. 66.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, i, pp. 74, 84.

<sup>191</sup> 'Annales de Margam', pp. 28-29; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 209; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', pp. 98-101, 106-107; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 107; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 29-30

followed the king though, even despite the fact he was excommunicated in 1211.<sup>192</sup> Such a response is not unexpected. King Richard had also had an interdict pronounced upon his lands due to his building of Chateau Gaillard on land the Church had declared as neutral. This interdict encompassed eastern Normandy and was only lifted in 1198, as it was ineffective as building work carried on.<sup>193</sup> Therefore, in this period, Ranulf still acted as one of John's counsellors, occasionally witnessing his charters.<sup>194</sup> By 1213 John decided to repair his relationship with the Church. Ranulf may have played a part in this decision as he acted as a surety for King John in this matter and between 1213 and 1214 he witnessed the king sign England over to the Pope.<sup>195</sup> An act that is reminiscent of how King Richard signed England over as a fief to the German King to obtain his freedom.<sup>196</sup> The Church did not necessarily see Ranulf in a bad light for following the king in this period though. Roger of Wendover lists evil counsellors of the king, and Ranulf is not among them.<sup>197</sup>

Ranulf's unsullied reputation during the interdict may, however, be due to the fact that he was not often present at court during its enforcement. In 1208 he was at court in January and October and once in April 1209.<sup>198</sup> After this date he was more involved in King John's military expeditions. In 1209 King John attempted a campaign against Scotland, which resulted in a peace being made in 1210 and the Scottish king sending hostages to John.<sup>199</sup> Earl Ranulf seems to have been involved in this campaign as he was an ambassador sent by King John to the Scottish King

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<sup>192</sup> For the excommunication see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 32; for the interdict, its lack of significance politically, and the lead up to it see, Warren, *King John*, Ch. 5, and especially pp. 181-91.

<sup>193</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 105; John Gillingham, *Richard the Lionheart*, (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1989), p. 263.

<sup>194</sup> *RLP*, p. 98; Turner, *King John*, pp. 73-74, 182.; Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, iii. pp. 281-83.

<sup>195</sup> For the end of the interdict see, 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', pp. 223-24; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 166; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 36; for the earl's role see, *RLP*, pp. 98-99, 114; *English Historical Documents, 1189-1327*, ed. by Harry Rothwell (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1975), p. 307; *Select Letters of Pope Innocent III Concerning England, 1198-1216*, ed. by C.R. Cheney and W.H. Semple (Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1953), no. 67.

<sup>196</sup> Gillingham, *Richard I*, p. 248.

<sup>197</sup> Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, iii. pp. 237-38.

<sup>198</sup> *RLP*, p. 78; *RChart.*, pp. 183, 185.

<sup>199</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', pp. 102-03; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus De Dunstaplia', p. 33.

along with other loyal men.<sup>200</sup> In 1210 John also set off on a campaign in Ireland, accompanied by William Marshal and the young Earl Henry II of Warwick with his guardian Thomas Basset.<sup>201</sup> This campaign, in part, may have been as a result of the king's punitive measures against the Briouze family who were Welsh Marcher lords and had fled to Ireland.<sup>202</sup> It is uncertain how Ranulf reacted to these events. William de Briouze would have been a familiar figure to the earl as they had frequented the court together.<sup>203</sup> However, at this stage in his life for whatever reason Ranulf decided not to interfere as he would do later.

Earl Ranulf was most extensively involved in the Welsh campaigns and had good reason to be so. In 1209 while he was re-building a castle at Deganwy, which Llywelyn ab Iorwerth had demolished, and one at Holywell, his lands were again attacked by Llywelyn.<sup>204</sup> The king supported the earl in his endeavours and commanded Ranulf's men to support him in the war against the Welsh.<sup>205</sup> Although the fact that this command was needed suggests that there was antipathy to the endeavour in Ranulf's lordship. In 1210, though, with the earl of Salisbury, Ranulf went on the offensive.<sup>206</sup> The earl, like his father Hugh, was a stalwart figure in the defence of England from the Welsh.<sup>207</sup> The king undertook a campaign in Wales on his return to England in 1211 led by Geoffrey fitz Peter in which Ranulf participated, and was obviously supportive of Ranulf's continued actions against the Welsh thereafter as he gave Ranulf 8 hogs heads of wine and four to the justiciar of

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<sup>200</sup> *RLP*, p. 91.

<sup>201</sup> 'Annales de Margam', p. 30; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 105; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 164; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 109; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 32; for a recent analysis of the campaign see, Sean Duffy, 'King John's Expedition to Ireland, 1210: The Evidence Reconsidered', *Irish Historical Studies*, 30. 117 (1996), 1-24. for Earl Henry, see Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 13.

<sup>202</sup> W. Holden Brock, 'King John, the Braoses, and the Celtic Fringe, 1207-1216', *Albion*, 33. 1 (2001), 1-23 (pp. 1, 10-18); for the King's expulsion of the Briouze family in 1208 see, Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p.164.

<sup>203</sup> *RChart*, pp. 104(2), 114(1), 122(4), 148(1), 173, 175.

<sup>204</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 32.

<sup>205</sup> *RLP*, p. 88.

<sup>206</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 106.

<sup>207</sup> For Earl Hugh's actions see especially battle of Bromfield 13 June 1177, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 26-27.

Chester in August 1212.<sup>208</sup> Llywelyn seems to have become more combative against the English crown as he had become involved with the Briouze family.<sup>209</sup> John, therefore, mustered a large force to invade Wales from Chester in the summer of 1212. However, John was distracted by the court and never set out, although Ranulf continued campaigning until the papal legate imposed a truce.<sup>210</sup> It is clear, however, that the king still supported the earl's actions as in August 1213, King John also instructed John de L'Isle to select 100 bucks and does to stock Earl Ranulf's park at Roynge.<sup>211</sup> In addition, he granted Ranulf wines from Southampton.<sup>212</sup>

The earl's more consistent return to court, came in the final months before the end of the interdict in July 1214.<sup>213</sup> Ranulf can be seen witnessing royal charters between 1213 and 1214, indicating that he was once more attending the court.<sup>214</sup> This return also heralded a new military campaign. In 1214, King John undertook another expedition to Poitou.<sup>215</sup> The campaign had been postponed due to the Welsh incursions and issues at court, including the raising of the interdict. Ranulf was in charge of one wing of the army and supplied considerable manpower from his lands. He was one of only a few barons to go with the king, many refusing the call to fight abroad, and thereby showed his loyalty.<sup>216</sup> However, the expedition and its failure is seen as one of the main reasons for John's difficulties on his return.<sup>217</sup> In 1215, a large number of the barons rebelled and forced John at Runnymede to sign a document imposing set laws on the king's actions, notably limiting his financial exactions: this document was called *Magna Carta*.<sup>218</sup> The

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<sup>208</sup> For the king's campaign, see, 'Annales de Margam', p. 31; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 164-65; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 110; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 32; for the hogs of wine see, *RLC*, i, p. 122.

<sup>209</sup> Brock, 'King John, the Braoses, and the Celtic Fringe, 1207-1216', pp. 18-20; for Llewellyn's rising 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 400.

<sup>210</sup> *RLP*, p. 100; Warren, *King John*, pp. 199-200.

<sup>211</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 147.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 163.

<sup>213</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, pp. 115-16; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 43.

<sup>214</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 186, 191, 193-203.

<sup>215</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 167, 169-70; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 41.

<sup>216</sup> Warren, *King John*, pp. 217-24.

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 214-17.

<sup>218</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', pp. 109-10; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 170-73; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 43;



barons' concerns were both fiscal and based on a general assumption that their rights were being impinged.<sup>219</sup> The campaign in Poitou had forced John to be ruthless in collecting money and enforcing control, his loss during the campaign showed his first weakness, which the barons decided to exploit.<sup>220</sup> King John did, however, sign the charter, but somewhat duplicitously as the Pope soon annulled it and rebellion followed.<sup>221</sup>

The earl once more was a staunch ally of the crown. Unlike his father Hugh, Ranulf supported the crown in the second of what are thought of as the three main crises of the relationship between barons and the crown.<sup>222</sup> His military expertise ensured that Ranulf was granted a number of royal castles, including Newcastle-under-Lyme, and 'The Peak' in Derbyshire.<sup>223</sup> In April 1216 Ranulf was also granted Lancaster honour, and had previously received a re-grant of the honour of Leicester.<sup>224</sup> In June 1216 he was also given Richmond castle, and around this time captured Middleham castle.<sup>225</sup> The earl also received the confiscated lands of rebels in the loyalist areas, which were to be ratified later under King Henry III.<sup>226</sup> As the earl of Salisbury had also joined the rebels, Ranulf was also granted his lands in Newport.<sup>227</sup> The connection between the earl and the king was so close that Ranulf seconded a secretary, Hugh de Morton, to King John's service.<sup>228</sup> Ranulf also attended the royal court witnessing John's charters right up until his death.<sup>229</sup>

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Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. pp. 517-20; see also Warren, *King John*, pp. 224-40; Nick Barratt, 'The Revenue of King John', *EHR*, 111. 443 (1996), 835-55.

<sup>219</sup> Richard Mortimer, *Angevin England, 1154-1258* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 94-98.

<sup>220</sup> For a discussion of the lead up to the civil war and the combatants motivations see, J. C. Holt, *Magna Carta* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 188-222.

<sup>221</sup> For the war see, Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 173-83; for the annulment of the charter, see, *Select Letters of Pope Innocent III*, pp. 212-16; Warren, *King John*, pp. 241-46; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', ii. p. 520.

<sup>222</sup> The three periods are 1173-4, the end of John's reign and the regency, and the 1258 troubles, Mortimer, *Angevin England*, p. 77.

<sup>223</sup> *RLP*, p. 153.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

<sup>225</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 33; *RLP*, p. 163.

<sup>226</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 233, 241, 251; ii. pp. 175, 193.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 286.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 289.

<sup>229</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 204-07, 209, 213, 217, 219-21, 223.

Yet the dire nature of the situation confronting the king in this period may have required some hard decisions for this relationship. The king granted Richmond to Pierre Mauclerc Duke of Brittany to obtain his aid.<sup>230</sup> This rebellion had drawn the interest of the French crown as the French King's son Louis landed in England in May 1216.<sup>231</sup> Painter suggested that Ranulf would have been affronted to give Richmond back, but Iain Soden believes that a friendship established with the duke during the 1214 campaign may have assuaged this.<sup>232</sup> He suggests that the handover was accomplished slowly as Ranulf retained control, but it was administered by Jolland the Breton, Mauclerc's seneschal at this time.<sup>233</sup> It is evident that Ranulf carried on fighting for the king. On 17 July 1216, with the earl of Derby and Falkes de Bréaute, Ranulf attacked the rebel-held city of Worcester defeating the defenders of the castle.<sup>234</sup>

### King Henry III: The Minority

King John died in October 1216 leaving his son Henry, a minor, as heir and Earl Ranulf as one of his executors.<sup>235</sup> The situation looked dire and the new minority government needed to act decisively to secure itself and in this Earl Ranulf would play his part. John, in his will, left a number of arbiters:

I appoint, moreover, the following arbiters and administrators: the lord G(uala), by the grace of God, cardinal-priest of the title of St Martin and legate of the apostolic see; the lord [Peter] bishop of Winchester; the lord R(ichard) bishop of Chichester; the lord S(ilvester) bishop of Worcester; Brother Aimery de St-Maur; W(illiam) Marshal earl of Pembroke; R(anulf) earl of Chester; W(illiam) earl Ferrers; William

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<sup>230</sup> *Rolls of the Justices in Eyre being the Rolls of the Pleas and Assizes for Lincolnshire, 1218-19, and Worcestershire 1221*, Selden Society vol. 53, ed. by Doris M. Stenton (London: B. Quaritch, 1934), no 494.

<sup>231</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 110; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 180-81; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 45.

<sup>232</sup> Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, pp. 68-69; Sydney Painter, *William Marshal: Knight Errant, Baron and Regent of England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1966), p. 259.

<sup>233</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 280, 282.

<sup>234</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 406.

<sup>235</sup> For John's death see, 'Annales de Margam', p. 33; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 110; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 183-84; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 124; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 48; for a discussion of the executors see, David Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London: Methuen London, 1990), p. 14.

Brewer; Walter de Lacy and John of Monmouth; Savaric de Mauléon;  
Falkes de Bréauté.<sup>236</sup>

The Minority Council of Henry III was therefore headed by the papal legate Guala. Guala had been appointed as papal legate to England in 1216.<sup>237</sup> His role as legate gave him the ability to discharge the full range of papally delegated authority, although, in practice, this was not unsupervised. He had supervision over ecclesiastical affairs, including episcopal appointments and was able to fine and reprimand rebellious clerks and monasteries in the civil war.<sup>238</sup> Guala had experience, not only as a papal judge, but also as a legate in France preaching the crusade, and also as a legate in Italy.<sup>239</sup> He had tried initially to dissuade the French king and his son from invading England due to the fact that John was a crusader, however he failed and was forced to flee.<sup>240</sup> On the 29 May 1216 he pronounced Louis excommunicate and any who fought with the rebels.<sup>241</sup> With the death of King John in October 1216, the legate was put in the leading position in a country, which John had recently put in the hands of the Church. Guala's leading position as the highest church official was only emphasised due to the absence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Stephen Langton.<sup>242</sup> He was ordered by the Pope to investigate the qualifications of William Marshal and Earl Ranulf as regents, to secure a marriage for Henry III, and secure the royal seal.<sup>243</sup>

Guala's first connection to Earl Ranulf was through the assignment made by himself and William Marshal to the Monks of St Mary's Worcester on the day of King John's burial for part of Worcester castle. This grant came in reparations for offences during the war and undoubtedly, to appease the monks due to the fact that the

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<sup>236</sup> Edited and translated by S. D. Church, 'King John's Testament and the Last Days of His Reign', *EHR*, 125.528 (2010), 505-528 (pp. 516-18).

<sup>237</sup> The exact date of his appointment is uncertain, see Guala Bicchieri, *The Letters and Charters of Cardinal Guala Bicchieri, Papal Legate in England, 1216-1218*, ed. by Nicholas Vincent (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1996). pp. xxxviii; for his arrival in England see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 284.

<sup>238</sup> The nature of legatine appointments is not standardised, see Bicchieri, *The Letters and Charters*, pp. xlv-xlix, for his relationship to the bishops see also, pp. lii-lviii.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxxiii-xxxvii.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xxxix-xli.

<sup>241</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 124-25; Rigord, *Œuvres de Rigord et de Guillaume Le Breton, Historiens de Philippe-Auguste*, ed. by H. Francois Delaborde (Paris: Librairie Renouard, H. Loones, 1882), i., pp. 307-09.

<sup>242</sup> Bicchieri, *The Letters and Charters*, p. xli-xlii.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 171, 173.

castle had taken part of their precinct. Earl Ranulf was present at this grant.<sup>244</sup> Guala had also assisted the earl personally, by supporting the presentation of his man to the church of Gayton-le-Marsh (Lincolnshire). The lord of this fee, his tenant Simon de Sees was at this time in rebellion.<sup>245</sup> In June 1217 or 1218 Guala also gave the earl a dispensation to appoint Ralph Vernon, to the church of Kegworth (Leicestershire) even though he was underage.<sup>246</sup> It is therefore probable that the earl had a good relationship with the leader of the new regime.

Earl Ranulf was late to see Henry crowned on the 29 October 1216 at Gloucester by the papal legate Guala, after first being knighted by William Marshal on the 28<sup>th</sup>.<sup>247</sup> They were unable to crown him at London due to the upheavals, but a second ceremony in 1219 would take place at Westminster to remedy this.<sup>248</sup> On 29 October 1216, it was decided that it was William Marshal who was to head the regency at the council of Gloucester, although some think Ranulf may have come to regret acquiescing to this.<sup>249</sup> It is true that Ranulf wrote a letter to the Pope to criticise William, and that he did look out for his personal interests in the war.<sup>250</sup> However, Ranulf was still an active campaigner in the fight against Louis of France and his English supporters, and was involved in the planning at the council in Gloucester.<sup>251</sup> Following a period of truce instigated by the papal legate, William Marshal undertook a new campaign against the southern rebels and Prince Louis, while Earl Ranulf harried the north.<sup>252</sup> Yet Earl Ranulf also used the opportunity to

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<sup>244</sup> Ibid., no. 138.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid., no. 27.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., no. 92.

<sup>247</sup> For the coronation see, Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 110; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 124; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 48; for Earl Ranulf's role see, 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224; for Ranulf being there see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 286; for him being late see, Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 195-96; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 1-2; *L'histoire de Guillaume Le Maréchal, Comte de Striguil et de Pembroke*, 3 vols, ed. by Paul Meyer (Paris: Libraire de la Societe de la Histoire de France, 1891-1901), lines 15473-82, 15521-35.

<sup>248</sup> Thomas fitz Thedmar, *De Antiquis Legibus Liber* (London: Camden Society, 1846). p. 4-5; for the second coronation see 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 293; 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 412.

<sup>249</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 16-17; Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 126; *L'Histoire de Guillaume le Maréchal*, lines 15473-82, 15521-35.

<sup>250</sup> For the letter to the Pope see, David A. Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, (London: Hambledon, 1996), p. 36.

<sup>251</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 62; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 406.

<sup>252</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 128-29.

attack Mountsorrel castle near Leicester, which was being held by Saher de Quincy.<sup>253</sup> The siege was raised as the rebels were reinforced and Ranulf retired to Nottingham.<sup>254</sup> It is apparent that the attack on Mountsorrel was as much a personal as a strategic assault, as the earl's ancestors had been ousted from this castle by those of the earls of Winchester. David Crouch suggests that this did not harm the strategy as a whole. However, it was clear that the earl was using the situation to his advantage.<sup>255</sup> The reason for this may have been due to a rift. In March 1217, Guala also headed a list of councillors to write to Peter de Mauley to inform him that as he retained William of Lancaster, who was supposed to have been released to Earl Ranulf, the earl was threatening to leave on crusade. Mauley was ordered to hand William of Lancaster to the sheriff in Gloucester, and thereby the earl had been persuaded to stay.<sup>256</sup> This gives a good indication that the earl was being left out of the inner council at this time.

That is not to say that the earl was not involved in royal business at all. In 1216 he acted to secure rebels to the loyalists' side in 1216 and in 1217 sent letters to knights and barons, to offer them an opportunity to return to the royal cause.<sup>257</sup> Ranulf also received a number of captured prisoners by grant of the council.<sup>258</sup> He was also named a key supporter of the crown to ensure royal forces kept fighting.<sup>259</sup> Yet it is not until 1217 or 1218 that his name appears more often in the royal documents as part of the council.<sup>260</sup> It may perhaps be the case that the other council members recognised the problem and sought to secure Ranulf's continuing help. The grant to Earl Ranulf of Lancaster and Richmond honours given by John was ratified in 1217 and 1218 by the council and would have helped this process.<sup>261</sup>

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<sup>253</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 50; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 49; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 15-16; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 206-07; Soden, *Ranulf de Blondeville*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>254</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 17-25; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 206-13.

<sup>255</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 128-29.

<sup>256</sup> Bicchieri, *The Letters and Charters*, no. 83.

<sup>257</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 4.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, i. pp. 6, 19, 118.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 22.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, i. pp. 24, 29, 64, 91, 108, 112-13, 134, 173.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 84, 120, 158.

That the earl establish cordial relations with William Marshal was also essential for the war effort. Earl William Marshal as regent was also the representative of the crown and Ranulf may have seen it as politic in the end to ally himself with the earl and aid him to pacify England.<sup>262</sup> Thus, it was in late May 1217 that the earl was involved with William Marshal at the defining battle of the civil war at Lincoln.<sup>263</sup> The defeat of the rebel forces here led towards the signing of the peace treaty with Prince Louis.<sup>264</sup> William also ensured that the earl was rewarded for his service. On 23 May 1217 Ranulf was confirmed as hereditary earl of Lincoln by the king's council.<sup>265</sup> Afterwards, by the command of King Henry's regency, he also saw Mountsorrel castle razed to the ground.<sup>266</sup> This may also explain why Ranulf followed the wishes of the late king and continued with the alliance with the Duke of Brittany who on 8 June was given letters of safe passage.<sup>267</sup> Such cooperation was obviously a success as on 12 September 1217 a peace treaty was signed with the French effectively ending the civil war.<sup>268</sup> Yet David Carpenter suggests that Earl Ranulf may not have been wholly happy with the terms as he breached them with the ransom he imposed on Maurice de Gant.<sup>269</sup>

However, in the aftermath of the victory Earl Ranulf was involved in the baronial council with William Marshal. In 1218 he helped decide the inheritance of lands.<sup>270</sup> Yet Ranulf was preoccupied with other matters and seems to have felt reassured with the council and state of the country by this time, so much so that in 1218 he felt confident enough to go on crusade, having taken the cross in 1215 with King

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<sup>262</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 127-28.

<sup>263</sup> For the battle of Lincoln see, *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 130-31; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia' (pp. 49-50); for Earl Ranulf's involvement see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 50-51; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 17-25; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 206-13.

<sup>264</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224-25; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', p. 112; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 245.

<sup>265</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 355.

<sup>266</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 50; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 24; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 213-14.

<sup>267</sup> *RLC*, i, pp. 361

<sup>268</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 186; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 50-51.

<sup>269</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 47-48, 82.

<sup>270</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 134.

John.<sup>271</sup> It is clear the council may have felt wary of the earl during this time as Carpenter suggests that they tried not to offend him when Gilbert de Gant brought a court case against him. They found in Ranulf's favour.<sup>272</sup> He came to an agreement with Llywelyn ab Iorwerth of Gwynedd, ensuring a period of relative stability and security for his lands before absenting himself.<sup>273</sup> This mirrors the peace accord that King Richard obtained from the Welsh in 1189.<sup>274</sup> In 1218, he departed on the fifth crusade helping capture Damietta in Egypt in 1219.<sup>275</sup> He returned in 1220, having set off in late 1219, and met Llywelyn on the day of his return to Chester.<sup>276</sup>

However, on his return in 1220 the political situation had changed. In 1218, Guala's legation was terminated and Pandulph, bishop elect of Norwich was put in his place.<sup>277</sup> William Marshal had also died, as had Earl David of Huntingdon.<sup>278</sup> Yet Earl Ranulf seems to have been able to secure his position on his return, as on 4 October 1220 the king's council re-confirmed the earldom of Leicester on Ranulf.<sup>279</sup> In 1221 he was also granted Huntingdon earldom as custodian of his nephew which included Fotheringay castle.<sup>280</sup> In the same year the earl's custody of Leicester honour was also again ratified.<sup>281</sup> He also received numerous grants of manors, rights, and materials to repair manors.<sup>282</sup> For instance in 1222 the king gave Ranulf 60 bucks.<sup>283</sup> It would seem therefore that the earl was seen somewhat as a

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<sup>271</sup> For King John taking the cross see, 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 404; Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, p. 28; James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p. 77.

<sup>272</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, p. 82.

<sup>273</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 50-51; Kathryn Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades, c.1095-1291* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 109, 119-22.

<sup>274</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 7.

<sup>275</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 225; *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 50-51; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 54; Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades*, pp. 106-09; Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, p. 81.

<sup>276</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 50-51; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 60; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 56; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 239.

<sup>277</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 291; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 186; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 134; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 53.

<sup>278</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 291; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 187; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 55.

<sup>279</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 431; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 254.

<sup>280</sup> *HKF*, ii. pp. 396-97; *RLC*, i. p. 596; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 285.

<sup>281</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 281.

<sup>282</sup> *RLC*, i, pp. 430, 464-65, 561.

<sup>283</sup> *Ibid.*, i, pp. 475.

powerful political entity, whose support needed to be maintained. Therefore, it is perhaps no surprise the earl had a role in royal government and enacting justice in 1221.<sup>284</sup>

The earl's military prowess was also recognised by the king and his council as in 1222 Ranulf was given custody of Whittington castle Shropshire and in 1223 Chartley Castle, Staffordshire.<sup>285</sup> This was also a precaution to defend against the Welsh who were growing restless. It has been noted they attacked the new earl of Pembroke, forcing him to surrender castles and to conclude a truce in 1220.<sup>286</sup> The situation was also hostile for Earl Ranulf as in 1222 Llywelyn attacked taking some of the earl's castles. The king marched on the Welsh, but Ranulf offered to stand surety for Llywelyn's compliance when terms were made.<sup>287</sup> It seems that the earl was taking an active role in maintaining the peace in the area. The result of these acts culminated in the marriage of Prince Llywelyn's daughter to Ranulf's nephew, ward and heir, John le Scot in 1222.<sup>288</sup>

It is clear that Earl Ranulf was benefiting from this change in circumstance. The earl gained new lands from the regency period. He had been fortunate in King John's reign and is regarded by Ralph Turner as the 'wealthiest of all' barons by the middle of John's reign.<sup>289</sup> Such grants did ensure that Ranulf's lordship was vastly increased, and much of his time must have been spent consolidating his hold on these new territories. It is also notable that the territories granted were those his predecessors claimed showing the earl's concern with his past. Such grants, however, also meant that the earl and his lordship were drawn back into the centre of politics.

### King Henry III: The Majority

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<sup>284</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 288, 297, 301, 306-07, 315-17.

<sup>285</sup> *RLC*, i, pp. 470, 520.

<sup>286</sup> Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, p. 97.

<sup>287</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 82.

<sup>288</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 50-51; *BC*, no. 411.

<sup>289</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 178.



Earl Ranulf's relationship to the crown changed again during the course of the 1220s. King Henry's majority began in 1223, but these changes began much earlier as Pandulf was dismissed from office in 1221 leading to a power vacuum.<sup>290</sup> The justiciar Hubert de Burgh was now able to step in and take a greater role in government than he had previously, as the council's power was waning.<sup>291</sup> Hubert had succeeded as justiciar as part of the settlement of *Magna Carta*. Hubert was a small landowner who rose in royal service, attending King Richard's court, but was also chamberlain to Prince John, and on Richard's death, King John.<sup>292</sup> He was a trusted officer and was in practice given the office of seneschal of Poitou between 1212 and 1215.<sup>293</sup> During the civil war, he fought for King John, defending the castle of Dover against Prince Louis between July and October 1216, when the French withdrew under a peace treaty.<sup>294</sup> Hubert was also involved in the second major battle of the civil war after Lincoln: the sea battle at Sandwich in August 1217 that saw the defeat of the French fleet and Prince Louis hopes.<sup>295</sup> Yet despite being at the centre of military events, his biographer suggests Hubert was side-lined during the minority by the prelates, William Marshal as regent, and Peter des Roches, bishop of Winchester, who was the young king's tutor.<sup>296</sup> Pandulf was more inclined to trust Hubert however, with the departure of William and the limiting of power of Peter, Hubert was to come to the fore in English politics as his own man.<sup>297</sup>

With more freedom of movement, the new justiciar tried to curtail the power of the lords. He was essentially trying to regain what the crown lost during the period of civil war. In part this included raising more funds, but this proved difficult. A tax

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<sup>290</sup> For Pandulf's dismissal see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 75; Coventry, *Memoriale*, i. p. 250; for the Kings majority see 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 83.

<sup>291</sup> West, *The Justiciarship*, pp. 227-36.

<sup>292</sup> Clarence Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh: A Study in Constancy*, (London: Phoenix House, 1952), pp. 9-10.

<sup>293</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 21-23.

<sup>294</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 182; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 46-47; Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 29-34.

<sup>295</sup> For the sea battle see, Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', (pp. 111); Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 185; *Chronica de Mailros*, pp. 128-129; for Hubert de Burgh's role see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', pp. 287-88; for a commentary see, Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 40-45.

<sup>296</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 37-38, 49-51.

<sup>297</sup> The relationship between Pandulf and Hubert is discussed in, Nicholas Vincent, 'Pandulf [Pandulph, Pandulph Verraccio], (d. 1226)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

had been attempted just after Ranulf's return from crusade in 1220. But many barons refused to allow it to be levied and it is largely regarded as a failure.<sup>298</sup> His biographer Clarence Ellis views the tensions arising from policies in this period as being systemic from the relationship between crown and lords, where one lives off the other, and not necessarily due to Hubert's character.<sup>299</sup> The pope had earlier also in 1220 arranged for the barons to swear oaths to return royal castles during a re-coronation ceremony. In practice a more gradual process had been decided upon by Pandulf, Archbishop Stephen Langton, and Hubert de Burgh.<sup>300</sup> Still, some barons were not happy about the process, notably including the earl of Albemarle who actively fought the crown.<sup>301</sup> In doing so, he attacked lands in Lincoln and Fotheringay Castle, recently returned to Earl Ranulf.<sup>302</sup> The council including Ranulf condemned the earl, who fled but was captured at Fountains Abbey and made to undertake his crusader's vow.<sup>303</sup>

With Pandulf's time coming to an end in 1221, Hubert began moving more aggressively against those holding royal castles. He took that of Peter des Roches follower Peter de Mauley.<sup>304</sup> At the Christmas court of 1221 Earl Ranulf had an argument with the justiciar Hubert de Burgh and with William Earl of Salisbury, likely regarding this matter.<sup>305</sup> Carpenter believes that the focus may have been Ranulf's claim to Lincoln castle, but tensions were also rising due to the proposed marriage between William of Pembroke and the king's sister.<sup>306</sup> Clarence Ellis believes that at this time sides were being drawn in court, with the justiciar and his followers supported by the earl of Salisbury and Archbishop Langton on one side, and Earl Ranulf and the Poitevins including Peter des Roches on the other.<sup>307</sup> Certainly, it is known that there was dissatisfaction with Hubert de Burgh's position

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<sup>298</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, pp. 222-25.

<sup>299</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 59-61.

<sup>302</sup> Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, iv, pp. 65-68.

<sup>303</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 188.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190; Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 67-69.

<sup>305</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 203.

<sup>306</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 270-72.

<sup>307</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, p. 69.

enough for chroniclers like Ralph Coggeshall to comment upon it.<sup>308</sup> Hubert paused in his machinations, but was not put off. In 1223, he took the royal castles from Walter de Lacy and Ralph Musard. Earl Ranulf with his supporters protested this and tried to seize the Tower before withdrawing to Waltham by November.<sup>309</sup> It is recorded in the sources that there was discord between the king and the earl at around this time.<sup>310</sup> The king summoned Ranulf and others and met them at Waltham Abbey where they declared that they had nothing against the king, only Hubert. Hubert may have thought that this resolution was at the hands of Peter des Roches his rival.<sup>311</sup> However, Henry seems to have been aware of the general dissatisfaction of the nobility with de Burgh and started using his own seal and claimed a Christmas truce.<sup>312</sup> Nevertheless, Ranulf seems to still have avoided the king as he went to Northampton and when the royal court was on its way there moved to Leicester.<sup>313</sup> Yet he was finally forced to come to Northampton with other barons on pain of excommunication and to surrender custodies and royal castles.<sup>314</sup> Ranulf surrendered Shrewsbury, Bridgnorth and Wallingford castles, along with the castle and sheriffdom of Lancaster in 1223.<sup>315</sup> The two former went to Hugh Despenser, Wallingford was retained by the king, and the latter went to the earl of Derby. Hugh Despenser and the earl of Derby were close comrades of Ranulf and it has been noted that this may be a concession to the earl.<sup>316</sup> That the earl seems to be an outsider though is clearly apparent. This was a low point in the earl's relationship to the crown.

Ranulf was not totally cut off from the court, but he does seem to have taken a more negative view of it in this period. He acted as an ambassador in 1223 on

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<sup>308</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 203-204.

<sup>309</sup> For Ranulf's motivation for his actions see, Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 74-75. Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 83-84; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 66.

<sup>310</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 66.

<sup>311</sup> For Hubert's response see, Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 75-76; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 481-82; Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, pp. 100-1.

<sup>312</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, p. 76; Soden, *Ranulf de Blondville*, pp. 100-01.

<sup>313</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, pp. 82-83.

<sup>314</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, p. 46. Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 82-83; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 260-62.

<sup>315</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 417-18.

<sup>316</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 326-27.

Llywelyn's behalf to the king to reach a peace accord when Llywelyn was attacked by William Marshal.<sup>317</sup> He also involved himself in the dispute that the king was having with Falkes de Bréauté, an alien in English politics but who had been a loyal and ferocious supporter of King John and Henry III.<sup>318</sup> Falkes had also had to surrender castles he had acquired during the civil war and this led him to revolt in 1224. Falkes' brother, William castellan of Bedford rose in revolt with him, but the revolt was to end in failure with William hanged and Falkes in exile.<sup>319</sup> Ranulf was involved in the siege of Bedford, acting on behalf of the King, but trying to argue the case for the brothers.<sup>320</sup> Ranulf seems to have been sympathetic to the rebels and interceded on Falkes' behalf. Falkes was an old ally who had assisted him in his dispute earlier in 1223 with the crown.<sup>321</sup> Ranulf wrote a letter to the king along with the Bishop of Coventry to assure the king of Falkes' loyalty. His letter reads:

It pleases me to write of Lord Falkes de Bréauté,... in order to aid the recovery of a friend, and [for] your aforementioned anger to be assuaged.<sup>322</sup>

The earl along with the bishop of Coventry persuaded Falkes to go to Coventry whereupon the 12<sup>th</sup> August he received letters of safe conduct.<sup>323</sup> However, his goods were confiscated and sold for his debts and he died in exile.<sup>324</sup> This marks the period of Hubert de Burgh's supremacy.<sup>325</sup> Hubert could not be complacent, however, and one of the first things he and the king did was to reassure nobles by reaffirming *Magna Carta* and the forest charter in 1225.<sup>326</sup> The reissue of the two documents would provide a calming measure not only due to the recent

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<sup>317</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 82.

<sup>318</sup> D. J. Power, 'Bréauté, Sir Falkes de, (d. 1226)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>319</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 225; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 67; Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 416; Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum with its Continuation', pp. 113-14; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 204-08; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 86-90; for the siege of Bedford see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', pp. 299-300; 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 84.

<sup>320</sup> For Earl Ranulf's role see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 87.

<sup>321</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Oseneia', p. 64.

<sup>322</sup> *BC*, no. 415. My translation of the Latin: *vobis placuit mihi significare de domino Falkesio de Breaute...per auxilium amicorum recuperare et predictam iram vestram pro suo sedere.*

<sup>323</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 478-79.

<sup>324</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 88-90.

<sup>325</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 107-08.

<sup>326</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 68; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 300; 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 417; for the two charters see, 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', pp. 225-36.

confiscations of castles but also as in 1223 Hubert increased royal control of forests, placing foresters in positions in forests such as Chester.<sup>327</sup> The *Magna Carta* especially by this point was beginning to be seen as an embodiment of a struggle between the crown and the baronage.<sup>328</sup> Its reissue and confirmation by the young king put the barons minds at rest that the new king was going to accept its provisions.<sup>329</sup>

There does seem to have been some reconciliation between Ranulf and the crown during this period however, as Ranulf did seal the king's charters when at a tournament at de Burgh's Montgomery Castle in Powys in 1224.<sup>330</sup> In 1224 and in 1226 Ranulf was also at court witnessing the king's letters patent.<sup>331</sup> He also received grants including in 1227 a reconfirmation of his ownership of parts of Richmond and Leicester honours and custody of heirs and widows.<sup>332</sup> Yet his reservations about Hubert and the court must have persisted. In 1227 Ranulf was at court again supporting Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and the king's younger brother and with many other barons assembled at Stamford.<sup>333</sup> The dispute concerned rights to property and the earl's desire for judgement before his peers, one of the tenets of *Magna Carta*. The gathering changed little however as once Richard was granted lands the barons dispersed, Hubert's standing with the crown seems to be unchanged.<sup>334</sup>

Hubert had just received the justiciarship for life and would appear to be at the pinnacle of his power.<sup>335</sup> Yet, Earl Ranulf's return to royal favour was soon to come with the muster for war. He was called to speak to the crown in 1227.<sup>336</sup> In June 1227, Ranulf was asked by the king to muster for war with France.<sup>337</sup> However, the

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<sup>327</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 423-24.

<sup>328</sup> Holt, *Magna Carta*, pp. 397-405.

<sup>329</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 393-94.

<sup>330</sup> *RLC*, ii. pp. 28, 30, 31; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 579.

<sup>331</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 447, 449-50, ii, p. 82, 98-100.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. p. 124.

<sup>333</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, p. 48; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 123-25; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 296-97.

<sup>334</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 111-12.

<sup>335</sup> *Calendar of the Charter Rolls vol. 1; Henry III A.D. 1226-1257* (London: HMSO, 1908), p. 74.

<sup>336</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. p. 137.

<sup>337</sup> *RLC*, ii, p. 211.

expedition was put on hold as Ranulf was in Chester in August 1228.<sup>338</sup> Yet the king was willing to pay to retain Ranulf's support. In 1228, the earl's return to royal favour was again confirmed as King Henry granted to Ranulf the honour of Leicester for life.<sup>339</sup> Iain Soden believes that the grant was made to placate Ranulf following his siding with Richard and to give him funds for war in France.<sup>340</sup> This may have worked as in 1229 the earl refused to pay a tithe to the Pope.<sup>341</sup> On 18 October 1229, the king also confirmed the grant of all the land between the Mersey and the Ribble.<sup>342</sup> The call to muster again came on 26 July 1229, when the king wrote to Ranulf ordering him to assemble his army and come to Portsmouth by 14<sup>th</sup> October.<sup>343</sup> In September 1229 Ranulf was granted the ship *La Haytee* for the expedition.<sup>344</sup> However, the expedition was again delayed until the following April. The king blamed Hubert de Burgh for the failure, as only a small fleet had been organised.<sup>345</sup> The earl's prominence was returning as the fortunes of de Burgh seem to be declining.

The campaign began in earnest in 1230.<sup>346</sup> Ranulf went with the king.<sup>347</sup> He was soon involved actively in the French campaign, taking a commanding role in the English forces along with William Marshal when the king returned to England, and embarking on raids into Normandy and Anjou.<sup>348</sup> However, William Marshal died

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<sup>338</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough, 'The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester', *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire*, 103 (1952 for 1951), 23-57 (p. 50).

<sup>339</sup> John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 8. For a discussion of the descent of Leicester honour see, Levi Fox, 'The Honor and Earldom of Leicester: Origin and Descent, 1066-1399', *EHR*, 54. 215 (1939), 385-402.

<sup>340</sup> Soden, *Ranulf de Blondeville*, p. 112.

<sup>341</sup> Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 189.

<sup>342</sup> *Calendar of the Charter Rolls*, i. pp. 101-02; *RLC*, ii. p. 221.

<sup>343</sup> *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 248; *Royal and other Historical letters Illustrative of the Reign of Henry III: From the Originals in the Public Record Office*, ed. by Walter Waddington Shirley, 2 vols. (London: Longmans, Green, Longman, and Roberts, 1862-66), no. 295.

<sup>344</sup> *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 252.

<sup>345</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 100-01.

<sup>346</sup> 'Annales de Margam', p. 38; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 243; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 125.

<sup>347</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. pp. 357-63.

<sup>348</sup> For the king's return see, 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 243; for Earl Ranulf's role see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 56-57; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', pp. 76-77; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 327-29; *Royal and other Historical letters*, no. 301; Soden, *Ranulf de Blondeville*, pp. 114-17; for some of the commands given jointly by the King to Ranulf and William see, *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 444, 450-51.

in 1231,<sup>349</sup> so it was Ranulf with the aid of the count of Brittany, who negotiated with the king of France for a truce.<sup>350</sup> The earl and the count seem to have maintained a good relationship even though the count of Brittany was again given Richmond honour in May 1230, which had seemingly remained in the hands of Earl Ranulf in practice, despite its gift to the count during John's reign.<sup>351</sup>

Once the truce was concluded, Ranulf returned to England, meeting with the king, who was on campaign in Wales where the Welsh Prince Llywelyn had rebelled once more.<sup>352</sup> Ranulf, however, quarrelled with the king on his return, possibly regarding de Burgh.<sup>353</sup> In 1232, the king did order Richard de Burgh, Hubert's brother, to release Ranulf's merchants in Ireland, suggesting one source of the squabble.<sup>354</sup> It is also possible that it was due to the king's desire to raise a new army for a continental war, as in 1232 Ranulf refused to provide the king with financial help for a new war with France.<sup>355</sup> But this does not seem to have harmed the earl's reputation with the king.

Ranulf's rival Hubert de Burgh was still losing royal favour in this period.<sup>356</sup> The failures at home against the Welsh and in the expedition to France helped lead to his eventual fall.<sup>357</sup> However, it is also important to note that his fall would come also with the return of a rival that would prove to be an ally for Earl Ranulf. Peter des

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<sup>349</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 78-79; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 126.

<sup>350</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 56-57; 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 422; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 127; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 333-34.

<sup>351</sup> *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i., pp. 410-11.

<sup>352</sup> For the king's campaign see, 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia,' p. 85; for Llywelyn's rebellion see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 127; for Earl Ranulf's meeting with the king see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 56-57; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 127; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii., p. 333-34.

<sup>353</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 56-59; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 79; Eales, R., 'Ranulf (III)'; Nicholas Vincent, *Peter des Roches: An Alien in English Politics*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 277.

<sup>354</sup> *Calendar of Documents, Relating to Ireland: Preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office ... 1171-[1307]*, ed. by Gustavus Frederick Handcock and H. S. Sweetman, 5 vols. (London: Longman & co., 1875-86), i. nos. 1801, 1930.

<sup>355</sup> Paris, *Historia Minor*, i. p. 339; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. pp. 472-73.

<sup>356</sup> 'Annales de Margam', pp. 39-40.

<sup>357</sup> F. J. West, 'Burgh, Hubert de, earl of Kent, (c. 1170-1243)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Roches, who had left on crusade, finally returned in 1231.<sup>358</sup> On 29<sup>th</sup> July 1232 Hubert was removed from office and imprisoned.<sup>359</sup> Ranulf is seen as one of the main characters to orchestrate de Burgh's fall in 1232, along with Peter and Richard Marshal, though Ranulf intervened on de Burgh's behalf when the citizens of London set out to bring him to court by force.<sup>360</sup> The Londoners perhaps remembered Hubert's harsh treatment of them in August 1221 when they rioted.<sup>361</sup> Ranulf and Peter may have struck up their alliance in France as it is possible that Peter was also involved in the creation of the peace treaty which ended the war in France.<sup>362</sup> Richard's support of Ranulf also probably proved decisive however. Richard was perhaps more in line with Ranulf's point of view than his predecessor was. On 29 July 1232, the only charter of a Marshal witnessed by Ranulf was created. It was an agreement between Eleanor countess of Pembroke, William's widow, and Richard regarding her dower.<sup>363</sup> The earl it seemed had finally gained a measure of power at the royal court again.

Following de Burgh's fall, it was one of the earl's own retainers that received the office of justiciar. Stephen de Seagrave, was one of the earl's tenants, but he had also experience in royal office. From 1217 he had been a significant justice, sitting on the bench at Westminster and touring the country on eyre. In 1232 he was a justice of England, witnessing a charter for Earl Ranulf as such.<sup>364</sup> Stephen witnessed around 15 charters of Earl Ranulf between 1201 and 1232, and received 10 grants in the same period.<sup>365</sup> In September 1232, Ranulf was at court and part

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<sup>358</sup> Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, pp. 273-309; for his return see, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 126.

<sup>359</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 243; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 129-30.

<sup>360</sup> For Earl Ranulf's and Richard Marshal's roles see, 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', pp. 86-87; Carpenter, D. A., *The Reign of Henry III*, pp. 56-57; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 86; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 346-47; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, p. 227-28; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 203.

<sup>361</sup> Ellis, *Hubert de Burgh*, pp. 69-73.

<sup>362</sup> 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 422; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 127.

<sup>363</sup> Crouch, *The Acts and Letters*, no. 189.

<sup>364</sup> For the charter see, Barraclough, *Charters*, no. 310; for the position see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 311; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 131.

<sup>365</sup> *BC*, as a witness see nos. 232, 248, 310, 322, 328, 336, 352, 355, 393, 402, 417-21, for grants see nos. 358, 361-64, 365-369, 460.



of the council that was arranging four royal tournaments in the New Year.<sup>366</sup> Unfortunately, Ranulf was soon to fall ill at court, and on the 26<sup>th</sup> October at Wallingford he died.<sup>367</sup>

The king's response to his death may show that the earl, despite having a tempestuous relationship, was remembered fondly. On the 25<sup>th</sup> October 1232, the king granted 60s. *per annum* to St Werburgh's for a chaplain to say mass for the earl.<sup>368</sup> That this relationship may also have been reciprocated is illustrated by the earl's bequest to the king of his castle of St-James-de-Beuvron in Normandy.<sup>369</sup>

### Earl Ranulf and His Contemporaries

Having considered the relationships that Earl Ranulf established with the various kings of England it will now be useful to compare his relationships to those of some of his contemporaries.

Earl David of Huntingdon, in contrast to Ranulf was not a ward of the English king. However, he was given by his eldest brother Malcolm IV King of the Scots as a hostage to King Henry II in 1163, and must therefore have formed some opinion of Henry during in his childhood.<sup>370</sup> He was also knighted by King Henry in 1170.<sup>371</sup> However, despite this, it would be his relationship to the kings of Scotland which would have a more profound influence on him. Notably, David was involved in the rebellion against King Henry II in which Earl Ranulf's father Hugh had also fought. He had joined his brother, King William of Scotland, in the cause of King Henry's younger son. David's and his brother's rebellion was ended with the capture of the king of Scotland by Ranulf de Glanville and Earl David's surrender slightly before this.<sup>372</sup>

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<sup>366</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. p. 498-99; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 130.

<sup>367</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 243; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 143; *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 58-59; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 130; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 349.

<sup>368</sup> *Calendar of the Charter Rolls*, i. p. 169.

<sup>369</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 132.

<sup>370</sup> Torigni, 'The Chronicle', p. 218.

<sup>371</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 118

<sup>372</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 249; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 18; *Chronica de Maillros*, pp. 85-87; Jordan Fantosme, 'Chronique de la Guerre Entre Les Anglois et Les Eccosais en 1173 et

David's reputation does not seem to have suffered in England from this incident, however, as he is regarded in quite good terms by contemporaries.<sup>373</sup> Such a reputation undoubtedly helped him and his brother, the king of Scotland, embark on a more peaceable relationship with the English crown. In 1181, they accompanied King Henry onto the Continent.<sup>374</sup> This new relationship bears fruit as Henry returned the earldom of Huntingdon to the king of Scotland in 1185, which was then granted to Earl David.<sup>375</sup> The grant of this honour essentially establishes Earl David in the affairs of England.

Despite the differences to Ranulf's early years, Earl David does seem to have followed a similar path to Ranulf in Richard's reign. He attended Richard's coronation where he carried a sword of state and was involved in the fight against Prince John in 1194.<sup>376</sup> In part this may have been because he had married Earl Ranulf's sister in 1190, suggesting that a political alliance had been created.<sup>377</sup> Yet there may also have been other factors. It is also important to note that Richard had sought assurances from the kings and rulers of Wales and Scotland not to invade his lands before going on crusade and these seem to have worked in the case of Scotland.<sup>378</sup> In no small part this was perhaps due to the goodwill he had forged by giving the king of Scotland liberties he had lost during the rebellion against King Henry in 1173.<sup>379</sup> Earl David would of course have been influenced by these negotiations as a Scottish lord. Such good will had also ensured that King William of Scotland contributed to the ransom of King Richard.<sup>380</sup> Gervase of Canterbury also reports that he did not join the rebellion of John in 1193 despite being asked.<sup>381</sup>

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1174', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard*, ed. by Richard Howlett (London: Longman & co., 1886), iii., pp. 202-377 (pp. 352-355, 372-73); Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 185; Torigni, 'The Chronicle', p. 264.

<sup>373</sup> Fantosme, 'Chronique de la Guerre', p. 296-299, 372-73.

<sup>374</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 91

<sup>375</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 94; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>376</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon 1152-1219*, p. 38, 40

<sup>377</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 99; Ralph V. Turner and Richard R. Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart: Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189-1199* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), p. 108.

<sup>378</sup> Devizes, 'De Rebus', p. 386.

<sup>379</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 98; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 304.

<sup>380</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 100

<sup>381</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum', p. 515.

During the initial years of King John's reign Earl David seems to have adopted the same stance as Earl Ranulf by supporting John's claim, and even acted as an envoy between the Scottish and English crowns.<sup>382</sup> Earl David was quite withdrawn from the politics of this period though, lacking lands on the Continent like Earl Ranulf. However, he was an active member of the court during John's reign and witnessed royal charters between 1199 and 1213.<sup>383</sup> By the end of the reign the peaceful quality of his relationship to the crown was to end.

David suffered directly at the hands of King John's bureaucracy after 1209.<sup>384</sup> More seriously he was accused of treason in 1212 and King John took the earl's son as a hostage and his castle of Fotheringhay.<sup>385</sup> However, he seems to have returned to the royal circle soon after.<sup>386</sup> Fotheringhay castle was returned in him 1215 as was his son John whose custody had been granted to Earl Ranulf.<sup>387</sup> That Ranulf obtained the custody would suggest that he had influenced the crown in this matter, or was trying to limit the repercussions.

The main conflict for Earl David's relationship to the English crown came, however, after David's brother King William of Scotland died in 1214 and his son Alexander took the throne.<sup>388</sup> The earl had given his allegiance to his nephew Alexander in 1205.<sup>389</sup> This had some profound effects for Earl David, as he was essentially a middle man between two kingdoms and acted as a messenger between both kings.<sup>390</sup> During the civil war the young king of Scotland fought on the side of the rebels, notably taking the allegiance of Northumberland barons and joining Louis of France in 1216.<sup>391</sup> David, perhaps with less enthusiasm, therefore, followed him as he had his lands confiscated by King John in 1216.<sup>392</sup> David's reluctant war

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<sup>382</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 44-47.

<sup>383</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 15-17, 21-24, 29, 57, 113, 147, 150, 153, 155, 157-59, 180-81, 186, 194.

<sup>384</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>385</sup> *RLP*, p. 94; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>386</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 50-57

<sup>387</sup> *RLP*, p. 143-44.

<sup>388</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 281; *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 114

<sup>389</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 105; *Chronicon de Lanercost*, edited by Joseph Stevenson (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1839), p. 2.

<sup>390</sup> *RLP*, p.56.

<sup>391</sup> Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 183; *Chronica de Mailros*, pp. 121-24.

<sup>392</sup> *RLP*, p. 170; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 52-53.

against the English crown also ended with the truce in 1217, and with his nephew the king of Scotland surrendering and giving his homage to King Henry III.<sup>393</sup>

David died in 1219, so it is unclear how he regarded the new regime and Hubert de Burgh.<sup>394</sup> David's heir John le Scot was also a minor. David's lands were initially passed to William Marshal the younger. However, they were soon after granted to Earl Ranulf.<sup>395</sup> The family's return to politics only came in 1227, when the king ordered Earl Ranulf to return Huntingdon honour to Earl John le Scot.<sup>396</sup> John seems primarily to have been influenced by his uncle, and he certainly followed Earl Ranulf in the 1230 expedition to France, and was granted a ship like Earl Ranulf in 1229 for the expedition.<sup>397</sup> John had started his relationship to the English crown in a slightly different manner to his father. Ranulf, it would appear acted as conduit during these initial years.

Earl William Marshal, in contrast, while not having as much contact with the crown as a child, was brought into royal service as a young man. William had been born to John Marshal and Sybil of Salisbury in around 1147. His father was a royal official and his mother was sister to the earl of Salisbury.<sup>398</sup> He was raised by his family as a younger son, and initially gained service with his family's connections in the household of the William de Tancarville and then the household of the earl of Salisbury before he became a royal household knight in the service of King Henry's son Henry the younger in 1170.<sup>399</sup> He served the young king until his death in 1183, and following Henry's death went on crusade in the young prince's name.<sup>400</sup> King

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<sup>393</sup> *Chronica de Mailros*, p. 131-32.

<sup>394</sup> John de Fordun, *Johannis de Fordun Chronica Gentis Scotorum*, ed. by W. F. Skene (Edinburgh: Edinburgh : Edmonston and Douglas, 1871), i. pp. 281-82.

<sup>395</sup> William had the lands from 1217, *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, p. 55, 75-76, Earl Ranulf was to receive them in 1221, p. 285.

<sup>396</sup> *RLC*, ii. p. 183.

<sup>397</sup> *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 252-53; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. pp. 357-63.

<sup>398</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 12-14.

<sup>399</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 2; for Henry the younger's household see, pp. 30-33; for the charters William Marshal witnessed for Henry the younger see, R. J. Smith, 'Henry II's Heir: The Acta and Seal of Henry the Young King, 1170-83', *EHR*, 116. 466 (2001), 297-326., p. 300, nos. 13-14, 27, 29-32.

<sup>400</sup> For the young King's death see, Benedictus, *Gesta Regis Henrici*, i. p. 301; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 58; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', p. 233; for William Marshal's crusade see, Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 55-56.

Henry does not seem to have supported William in this endeavour, despite having large cash reserves in the east.<sup>401</sup> However, William was rewarded firstly with service in the king's own household and then with royal patronage. It was the marriage contracts that the earl was able to obtain through royal largesse that enabled him to become the leading political figure he did. It is easy to see that courtly ideals helped provide Marshal with his fortune. This is a startlingly different beginning to the relationship to the crown in comparison to Earl Ranulf. There are some similarities to Earl David's initial years as he received his honour through royal grants as well. But this is superficial as he had existing resources in Scotland.

In Richard's reign, William Marshal was a wealthy man. He had received advancement in royal service gaining lands and position via his marriage to the heiress of Striguil.<sup>402</sup> For this reward he took an active role in government. He supported John against Longchamp, but seems to have done so in the interests of the crown, as during the second rebellion he joined the royal supporters. He may initially have been at some distance from King Richard as he was part of the old regime, having notably fought Richard in the war at the end of King Henry's life. Yet Richard did appoint him as one of his co-justiciars while away on crusade. His position was under that of the main Justiciars.<sup>403</sup> Matthew Paris records that he was an administrator of the realm.<sup>404</sup> It is certain that Richard sent letters to William Marshal concerning the chancellor and to give full powers to the archbishop of Rouen when required.<sup>405</sup> This would suggest that he was trusted by the king and was a confidant when Earl Ranulf was still at a slight distance from the crown.

William Marshal was closely associated with King John not just towards the end of his reign but from the very beginning. William was sent by John on Richard's death

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<sup>401</sup> King Henry II had an odd relationship with the east sending monies out there but never seemingly committing to spend them or go on crusade, see, Hans Eberhard Mayer, 'Henry II of England and the Holy Land', *EHR*, 97. 385 (1982), 721-39. for King Henry's lack of support for William Marshal see, pp. 730-31.

<sup>402</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 66-73.

<sup>403</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 77-80.

<sup>404</sup> Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 27

<sup>405</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. pp. 379-80

to secure the allegiance of England.<sup>406</sup> At Northampton he induced all to swear fealty to John.<sup>407</sup> He was a frequent attendant at the royal court, more so than Ranulf, and witness to the king's charters, although he was somewhat out of favour between 1205 to 1212.<sup>408</sup>

William was also linked to the leading officer in King John's court, Geoffrey fitz Peter. Geoffrey fitz Peter had taken over as justiciar, by appointment of King Richard, on Hubert Walter's retirement in 1198.<sup>409</sup> His first connection to the earl was, however, in Richard's reign, as he was one of the men left to assist the two justiciars, while Richard was on crusade.<sup>410</sup> Geoffrey had also witnessed a charter of the earl to Robert son of Robert in c.1189 to 1194.<sup>411</sup> Geoffrey like William became an opponent to Longchamp and fought Prince John's rebellion.<sup>412</sup> He also supported King John over Arthur following Richard's death, for which John rewarded him with the title of earl.<sup>413</sup> He is now regarded as an able administrator.<sup>414</sup> During the early years of John's reign he was to show this as the justiciar, however the power of the office diminished in this period as the king was not often away from his lands after 1204 and took more personal responsibility for the exchequer and courts.<sup>415</sup> Yet William must have seen him as an ally still as he granted him a share of a market in return for an agreed upon rent c. 1204 to 1213.<sup>416</sup>

William did have disagreements with John. One key example of this which mirrored Ranulf's experience was a deep suspicion when William negotiated with Philip of France for his lands following the loss of Normandy.<sup>417</sup> Yet William Marshal was

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<sup>406</sup> Ibid., ii. p. 452.

<sup>407</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 198; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 453.

<sup>408</sup> William is frequently found witnessing the royal charters in *RChart.*. For the period 1205-12 see Crouch, *William Marshal*, Ch. 4.

<sup>409</sup> Canterbury, 'Chronica', p. 572.

<sup>410</sup> Howden, *Chronica*, iii, p. 16.

<sup>411</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters* no. 88.

<sup>412</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 43-44.

<sup>413</sup> Coventry, *Memoriale*, ii, p. 146; see also Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 46.

<sup>414</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 36.

<sup>415</sup> West, *The Justiciarship*, Chs. 4-5

<sup>416</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters* no. 37.

<sup>417</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 92-96.

one of the main supporters of the king. He fought on John's side at Runnymede.<sup>418</sup> When the king died he also acted to protect John's legacy by taking charge of the regency and John's heir.<sup>419</sup> During the regency period he was active in fighting the rebellious barons and was involved in the battles of Lincoln and London.<sup>420</sup> It was also William, with the Legate Guala, who met Prince Louis to arrange a peace.<sup>421</sup> William was involved in restructuring the government after this endeavour but died in 1219 and was buried at New Temple London.<sup>422</sup>

William Marshal, of course, had been rewarded for his service, as was Earl Ranulf. He was made earl of Striguil by King John, Richard had only given him the lands.<sup>423</sup> He also obtained new lands during his time as regent.<sup>424</sup> This also included a large cash fee of 1000m. which his son William returned to the crown in 1220.<sup>425</sup> Yet in comparison to Earl Ranulf, William had a much closer relationship with the crown in this period and this was to extend to his son and heir.

William Marshal the younger was in an odd position after his father died, he had inherited his wealth from his father but was not able to hold on to all of it. This was possibly because of his conduct in the civil war. The new earl Marshal had been involved with the rebels in 1215.<sup>426</sup> He had, furthermore, joined Prince Louis in 1217.<sup>427</sup> His return to allegiance only came after John's death when he was persuaded by his father to return to allegiance.<sup>428</sup> Once he did return he actively fought on the king's side, and in 1217 he was one of the leaders who assembled to besiege Lincoln.<sup>429</sup> With his father as regent he initially had a relatively stable

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<sup>418</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 589.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid., iii. p. 122; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 196-97, 201.

<sup>420</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 49; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 18; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 208-09, 221, 239.

<sup>421</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 30-31; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 222.

<sup>422</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 64; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 291; 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 55; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 43, 201; iv. 136; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 232.

<sup>423</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 72.

<sup>424</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 136-38.

<sup>425</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 151.

<sup>426</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 47; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 585; Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 121.

<sup>427</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 654; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 180.

<sup>428</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 13; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 206.

<sup>429</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 18; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 209.

period after the war. He was even rewarded by being granted the lands of the earl of Winchester in 1217.<sup>430</sup> Yet with his father's death it appears that William the younger felt insecure and was keen to display his loyalty sending letters to the king assuring him of his loyalty in certain cases.<sup>431</sup> In 1220, he also sent a letter to the king that he was ready and willing to join the fight against the earl of Albermarle who had rebelled in 1220.<sup>432</sup>

William Marshal, however, seems to have quickly found allies in the new government and was soon acting on the king's behalf in certain matters. For instance, he was involved in talks in planning a suitable course of action against Wales with the earl of Salisbury after peace talks failed in July 1223. Both earls combined and decided to attack the Welsh.<sup>433</sup> In addition, it appears that William had a close relationship to the new justiciar Hubert de Burgh. He wrote many letters to the justiciar, most calling Hubert *karissimo amico suo*, his dearest friend, an address he did not use for any other.<sup>434</sup> Meanwhile, Carpenter regards William as one of Hubert's main supporters in the period.<sup>435</sup> This relationship is in complete contrast to the one Ranulf found himself in.

It is apparent that this period represents one in which William Marshal seems to have gained in strength. In 1224 he received the justiciarship of Ireland.<sup>436</sup> But more importantly, in that same year, he also married the king's sister.<sup>437</sup> However, William was also forced to return castles like Ranulf, such as Marlborough in 1221.<sup>438</sup> There is also evidence that William did not always support the regime. In

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<sup>430</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 55, 75-76.

<sup>431</sup> There are two of these: one that he knew nothing of his bailiffs deeds in seizing Earl David's lands once he died in 1219, and the second an apology for not being able to attend a meeting in 1220, Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 148-49.

<sup>432</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 150; for the earl of Albemarle's revolt see, 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 413; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 63-64.

<sup>433</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 153; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 82-83.

<sup>434</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos 113-125.

<sup>435</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, pp. 243-45.

<sup>436</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 155.

<sup>437</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 299; 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 84; Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', pp. 415-16; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 91; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 124; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 296.

<sup>438</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 68.



1227 he joined Richard of Cornwall's rising against the king.<sup>439</sup> This suggests that the relationship William had established with the crown and Hubert did not overcome their responsibility to restore royal control.

Like Earl Ranulf, however, William was called upon for his military expertise towards the end of the 1220s. He was soon involved actively taking a commanding role in the English forces in the king's 1230 campaign to France.<sup>440</sup> Yet, William Marshal died in 1231.<sup>441</sup> The alliances he had made with the crown seem to have disappeared with his death. His heir Richard Marshal went to King Henry in Wales to request his rights to his brother's lands. But he was initially refused on the advice of Hubert de Burgh.<sup>442</sup> He does however receive them eventually.<sup>443</sup> Richard did seem to have leanings towards Hubert's adversaries and was an ally of Earl Ranulf, which may explain the reasoning behind this.

The earl of Warwick, Waleran, had less contact than any of the other earls with the crown as a youngster. David Crouch believes that he was born between 1137 and 1141 and was a member of his brother's household between 1153 and 1184.<sup>444</sup> Waleran succeeded to his inheritance and did not receive it through royal largesse.<sup>445</sup> This could suggest that he was distanced from the crown. Yet Waleran seems to have attended some of the major events in Richard's reign. He was involved in Richard's coronation and also supported the justiciar during the rebellion of Prince John.<sup>446</sup> After this date his actions are uncertain, and according to David Crouch, Waleran died at the end of 1204.<sup>447</sup> However, in that year Waleran

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<sup>439</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 124; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 296.

<sup>440</sup> For the king's return see, 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 243; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 308; for Earl Ranulf's role see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 56-57; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', pp. 76-77; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 327-29; *Royal and other Historical Letters Illustrative of the Reign of Henry III*, i., no. 301; Soden, I., *Ranulf de Blondville*, pp. 114-17; for some of the commands given jointly by the King to Ranulf and William see, *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 444, 450-51.

<sup>441</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', pp. 78-79; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 126; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 201.

<sup>442</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 204; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 333-34.

<sup>443</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 79; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 127.

<sup>444</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 11.

<sup>445</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 244.

<sup>446</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 11.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

was present at court suggesting that he was aware of, if not always active in the politics of the period.<sup>448</sup>

Waleran's heir, Henry, was a minor in the custody of Thomas Basset of Headington. Thomas had been at Richard's deathbed and is deemed by Ralph Turner to have been an intimate of King John which would suggest that a closer connection to the crown may follow.<sup>449</sup> Henry's minority would end in 1213.<sup>450</sup> However, this did not stop the earl's heir being involved with the crown in other ways. In 1210 John set off on a campaign in Ireland, accompanied by William Marshal and the young Earl Henry of Warwick with his guardian Thomas Basset.<sup>451</sup> Upon his majority Henry earl of Warwick also came out firmly in support of the crown during the civil war.<sup>452</sup> He received Warwick castle in June 1216 and joined King John on his last campaign.<sup>453</sup> There is a possibility, as David Crouch states, that the earl's support may have wavered when Louis arrived.<sup>454</sup> However, it is apparent that, like his father, he chose to favour the crown. Following the end of this civil war this support was rewarded. In 1218 Henry was involved in the council work with other loyalist earls like Earl Ranulf.<sup>455</sup>

During King Henry III's minority Earl Henry also actively supported the new regime, fighting the Earl of Albermarle in 1220 for the king. However, unlike Ranulf he does not seem to have attended court, like his father.<sup>456</sup> Instead, he seems to have been involved in a number of court cases between 1225 and 1227, and in 1228 was struggling with debts owed to the crown.<sup>457</sup> Henry did join Richard of Cornwall's rising at Stamford in 1227 suggesting that he had some gripes with the crown.<sup>458</sup> This would seem to suggest that towards the end of his life Henry, whilst being an

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<sup>448</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 114, 122.

<sup>449</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 55.

<sup>450</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 13.

<sup>451</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

<sup>452</sup> Coventry, *Memoriale*, ii. p. 225.

<sup>453</sup> *RLP*, p. 187; *RChart.*, p. 224.

<sup>454</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 13.

<sup>455</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i., p. 134.

<sup>456</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 14.

<sup>457</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. pp. 70, 161, 166, 230.

<sup>458</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 124; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 296; Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 14.

active royalist from an early age, was finding his relationship tested in a manner akin to the other earls. Unfortunately, Henry died in 1229 and was not able to reconcile any difficulties with the crown when the regime changed.<sup>459</sup>

## Conclusion

In conclusion, the earl seems to have tried to maintain a cordial relationship with the crown if not always with all of its officers. It is clear that his relationship varied with the individual kings and officers, as well as with the circumstances in the reigns. The comparison of Earl Ranulf with the other earls illuminates the fact that Ranulf enjoyed a relationship with the crown distinct from his contemporaries in many ways. He began his relationship from a position of power and familiarity with the crown. He seems to have had the most secure relationships with the strongest monarchs, Henry II and Richard, during his formative years. There is a sense of dissatisfaction and distance in his ties with John and the regency of Henry III, although at the end of his life this seems to have changed.

This is in contrast with the other earls. David of Huntingdon operated at a distance from the crown consistently throughout his life. He was essentially in a middle ground owing allegiance to two kings and had to balance support for both. Similarly, the earls of Warwick were at a distance from court, although they seem to have shown support for the crown to maintain their position at key junctures. The Marshal family seem to have started their relationships to the crown from a relative position of weakness. William Marshal seems to have sought the patronage of the king to create his lordship and relied on the crown throughout his life. The loyalty to the crown and its officers is a part of Earl Ranulf's relationship as well, yet Ranulf was also able to act independently of the king's interests, especially in the later years of his life. William Marshal rarely does this and his son, having been a rebel as a youth, needed to show his loyalty and maintained a good relationship with the justiciar Hubert de Burgh during the majority of Henry III. It may perhaps be that the William thought that to maintain his position, allies of this type were

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<sup>459</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 14.

essential, where Ranulf felt more secure to complain, having his fortunes from inheritance rather than royal gift.

Yet there were some similarities in the relationships. While David of Huntingdon and his heir John had split loyalties upon occasion so did William Marshal and Earl Ranulf with their Norman estates under King John. The navigation of these loyalties was quite difficult for all parties. Moreover, the main quality of the earls, which seems to have brought them into royal service was the same for all, their ability to wage war. War with Wales, Ireland and France necessarily required the king to garner support from the earls and this seems to have often been at the centre of the relationships established with the crown. Indeed, it seems to have been often at the centre of Earl Ranulf's relationship.

That war was at the centre of the earl's relationship with the crown should be little surprise looking at Ranulf's ancestors. It is clear that the earldom when it was created was formed for the purpose of war. Indeed, it is also apparent that the earl's inheritance has a large impact on his relationship to the crown. His links to the honours of Lancashire, Lincolnshire and Leicestershire are acknowledged from King John's reign onwards and clearly show that the earl was aware of his predecessors and their rights. That the earldom represented a large and powerful entity with a lord who could show independence clearly meant that the crown had to handle the earl carefully and this was shown most especially by King John who echoed more successfully many of the choices King Stephen made.

It is also therefore clear that Earl Ranulf was a courtier and showed key courtly values throughout his life as he was loyal to the crown, showed forbearance and mercy to his enemies and was rewarded for this. Earl David, and the earls of Warwick also showed such values but did not attend the court. Showing courtly values and receiving the rewards for such are separate issues. The Marshal family were primarily courtiers. They relied upon royal largesse and service within the royal administration to obtain wealth and power. Ranulf, however, only became actively involved in politics in the last years of his life when he fought Hubert de Burgh in a bloodless battle, and supported Llywelyn and the various rebels. It is

these years which show that the earl was as adept at court and in politics as on the battlefield and which suggest that he was as much a courtier as any other lord.

The relationship the earl had with the crown therefore had a direct impact upon his lordship. His positive relationship founded through his ability to wage war resulted in large amounts of royal largesse which will be shown in subsequent chapters to have shifted his lordship and the relationships he creates more widely in consequence. The political support he gave the crown also affected his local political relationships as he was involved in some decisive engagements in the war in Wales, and the civil war. The dispute with Hubert de Burgh would also lead to a change in his political alliances.

## Chapter 2

### The Honorial Baronage:

#### Which Magnates and Barons did Earl Ranulf establish Relationships with and why?

The kings of England have always had leading political figures, who would provide counsel. When establishing a lordship, a lord needed to not only consider establishing a relationship with the crown, but also establishing relationships to these individuals. This chapter aims to initially examine what role these men had within Earl Ranulf's lordship and the nature of the relationships he established with them. This will not only provide an understanding of what Earl Ranulf was doing with his lordship, but also help highlight the role of this group within lordly power.

The individuals considered herein will include the leading members of the honorial baronage, the magnates such as the earls, bishops, and leading barons of the realm. This examination will build upon the previous chapter showing not only how the earl's alliances were affected by his relationship to the crown, but will also highlight where relationships were established outside of such political concerns. In order to fully address the role of leading barons within the earl's lordship it will also be necessary to consider any local barons who are part of Earl Ranulf's own honorial baronage. These men often had independence to the earl similar to that of the magnates, suggesting a similar relationship. A comparison to his contemporaries will also allow Earl Ranulf's relationships to be put into context.

#### Magnates, Barons, and Inner Circles

Before analysing the nature of the earl's connection to the magnates and local baronage, it is necessary to consider some of the wider concerns of this group and how historians have previously examined their role in lordly power. The feudal and bastard feudal theories have overlaid the understanding of this group until recently and have resulted in two separate models of lordship and two separate ways to identify and understand how leading lords acted within a lordship.

The feudal model emphasised hierarchy within society. The structure of society was envisioned as a feudal pyramid. At the top would sit the king, below him the magnates and below them the barons and so on. This view of society emphasised vertical connections rather than horizontal ones and often left alliances with other lords outside its consideration or were thought of as being uncertain.<sup>1</sup> With regard to an earl's following, like that of Earl Ranulf, a smaller version of this hierarchy was envisioned within their lordship where the earl would rely on his leading barons as counsellors and allies. However, such a view of society has been discredited.<sup>2</sup>

Despite these criticisms the feudal model of lordship does have something to say about how Earl Ranulf's relationships should be approached and identified. It is clear that social rank has importance for understanding relationships in this period. David Crouch, particularly, has identified that the lords were seeking to differentiate themselves from other areas of society through the concept of nobility.<sup>3</sup> Such changes are also seen within how the crown interacted with its magnates. The late twelfth and thirteenth centuries represent a period of great political and social change for this group of individuals. The magnates had been forced out of their traditional role in the royal administration by a new class. By the late twelfth century the Angevin kings had begun not only expanding their administration, but also professionalising it by employing a new class of official coined *curiales* by historians.<sup>4</sup> In fact Earl Ranulf has been described by Ralph Turner as a counsellor more than office holder to King John.<sup>5</sup>

There is also justification that these leading men also began to see their role differently. Having been distanced from the centre of government the leading lords

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<sup>1</sup> Consider how Frank Stenton and François Louis Ganshof in their discussion of feudalism see it as essentially a closed power structure and rarely refer to influences from the outside, Frank Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166: Being the Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in Hilary Term 1929*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1961); François Louis Ganshof, *Feudalism* (London: Longmans, 1960).

<sup>2</sup> See above, Introduction: The Historiography of Lordly Power: Feudalism and Bastard Feudalism.

<sup>3</sup> David Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility: Constructing Aristocracy in England and France, 900-1300* (Harlow: Routledge, 2005).

<sup>4</sup> For the creation of the role of curial and counsellor see, Ralph V. Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust: Administrative Service and Upward Mobility in Angevin England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 4-15.

<sup>5</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London: Longman, 1994), p. 73.

sought to regain some of their control. The first formal request that the lords in England should have a role in its governance comes from the articles of the barons in 1215. It states:

32. That no scutage or aid be imposed in the kingdom unless by common counsel of the kingdom.<sup>6</sup>

The development of the formal council was, however, a very long process, which was not complete during the lifetime of Earl Ranulf III of Chester. Indeed the request of the rebels in 1215 was not seen in the actual published versions of *Magna Carta*.<sup>7</sup>

In practice during the Angevin period the king often picked who he would ask for counsel, so those who had the position to call themselves a counsellor did not always attend the court. However, this does not mean that they were politically inactive or did not see a different role for themselves. Indeed, by the mid-thirteenth century the kings' leading men, both lay and prelate, were coming to be known as magnates, thereby distancing themselves from other lords in the kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

Such a social and political change was also mirrored in lower ranks of society. The thirteenth and later centuries are seen as a period in which further social graduations were becoming identified with the creation of the gentry.<sup>9</sup> Thus for Earl Ranulf's following, rank must necessarily play a part in identifying what the nature of his relationships were, as it impacts on what role each partner in a relationship may envisage for themselves.

The second model of lordship, the bastard feudal model, suggested that lords built their followings in terms of concentric circles. Keith Stringer and to an extent David

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<sup>6</sup> Translated in *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, ed. by Harry Rothwell (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1975), p. 313. The original Latin can be found in *Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History*, ed. by William Stubbs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 293: 32 *Ne scutagium vel auxilium ponatur in regno, nisi per commune consilium regni,..*

<sup>7</sup> *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, pp. 316-24, 327-37, 341-46.

<sup>8</sup> Alan Harding, *England in the Thirteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 220-24.

<sup>9</sup> Peter Coss provides one of the best overviews of the developments, even if his definition of gentry is more limited than others, see Peter Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).



Crouch, who used a similar method in his work, have suggested that the followings of Earl Ranulf's contemporaries, Earl William Marshal and David, Earl of Huntingdon, should be discussed in terms of an inner and outer circle.<sup>10</sup> Such an approach bypasses the issues with feudalism in its consideration of lords within a lordship as vertical and horizontal ties are considered in the same light.

This model, despite being more open, does have its own problems however. These primarily stem from the way that individuals are generally identified within each circle. Initially this depends in part on rank, which builds upon observations within the feudal model. The servants and others as the lowest rank are seen in the outer circles of the model, while closer confidants are those with more social status. The identification between the higher ranked individuals, however, becomes more complicated, as it relies upon the witnessing of charter documents produced by the lord. The more individuals witness, the closer they are to the lord and this decides who is the more important.

Such methodology fails to account for the fact that these relationships should be considered on their own merits. Indeed when considering the charter witness lists, it is apparent that magnates such as other earl's and individuals of equivalent stature are less frequent witnesses compared to household officers, which as time progressed are gradually recruited from lesser members of society. In the above model the relationship the household officer had would be more important to the earl. This is clearly not the case, as these relationships are different from one another.

Linking the relationship to the witnessing of documents also supposes that it was tied to land disputes alone. There are of course other areas where the earl may wish to have support or counsel, including in politics or war, which may be more pertinent to his relationships with magnates and local barons, although a concern with land and its management cannot be ruled out. Because of such issues this

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<sup>10</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 145; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 155-58.

model also cannot be used to understand the relationship the earl has with his leading lords.

However, this model as the feudal model does, once again emphasise rank to a degree. Therefore this study looks at the individuals of rank with whom the earl establishes ties, through means not only of the earl's court shown by his charters, or through legal ties, but in the round, thereby negating the limitations found in the above models. This will help to identify the individuality of these relationships and the different purposes for them.

## The Earls

The most easily identifiable men of rank in this period are the earls. The numbers of earls varied as lineages came and went, but 25 earldoms have been identified between 1150 and 1250.<sup>11</sup> Yet Ranulf only had notable ties to a small group of these individuals. This section will look at those individuals and the nature of the relationships he formed with them.

There are various ways in which Earl Ranulf established relationships with other earls. The main way he did so, however, was through marriages. Earl Ranulf had a number of female relatives for whom he had to provide through finding them husbands. The figure overleaf provides an overview of these marriages and the connections the earl made. These marriages provided a link to other lords and also undoubtedly engendered a sense of gratitude in the recipient and it is in context of establishing ties to other lords that these marriages are considered.

The women in these marriages undoubtedly helped to cement the alliance and further the connection. The role of women in lordship has recently undergone an upsurge in interest. Rebecca Slitt has, for instance, identified women's role in creating alliances or political friendships.<sup>12</sup> Earl Ranulf's own marriages also had an impact on his lordship; his marriage to Constance undoubtedly brought him into further contact with the crown, and that with Clemence helped establish ties in

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<sup>11</sup> Richard Mortimer, *Angevin England, 1154-1258* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 77-79.

<sup>12</sup> Rebecca Slitt, 'The boundaries of women's power: Gender and the discourse of political friendship in Twelfth-Century England', *Gender & History*, 24. 1 (2012), 1-17.

Normandy. However, an assessment of the role of women in lordship is beyond the scope of this study as it would be served better by a more dedicated and targeted

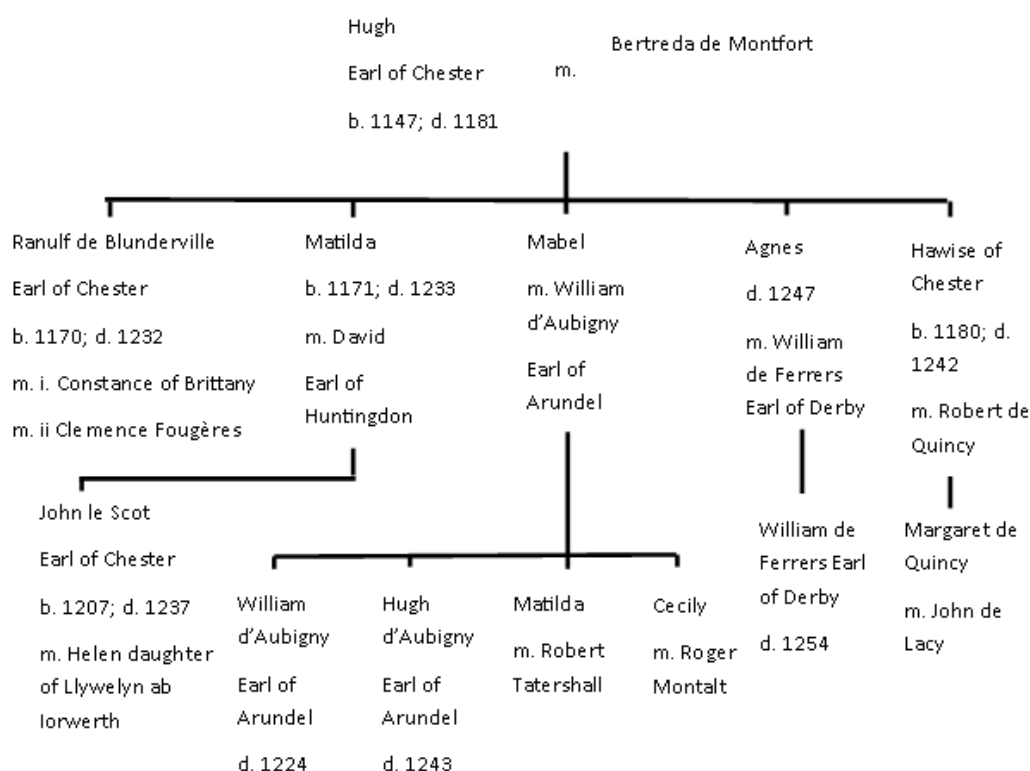


Figure 3 Earl Ranulf's Family Ties

study. This thesis will therefore concentrate on how the marriages affected the earl's relationship with the suitors.

For the suitor these marriages were, undoubtedly, less about establishing a familial link, but more with what came with it, namely property. Carole Rawcliffe suggested that for many marriage was a means to an end, a way of gaining wealth and new lands.<sup>13</sup> The twelfth century Earl William Marshal, is a key example of this as his fortunes were made not by grants of land, but of an heiress.<sup>14</sup> The crown often used marriages to reward individuals, and it was seen as a valuable source of patronage.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, the examples of legal disputes following marriages found by

<sup>13</sup> Carole Rawcliffe, 'The Politics of Marriage in Later Medieval England: William, Lord Botreaux, and the Hungerfords', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, 51. 3 (1988), 161-75.

<sup>14</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 66-73.

<sup>15</sup> Turner, *King John*, pp. 103-04.

R. C. Palmer in 1300, would confirm that there was definitely a proprietary element to marriage.<sup>16</sup> Most often lands were granted to the suitor via the dowry rather than an heiress however, as S. J. Payling illustrated, female inheritance was profoundly unpredictable.<sup>17</sup> This would suggest that Ranulf, by forming ties to individuals through marriages, established a link which may have had social elements, but also had financial elements.

The nobles Earl Ranulf chose to grant his sisters in marriage to indicates, first and foremost, his primary concern with consolidating his hold on his lands. One early alliance he made was to William de Ferrers, earl of Derby, who in 1192 married Ranulf's sister Agnes.<sup>18</sup> There was a definite territorial theme to be seen in the alliance. The earl of Derby held lands in the Midlands neighbouring those of Earl Ranulf himself.<sup>19</sup> There is also evidence of a pre-existing relationship between the two earls. William, for instance, also witnessed a charter of Earl Ranulf in 1190.<sup>20</sup> This would suggest that in 1190 the earl of Derby was already known to Earl Ranulf, and this alliance probably arose as there was a hereditary tie between the two families, as previous earls of Chester had had dealings with the Ferrers family in their charters and elsewhere.<sup>21</sup> Indeed, in 1171 Earl Ranulf's father Hugh had rebelled against King Henry II in support of his son Henry the Younger. Hugh was also joined in this rebellion by Earl William de Ferrers of Derby, as well as a host of other lords.<sup>22</sup> Their aim it is believed was to try and regain lands they had been

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<sup>16</sup> Robert C. Palmer, 'Contexts of Marriage in Medieval England: Evidence from the King's Court Circa 1300', *Speculum*, 59. 1 (1984), 42-67 (pp. 42-67).

<sup>17</sup> S. J. Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage in Late Medieval England: The Marriage of Heiresses', *The Economic History Review*, 54. 3 (2001), 413-29 (pp. 415-16).

<sup>18</sup> *BC*, no. 263.

<sup>19</sup> Domesday Book, Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, records the earls of Derby held lands in Derbyshire, pp. 744-49, Northamptonshire, pp. 608-09, Leicestershire, pp. 636-37, Warwickshire, pp. 663-64; Staffordshire, pp. 679-80, all counties where Ranulf also held lands.

<sup>20</sup> *BC*, no. 220.

<sup>21</sup> *BC*, nos. 45, 56.

<sup>22</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 51; *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 26-27; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, pp. 17-18; Jordan Fantosme, 'Chronique De La Guerre Entre Les Anglois et Les Eccosais en 1173 et 1174', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard*, ed. by Richard Howlett (London: Longman & co., 1886), pp. 202-377 (pp. 214-223); Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 176; Torigni, 'Chronicle', pp. 255-56, 259-60.

promised or had lost.<sup>23</sup> In these initial relationships to leading earls, Earl Ranulf was therefore also trying to maintain and continue traditional alliances as well.

A similar picture can be found in the grant of August 1190, in which Earl Ranulf granted his sister Matilda in marriage to David, earl of Huntingdon.<sup>24</sup> Much like in Ranulf's relationship to the earl of Derby there was undeniably a territorial element as to why David was chosen. Earl David was a landowner in the Midlands, holding lands neighbouring those of Earl Ranulf.<sup>25</sup> There was also a pre-existing tie between the earls of Chester and the earl of Huntingdon. As the earl of Ferrers had done in 1171 with Ranulf's father Hugh, David had also rebelled against King Henry II in support of his son Henry the Younger.<sup>26</sup> The alliance between Ranulf, and David also seems to have included William de Ferrers, as not only do they now share a kinship, but William had also witnessed Ranulf grant his sister in marriage to David.<sup>27</sup> There is therefore some indication that Ranulf was forming a territorial block of alliances made with individuals who could help support each other in their lordships.

It is interesting to note that certain knights of the household of Earl David also enter the court of Earl Ranulf after the marriage, such as Robert Bassingham who witnessed a charter of Earl Ranulf in 1199 to 1200.<sup>28</sup> He was named as steward of Earl David of Huntingdon in 1194 to 1208 and was also a landholder of Huntingdon honour.<sup>29</sup> This example illustrates that these relationships could lead to the cross fertilisation and blending of lordship.

One of the most important uses Earl Ranulf initially made of such relationships, however, was perhaps between 1198 and 1202 when Earl David witnessed Earl

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<sup>23</sup> Mortimer, *Angevin England, 1154-1258*, pp. 86-90; Wilfred Lewis Warren, *Henry II* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 121-22.

<sup>24</sup> *BC*, no. 220.

<sup>25</sup> For a breakdown of earl David's lands see, *HKF*, iii; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*.

<sup>26</sup> Canterbury, 'Gesta Regum', p. 249; Coggeshall, *Chronicon Anglicanum*, p. 18; *Chronica de Maillros*, pp. 85-87; Jordan Fantosme, 'Chronique de la Guerre', pp. 352-355, 372-73; Newburgh, 'Historia Rerum Anglicarum', i. p. 185; Torigni, 'The Chronicle', p. 264.

<sup>27</sup> *BC*, no. 220.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 308.

<sup>29</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 409; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, acta 20.

Ranulf confirm the site of the foundation of Revesby Abbey.<sup>30</sup> The fact that David witnessed the earl's charter suggests that they were still in contact. This is also shown in another charter around the same time that Earl David also witnessed.<sup>31</sup> However, the grant to Revesby Abbey also signifies something else. Earl Ranulf had only just obtained the Roumare lands, Lincoln honour, as the Roumare family had died out. He had been granted them by King Richard.<sup>32</sup> Yet his position was not entirely stable as he was not a direct hereditary lord of the area and needed to consolidate his position. This was accomplished, in part, by taking on the patronage of the Roumare family's ecclesiastical foundations. Revesby Abbey had been founded by William Roumare in 1142.<sup>33</sup> The act of granting this charter would establish Ranulf's link to the past. Nevertheless, having Earl David witness those grants as well provided added support for the earl, giving him more authority and the local populace knowledge that a powerful lord local to the area was willing to support the earl's acquisition.

Earl David also witnessed Earl Ranulf's charter of 1199 to 1200, granting a dowry to Robert de Quincy for his marriage to Ranulf's sister Hawise.<sup>34</sup> This dowry included lands in Lincolnshire, and further supports the idea that in this initial period of consolidation of the Lincolnshire honour, Earl David was actively supporting Earl Ranulf. The fact that between 1207 and 1217 Robert de Quincy also witnessed Earl Ranulf grant a gift to Bordesley Abbey in Lincolnshire, suggests that his relationship might have been used to that effect as well.<sup>35</sup>

However, it was primarily with Robert's father Saher de Quincy, that Earl Ranulf had the most contact. Saher witnessed none of Earl Ranulf's charters, but they were often found together at court especially during 1207.<sup>36</sup> The root of this close tie was perhaps not only to do with the marriage and locative factors, but also to do with the fact that Ranulf in July 1207 had received the lands of Simon de Montfort

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<sup>30</sup> *BC*, no. 288.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 308.

<sup>32</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 7.

<sup>33</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. p. 453.

<sup>34</sup> *BC*, no. 308.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 207.

<sup>36</sup> *RChart.*, pp. 165, 67, 70-75, 85-86, 94-95, 202-04.

Earl of Leicester. Saher had previously received the other half of the earldom in 1204.<sup>37</sup> Saher undoubtedly saw in Ranulf an ally to help consolidate his holdings, and also as the head of a group of likeminded lords. That there was some mutual regard is shown by the fact that both patronised Garendon Abbey.<sup>38</sup>

Another key contact for Earl Ranulf was the earl of Arundel. The earl of Arundel, however, must have a slightly different relationship to Ranulf than the previous lords. The earls of Arundel held lands in the South East, mainly in Sussex and Norfolk, so there was little territorial overlap of concerns.<sup>39</sup> Yet the alliance between Earl Ranulf and the Arundel family must have begun quite early in Ranulf's life as his sister Mabel was also married to William de Aubigny, son of the earl of Arundel, in around 1192.<sup>40</sup> The reason for the alliance from William and his father's perspective was perhaps due to the fact they were both new to their role. William's father had only recently gained his honour in 1190.<sup>41</sup> The fact the honour had remained in the king's hand from 1176 on the death of the then earl, would suggest that he obtained the honour almost as a newcomer.<sup>42</sup> William also only succeeded his father in 1193, and would also have seen a relationship to Ranulf in the same manner as his father, as a means to establish his position.<sup>43</sup> Yet it is difficult to see what Ranulf obtained from the Arundels. It is possible the earl was merely seeking a good match for his sister. However, Ranulf and William did attend court together upon numerous occasions which might suggest more political connotations.<sup>44</sup> The relationship was, however, cut short as William joined Ranulf on crusade in 1217 but died soon upon his return in 1221.<sup>45</sup> William's son and Ranulf's nephew

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<sup>37</sup> *Records of the Borough of Leicester: Being a series of Extracts from the Archives of the Corporation of Leicester, 1103-1327*, ed. by Mary Bateson (London: Cambridge University Press, 1899) pp. xiv-xvi; for the grant to Earl Ranulf see, *Calendarium Rotulorum Patentium in Turri Londinensi*, ed. by S. Ayescough, J. Caley (London: Printed by G Eye and A. Strahan, 1802), p. 6.

<sup>38</sup> For Saher see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 292; for Earl Ranulf see *BC*, nos 264-65.

<sup>39</sup> For a discussion of the Arundel honour see, *HKF*, iii.

<sup>40</sup> *HKF*, i. p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> *CChartR.*, iv. p. 257-258.

<sup>42</sup> Torigni, 'Chronicle', p. 271; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 240.

<sup>43</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 249.

<sup>44</sup> *RChart.*, in 1203, pp. 110, 112-14 (5), in 1205 p. 141, in 1206, p. 165(4), in 1207, pp. 167, 170-71, in 1209, p. 186, in January 1215 p. 203-05.

<sup>45</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 294.

succeeded to the honour in 1221, but also died soon after in 1224.<sup>46</sup> Unfortunately the next heir was a minor and was put under the care of Hubert de Burgh, distancing the family from Ranulf.<sup>47</sup>

Ranulf also seems to have established ties to individuals based not upon marriage alliances, but solely around territorial connections. A clear example of this is his relationship to the Duke of Brittany to whom was granted the honour of Richmond during the civil war of 1215 to 1217, which Ranulf had held since 1204 after it had been granted to him on the death of Prince Arthur.<sup>48</sup> This relationship never really had the same outlook as those of the above earls, but it is clear that Ranulf was keen to establish relationships with individuals with whom he had some territorial link. In 1231 Ranulf worked closely with Philip when they fought on the Continent.<sup>49</sup>

Outside of his ties established through marriage, Ranulf also had links to lords such as Simon de Montfort. The Montforts were a knightly family based in France. Yet Simon's grandfather was co-heir of the honour of Leicester, which brought him onto the English stage.<sup>50</sup> It was also this honour that established his ties to Earl Ranulf as King John had placed half the honour of Leicester in the earl's custody, as Simon de Montfort's father was fighting for the French.<sup>51</sup> Earl Ranulf maintained his hold on those lands until 1231. Little is known of Simon until his departure for England in 1230.<sup>52</sup> It is likely that he spent time with his surviving elder brother Amaury after his parents died, and possibly played a part fighting in the Albigensian crusade of 1226 to 1229.<sup>53</sup> In 1230, however, Simon and Amaury came to an agreement to split the claims to their father's inheritance, Amaury taking the French lands and Simon the English after Amaury's claim to the English

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 299.

<sup>47</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 102-03.

<sup>48</sup> For the grant of Richmond to Peter see, *Rolls of the Justices in Eyre being the Rolls of the Pleas and Assizes for Lincolnshire, 1218-19, and Worcestershire 1221*, Selden Society vol. 53, ed. by Doris M. Stenton (London: B. Quaritch, 1934), no 494; for the grant to Earl Ranulf see, 'Annales Prioratus de Wigornia', p. 393; *RLP*, p. 51.

<sup>49</sup> See above, pp. 93.

<sup>50</sup> John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 3-4.

<sup>51</sup> For the grant to Ranulf see, *Calendarium Rotulorum Patentium*, i. p. 6.

<sup>52</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 4.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., p. 6.



lands was rejected by King Henry III. A payment was probably made between Amaury and Simon to secure this deal.<sup>54</sup> Simon then came to England and petitioned the king for his inheritance.<sup>55</sup> This resulted in a grant of the estates in August 1232, when they were released by Earl Ranulf who also witnessed this transaction.<sup>56</sup>

J. R. Maddicott suggests that as Earl Ranulf witnessed the transaction he was probably already involved in the process and that a deal had possibly already been set up before the royal grant.<sup>57</sup> Maddicott believes that the earl's willingness to surrender his custody of these lands was due to family ties. Earl Ranulf was tied to Simon through his mother who was a Montfort. The earl probably also recognised Simon's superior right. Yet Maddicott has also identified that Simon owed a debt to the earl of £200 at the time of the earl's death.<sup>58</sup> This may suggest that some payment was also made.

Having considered some of the relationships the earl established, it is clear that they were created for the purpose of local lordship. However, some of these relationships had wider political significance. The most useful political alliance the earl had from the individuals above was to the earl of Derby. William de Ferrers, earl of Derby, was, like Earl Ranulf, tied to the Angevin cause and notably fought on the royalist side alongside him during the rebellion of 1215 to 1217 at the siege of Mountsorrel castle and the battle of Lincoln.<sup>59</sup> Undoubtedly, he did this in part in hopes of gaining the Peak and Bolsover lands which he had been granted in 1199 and castles in 1216.<sup>60</sup> William Marshal is known to have reinforced those grants in a charter during Henry's regency.<sup>61</sup> David Carpenter suggests that Marshal's grant was required to ensure the earl's continued loyalty.<sup>62</sup> In this way, the earl of Derby

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<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

<sup>55</sup> *Close Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i., p. 316.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, i. pp. 316, 543; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 128.

<sup>57</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, p. 9.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 224; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 15, 18; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 206, 209.

<sup>60</sup> *RLP*, pp. 188, 192-93.

<sup>61</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, pp. 1, 4.

<sup>62</sup> David Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III* (London: Hambledon, 1996), p. 17.

also acted in concert with Earl Ranulf, who also had to be appeased by the regency council as he almost abandoned them.<sup>63</sup> It would appear that these men had much in common politically.

Some of the earl's allies who assisted him with local issues, however, seem to have opposed him and the crown during the civil war. These include Earl David of Huntingdon, Saher de Quincy, and towards the end of the civil war the earl of Arundel.<sup>64</sup> This would seem to suggest that the careful organisation of a territorial group through familial alliances was unravelling in difficult circumstances. A connection based on family and lordship does not seem to always have extended to politics. Ranulf went so far as to attack Saher's forces in Mountsorrel castle during hostilities of the baronial rebellion in John's reign.<sup>65</sup> He also fought on the opposite side to Saher at the battle of Lincoln.<sup>66</sup>

The reason for the failure in the relationships may be due to the fact that there are two forms of family community acknowledged in the historiography, a wider kin-group and a close knit nuclear family. Earl Ranulf's tie to his brothers-in-law would be a horizontal tie to a kin-group. However, Andrew Wareham has investigated the theme through case studies from East Anglia, and suggests that the development of the nuclear family and a concern with lineage had developed in the early eleventh century.<sup>67</sup> Indeed, Hugh Thomas, in his assessment of Yorkshire c.1154 to 1216, found that lower ranked individuals had also developed a similar concern by this time.<sup>68</sup> The concern with lineage, according to Thomas, is also most notably identified in the Angevin period by the wider adoption of surnames.<sup>69</sup> That family ties were primarily based on the model of the nuclear family is confirmed by S. J. Payling who found instances in the later medieval period where the concern with

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<sup>63</sup> See Chapter 1: King Henry III: The Minority.

<sup>64</sup> For David and Saher see above, pp. 83-84, 98; for William Arundel see Warren, *King John* (London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 231, 252.

<sup>65</sup> Paris, *Matthaei Parisiensis*, iii. p. 15-16; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 106.

<sup>66</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 287; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 22; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii, p. 212, iii. p. 239.

<sup>67</sup> Andrew F. Wareham, *Lords and Communities in Early Medieval East Anglia* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2005), pp. 75-77.

<sup>68</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders, and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), p. 111.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106-09.

lineage and the conservation of the patrimony meant that individuals would deed their inheritance to another kinsman rather than see it swallowed in a larger holding through a rightful female heir, although this was illegal.<sup>70</sup> Such evidence suggests that lineage and maintenance of the family name was a real concern and would argue that these familial alliances Ranulf made were not necessarily always that strong.

However, it is possible that these relationships did retain some use to the earl. Family relationships are not clear-cut in this period. Hugh Thomas, in his investigation of Angevin Yorkshire, found through an investigation of three families that, although there was a concern for lineage, families of the Angevin 'gentry' would diminish their patrimony to care for their younger sons and for their daughters, and that the maintenance of the patrimony by restricting such actions was only more common in later periods.<sup>71</sup> It is highly likely therefore that these relationships were mended when Earl Ranulf went on crusade. The crusades offered the opportunity for the ties of Ranulf's political group to be re-established as well as the earl of Derby also joined him.<sup>72</sup> It has been shown that going on crusade can be for political reasons, to regain political standing.<sup>73</sup> It is apparent that many of the rebellious barons, who have family ties to the earl seem to have joined him. These include, the earl of Winchester and William, Earl of Arundel, but there are others who seem to have gone with him including the earls of Gloucester, Hereford, Salisbury, and Oxford.<sup>74</sup> It is uncertain whether they established any further relationships with Ranulf on the journey. However, David Carpenter suggests that during the crusade the marriage between Margaret de Quincy and Ranulf's baron John de Lacy was arranged, suggesting that the dispute the families

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<sup>70</sup> S. J. Payling, 'The Economics of Marriage in Late Medieval England: The Marriage of Heiresses', *The Economic History Review*, 54. 3 (2001), 413-29 (pp. 417-18).

<sup>71</sup> Thomas, *Vassals*, pp. 117-25.

<sup>72</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 225; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 289.

<sup>73</sup> A point which was raised Simon Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade 1216-1307* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), pp. 93-95; Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 224-26, and retains significance in the study of crusade history now; see Kathryn Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades, c.1000-1300*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), pp. 82-85.

<sup>74</sup> Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades*, p. 72; James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p. 246.

had was resolved.<sup>75</sup> It is also noticeable that Ranulf was joined in his avoidance of the 1223 tax (carrucage) on his return by the earls of Arundel and Gloucester, as well as others.<sup>76</sup>

The key political ally for Earl Ranulf on his return from crusade, however, seems to have remained the earl of Derby. In part, this is because some individuals had died or were soon to die, notably the earls of Arundel, Huntingdon, and Winchester.<sup>77</sup> Ranulf also seems to have deepened his alliance with the earl of Derby. The earl of Derby, for instance, witnessed three of the earl's charters between 1225 and 1232.<sup>78</sup> That this relationship was politically useful for Earl Ranulf in this period is shown by the fact that the earl of Derby aided the earl in his first major dispute with the crown. In 1223 when Ranulf was at odds with the crown over the reclamation of castles, the earl of Derby was on the royal side of the debate. He received some of Ranulf's offices and castles following the confrontation in what is seen as a conciliatory gesture by the crown to Ranulf. While Carpenter has perhaps seen this as a break in the relationship between the earls of Derby and Chester, it is more likely that the relationship continued and that the earl of Derby was mediating.<sup>79</sup> The earl of Derby had his own quarrel with the government, as he had lost Bolsover and the Peak in 1222.<sup>80</sup>

The earl of Derby was to support Ranulf more openly in 1227, when Ranulf again acted against the crown by supporting the earl of Cornwall in a dispute with the crown and Hubert de Burgh. Ranulf with many other barons including the earls of Derby, Pembroke, Warenne, Hereford, and Warwick assembled at Stamford.<sup>81</sup> It is not apparent that Ranulf had much contact with the earl of Cornwall outside of this incident. No charters exist tying them together and this incident is therefore more

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<sup>75</sup> David Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III* (London: Methuen London, 1990), p. 103.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 224-25.

<sup>77</sup> Saher died on crusade, see, 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 292; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 56, 60, for the marriage p. 143; Paris, *Chronica Majora.*, iii. p. 60 for the marriage p. 365 and Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 243.

<sup>78</sup> *BC*, nos. 290, 310, 390.

<sup>79</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 325-27.

<sup>80</sup> This loss was quite involved and was not uncontested, see Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 284-85.

<sup>81</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, p. 48; Paris, *Chronica Majora.*, iii. pp. 123-25; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 296-97.

an example of the earl using the situation to display his unhappiness with the current political climate and his distance from court. However, the fact that the earl of Derby joined him suggests a mutual outlook in their approach to the king and his officer Hubert.

Another major political ally later in this dispute was Simon de Montfort. Upon his return to England Simon was drawn into the renewed power struggle against Hubert de Burgh due to his connection to Earl Ranulf who also opposed de Burgh.<sup>82</sup> It is clear he allied himself with the earl as in 1231 he witnessed Ranulf grant Salford the status of a free borough.<sup>83</sup> It is also apparent that Ranulf saw Simon as a political ally as it is believed that one reason why Ranulf angrily departed from the court in August 1231 is because Simon's rights had been slighted. The king had granted two manors of Leicester honour, Illston on the Hill, and Thurnby, to Creak Priory, on behalf of Hubert de Burgh. Hubert's late cousin had held the manors and his family sponsored Creak priory. After the dispute Simon received his rights to these lands, but quickly re-granted them to Creak Priory in 1232.<sup>84</sup>

At the end of his life, Earl Ranulf did see the fall of his enemy Hubert de Burgh. In this fall he was also helped by Earl John le Scot of Huntingdon who was to become one of four earls in charge of Hubert de Burgh who was imprisoned at Devizes.<sup>85</sup> It is apparent therefore that David earl of Huntingdon's heir was tied to the earl politically, which would suggest a hereditary alliance had been formed. William Ferrers was also of the four earls to whom Hubert de Burgh was committed on his fall from grace, once again showing his connection to Ranulf remained.<sup>86</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 10-11, 13.

<sup>83</sup> *BC*, no. 435.

<sup>84</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 11-13. For this incident which may also be related to Ranulf's ties to Wales and his dissatisfaction with how the king handled the Welsh campaign see, Nicholas Vincent, *Peter Des Roches: An Alien in English Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), p. 277.

<sup>85</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 88.

<sup>86</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora.*, iii. p. 234; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 351.

Therefore, it is clear that Ranulf utilised his contacts with the earls to consolidate his hold on his estates as well as provide some political support and independence from the crown.

## The Bishops

Another influential group with whom the earl created ties were the bishops. Of the prelates who were to become counsellors to the crown and later magnates, bishops were far more active politically than the abbots, partly due to the different rules of the monastic orders, but also the status bishops had as great lords of lands.<sup>87</sup> There were 17 dioceses, each of which with a varying number of bishops over this period.<sup>88</sup>

One of the earl's earliest ties to a bishop was to the bishop of Coventry. Hugh de Nonant was elected bishop of Coventry and Lichfield in 1185 and held the office until his death in 1197.<sup>89</sup> He was involved with the earl in order to gain support for his creation of a secular chapter of canons in Coventry replacing the priory.<sup>90</sup> The canons only remained until 1197 when the monks returned.<sup>91</sup> The earl's collusion in this matter can be seen in his charter of 1192. This charter granted his recognition of the right of the new cathedral of Coventry in the chapel of St Michael (Coventry), and his gift of the other chapels pertaining to it.<sup>92</sup> One aspect of this relationship therefore is one of mutual supportive action on a local issue.

Such a relationship is also mirrored in the earl's relationship to the other bishops of Coventry. Little is known about Bishop Geoffrey Muschamp of Coventry and

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<sup>87</sup> Harding, *England in the Thirteenth Century*, pp. 225, 33.

<sup>88</sup> Austin Lane Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta, 1087-1216*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 168.

<sup>89</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 44-45; M. J. Franklin, 'Nonant, Hugh de, (d. 1198)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Paris, *Chronica Majora*. ii. p. 444.

<sup>90</sup> See above, p. 68.

<sup>91</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 17: Coventry and Lichfield, 1183-1208*, ed. by M. J. Franklin (Oxford: Published for the British Academy by Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. xxvi-xxvii, especially xxxv-xl; Franklin, 'Nonant, Hugh de, (d. 1198)'; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 380.

<sup>92</sup> Listed in *BC*, no. 219.; to be found in *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter R. Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), no. 13; for the background to the grant see also *English Episcopal Acta 17*, p. xl.

Lichfield, who was elected in 1198 and held office until his death in 1208.<sup>93</sup> Yet it is with Bishop Geoffrey that we find an instance where Earl Ranulf is called upon to witness a grant of a bishop, specifically a grant to King John of three chantry chaplains to celebrate mass daily for the souls of the king's father, his brothers, and his predecessors.<sup>94</sup> Clearly Ranulf at times was present in the bishop's court. Another charter, a confirmation, which was sought from Geoffrey bishop of Coventry and Lichfield between 1194 and 1208, for a grant Ranulf had made to the abbey of St Werburgh's, was also witnessed by the earl's officer Phillip the Justice of Chester, his clerk Thomas, and a knight in his circle Henry de Audley.<sup>95</sup> That the earl's officers witnessed the confirmation also suggests that there was upon occasion some mingling between the courts. These instances would imply that the earl and the bishops were acting reciprocally to ensure the security of their grants. That such cooperation went much further is illustrated by the fact that the bishops of Coventry and Lichfield granted charters to a number of religious houses which the earls also supported, including the abbey of St Werburgh's, Lilleshall Abbey, Combe Abbey, Combermere Abbey, Mobberley Priory, and Polesworth Abbey.<sup>96</sup> Supporting each other's concerns seems to suggest mutual cooperation.

That there was a continuing reciprocal relationship between the earl and bishop of Coventry is clear when the other office holders are examined. William of Cornhill was bishop of Coventry and Lichfield from 1214 to his death in 1223.<sup>97</sup> He was an able administrator, elected through the mediation of the papal legate, due to the confrontation between the priory of Coventry and canons of Lichfield. He was loyal to King John through the interdict and the revolt, showing that he was politically aligned in the same way as Earl Ranulf.<sup>98</sup> William also supported Ranulf's

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<sup>93</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 17*, pp. xlvii-xlix. M. J. Franklin, 'Muschamp, Geoffrey de (d. 1208)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>94</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 17*, no. 113.

<sup>95</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 44-45, 48-49; *English Episcopal Acta 17*, no. 80; *BC*, no. 229; for the dates of Geoffrey's election see *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 44-45, 48-49, 54-55.

<sup>96</sup> For the bishops grants see, *English Episcopal Acta 17*, nos. 11-13, 42, 77-83, 116, 124.

<sup>97</sup> For William of Cornhill's appointment see, *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 52-53; Paris, *Chronica Majora*. ii. p. 638; iii. p. 82.

<sup>98</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 43: Coventry and Lichfield, 1215-1256*, ed. by J. H. Denton and Phillipa M. Hoskin (Oxford : Published for The British Academy by Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. xxxv-xli.

institutions, granting St Werburgh's nine charters.<sup>99</sup> He also gave grants to institutions the earl supported like Combe, Combermere, Repton, and Stanlaw.<sup>100</sup> Interestingly he also granted Dieulacres Abbey, at the petition of the earl, the church of Leek, which was a confirmation of the earl's own grant from between 1220 to 1223.<sup>101</sup> This shows direct evidence of cooperation between both parties, and perhaps some familiarity.

William of Cornhill's successor continued such a relationship. Bishop Alexander of Coventry confirmed William's grant to Dieulacres along with the deacon of Lichfield, and the prior of Coventry.<sup>102</sup> Alexander also supported St Werburgh's, Dieulacres, Repton, Rocester, Stanlaw, and Trentham.<sup>103</sup> This shows how the bishops and the earl continued to share mutual interests in their local area. That there was therefore some mutual regard is clear. However, the fact that Alexander of Stavenby, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield between 1224 and his death in 1238, was also called upon to help Ranulf with securing his legacy suggests how close this relationship may have been.<sup>104</sup> Bishop Alexander witnessed two charters of the earl in 1232, one in which the earl granted Dieulacres Abbey the manor of Leek along with his heart, and one conveying the county of Lincoln to Hawise de Quincy, Ranulf's sister, to hold as countess.<sup>105</sup> Alexander was in effect guaranteeing the earl's will. He would also grant 'according to the wishes of his beloved son in Christ the noble man Ranulf, earl of Chester and Lincoln,' Sandbach church to Dieulacres Abbey in 1230 to 1231 which he confirmed 1231 to 1232.<sup>106</sup> This is a clear indication that the bishop had an interest in providing for the earl's soul and being seen to do so.

The earl also had a similar, if not as close relationship with the bishops of Lincoln, another diocese that covered Ranulf's concerns. One of the first bishops of Lincoln

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 9-17.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 18-19, 55, 60-62.

<sup>101</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 43*, no. 28; *BC*, no. 386; *Chartulary of Dieulacres Abbey: with an Introduction and Notes*, ed. by George Wrottesley (London: Harrison, 1906), p. 311.

<sup>102</sup> *Chartulary of Dieulacres Abbey*, p. 311.

<sup>103</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 43*, nos. 84-87, 106-6, 146-48, 154-58, 169.

<sup>104</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 52-53, 60; Paris, *Chronica Majora*. iii. pp. 89, 518, 524.

<sup>105</sup> *BC*, nos. 310, 393.

<sup>106</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 43*, nos. 107-08.



with whom the earl came into contact was Hugh of Avalon, Bishop of Lincoln between 1186 and 1200. Hugh had been appointed bishop after being prior of Witham. He was a Frenchman, and likely spoke little English. He was later canonised. Yet Hugh was quite involved in politics and worldly concerns surrounding the management of his diocese.<sup>107</sup> Hugh confirmed a grant of Earl Ranulf to Bardney Abbey, as part of a general confirmation and also confirmed a confirmation that Earl Ranulf had made to Stixwold Priory.<sup>108</sup> In this respect, the bishop was interacting with the earl by providing additional security for his grants in a manner akin to the bishops of Coventry.

However, the relationship was not always straightforward. The earl also established links to one of Hugh of Avalon's successors, Hugh of Wells. Bishop Hugh of Wells was elected in 1209 and held his office until his death in 1235.<sup>109</sup> Hugh was responsible for implementing new administrative methods in the running of his diocese from his experience at the court, which illustrates that he was more procedurally minded than perhaps his predecessors.<sup>110</sup> The bishop's main appearance in Earl Ranulf's charters concerns Spalding priory in Lincolnshire. In January 1230, the earl wrote to Bishop Hugh of Lincoln, that as patron he has agreed to the candidate of the abbot of St Nicholas of Angers to be prior of Spalding.<sup>111</sup> This initial charter, however, seems to have exceeded the normal procedure as the bishop saw it. In February or March Earl Ranulf wrote again to the bishop, revoking his previous letter in favour of Prior John of Kirkby as prior of Spalding, and notifying the bishop that he had sent the abbot of Chester and Master Gilbert of Weston as his proctors in this matter.<sup>112</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough suggests that the second charter was in response to the fact that the bishop had deemed

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<sup>107</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 34-35; Henry Mayr-Harting, 'Hugh of Lincoln (1140?-1200)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. pp. 468-71.

<sup>108</sup> *English Episcopal Acta 4: Lincoln 1186-1206*, ed. by David M. Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press for the British Academy, 1986), nos. 16, 189.

<sup>109</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*. ii. p. 526; iii. p. 306.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. pp. 526, 528, 542, 550; for the bishops biography see, David M. Smith, *The Administration of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, 2 vols. (Unpublished doctoral thesis: University of Nottingham, 1970); David M. Smith, 'Wells, Hugh of (d. 1235)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>111</sup> *BC*, no. 428.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 429.

that he had exceeded his rights of patronage. A further letter in March set out in detail the new procedure for the election, presentation, and institution of a new prior. While in June, Ranulf and the abbot of Angers came to an agreement with the bishop of Lincoln and the prior of Spalding, regarding the election, presentation, and institution of the new prior.<sup>113</sup> The result of this series of events was to limit the earl's right of choice of the person elected, only to give or withhold license of an election. The limitation of a lay patron's rights in such appointments is a general theme of the period.<sup>114</sup> Yet it does suggest that herein the bishop's prime relationship with the earl was over ecclesiastical prerogatives and local lordship. It is just in this instance that the earl is perhaps frustrated in his aims.

The earl's alliances with these bishops, furthermore, have very few political aspects. The bishops of Coventry may have provided some support, but it was very situational and limited. Hugh de Nonant may have been the earl's first foray into extending his political influence at court, but this was based upon his connection to Prince John and the general dissatisfaction with the justiciar Longchamp.<sup>115</sup> Bishop Alexander also assisted the earl in protecting Falkes de Bréauté when Falkes was in disgrace, but this was perhaps due to Alexander wishing to act as a mediator rather than to support Ranulf. Indeed, the bishop had previously informed the king that when he came across Falkes he had excommunicated him and offered his services as mediator.<sup>116</sup>

The most influential political alliance with a prelate for the earl during his life was with the bishop of Winchester, who had no lordship ties with him. The bishop of Winchester, Peter des Roches, had benefitted from royal patronage to obtain his position. Peter came to England in 1197 and five years later was a royal clerk, but was still primarily a man dependent upon the crown as a foreigner.<sup>117</sup> His acquisition of the bishopric of Winchester shortly after provided him with a wealthy

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., nos. 430-31.

<sup>114</sup> A similar pattern can be seen for the appointment of parish priests, B. R. Kemp, 'Towards Admission and Institution: English Episcopal Formulae for the Appointment of Parochial Incumbents in the Twelfth Century', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 16 (1993), 155-76.

<sup>115</sup> See above, pp. 53-57.

<sup>116</sup> *English Episcopal Acta* 43, no. 115.

<sup>117</sup> Vincent, *Peter Des Roches*, pp. 36-38.

and powerful position.<sup>118</sup> During the reign of King John, he remained steadfastly close to the crown, and became heavily involved in royal government, even becoming Justiciar of England during King John's 1214 expedition to retake his continental domains.<sup>119</sup> In this role he was to return the office to the vice-regal power it had had before 1204.<sup>120</sup> It was during this time that it is clear that Ranulf got to know the bishop as they were frequently at court together in John's reign, especially towards the outbreak of the civil war.<sup>121</sup>

Peter was also active on the king's side during the baronial rebellion, and the invasion following the king's death, and was a leading figure during the minority of King Henry III.<sup>122</sup> Peter was present with the earl of Chester at the siege of Lincoln that ultimately led to the defeat of the rebels and Prince Louis' invasion force.<sup>123</sup> Their mutual support for the crown seems to have provided them with a common goal. That they continued to see in each other an ally is unsurprising, as their careers from this date follow similar paths. From 1219, Peter was gradually sidelined from court.<sup>124</sup> This mirrors the earl's relationship to the crown. Peter, during this time, as the earl of Chester had done in 1218, also undertook a crusade. He departed in 1227 and returned in 1231 with an increased reputation.<sup>125</sup> Upon his return, the bishop eventually reclaimed his position in government. In 1232, Earl Ranulf assisted by Peter, Bishop of Winchester and others orchestrated Hubert de Burgh's fall, although Ranulf intervened on de Burgh's behalf when the citizens of London set out to bring him to court by force.<sup>126</sup> Peter, while not obtaining the justiciarship, which had been granted to Earl Ranulf's knight Stephen de Seagrave,

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<sup>118</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 489, iii. p. 489; Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, pp. 48-49.

<sup>119</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. pp. 533, 551; Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, pp. 55-113.

<sup>120</sup> For a discussion of Peter's justiciarship see, Francis James West, *The Justiciarship in England, 1066-1232* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), Ch. 6.

<sup>121</sup> *RChart.*, for 1207, pp. 166-167(2), 170; for 1208, pp. 183, 186; 1213, 193-194(2); for 1214, pp. 200, 202; for 1215, pp. 203, 205(2), 206, 213(2), 214(2), 217.

<sup>122</sup> Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, Chs. 4 and 5.

<sup>123</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 17-25; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 206-13.

<sup>124</sup> Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, Ch. 6.

<sup>125</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 127, 204; Christopher Tyerman, *Gods War: A New History of the Crusades*, (London: Penguin, 2007), pp. 744-45; Vincent, *Peter Des Roches*, Ch. 7.

<sup>126</sup> Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III*, pp. 56-57; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 346-47; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', (p. 86); for Peter and the lead up to the fall see, Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, Ch. 8.

became central to the new administration, and was in receipt of royal patronage again.<sup>127</sup>

The closeness of the relationship between Peter and Ranulf is perhaps best shown however, by the fact that Peter witnessed two of the earl's charters. These are one of 1232 conveying the county of Lincoln to Hawise de Quincy, his sister, to hold as countess, and another of the same date granting Dieulacres Abbey the manor of Leek with his heart.<sup>128</sup> He was the first witness in both witness lists. They were written at the king's court just prior to the earl's death, so his presence is not unexpected, given des Roches' rising influence at court, but it is clear that he had a close tie to the earl as he was again in effect witnessing the earl's will.

In conclusion, the bishops like the earls provided in the main, mutual support for local lordship. They also provide the earl with some political support although this is limited. It was perhaps more unusual for the bishops to do this when the earl was anti-establishment than the earls, as bishops were crown appointees.<sup>129</sup> Yet Ranulf was able to form an alliance with two bishops, Hugh Nonant and Peter des Roches to undermine the position of the crown's chief officer.

## The Barons

Earl Ranulf was also involved with a number of lords who are named barons. One such example is Falkes de Bréauté, whom he supported despite King Henry's antagonism towards him in the 1220s.<sup>130</sup> However, Ranulf also had ties to a number of similarly ranked individuals who held estates not only of himself but of others. These include a number of barons listed in Sanders' *Baronies*, all of whom Sanders' has identified as tenants in chief, that is tenants of the crown.<sup>131</sup> Families such as Bardulf and Cauz.<sup>132</sup> However, his ties to such individuals varied in type.

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<sup>127</sup> Vincent, *Peter des Roches*, Ch. 9.

<sup>128</sup> *BC*, nos. 310, 393.

<sup>129</sup> See for instance, Ralph V. Turner, 'Richard Lionheart and English Episcopal Elections', *Albion*, 29. 1 (1997), 1-13; Wilfred Lewis Warren, *King John* (London: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 159-67

<sup>130</sup> He wrote a letter interceding on Falkes' behalf, see, *BC*, no. 415.

<sup>131</sup> Ivor John Sanders, *English Baronies: A Study of Their Origin and Descent 1086-1327* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1960).

<sup>132</sup> For Ranulf's ties to the Bardulf see below, p. 292; for the Cauz family below pp. 305-06.

Those of this group who have the strongest personal relationship are the Tattershall, Lacy, Somery, and Fitz Alan families. This was because Earl Ranulf once more had family ties to establish connections to these leading men. Before 1212 Robert Tattershall had married a niece of Earl Ranulf called Rohaise.<sup>133</sup> This would have established a family tie to the earl, and it is clear the earl was interested in his nieces, as in 1232 he granted another niece Colette, 30 liberates from the manor of Leeds (Yorkshire) as her marriage portion.<sup>134</sup> There are some similarities between this relationship and those the earl established with the earls and bishops above. There was, for instance, a pre-existing tie between Ranulf and Philip Tattershall, Robert's predecessor. Philip died before 1200, as in that year Robert Tattershall gave £100 for relief of his barony.<sup>135</sup> However, Philip had witnessed a single charter of Earl Ranulf dated between 1186 to 1200 to Minting Priory in Lincolnshire.<sup>136</sup> Therefore, this relationship was again based upon an existing connection.

Unlike the relationships he established with the greater royal counsellors like the earls, Ranulf did have a different connection to the family which was persistent and hereditary. The Tattershalls were tenants of the earl in Lincolnshire of the honour of Lincoln.<sup>137</sup> Indeed, we can see a slight shift in approach by the earl to this family as the only instance where the earl may have reinforced his relationship to the new heir Robert, prior to the marriage, was through the single instance of patronage the earl made to Kirkstead Abbey. Kirkstead Abbey had been founded by Hugh Brito (son of Eudo), lord of Tattershall in Lincolnshire in 1139.<sup>138</sup> In a charter of 1198 to 1202 Earl Ranulf confirmed the gifts to Kirkstead Abbey in Sibsey, the East Fen of Bolingbroke made by William of Roumare, his predecessor as earl of Lincoln.<sup>139</sup> By supporting the family's institution Ranulf was obviously garnering the support of

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<sup>133</sup> *HKF*, ii. pp. 9-11.

<sup>134</sup> Listed in *BC*, no. 437 as a later confirmation as the original was lost.

<sup>135</sup> *ROF*, p. 44.

<sup>136</sup> *BC*, no. 203.

<sup>137</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 190.

<sup>138</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, fos. 2, 49d.

<sup>139</sup> *BC*, no. 291.

the family as well. Yet these efforts were to come to naught as Robert Tattershall died in 1212 leaving an underage heir.<sup>140</sup>

Despite the death of Robert, Ranulf does seem to have maintained some semblance of lordly responsibility towards the family and its institutions. The heir was of course the earl's great nephew. Between 1220 and 1221 Ranulf also granted to Kirkstead Abbey another charter now found in the abbey's cartulary.<sup>141</sup> He was clearly looking after his tenant's institution, and there was perhaps good reason for him to do so. Robert's heir was a minor during this period, and in 1213 Ranulf's niece had married Robert de Insula, who had paid £100 to the king to marry her and receive her inheritance and her dower from her late husband's lands.<sup>142</sup> As the sum was paid to the crown it is unlikely that Ranulf established a tie to Robert de Insula, so he represented an outside force.

What is also interesting about this period, however, is that it is revealed that in 1214 Robert son of Robert de Tattershall was still in the earl of Arundel's custody, and held 16 fees of him.<sup>143</sup> This shows that there were additional factors to the relationship which affected the earl's ability to form ties with the family that also made the relationship different from his ties to the leading magnates. Other parties were involved. In addition, the alliance between Earl Ranulf and Robert Tattershall through marriage, is also complicated by the fact that Earl Ranulf's niece was sister to Hugh de Aubigny, earl of Arundel.<sup>144</sup> The tie may therefore have been established equally between the earl of Arundel and the Tattershalls, as between Earl Ranulf and the family. The earl's relationship with the Tattershall family therefore may have been as much about establishing his influence with a tenant in Lincolnshire as about strengthening his alliance with the earls of Arundel.

Another two families of this rank who have a similar familial link to Earl Ranulf are the Somery family and the fitz Alan family. Members of these families had also

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<sup>140</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 190.

<sup>141</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, f. 36v; *BC*, no. 293.

<sup>142</sup> *ROF*, p. 487.

<sup>143</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 201.

<sup>144</sup> A breakdown of the marriages and progeny of Ranulf's sisters can be found in *HKE*, ii. pp. 9-11.

married Ranulf's nieces, and sisters of the earl of Arundel.<sup>145</sup> None of the husbands or representatives of the families appear in Earl Ranulf's charters, however. He had only limited contact with a potential heir of Roger de Somery, some of whose lands he took in 1229 after the heirs death.<sup>146</sup> It is perhaps clear, therefore, that while the earl was aware of his familial ties he did not always maintain them. There must therefore be an element of forethought in the alliances he cultivates in this social group.

One of the most important baronial families for the earl, operating in this middling social position was the Lacy family. The Lacy family held 10 fees in Cheshire of Earl Ranulf, as well as lands in Lincolnshire.<sup>147</sup> The Lacys also held lands of the crown including 1/3 fee in Northamptonshire.<sup>148</sup> But they also held lands of various other honours, including 8 fees of Ticknell Honour, lands of Clitheroe honour and Pontefract.<sup>149</sup> This allowed them to create a following of their own. Like the Tattershalls the Lacys also married into the earl's family. John de Lacy was granted Earl Ranulf's niece in marriage.<sup>150</sup> However, unlike the Tattershalls, the Lacys had a much more involved relationship with the earl of Chester with regard to consolidating and maintaining his hold on his lands.

Chiefly this was because they were the traditional constables of the earl's household. As such, they were frequently within the followings of the earls of Chester. Roger de Lacy was a frequent witness to the charters of Earl Ranulf III, witnessing 21 of the earl's charters between 1190 and 1211.<sup>151</sup> His son John was also a frequent attendant of the earl's court, witnessing seven of the earl's charters.<sup>152</sup> This would suggest a hereditary, close, and working relationship between the earl and this family, and Roger was one of the few knights to receive a grant of patronage from the earl. Between 1199 and 1203, Earl Ranulf granted to

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> London, National Archives, Fine Roll C 60/28 m.6.

<sup>147</sup> *BC*, no. 440; *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 189.

<sup>148</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 18.

<sup>149</sup> For Ticknell honour fees see, *Liber Feodorum*, p 32; for Clitheroe honour, *Liber Feodorum*, p. 225; for Pontefract honour *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 449, 821-22, 826, 830.

<sup>150</sup> *HKF*, ii. pp. 9-11.

<sup>151</sup> *BC*, nos. 209, 211-13, 221, 223, 227-28, 232, 240, 242, 246, 256-57, 259, 260-62, 264, 271, 328.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 226, 290, 378, 390, 393, 400, 402.

Roger, a free boat to fish the Dee at Chester bridge and Eaton.<sup>153</sup> Yet it is unlikely if the family performed the traditional role of constables.

The constable was one of the earl's military officers, and one which took perhaps more of a military function than an administrative one. The role of constable could also range to custody of castles or more *ad hoc* military appointments, although this is unlikely in the case of the earl's constables due to their lineage and the evidence of their itinerancy.<sup>154</sup> It is also known that as the roles of officers became more prestigious, for example in the royal household which were held by leading magnates, they became ceremonial and were often delegated.<sup>155</sup> David Crouch has suggested that a similar situation arose in the earldom of Chester.<sup>156</sup>

This is confirmed by the fact that John de Lacy fought against Earl Ranulf in the civil war of 1215. John's reasoning for revolting are unknown. King John's reign, however, was known for its avariciousness, which an inflation may have helped to explain, but was also due the personality of the king.<sup>157</sup> Dissatisfaction with the king became outright rebellion for many after John's failure on the Continent in 1214. However, for the Lacy family their dissatisfaction may have begun earlier as it is suggested that Roger, John's father, was plotting with the king of France in 1209.<sup>158</sup> Whatever his reasons for dissatisfaction, clearly John was not undertaking his duties for Earl Ranulf, and thus attended Ranulf's court as more of a counsellor than an officer.

Yet this break in allegiance does mirror the earl's ties to other earls, showing that the Lacy family were independent. This situation was also resolved in a similar manner similar to how he reformed his ties to the earls. John de Lacy accompanied

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<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 313.

<sup>154</sup> David Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', in *Thacker*, pp. 69-95; Noel Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 6-7; David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 144; John Horace Round, *The King's Serjeants and Officers of State with their Coronation Services* (London: James Nisbet, 1911), pp. 76-81.

<sup>155</sup> Round, *The Kings Serjeants*, pp. 68-92, 140-65, 186-97.

<sup>156</sup> Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', p. 95.

<sup>157</sup> Turner, *King John*, pp. 72-73, 187.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 226.



Earl Ranulf on crusade.<sup>159</sup> It is at this time that he was reckoned to have married his wife, Ranulf's niece.<sup>160</sup> John also begins to witness the earl's charters around this period suggesting that their relationship had been mended.

The relationship Ranulf had to the Lacys had both local and political aspects like his ties to some of the leading earls. John, like Ranulf, seems to have been dissatisfied with the government on their return from crusade and he joined Ranulf in 1223 opposing Hubert.<sup>161</sup> John also seems to have suffered from royal interference in his lands. In 1225 he was being forced to disafforest lands in Lancashire.<sup>162</sup> Yet the earl's relationship to the Lacys also differed from the greater counsellors as the earl was also wont to use other types of connections to establish links to them.

Most notable of these was the grant of charters of lands or rights to the churches of which they were patrons. Baronial families, by founding religious houses, formed an indefinite relationship, but one which gave the family a stake and certain rights.<sup>163</sup> As primarily landholders in Cheshire originally the Lacys had founded a number of religious houses in the area. By Earl Ranulf's lifetime such creations were becoming less common, but it can be established that these hereditary connections were still maintained. Norton Priory in Cheshire was one such religious house. That the Lacy family still had a connection to it is perhaps established by the fact that Richard, brother to Roger de Lacy, was buried there on his death, although the family may have felt more connected to their more recent foundation at Stanlaw.<sup>164</sup> The Augustinian house of Norton had been established in 1134 at Runcorn by William junior constable of Chester, but was moved to Norton by 1134 to 1135.<sup>165</sup> In around 1207 to 1217 Earl Ranulf confirmed the gifts to Norton Priory made by William fitz Nigel, constable of Chester, and his heirs, as well as granting

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<sup>159</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 2; *The Chartulary of St John of Pontefract*, ed. by Richard Holmes, 2 vols. (York: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1899-1902), i. no. 21; Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade*, p. 232.

<sup>160</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, p. 103.

<sup>161</sup> He like Ranulf was ordered to come to court following the Earl's actions in 1223, see *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 481-82.

<sup>162</sup> Carpenter, *The Minority of Henry III*, pp. 387-88.

<sup>163</sup> Andrew Abram, *Norton Priory: An Augustinian Priory and its Benefactors*, Trivium Publications, Occasional Papers No. 2 (Lampeter; University of Wales, 2007), pp. 10-11.

<sup>164</sup> Ormerod, *The History*, i. p. 694; Abram, *Norton Priory*, p. 10, 17-18.

<sup>165</sup> Abram, *Norton Priory*, p. 1, 12-15.

two houses in Chester and freedom from exactions and secular services.<sup>166</sup> Herein we can see the earl supporting both the priory and its patrons.

The closer tie between the two families can also be shown by the fact that it was reciprocal. The surviving documents from the period found in the c. 1331 cartulary of Spalding Priory illustrate this.<sup>167</sup> In this cartulary it is revealed that Ranulf witnessed Roger de Lacy grant the abbey of Spalding, Lincolnshire, lands in Hardlethorp.<sup>168</sup> Spalding priory was founded by Ivo Taillebois and was patronised by his daughter Lucy and her son William de Roumare and his grandson William III Roumare.<sup>169</sup> Ranulf had adopted it as his own house when he became earl of Lincoln, although his family had some connections with it earlier.<sup>170</sup> Ranulf's close connection to the family can best be seen, however, in his charter of 1232, in which his other leading counsellors, Simon de Montfort, John le Scot as well as the Earl Richard Marshal, witnessed Earl Ranulf convey the county of Lincoln to Hawise de Quincy, his sister, to hold as countess.<sup>171</sup> Hawise had married Ranulf's constable John de Lacy following the earl of Winchester's death. This grant, in effect, made him earl of Lincoln. It is apparent therefore that the Lacys provided not only counsel but had also become part of the earl's social sphere.

Another reason why the earl's relationship to the Lacys and these lesser barons was different was that these men had ties to not only other lords, but also other local barons within the earl's sphere. One key relationship that the Lacy family had was with their tenants the Duttons. The Duttons were a well to do local family and would patronise the Lacy family's religious institutions of Norton and Stanlaw.<sup>172</sup> They received numerous grants shown through surviving original charters from the Lacy family, in this period from John de Lacy and his son Roger, which would imply that the Lacys are reinforcing their patronage.<sup>173</sup> However, the Duttons were also

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<sup>166</sup> *BC*, no. 350.

<sup>167</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296; G. R. C. Davis, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2010), pp. 185-86.

<sup>168</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296, f. 383v.

<sup>169</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296, f. 8r-9, 378v-379, 388v.

<sup>170</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296, f. 388v-390r, 410.

<sup>171</sup> *BC*, no. 310.

<sup>172</sup> Abram, *Norton Priory*, pp. 28-43.

<sup>173</sup> Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, nos. 6, 19, 44, 81, 71, 74.

witnesses to a number of the earl's charters, suggesting that they were also members of his court.<sup>174</sup> That the earl could obtain ties to his followers indirectly through ties to his leading barons is undoubtedly one of the reasons that he formed these alliances, and marks them in a different light to the relationships he establishes with the earls and bishops.

Barons like the Lacys had ties to his tenants, both ecclesiastical and lay, and operated within a local community with which the earl could interact through them. This suggests that there is good reason to believe that barons, especially of lesser status had a distinctly different relationship to the earl, which was local in focus. That other local lords granted charters to the Duttons, including the Altons, Montalts, and Vernon families suggests that these families can also play a role similar to that of the traditional barons like the Lacys.<sup>175</sup> These families were not barons in the sense of holding their lands of the crown, but they were significant landowners of Earl Ranulf. This therefore leads to the conclusion that the earl may also forge the same alliances he does with the traditional barons with men in his own lands, his own tenants, who can also be called barons and counsellors.

### Earl Ranulf's Counsellors: the Barons

The second part of this chapter addresses whether the earl recruited his own counsellors. That the earl had his own barons who could become counsellors is clear when the concept of a baron is investigated in more detail. The main qualification for baronial status, of course, would be the presence of landed wealth. Keith Stringer primarily characterised barons by wealth and wider power.<sup>176</sup> Yet barons have also traditionally been identified by the payment they give to inherit their lands from the king. In this definition, they are essentially therefore only tenants of the king.<sup>177</sup> However, there are indications that such a view of what a baron is too limited.

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<sup>174</sup> *BC*, nos. 209, 211-213, 215, 258, 260-261, 282-283, 286, 313, 315, 357, 385.

<sup>175</sup> Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, nos. 3, 5, 83.

<sup>176</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 127-28.

<sup>177</sup> Mortimer, *Angevin England*, p. 79; Sanders, *English Baronies*, pp. v-viii.

There are other ways to understand the term baron. There is, for instance, the consciousness of rank its existence suggests. David Crouch suggests that 'the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries had a good idea of individual status...the idea of status and hierarchy was common to all'<sup>178</sup> In the Angevin period it is clear that knighthood was becoming more exclusive. Jean Scammel argued that in the twelfth century, knights ranged in class and wealth.<sup>179</sup> This was soon to change. According to Peter Coss, in the thirteenth century there was a crisis of the knightly class, and although the idea of a revolution has been questioned by David Carpenter and A. Polden, there is still evidence and support for the decline in numbers of knights in part due to the increasing financial demands.<sup>180</sup> This led to the knight becoming a distinct class. This is especially shown by the fact that knight (*miles*) as a rank was becoming more frequently used over the course of the thirteenth century.<sup>181</sup> Ranulf's barons therefore would be the wealthy individuals who would classify themselves as knights into the thirteenth century and beyond: the wealthy knights Scammel had envisioned.

David Crouch goes on further to state that there are some social tests which may pinpoint the notion of baronage as well, including the need for them to patronise ecclesiastical institutions, having a household, having a lineage and so forth.<sup>182</sup> Peter Coss has echoed this in two recent works in which he discusses the outcome of this crisis, the development of the gentry. He primarily sees the gentry as a phenomenon of the fourteenth century onwards but which originated from developments in the thirteenth century. But it is clear from his analysis that such

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<sup>178</sup> David Crouch, *The Image of Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London: Routledge, 1992), pp. 1-38, especially p. 37.

<sup>179</sup> Jean Scammell, 'The Formation of the English Social Structure: Freedom, Knights, and Gentry, 1066-1300', *Speculum*, 68. 3 (1993), 591-618.

<sup>180</sup> D. A. Carpenter, 'Was There a Crisis of the Knightly Class in the Thirteenth Century? The Oxfordshire Evidence', *EHR*, 95. 377 (1980), 721-52 (pp. 721-52); P. R. Coss, 'Sir Geoffrey de Langley and the Crisis of the Knightly Class in Thirteenth-Century England', *P&P*, 68 (1975), 3-37; Peter R. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 69-108; A. Polden, 'A Crisis of the Knightly Class? Inheritance and Office among the Gentry of Thirteenth Century Buckinghamshire', in *Regionalism and Revision: The Crown and Its Provinces in England, 1200-1650*, ed. by J. R. Lander (London: Bloomsbury, 1998), pp. 15-27.

<sup>181</sup> F. Fleming Donald, 'Milites as Attestors to Charters in England, 1101-1300', *Albion*, 22. 2 (1990), 185-98.

<sup>182</sup> Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 115.

individuals had many of the concerns of the nobility, including ecclesiastical patronage, having households, and also a concern with their locality.<sup>183</sup> Another historian has also suggested that a number of the concerns of this fourteenth century gentry can be traced to the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.<sup>184</sup> That there was a cultural difference between varying classes in this period is also confirmed by the literary evidence which shows that there was a development of a code of conduct, chivalry, that gave lords and their men (knights) a distinct and elevated identity separate from the rest of society.<sup>185</sup>

That barons were a much wider social group also suggests that Earl Ranulf may have individuals like them as counsellors in his own lordship. Indeed, he made it abundantly clear in the address he made to his lordship in Cheshire following the issue of *Magna Carta* in 1215 that baron has a wider definition. A charter dated around June to September of that year outlines the rights and duties the earl confirms to his tenants in Cheshire, it begins:

Ranulf Earl of Chester to the constable, steward, justice, sheriff, barons and bailiffs (or estate stewards) and all his men and friends (*amicis*) present and future [who] will inspect and hear the present charter, greeting.<sup>186</sup>

The earl's officers are clearly ranked highly in this address and this was natural, due to the fact that it would have presumably also been they who enacted or enforced the commitments the earl made in the main text of the charter. Nevertheless, it is also apparent that the earl made a distinction between his men in Cheshire, naming some barons. There could be some argument that the earl's vision of Chester is different as it has an uncertain status in the kingdom as a whole.<sup>187</sup> However, he

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<sup>183</sup> Peter R. Coss, *The Foundations of Gentry Life: The Multons of Frampton and Their World, 1270-1370*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry*.

<sup>184</sup> Thomas, *Vassals*, pp. 193-94.

<sup>185</sup> Crouch, *The Birth of Nobility*, pp. 29-86; John Gillingham, 'War and Chivalry in the History of William Marshal', in *Thirteenth Century England II: Proceedings of the Newcastle Upon Tyne Conference 1987*, ed. by Peter R. Coss and P. R. Lloyd (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1988), 1-13.

<sup>186</sup> *BC*, no. 394. My own translation of the Latin: *Ranulfus comes Cestrie constublarior, dapifero, iusticiario, vicecomiti, baronibus et ballivis et omnibus hominibus suis et amicis presentibus et futuris presentem cartam inspecturis et audituris salutem.*

<sup>187</sup> The county of Cheshire is often termed a palatinate. The exact meaning of what this entails for the nature of the it is however less than certain. This will be examined more closely in Chapter 4: The Palatinate of Chester.

does occasionally use a similar address elsewhere, such as when granting his protection to Dieulacres Abbey in Staffordshire.<sup>188</sup>

However barons are understood as a term, it is clear that Earl Ranulf not only interacted with them on a national stage, but also within his own holdings. These men were often tenants of the earl and were men chosen to sit within the earl's court and provide counsel.<sup>189</sup> Formal councils are difficult to identify in this period but it is believed that they were present and that they were likely to include financial, legal and administrative experts, who by the end of the thirteenth century are permanent and salaried officials.<sup>190</sup> In this period, the existence and purpose of such councils are confused as the earls' courts in their legal aspect still exist and a more informal counsellor role seems more easily identified.<sup>191</sup> Nevertheless, it can be envisioned what counsel these men provided. Their local knowledge gave weight to the legal decisions of the earl's court.

Two of the most important families in Ranulf's lordship were the Montalts and the Mainwarings. The Montalts were a family that held lands in the honour of Chester and in Cheshire itself of the earl.<sup>192</sup> Therefore, a traditional relationship of tenancy was established between the family and the earl which was reinforced by its becoming a hereditary relationship. The Montalts were also hereditary officers of the earls of Chester. From the earliest charter records, such as the charter of Earl Ranulf I of Chester from between 1121 to 1125, there is a *dapifer* or steward bearing the name Ralph.<sup>193</sup> Evidence suggests that this individual is an ancestor of the family that held the office during the life of Earl Ranulf III.<sup>194</sup> These hereditary ties would establish a strong link combined with a mutual interest as their tenancies were located near the earl's own lands.

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<sup>188</sup> *BC*, pp. nos. 375-78.

<sup>189</sup> The role of the court to provide council is shown in Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 158.

<sup>190</sup> For the council see Denholm-Young, *Seigniorial Administration*, pp. 25-31; see also Michael Altschul, *A Baronial Family in Medieval England: The Clares, 1217-1314* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), pp. 234-36.

<sup>191</sup> For the court as a legal body see, Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 158-62.

<sup>192</sup> For their lands inside Cheshire see the lands of Hugh Delamere in Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 728; see also Ormerod, *History*, i. pp. 53-54.

<sup>193</sup> *BC*, no. 10, see also 13.

<sup>194</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. pp. 53-54.

The Montalts were also frequent witnesses of the earl's charters and therefore attended his court. Ralph Montalt witnessed 11 charters between 1198 and 1194, Robert, 3 between 1190 and 1203, and Ranulf 1 between 1200 and 1203.<sup>195</sup> Robert had been the steward; he was succeeded by his brother Roger as steward before 1211, and likely around 1205.<sup>196</sup> Roger witnessed 17 of the earl's charters between 1205 and 1232.<sup>197</sup> Nevertheless, it is also clear, as in the example of the Lacy family, that the Montalts while officers, were perhaps more than this.

Roger Montalt married the earl's niece and the earl of Arundel's sister.<sup>198</sup> The date of the marriage is uncertain, but it is likely to have been before the earl's death in 1232 as her other sisters had been married by then. That the earl would see Roger as of sufficient rank to marry his niece indicates that Roger was of high status. There does not, however, seem to have been the issues with the Montalt's service, as with that of the Lacy family. There was no period when the Montalts seem to have fought against the earl. Indeed, it would seem that Robert, at least, was like Earl Ranulf a royal supporter. Between 1198 and 1199 Robert was in the king's service in Wales.<sup>199</sup> This suggests that the Montalts were not as politically independent as the Lacys, whether through circumstances or will. Their main service to Earl Ranulf, apart from providing a loyal supporter within his domains and counsel, may also have involved providing the social interaction that the Lacy's must have as well.

The Mainwarings were another family who had married into the earl's family. Ralph de Mainwaring had married Amice, Earl Ranulf's sister.<sup>200</sup> The Mainwaring family were tenants of the earls of Chester.<sup>201</sup> As with the Montalts, it does seem as though the Mainwarings were more closely allied with the political concerns of Earl Ranulf. It is also apparent that they were actively involved with the earl's administration. Ralph Mainwaring was the first individual to take the role of justice

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<sup>195</sup> *BC*, for Ralph nos. 206, 223, 228, 240, 244, 256-57, 262, 264, 266-67; for Robert nos. 242, 271, 313; for Ranulf no. 225.

<sup>196</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, ed. By Geoffrey Barraclough (Chester: The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1957), no. 17; *HKF*, ii. p. 111.

<sup>197</sup> *BC*, nos. 214, 226, 232, 282-83, 285, 315, 337, 353, 357, 374, 377-79, 386, 389, 400.

<sup>198</sup> *HKF*, ii. pp. 9-11.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. p. 236.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, p. 228.

<sup>201</sup> *BC*, no. 401.

of Chester for the earl. This was a new office created by the earl, presumably to account for issues with the hereditary officers. He was active in the role from around 1194 to 1204, witnessing two charters as justice of Chester.<sup>202</sup> The office did not pass to his heir, which suggests that it was being assigned to people with the required skills, and was therefore more professional in its purview. However, Ralph was more widely active in the charters of the earls of Chester from 1135 to 1206 and witnessed 26 charters in all of Earl Ranulf III's charters.<sup>203</sup> This would suggest that he was often present with the earl and able to give him counsel and guidance.

That the familial link also established a more social connection is also apparent as Roger Mainwaring son of Ralph Mainwaring also gave Dieulacres Abbey for the soul of Earl Ranulf III, his uncle, common of his wood of Peover, his brother William being a witness and a donor of a saltern in Middlewich.<sup>204</sup> This would seem to suggest that there was some familiarity and fondness in the relationship. The earl also provided additional patronage to the family. A certain Ralph the chaplain can be identified in one of the earl's charters of 1188 to 1192. This charter granted to his chaplain, Ralph, the chapel of St Michael's in Chester and all pertaining to it.<sup>205</sup> The identity of Ralph is found in a charter of the bishop of Coventry, which names this Ralph as a Ralph Mainwaring.<sup>206</sup> Providing such an office gave support for one of the Mainwaring's family members.

These two families were perhaps the two chief families in importance to the earl in Cheshire after the Lacys. There were, however, other leading barons within the earl's lands who would provide him with counsel and support. One such was the Vernon family from Cheshire, whose members witnessed 44 charters during the earl's lifetime making them more frequent witnesses than even the earl's

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<sup>202</sup> Ibid., nos. 271, 275.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid., nos. 21, 132-33, 147, 160-62, 165, 170, 187, 190, 206, 208, 220-21, 223-25, 227-28, 240, 244-47, 250, 256-57, 267-68, 272, 294, 300, 313, 321 as justice of Chester 271, 275.

<sup>204</sup> *Chartulary of Dieulacres Abbey*, nos. 342, 353.

<sup>205</sup> Listed in *BC*, no. 218; to be found in Coss, *Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, pp. 21-22 (no. 14).

<sup>206</sup> For Ralph Mainwaring as a rector see Peter Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - c.1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 161; *English Episcopal Acta 17*, nos. 14, 110.



hereditary officers.<sup>207</sup> More interestingly, it can also be seen that Ranulf established connections to leading barons in his newly acquired honours as well in order to consolidate his position. The Benningworths were the leading baronial tenants of the earl in the honour of Lincoln. The family can be traced back to Walter son of Odo who accounted £21 13s. 4d. for the right of his inheritance of Countess Lucy of Chester in 1130.<sup>208</sup> In the 1166 *cartae baronum* it was returned that Roger Benningworth held 8 ½ fees of William III de Roumare of which the service of 5 ½ had been remitted by the earl.<sup>209</sup> This was a large holding in the honour and it is clear that the family was accustomed to receiving patronage from the traditional earls of the honour. They were therefore a prime target for Earl Ranulf to establish a relationship and to consolidate his hold on his newly acquired estates.

Earl Ranulf's relationship to the Benningworth family began with him confirming their lands. Thus between 1198 and 1203 Earl Ranulf confirmed the lands of Gilbert of Benningworth and his heirs which he held of William of Roumare, a confirmation which was echoed in a similar charter of 1205.<sup>210</sup> The earl did not just re-confirm the grants of his predecessors, however, as Gilbert of Benningworth also saw value in obtaining the earl's confirmation of his new acquisitions. In 1205, Earl Ranulf granted to Gilbert of Benningworth the land of Richard of Warwick, which he had acquired through his marriage to Richard's daughter, Sara.<sup>211</sup> That such documents were created suggests a number of things: first that the earl was becoming involved in the lordship of Lincoln honour; and second that the Benningworths recognised the earl as their lord and desired to form a relationship with him, and that they viewed his confirmations as providing security.

The Benningworths, do not, however, appear very often in the earl's charters suggesting that their role as counsellors was perhaps restricted as they were at a

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<sup>207</sup> Warin de Vernon witnessed the charters, *BC*, nos. 209, 213-14, 226, 232, 240, 242, 244, 256-58, 261, 266, 272, 276, 282-286, 309, 315, 321, 337, 340, 341, 348-50, 353-54, 357, 360, 373-74, 377-79, 381, 386, 383, 389, 400, 402; for the Vernon family see, Ormerod, *History*, iii. p. 130-31; for their lands see under the entries for Richard and Walter de Vernon, in Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 723-24.

<sup>208</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 179.

<sup>209</sup> *Red Book*, pp. 377-78.

<sup>210</sup> *BC*, nos. 295, 297.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 296.

distance. Between 1198 and 1208 Gilbert of Benningworth witnessed two of Earl Ranulf's charters.<sup>212</sup> Yet the earl did attempt to establish ties in other ways to these barons, notably through ecclesiastical patronage. Gilbert of Benningworth was a benefactor of Bullington Abbey and Newhouse Abbey.<sup>213</sup> In around 1200 to 1205 Earl Ranulf confirmed the gifts to the nuns of Bullington made by Helte Boydel and his wife Idonea, and Alan Boydel.<sup>214</sup> Despite this grant being a confirmation of another tenants grant, Gilbert would have been aware of Ranulf's actions as well. Similarly, between 1198 and 1200 Earl Ranulf confirmed the gifts to the monastery and canons of Newhouse within Lincolnshire made by his tenants and took the canons under his protection.<sup>215</sup> Therefore, the earl was becoming active in Benningworth concerns.

The fact that the earl was establishing a connection between himself and the Benningworths through ecclesiastical patronage is, however, no more evident than in his charter dated between 1198 and 1217. In this charter, Earl Ranulf granted to the monastery of Kirkstead lands in Benningworth for a grange with common pasture, as given by Gilbert of Benningworth.<sup>216</sup> Kirkstead was founded by the Tattershall family, another baronial family with ties to the earl. A Geoffrey de Benningworth had also granted Kirkstead Abbey lands suggesting a definite family tie to the institution.<sup>217</sup> That these grants established Ranulf's position with the Benningworths as lord in the area is also clear, as Gilbert of Benningworth had witnessed William de Roumare's grant to Kirkstead Abbey.<sup>218</sup> The earl, through this action, was making a direct association between himself and the Roumares.

Whether these overtures were overly successful is uncertain, as the Benningworths fought against the king and the earl during the civil war. In 1216 Gilbert had to give 60m. and a destrier for the king's goodwill and pledged allegiance to King John.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 294, 355.

<sup>213</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 180.

<sup>214</sup> The existing charter is likely a forgery but based upon an original, see *BC*, no. 330.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 278.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 292

<sup>217</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, fos. 5r, 181r

<sup>218</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, f. 181r

<sup>219</sup> *ROF*, pp. 588-589; *RLC*, i. 255.

Yet on 27 May 1217, Gilbert's lands in Lincolnshire were committed to William de Percy and John Botrell.<sup>220</sup> Clearly, he had not complied. It was not until 26<sup>th</sup> October 1217, that Gilbert had writs of *reseisin* sent to the sheriffs of Lincoln, Warwick and York after returning to allegiance.<sup>221</sup> This may suggest that the earlier ties the earl had tried to establish with the family had been for nought.

Following this dispute, however, all seems to have returned to normal. It is not certain if Gilbert was involved in the crusade, but it does seem as though he was forgiven. Between 1220 and 1224 Earl Ranulf confirmed the inheritance of Gilbert of Benningworth of lands in Lincolnshire from his father Roger, excluding the manors of Halton, Irby, Steeping, and Kingthorpe which the earl retained.<sup>222</sup> Clearly the relationship had suffered somewhat. The need for the new confirmation would suggest that Gilbert felt himself in an uncertain position. However, by 1223, Gilbert and Ranulf were able to forge new relationships. Earl Ranulf came to an agreement with Gilbert of Benningworth, who would assign seven bovates in Benningworth to Earl Ranulf for eight years from 11 Noember 1223 in return for 40m.<sup>223</sup> This contract would suggest that the two parties were on agreeable terms and able to at least converse about business matters.

There is also possible evidence that Gilbert sought to regain Earl Ranulf's favour by granting him lands. Before 1224, Ellen widow of Robert or Walter de Stepinges claimed 50 acres in Steeping in dower against Gilbert of Benningworth, who had pledged it to Earl Ranulf. The earl was impleaded in 1224 by Ellen and vouched to warranty William son and heir of Gilbert, who claimed that his father had sold nearly all his lands. However, Ellen recovered *seisin* and William was adjudged to make an exchange to the earl.<sup>224</sup>

It is clear that Ranulf still saw the relationship favourably as he patronised Benningworth institutions once more. The earl patronised Bardney Abbey where

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<sup>220</sup> *RLC*, i. 309, 314.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 332.

<sup>222</sup> *BC*, no. 298.

<sup>223</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 299

<sup>224</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 180.

Gilbert gave ½ bovate in Benningworth, as well as other lands.<sup>225</sup> Between 1217 and 1232 Earl Ranulf had confirmed the gift made by Roger of Milly and granted protection to Bardney Abbey.<sup>226</sup> That Bardney had some importance to the Benningworth family is confirmed by other charters which can be found in the late thirteenth century cartulary of the abbey, which include Peter of Benningworth's later grant to Bardney Abbey of lands which Stephen Lund and William Benningworth witnessed.<sup>227</sup> William of Benningworth, Gilbert's son, was the last of the family to be present in the earl's court. He witnessed a charter of the earl between 1224 and 1227.<sup>228</sup>

By establishing ties with the Benningworth family, of course, the earl was also establishing ties with other leading families in the area. For instance, Roger of Benningworth married Sibyl, sister of Simon son of William, the ancestor of the Kime family.<sup>229</sup> The ties that the Benningworths had with the Kime family ran quite deep. Roger Benningworth also gave the Sempringham nuns the church Simon son of William, and Simon's son Philip de Kime, had founded in Bullington.<sup>230</sup> Roger of Benningworth also witnessed a number of grants made by Philip Kime to the abbey of Kirkstead.<sup>231</sup> Therefore despite the fact that the Benningworths were not active counsellors in his court, they provided links to the area which could help the earl consolidate his control there.

### Earl Ranulf's Counsellors: The Ecclesiastical Barons

In addition, to the lay barons there were also ecclesiastical barons within the earl's holdings. One of the most influential ecclesiastics in the earl's lordship was Hugh, Abbot of St Werburgh's Chester. Hugh was abbot of St Werburgh's Abbey between 1208 and 1226 when he died.<sup>232</sup> The abbey was a pre-conquest foundation of

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid., ii, p. 180; London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f 90<sup>r</sup>

<sup>226</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 83; *BC*, nos. 398, 399

<sup>227</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 144; for the cartulary see, Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 5.

<sup>228</sup> *BC*, no. 416.

<sup>229</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 179.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid., ii, p. 179.

<sup>231</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, f. 4<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>232</sup> *Annales. Cestriensis*, pp. 48-9, 54-5; Ormerod, *The History*, i. p. 213.

secular canons that was re-founded by Earl Hugh of Chester as a Benedictine monastery. It inherited sprawling lands within Cheshire.<sup>233</sup> As the abbot of St Werburgh's, therefore, Hugh was a powerful local figure, which would give him the ideal position to become a counsellor for the earl. Hugh witnessed 16 of the earl's charters during his time as abbot, which would suggest that he was interested in the earl's dealings.<sup>234</sup>

There is a reason why the earl would look favourably upon the abbot of St Werburgh's as a counsellor of high rank. The earl had the ability to influence the choice of a leader of the community, which gave the earl the opportunity to put his choice of individual in the position, as well as possibly providing the ability to reward, or provide support for the individuals with whom they have particular ties.<sup>235</sup> Hugh's successor provides an example of the type of person the earl chose. William Marmion was abbot between 1226 to his death in 1228.<sup>236</sup> William was from a knightly family who were also wealthy and influential landowners. Furthermore, this family had had dealings with the earl before William's appointment. For instance, in 1221 Earl Ranulf contracted to pay £400 for the wardship and marriage of Robert Marmion, son and heir of Robert Marmion.<sup>237</sup> In addition, members of the Marmion family were found as witnesses, and were granted patronage by Earl Ranulf when he patronised their foundations for the soul of Robert, father of Robert Marmion in 1222.<sup>238</sup> The fact that he had granted the family patronage placed them as allies to the earl. The election of William would seem to suggest that the earl was looking for an influential man who would be amenable to his lordship.

There is also, of course, the geographic aspect of the relationship which would draw the Abbot of St Werburgh's into the earl's court. Both have the centre of their

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<sup>233</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. pp. 212-13.

<sup>234</sup> *BC*, nos. 248, 258, 285, 335, 357, 359-60, 378, 382-83, 386-89, 409, 411.

<sup>235</sup> Janet Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 212-15; Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), Ch. 4.

<sup>236</sup> *Annales. Cestriensis*, p. 54-55; Ormerod, *The History*, i. p. 213

<sup>237</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 319.

<sup>238</sup> *BC*, nos. 267, 281, 412.

estates located in the same city. It is apparent that a number of the charters that Abbot Hugh witnesses concern Cheshire. These include: a grant to the city of Chester; a grant of disafforestation to a Cheshire tenant; a grant of rights concerning Cheshire lands (Thornton) to a clerk; a grant of the master serjeanty of Macclesfield; and a confirmation of a tenants grant to Poulton Abbey.<sup>239</sup> The abbot would have good local knowledge and interest in these acts as they could affect him, as well as the local standing which would therefore make him a good witness for such documents.

Yet a number of the earl's charters the abbot witnesses do not relate to Cheshire, such as the charters the earl grants concerning Kegworth church in Leicestershire.<sup>240</sup> Whilst the abbot also witnessed the earl's grant to Savigny Abbey a rood of land in Long Bennington (Lincolnshire), which suggests that the relationship does extend beyond the borders of the abbots main sphere of influence.<sup>241</sup> This would confirm that the abbot had a much wider counsellor role in the earl's lordship. Indeed, Hugh was also present at notable events in the earl's life. One example is when Abbot Hugh of St Werburgh's Chester witnessed in 1222 Earl Ranulf come to an agreement with Llywelyn, prince of North Wales, to marry his daughter Helen to Ranulf's nephew and heir, John the Scot.<sup>242</sup>

A number of the grants the earl makes to his foundation of Dieulacres are also witnessed by Hugh abbot of Chester, which suggests that the relationship the abbot has to the earl may involve religious oversight or at least interest in the earl's ecclesiastical patronage.<sup>243</sup> It is somewhat surprising that the only abbot of Dieulacres, the earl's own foundation, to witness the earl's charters was Richard, and he only witnessed two of the earl's charters between 1215 and 1216.<sup>244</sup> The fact that both the charters Abbot Richard witnesses also have similar witness lists may suggest that they were composed at a similar time, which, in turn, would

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<sup>239</sup> Ibid., nos. 248, 258, 285, 357, 409.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., nos. 359-60.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., no. 335.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., no. 411.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., nos. 378, 382-83, 386-89.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid., no. 359, 360.

suggest that the abbot of Dieulacres only visited the earl's court once, unlike Abbot Hugh. The limited contact between Richard and Ranulf compared with Hugh and Ranulf does reflect the fact that Abbot Hugh had a preferential position. The earl also has little personal contact in his charters with the other three abbots of Dieulacres active during the earl's lifetime, Richard, Robert, and Adam.<sup>245</sup> It could therefore be suggested that beyond the initial creation of the abbey the earl had little to do with its leaders.

Very few of the leaders of the earl's other religious institutions witness his charters. It is apparent that in these relationships the earl was less concerned with establishing ties with a wide range of individuals. This mirrors the limited role abbots had with the crown during this period.<sup>246</sup> It is apparent however, that the earl does seem to desire some ecclesiastical support for certain actions, and that the abbots have an interest in attending their lord's court when they are able.

### Earl Ranulf and His Contemporaries

A final point to address is how Earl Ranulf's relationships compare to those of his contemporaries. Earl David of Huntingdon perhaps establishes the most similar group of relationships to Earl Ranulf, as he was one of the earl's allies. David was otherwise less proactive in his approach to garnering allies. In part this may have been because he was unable to form relationships with earls or barons by familial relationships. He had three sons but two, Henry and David died, and John was a minor at the earl's death. The history of David's four daughters is a bit uncertain, so it is unclear whether he established political alliances with them. However, some connection was probably made between his illegitimate daughter Ada and Malise earl of Strathearn. Their offspring were granted lands in England and in Scotland.<sup>247</sup>

Generally, David may have relied upon his brother's and nephew's standing as kings of Scotland to recruit allies. Based upon his charters he was more active at recruiting allies in Scotland as in 1198 to 1199 Earl David of Huntingdon granted

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<sup>245</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. pp. 627-28.

<sup>246</sup> Harding, *England in the Thirteenth Century*, p. 225.

<sup>247</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 81-82.

charters to Lindores Abbey at its foundation, which were witnessed by Malcolm son of Earl David, Earl Patrick, Duncan earl of Fife, and Gilbert, earl of Strathearn.<sup>248</sup>

Meanwhile, Malcolm son of Earl Duncan, and Malisio brother of the earl of Strathearn witnessed in c. 1190 to 1204 Earl David grant in alms to St. Andrews Priory (Fife) one toft in the burgh of Dundee and 1m. to make oblations at Easter.<sup>249</sup>

Those ties he did establish in England were within his lordship and primarily with the knightly barons rather than with any ecclesiastical lords. In his honour of Huntingdon between 1185 and 1219 it has been calculated that there were fifty and sixty lineages.<sup>250</sup> The earl had a number of leading lineages in his lordship, some of whom he only had distant contact with, including the Basset, Hommet, Mauduit, Muschamp, Umframville, Fitz Roberts, Danmartins.<sup>251</sup> Keith Stringer suggests that more contact was established with barons such as Bois, Burdet, Grimbold, Sproxton, Moreville, Olifard, Ridel, Vieuxport, Lindsey, Brus, Sules and Quincy.<sup>252</sup> However, by examining the charters for his counsellors, it is revealed that only the Burdets, Lindseys, Olifards, and Ridels, were witnesses and can therefore be established as tied to him meaningfully.<sup>253</sup> The main source of contact between the earl and these men is primarily in his court. Direct patronage is limited, although William Burdet and Richard of Lindsey both received grants.<sup>254</sup> David also did not patronise the religious houses of his barons. David patronised 13 religious houses none of which were founded by his own baronial tenants. David drew these men to him in other ways, as it is notable that many of those he had closest ties to, the Burdets, Ridels, and Lindseys were landholders in both England and Scotland. Their unique position undoubtedly drew them to Earl David for lordship. The main purposes of such was of course, as with Earl Ranulf, mutual support.

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<sup>248</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 43, 44.

<sup>249</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 73.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 127.

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 127.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 128-30.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, for the Burdets see, nos. 15, 18-20, 23, 38-42, 68, 73; for the Lindseys see nos. 9, 15, 23, 36, 37, 40-41, 44, 51, 59, 69, 73, 74, 76; for the Olifards see nos. 39-41, 43-46, 49, 51, 56, 69, 74; for the Ridels see, nos. 3, 23, 27, 58.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 11, 53.



David's heir followed a similar path to his father. He had a prime interest in Scotland and patronised mainly his family's abbey of Lindores and established few ties to ecclesiastical lords in England. One exception was the grant made to Stanlaw Abbey.<sup>255</sup> He may have been following his uncle in this regard by trying to establish ties to the Lacy family, which he increased through grants given to the Lacys directly.<sup>256</sup> John, meanwhile also maintained contact with a number of local barons like his father and Earl Ranulf. However, his inheritance of the Chester honour after Ranulf's death, distorted his connections and he brought into his circle many Cheshire barons. John like his father was also not acquainted with many of the other magnates in England. None appear in his charters, and he was only occasionally involved in major political events.

Waleran, Earl of Warwick, was very much in the mould of David and John as he very rarely attended the royal court and took part in national politics even less. His concern was entirely local, and this can be shown by the fact that in 1196 Waleran married Alice daughter of Robert Harcourt a leading tenant in Warwick and Leicester honours, by whom he had a son Waleran and a daughter Alice.<sup>257</sup> Robert is described not as a leading baron and the high point of his career is being sheriff of Leicestershire and Warwickshire between 1197 and 1201.<sup>258</sup> This contrasts greatly with the suitors Ranulf sought for his sisters and nieces. He also married his son Henry to an heir to the d'Oilly barony of Hook Norton in Oxfordshire.<sup>259</sup> Clearly, he was not interested in creating ties with other earls or other magnates.

Henry earl of Warwick had two children with his wife Margaret by 1205. Unfortunately, Margaret had died by 1205, and Henry was remarried to his custodian, Thomas Basset's daughter, Philippa.<sup>260</sup> It has been stated that Thomas Basset, as well as a leading baron of the earl's honour and his custodian, was also likely his godfather.<sup>261</sup> Henry therefore started his life with the same limited

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<sup>255</sup> *BC*, no. 461.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 440, 452, 453.

<sup>257</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, pp. 11-12.

<sup>258</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 12.

<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13; *RLC*, i. pp. 35-36.

<sup>261</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, p. 13.

alliances that his father had had. Yet Henry seems to have searched for more meaningful contacts than this later in his life. Henry's son Thomas would marry Ela daughter of William Longespee, earl of Salisbury. The process leading to this marriage likely began in 1229.<sup>262</sup> Thus it is unlikely that there was a relationship between the earl of Warwick and the Earl of Salisbury until near this date.

The earls of Warwick had a number of leading barons in their lordship. Those described as the greater tenants by Crouch within the honour include the Ardens, Corbucions, Hattons, Harcourts, Montforts, Clintons, Verduns, and Beaumonts.<sup>263</sup> However, it has been noted by Crouch that the family have limited contact with the tenants and barons within their own local area.<sup>264</sup> This would suggest that the family were extremely withdrawn.

The Marshal family created a network of relationships to royal counsellors and barons the closest in extent to that of Earl Ranulf. William Marshal seems to have primarily relied on his ties to the crown to establish his position. But he also established ties with a number of royal counsellors and local barons. These included the Bloets, a tenant family, and a family that entered service via a connection based upon a grant of custody by the crown, the Earley family.<sup>265</sup> However, the earl's ties to the local baronage are what his biographer has suggested make him individual. He utilises ties to non-tenants in the main to establish local control as well as tenants.<sup>266</sup> Clearly William saw recruiting key figures as a foundation of local power.

There were some unusual ties however, as in Earl Ranulf's connections. William Marshal seems to have established a link with the Bigod earls of Norfolk as he married his daughter Matilda to Hugh Bigod in around 1206. This alliance was to last until Hugh's death in 1225, whereupon she was married to William de Warenne.<sup>267</sup> Hugh was the heir to the Bigod estates in 1221 when his father Roger

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<sup>262</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., pp. 300-21

<sup>264</sup> David Crouch, 'The Local Influence of the Earls of Warwick, 1088-1242: A Study in Decline and Resourcefulness', *Midland History*, 21.1 (1996), pp. 1-22 (pp. 8-10)

<sup>265</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 146-152, Appendix 1.

<sup>266</sup> Ibid., pp. 169-70.

<sup>267</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 94; for the date of the marriage see Crouch, *Acts and Letters* no. 15.

died.<sup>268</sup> However, the marriage to the Bigod family, as in the case of Ranulf's ties to the earl of Arundel, may be explained by the need to find someone of status for his daughter to marry. It would also have established his status, as he had only recently received the title of earl and the Bigods had held it for a number of years. During the lead up to the civil war in 1214 William had also married his daughter Isabella to Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester.<sup>269</sup> The earls of Gloucester were a local family to him and this tie would also have undoubtedly helped him and the earl of Gloucester to work together in their lordships.

As the Bigods revolted in the war of 1215 to 1217 one of the relationships the earl formed seems to have created a limited political alliance. The Bigods therefore fought against Earl William and cannot have had as great a political tie to him as some of the relationships Earl Ranulf established. Both Roger and his father Hugh were excommunicated by Innocent III.<sup>270</sup> They also had their lands ravaged by King John.<sup>271</sup>

More successfully, William did establish alliances to certain ecclesiastics. These included the bishops of Salisbury whom he asked to vouchsafe his grants to churches.<sup>272</sup> William also created ties to abbots with whom William sometimes established a friendship. These included an abbot of Notley of which he was the patron and one of St Augustine's, Bristol, which was within his political sphere.<sup>273</sup> Yet the overall limited ecclesiastical contact is again reminiscent of other lordships.

William Marshal the Younger benefitted from the ties his father established. For instance, Hugh Bigod came to aid William when he was fighting the Welsh in 1223.<sup>274</sup> He also maintained many of the ties his father had established with the local baronage as evidenced by his charters.<sup>275</sup> Yet William the Younger seems to

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<sup>268</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 95.

<sup>269</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 61.

<sup>270</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ii. p. 643.

<sup>271</sup> Ibid., p. 665; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 185.

<sup>272</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters* nos. 18, 19.

<sup>273</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 152-53.

<sup>274</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 82.

<sup>275</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, for the Bloets nos. 48, 111, for the Earley's, nos 107, 130, 139, 145-146, 170, 176.

have had different aims than his father. He saw the opportunity to tie himself more closely to the crown. The first stage of this was his marriage to Princess Eleanor in 1224.<sup>276</sup> He also joined Richard of Cornwall to support his demands of the king in 1227.<sup>277</sup> Unlike Ranulf, however, there was perhaps more to the relationship. William had received a great deal of patronage from the crown during this period and it is unlikely that he felt as Ranulf did, at a distance from the court. His true motive might have been his desire to establish ties with Richard earl of Cornwall, and through him the king, as Richard married his sister Isabella in 1231 after her husband the earl of Warenne had died.<sup>278</sup>

The ties William established, however, may not have been passed on to his brother and heir Richard Marshal. Richard went to King Henry in Wales to request his rights to his brother's lands as heir in 1231. He was initially refused on the advice of Hubert de Burgh, although eventually he gains his lands. This friction between Richard and the king was to continue as in the 1230's as he was accused of having dealings with the king's enemies and sent into exile.<sup>279</sup>

Comparing Earl Ranulf with the other earls, it is clear that Earl Ranulf's relationship to leading landowners had a different emphasis than the relationships established by other lords. It is clear that the Marshal and Huntingdon families at times looked more to their relationship to the crown and seem to have relied upon this more than contact with other leading barons. All of the earls seem to have extended their contacts to local lords to form their own group of counsellors, although the Warwicks perhaps had the smallest circle. Ranulf, however, was particularly fortunate in that he had considerably more resources to establish familial relationships to leading lords. His established hereditary base also brought him a pre-established block of baronial followers. The extent of this contact to barons

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<sup>276</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 67; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 299; 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', p. 84. The Annal of Dunstable puts the date erroneously at 1225, Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 91.

<sup>277</sup> Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. p. 124; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 296.

<sup>278</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Oseneia', p. 72.

<sup>279</sup> Paris, *Chronica majora*, iii. p. 204; Paris, *Historia minor*, ii. pp. 333-34.

also helped the earl to establish a measure of successful independence from the crown, which earls such as the Marshals and Huntingdons were unable to obtain.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is apparent that Earl Ranulf established ties to individuals who were landowners of considerable means. His relationships to these men extended beyond the custom of service established through landownership. Relationships based upon familial ties as well as patronage, hereditary connections, and common social practices are in evidence. It is unlikely that he established these ties because they were active royal counsellors. These individuals supplied the earl with counsel by attending his court, most notably in the case of the lesser barons, and helped with garnering political support in the area they were located as well as nationally. The relationships that he established were primarily based upon familial ties, locality and a mutual concern for their lordships, however as in the last chapter, it is also apparent that pre-existing traditional ties also directed the earl's choices in alliances.

There were of course difficulties to these relationships due to the nature of the individuals involved, and it is clear that interests did not always converge, but it seems reasonable to suggest that in the majority of circumstances these individuals helped to mutually support each other's lordships. Ranulf benefited in many respects in this endeavour due to the ability to form familial ties not open to other lords in this period. He was also lucky to be on the winning side in many conflicts, which would also naturally have drawn people to his cause. Perhaps the most important difference between Ranulf and other lords in this period though was that by having such a wide range of support he was able to challenge the crown and therefore was not as subject to its whims as were others. Interestingly therefore, these relationships are directly influenced by the crown and its grants, but also his inheritance which drove the locative concern. These relationships will of course also impact upon his relationships to others in his lordship.

## Chapter 3

Curials:

Did Earl Ranulf establish Relationships with Royal Administrators, and how did the Royal Bureaucracy impact his Lordship?

Earl Ranulf III of Chester was alive during a period of profound change. The twelfth and thirteenth centuries represent a period of great expansion in the royal administration and bureaucracy.<sup>1</sup> The purpose behind the creation of a new more professional administration and bureaucracy was ostensibly to raise more funds for the crown. King Richard sought funds both before and after his crusade, and his justiciar Hubert Walter professionalised the administration to that end.<sup>2</sup> Richard's successor, King John, pursued a similar agenda and was perhaps particularly avaricious.<sup>3</sup> The acquisitiveness of the crown lessened initially during the regency period. However, the then justiciar, Hubert de Burgh fought to regain royal control after it had been diminished. His actions led to a great many disagreements with the baronage during the latter years of Earl Ranulf's life.<sup>4</sup>

The aim of this chapter is to examine the earl's reaction to these changes and how they affected his lordship as it is understood, namely as a system of relationships. This will build upon the previous chapters where it has been shown that the earl had a varied relationship with the kings in this period and established connections to leading magnates to help mitigate this.

Generally, Ralph Turner argues that the administrators were often made the scapegoats for resentment by the barons over the expansion of royal government.<sup>5</sup> Some of this was mitigated by the individual king. King Richard had been able to

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<sup>1</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 72-73.

<sup>2</sup> Ralph V. Turner and Richard R. Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart: Ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189-1199* (Harlow: Longman, 2000), pp. 106, 150-59; see also Robert C. Stacey, 'Walter, Hubert, (d. 1205)', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>3</sup> Turner, *King John*, pp. 72-73, 187.

<sup>4</sup> David Carpenter, *The Reign of Henry III* (London: Hambledon, 1996), Ch. 4

<sup>5</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 183.

accommodate baronial resentment, but King John, in particular, was open to the accusation that he had neglected baronial counsel and instead followed the advice of 'evil advisors'.<sup>6</sup> Similar calls were made throughout the thirteenth century as justification for various rebellions. This hostility undoubtedly arose as the new curial professional officers were taking administrative positions previously held by the barons.<sup>7</sup> Antagonism, was also caused by the fact that these new *curials* were in essence a new social group, which looked for advancement through administrative service rather than traditional warfare.<sup>8</sup> These men therefore represent a social change in addition to the political change, to which the barons had to adapt.

One way that the barons adapted to these changes was suggested by Peter Coss. Coss has theorised that in the thirteenth century, as royal power increased in the localities, lords turned to recruiting royal officers to retain their control of their areas.<sup>9</sup> That power, therefore, derived, at least in part, not from establishing connections with other lords, but through subverting royal administrators. The first part of this chapter will therefore examine how Earl Ranulf took stock of these changes and examine if, and how, he interacted with the new administration. Did he create new relationships with these administrators? How were they involved with his lordship?

It will also be necessary to see whom the earl recruits within his own administration. It is clear in the last chapter that the earl borrowed practices from the crown and established a group of local counsellors: does he do the same in his administration? That there was such cross fertilisation within other lordships has been generally shown in a variety of case studies, particularly with regard to the

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<sup>6</sup> Turner, *King John*, pp. 182-83; Turner and Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart*, pp. 93-94.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust: Administrative Service and Upward Mobility in Angevin England* (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 1-15.

<sup>8</sup> Ralph V. Turner, 'Changing Perceptions of the New Administrative Class in Anglo-Norman and Angevin England: The Curiales and Their Conservative Critics', *Journal of British Studies*, 29. 2 (1990), 93-117.

<sup>9</sup> Peter R. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised', *P&P*, 125 (1989), 27-64; Peter R. Coss, 'Bastard Feudalism Revised: Reply', *P&P*, 131 (1991), 190-203.

ecclesiastical lords.<sup>10</sup> The second part of this chapter will therefore consider how the new administrative and bureaucratic developments of the crown influenced the earl's administration of his own lordship. To provide a wider context for Earl Ranulf's relationships and his actions in these regards, this chapter will also compare the earl with his contemporaries. Through such comparisons, the individual nature of Ranulf's lordship will be displayed as well as any common themes.

### Royal Officers: The Sheriff

The sheriff's office was the oldest office in the kingdom, with its origins from before the conquest of England by the Normans in 1066.<sup>11</sup> During the Angevin period there was a move to place men of experience and usually of lesser status in the office of sheriff and not barons as had been the case in previous generations.<sup>12</sup> The aim in doing this was to foster loyalty in the office first and foremost to the crown, and to this end King Richard was personally involved in the appointment of sheriffs, and often chose local men of rank, but not leading lords. These new men owed their fortune to him.<sup>13</sup>

The need to maintain loyalty to the crown in this office derived from the responsibilities of the sheriff. The sheriff by the time of King Richard had control over the bailiffs and reeves of the county, and operated at the head of a regional unit.<sup>14</sup> The conscious move away from baronial sheriffs was made because the barons often had such a degree of local influence that they could shrug off royal oversight.<sup>15</sup> In practice, when the barons held the office they also often delegated it to under sheriffs, which meant that the office was even further devolved from crown control.<sup>16</sup> It was only during periods of particular military need, therefore,

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<sup>10</sup> Christopher R. Cheney, *English Bishops Chanceries, 1100-1250*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950).

<sup>11</sup> William Alfred Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff to 1300*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1927), pp. 18-21.

<sup>12</sup> Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, pp. 163-66.

<sup>13</sup> Turner and Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart*, pp. 99-105, 45-46.

<sup>14</sup> Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, p. 146.

<sup>15</sup> As in the reigns of Stephen, see *ibid.*, pp. 104-12.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.



that there was a return to baronial sheriffs, such as during the civil war of John's reign.<sup>17</sup> This was because their local influence helped them with the military element of the role, which required the sheriff to look after royal castles, and serve as the crown's representative in summoning military tenants to their service, and providing victuals to royal armies.<sup>18</sup>

The policy of recruiting *curial* sheriffs was, however, continued after such periods of upheaval. Between 1222 and 1224, for instance, the reversion to baronial sheriffs was undone and a custodian system involving professionals was re-imposed.<sup>19</sup> It is at this time that Earl Ranulf was stripped of his office as a sheriff in Lancashire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire. That this could have led to antagonism between the earl and the *curials* who would replace him, seems a distinct possibility, but was avoided when his replacements are considered. Stephen Seagrave, his baron, and William de Ferrers, the earl's brother-in-law, were his successors in Lancashire, and his baron Hugh Despenser, in Shropshire and Staffordshire.<sup>20</sup> Their appointment would have been made in order to mollify the earl, while the crown could re-assert its authority.

The essential duties of the sheriff during peacetime, which would affect the earl most frequently, concern the administration of royal rights and fiscal accounting of those rights in the shire. The sheriff managed the king's customary incomes due

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<sup>17</sup> David Carpenter, 'The Decline of the Curial Sheriff in England 1194-1258', *EHR*, 91. 358 (1976), 1-32 (pp. 8-10); thus, Falkes de Bréauté, who fought on behalf of the crown and was to become a leading landowner held shrieval office in Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire (1216-1224), Northamptonshire (1216-1223), Oxfordshire (1215-1223) and Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire (1217-1224). Richard earl of Cornwall held the sheriffdom of Cornwall in 1225-26. Earl Ranulf's brother in law William de Ferrers earl of Derby held the sheriffdoms of Nottinghamshire and Derby (1194) and Lancashire (1223-1228). John Marshal held Sussex (1191-1193), Yorkshire (1189-90), Lincolnshire (1214-1215), Hampshire (1217), Norfolk and Suffolk (1215-1217), and Worcestershire (1216-1217). William Marshall held Gloucester (1189-1194, 1198-1207), Sussex (1193-1204), and Essex and Hertfordshire (1217-1218). William Longespee, earl of Salisbury, held Somerset and Dorset (1194), Wiltshire (1189-90, 1191-1196, 1199-1203, 1204-1207, 1213-1226), Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire (1212-1216), Devonshire (1217-1218), Shropshire and Staffordshire (1223-1224), and Somerset (1217). His wife Ela countess of Salisbury later held Wiltshire (1227-1228, 1231-1237). William Warenne 5<sup>th</sup> earl of Surrey also held Surrey and Sussex (1217-1218/1226). For a list of the sheriffs for each county see A. Hughes, *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales: From the Earliest Times to A.D. 1831* (London: HMSO, 1898).

<sup>18</sup> Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, pp. 151-53.

<sup>19</sup> David Carpenter, 'The Decline of the Curial Sheriff', pp. 7-8, 10-13; Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, pp. 111-12, 161-63, 168-69.

<sup>20</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, pp. 72, 117.

from his tenants: such incomes could include wardships, reliefs, aids, and by 1165 escheats from forfeitures. The sheriff also managed the collection of taxes, such as scutage, and tallages from towns, as well as sometimes from ecclesiastical institutions and the Jews. The sheriff would also account for the profits of justice from fines and amercements.<sup>21</sup> By the time of Hubert Walter's justiciarship in Richard's reign the sheriff's role was therefore a powerful one. Hubert decided to limit some of its power, but by doing so undoubtedly inserting more professionalism by reducing its duties to mainly looking after criminals, revenues, and castles. Yet the office is still regarded as the crown's chief fiscal officer in the localities.<sup>22</sup> Earl Ranulf accounted through the sheriff for various scutages in the period and held debts against the Jews in Lincoln, which were accounted for on the exchequer rolls.<sup>23</sup>

However, it is necessary at this point to consider whether the role of sheriff would have affected the earl to any great extent due to the separation of Cheshire from the administration of the rest of the country. Earl Ranulf appointed his own sheriffs in Cheshire.<sup>24</sup> It is also clear that no royal sheriff was involved in the county while the earl was in his majority. In his minority there was a sheriff who accounted for the earl's lands to the exchequer.<sup>25</sup> The real reason why there may have been no interference in the county from the exchequer officers is that the king held no lands and no tenants-in-chief in Cheshire. Rather, through design or accident the county had become somewhat separate from the rest of the country in this regard. Yet this should not suggest that the earl had no interest in sheriffs and their actions. Most of the earl's lands and tenants were held outside of the county.<sup>26</sup> The sheriffs,

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<sup>21</sup> Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, pp. 131-33, 148-49, 152.

<sup>22</sup> Turner and Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart*, pp. 150-51.

<sup>23</sup> For the scutages see PR, Richard, i., p. 91; ii., p. v., p. 119, 210, 258; vi., p. 191; viii., pp. 56, 150; PR, John, x. 20, 118, 151, 166, 254; xii, pp. 20; xiv., p. 22, 141, 173, 186, 200, 214, 241; xv., pp. 8, 28, 33, 40, 67, 117, 155, 180, 186, 196, 210; xvi., p. 5, 40, 49, 64, 97, 101, 185, 186, 192, 211, 252; xviii., pp. 16, 152; xix., pp. 33, 62, 65, 159, 232; xx., pp. 16, 42, 86, 113, 115, 204, 209, 225; xxii., pp. 8, 27, 88; xxvi, pp. 32, 101, 106; xxiii., p. 149; xxiv, pp. 7, 114, 133; xxv, pp. 19, 48; xxviii., p. 31, 32, 59, 74, 264, 268; xxx, p. 105; PR, Henry III, xxxix, p. 65; lxxx., pp. 57, 130; xlvi, pp. 5, 99; liv., pp. 31, 65, 79, 94, 134, 163, 169; lvi, pp. 137; for his debts of the Jews see, PR, Richard, ii., p. 22; iii. p. 36; v. p. 100; viii., p. 109; ix. p. 57; PR, John, xiv, p. 233; xvi. p. 29; xviii, p. 221.

<sup>24</sup> R. Stewart-Brown, 'The Exchequer of Chester', *EHR*, 57. 227 (1942), 289-97.

<sup>25</sup> PR, Henry II, xxxi, pp. 148-155; xxxii, pp. 151-52; xxxiii, pp. 1-2; xxxiv, pp. 20-21.

<sup>26</sup> HKF, ii. p. 8.

furthermore could oversee the earl's tenants receiving their lands. It is recorded in 1206 that Thomas Arden owed 5m. for his lands of Earl Ranulf in Warwickshire.<sup>27</sup>

Nevertheless, the question remains: what relationship did the earl have with these men? A striking relationship between the earl and the office of sheriff comes from an examination of the sheriffs appointed to Lancashire, Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Shropshire, and Staffordshire over the period.<sup>28</sup> Ranulf had ties to a number of these individuals who acted as his counsellors. In Lancashire William, earl of Ferrers, who was appointed sheriff in Lancashire 1223, was a trusted ally who acted in concert with Ranulf in a number of instances. Meanwhile, Robert Tattershall who had gained the office in Lancashire in 1199 and Lincolnshire in 1198, was also an ally or counsellor of the earl. His father Philip had witnessed one of Ranulf's charters. The family was also to go on to establish further ties through mutual ecclesiastical patronage and through a familial tie when Robert married Ranulf's niece in the early 1200s.<sup>29</sup>

Similarly, in Lincolnshire Ranulf had ties to Simon de Kime, who became sheriff there in 1194.<sup>30</sup> Simon was also of a leading baronial family which had landed ties to the earl. The earl also established ties to the Kime family through ecclesiastical support of their institutions, and the Kime family were frequent witnesses to his charters.<sup>31</sup> Simon's successor, Gerard de Camville, was also known to the earl. Gerard was sheriff of Lincolnshire from 1189 to 1194 and 1199 to 1204.<sup>32</sup> Gerard was a tenant of Earl Ranulf, whose family's establishment at Combe Abbey the earl supported, notably granting them two charters between 1200 and 1217.<sup>33</sup> Richard de Camville had founded the abbey in 1150.<sup>34</sup> That other members of the family, Roger and William de Camville, also witnessed five of the earl's charters between

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<sup>27</sup> *PR, John*, xx. p. 8.

<sup>28</sup> For Lancashire see, Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 72. for Lincolnshire p. 78, for Northamptonshire p. 92, for Shropshire and Staffordshire p. 117.

<sup>29</sup> See above, pp. 120-122.

<sup>30</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 78.

<sup>31</sup> For a discussion of the Kime's see below, pp. 299-301.

<sup>32</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 78.

<sup>33</sup> *BC*, nos. 322, 323.

<sup>34</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 233.

1190 and 1200, would suggest that they were active members of his court.<sup>35</sup> Ranulf is also known to have worked alongside the bishop of Lincoln, who was appointed sheriff of Lincolnshire in 1223, even if their relationship was more distant.<sup>36</sup>

In Northamptonshire, the Braybrooke family became sheriffs from 1208 to 1215, and it is clear that the earl had some contact with them. Between 1199 and 1200 Henry de Braybrooke witnessed Earl Ranulf grant Robert de Quincy £10 of land in Sibsey (Lincolnshire) and 3 knights' fees in Cabourne in marriage with his sister Hawise.<sup>37</sup> A similar picture emerges with Walter of Preston, sheriff of Northamptonshire between 1206 and 1208, who was a tenant of the earl.<sup>38</sup> Clearly Ranulf had ties, and in many instances significant ties, to the men taking up these offices.

It is of course probable that a number of these individuals were appointed because they were leading men in their locality, rather than due to their ties to Earl Ranulf. The relationships the earl had may therefore be opportunistic. However, an indicator that Ranulf was helping with some of these appointments comes from the appointment of Richard Vernon who was appointed sheriff in Lancashire in 1200. He was also a tenant of the earl, holding lands in Cheshire. He descended from a *Domesday* tenant who held lands in Willington, and three other Cheshire manors of Earl Hugh, Ranulf's ancestor, although he was possibly enfeoffed with Harlaston manor (Staffordshire) and Churchill manor (Oxfordshire) in lieu of these.<sup>39</sup> The relationship may have started out quite rocky as his support was given in 1189 to Count John of Mortain (later King John) who appointed Richard sheriff of Lancaster. In 1194, however, following his lord the Count of Mortain's rebellion, Richard lost the office of sheriff, had Harlaston taken into the king's hand and his chattels sold. He was only re-appointed at the discretion of the men of the county in 1199. Richard proffered £20 for land worth £20 yearly in Staffordshire, and the men of

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<sup>35</sup> *BC*, nos. 220, 260, 268, 272, 295.

<sup>36</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 78; for their relationship see, above pp. 90-91.

<sup>37</sup> *BC*, no. 308.

<sup>38</sup> *HKF*, i. p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 724.

Lancashire gave 50m. to the crown for Richard to be their sheriff again for 5 years.<sup>40</sup> It is at this time that Richard witnessed Earl Ranulf confer the lands of Longdendale, Lancashire, with certain rights and liberties to William Neville and his wife Amabilia.<sup>41</sup> This suggests that an alliance had been formed and Ranulf could have had a role in his return to favour. This alliance was maintained under Richard's heir William, who witnessed charters for the earl and was granted one between 1221 and 1223.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the family began to be so trusted that William became the earl's chief household officer the justice.<sup>43</sup>

Another instance like this is the appointment of Walter of Coventry as sheriff of Lincolnshire between 25 July 1215 and October 1216.<sup>44</sup> Walter is known to have been the earl's steward in Lincolnshire from around 1198.<sup>45</sup> He was undoubtedly placed in this office as an extension of the earl's own control of the shires in the turbulent period this represents. Similarly, the earl's hereditary dispenser, Hugh Dispenser gained the office of sheriff of Berkshire between 1226 and September 1227 and of Shropshire and Staffordshire in December 1223.<sup>46</sup> That his officers were gaining such offices suggests that it is highly likely that Ranulf was able to influence appointments.

The leading indicator that Ranulf was influencing the local administration, however, comes from the most well-known *curial* that Earl Ranulf had a relationship with, Stephen of Seagrave. Stephen was appointed to the office of sheriff in Lancashire, Lincolnshire, and Northamptonshire, as well as in other areas of the country.<sup>47</sup> A

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<sup>40</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 276.

<sup>41</sup> *BC*, no. 321.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 226, 272-74, 363-64, 380, 390-92, 402, 410, 416-21, 426-27, 432-33, 435; for the grant no. 408.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 226, 273, 364, 390-92, 427, 433.

<sup>44</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*.

<sup>45</sup> *BC*, no. 326.

<sup>46</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*.

<sup>47</sup> Steven of Seagrave was sheriff from September 1228 to May 1234 in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire (with deputies William Martiwast, Richard Attenestone, John Ulecote); from 16th November 1220 to January 1224 in Essex and Hertfordshire; with deputies Ralph son of Reginald and Peter St Edward from 18 February 1222 to December 1223 in Lancashire; from Christmas 1221 to December 1223 in Lincolnshire. (with deputy Ralph son of Reginald); from 25 November 1228 to May 1234 in Northamptonshire (with Richard Attonestona and William Martiwast as deputies); and from 31 May 1229 to April 1233 in Leicestershire and Warwicks (with deputy William St Edmond, John Riparis). See Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*.

biographer describes him as a careerist, building his position in royal service, but not an innovator.<sup>48</sup> He was of knightly origin, his family holding lands in Seagrave, Leicestershire, of the earls of Leicester or Abbot of Leicester.<sup>49</sup> By 1218, these tenements were held of the Abbey of St Mary des Prés and the Earl of Chester.<sup>50</sup> There was therefore, as with some of the other individuals considered previously, a tenurial link between Stephen and Ranulf.

Yet Stephen was different and of all Ranulf's contacts the one who could be most described as a royal *curial*. His involvement in royal administration was inherited from his father Gilbert. Gilbert was undersheriff for Bishop Hugh de Nonant in Leicestershire in 1193.<sup>51</sup> Ranulf had had dealings with Hugh, assisting with his attempt to replace the priory at Coventry at this time.<sup>52</sup> This indicates that Ranulf and Gilbert would have been moving in the same circles, and could have met. However, Stephen succeeded to his father's lands in 1201.<sup>53</sup> Stephen showed great interest in the royal administration. In 1206 he was a coroner in Leicestershire.<sup>54</sup> It is uncertain where his expertise arose, but it is possible that he learnt from his father. Another possibility that has been suggested is that Stephen may have been an estate steward for Earl Ranulf, although there is little evidence of this other than his later sound knowledge of the law.<sup>55</sup> It is clear that Earl Ranulf established a relationship with Stephen as early on in Stephen's career, he granted him lands in Kegworth (Leicestershire).<sup>56</sup> Stephen progressed rapidly in royal service and Ranulf was undoubtedly involved. It is apparent that Stephen dealt with issues relating specifically to the earl. Stephen was appointed as part of the group to divide the earl of Leicester's inheritance between his heirs.<sup>57</sup> Half of the honour of Leicester

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<sup>48</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 120-21.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 121.

<sup>50</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 72.

<sup>51</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 144.

<sup>52</sup> See above, p. 56.

<sup>53</sup> *PR, John*, xiv. p. 236.

<sup>54</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, v. p. 18.

<sup>55</sup> It is uncertain where Stephen's legal knowledge came from, see Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 122, 125-26.

<sup>56</sup> *BC*, no. 358.

<sup>57</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 122.

was eventually put into the earl's custody.<sup>58</sup> But King John obviously saw Stephen's loyalty and expertise as well and rewarded it. He was rewarded for royal service and loyalty to King John in the civil war with custody of the rebel Stephen de Gant's lands in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, and grants of royal lands in Kineton, Warwickshire for £12 fee farm.<sup>59</sup>

Stephen also became acquainted with other leading barons during the civil war, specifically those who would hold power in the minority.<sup>60</sup> The nature of his previous service and the prominence of his connections may have led to Stephen's rise during the minority and the rest of Henry III's reign.<sup>61</sup> Following the minority of King Henry III and the move to reclaim royal control Stephen was appointed custodian of a number of reclaimed royal castles: in 1220 of Sauvey, March 1221/22 Headingham (Essex), July 1221 the Tower of London.<sup>62</sup> By the end of 1223, he held Lincoln castle, and Hereford castle.<sup>63</sup> Whilst Earl Ranulf was on crusade, Stephen also received custody of half of the honour of Leicester.<sup>64</sup> This can be seen as the rewarding of a royal official, but it also looks like the earl possibly ensured that a loyal knight administered his estates. Stephen also received custody of the honour of Boulogne in December 1220.<sup>65</sup>

That Ranulf maintained this relationship is also clear as the earl also made Stephen other grants during this period. These include Caludon, outside of Coventry, but also lands in Mountsorrel (Leicestershire) outside the castle bailey to augment his fee of Seagrave.<sup>66</sup> Between 1217 and 1232 Earl Ranulf also granted Stephen the advowson of Kegworth church (Leicestershire).<sup>67</sup> There are also indications that Earl Ranulf entered into land deals with Stephen, as between 1225 and 1228, Earl

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<sup>58</sup> *Records of the Borough of Leicester: Being a series of Extracts from the Archives of the Corporation of Leicester, 1103-1327*, ed. by Mary Bateson (London: Cambridge University Press, 1899), pp. xiv-xvi.

<sup>59</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 246, 278; *RChart.*, pp. 223-224.

<sup>60</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 122.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-23.

<sup>62</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 466, 471-72, 489, 512, 545; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 240.

<sup>63</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. pp. 419-20.

<sup>64</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 366; *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 163.

<sup>65</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, i. p. 274.

<sup>66</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 62; Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 122.

<sup>67</sup> *BC*, nos. 361-62.

Ranulf granted Stephen of Seagrave, Bretby (Derbyshire), previously of Simon of Kime, in exchange for lands in Great Tew (Oxfordshire).<sup>68</sup> Such interactions would argue that Ranulf and Stephen were very familiar with each other, and had a mutual regard.

The connections between Stephen and the earl are not only limited to direct ties between them as individuals, however. It is clear that Stephen was tied to the earl's other tenants and counsellors, including the Despensers having married Hugh Despenser's sister Rose.<sup>69</sup> This led to King John pardoning Stephen's debt of 116m. that his father had left, for the love of Hugh Despenser.<sup>70</sup> Roger de Montalt, the earl's hereditary steward, also gave Stephen de Seagrave 8 virgates in Rosliston (Derbyshire), once held by Ralph Grim, for ½ fee, and also released to Stephen de Seagrave the service of 1 knight rendered to Roger, the grantor's father, for Rosliston.<sup>71</sup> Stephen was also tied to the earl's lordship through his son's marriage. John his eldest son married Emma, who was the daughter and heir of Roger de Cauz, who held lands of the earl. Stephen had been granted her wardship in 1227.<sup>72</sup> It is therefore extremely likely that, despite being a royal officer, Stephen was still active within the earl's circle.

That Stephen gained offices such as the sheriff in areas where the earl had local influence, and that other individuals were also appointed who had ties to the earl would suggest that Ranulf had a degree of interest if not influence in their appointment. There are of course other individuals that hold the office of sheriff in these counties who have a different kind of relationship to the earl. William earl of Salisbury was related to the crown, and there were several officers of the central administration who held office in the counties. Therefore, Ranulf's influence was not total.

The degree with which Ranulf pursued this policy contrasts greatly with that of his contemporaries. Unlike Earl Ranulf, the earls of Warwick do not seem to have had

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 363.

<sup>69</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 56; Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, p. 122.

<sup>70</sup> *ROF*, p. 422.

<sup>71</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 36.

<sup>72</sup> *RLC*, ii. p. 174, 183.



many of their followers involved in the royal administration of the counties where they held lands. This may reflect the earls of Warwick's more distant stance during the period. Where they can be shown to be tied to notable sheriffs including Ralph Hareng (sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire in 1215); Stephen Seagrave (sheriff of Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire between 1228 and 1234 and Lancashire in 1222, Lincolnshire between 1221 and 1223, and Northamptonshire between 1228 and 1234); Hugh Despenser (sheriff of Berkshire in 1226); Simon Pattishull (sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire in 1193, and Northamptonshire between 1194 and 1203), the contacts they had with these men were primarily in their role as justices as the contact was in a court setting.<sup>73</sup>

David, Earl of Huntingdon also seems to have had little interaction with any sheriffs. Examining the lists of sheriffs for the areas in which the earl also has influence, mainly Huntingdonshire, Cambridgeshire, Rutland and Northamptonshire, it appears that Earl David made little effort to try and control the local administration as Earl Ranulf did. Indeed, Ranulf through his contacts seems to have had more influence in these areas. Ranulf's nephew and Earl David's heir, John le Scot, followed his father's example.

William Marshal, William Marshal the younger, and Richard Marshal also seem to have had limited contact with the sheriffs in their localities. In part this can be explained by the fact their main seat of power, Pembroke, did not have a sheriff sitting there. In many respects Pembroke existed in a similar administrative position to Cheshire. Yet the Marshals also show little inclination in the counties where they had lands and where there were sheriffs to establish contact with them, although the earls themselves held the office upon occasion. For instance, in Gloucestershire William Marshal held the office between 1189 and 1193, and between 1198 and 1207.<sup>74</sup> William Marshal did have more contact with the sheriffs when he was regent in the running of the county and used his position to pass

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<sup>73</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 49.

orders onto them, which may suggest that the earl had a different outlook on the office than Ranulf.<sup>75</sup>

In general, while it is possible, therefore, to identify that Earl Ranulf establishes connections with a number of sheriffs in counties in his locality, the reason for these connections is uncertain. David Crouch would perhaps argue that the earl was trying to create independent control of an area, as he arguably had in Cheshire.<sup>76</sup> It is clear that the earl's predecessors had tried to obtain the office of sheriff for themselves during the civil war of Stephen's reign and, in P. Dalton's view, in order to obtain regalian type power.<sup>77</sup> Yet it is also apparent that sherial office had been a baronial office so control of it was not new. Yet compared with his contemporaries the fact Earl Ranulf created more of these relationships does suggest that he was more concerned with it and the new administrative advances than were they.

### Royal Officers: The Justice

The second leading official in the localities during the Angevin period was the justice. The duties of the sheriff had originally included the administration of justice for the crown in the shire. King Henry II gradually began to change this, providing more powers to the justice and increasing their numbers. The sheriff's role eventually became limited to serving and executing judicial writs.<sup>78</sup>

The need for more justices was created when the scope of royal justice increased dramatically in this period following the reforms of King Henry II, which brought more business to royal courts and away from seigniorial courts by allowing land disputes to be seen in royal courts.<sup>79</sup> Royal justice had been limited previously to cases involving royal tenants and demesne, and criminal cases. The increase in cases in the royal courts also necessitated a shakeup of the court system. There

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<sup>75</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 57-58.

<sup>76</sup> For David Crouch's view of Cheshire see, Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 180-82; for a discussion of the palatinate of Chester see Chapter 4: The Palatinate of Chester below.

<sup>77</sup> P. Dalton, 'Ranulf II and Lincolnshire', in *Thacker*, pp. 111-13.

<sup>78</sup> Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff*, pp. 146-47, 149-51.

<sup>79</sup> Wilfred Lewis Warren, *Henry II* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), Ch. 9.

were three courts in England during this period. Ralph V Turner has identified the eyre, central court at Westminster and the *coram rege*, or king's court.<sup>80</sup> The eyre was perhaps one of the oldest courts to have become independent of the *coram rege* and was staffed by justices who travelled in circuits throughout the country as commanded by the crown. These circuits were to become more frequent and regular under Henry II.<sup>81</sup> The court at Westminster, the Bench, arose during the reign of Henry II as a result of the upsurge in litigation. In Richard's reign a standard pattern of justice which included the Bench appeared by 1194 and by King John's reign the Bench had become firmly established.<sup>82</sup> With the loss of Normandy the *coram rege*, or the crown court, which travelled with the king, became more important in England. During the lifetime of Earl Ranulf, the only *coram rege* that was active in England to a great degree, however, was that of King John, but it ended with John's death.<sup>83</sup> King Henry III's *coram rege* did not establish itself until 1234.<sup>84</sup>

There has been fierce debate as to whether King Henry II, by extending royal justice had been trying to support existing custom or purposefully undermining it for his own gain.<sup>85</sup> The three royal courts of course could overturn local and seigniorial justice.<sup>86</sup> But it is also known that the legal innovations provided lords with access to the legal structure that they wanted. This is shown by *Magna Carta* and the increasing popularity showed in court cases over the thirteenth century.<sup>87</sup> It is also clear that Earl Ranulf was involved in the court system outside of Cheshire. Through

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<sup>80</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *The King and his Courts: The Role of John and Henry III in the Administration of Justice, 1199-1240* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1968), Ch. 1.

<sup>81</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *The English Judiciary in the Age of Glanvill and Bracton, c.1176-1239* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 17-25; Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 10-14.

<sup>82</sup> Turner, *The English Judiciary*, pp. 65-74; Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 14-20; Ralph V. Turner, 'The Origins of Common Pleas and King's Bench', *The American Journal of Legal History*, 21. 3 (1977), 238-54 (pp. 238-46); Warren, *Henry II*, pp. 295-300.

<sup>83</sup> Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 14-25; Turner, 'The Origins of Common Pleas and King's Bench', pp. 246-48.

<sup>84</sup> Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 24-28; Turner, 'The Origins of Common Pleas and King's Bench', pp. 248-51.

<sup>85</sup> Ralph V. Turner, *Judges, Administrators and the Common Law in Angevin England*, (London: Hambledon Press, 1994), pp. 1-15.

<sup>86</sup> Turner, *The King and his Courts*, p. 181.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 172-73; Ralph V. Turner, 'The Reputation of Royal Judges under the Angevin Kings', *Albion*, 11. 4 (1979), 301-16 (p. 316).

his attorneys he was often found at the royal courts.<sup>88</sup> It is possible that Ranulf handled a number of cases himself, as well as using attorneys, as he acted as an attorney in one case on behalf of the king.<sup>89</sup> That he was able to do so suggests that he was aware of proceedings and able to follow the necessary procedure. That the crown trusted him to do so also suggests that he was not incapable of the task.

Many of the men employed to provide justice in these courts, the justices, were like the new sheriffs, of lower rank and these men also had their critics, who could accuse them of sycophancy and greed.<sup>90</sup> There was a slight resurgence of baronial interference during and after the minority of King Henry III. During the minority the baronial council had been involved in certain cases and perhaps established more of a role for baronial counsel in justice by doing so.<sup>91</sup> Such a case was that of a plea of false judgement made by Earl Ranulf's court brought before the court at Westminster and the Regency Council in 1220. Ranulf's decision was supported and it was decided that the warrantor should lose his foot.<sup>92</sup> In this case Turner argued that the council were supporting a royalist who had been instrumental in supporting the new regime and was currently on crusade.<sup>93</sup> More regularly, however, Ranulf's cases would have been brought before royal justices.

There was not a permanent position of justice, nor was a justice a professional office until the reign of Richard in 1196 under the direction of the justiciar Hubert Walter.<sup>94</sup> It has been suggested that under King John the professionalization of justice continued, although his imposition of his *curia regis* suggests that he wanted more personal control.<sup>95</sup> Yet while John may have taken more of an interest in the courts the justices were still chiefly chosen by the justiciar, namely Geoffrey fitz Peter or his predecessor, Hubert Walter, which would suggest it more likely they

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<sup>88</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, i. p. 383, 392(2),425, iv., pp. 199, 201, 219(3), 267; v., pp. 1, 307; vi., pp. 27-28; x., pp. 18, 45-46, 127, 287; xi., p. 50-51, 149, 232, 310, 454, 477; xii., pp. 56, 89-90, 159, 249, 311, 396, 446-47, 530; xiii., pp. 1, 97, 131, 137, 152, 182, 251, 326, 565, 585-87; xiv., pp. 73, 128, 204.

<sup>89</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, x. pp. 293-94.

<sup>90</sup> Turner, *The English Judiciary*, pp. 1-11; Turner, 'The Reputation of Royal Judges under the Angevin Kings', pp. 301-16.

<sup>91</sup> Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 173-79.

<sup>92</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, viii. pp. 271-72.

<sup>93</sup> Turner, *The King and his Courts*, pp. 182-83.

<sup>94</sup> Turner, *The English Judiciary*, pp. 72-88; Turner and Heiser, *The Reign of Richard Lionheart*, p. 151.

<sup>95</sup> Turner, *The English Judiciary*, pp. 126-38.

were chosen for their expertise rather than an act of patronage of the crown. These officers were not ceremonial and included individuals like Simon of Pattishall, Richard of Herriard, James Potterne, Master Ralph of Stokes, Henry of Whiston. Most of had known the justiciars before they gained office in other aspects of royal service, and had therefore proved their value.<sup>96</sup> After the civil war the judiciary was even more professionalised, in part, according to Turner, due to the fact that the justiciar had less interest in justice, being a military man, and therefore requiring skilled men to run the courts for him.<sup>97</sup> There was therefore a limited number of men who administered justice from the very beginning of Ranulf's life. Ralph V. Turner has identified a number of these men who witnessed frequently enough to be called a core group. They included both baronial and lesser ranked individuals.<sup>98</sup>

Of this core, only one name appears with whom the earl has some significant evidence of being in contact: Stephen Seagrave. He has contact with a range of others, especially at court as some witnessed royal charters alongside him.<sup>99</sup> Some even witness royal charters granted to his tenants, such as Simon Pattishall who was a witness to King John's confirmation of liberties to the city of Chester.<sup>100</sup> However, despite these instances it is unclear whether Simon, or any justice, was meaningfully connected to the earl.

This indicates that Ranulf was linked to a significantly smaller number of justices than sheriffs, especially as David Crook calculates that there were 104 eyres between 1194 and 1209 and 281 between 1218 and 1277 (81 between 1218-1233).<sup>101</sup> The reason for this may be due to the fact that many more of these men were professional royal *curials* with loyalty primarily to the crown and its administration. Simon Pattishall, for instance, had a long history of service to the

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<sup>96</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 49-51.

<sup>97</sup> Turner, *The English Judiciary*, p. 193.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 19, 77, 127-38, 91-96, 299-302.

<sup>99</sup> From the *RChart.*, these include Alan Basset; Robert Berkeley; Gerard Camville, (also a sheriff); William Cantilupe (15) (also sheriff); Guiscard Charrun; Reynold Cornhill (also sheriff); Robert Courtney; Mathew fitz Herbert (2); John fitz Robert (9); Robert fitz Roger (3); Maurice Gaunt (3); Ralph Gernon (2); William Huntingfield (3); Geoffrey Lucy (3); Roger Mortimer; Robert Ros; Stephen Thornham (2); Roger de Tony (2); Adam of Port.

<sup>100</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 6.

<sup>101</sup> David Crook, *Records of the General Eyre* (London: HMSO, 1982), pp. 13-14.

crown. He attended frequent eyres covering the earl's lands, but had also had a career on the Bench as a justice in Westminster between 1190 and 1216 and is regarded by some historians as the most respected of the core 15 more permanent justices of the 90 justices appointed during the period.<sup>102</sup> He is described by his biographer as a middling rank family from Northamptonshire of 1 knight's fee and likely began his career in the royal administration in Henry II's reign. He obtained position as sheriff in 1193 and 1194 of Essex and Hertfordshire, and between 1194 and 1203 Northamptonshire. Showing he was a general royal administrator, if he has perhaps been characterised as a justice more frequently. He served on the Bench and on eyre as well as in the *coram rege* of King John's reign and likely died in 1217.<sup>103</sup> Simon's clerk Martin of Pattishall also became a judge and seems to indicate that the family's loyalty was to the crown first rather than an outside party like some of the other sheriffs.<sup>104</sup> That such men were a close knit group is also indicated by the fact that Martin also created similar ties to a William Raleigh, who again was to become a justice.<sup>105</sup>

Obtaining or influencing connections within the new judiciary seems to have been a more complex affair. Of the core of professional justices it is only Stephen Seagrave, who was also a sheriff, that Ranulf has most contact with. Stephen of Seagrave's role as a royal justice, began when he sat on the Bench from 1218. He maintained a presence on the Bench until his death. He also took part in seven eyres during the earl's lifetime.<sup>106</sup> Stephen's role in the royal government increased during the 1220's. Between 1225 and 1232 Stephen also began taking assizes, assessing amercements or delivering gaols. He also began to witness increasing numbers of royal charters and is thought to have been drawn into King Henry's

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<sup>102</sup> Ralph V. Turner, 'Simon of Pattishall, Pioneer Professional Judge', *Albion*, 9. 2 (1977), 115-27 (p. 115).

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 115-27.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.

<sup>105</sup> C. A. F. Meekings, *Studies in 13th Century Justice and Administration* (London: Hambledon, 1981), XI (especially pp. 177-79).

<sup>106</sup> In 1218-1219 he went on an eyre to the East Midlands (with its concluding stages in 1221 Herts. and 1222); 1221 was on the London eyre and completed the Hertfordshire eyre; 1226-1229 leader on one of the two midland circuits (either Sept 1226-April 1227 or Sept 1227-May 1228); 1228 visited Norfolk and Suffolk on eyre; Spring 1229 Surrey was leader of an eyre; Jan 1230 he was the leader of an eyre in Rutland; 1231-32 was leader of a circuit, Crook, *Records of the General Eyre*, pp. 71-72, 76, 78, 80-88.

household.<sup>107</sup> The culmination of his role in the royal administration, however, began in 1230 when, with Ralph de Nevill, bishop of Chichester he was named Regent.<sup>108</sup> His fortune was to continue as in August 1232, he was granted the castles, which the then justiciar Hubert de Burgh held in custody.<sup>109</sup> This foreshadowed the fact that in the summer of 1232 he replaced Hubert de Burgh as justiciar.<sup>110</sup> It is possible that his appointment at this time was at the instigation of Peter des Roches.<sup>111</sup> He did adhere to the Poitevins who came to power in 1232 and fell with them in 1234 losing his office of justiciar as well as certain lands. He was prosecuted by the crown and only reconciled in 1236.<sup>112</sup> Yet Earl Ranulf was also tied to the Poitevins and was heavily involved in displacing Hubert de Burgh. The telling factor that Stephen was still the earl's man was that he was an executor of Earl Ranulf's will.<sup>113</sup> Stephen therefore may have been Ranulf's prime contact in the new judiciary as well as being a local sheriff.

Earl David and John le Scot seem to have followed Earl Ranulf in maintaining some distance from the new judiciary. There is little evidence that they had contact with any justice outside of the court cases they were part of, or through witnessing royal charters with these men at court. The earls of Warwick similarly seem to have maintained contact only through court cases. The earls of Warwick, particularly, seem to have been involved in the courts on a number of occasions and came to agreements witnessed by various justices.<sup>114</sup> William Marshal also seems to have followed a similar path, as he came to a number of agreements at the royal courts including one with William of Hill Croom concerning the ownership of a township. This was witnessed by several justices including Simon of Pattishall.<sup>115</sup> William Marshal the Younger, however, seems to have taken a more active role and sat as

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<sup>107</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 127-28.

<sup>108</sup> *Patent Rolls of the Reign of Henry III*, ii. p. 339.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. p. 496.

<sup>110</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 128-29.

<sup>111</sup> Wendover, *Flores Historiarum*, iv, p. 245.

<sup>112</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 129-34.

<sup>113</sup> R. Stewart-Brown, 'The End of the Norman Earldom of Chester', *EHR*, 35. 137 (1920), 26-54 (p. 27).

<sup>114</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, nos. 154, 164, 191, 196-97, 201, 203.

<sup>115</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 49.

a justice on certain eyres.<sup>116</sup> The Marshals' closer alliance to the central administration and the justiciars who headed it undoubtedly meant that they had more influence there than Ranulf.

What Ranulf gained from his alliance with Stephen is again difficult to quantify. Indeed, as it is the same individual who was also a sheriff, it is likely that this relationship was built more in terms of him being a general *curial* rather than a justice. Yet the fact that he had this relationship again suggests that he was at least not antagonistic to these new administrative developments and the administrators.

### Earl Ranulf's Administration

The greatest influence from having these contacts for the earl's lordship, however, must have been his exposure to new ways of administering his own estates. Earl Ranulf III of Chester like many of the individuals in this period, inherited the traditional administrative officers and offices, which were derived from positions in the household, which were based on the royal equivalent.<sup>117</sup> However, it is unclear whether Ranulf also followed royal developments in his own lordship. The sections below will consider the various sections of his administration and changes he made. It will address the itinerant household officers, lay and clerical, followed by the local officers. A final section will compare Earl Ranulf with his contemporaries.

### Lay Household Officers

Traditional household officers such as the steward, constable, marshal, butler, and dispenser, are still in evidence from the earl's charter witness lists and may have retained some significance for him. Traditionally a seneschal or steward was responsible for the running of the household and bringing the lord food, much as the butler was responsible for the wine. The dispensers also had a similar role, and in many ways are seen to take over the responsibilities of the butler in Cheshire as the office decreased in importance. The marshals and constables are traditionally

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<sup>116</sup> Crook, *Records of the General Eyre*, pp. 76-78.

<sup>117</sup> David Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', in *Thacker*, pp. 69-95 (p. 69).



the military officers, with the constable taking perhaps more of a military function than an administrative one. The role of constable could also range from custody of castles to more *ad hoc* military appointments.<sup>118</sup> The chamberlains, another traditional officer found in the earl's charters, were the chief financial officers.<sup>119</sup> The names of these officers can be seen in the table below.

Office	Name	Active dates	Charters witnessed
Steward	Ralph Montalt	1188-1194	11
	Robert Montalt	1190-1203	3
	Roger Montalt	1205-1237	23 <sup>120</sup>
Butler	Thomas the Butler	1194-1203	4
	Helia the Butler	1198-1229	8
	William the Butler	1208-1217	2 <sup>121</sup>
Dispenser	Geoffrey Despenser, Henry Despenser, Hugh Despenser, Robert Despenser, Thomas Despenser, Thomas fitz Thomas Despenser	(1178-1186-1230 Thomas)	57 <sup>122</sup>
Marshal	Robert of Stiviehall	1181-1210	1
	William of Sutton	1198-1203	2
	Peter	1233-1237	1 <sup>123</sup>
Constable	John	1188-1190	2
	Roger de Lacy son of John	1190-1211	21
	John de Lacy	1217-1232	7 <sup>124</sup>
Chamberlain	Robert	1190-1203	4
	Bertram	1190-1214	8
	Nicholas	1194-1203	5
	Thomas of Chester	1194-1217	5
	Richard of Cagworth	1221-1225	1 <sup>125</sup>

Figure 4 Household Officers

<sup>118</sup> Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', pp. 73-88; David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 144; Noel Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), pp. 6-7; John Horace Round, *The Kings Serjeants and Officers of State with Their Coronation Services* (London: James Nisbet, 1911), pp. 68-92, 140-65, 86-97.

<sup>119</sup> Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England*, p. 6.

<sup>120</sup> *BC*, for Ralph, nos. 206, 223, 228, 240, 244, 256-57, 262, 264, 266-67, for Robert nos. 242, 271, 313, for Roger nos. 214, 226, 232, 282-83, 285, 315, 337, 353, 357, 374, 377, 378, 379, 386, 389, 400, 451-54, 462-63.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, for Thomas the Butler, nos. 229, 269, 281, 314, for Helia the Butler, nos. 207, 296-97, 302, 325, 355, 372, 425, for William the Butler, nos. 258, 394, for Peter the Butler, no. 466.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 192, 194, 203, 207, 209, 211-12, 231-32, 240-41, 258, 260-62, 265, 269, 271-72, 276, 282-83, 288-89, 290, 301-03, 308, 313, 315-16, 321, 326, 333-34, 337-38, 341, 348, 350-51, 353-54, 358-60, 374-76, 379, 381, 384, 386, 389, 394, 402, 408, 416.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, for Robert, no. 255, for William nos. 294-95, for Peter no. 456.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, for John the constable see nos. 206, 208, for Roger the constable later de Lacy see nos. 209, 211-13, 221, 223, 227-28, 232, 240, 242, 246, 256-57, 259-62, 264, 271, 328, for John de Lacy constable of Chester see nos. 226, 290, 378, 390, 393, 400, 402.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, for Robert the Chamberlain see nos. 244, 267-68, 281, for Bertram the Chamberlain see nos. 213, 221, 223-24, 227, 246, 249, 284, for Nicholas the Chamberlain see nos. 280-81, 314, 317, 332, for Thomas of Chester the Chamberlain see nos. 280, 282, 371-73, and for Richard of Cagworth the Chamberlain see no. 409.

However, the numbers of charters that these individuals witnessed, shown in the above table, suggests that these individuals were not being required to witness the earl's documentation very often. Earl Ranulf produced up to 236 known charters and these men only witness a small number each. As they were household officers they would usually be present with the earl and therefore the expectation would be that they would appear in the charter witness lists more often. This could suggest separation between the office holder and the earl's household. It is known that as the roles of officers became more prestigious in the royal household, they became ceremonial and were often delegated.<sup>126</sup>

In some instances, this cannot be the case in Earl Ranulf's administration. The butler, marshal and chamberlain may have retained their duties. Their offices were frequently replaced by new men and were therefore not hereditary and as such are less likely to be ceremonial. The individuals who held those offices also do not appear to have been of leading families, as they often lack a surname other than the reference to their office in the documents. The fact that they do not appear often in the earl's charters suggests that they did not have a great deal of connection with the earl's court. It is reasonable to therefore conclude that they were restricted to the household tasks that these offices are traditionally associated with due to low status.

The role of the dispensers is a bit more complicated. The dispenser role had been adopted by the Despenser family who had taken the title as their surname. The Despensers however, were frequent witnesses to the earl's charters. Between 1186 and 1230 six members of the family witness 57 of the earl's charters.<sup>127</sup> They most often witnessed in groups of more than one individual. This indicates on the one hand, that they were present in the earl's court, and on the other that they were knowledgeable about his business concerns. They were however, also landowners. They were hereditary tenants of Earl Ranulf, suggesting that their office may be

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<sup>126</sup> Round, *The Kings Serjeants and Officers*, pp. 68-92, 140-165, 186-97.

<sup>127</sup> *BC*, nos. 192, 194, 203, 207, 209, 211-12, 231-32, 240-41, 258, 260-62, 265, 269, 271-72, 276, 282-83, 288-89, 290, 301-03, 308, 313, 315-16, 321, 326, 333-34, 337-38, 341, 348, 350-51, 353-54, 358-60, 374-76, 379, 381, 384, 386, 389, 394, 402, 408, 416.

more ceremonial.<sup>128</sup> This on its own suggests that their concentration could be divided. Hugh Despenser, Thomas's brother, is known to have had specific interests developing his possessions in the honour of Chester.<sup>129</sup> In 1221 Hugh gained a grant of a market and fair in Loughborough, the grant being made perpetual once the minority was over in 1227.<sup>130</sup> Hugh Despenser also gave, in marriage, his sister Rohaise to Stephen de Seagrave, and the marriage was accompanied with a grant by Hugh to Stephen of 1 virgate in Barrow (Leicestershire).<sup>131</sup> This would suggest that Hugh's time was spent as much in his own concerns as those of the earl.

The Despensers were also tenants of other lords, which would suggest that they would also have had some conflicts of interest. It was found in a royal investigation in 1212 that Thomas Despenser son of Thomas, and James de la Mare each held  $\frac{1}{4}$  fee and Henry Auney  $\frac{1}{12}$  fee in Arnesby of Hugh Beauchamp of the honour of Peverel.<sup>132</sup> Through his wife Joan daughter of Hugh de L'Isle, it is known that Thomas Despenser also held 2 fees in Barby Northamptonshire,  $\frac{3}{4}$  fee in Lubbesthorpe, Leicestershire, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  fee in Thorpe, Nottinghamshire, also of the honour of Peverel.<sup>133</sup>

Yet the earl still obviously also saw the Despensers as important men to establish ties with, as he added to these concerns by granting the family lands as well as granting them rights.<sup>134</sup> Ties were also established between the earl and the Despenser family through common ecclesiastical patronage. Thomas Despenser was a benefactor of Garendon Abbey, as was Hugh.<sup>135</sup> The earl also gave grants to the abbey. Most notable of these, linking the earl and the Despenser family more closely together, was the earl's grant (c. 1197 to 1207) of pasture in Barrow-upon-Soar (Leicestershire), which Thomas Despenser witnessed, and also in which the gifts of Thomas Despenser in his fee of Holywell Hall were confirmed.<sup>136</sup> The

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<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 357.

<sup>129</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 517.

<sup>130</sup> *RLC*, i. pp. 446-47; *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, i. pp. 4, 90.

<sup>131</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 56.

<sup>132</sup> *Red book*, p. 586.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 584.

<sup>134</sup> *BC*, no. 357.

<sup>135</sup> *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, iv, pp. 474-475.

<sup>136</sup> *BC*, no. 265.

relationship here seems to be more about landlordship and less about the professional abilities of an officer who is concerned with the earl's service alone.

However, the frequency with which the Despensers witness the earl's charters, suggests that, of the traditional household officers they are the most frequent witnesses, and the fact that the Despensers seem to have accompanied the earl on his trip to Normandy, may suggest that the Despensers had a more official role.<sup>137</sup> Thomas Despenser also accompanied Ranulf on his crusade in 1217.<sup>138</sup> That there were more of them undoubtedly gave the family the ability to split their concentration. Some undoubtedly still had the desire to serve the earl and Hugh is known to have acted as an attorney for the earl in the royal court.<sup>139</sup> Hugh was also a royal sheriff, suggesting that he was administratively minded and could provide the earl with a new type of service. In this instance, the traditional roles have been adapted to the changing nature of the individuals involved and the earl's needs. This had resulted in new official responsibilities for the Despenser family.

The largest change to their traditional duties, however, can be found in the examples of the Constables and Stewards. The limited number of times these individuals witness the earl's documentation suggests that these officers were not always present with the earl and were not always involved in the running of his affairs. It is possible to see the Constables and Steward especially, not in the light of practical officers, reliant upon the earl for their service, but as friends and counsellors. The hereditary constables, the Lacy family were particularly wealthy, holding lands not only of the earl but elsewhere. The Montalts, the stewards, were also wealthy land holders of the earl. Both families ended up marrying into the earl's family.<sup>140</sup> David Crouch has suggested that these offices became less useful and perhaps ceremonial as in the royal court and in other twelfth and thirteenth

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<sup>137</sup> In 1203 Henry Despenser witnessed Earl Ranulf III of Chester grant the Abbey of Aunay (diocese of Bayeux) the tenement formerly of Ranulf Columbel in the park of Trévières, *ibid.*, no. 333.

<sup>138</sup> James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p. 243.

<sup>139</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, x. p. 127.

<sup>140</sup> For these families see Chapter 2 The Barons, and Chapter 2: Earl Ranulf's Counsellors: the Barons above.

century households.<sup>141</sup> In general, it seems likely that these men did not support the earl's administrative needs but provided a different service as counsellors when required.

### Clerical Household Officers

That the earl still makes use of traditional officers, however, can also be seen in the example of his traditional household ecclesiastics who provided for his religious needs. These were the chaplains. A chaplain was an ordained priest who would have celebrated mass for the earl, but may also have helped him with the other devotional practices, which the aristocracy were adopting, including daily prayer.<sup>142</sup> It is known that within aristocratic households there was a movement for aristocrats to have their own chapel.<sup>143</sup> Examining the charters shows that the earl had a number of chaplains, who were each retained for a limited number of years. Ralph would seem to be the earliest chaplain followed by Alan and Jocelin, however there are 9 different named chaplains in the charters in total.<sup>144</sup> Some of these witness at around the same time: chaplain Hugh witnessed 2 of the earl's charters between 1215 and 1216 and Master John of Barraua witnessed 1 during the same period so the earl may have two individuals in that office at once.<sup>145</sup> This shows that the position was not permanent and indicates that it was largely a professional office. That the chaplains witnessed few charters, only nine in total, suggests that these officers were not always at court, but that may be excused as they were religious officers.

However, there was also other developments within the earl's clerical household which focused it on professional services, perhaps even more so than the lay household. Earl Ranulf developed a chancery producing documentation in the same

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<sup>141</sup> Crouch, D., 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', p. 95; Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 143; Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration*, p. 7.

<sup>142</sup> David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 224-30, 233-40.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 13; see also Kate Rawlinson, who argues that household chapels became their own religious institution, Kate Rawlinson, *The English Household Chapel, c. 1100-c. 1500: An Institutional Study* (Unpublished PhD Thesis; Durham University, 2008).

<sup>144</sup> Nine charters list chaplains in the witness lists, providing in total 9 individuals, Barraclough, *Charters.*, nos. 207, 218, 302, 325, 359, 360, 385, 431, 469.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 359-60.

manner as the crown. The charters show that the earl had a chancellor. From around 1188 to 1199 a Peter the Chancellor appeared in the earl's charters, and after 1199 Thomas the chancellor appeared.<sup>146</sup> Having a chancellor suggests that the earl has established a sophisticated bureaucracy that was able to create the documentation required to administer his estates. The chancellor would look after a number of clerks who would undertake writing, one of the most common duties of the clerk. Whilst it is likely that Earl Ranulf, like other magnates and many knights, especially those who worked alongside the royal government, were literate, that is able to read Latin, that was a different skill to writing.<sup>147</sup> A clerk as a scribe was required to be able to read and write Latin, to make the accoutrements required for writing, and to be able to translate what was often a vernacular ceremony into semi-legalised prose.<sup>148</sup> Where these men were trained is uncertain, but these men, as they were known only by their first name in the charters, had low status.<sup>149</sup>

Ranulf had followed the example of King Henry II, who had developed a royal chancery, and undoubtedly the developments made after that.<sup>150</sup> It is therefore consistent with developments in the royal administration that the earls of Chester should have some form of chancery, if it is unlikely that it was as organised. The work by C. R. Cheney also shows that by or within the Angevin period, the bishops had begun to develop independent chanceries.<sup>151</sup> However, some disagree with

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<sup>146</sup> *BC*, nos. 208, 247, 289.

<sup>147</sup> Ralph V. Turner, 'The Miles Literatus in Twelfth- and Thirteenth-Century England: How Rare a Phenomenon?', *The American Historical Review*, 83. 4 (1978), 928-45 (pp. 928-45, especially pp. 34-41); see also Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), Ch. 7, for a discussion of how literacy in the vernacular and Latin was generally spreading, as well as the difference between both languages.

<sup>148</sup> For a discussion of the accoutrements and skills of writing and different uses of languages in England see Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, Chapters 4 and 6.

<sup>149</sup> A similar picture emerges in an earlier household see, Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 151-53.

<sup>150</sup> For the royal chancery see, T. F. Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England: The Wardrobe, the Chamber, and the Small Seals*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967); see also T. A. M. Bishop, *Scriptores Regis: Facsimiles to Identify and Illustrate the Hands of Royal Scribes in Original Charters of Henry I, Stephen, and Henry II*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), who identifies the chancery and its members, and Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 57-73, which discusses how royal records increased in this period. For how the royal chancery influenced other lords and proliferated record creation see, Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, pp. 74-78.

<sup>151</sup> Christopher R. Cheney, *English Bishops Chanceries, 1100-1250* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1950).

this. M. T. J. Webber suggests that the earls of Chester had nothing so 'formal as a writing office, still less a chancery' in the thirteenth century.<sup>152</sup> Although they had a chancellor the chancellor could precede the creation of a formal chancery.<sup>153</sup> Michael Clanchy furthermore states that it is unlikely that lords, rather than bishops, had writing offices in twelfth century as charters were written by the beneficiaries.<sup>154</sup>

Yet, this is too negative a view. David Crouch believes that Ranulf had a chancery specifically as he had a chancellor.<sup>155</sup> The evidence for the bishop's chanceries can also be based upon the increasingly profuse and technical competence of the charters. That the earls of Chester produced voluminous numbers of charters, in the case of Earl Ranulf around 236 in a 51 year period suggests they should be considered in a similar light to ecclesiastical lords.<sup>156</sup> This can be compared with Hugh bishop of Lincoln, one of the most prolific creators of documents, who created 215 between 1209 and 1235.<sup>157</sup> The diplomatic of the earl's charters also shows common characteristics, which indicate that they were written under supervision in the earl's chancery.<sup>158</sup> In addition, the handwriting of the original charters would suggest that from the succession of Earl Ranulf III a more organised approach was taken to the writing of the charters with a permanent scribe in the household.<sup>159</sup> The assumption that the clerks named in the charters were professional scribes in the earls' lordships is therefore highly likely.

There are a number of clerks who could have been part of the earl's chancery. These individuals are named in the earl's charters as witnesses, and they were probably the writers of the document that they witnessed. While most are identified by their title, it is clear the earl had more involved or slightly different

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<sup>152</sup> Webber, 'The scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', in *Thacker*, 137-51 (p. 147).

<sup>153</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, p. 56; Webber, 'The scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', pp. 143-44.

<sup>154</sup> Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, p. 56.

<sup>155</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters* p. 42.

<sup>156</sup> *BC*.

<sup>157</sup> David M. Smith, *The Administration of Hugh of Wells, Bishop of Lincoln 1209-1235*, 2 vols. (Unpublished PhD Thesis; Nottingham, 1970), ii.

<sup>158</sup> For an analysis of the charter diplomatic see, J. Hudson, 'Diplomatic and Legal Aspects of the Charters', in *Thacker*, pp. 153-78.

<sup>159</sup> Webber, 'The scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters', pp. 137-51.

relationships with certain clerks. The tables below illustrate some of the different types of clerk that the earl was in contact with.

The first table overleaf details a number of clerks who seem to be tied to certain locations. For example David *of Malpas* or David *of Malpas the clerk* would seem to be linked to Malpas. He certainly only witnesses charters in Cheshire and Staffordshire, suggesting a local connection. There are other clerks like this in the earl's charters.

Name	Charters witnessed	Dates of Charters.	Location of contents (County)
Clerk of Malpas (Cheshire), David	14 <sup>160</sup>	1194-1221	Cheshire, Staffordshire
Clerk, Master Hugh de Chester (Cheshire) my	14 <sup>161</sup>	1191-1222	Cheshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Staffordshire
Clerk of Enderby (Lincolnshire), Nicholas	1 <sup>162</sup>	1198-1206	Lincolnshire
Clerk of Kegworth (Leicestershire), Richard	5 <sup>163</sup>	1207-1225	Cheshire, Northamptonshire, Staffordshire
Clerk of Olney (Buckinghamshire), Richard	1 <sup>164</sup>	1217-1218	Lincolnshire
Clerk, Richard de Rostherne (Cheshire)	11 <sup>165</sup>	1190-1225	Cheshire, Leicestershire, Staffordshire
Clerk, Roger (de Worth?) (Sussex?)	4 <sup>166</sup>	1194-1237	Scotland
Clerk of Melsonby (Richmondshire), Thomas my	2 <sup>167</sup>	1208-1213	Cheshire
Clerk, William de Stoke (Worcestershire)	2 <sup>168</sup>	1215-1229	Cheshire, Leicestershire
Clerk, William de Weston (Cheshire)	1 <sup>169</sup>	c. 1229	Oxfordshire

Figure 5 The Clerks i.

However, not all of these clerks seem to witness in the area from which they take their name, although some do. The significance of the name may therefore be an indicator of where the earl was recruiting his clerks. However, the inclusion of the surname also indicates a different relationship to these men. Other clerks lack a

<sup>160</sup> BC, nos. 231-32, 258, 276, 282-84, 340-41, 353-54, 357, 372, 378.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., nos. 228, 231, 248, 258, 278, 282, 351, 359-60, 379, 382, 386, 409, 411.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid., no. 301.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid., no. 354, 376, 379, 387, 406.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., no. 309.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid., no. 240, 249, 282-83, 354, 359-60, 372-73, 377, 387.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid., no. 267, 372, 466, 469.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid., no. 282, 356.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., no. 360, 402.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., no. 425.



surname. David Malpas is an interesting figure as in many charters he is not named clerk at all but just David Malpas, suggesting a more ambiguous relationship.

Peter the clerk is another clerk who has an ambiguous relationship to the earl. Peter witnessed 52 of the earl's charters in total, over a sustained period between 1190 and 1232, showing that he frequently attended the court.<sup>170</sup> The identity or the origins of Peter the clerk are uncertain. However, it is notable that in a number of the charters Peter witnesses there are additional clerks listed. Thus for instance, in a charter of 1191 to 1194, which Peter witnessed, Earl Ranulf confirmed the gift to St Werburgh's Abbey of half a salthouse at Northwich made by William de Venables, Thomas is named as 'clerk of the present letter'.<sup>171</sup> Peter therefore was not merely a scribe.

David Postles has discussed the ambiguity of how the clerks named in witness lists may relate to the charter: are they writer or merely witness, or both?<sup>172</sup> Obviously Peter was an officer but what function did he perform. In one charter, of between 1188 and 1190, he is named as chancellor in the witness list, but this is a singular instance.<sup>173</sup> It is possible, however, that Peter held a leading role in the administration. The royal administration was a developing entity and Ranulf's would have been nothing less. Peter certainly had a privileged relationship with the earl, which was illustrated by the grant of three charters. One of these was granted between 1194 and 1200, giving Peter a boat to fish the Dee at Chester bridge and Eaton. Another was granted between 1199 and 1203 where the earl granted Peter the clerk land in Castle Street (Chester). And the final charter was granted in around 1208 to 1217 and gave Peter quittance from suit of county and hundred and pleas of forest, of pannage, and feeding the earl's foresters and serjeants in the vill of

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid., nos. 207-09, 212-15, 225, 227-28, 231-32, 247, 249-50, 253, 256-58, 272, 276, 295, 300, 307, 313, 322, 334, 338, 340-41, 348-50, 352, 354, 357, 359-60, 371-74, 376-78, 379, 381, 387, 389, 394, 407, 434.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid., no. 228.

<sup>172</sup> David Postles, 'County Clerici and the Composition of English Twelfth and Thirteenth Century Charters', in *Charters and the Use of the Written Word In medieval Society*, ed. by Karl Heidecker (Belgium: Turnhout: Brepols 2000), 27-42; Webber, 'The scribes and Handwriting of the Original Charters'.

<sup>173</sup> BC, no. 208.

Thornton.<sup>174</sup> That Peter received patronage makes him stand out. It also illustrates that, unlike other clerks, Peter owned lands.

Another key factor for understanding the personal relationship of Peter to the earl is through the charter Earl Ranulf gave to the sons of Peter the clerk between 1208 and 1216. In this charter, Earl Ranulf confirmed the grant to Ranulf and Patrick of lands made by their father Peter the clerk.<sup>175</sup> At this point, it is clear that the relationship has stepped beyond that of mere lord and his clerk. For within the charter it is explained that not only is the earl taking Peter's sons under his protection, but also informs the reader that he is the godfather to one of them.<sup>176</sup> The clerk has therefore become family and it is highly likely that he interacts with the earl in a more familiar manner than merely as an officer. It is also highly likely this was a hereditary relationship as in the later charter it is also explained that one of the sons was also a clerk, and a Peter the clerk functions in the same role for Ranulf's heir John le Scot.<sup>177</sup>

As well as Peter there are other clerks whose relationship to the earl is uncertain. Ralph Vernon, for instance, was named a clerk of the earl in a charter granted to him but does not witness any of the earls' charters suggesting that he was not the author of any.<sup>178</sup> The role of clerk whilst undoubtedly involving some knowledge of letters and writing could also be adapted to other needs. Indeed, while the term clerk has most often been applied to a clerical staff, who would undertake writing duties, *clericus* is a term that is extremely imprecise.<sup>179</sup> A clerk would, of course, provide an ideal professional officer or representative, so while the earl undoubtedly had a chancery he was also involved with a number of lettered individuals for less obvious reasons.

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<sup>174</sup> Ibid., nos. 280-81, 285.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., no. 283.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid., no. 283.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid., nos. 440, 447, 451, 453-455, 461.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid., no. 359.

<sup>179</sup> Turner, 'The Miles Literatus', pp. 930-31; Elizabeth Rutledge, 'Lawyers and Administrators: The Clerks of Late Thirteenth-Century Norwich', in *Medieval East Anglia*, ed. by C. Harper-Bill (Woodbridge: John Wiley & Sons, 2005), 83-98.

Yet despite these ambiguous relationships there are of course a number of other clerks who it is more likely performed the clerical duties. The names of these can be found in the following table.

Name	Charters witnessed	Dates of Charters witnessed
Clerk, Master Adam	1 <sup>180</sup>	1222
Alan, Master	1 <sup>181</sup>	1208-1211
Clerk, Geoffrey	1 <sup>182</sup>	1220-1226
Clerk, John	13 <sup>183</sup>	1190-1232
Clerk, Martin	3 <sup>184</sup>	1198-1200
Clerk, Patrick	2 <sup>185</sup>	1215-1216
Clerk, Richard	11 <sup>186</sup>	1190-1237
Clerk, Simon	24 <sup>187</sup>	1200-1237
Clerk, Thomas, of the count	17 <sup>188</sup>	1186-1216
Clerk, Thurstan	1 <sup>189</sup>	1213-1214
Clerk, William my	1 <sup>190</sup>	1232-1237
Clerk, William de	3 <sup>191</sup>	1207-1223

Figure 6 The Clerks ii.

While there are numerous names identified it is clear from this table that there was a core group of clerks, John, Richard, Simon, and Thomas, who would seem to be the earl's principal clerks. That Earl Ranulf recruited such numerous men with a range of relationships, some unclear, would suggest that he was rapidly expanding his chancery and this must in no small part have been due to the earl's need to administer his extensive and increasing estates as this bureaucratic development while starting under his father Earl Hugh II, was rapid and extensive under Earl Ranulf III.<sup>192</sup>

<sup>180</sup> *BC*, no. 411.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 232.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 335.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 227, 273-74, 335, 363-64, 388, 393, 425, 427, 432-33, 435.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 278, 294, 314.

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 359-60.

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 223-24, 249, 276, 295, 373, 441, 453-54, 456, 463.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 215, 273-74, 298, 322, 359-60, 363, 380, 385, 391,-93, 406, 411, 413, 416, 426, 432-35, 447, 462.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 203, 228, 240, 245-46, 250, 256-57, 260, 268, 272, 283-84, 336-37, 350.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 249.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 439.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 354, 359, 408.

<sup>192</sup> For an overview of the developments see, Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', p. 85-88; see also Webber, 'The Scribes and the Handwriting of the Original Charters', pp. 146-47, 150-51.

## Local Officers: Estate Stewards

Another requirement brought about by the need to administer a vast array of lands were regional officers. To run his extensive lands Ranulf needed regional officers that are often termed bailiffs.<sup>193</sup> The duties of these individuals covered looking after the administration and jurisdiction of the earls' lands and tenants, often in defined areas called bailiwicks.<sup>194</sup> The earl had two key bailiffs who looked after his concerns. The first is the sheriff of Cheshire, the second the steward of Bolingbroke.

The sheriff of Chester, unlike other sheriffs, was appointed by the earls of Chester. These men were probably stewards under a different title, rather than the earl purloining a royal office.<sup>195</sup> There are three known sheriffs of Chester active during Earl Ranulf's lifetime. Liulf Twemlow was the longest to hold office, holding it from around 1190 to 1215.<sup>196</sup> In all Liulf witnessed 20 of the earl's charters between 1191 and 1218.<sup>197</sup> This would suggest that he was often in the earl's presence and attended court. The majority of the charters he witnessed primarily concern lands in Cheshire, although he did also witness documents relating to Staffordshire upon occasion. The most notable charter he witnessed was perhaps the Chester Magna Carta in 1215.<sup>198</sup> The relative importance of the position of the sheriff compared to the justice is unclear. Liulf was probably of knightly origin. He certainly mixed with knights as William Boydel granted a moiety of Winnington to him.<sup>199</sup> Yet it is unlikely that he was a leading baron of the earl. It is more likely that, like royal *curials*, the sheriff was chosen to undertake the office as a professional and was therefore of lesser status. It is probable that the estate financial accounting for

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<sup>193</sup> Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration in England*, pp. 32-33.

<sup>194</sup> Michael Altschul, *A Baronial Family in Medieval England: The Clares, 1217-1314* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1965), p. 222.

<sup>195</sup> The title sheriff will also appear in place of reeve in Chester suggesting a local quirk of terminology.

<sup>196</sup> By 1215 Liulf de Twemlow had ceased to function as sheriff, see *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, ed. by Geoffrey Barraclough (Chester: The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1957), p. 46.

<sup>197</sup> *BC*, nos. 213, 224, 232, 245, 256-57, 261, 283-84, 300, 321, 340, 348-49, 356-57, 372, 379, 394, 395 a spurious charter refers to him also in 1230 no. 241.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 394.

<sup>199</sup> *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester*, ed. by James Tait (Manchester: Printed for the Chetham Society, 1920), no. 553.

Cheshire or Chester honour passed through the exchequer at Chester, following the later example of Edward I who used Bristol as a regional accounting office for his English estates.<sup>200</sup> The sheriff therefore undoubtedly administered the accounts of lesser bailiffs responsible for select areas of the earl's demesne and tenants in the area.<sup>201</sup> The sheriff did not receive any grants directly from the earl, however his rewards for service were perhaps based upon farming the area in a manner akin to the stewards of other honours or in receipt of coin.<sup>202</sup>

Despite the fact that the office of sheriff seems to have been professional in its concerns, it does seem to have had for a time elements that indicate a non-professional approach. Most notably, it had become hereditary for a short period. The second officer in Earl Ranulf's lifetime was Richard son of Liulf who was active as sheriff between 1215 and 1225.<sup>203</sup> It is uncertain that it was hereditary before Liulf took the office as the sheriff of Earl Hugh is only known as Ralph the sheriff.<sup>204</sup> The reason Liulf's son may have inherited the position may also have pragmatism at its heart. He would have had experience. It is clear that Liulf brought his son to the earl's court, as Liulf and Richard witnessed two of the earl's charters together between 1208 and 1217.<sup>205</sup> There is therefore reason to believe that Liulf may have shown his son the business of being a sheriff. In all, between 1208 and 1225, Richard witnessed 4 of the earl's charters.<sup>206</sup> This represents a significant decrease from those of Liulf. However, it must be remembered that during his tenure Ranulf was occupied with a crusade and establishing his hold on his new acquisitions. Liulf was in office when the earl was consolidating his position in Cheshire.

However, the desire to appoint a close companion rather than a professional cannot be discredited. Another officer within Chester who gained a privileged role

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<sup>200</sup> For the Exchequer at Cheshire and its separation from royal administration see, Stewart-Brown, 'The Exchequer of Chester', pp. 289-97.

<sup>201</sup> Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration*, pp. 10-11, 13-14. A similar possibility had been identified in the Beaumont estates as well, see, Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, pp. 163-66.

<sup>202</sup> Altschul, *A Baronial Family*, pp. 230-31; Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins*, p. 141; Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 172-73.

<sup>203</sup> He is named as sheriff in a single charter of Earl Ranulf of 1221-1223, but it seems likely he took over from his father as his father stopped being sheriff in 1215, *BC*, no. 408.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 188.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 372, 379.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 372, 379, 406, 408.

with the earl was the gardener William Munitor. William was an individual of lesser status. He appears in the earl's charters as a resident of Chester. In c.1199 Earl Ranulf III of Chester granted an unusual charter to him:

Let it be known to you all I have given and conceded and by this present charter [and] confirmed to William Munitor the custody of my garden and orchard in Chester with its house and appurtences to be held by him and his heirs in fief and hereditarily from me and my heirs, and [also] livery in my home at Chester to one man, whoever he may be. And I concede to the aforementioned William and his heirs the *restingtre* (resting tree) and remaining fruit after harvest (*excucionem*) of the trees of my garden, and the garden within my castle of Chester's moat.<sup>207</sup>

William can be described as an officer of the earl, a gardener. He was clearly a trusted individual and the rank he had, while possibly lowly, was not inconsequential. He later witnessed a grant to William of Barrow, the earl's reeve in Chester, which would further tie him to the city and its officials.<sup>208</sup> The main connection the earl would seem to have with William is through patronage and tenancy. The proximity of the gardener to the earl's household would also have brought some familiarity, and the grant to William of his resting tree (Barraclough's translation) may suggest an established and friendly relationship between the two.

However, the hereditary nature of the shrieval office did not last long as it was Richard of Sandbach who took over in 1225.<sup>209</sup> This could have been due to the fact that Richard son of Liulph had no ready heir, or could indicate the earl was guarding against the office becoming hereditary and ceremonial as well. The appointment of Richard Sandbach as sheriff identifies that the role was also granted to individuals who were of knightly origin and minor landholders. Richard of Sandbach held lands

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<sup>207</sup> Ibid., no. 307. My translation of the Latin: *Notum sit vobis omnibus me dedisse concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Willelmo Munitori custodiam gardini mei et orti mei de Cestria cum mesuagiis et suis pertinenciis, habendam ei et heredibus suis in feod et hereditate de me et heredibus meis, et liberacionem suam in domo mea de Cestria ad unum hominem, quicumque sit, in domo mea de Cestria. Concedo eciam predicto Willelmo et heredibus suis suum restingtre et residuum pomorummeorum post excucionem arborum gardini mei, et gardinum faciendum in fossa castelli mei de Cestria.*

<sup>208</sup> Ibid., no. 373.

<sup>209</sup> Named as sheriff in *ibid.*, no. 407, he also witnessed nos. 215, 249, 385, 434, 448-49, 452, 454, 461.

in Cheshire.<sup>210</sup> He became sheriff around 1225 but was active in the earl's charters from 1215. In all, Richard witnessed five of the earl's charters.<sup>211</sup>

The sheriff of Chester, however, represents a long established official. Earl Ranulf's acquisitions necessitated the creation of more officers. The first steward of Bolingbroke for Earl Ranulf was Walter of Coventry. The steward of Bolingbroke is sometimes regarded as being the steward of all the earl's lands outside of Cheshire.<sup>212</sup> However, this seems unlikely and it seems more probable that the earl had other stewards with whom he had little contact. It is possible, for instance, that Stephen Seagrave acted as steward of Leicestershire for him.<sup>213</sup> During Ranulf's crusade, furthermore, it is suggested that Philip de Orreby looked after Chester; William Vernon, Lancaster; Richard Fitton, Richmondshire; and Walter of Coventry the remainder.<sup>214</sup>

Walter's background does, however, provide more information about what the earl valued in his regional officers. Walter gained the position of estate steward soon after the earl received the grant in 1199 of Lincoln honour, and held the office until around the middle of the 1220s.<sup>215</sup> He witnessed 25 of the earl's charters between c.1198 and 1229, most dealing with grants and confirmations within Lincolnshire or the Midlands.<sup>216</sup> Walter was the son of a man named Terry who was a landowner in Coventry.<sup>217</sup> He was wealthy enough that he was able to lease lands in and around Coventry.<sup>218</sup> Walter also served as the town reeve of Coventry, showing his administrative adeptness.<sup>219</sup> He was therefore already familiar with business

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<sup>210</sup> Ormerod, *The History*, iii. pp. 55-56.

<sup>211</sup> *BC*, nos. 215, 249, 385, 434, and as sheriff in 407.

<sup>212</sup> *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter R. Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), p. 23.

<sup>213</sup> Turner, *Men Raised from the Dust*, pp. 122, 125-26.

<sup>214</sup> Peter R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - C.1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 36.

<sup>215</sup> It is apparent that Walter was seneschal in 1199 and had dealings with the earl Ranulf's lands in Lincolnshire of the Lincoln or Bolingbroke honour *HKF*, ii. pp. 156-57.

<sup>216</sup> *BC*, nos. 278, 289-90, 294, 296-97, 301-3, 308-9, 316, 329, 334, 336-38, 355, 394, 402, as seneschal, nos. 286, 326-28, 408.

<sup>217</sup> *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, nos. 16-19, Walter is named Walter son of Terry (*Walter filio Terri*) see also no. 16n.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 259.

<sup>219</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xx.

dealings and the administration of the earl's lands. In the role of reeve, he received a number of gifts in Coventry as well as in Lincolnshire.<sup>220</sup>

As Coventry was also in the earl's honour of Chester his ties to the earl were already established through locative and historic factors before he gained the office of steward of Bolingbroke. As Walter also owned lands in Lincolnshire of the earl of Chester, he also had local knowledge of that area.<sup>221</sup> Yet it is also clear that there were other ties between the two individuals. Walter gave lands to Combe Abbey in Warwickshire.<sup>222</sup> The earl granted this abbey 2 charters between 1200 and 1217.<sup>223</sup> Common ecclesiastical patronage would suggest a much more social connection was involved in the relationship. Walter was also an attorney for Earl Ranulf between 1206 to 1208 in the royal courts suggesting a degree of trust.<sup>224</sup> However, this should not be seen as a necessary feature of the role of steward. Earl Ranulf mainly relied upon a professional attorney named Odo *Aurifabrum* in his court cases later in his life.<sup>225</sup> The background of Odo is unclear other than his surname meaning goldsmith. Potentially this was a family trade, and would have been one of value and trust to the aristocracy and the earl, and requiring skill itself. The earl's willingness to employ this man on frequent occasions suggests he was trusted as well as competent. Nevertheless, the fact that Walter of Coventry did also attend the royal court does suggest a high degree of adaptability and a degree of professionalism for him, which would be brought to bear in establishing and administering the earl's lordship in his newly acquired honour.

It is believed that Walter of Coventry died around the middle or beginning of the 1220s.<sup>226</sup> It is apparent in his later charters that he does bring his son Richard to witness along with him.<sup>227</sup> This may suggest that like Liulf he was preparing his son

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<sup>220</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 66-69.

<sup>221</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 163, 362, 1057, 1077.

<sup>222</sup> *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry.*, no. 767.65.

<sup>223</sup> *BC*, nos. 322-23.

<sup>224</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls*, iv., p. 199, 201, 219(3) 267; v. 307-08.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, x. pp. 18, 45-46, 127; xi., pp. 454, 477; xii., pp. 1, 59, 89-90, 249, 311, 530; xiii. 152, 251, 326, 565; xiv., pp. 73, 128, 204. Although a Gilbert of Chester also appears once as his attorney in 1228, xiii. p. 131.

<sup>226</sup> Peter Coss suggests 1221: Coss, *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, pp. 26-27.

<sup>227</sup> *BC*, nos. 290, 408



to take office. Richard does appear later in the earl's charters witnessing between 1224 and 1227, the grant to William Cantilupe junior, of Bingley (Yorkshire) for half a knight's fee.<sup>228</sup> However, the office does not seem to have become hereditary. Gilbert Cusin is the next steward of Bolingbroke. Gilbert took office around 1221 to 1223 and witnessed 11 of the earl's charters between 1217 and 1232, one specifically with the title of steward of Bolingbroke.<sup>229</sup> He is known in 1212 to have held 11 bovates in Foston, Lincolnshire, of William Struby, and so like Walter he was a local landholder.<sup>230</sup> However, it is uncertain how he came into the service of Earl Ranulf. It is clear that he began witnessing the earl's charters before becoming an estate steward, and the earl held lands in Foston of the honour of Richmond.<sup>231</sup> There may, therefore, have been a tenurial connection, which was buoyed by personal knowledge through service in the earl's court. But like many of the other administrators, his background is unclear probably because of his lesser status.

### Local Officers: Town Reeves

Another group of individuals who looked after the earl's concerns are the town reeves. The reeve was responsible for the administration of the city for the earl. The office of reeve was also one that was occasionally not chosen by the earl. That right could in some instances be given to the town residents so that they elect their own reeve, such as at Salford.<sup>232</sup> This undoubtedly indicates that the individuals who held these roles actually undertook the duties that can be associated with them. These duties included collecting monies as at Salford:

22. To the reeve (*prefati*) the burghers shall render their farm of the borough at four terms of the year, of course at the birth of the Lord 3d., at the middle of Lent 3d., at feast of St. John the Baptist 3d. and at the feast of St. Michael 3d.<sup>233</sup>

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid., no. 416.

<sup>229</sup> Ibid., nos. 298, 335, 388, 413, 417-421, as seneschal, no. 299, and as seneschal of Bolingbroke no. 290

<sup>230</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 187.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., p. 187.

<sup>232</sup> *BC*, no. 435.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., no. 435. My translation of the Latin (my numbering): 22. *Prefati vero burgenses dabunt firnam suam de burgagio ad quatuor anni terminos, scilicet ad natale Domini iii. denarios, ad*

This clause suggests that the reeve collected the annual farm the citizens of the town owed to the earl. He would also have collected other dues and taxes based upon trade and justice, as the reeve was also more generally involved in the administration of the earl's towns:

3. If truly the reeve (*prepositus*) of the town shall charge any burgher concerning any plea and the accused does not come on the day to the court (*Langhemote*) nor any other for him due to illness, he is in my forfeiture 12d.

7. If any burgher or other appeals another burgher concerning robbery, the reeve (*prefectus*) brings him to respond and to stand justice in the court (*Portmannemote*), under my protection.<sup>234</sup>

These clauses would also indicate that the reeve is responsible for calling individuals to his court. However, it is uncertain whether the reeve actually stood in judgement. Another clause in the charter to Salford may suggest that sometimes it was the burghers themselves who had a role in deciding the outcome of justice in the town:

23. All the aforementioned pleas will be resolved in the court of the reeve (*ballivis*) of the lord count in the sight of the burghers.<sup>235</sup>

This clause may furthermore suggest at least some oversight of the court in the town of Salford by the citizens of the city. It is unclear why the term for the earl's officer changes at this point from *prefectus* to *ballivicus*. It may suggest multiple positions in the administration of justice or a different term for the same office. Nevertheless, from this last clause it is clear that the court in the town was administered by the reeve or other officer and they acted as an appointee of the earl.

Only a few of the earl's reeves can be identified, and of those the ones most identifiable are the reeves that the earl appointed himself. It was these he had most

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*mediam quadragesimam iii. denarios, ad festum beati Iohannis Baptiste iii. denarios, et ad festum beati Michaelis iii. denarios.*

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., no. 435. My translation of the Latin (my numbering):

3. *Si vero prepositus ville aliquem burgensem calumpniaverit de aliquo placito et calumpniatus non venerit ad diem nec aliquis pro eo infra Langhemote, in forisfactura mea est de duodecim denariis.*  
7. *Si aliquis burgensis vel alius appellet aliquem burgensem de latrocino, prefectus attachiet eum ad respondendum et stare iudicio in Portmannemote, salvo iure meo.*

<sup>235</sup> Ibid., no. 435. My translation of the Latin (my numbering): 23. *Omnia predicta placita reunt terminata coram ballivis domini comitis per visum burgensium.*

contact with in his charters. One of these is the reeve of Chester. However, the reeves of Chester are somewhat of a special case, for it is apparent that there was not a reeve of Chester, but a sheriff. This sheriff was not sheriff of the county as other individuals held that office.<sup>236</sup> This means that they were actually the sheriffs of the city, which also provides an indication that sheriff was a local variant in terminology for offices which were called different things elsewhere. Three individuals can be identified in the earl's charters who hold this office. William Gamberello was sheriff of Chester around 1190 to 1199 at which time he witnessed Earl Ranulf confirm his father's grant to the monks of Poulton.<sup>237</sup> Little is known about him other than his name. However, he was succeeded by Richard Pierrepont, who was sheriff of Chester from around 1208 to 1215. At this time, Richard witnessed Earl Ranulf grant liberties to the burgesses of Frodsham.<sup>238</sup> Richard unlike William, was more active in the earl's court and witnessed five of the earl's charters between 1208 and 1217.<sup>239</sup> It is also clear that Richard was a landowner as the earl granted him quittance from finding a doomsman in the portmoot of Chester for the land he held between that of Richard, son of Ralph and Nicholas Kent in around 1208 to 1217.<sup>240</sup> Richard was dead by at least 1227 to 1232 as Earl Ranulf granted Hilton Abbey (Staffordshire), two salt houses in Norwich, formerly held by Richard of Pierrepont.<sup>241</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough believes that he was a Lincolnshire man like Philip de Orreby, but this is difficult to establish.<sup>242</sup>

Richard seems to have lost the office of sheriff before his death, however, as William of Barrow can be found in the earl's charters in around 1208 to 1217, not as sheriff of Chester (*vicecomes*) but as reeve of Chester (*prepositus*).<sup>243</sup> This change in terminology may just be an error in Latin terminology as few other towns had sheriffs. William's background is somewhat uncertain, but his surname may suggest he was not of the city, but of the village of Barrow in Cheshire. Thus, perhaps unlike

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<sup>236</sup> Geoffrey Barraclough makes the same argument in *ibid.*, no. 372 note.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 246.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 371.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 249, 282-83, 371, 394 see note to 372.

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 372.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 423.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, see note to 372.

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 373.

Richard, William had ties to the city and to the locality.<sup>244</sup> William did not witness any of the earl's charters, which would suggest that he was not regularly at court and the earl's relationship to him was limited in this respect. However, William was also fortunate in that he received, around 1208 to 1217, a grant from the earl of 12 acres between Little Saughall and Blakney wood on the bank of the Dee for 2d. annually.<sup>245</sup> He was, therefore, a landholder by the earl's patronage like Richard Pierrepont. However, as with Richard, the lack of knight service tied to this grant may indicate that the reeve was not of knightly status. He held office from Richard's death, probably in the mid 1210s, to his own demise by c.1229, when his lands were included in Earl Ranulf's grant to Baldwin de Vere.<sup>246</sup>

At around this time Richard de Wybunbury became sheriff of Chester. He witnessed a charter of Earl John le Scot between 1233 to 1236 in his capacity as sheriff,<sup>247</sup> and a further two charters of the earl under just his name in the same period.<sup>248</sup> Richard was, like William, a local man. Wybunbury was a small settlement in Cheshire.<sup>249</sup> This would initially suggest that the earl's officers in Chester were men local to the area and would therefore have some ties to other local men. Their standing was obviously low status, but they were landowners.

Such themes can also be echoed in one of the earl's other Cheshire urban communities. The reeve of Frodsham is known through a charter granted between 1217 and 1232 by the earl to Richard son of Robert of Frodsham. This charter granted Richard the land formerly belonging to Ranulf, the earl's reeve (*prepositus*) in Frodsham.<sup>250</sup> Little else is known about the reeve named Ranulf. However, the fact that the earl granted his lands to Richard, who was a local man, as his father's surname would suggest, would indicate perhaps that Richard was going to be the

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<sup>244</sup> Ormerod, *The History*, ii. pp. 185-86.

<sup>245</sup> BC, no. 373.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., no. 425.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid., no. 454.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid., no. 449, 453.

<sup>249</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 717.

<sup>250</sup> BC, no. 403.

next reeve and that lands were associated with the office, indicating some heritability to the role.

Moving away from Cheshire there are indications that the earl also chose local men when appointing his officers in Coventry. One of the earliest identifiable was William the Marshal, who witnessed the earl's confirmation to the city of its rights.<sup>251</sup> He probably took the office around 1200 when he was granted lands by the earl in and around Coventry.<sup>252</sup> As in the previous cases, the earl has put an individual in the position of reeve who was, or was being made into, a landowner. However, in this instance it is clear he was a knight. The office of marshal was a military office within a lord's household. The marshal was perhaps more of an administrative role compared to the constable, however it is often held by knights. The most notable marshal is the royal marshal who became the earl of Pembroke.

The other remarkable thing about William is that the earl has presumably placed one of his own officers in this position. This would suggest that the role of marshal was not as useful to the earl as when it was created, but also that the earl was interested in establishing a strong connection to the leadership in the town. William's successor would also become one of the earl's leading officers. Walter of Coventry, also seneschal of Bolingbroke, was at one time the earl's bailiff in his home city, possibly after William's death in 1209. The fact that he was also an estate steward for the earl would suggest that he was of knightly status and it is clear he held estates in Coventry.

### Local Officer: The Justice of Chester

Over time the earls of Chester had to respond to some deficiencies in their household. During the tenure of Earl Ranulf II a justice was created, however the duties and position of that office are unclear. By the time of Earl Ranulf III the holders of this office were becoming more prominent. David Crouch suggests that they were the earl's judicial officer, and that they headed the county court and

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<sup>251</sup> Peter Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 34.

<sup>252</sup> *BC*, nos., 252-54; Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 37-38.

were a replacement for the sheriff.<sup>253</sup> But there are indications that the office was much more than this when examining the individuals who held the office and the practice of their role in the charters.

Firstly, this office was not hereditary. This is especially important, as hereditary offices seem to become less prevalent as practical services were necessary.<sup>254</sup> Ralph Mainwaring was the first individual to take the role of justice of Chester under Earl Ranulf III, but his family had not held it previously. He was active in the role from around 1194 to 1204, witnessing two charters as such for the earl.<sup>255</sup> The Mainwaring family were tenants of the earl of Chester.<sup>256</sup> Ralph was also tied to the earl through a familial connection. Ralph Mainwaring married Amice, daughter of Earl Hugh.<sup>257</sup> The earl, therefore, for his first choice of individual in this new position chose someone of standing who was akin to, if not the same as his other leading traditional officers like the steward and constable. This would, however, have provided this office with the standing it perhaps had not had under previous earls. The office was therefore changing to suit the new circumstances of Earl Ranulf III.

Ralph was, however, called upon to act as an administrator of the earl's will. In 1194 to 1198 Earl Ranulf wrote to the justiciar of Chester from Le Mans, notifying that he has freed the monks of Stanlaw from forinsec service.<sup>258</sup> This would suggest that Ralph was a local officer handling the earl's business while he was away. He was acting as the earl's stand in much like a royal justiciar. But this role was to be adapted.

After Ralph's short time in the role it was not Roger or William Mainwaring, his heirs, who took over the role of justice of Chester. Clearly, the earl did not want the new office he had created being made merely ceremonial. The earl chose at this juncture to put a more administratively minded individual in the position. Peter de Orreby took over the role of justice and was incumbent from around 1207 to 1230. He witnessed 109 of the earl's charters between 1190 and 1230, the most

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<sup>253</sup> Crouch, D., 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', pp. 91-93.

<sup>254</sup> Denholm-Young, *Seignorial Administration*, p. 7.

<sup>255</sup> *BC*, nos. 271, 275.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 401.

<sup>257</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 228.

<sup>258</sup> *BC*, no. 210.

witnessed by any single individual, representing around half of the charters the earl created.<sup>259</sup> It was perhaps Philip who made the role the professional one it needed to be.

Philip has an obscure background. He obviously established a family holding as his son Herbert was involved with the local knighthood in Cheshire. There exists a charter in which Herbert agreed to restore lands to Geoffrey Dutton on Geoffrey's return from crusade.<sup>260</sup> It is clear from this charter that Herbert is of knightly origin and able to enter into deals with the knightly Dutton family. That the Orreby's were not only part of Ranulf's household but also still leading figures in the localities is also illustrated by the fact that they gave lands to the Dutton family, and were witnesses to various grants made by local landowners to religious institutions.<sup>261</sup> Herbert also witnessed Earl Ranulf confirm the lands and liberties granted by Hugh Malbank and his son William to Combermere Abbey.<sup>262</sup> Earl Ranulf despite not granting Philip any charters, did grant one to Herbert between 1208 and 1213 in which the earl confirmed the grant to Herbert of Orreby and Lucia, his wife, of Gawsworth made by Richard of Aldford.<sup>263</sup> This would suggest that the family had ties to the earl and the locality, but beyond that little further can be ascertained, suggesting they were not of lowly status, but perhaps also not leading figures.

Unlike Ralph Mainwaring and the earl's other household officers, Philip is willing to stay in the earl's company. He does not seem to have often departed the earl's side during his tenure and witnesses the largest quantity of charters of anyone. This would indicate that the demands made upon Philip in this office were considerably more involved than those demanded of the steward and constable with whom he is regarded as forming a triumvirate leading the estates.<sup>264</sup> Indeed, the justice of Chester would seem to represent the earl's main administrative itinerant officer,

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<sup>259</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 207, 209, 211-15, 220, 226, 229, 231-32, 241, 244-45, 247-49, 250, 253-54, 256-58, 260, 262, 268, 276, 278-79, 280-86, 288-90, 296-99, 302-03, 307-09, 312-13, 315, 327-28, 335, 337-38, 340-41, 348-49, 350-53, 354-60, 363, 371-74, 377, 378-79, 381-82, 384-89, 394-95, 398, 400-02, 406-09, 410-411, 416, 427.

<sup>260</sup> Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 94

<sup>261</sup> For the grant to the Duttons see, Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 72

<sup>262</sup> *BC*, no. 241.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 356.

<sup>264</sup> Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', pp. 92-93.

perhaps replacing the steward and replicating the king's justiciar whose role had also changed when the king became resident in England.<sup>265</sup> As Philip was so often present with the earl it would make more sense for him to be acting as a centralised administrator than as a regional officer. Peter Coss even suggests that he may have had a steward of the household role, although the minor role this indicates is qualified by the fact he may have been Walter of Coventry's, who was an estate steward, senior colleague.<sup>266</sup>

Following Philip's death or retirement, the office was not made hereditary, although Philip seems to have had three sons, Herbert, Thomas and Phillip Orreby junior, and may have made plans for it to be so. Thomas Orreby, Philip's son was like Herbert, a local notable witnessing charters between the Duttons and Norton Priory, suggesting a different future had been arranged for him.<sup>267</sup> However, Philip junior was present as witness in the earl's charters, which would suggest that he was perhaps groomed for the office.<sup>268</sup>

However, in 1229 William Vernon takes over the office.<sup>269</sup> William is active in the earl's charters between 1217 and 1237 and witnesses 24 of them.<sup>270</sup> Once more therefore, it is apparent that there is a need for the justice to be an active participant in the earl's court. However, William Vernon represents a return to a type of individual more akin to Ralph Mainwaring than Philip de Orreby. William descended from a *Domesday* tenant who held lands in Willington, and three other Cheshire manors of Earl Hugh of Chester, although he was possibly enfeoffed with Harlaston manor (Staffordshire) and Churchill manor (Oxfordshire) in lieu of these.<sup>271</sup> Wascelin, his nephew and heir, also gave St Werburgh's Abbey land and tithes in two of these manors, which shows that the family was wealthy enough to become a benefactor of a religious house.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>265</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 91-93.

<sup>266</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>267</sup> Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 38

<sup>268</sup> *BC*, no. 408.

<sup>269</sup> Note he is known as justice of Chester between 1229-33, see *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 54-57.

<sup>270</sup> *BC*, nos. 226, 273-74, 363-64, 380, 384, 390-92, 402, 410, 416-21, 426-27, 432-33, 435, 462.

<sup>271</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 276.

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. p. 276.



However, William did have experience in the royal administration. He obtained some of his experience from his father Richard Vernon. In 1199 the men of Lancashire gave 50m. for Richard Vernon to be their sheriff for 5 years.<sup>273</sup> Richard was also appointed, or made sheriff of Lancashire between Michaelmas term 1200 to April 1205 in Lancashire.<sup>274</sup> It can also be shown that Richard had experience of Ranulf's court as between 1200 and 1203 he witnessed Earl Ranulf confer the lands of Longdendale with certain rights and liberties to William Neville and his wife Amabilia.<sup>275</sup> William, however, also had first-hand administrative experience as he took on the office of sheriff of Lancaster for the last 6 months of his father's term.<sup>276</sup>

By 1223, Earl Ranulf knew William well enough to grant him the wood of Marple and Wybersley with certain liberties in return for finding a forester.<sup>277</sup> Then, between 1229 and 1233 William Vernun became justice of Chester.<sup>278</sup> It is possible that the earl was poaching royal administrators to ensure administrative experience in his most personal officer. The fact that William also had more landed power may also have helped him in this turbulent period. The earl was at odds with the king's justiciar, Hubert de Burgh. However, the earl and William did have a good relationship. In 1242 William died leaving the abbot of Dieulacres, the earl's foundation, the priors of Chester, the priors of Lenton, and the Friars Preacher of Derby, as his executors, with his son Richard as his heir.<sup>279</sup>

## Comparisons

It is clear from these examples that Earl Ranulf maintained ties to a number of his traditional officials. In this respect he was very much like his contemporaries. The earls of Warwick also had a household and administration. Those individuals who most likely acted in a traditional manner under Waleran were the marshal named Herbert, a butler named Roger Despenser, and another named Henry the Butler.<sup>280</sup>

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<sup>273</sup> Ibid., ii. p. 276.

<sup>274</sup> Hughes, *List of Sheriffs*, p. 72.

<sup>275</sup> BC, no. 321.

<sup>276</sup> HKF, ii. p. 276.

<sup>277</sup> BC, no. 408.

<sup>278</sup> HKF, ii. p. 277.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid., ii. p. 277.

<sup>280</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, nos. 180, 182, 184.

These individuals witnessed only one charter each suggesting that they were not active in the administration. Waleran also had a number of chaplains including William, Richard, and Luther who again only witnessed one of his charters each.<sup>281</sup> Earl David of Huntingdon had his traditional household officers as well. He had a household steward named Ala[n] *dapifer*. William Bassingham also acted as his marshal. William was a tenant of Huntingdon honour.<sup>282</sup> David also had four chaplains, Arnold, Richard, Walter, and William and likely had two chaplains at any one time in his household.<sup>283</sup>

The Marshal household is different from the other households in that it was new. William Marshal received his earldom by grant of the crown. However, there are indications that the earl employed traditional and non-professional offices. David Crouch has shown that William Marshal established traditional household officers like the stewards and chamberlain. Generally, these offices were not hereditary. They were, however, sometimes granted out to intimates as a reward in some instances, suggesting a less professional reason for the appointment.<sup>284</sup> Both William Marshal and his son William also had chaplains, as did Earl Ranulf, to see to their religious needs.<sup>285</sup> The Marshals, therefore, have some similarities to their contemporaries.

The earls of Warwick also employed more professional officers, indicating that, like Earl Ranulf they had taken note of new methods of administration. As with other lords' households this included a steward. For Waleran there were 8 stewards identified by David Crouch between 1184 and 1204 and for Earl Henry 4 between 1212 and 1228.<sup>286</sup> That there was so many suggests that the earl's of Warwick were operating a similar organisation to Ranulf and that some of these stewards were in fact estate stewards. The fact that there would be such a high turnover of staff also indicates a more professional approach, as these were not hereditary offices. David

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<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 170-71, 173.

<sup>282</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 409.

<sup>283</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 150-51.

<sup>284</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 157, 172-73.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-55. for William the younger see Crouch, *Acts and Letters* nos. 142.

<sup>286</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, pp. 35-38.

Crouch has also identified that under Waleran and Henry many of the stewards came from the lesser ranks, were unattached, and perhaps more professional because of that.<sup>287</sup> The fact that Waleran also had a number of chamberlains, the financial officers in the royal household, would also suggest some sophistication to his administration. One was named Alan, another named Simon, and a third named Bernard.<sup>288</sup> The earls also employed a small number of clerks, Waleran had Matthew, Nicholas (who witnessed 2 of his charters), Peter, Roger (who witnessed 6), and William clerk of Warwick (who witnessed 4).<sup>289</sup> It is apparent that, as in other households, some clerks received more benefits and were rewarded more highly, suggesting some demarcation of roles. Roger was presented to the church of Tamworth in Arden for his service.<sup>290</sup> Henry, earl of Warwick also employed a clerk named Walter.<sup>291</sup> However, it is unlikely that either earl of Warwick had a sophisticated chancery. Waleran only produced 44 charters and Henry 8 charters: in the same period Ranulf produced 220.<sup>292</sup> Yet they certainly employed clerks for administrative purposes suggesting some knowledge of the benefits of a bureaucracy.

Earl David of Huntingdon, like Earl Ranulf, also developed his own administration based on the crown model. David was amenable to new techniques of administration and is deemed by his biographer to have seen and utilised the methods used in his Huntingdon estates in his Scottish estates as well.<sup>293</sup> David also formed connections with new men. Keith Stringer suggests that the old baronial steward's position lost favour with David. The household steward became a minor role. Instead, estate stewards became more useful.<sup>294</sup> Much like Earl Ranulf, David was familiar with having to delegate his responsibilities as he had lands spread over a large geographical area. In addition to his lands in England, David had lands in Scotland which, according to Keith Stringer, were administered in a similar manner

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<sup>287</sup> Ibid., pp. 35-38.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid., Alan, no. 184, Bernard nos. 170, 182, Simon, nos. 171, 180.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid., nos. 152, 156, 162-3, 171, 173, 179, 181, 182, 184, 185.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., nos. 177-78.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid., no. 200.

<sup>292</sup> Compare, *ibid.*, and *BC*.

<sup>293</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, p. 76.

<sup>294</sup> Ibid., pp. 122, 150.

to his demesne estates in England, utilising estate stewards, some of whom may have had clerical, and therefore, bureaucratic inclinations.<sup>295</sup> David's estate stewards included nine individuals. They were men of knightly status of Huntingdon honour, but their position was not hereditary, and it looks like they were recruited on personal merit. Stringer therefore argues that David, like Earl Ranulf, was altering his administration to meet the new requirements and methods of the thirteenth century.<sup>296</sup> Earl David, akin to Earl Ranulf, also employed an attorney named Reginald Argentan, indicating that he was willing to interact in the new legal framework.<sup>297</sup> However, as with Earl Ranulf the estate stewards can also be seen to have been involved in the courts for Earl David as well.<sup>298</sup>

David also seems to have employed a number of clerks. These included two *magistri*, a title which would indicate a level of training, and an individual borrowed from the Scottish royal court. However, many of the earl's clerks can be shown to have been locals from around his Huntingdon estates.<sup>299</sup> There are indications that the clerks in David's service undertook different duties. Keith Stringer, for instance, implies that some would have acted on the earl's part in legal matters, and some could obtain office as estate stewards. However, it is also clear that, in a similar manner to Earl Ranulf, David had clerks attached to his household. Yet it is unlikely that David's writing office was as systematic or professional as that of Earl Ranulf's, lacking a chancellor and the development of systematic formulae.<sup>300</sup> However, nevertheless it is clear that the earl was pursuing the same bureaucratic agenda.

The administration of John le Scot, David's heir is less clearly visible than his father's. However, John would have been a pragmatist and utilised the administrative foundation which had been established by his father. John le Scot did establish limited relationships with the descendants of some of his father's known estate officers, even if his interaction with them as officers in his charters

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<sup>295</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 122-23; their names were David of Ashby, William of Ashby, Robert Bassingham, Philip le Moyne, Gilbert Nuers, Aymer Oakley, Richard son of William, and Simon de Senlis.

<sup>297</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>298</sup> *Rotuli Curia Regis*, ed. by Francis Palgrave, 2 vols. (London: HMSO, 1835), ii p. 63.

<sup>299</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 151-53.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 153-54.

seems limited. Indeed, David Ashby is not found in Earl John le Scot's charters as a steward as he was under John's father, but he is mentioned in other sources as being such.<sup>301</sup> It is also possible Peter Marshal was still the earl's marshal prior to his assumption of his estates in Cheshire.<sup>302</sup> Upon his assumption of the Cheshire estates of Earl Ranulf, John seems to have adopted similar administrative offices as his uncle. He retained the traditional household officers of steward and constable and employed a justice of Chester named Richard Fitton who frequently witnessed his charters.<sup>303</sup> He also established ties to Richard de Wybunbury, reeve of Chester, who witnessed three of his charters.<sup>304</sup> John also employed 15 clerks, with Hugh, Peter and Richard being the most frequent witnesses. Clearly John therefore, also maintained some elements of Ranulf's bureaucratic agenda.

David Crouch has shown that William Marshal also adapted to the changes in the period and the need to create a new working administration. He had traditional household officers like the stewards and chamberlain, but also had estate stewards. These offices could be more professional as they were not hereditary, but were, Crouch suggests, sometimes granted out to intimates as a reward in some instances, suggesting a less professional reason for the appointment.<sup>305</sup> William Marshal the Younger also employed stewards, including Thomas son of Anthony, who appears in the witness lists of William's charters.<sup>306</sup> However, it is clear that the numbers of stewards appearing in his charters reduces, suggesting that, if his father's provisions continue they were more independent of the earl. Therefore, their administration, like Ranulf's, was a mixture of tradition and new methods.

William Marshal also had a clerical household. If clerks were not as numerous as Earl Ranulf's there were still a significant number. Crouch identifies nine as being

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<sup>301</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 334.

<sup>302</sup> *BC*, no. 456.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 440 (c. 1233); 441(1234-37); 446 (1233-37); 447 (1233-37); 448 (1233-37); 449 (1233-37); 450 (1233-37); 456 (1233-37); 461 (1233-37); 463 (1234).

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 449, 453-54.

<sup>305</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 157, 172-73.

<sup>306</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, for Thomas son of Anthony, nos. 127, 138, 162, 169,

closely associated with the earl, although they did not have a chancellor.<sup>307</sup> During William Marshal the Younger's tenure, however, a chancery was created, presided over by a chancellor and this writing office continued under Richard Marshal.<sup>308</sup> This would suggest that they were adapting to new circumstances and it is also clear that William Marshal had attorneys suggesting that he was fully integrating with the changing circumstances of the period.<sup>309</sup>

Interestingly, the Marshals also had a regional office in London which would provide for the earl's household resident there. This was an accounting office for the purchase and distribution of goods called a wardrobe. It also received funds through grants from the crown.<sup>310</sup> The existence of this office shows an innovation creating a regional administration comparable to Earl Ranulf's new estate stewards. But it would also be apparent that this office may have arisen due to the peculiar circumstances of William Marshal's tenure as regent and his particular ties to the crown. The office was also continued under William the Younger.<sup>311</sup>

## Conclusion

Earl Ranulf was involved with royal government, especially at the local level with the sheriffs. He also had some contact with the central administrators of justice but this was more limited. Like most nobles in this period, however, the developments in the central administration and the increase in size of the bureaucracy influenced the earl's own administration. Earl Ranulf clearly developed a more professional administration. He recruited individuals, who while they were knights and often his tenants, were perhaps less wealthy, but also schooled in the practices of the time. Some may have been picked from royal service.

The nature of the relationships he established with royal officials seems largely to be based upon existing ties through other lordship connections. Hereditary, legal, and local relationships seem to have underlined the majority of these connections.

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<sup>307</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 153-57.

<sup>308</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, pp. 42-44.

<sup>309</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 173.

<sup>310</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 176-77.

<sup>311</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters* pp. 42-44.

The purpose of such ties is largely unclear, although it is reminiscent of the earl's family's attempt to control the office of sheriff in Lincoln in the past. The one thing it does suggest is that Earl Ranulf recognised that his lordship was not only influenced by the crown as shown in Chapter 1, but in the localities was also connected to the crown's administration.

The relationships the earl established to his own *curials* varied from the very personal towards being much more distant and professional. There does seem to be a gradual shift in emphasis shown by the recruitment towards a more professional staff, with a relationship to match, during Earl Ranulf's tenure. The earl seems to have created an extensive chancery and developed existing offices, such as the justice, to become the officer he required, along with creating new officers such as stewards of Bolingbroke among others.

Ranulf's contemporaries seem to have followed similar practices to him, even if to a lesser degree. The reason for this may be related to the size of Ranulf's holdings, which were much larger than his contemporaries. That Earl Ranulf's holdings were larger necessitated a larger administration. That this administration was so large also necessitated that the earl's lordship needed to become more complex. In respect of his administration and bureaucracy, Ranulf should be regarded as being at the forefront of developments for the lay aristocracy.

## Chapter 4

### Tenants:

#### Do Tenants have a Place in the Relationships Earl Ranulf created in his Lordship?

The traditional understanding of medieval lordship was primarily focused on the knightly following. Historians had suggested that during the Angevin period this following was created by the lord establishing ties to knights through grants of land.<sup>1</sup> Earl Ranulf was regarded as one of the most typical examples of a lord of this type.<sup>2</sup> However, there has recently been a great deal of criticism of the role of this group within lordly power.<sup>3</sup> This chapter, therefore, aims to address what role these individuals, who are called tenants, had in Earl Ranulf's lordship. The focus of this chapter will again be on the relationships the earl created and will build on the discussions in the previous chapters.

However, by discussing tenancy as a relationship it will also be necessary to first re-address the nature of tenancy itself, in essence, to try and answer the question what was a tenant? The approach taken in this chapter is different from previous approaches as the term tenant will be examined more widely than historians have traditionally approached it. In addressing the nature of tenancy, it is also necessary to consider the contention that Earl Ranulf's earldom of Chester, and particularly Cheshire, was a palatinate. It is the status of this holding which often leads many

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<sup>1</sup> Key proponents of this theory include Fredrick Ganshof and related to England, Frank Stenton, see François Louis Ganshof, *Feudalism* (London: Longmans, 1960); Frank M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166: Being the Ford Lectures Delivered in the University of Oxford in Hilary Term 1929*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961).

<sup>2</sup> The earl has always been thought of a one who could rely on the traditional form of lordly power, the service of knightly tenants, even in a period when that was on the wane, see J. C. Holt, *The Northerners: A Study in the Reign of King John* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), p. 45; for the most recent view of the earl's traditional nature, see David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 180-82.

<sup>3</sup> Two of the leading critics are Elisabeth Brown and Susan Reynolds, see Elizabeth A. R. Brown, 'The Tyranny of a Construct: Feudalism and Historians of Medieval Europe', *The American Historical Review*, 79. 4 (1974), 1063-88; Susan Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals: The Medieval Evidence Reinterpreted* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994); for an overview of the historiography see, Marjorie Chibnall, 'Feudalism and Lordship', in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. by Harper, Bill C. and E. van Hout (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 123-34.



to suggest he was a traditional lord. Understanding the palatine status of Chester is also important as Earl Ranulf has been accused of seeing the rest of his holdings in a similar light to those in Cheshire.<sup>4</sup> The first two sections of this chapter, therefore, examine the nature of tenants and discuss how they should be approached, bearing in mind of Earl Ranulf's particular circumstances.

The second section of this chapter looks in more detail at the role these tenants had within the earl's lordship. This involves an examination of the way the role of tenants in lordship has been traditionally identified and assessed. It also addresses the roles and duties of the earl and his tenants to identify whether, and how, tenants are still important to the earl and his lordship. A comparison is also made in this chapter with other earls in this period. This will show how different or comparable Earl Ranulf was to his contemporaries in these relationships.

### What are Tenants?

Two sources of contemporary information that can illustrate the existence of tenants, or a relationship that is created through land, are royal records and the earl's own personal charters. To understand the nature of tenancy and this relationship it will be necessary to evaluate these records in the light of past historiography and recent criticism to outline a way to investigate the tenants' role in lordship more fruitfully.

The evidence in the royal records for the existence of a relationship between a lord and a tenant can be shown by examining one of Ranulf's possible tenants throughout the period. In 1086, Hugh (Blundus or Fitz-Osbern) held lands under the heading 'The land of Earl Hugh' (*Terra Hugonis Comitis*) in South Ormsby and Ketsby, Lincolnshire.<sup>5</sup> Earl Hugh was Earl Ranulf's *Domesday* ancestor. This piece of evidence, found in the *Domesday Book* is perhaps the first indication that some form of connection is established via lands between individuals, at least in the mind

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<sup>4</sup> David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 180-82.

<sup>5</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 909; for the original Latin see, John Morris (ed.) *Domesday Book: Lincolnshire*, 2 vols. (Chichester: Phillimore, 1975).

of the crown. Interestingly, the tenant Hugh is also known as ‘Hugh, the earl’s man’ (*Hugo homo comitis*) which suggests a connection beyond the limits of names in this record.<sup>6</sup> The purpose of *Domesday Book* also provides us with some indication of how this relationship was viewed by the crown. It is often seen as a record produced to raise taxes, whether that be the Anglo-Saxon geld or what were seen as the new Norman feudal taxes, and as such was used as a political statement to either cow or pander to the crown’s subjects. It is also seen as an attempt by the crown to create some form of record of lands and lordship, which the crown could exploit.<sup>7</sup> The implication of this is that the crown identified that these lands and their tenants had some relationship to the lord and that they could be seen from the crown’s perspective as an economic or political grouping.

*Domesday Book* is, however, known not to have readily been consulted by the crown until the mid-thirteenth century. This is in part probably due to the misunderstanding of its purpose by administrators at the time, and due to the fact it was not until later periods that records were more routinely consulted.<sup>8</sup> By 1166, though, King Henry II had undertaken a review of knights’ fees held by his lords, thus establishing an initial point at which we can assume more widespread enfeoffment, that is the widespread granting of knights’ fees or fiefs and the changing of knightly tenancy to such. This review was called the *Cartae Baronum* and was created to ascertain and update what the lords owed the crown through scutage or service from their lands.<sup>9</sup> Continuing the example from above it was found in 1166 that the descendants of Hugh still held lands in this area. Simon son of Osbert held 2 fees of Thomas de Arcy and Alan de Ormsby held 1 fee of Thomas as well.<sup>10</sup> The *Cartae Baronum* generally recorded all relationships it documented in this way, and indicates a widespread and standardised tenancy had been created

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> N. J. Higham, ‘The Domesday Survey: Context and Purpose’, *History*, 78. 252 (1993), 7-21; for a more detailed look at the fiscal and procedural elements of Domesday see, Sally Harvey, *Domesday Book of Judgement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), especially section II, and David Roffe, *Domesday: The Inquest and the Book* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> Michael T. Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn (Oxford: Blackwell, 1993), pp. 32-35.

<sup>9</sup> Wilfred Lewis Warren, *Henry II* (London: Yale University Press, 2000), pp. 275-81.

<sup>10</sup> *Red Book*, p. 386.

which was linked to knighthood. This type of tenancy was to continue as a theme throughout our period. King John undertook another survey for a similar purpose in 1212. Then, it was recorded that Ralph son of Simon held in Lincolnshire  $\frac{1}{2}$  fee in Calceworth wapentake (in Mablethorpe and Theddlethorpe), and 3 fees in Hill wapentake (in Walmsgate, Ketsby, Ormsby, Ruckland, Swaby and Stain), all of the earl of Chester.<sup>11</sup> Finally at the end of our period in another survey it was found that Ralph's grandson of the same name (Ralph son of Simon) in 1242 to 1243 held 2 fees in Ormsby and Ketsby,  $\frac{1}{4}$  and  $\frac{1}{10}$  fee in Ruckland, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  fee in Stain and Theddlethorpe, which William de Steyne held of him, in Lincolnshire, all of the earl of Chester and Huntingdon.<sup>12</sup> These surveys do not of course indicate the specifics of the relationship other than that the crown had an interest which was perhaps fiscal in origin. However, they do show by the increasing frequency of these surveys that tenancy was, at least for the crown, becoming more important than ever during this period.

There is also evidence from the earl's own charters that tenancy formed a defined and useful relationship for the earl. Thus, for example in one of Earl Ranulf's grants he states:

Let it be known I give and concede and by this present charter of mine confirm to Stephen Seagrave for his homage and service the village of Bretbury with appurtenances, which Simon Kime otherwise held from me in the county of Derbyshire, to have and hold of me and my heirs. And the same Stephen and his heirs to be free and quit, full and peacefully, with wood and all other easements and liberties to the aforementioned lands in the village and outside, by making to me and my heirs, the same Stephen and his heirs, their service of one quarter of a knight's [fee] for all services and demands.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 160, 167.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1063, 1055, 1059.

<sup>13</sup> *BC*, no. 363. My translation of the Latin: *Sciatis me dedisse et concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse Stephano de Segrave pro homagio et servico suo villam de Betteby cum pertinentiis, quam Simon de Kymba aliquando de me tenuit in comitatu Derbeye, habendam et tenendam de me et de heredibus meis eidem Stephano et heredibus suis libere et quiete, plene et pacifice, cum boscis et cum omnibus aliis asiamentis et libertatibus ad dictam terram pertinentibus infra villam et extra, faciendo inde mihi et heredibus meis ipse Stephanus et heredes sui servitium quarte partis unius milites pro omnibus serviciis et demandis universis.*

Herein the earl has established a tenancy with Stephen de Seagrave in return for a standardised service. Comparable charters establishing such tenancy ties were also created by other lords in this period. For example, the Marshal family granted or confirmed 20 charters which refer to knight's fees held from him, the earl's of Huntingdon 17 and the earl's of Warwick two.<sup>14</sup> That a relationship existed based on landholding is therefore clear. However, the nature of this relationship requires more examination.

There are two different approaches to tenancy. A traditional view of tenancy can be found in the works of Fredrick Ganshof from a Continental perspective, and Frank Stenton from the English perspective, who suggested that such tenancies are conjoined with concepts of the conditional ownership of lands based upon completing services. There are three main themes in the sources regarding the expectations of tenants, which were also noticed by the traditional feudal historians; they are: service in war, service in peacetime and economic concerns.<sup>15</sup> The main expectations of the lord are for maintenance and protection. It was presented that the services owed were standard services. These requirements for service are identified in various legal codes which were published over the period.<sup>16</sup> Such a relationship is therefore clearly defined and standardised.

However, there is also another way to consider tenancy. Susan Reynolds argued that the tenant relationship was based upon custom and thus not necessarily as standard as previous historians had thought. Instead it was a developing relationship over the period which became codified only towards the thirteenth century. The quasi-legal texts of the eleventh and twelfth centuries in England were written to answer specific legal issues and not to provide a comprehensive legal

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<sup>14</sup>Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, nos. 184, 188; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, nos. 6-7, 11, 16-17, 25-27, 53-55, 57, 69, 81-83, 86; Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 10-13, 47-8, 55, 86-89, 94, 128-130, 150-42, 168, 174, 176.

<sup>15</sup> Ganshof, *Feudalism*, see especially pp. 69-105; Stenton, *The First Century*, see especially pp. 152-91.

<sup>16</sup> These texts include the coronation charter of Henry I, the *Leges Henrici Primi*, and the editions of *Magna Carta* including the Cheshire Magna Carta issued by Earl Ranulf III, see *BC*, no. 394; *English Historical Documents, II, 1042-1189*, ed. by David C. Douglas and George W. Greenaway (London: Eyre Methuen, 1981), pp. 432-434, 491-495; *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, ed. by Harry Rothwell (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1975). pp. 316-324, 329-330, 335.

code. These codes are therefore still customary in this period and, as Reynolds' states, a truly written legal tradition was only just starting to establish itself.<sup>17</sup> For Reynolds tenancy is a much more unclear term, which evolved over the period, and standardisation of any relationship created through it would therefore be limited.

Reynolds' approach has to a large extent now superseded other approaches in the historiography.<sup>18</sup> Her approach also opens a new way to approach tenancy in Earl Ranulf's lordship. Traditionally knightly tenancy was held up as the pinnacle and in many ways the organising force in society. Principally this was due to the crown's interest. However, there were other forms of tenancy, and if knightly tenancy is understood not as a standard it allows the possibility that it should be seen in relation to other forms of tenancy as well.

That tenancy should be examined in the round is also justified when examining who holds which type of tenancy. The knight's fee was often deemed to have been held by knights who would provide knightly service, but this is not necessarily the case.<sup>19</sup> R. Mortimer had raised doubts about the necessity of knights holding knights' fees.<sup>20</sup> The assumption that a knight must hold a knight's fee is clearly uncertain as it is not so indicated in any texts. In Ranulf's grant above no mention is made of Stephen Seagrave being a knight. The status of knights in this early period is also extremely unclear. The role of knights as a defined social group only seems to become apparent by the thirteenth century when *milites* begins to be used as a title in charters.<sup>21</sup> Before this date knighthood could be linked to varying groups of individuals from the wealthy to the landless and poor.<sup>22</sup>

This would indicate that the tenant of a knight's fee may not always have been a knight. Indeed, it is apparent that other kinds of individuals can hold knights' fees.

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<sup>17</sup> For Reynolds' view of the development of tenancy in terms of the laws see, Reynolds, *Fiefs and Vassals*, pp. 386-93.

<sup>18</sup> Chibnall, 'Feudalism and Lordship'.

<sup>19</sup> The works of Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 146-52; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 127-41 take the link between the knight and knights' fee for granted.

<sup>20</sup> Doubts were raised by Richard Mortimer, 'Land and Service: The Tenants of the Honor of Clare', in *Anglo-Norman Studies*, viii, ed. by R. A. Brown (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1985), 177-97.

<sup>21</sup> Donald F. Fleming, 'Milites as Attestors to Charters in England, 1101-1300', *Albion*, 22. 2 (1990), 185-98.

<sup>22</sup> Sally Harvey, 'The Knight and the Knight's Fee in England', *P&P*, 49 (1970), 3-43.

Most notably some ecclesiastical lords have been shown to have supplied services based upon knights' fees to the crown by H. Chew.<sup>23</sup> William Marshal also granted the leper hospital of Maiden Bradley between 1199 and 1219 two knights' fees in Maiden Bradley.<sup>24</sup> The concept that the tenancy of a knight's fee can only be held by a knight is therefore erroneous. Well-to-do landowners are also known to have held a variety of tenancies by *ad hoc* means and in towns by burgage tenure. For example, in a charter of 1190 to 1198 the earl granted to Robert Lancelyn a boat on the river Dee in return for Robert quitclaiming a house and its lands near the south gate of Chester to the earl.<sup>25</sup> Robert clearly had held lands within Chester, if by c.1190 to 1198 he had become less interested in them than the profits that could be made from fishing the local river. Robert Lancelyn also held lands in Poulton and Bebington, Cheshire, of the earl.<sup>26</sup> While it is difficult to say for certain that Robert Lancelyn was a knight, Robert was moving in that social class and granted a knightly family, the Duttons a charter.<sup>27</sup> It is therefore clear that the identity of the individual tenant can vary within any type of tenancy.

Having examined the concept of tenancy it is clear that tenant and lord relationships established around landholding existed. These relationships furthermore, while having some standard elements, must not be regarded as being standardised. This is because the individuals who hold these tenancies are individuals and the relationship in terms of its specifics can vary with each individual and circumstance. There is, therefore, justification to approach the evaluation of tenancy and the relationships it creates for lordship as a whole. In addition to knightly forms of tenancy there are also church tenancies often called tenancies held in free alms, and urban tenancies called burgage tenancies. There are also other more *ad hoc* forms of tenancies where rents in monies or goods are swapped. It is also clear that these tenancies were developing side by side and were customary. Susan Reynolds has identified that burgage tenure, the traditional

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<sup>23</sup> H. Chew, *The Ecclesiastical Tenants-in-Chief and Knight Service, Especially in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932).

<sup>24</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 73.

<sup>25</sup> *BC*, no. 244.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245.

<sup>27</sup> Manchester, John Rylands Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 7.

urban tenancy, also developed slowly over the twelfth century, only appearing for the first time in royal records in the reign of Henry I.<sup>28</sup> Examining tenancy as a whole, as a type of relationship rather than a set institution will provide the necessary flexibility to understand how the earl and other lords utilised it for their lordship.

### The Palatinate of Chester

Having addressed the nature of tenancy and how it will be approached in this chapter it remains to examine the role of the honour of Chester in the earl's relationship to tenants. The earl's lands in the honour have been termed a palatinate by many historians, although the exact meaning of this term varies and whether it should be applicable to this lordship is uncertain.

Some historians like David Crouch suggest that by 1150 the earldom of Chester was a quasi-principality.<sup>29</sup> It was, in effect, the little kingdom F. M. Stenton saw in the honour, which he described as a 'feudal state in miniature'.<sup>30</sup> Others such as James Alexander argued that there is no evidence for the palatinate status of Chester or any other such lordship until much later in the thirteenth century.<sup>31</sup> Jean Scammell identified in her discussion of palatinates that the term itself is an unclear one, and even in the fourteenth century the exact legal status of a palatinate was not widely known. The term palatinate was used first in 1297 regarding Chester and according to Scammell was only coincidentally used in relation to Chester before. Its use was perhaps spurred on, she suggests, by circumstances in the late thirteenth century which saw Edmund of Lancaster marry and obtain the honorific title Count Palatine of Champagne. At this time Chester and Lancaster therefore adopted the title as did Durham.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Susan Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), pp. 98-99.

<sup>29</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 180-82.

<sup>30</sup> Stenton, *The First Century*, p. 50.

<sup>31</sup> James W. Alexander, 'The Alleged Palatinates of Norman England', *Speculum*, 56. 1 (1981), 17-27

<sup>32</sup> Jean Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', *EHR*, 81. 320 (1966), 449-473 (pp.450-452)

Such an approach to Chester's palatine status does have its merits as there was a distinct change within Chester in the late thirteenth century. Chester and Lancaster also at this time were markedly different from other lordships because they were owned by the crown.<sup>33</sup> The change in status of Chester began with the division of the honour on Ranulf's death in 1232 among his heirs. The county of Cheshire was given in total to his successor to the earldom, John le Scot, along with some of the lands outside Cheshire. The remaining lands were divided among his other heirs. That Cheshire was kept intact, however, does suggest that the county was different from the other lands of the honour. However the division made here undoubtedly also makes this separation and difference sharper, so care must be taken not to anachronistically interpret this division as an existing division when it could equally suggest a new one. By 1237 the crown took possession of John's inheritance. At this point the difference between Cheshire and other honours was becoming more established as it became a royal possession.<sup>34</sup>

During Earl Ranulf's tenure the honour's status is unclear, but it did have certain differences compared to other honours. In administrative terms the earldom of Chester did have some peculiarities, specifically with regard to the lands held within the county of Cheshire. The peculiarity here was that the crown never appointed a sheriff to the area. The sheriff of course was the crown's regional administrator for financial and legal purposes.<sup>35</sup> The lack of a sheriff in the county suggests that the earl's lands lacked royal oversight.

Other potential palatinates also had similar features. Durham's rights were granted to the bishops by the immunity of St Cuthbert. The bishops did have some interference from the earl and sheriff of Northumberland but they were able to

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<sup>33</sup> Ibid, p. 452.

<sup>34</sup> For an account of these developments see, Stewart-Brown, R., 'The End of the Norman Earldom of Chester', *EHR*, 35. 137 (1920), 26-54.

<sup>35</sup> For an overview of the role of the Sheriff in this period see, William Alfred Morris, *The Medieval English Sheriff to 1300* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1927).



resist intrusion. Indeed the bishop Ranulf Flambard (1099-1128) installed his own sheriff.<sup>36</sup>

It has also been suggested that control of the office of sheriff was an attempt to obtain regalian rights. Earl Ranulf of Chester's ancestor has been accused of trying to obtain such rights in Lincolnshire during Stephen's reign.<sup>37</sup> However, it is certain that while such control may indicate a desire to take over regalian powers, sheriffs offices during Ranulf's tenure, and that of his predecessors, could be held by barons.<sup>38</sup> The essential difference in Cheshire is that the office in the lordship is not accountable to the crown.

However, this situation undoubtedly arose because the crown did not hold lands or tenants within the county of Cheshire, and therefore the sheriff would have no lands to administer there for the crown.<sup>39</sup> There are also issues with seeing the earldom of Chester as totally administratively independent. It is clear from the way it was constructed that the earldom was cobbled together through circumstance, not as a clearly set out mini kingdom.<sup>40</sup> In addition, the county of Cheshire was not the whole of the earl's lands. That the vast majority of the earldom sat in other counties suggests that it was just as much at the mercy of sheriffs as were other lordships.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, the fact that Ranulf's tenants of his honour outside of Cheshire, as illustrated by the Ormsby family above, are listed in the royal surveys including the *Cartae Baronum* and the *Book of Fees*, shows that his lands were under royal oversight outside of Cheshire, if not always within. It is therefore primarily the county of Cheshire where any difference in landholding should be identified and

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<sup>36</sup> Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', pp.452-455; see also Gaillard Thomas Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham: A Study in Constitutional History* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1900), pp. 80-85.

<sup>37</sup> P. Dalton, 'Ranulf II and Lincolnshire', in *Thacker*, 109-134 (pp. 111-113).

<sup>38</sup> See above, Chapter 3 Royal Officers: The Sheriff.

<sup>39</sup> At the time of Domesday, the king only had rights in Chester, see Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 716; see also Andrew Abram, 'Pilgrimage and crusading activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. by Kathryn Hurlock and Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge, Boydell), p. 125.

<sup>40</sup> C. P. Lewis, 'The formation of the honor of Chester, 1066-1100', in *Thacker*, 37-68.

<sup>41</sup> For the earl's lands outside of Cheshire see *HKF*, ii.

this substantiates the difference between the honour and county found in the later division.

Another key difference in Cheshire was that the county was also exempt from royal oversight with regard to justice both via the office of sheriff and the new royal legal officer the justice.<sup>42</sup> Yet this should also not be overstated. Indeed, it is important to remember that when Earl Ranulf was a minor the lands of the earl were accounted for at the exchequer.<sup>43</sup> There are also indications that the tenants sought legal confirmations from the crown in the county. A number of royal charters, for instance, grant or confirm the grants made by the earls of Chester to the city of Chester. King Henry II granted the city the rights they had in the time of his father, namely trading rights in Dublin, and King John would later confirm this.<sup>44</sup> Whilst King Henry's charter may have been granted before Earl Ranulf's majority and while the honour was in custody King John's was definitely not. This shows that there was some royal oversight in the county. King Henry III also issued charters inspecting and confirming the grants of Earl Ranulf.<sup>45</sup>

In addition, while royal courts were not present within the county, and legal supervision was therefore provided through the earl's court, royal courts could adjudicate the earl's decisions if they needed to. For example a plea of false judgement made by Earl Ranulf's court was brought before the court at Westminster and the Regency Council in 1220. Ranulf's decision was supported and the warrantor should lose his foot.<sup>46</sup> The fact that the royal courts had superiority to Ranulf's would indicate that he was not completely independent.

A similar situation has been proposed for the palatinate of Durham which also seems to have attained a measure of judicial independence. Lapsley noted that, in

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<sup>42</sup> See David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 180-82; Andrew Abram has recently suggested that the royal writ did not run in the county, Abram, 'Pilgrimage and crusading activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', p. 125, and it is clear no circuits are known to have gone there in this period, see, David Crook, *Records of the General Eyre* (London: HMSO, 1982); it is also likely that the earl had his own itinerant justice and had oversight of criminal cases from his charter to William of Macclesfield granting him those rights, see *BC*, no. 321.

<sup>43</sup> *PR, Henry II*, xxxi, pp. 148-155; xxxii, pp. 151-152; xxxiii, pp. 1-2; xxxiv, pp. 20-21.

<sup>44</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 1, 6; see Appendix 3.

<sup>45</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 9-11; see Appendix 3.

<sup>46</sup> *Curia Regis Rolls.*, viii. pp. 271-72.

the twelfth century, the bishops had full jurisdiction over land and criminal cases, however they were gradually forced to concede to the new writs, developing an eyre court which would sit when the eyre would come to Yorkshire. At this point they became a miniature version of the royal courts.<sup>47</sup> It has also been suggested that, in Cheshire royal writs were limited to certain types by a register created by Earl Ranulf.<sup>48</sup> This would indicate a more complex picture of a mediated lordship not one which is a separate entity in the kingdom.

Jean Scammell has also shown that, in Durham, royal writs were still active in the franchise suggesting that the decisions were not above the royal courts. Indeed the crown was able to decide which writs were able to be allowed in the county. Durham seems to have relied on the eyre to bring writs that otherwise were not able to be heard in the franchise as they were fixed in 1224, suggesting that it was still fundamentally connected to the royal court as suitors would wait for the eyre to arrive to hear writs in the bishops court.<sup>49</sup> This may not have presented a problem for the tenants as M. Holford suggests that the tenants' views of jurisdiction in Durham seem to have been favourable.<sup>50</sup> However, it does indicate again a mediated jurisdiction dependent on the crown.

An interesting point to come out from these discussions of justice in Durham is that there the bishops also gave rights to certain tenants, including the priory, to have courts of their own within the franchise, although in practice the relationship was more difficult as both parties wanted the rights to jurisdiction.<sup>51</sup> The demarcation of these rights would suggest that the bishops power within the palatinate was not over powerful. Such a similar theme can be found within Cheshire when examining the so-called Cheshire Magna Carta.

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<sup>47</sup> Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham*, pp. 163-173, 209-10.

<sup>48</sup> Scammell, 'The Origin and Limitations of the Liberty of Durham', pp. 463-64.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.458-71.

<sup>50</sup> M. L. Holford, 'Feet of Fines for the Palatinate of Durham, 1228—1457: Liberties, Law and the Local Community', *EHR*, 125. 515 (2010), 818-43.

<sup>51</sup> Cynthia J. Neville, 'The Courts of the Prior and the Bishop of Durham in the Later Middle Ages', *History*, 85. 278 (2000), 216-231; Lapsley had also noted this feature and extended it to corporations in the palatinate, see Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham*, pp. 34-36.

Another piece of evidence that is often used to suggest that Chester and Cheshire was a separate entity in the kingdom is the charter made by the earl in 1215 called the Cheshire Magna Carta, transcribed in Appendix 2.<sup>52</sup> This charter, it is argued, by its creation suggests that the royal *Magna Carta* does not apply in the county. Ranulf, therefore, had to create this document to give his own men the rights that the other document provided. Such a situation would suggest that the county had a great degree of independence.

James Tait pointed out that the Cheshire Magna Carta is feudal in its concerns and perhaps even more feudal than the *Magna Carta* itself as it lacks reference to towns and merchants.<sup>53</sup> In its feudal elements, it bears close comparison to the concerns of *Magna Carta*. Clause 8 stipulates that a widow can remain in her house for a set period, and also fixes the relief and rights of men to inherit their lands. Widows and heirs are also not to be married unequally. Clauses 3 and 10 narrowed down what military service is owed. Clause 3 states that the barons have to perform for as many fees as they owe and their men must keep armour ready, although substitutes are allowed in case of incapacity. Their villeins are also exempted from military service. Clause 10 states that there is to be no military service beyond the east boundary of Cheshire without consent and at the earl's expense. It also stipulates that when knights are doing castle guard the barons are to be exempt unless imminent invasion of Cheshire threatened. Clause 6 also gives the barons the right to assart their lands within the arable area of the forest and grow crops on lands previously cultivated free from payment. In addition, to take *housbote* (wood for building) and *haybote* (wood for hedges or fences) in their woods without supervision of a forester and to give and sell dead wood.

However, there are issues with this argument. It assumes firstly that the only reason for issuing the Cheshire Magna Carta was to provide rights that otherwise wouldn't be given in Cheshire. This rules out the possibility that Ranulf was not

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<sup>52</sup> J. C. Holt, *Magna Carta* (Cambridge; Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 379-80, although he was more cautious in the note he placed with this statement as the Magna Carta does not allow exceptions.

<sup>53</sup> *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester*, ed. by James Tait, 2 vols. (Manchester: Printed for the Chetham Society, 1920), i. p. 108.

merely issuing a charter in support of the *Magna Carta* as a loyalist baron, which worked alongside it. Geoffrey Barraclough has suggested that the reason for the Cheshire Magna Carta's creation was to placate the local Cheshire barons as they were antagonistic to the earl due to the earl's expansion of his power in the county.<sup>54</sup> Alexander is less certain that there is any evidence for any discontent.<sup>55</sup> However, there is some reason to see the Cheshire Magna Carta as a personal peace offering which addressed specific demands of the local barons and as such had little to do with the status of the county in relation to the kingdom. This is due to the wording of the charter. It states:

Let it be known I by the sign of the cross for the love of God and at the petition of my Cheshire Barons concede...<sup>56</sup>

The charter was therefore created upon request, not as a result of the general *Magna Carta* directly.

That the charter also deals with local concerns can be seen by the other clauses. Clause 11 concerns the limitations put on the earl's administration, by limiting the earl's itinerant serjeants to 12 in time of peace, the master only having a horse, with no compulsory provender from Easter to Michaelmas and no special food to be required for the serjeants, who will not eat in demesne manors. In war their number can be increased under advice. Clause 5 gives the barons exemption from sheaves and offerings formerly levied by the earl's serjeants and beadles. Tait pointed out that these clauses, along with clause 10 show the drain on the county by being a frontier lordship that was constantly threatened by the Welsh.<sup>57</sup> The barons needed exemptions from services and dues to maintain themselves. Such clauses clearly underline that this document is local in its concerns.

Clause 2 also shows how local concerns, including war, dictated the nature of this charter. Clause 2 allows the barons to receive strangers on their lands which indicates that lands were being de-populated. A similar local motivation can also

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<sup>54</sup> BC, no. 394 n.

<sup>55</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 63.

<sup>56</sup> BC, no. 394. My own translation of the Latin: *Sciatis me cruce signatum pro amore dei et ad petitionem baronum meorum Cestresirie concessisse...*

<sup>57</sup> *Chartulary of St Werburgh's*, i. p. 108.

be interpreted from clause 9, which defines the limitations of the barons villeins gaining freedom within the city of Chester. No other boroughs are mentioned indicating Chester as an entity was the main concern in this matter. Finally, clause 12 indicates the personal and local nature of this document. Clause 12 records Roger Montalt's petition for wreck and fish cast up by the sea and shooting rights in the earl's forest, as well as others' petitions for the latter right and liberty to feed swine in the forest. It also records the petition for a reduction of the fine of doomsman of Nantwich. All these petitions were rejected. Yet their inclusion suggests a negotiation on local rights.

Clearly this is a local document, produced to serve specific needs and could be produced due to a range of circumstances. This was not, as James Tait and other historians consider, produced as a result of the separate palatinate status of Cheshire, which would entail that the *Magna Carta* would not run in the county.<sup>58</sup> Indeed, the charter would seem to show the limits of the earl's power in the area especially in clauses 1, 4, 5, and 7, which all deal with the barons rights in relation to the courts. Clause 1 gives them rights to their own courts over all pleas except pleas of the sword and to bail out their men when arrested. If their men are impleaded by the sheriff or serjeant without witnesses, they are also given the right to defend themselves with absolute denial in clause 4. Clause 5 states that fines for doomsmen and any suitors for non attendance at the earl's court are to be limited to 2s and 1s respectively. In addition, clause 7 states that the barons' stewards can represent them in matters affecting their demesne manors. Such clauses provided clear identification of the barons' rights. Interestingly, they also limit the jurisdictional power of the earl's court. Such restrictions mirror those found within Durham, as these clauses indicate barons in the county had their own jurisdictions, suggesting a much more complex picture within Cheshire than seeing it as the earl's little kingdom.

The current opinion of some of Ranulf's biographers on the question of palatinate status has been that Chester was not a palatinate and it only gradually seemed to

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<sup>58</sup> *Chartulary of St Werburgh's*, i. p. 108.

adopt some of these characteristics by the time of Earl Ranulf III. The county and its tenants' relationships to their lord should be seen slightly differently than elsewhere, but not drastically differently.<sup>59</sup> The traditional view for the creation of Durham was the formation of a large estate tied to the bishopric before the conquest that formed after the conquest into palatinate status by its character rather than through grants of liberties.<sup>60</sup> In many respects this mirrors the situation of Cheshire. The character of Cheshire was different, but there is no concrete rights that it had from the crown that make it so.

James W. Alexander would also say from examining the earl's charters that it is clear that Ranulf acted in a very similar way within and without the county of Cheshire as did his contemporaries.<sup>61</sup> This seems a more sensible approach. It was the peculiarity of a consolidated lordship in Cheshire that has supplied the difference to other lordships, but this has been over emphasised recently. The implications of the earl's status in Cheshire on his other holdings would therefore be less dramatic than has also recently been suggested. However, his approach to tenancy may be skewed slightly towards creating strongly consolidated lordship, but this has always been a theme of the marcher lordships which operate on the frontiers. The requirement to be ready for war has provided them with a degree of difference.<sup>62</sup> It is not clear that the status of his lands in Cheshire would cause him to try and separate his holdings from royal oversight. That the earl was a powerful individual in this period would be the source of any move to do so. Geoffrey Barraclough and James Alexander have previously pointed out that Chester was not a palatinate under the earls and any difference therein and with the power of the earldom came not from special rights, but from a vast array of landholdings outside Cheshire.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> James W. Alexander, 'New Evidence on the Palatinate of Chester', *EHR*, 85. 337 (1970), 715-29; Barraclough, 'The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester', *Speculum*, 56. 1 (1981), 17-27.

<sup>60</sup> Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham*, pp. 21-30.

<sup>61</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, Ch. 4.

<sup>62</sup> That the crown had to be careful with all marcher lords has already been identified, see Ralph V. Turner, *King John* (London: Longman, 1994), pp. 137-38.

<sup>63</sup> Alexander, 'New Evidence on the Palatinate of Chester', 715-29; Alexander, 'The Alleged Palatinates of Norman England', 17-27; Barraclough, 'The Earldom and County Palatine of Chester', 23-57.

What this suggests is that the palatinate status, while peculiar, did not twist the earl's perceptions of his other lands or relationships with his tenants. Indeed, the Cheshire Magna Carta would indicate that in Cheshire, at least, the tenants still had significant power. This situation mirrors other franchises like that of Durham, where tenants would later petition the crown as the bishop's men were not following the rules regarding wardship laid down in *Magna Carta* itself.<sup>64</sup> The earl's relationship to his tenants therefore was negotiated, and was similar within as well as outside Cheshire. It is only after the division of the honour that the status of Cheshire may change.

### The Concept of *familiars*

Having identified the existence of tenancy, the peculiar circumstances of the earl of Chester, and put forward an approach to tenancy, the question remains, was the earl concerned with tenants? The traditional way to identify a lord's lordship and powerbase is to look at the origins of his followers. There was, prior to Reynolds' criticisms, a debate concerning the identity of the followers of lords. Investigators of the theme of bastard feudalism had highlighted a means to identify the role of knightly tenants in lordship, ostensibly to show their declining usefulness. Historians such as Keith Stringer and David Crouch sought primarily to look at the lords' charters to identify who exactly a lord met on a regular basis, their *familiars*.<sup>65</sup> Their argument was that reliable service was not dictated solely by such a tenuous connection of tenancy but by evidence of actual attendance upon the lord which showed that non-tenants were often present in lords' followings.

The method used to identify men who attended a lord required quantitative analysis of the witness lists of the lords' charters. Those individuals who witness frequently are part of the household or *familiars* and those who witness most frequently are deemed to be part of an inner circle. The method has also been used by other historians, such as Stephen Church who also suggests that King John had

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<sup>64</sup> Lapsley, *The County Palatine of Durham*, pp. 55-56.

<sup>65</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 145; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 155-58.



two levels of followers within his household.<sup>66</sup> That the method of examining the charters could identify the household had validity was also confirmed by David Crouch's examination of William Marshal, the earl of Pembroke.<sup>67</sup> The earl of Pembroke is a peculiar case as the identification of his household via his charters can be corroborated through a narrative history of his life.<sup>68</sup> David Crouch, in his biography of the earl, therefore collected the charters and identified the household and found that those individuals were named in the history as members of his *mesnie* or household as well.<sup>69</sup> The outcome of these studies was to show that Ranulf's contemporaries, the earl of Pembroke and Huntingdon had moved away from tenants and were recruiting non-tenant knights into their followings.<sup>70</sup>

However, many of the arguments for the declining role of tenants' in lordship do not always account for circumstances, and have not been made without criticism. Michael Hicks has suggested that David Crouch's understanding of the change in William Marshal's following may not be accurately characterised as a move away from tenancy and towards the more nebulous affinity. Hicks says that these initial ties were just transient relationships which William Marshal made permanent through 'feudal' tenure, and indeed these types of transient relationships always existed alongside feudalism.<sup>71</sup> In some respects such a view may be supported by C. Burt who sees in the later medieval affinity both retainers with feudal ties, that is relationships formed by tenure, and non-feudal ties with the earls of Warwick in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries.<sup>72</sup> David Carpenter meanwhile

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<sup>66</sup> S. D. Church, *The Household Knights of King John* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 73

<sup>67</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 145.

<sup>68</sup> Paul Meyer (ed.) *L'Histoire de Guillaume Le Maréchal, Comte de Striguil et de Pembroke*, 3 vols. (Paris: Librairie de la Societe de la Histoire de France, 1891-1901); new edition, *History of William Marshal*, edited by A.J. Holden, with English translation by S. Gregory and historical notes by D. Crouch, 3 vols., Anglo-Norman Text Society, Occasional Publications Series, No. 4, (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 2002).

<sup>69</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 145;

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 165-172.

<sup>71</sup> Michael A. Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism* (London: Longman, 1995), pp. 104-08.

<sup>72</sup> Caroline Burt, 'A 'Bastard Feudal' Affinity in the Making? The Followings of William and Guy Beauchamp, Earls of Warwick, 1268–1315', *Midland History*, 34. 2 (2009), 156-80.

notes that tenancies were still being created in the thirteenth century, suggesting that they still had some relevancy.<sup>73</sup>

The main criticism of this approach to identifying a lord's following, should however be aimed at the method not its results. The criticism of the method can be approached in two parts. The first that there is an issue with the accuracy of quantitative analysis, and secondly that there is an issue with using charters in this way due to the nature of charters themselves.

The method used to identify the household from witnesses to charters is surprisingly not well defined. The general principles of the method, while used basically the same way by different historians, diverges in its specifics. Notably, for instance, the numbers of charters that a person must witness before being identified as a household member or *familiaris*. Keith Stringer, in his assessment of the earl of Huntingdon's household estimates four.<sup>74</sup> In David Crouch's analysis of the household of the earl of Pembroke, he suggests three.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, this issue is further complicated by the fact that the numbers of charters each lord issued varies, altering proportions to the total, and there is also the concern that not all charters survive. This would suggest that the numerical method would provide arbitrary results at best.

Indeed, when using numeric information in this way there are other problem areas. For instance, a simple numerical issue can arise when some members of the earl of Huntingdon's household attest four charters, but to only two beneficiaries. Nicholas de Anas, for example, attests three charters of Earl David of Huntingdon to Lindores Abbey and one to Repton Priory.<sup>76</sup> Should this man be regarded as witnessing two charters? Indeed, it is possible that this man had an interest in the local area and the other charter was merely a singular event.

There is also a general problem of using quantitative evidence such as this to rank an individual's importance to the lord. In Chapter 2 the problem of using this type

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<sup>73</sup> David Carpenter, 'The Second Century of English Feudalism', *P&P*, 168 (2000), 30-71

<sup>74</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, p. 155.

<sup>75</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp. 217-25, note especially Eustace de Betrimont.

<sup>76</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 244-245, 247-48, 261-62, charter nos. 42, 43, 45, 68

of evidence to rank individuals importance into an inner and outer circle was identified and criticised when used for discussing the earl's relationship to the magnates.<sup>77</sup> The main problem identified was that the quantitative data does not take account of the individual and the individual relationship they would have with the lord.

These issues arise, of course, from the nature of the charters. While it is that certain they provide our best glimpse of the legal proceedings of the lords court, as they deal with tenants and their holdings, and while it is clear they can provide the identity of the household as illustrated by David Crouch's analysis of William Marshal, they cannot indicate the relative importance of any group to the lord. How the witnesses and participants are tied to one another is unclear. Crouch and Stringer have sought to suggest that they are parties who are tied to the beneficiary or grantor, others suggest that the choice of witness was linked primarily to the best testimony.<sup>78</sup> Indeed seals of significant individuals or institutions could also be appended for a price, added to improve the validity of the document.<sup>79</sup>

The method of analysing the charter witness lists for individuals with some form of relationship to the lord is a viable method. But to attempt to do this without bearing in mind the individuality of lords and their lordship, including the variety of differing groups of individuals with differing relationships and responsibilities to the lord that may be present in the witness lists, means that the results are not likely to be as instructive. Indeed, when re-examining the terminology of the works by Crouch and Stringer we find that, although at times they speak of the household, terms such as affinity and following are used ambiguously as well.<sup>80</sup> Therefore, using this method to identify the presence of tenancy within a lordship is flawed.

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<sup>77</sup> See above Chapter 2: Magnates, Barons, and Inner Circles.

<sup>78</sup> D. Bates, 'The Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters', in *Family Trees and the Roots of Politics*, ed. by K. S. B. Keats-Rohan (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1997), 89-96, especially p. 92.

<sup>79</sup> P. D. A. Harvey, and A. McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, (London : British Library and Public Record Office, 1996), pp. 84-87.

<sup>80</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 170; Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 149-76.

## Tenants: A Discussion

In order to address whether tenancies had a role in the earl's lordship therefore requires a different approach. The best way to identify whether the earl was interested in his tenants is by considering the relationships he establishes with them as a whole, however it will be worthwhile to consider the relationships the earl had with different types of tenants individually before comparing them as a group.

### Tenants: Knightly Tenancies

Knightly tenancies were the standard tenants considered in the context of lordly power. However, their importance is seen as being in decline. The problem for Earl Ranulf and his contemporaries, and the reason why creating new tenancies is seen to have been on the decline, was that they had less and less lands to grant to establish such relationships.<sup>81</sup> Earl Ranulf of course granted lands to Stephen Seagrave, as noted above, and through this grant restructured estates in the local area.<sup>82</sup> However, despite the grant to Stephen, Ranulf only granted knights' fees to an additional 2 individuals.<sup>83</sup> The earls of Warwick also granted few lands to knights, and only 1 charter survives.<sup>84</sup> In comparison William Marshal granted many more charters creating such tenancies. He has 9 surviving charters granting them.<sup>85</sup> His son, William Marshal the Younger, granted a further 3.<sup>86</sup> David earl of Huntingdon also granted more. He granted 16 charters creating knight tenancies.<sup>87</sup> One reason that Ranulf's contemporaries created more knightly tenancies was because they had ties to other kingdoms. Of these grants David granted 3 charters in Scotland while the Marshals granted 3 in Ireland and 1 in Wales. Yet even so the

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<sup>81</sup> This was a factor identified for Earl David of Huntingdon, see Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 172-73.

<sup>82</sup> Peter R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - c.1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 93-102.

<sup>83</sup> *BC*, nos. 266, 416.

<sup>84</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, no. 184.

<sup>85</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 10-13, 47, 48, 87, 89, 94.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 129, 141, 174.

<sup>87</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, nos. 6-7, 11, 16-17, 25-27, 53-55, 57, 81-83, 86.

number of grants is minimal and would not create an adequate following for any lord.

Establishing relationships to knightly tenants, therefore, must have often relied on establishing ties to existing tenants, not new ones. This was not a new development for this period. J. C. Holt regards the practice and expectation of heritability of knights' fiefs to have come from Normandy in 1066 and while there were issues with inheritance upon occasion they arose due to the fact that law could at times be in opposition to politics.<sup>88</sup> Other historians had suggested that the inheritance of tenancies was only routinely established by a legal change enforced by Henry II. These reforms, as described by F. W. Maitland and F. Pollock, are the reforms of 1166 and 1176 which allowed tenants to apply for writs of *novel disseisin* which provided them with rights to seisin of their lands and not be dispossessed unjustly, and *mort d'ancestor* which provided rights for heirs to inherit their lands, and have access to the grand assize, the royal court, to ensure those rights.<sup>89</sup> However, with Reynolds' view that law was essentially now custom, the current opinion is perhaps closer to Holt's approach than the view that hereditary right was introduced by the crown.

It has, however, been argued, that the establishment of inheritance would have undermined the lords' control of their tenants as they lost the right to dispossess their tenants and also to choose who was enfeoffed upon their lands. A particularly negative outlook with regard to knightly tenancy in this period can be found in the views of Hugh Thomas. He suggested that the hereditary nature of tenancies, royal interference, combined with the collective power of tenants engendered collectively was a fracturing of the personal relationship between lord and tenant. He sees the fixed relationship of tenure as, therefore, not being adaptable to the fluidity of circumstances and human relationships, and therefore inherently unstable. Thomas therefore suggested that the decline of tenancies began from

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<sup>88</sup> J. C. Holt, 'Politics and Property in Early Medieval England', *P&P*, 57 (1972), 3-52; J. C. Holt, 'Politics and Property in Early Medieval England: A Rejoinder', *P&P*, 65 (1974), 127-35.

<sup>89</sup> F. Pollock, and F. W. Maitland, *The History of English Law Before the Time of Edward I*, ed. by Rev. S. F. C. Milsom, 2 vols. (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1968), vol. 1, pp. 144-51, 202-3, vol. 2, pp. 46-80.

their very inception, when lords must always have looked for the best ways to have good service.<sup>90</sup>

A more positive outlook of inheritance to tenancies can, however, be found in a later book on the social theory of lordship. Michael Hicks suggested that inheritance, far from destroying a relationship between lord and man by removing the personal element could form its own tie to the lord, namely tradition.<sup>91</sup> Furthermore, those that were most likely to inherit, the leading knights, would have knights holding fees of them and would wish to enforce the social obligation of loyalty to their lord for their own good, although clearly this was not a necessity. Such a view perhaps comes as a result of seeing lordship not merely in relation to knightly tenancies, as Hicks sees lordship as a conglomeration of individuals.<sup>92</sup>

It is clear from the earl's own charters that he was interested in establishing heritable relationships with tenants of all types including knights. The Cheshire Magna Carta, c. 8, states:

I concede that, when a man dies, his wife has for forty days peace within her home. And his heirs, if he of age, shall have their inheritance for a reasonable relief, namely for a knight's fee 100s.<sup>93</sup>

In such instances the earl was confirming wider legal grants provided by the crown through *Magna Carta* in 1215 which fixed relief at £100 for an earldom or baronage and 100s. for a knight, but also in previous royal documents.<sup>94</sup> The coronation charter of King Henry I in 1100 states:

If any of my barons or of my earls or any other of my tenants shall die, his heir shall not redeem his land as he was wont to do in the time of my brother but shall henceforth redeem it by means of a just and lawful

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<sup>90</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders, and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 14-58, note especially p. 56.

<sup>91</sup> Hicks, *Bastard Feudalism*, pp. 93-99.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-5.

<sup>93</sup> BC, no. 394. My translation of the Latin: *Concedo etiam quod, mortuo viro, uxor sua per quadraginta dies pacem habeat in domo sua. Et heres suus, si etatem habuerit, per rationabile relevium hereditatem suam habeat, scilicet feodum militis per centum solidos.*

<sup>94</sup> *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, pp. 311, 317, 327, 341.

relief. Similarly the men of my barons shall redeem their lands from their lords by means of a just and lawful relief.<sup>95</sup>

In this instance the heirs gain the right to inherit after a monetary payment called relief. The reason for the earl's grant is to fix the price to a reasonable sum.

The earl therefore maintained his relationships with the tenant knights through granting livery to heirs. However, the earl had other ways to maintain ties to his hereditary tenants. It is clear that the earls of Chester could provide legal protection to their tenants with regard to their lands through confirmations, which provide the earls support for the tenants ownership against any claimants. For example, there were a series of confirmations granted to the Benningworth family, including one from between 1198 and 1203, wherein Earl Ranulf confirmed the lands of Gilbert of Benningworth and his heirs, which he held of William of Roumare.<sup>96</sup>

In addition, the earl's courts also established a place in which justice could be done, and meted out to his tenants, establishing the earl as a figure of authority. The existence of this court and its jurisdiction over tenants, including the difficult issue of deciding which court had jurisdiction in the case of tenants holding lands of multiple lords, can be found in the *Leges Henrici Primi*.<sup>97</sup> The exact business these courts undertook is less than certain however, but probably included land disputes between tenants as well as outsiders.

In return for such maintenance and protection the tenants provided services. Chief among these services in this period were economic in nature. Economic exploitation can be found in the case of knights' tenancies, and the Leicester honour was worth £450 annually.<sup>98</sup> It is clear that these tenancies were an economic unit as the payment of relief was also requested in order to inherit.

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<sup>95</sup> Translated from *English Historical Documents, II, 1042-1189*, p. 433 (no. 2); original Latin in *Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History*, ed. by William Stubbs (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1913), p. 100: 2. *Si quis baronum, comitum meorum sive aliorum qui de me tenet, mortuus fuerit, haeres suus non redimet terram suam sicut faciebat tempore fratris mei, sed justa et legitima relevatione relevabit eam Similiter et homines baronum meorum justa et legitima relevatione relevabunt terras suas de dominis suis.*

<sup>96</sup> BC, nos. 295-99.

<sup>97</sup> *English Historical Documents, II, 1042-1189*, p. 494, LV.

<sup>98</sup> John Robert Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 47-49.

Wardships of young heirs of tenants was also a prime source of economic revenue for the king and other lords, as they allowed the direct exploitation of the tenants' lands. The 1215 *Magna Carta* and its reissues are primarily concerned with limiting royal excess in this regard.<sup>99</sup> There is also evidence in the case of the king, especially from the twelfth century, that money payments based upon the size of the fee were paid in place of actual wartime service, a practice known as scutage.<sup>100</sup> This would also allow the efficient exploitation of fractional fees. It is also clear that lords, including the king, could request money payments on other occasions, and these payments were named aids. At what time aids were introduced or whether they were always claimed is uncertain, but the *Charter of Liberties*, and *Magna Carta* of 1215 suggests that they be limited to the ransoming of the lord, knighting the lord's eldest son, and marrying his eldest daughter.<sup>101</sup> What is apparent from knights' fees, however, is that their economic return is extremely circumstantial and would be difficult to rely upon.

Besides economic services the earl's tenants also provided a number of other services. The knights' service done during peace time that is visible, is essentially one of court and household membership. The traditional evidence for such courts are the provisions noted in the *Leges Henrici Primi*, which gave the lord a right to his own honour court, with jurisdiction over his tenants.<sup>102</sup> However, too much may have been made of the legal and procedural importance of such courts as little evidence survives beyond this. There are no honorial court records. That the earl did have a court is certain as a decision he made in his court was challenged in the royal court and his charters suggest decisions on land ownership were made therein.<sup>103</sup> Yet the nature of the honorial court is largely unclear.

Indeed the exclusivity of membership of the earl's court to tenants is also doubtful. The evidence which has traditionally been used to identify the honorial court are

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<sup>99</sup> *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, pp. 311, clause 3, 317, clauses 4-6, 327-8, clauses 3-6, 332-33, clauses 3-6, 341-42, clauses 3-6.

<sup>100</sup> B. D. Lyon, 'The Feudal Antecedent of the Indenture System', *Speculum*, 29.3 (1954), 503-11; B. D. Lyon, 'The Money Fief under the English Kings, 1066-1485', *EHR*, Vol. 66.259 (1951), 161-93.

<sup>101</sup> *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, p. 312, clause 6, p. 319, clause 15 respectively.

<sup>102</sup> *English Historical Documents, II, 1042-1189*, pp. 491-495, especially clause LV, I.

<sup>103</sup> *BC*, nos. 302; *Curia Regis Rolls*, viii. pp. 271-72.



the lord's charters.<sup>104</sup> The charters of Earl Ranulf do seem to suggest that the earl was concerned with providing tenants with security for their grants. It is also clear from the witness lists that Ranulf's tenants frequented the earl's personage by witnessing his charters. Thus, for example the earl's leading tenants in Cheshire, the Montalts, Lacys and Mainwarings, his tenurial counsellors, witness a number of his charters.<sup>105</sup> Other leading tenants in his charters, including men like the Vernons or Venables, were even more frequent witnesses than these individuals who had familial connections to the earl.<sup>106</sup> Tenants may therefore have a role in the earl's court, however, it is clear that the court was not just an instrument of the honour. In Ranulf's court individuals such as Robert Bassingham, who was a tenant of the Earl of Huntingdon witnessed a charter.<sup>107</sup> Ranulf's own tenants were also attendees at other lords' courts, witnessing their charters, such as the earl of Leicester Simon de Montfort, even if they did not represent the most often present and largest group of witnesses.<sup>108</sup> This would suggest that tenants did not have sole access to the court and that their services there was not always required.

The household like the courts, is also often linked with tenants, as this institution is deemed to be the administrative centre ruling the earl's honours.<sup>109</sup> The household as a means of organisation was introduced by the earl's ancestor, the Norman Earl Hugh of Chester, by his copying the royal institution.<sup>110</sup> However, what is also clear is that the household is also evolving, that new offices are created as the hereditary nature of office holding began to undermine its utility and adaptability.<sup>111</sup> Yet

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<sup>104</sup> Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 42-51.

<sup>105</sup> See above, pp. 123-136..

<sup>106</sup> The Warin Vernon witnessed 43 of the earl's charters, *BC*, nos. 209, 213-214, 226, 232, 240, 242, 244, 256-258, 261, 266, 272, 276, 282-286, 309, 315, 321, 337, 340, 341, 348-350, 353-354, 357, 360, 373-374, 377-379, 381, 386, 383, 389, 400, 402; for the Vernon family see, Ormerod, *History*, iii. p. 130-131; for their lands see under the entries for Richard and Walter Vernon, in Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 723-724. William Venables witnessed 40 of the earl's charters, *BC*, nos. 209, 213-14, 228, 231-32, 242, 245, 258, 266, 276, 282-86, 309, 315, 337, 340, 348-49, 353-54, 356-57, 359-60, 373-74, 377, 379, 391, 383, 386, 389, 394, 400, 402, 432; for the Venables family see, Ormerod, *History*, iii. pp. 102-03; for their lands see under the entry for Gilbert Venables, in Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 730-31.

<sup>107</sup> *BC*, no. 308.

<sup>108</sup> Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort*, pp. 61-62.

<sup>109</sup> Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 42-83.

<sup>110</sup> David Crouch, 'The Administration of the Norman Earldom', in *Thacker*, 69-95 (p. 69).

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*.

tenants are still recruited to offices, thus Ralph Mainwaring in c.1194 to 1204 is found as a justice.<sup>112</sup> However, it is clear that practical need dictated choice as much as loyalty to tradition and tenancy, and as with the earls' courts, while this service was required it was selective and not limited to the tenants, although they seem a notable source for recruitment.

A final aspect of tenancy, and one of the reasons that knights' fees are claimed to have been created, is for military service. Concerning service in war there is clear evidence that by holding a knight's fee of a lord, the lord expected some form of support in military service. This can be found in a number of the quasi-legal texts, including, clause 11 of the coronation charter of King Henry I of 1100, although it does not say that such service is standard of tenure as a whole, and is implied in his law code, clause, XLIII, 9.<sup>113</sup> In addition, the assize of arms of King Henry II in 1181 tries to standardise the required military accoutrements not only of knights' fees but also more widely to form a militia based on land ownership, although the need to try and enforce this may suggest that the military aspect of service had been of diminishing in value near this time.<sup>114</sup> The *Magna Carta* of 1215 also includes a clause (29) relating to military service including castle guard, as does its 1216 reissue (clause 22), its 1217 reissue (clause 24), and the 1225 reissue (clause 20).<sup>115</sup> Castle guard entailed the service of guarding the lord's castles for a period of time, and there are records for a timetable of service found for some castles such as Richmond, which corroborate that it was a real expectation of service that was undertaken.<sup>116</sup> The Cheshire Magna Carta was also concerned with service in war and its limitations, showing that wartime service was still requested and needed.<sup>117</sup>

More practically, there are also examples of the knights following their lords into battle. The actions of knights can best be seen when fighting during a rebellion. It

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<sup>112</sup> *BC*, no. 275.

<sup>113</sup> *English historical documents, 1042-1189*, pp. 432-34, 491-95.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 449-51.

<sup>115</sup> *English Historical Documents, II, 1189-1327*, pp. 316-24, 329-30, 335, 344.

<sup>116</sup> *Early Yorkshire Charters*, vols. 1-3 ed. W. Farrer (Edinburgh, 1914-16), indexes to vols. 1-3 ed. C. Clay and E. M. Clay (Wakefield, 1942), vols. 4-12 ed. Sir C. Clay (Wakefield, 1935-65), v, pt. 2, pp. 11-12, 15-16; see also Stenton, *The First Century*, pp. 192-217 for a discussion of castle guard.

<sup>117</sup> See above, pp. 208-10, and Appendix 2.

is at this stage that records, primarily royal records, will point towards who fought for whom. Thus in the case of Earl Ranulf's tenants there are some records that suggest that knights fought on the same side as the earl, notably in the earl of Chester's case in support the king, especially in the rebellion of c. 1215 to 1217. His Cheshire tenants are viewed as mainly supporting him.<sup>118</sup> But others did as well, thus, in 1215, Roger de St Martin was granted letters of protection by the crown.<sup>119</sup> It is also apparent that such support was valued not only by the earl but also by the king, as in 1216 King John committed the lands late of Nicholas de Chavincurt in Lincolnshire to Roger.<sup>120</sup> Roger was a tenant of Earl Ranulf in Lincolnshire of Lincoln honour.<sup>121</sup>

However, the role of tenants in service in war has been heavily criticised and is seen as one of the defining limitations and failures of the tenancy system. During the civil war in King John's reign many of the earl's tenants in Lincolnshire and Richmondshire, fought actively against him.<sup>122</sup> Holt identifies 5 or 6 knights who held lands only from the earl, namely Gilbert and William Benningworth, Walter Badvent, Hugh de Caux, Hugh of Harrington and possibly Martin Brayboef, who fought against him.<sup>123</sup> Clearly, this aptly reinforces the point that tenancy is not an institution, but a series of relationships with individuals.

Sometimes individual knights held multiple fees of differing lords leading to potential conflicts of interests. In economic terms, these tenancies could prove disastrous for the lords, as the crown could attempt to claim all the monies of its tenants, not just the money due by the tenant for lands they held of the crown. This was a particular complaint found within *Magna Carta* and its reissues.<sup>124</sup> However, it also raises issues about loyal service in war. For instance, Henry de

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<sup>118</sup> Holt, *The Northerners*, p. 45.

<sup>119</sup> *RLP*, p. 150.

<sup>120</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 289.

<sup>121</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 158, 191.

<sup>122</sup> Lincolnshire was seen as part of the north (although the dividing line between north and south was vague) and formed a close ties with neighbouring counties. Richmondshire revolted completely see Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 14-16, 46-49.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 45.

<sup>124</sup> *English Historical Documents, III, 1189-1327*, pp. 320, clause 37, 330, clause 30, 335-336, clause 33, 344, clause 27.

Neville, a tenant of Lincoln honour fought against Earl Ranulf. In 1216 he gave 100m. for the king's goodwill and delivered his charter of fidelity under pain of forfeiture if he withdrew from allegiance. Henry also had to find hostages and deliver his castle of Brancepeth to Philip de Ulcotes on behalf of the king, to be re-seized of his lands.<sup>125</sup> Henry held ½ fee in Burreth of the earl of Chester in Gartree wapentake, Lincolnshire.<sup>126</sup> However, Henry de Neville also held 5 fees of the bishop of Lincoln.<sup>127</sup> This may explain his fighting on opposing sides to Earl Ranulf in the rebellion of 1215 to 1217 as he was able to distance himself from the earl. Traditionally such a situation suggested a liege lord type service, which can be found in the *Leges Henrici Primi*, wherein one main lord was to be chosen who would have the prime service.<sup>128</sup> Whether this worked in reality is unclear, and in periods of strife, such as the civil war, historians have argued that it led to the failure of the tenant bond as other political factors took centre stage.<sup>129</sup>

J. C. Holt has pointed out that custom in this period was, even in the case of the relationship to the crown, a matter for argument, often revolving around demands for ancient custom when the crown was seen infringing it. This is what helped lead to the major crisis of 1215 itself.<sup>130</sup> *Magna Carta*, the result of the crisis, in Holt's view, was also an argument of what was custom.<sup>131</sup> This would suggest that there is good reason why the tenancy relationship may not always cajole individuals to follow the earl, as it was not seen as binding.

Hugh Thomas also made the point that tenants have a collective power which can force the lord to certain actions, they were not passive.<sup>132</sup> This would suggest that tenants could dictate their own actions to a greater extent than previously thought. This was undoubtedly the case with leading barons, tenants who could call themselves counsellors like John de Lacy, who were free to exercise their own will

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<sup>125</sup> *ROF.*, p. 572.

<sup>126</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 169.

<sup>127</sup> *ROF.*, p. 153.

<sup>128</sup> *English Historical Documents, II, 1042-1189*, p. 494, XLIII, 6-6a, LV, 2; *Leges Henrici Primi*, ed. by Leslie John Downer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), pp. 152-53 (43, 6-6a); pp. 172-73 (55, 2).

<sup>129</sup> Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 36-37.

<sup>130</sup> Holt, *Magna Carta*, pp. 111-22.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 9 (especially p. 298)

<sup>132</sup> Thomas, *Vassals*, pp. 52-54.

and fight against the earl if they so wished. They had a great degree of independence.<sup>133</sup> However, the creation of the Cheshire Magna Carta also shows that barons within a local area were able to act in concert and by so doing, not only act independently, but also enforce their will on the earl.<sup>134</sup> This would indicate that tenants could act collectively and saw themselves as working in a partnership with the earl. If the earl failed to do as they wished it also suggests that they were able collectively to fracture the relationship or at least make the earl reconsider his role in it. This relationship was therefore contractual for both parties, although the contractual nature of the relationship was undoubtedly negotiated in its terms and varied in its effectiveness.

### Tenants: Burgage Tenancies

It is clear that, while the earl's grants to knights were limited the earl was more than happy to establish new ties to other groups of tenants. Ranulf founded at least three towns during his lifetime, Salford in 1231, Leek between 1207 and 1215, and Frodsham between 1208 to 1215.<sup>135</sup> Towns, were being founded in this period more frequently as urban development increased.<sup>136</sup> The earl was acting within the context of wider national urbanisation. However, in doing so Ranulf was also aware that he was taking a risk, as urban communities like these had a high chance of failure.<sup>137</sup>

This contrasts with some of the earl's contemporaries. The earl of Pembroke, William Marshal, does not found a single town during the period and neither do his sons. However, William does show an interest in obtaining control of them, as he came to an agreement with William of Hill Croom to obtain control of the unidentified town of *Shelue* in 1206.<sup>138</sup> The earls of Warwick also did not found any

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<sup>133</sup> See above, Chapter 2: The Barons.

<sup>134</sup> See above, Chapter 4: The Palatinate of Chester.

<sup>135</sup> *BC*, nos 349, 371, 435.

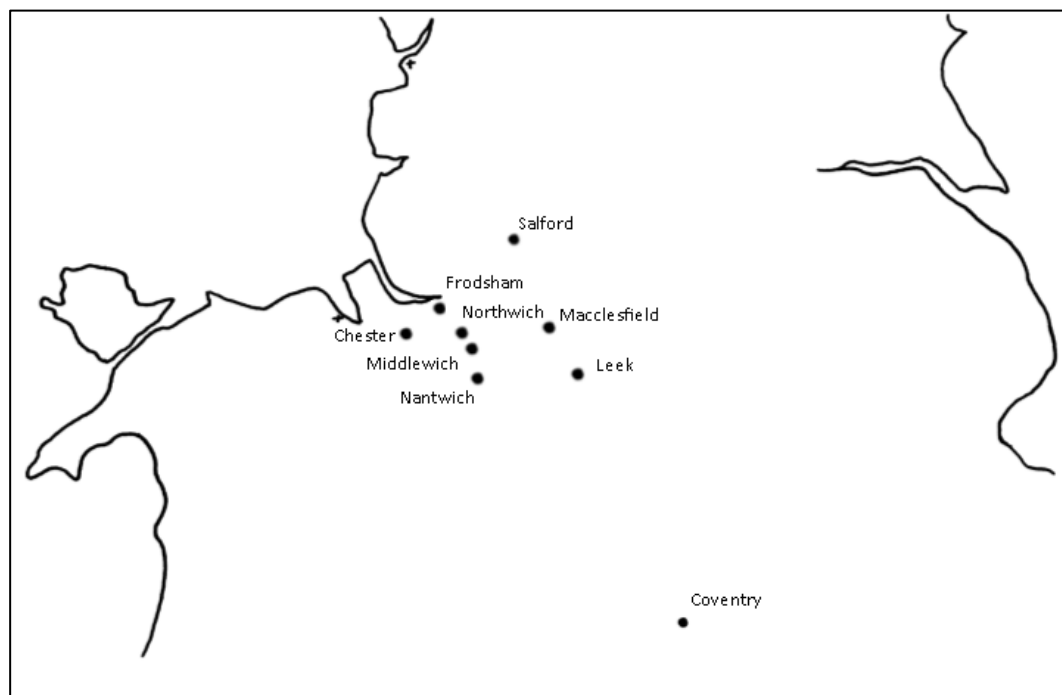
<sup>136</sup> Edward Miller and John Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts, 1086-1348*, (Harlow: Longman, 1995), pp. 263-274; Susan Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns*, pp. 46-47; H. Swanson, *Medieval British Towns* (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1999), pp. 10-15.

<sup>137</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns*, p. 53.

<sup>138</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 49.

urban tenancies. The earl of Huntingdon is perhaps more active as he does have strong ties to the urban administrative centres of his holdings Inverurie and Dundee in Scotland.<sup>139</sup> However, Earl Ranulf should be seen as distinct from his contemporaries by the number of his creations and contacts and there is therefore some indication that he was more concerned with tenants than they. As these are burgage tenants this would suggest that he was at the forefront of new methods in lordship during this period.

The earl also had a hereditary relationship to towns, and had ties to Chester, Coventry, as well as to other semi urban settlements such as the Wiches in Cheshire. The settlements the earl had contact with can be seen in the map below:



*Figure 7 Earl Ranulf's Urban Tenancies*

That the earl was happy to establish hereditary rights to burgage tenures can also be seen in the earl's foundations at Leek and at Salford. There are a number of clauses granting rights to heirs and widows.<sup>140</sup> The earl also still interacted with his hereditary burgage tenants through the granting of rights. The main grant the earl could give of value to the citizens of towns was more freedom. Most of the earl's

<sup>139</sup> Stringer, *David of Huntingdon*, pp. 68-76.

<sup>140</sup> See pp. 256, 260-62 for a translation of the charters.

towns were controlled by the earl's own official, the reeve, yet there was a tendency for towns and their citizens to want more self-determination as the lord's officials could become exploitative.<sup>141</sup> Chester was one of the most important towns in the earl's lordship. In 1086, when his ancestor Earl Hugh held the town it had over 431 houses.<sup>142</sup> From its size, it is clear that the town is a metropolis and meeting ground for ideas in the county. Yet this must not be overemphasised. Chester is smaller than other cities elsewhere, indeed the seat of the bishopric was moved to Coventry as both Chester and Lichfield were deemed too humble.<sup>143</sup> In his grant between 1191 and 1194 to the citizens of Chester, the earl provided patronage through a grant of such freedoms:

Let it be known to you all that I have given and conceded and by my present charter confirmed to all my citizens of Chester its merchant gild with all liberties and free customs, which those ever they had rightly, freely, and quit, in the time of my ancestors in the aforementioned gild.<sup>144</sup>

A merchant guild is now seen as the first stepping stone for self-government within a town. It was a body formed to protect the trading interests of the merchants within the town by setting prices and establishing control of the merchant trade.<sup>145</sup> The ability to protect and have direct control over the market of one's own trade would of course provide encouragement to merchants to settle and become part of the gild in the town and therefore promote trade as well. Although in towns

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<sup>141</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 288-306; Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns*, pp. 102-16.

<sup>142</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 716-17.

<sup>143</sup> John Doran, 'St Werburgh's, St John's and the Liber Luciani de laude Cestrie', in *Mapping the Medieval Town*, ed. by Catherine A. M. Clarke (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), 57-77 (p. 59).

<sup>144</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 5; transcript in BC, no. 257. My own translation from the Latin: *Notum sit vobis omnibus me dedisse et concessisse et presenti carta mea confirmasse omnibus civibus meis de Cestria gildam suam mercelem cum omnibus libertatibus et liberis consuetudinibus, quas illi unquam melius et liberius et quietius habuerunt temporibus antecessorum meorum in predicta gilda.*

<sup>145</sup> James Campbell, 'Power and Authority 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 51-78 (p. 64); Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 290-98; James Tait, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on Its Origins and Constitutional History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1936), pp. 222-34; *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe; Volume III Economic Organisation and Policies in the Middle Ages*, ed. by M. M. Postan, E. E. Rich, Edward Milers (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1965), Ch. 5.

owned by lords rather than the king it is known that autonomy was perhaps more curtailed despite such gifts.<sup>146</sup>

Earl Ranulf would also offer towns more than merely maintenance. Like the knights he also gave them protection. One indication that the earl was taking on the role of protector comes in a charter dated between 1191 and 1194, in which the earl granted to the citizens of the Chester a confirmation of their legal status. This charter sets out the legal responsibilities of both parties in the relationship and begins by stating:

Let it be known to you all that I have given and conceded and by my present charter confirmed to all my citizens of Chester, all the liberties and free customs which they had at any time, rightly and freely or quit, in the times of my predecessors, and namely quittance and release from inquest and assize in the town of Chester in perpetuity.<sup>147</sup>

The earl has hereby provided the citizens of Chester, with legal status and protection of their existing rights, as well as providing additional rights. A similar relationship was established between the earl and the citizens of Coventry.

The earl inherited the lordship of half of Coventry, as he had inherited Chester. In 1086 the manor was held by Countess Godgifu.<sup>148</sup> It is uncertain when the earls of Chester received Countess Godgifu's estates, including Coventry, but it was likely that they were granted to Earl Hugh who had died by 1101; the town being shared between the earl and the local priory.<sup>149</sup> By the eleventh century the town, which had looked more akin to a village or manor in 1086, had expanded enough that the

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<sup>146</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns*, pp. 114-16.

<sup>147</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 4; transcript in BC, no. 256. My own translation of the Latin: *Notum sit vobis omnibus me dedisse et concessisse et presenti carta mea confirmasse omnibus civibus meis de Cestria omnes libertates et omnes liberas consuetudines, quas illi unquam melius et liberius aut quietius habuerunt temporibus aliquorum predecessorum meorum, et nominatim quietantiam et relaxationem recognitionis et proportamenti in civitate Cestrie in perpetuum.*

<sup>148</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 655

<sup>149</sup> Peter R. Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - c.1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 26; Richard Goddard, *Lordship and Medieval Urbanisation: Coventry, 1043-1355* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2004), pp. 22-23.



bishop of Coventry was happy to move the seat of the diocese here, although Richard Goddard suggests that there was a gradual process of urbanisation.<sup>150</sup>

The earliest known charter the town received during the earl's tenure was made by the crown in 1182 during his minority. It begins:

Henry, by grace of God, King of England and Duke of Normandy and Aquitaine, Count of Anjou, to his Archbishops, bishops, abbots, counts, barons, justices, sheriffs, and all ministers and loyal men in all of England, greetings. Let it be known that I have conceded and by this present charter, confirmed to the burghers of Coventry all the liberties and free customs which Ranulf [II] Earl of Chester reasonably conceded to them and his charter confirmed...<sup>151</sup>

It is clear from this charter that the citizens of Coventry gain their rights from the earl. There is no mention of the crown giving them itself, or of the priory granting them. As in the case of Chester, it is clear that the earl of Chester is the one to grant them their position and thereby to protect it.

Such protection also extended to protection of trade. In his 1208 to 1217 grant to the citizens of Chester the earl provided further protection to the citizens of the city and their heirs, by giving them the right to give consent to individuals coming to the city to buy or sell goods, excluding the fairs at the nativity of St John the Baptist and Christmas.<sup>152</sup> This would have ensured that the merchants within the city had even greater control of their own markets.

The earl also provided justice within his towns, and therefore acted as a figure of authority. There are a number of clauses in the foundation charter of Frodsham, which indicate the role that the earl had in the justice system:

And I concede to the same burghers...that they will be sent for no plea outside of the same borough, excepting pleas which pertain to my sword,

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<sup>150</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*. p. 655; Doran, 'St Werburgh's, St John's and the Liber Luciani de laude Cestrie', p. 59, n. 30; Goddard, *Lordship and Medieval Urbanisation*, pp. 47-48.

<sup>151</sup> Coss, *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, no. 11. My own translation of the Latin: *H[enricus] Dei gratia Rex Angl[ie] et Dux Norman[nie] et Aqui[annie] et Comes Andeg[avie] archiepiscopis episcopis abbatibus comitibus baronibus justiciariis vicecomitibus et omnibus ministris et fidelibus suis totius Angl[ie] salutem. Sciatis me concessisse et presenti carta mea confirmasse burgensibus de Coventr' omnes libertates et liberas consuetudines quas Rann[ulphus] Comes Cestr' rationabiliter eis concessit et carta sua confirmavit...*

<sup>152</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 7; transcript in *BC*, no. 258.

and of all other pleas they are judged in the same borough by my reeve (*prepositus*) and by their neighbours.<sup>153</sup>

Such clauses can also be found in the foundation charters of Leek and Salford.<sup>154</sup> It is clear from Frodsham that it was the reeve, the earl's representative, who would administer the court in the earl's name. The earl, therefore, provided the authority rather than personal judgement. However, this is comparable with the administration of his own knightly tenancies as he had stewards for the different areas of his lordship.<sup>155</sup>

The services the town provides more than make up for the duties incumbent upon the earl. A monetary concern in the relationship can be found within the earl's burgage tenures. It is recorded in *Domesday Book* that the earl, like the king, received monies in farm from his official who managed the borough.<sup>156</sup> In *Domesday*, it is recorded at Chester that:

This town then rendered at farm £45 and 3 timbers of marten pelts. The third part belonged to the earl and 2 [parts] to the king.<sup>157</sup>

The farm included monies raised from a variety of means. The expectation of economic returns can also be seen in other towns. The earl expected the citizens of Frodsham, for instance, to return 12d. annually.<sup>158</sup>

The towns of course also acted as a local economic powerhouse where items could be bought or sold. The fact that the earl provided exemptions from taxes for sale suggests that he controlled sales in the towns as well. Between 1207 and 1217, Earl Ranulf granted Bordesley abbey and its monks such an exemption.<sup>159</sup> The regulation of sales, however, is more clearly visible in the customs of the Wiches of Cheshire. These Wiches, while their citizens did not strictly speaking have borough status, did have tenancies which were similar in many ways to borough tenancies

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<sup>153</sup> BC, no. 371. My own translation of the Latin: *Concedo eciam eisdem burgensibus..., et quod pro nullo placito exeant foras de burgo ipso, nisi pro placitis ad gladium meum pertentibus, et de omnibus aliis placitis iudicabuntur in ipso burgo per prepositum meum et per vicinos suos.*

<sup>154</sup> See below, pp. 256, 260-62.

<sup>155</sup> See above, Chapter 3: Local Officers: Estate Stewards.

<sup>156</sup> For a discussion of the farm of boroughs, see Tait, *The Medieval English Borough*, Ch. 7.

<sup>157</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 717.

<sup>158</sup> BC, no. 371.

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 207.

and they did provide economic returns. They were industrial settlements producing salt. At times Northwich was recorded as at farm for £8, while Nantwich and Middlewich are recorded as at farm for £10 and £8 respectively.<sup>160</sup> Within these urban industrial centres though, salt was made and sold, and a price was put on its sale throughout Cheshire. In 1086, the imposition of tolls on exporting salt is clearly shown in the description of the customs of Middlewich:

[at Middlewich] whoever carried away in a cart salt he had bought from these two Wiches (Nantwich and Middlewich) gave 4d in toll if he had 4 oxen or more to the cart: if two oxen, he gave 2d toll if there were 2 summae of salt. A man from another hundred gave 2d for a horse load. But a man from the same hundred gave only ½ d for a summae of salt.<sup>161</sup>

[at Middlewich] men on foot from another hundred buying salt there gave 2d for 8 men's loads: men of the same hundred [gave] 1d for 8 loads.<sup>162</sup>

This would indicate that purchases had a toll, which was to be paid to the earl. Such tolls are often applied to other purchases or sales. Richard Britnell suggests that such economic rewards undoubtedly encouraged urban development by the lords.<sup>163</sup>

However, such a multitude of economic benefits should not overrule the other roles urban tenants had. Towns also supplied the earl with a defensible position. Chester, for instance was a key border city. Defences were necessary to prevent Welsh incursions. The Welsh border was a hostile environment between 1209 and 1212 when Ranulf was extensively involved in the Welsh campaigns, re-building a castle at Deganwy in 1209, which Llywelyn ab Iorwerth had demolished, and one at Holywell: at this time his lands were also attacked by Llywelyn.<sup>164</sup> Therefore, not only did the earl have his own castle, but the citizens of the Chester also had a duty to ensure the walls of the town were maintained. In *Domesday* it is recorded that:

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<sup>160</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 734.

<sup>161</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 735.

<sup>162</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 735.

<sup>163</sup> Richard Britnell, 'The Economy of British Towns 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 105-26 (p. 111).

<sup>164</sup> Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 32.

For the repair of the town wall and bridge the reeve called up one man from each hide in the shire. The lord of any man whose man did not come paid a fine of 40s. to the king and the earl.<sup>165</sup>

There is some question over who would defend such walls. The earl's knights would probably have had a schedule of castle guard duties as they had at Richmond castle in Yorkshire.<sup>166</sup> Yet it is also likely that some of the defence came from the local populace, perhaps using the medium of the old Anglo-Saxon demand of fyrd. King Henry II had tried to re-establish its use through the Assize of Arms to ensure royal townsmen provided such support.<sup>167</sup> Other means may also have been used. Whilst there is no evidence of this in Chester, other towns used different types of burgage tenure to ensure defence. An interesting fact at Salford is that it is also clear some of the tenures in the town were military tenures:

When a burgher dies, his heirs will give no other relief to me unless of this military type, namely of a sword or a bow or a spear.<sup>168</sup>

This clause firstly suggests two types of tenancy in the borough, one that can be called standard, and one that owes armed service. The existence of tenancies with military services indicates that individuals were possibly militarily trained and fought, either in the earl's campaigns, or to defend the town. This was not uncommon as James Campbell also found that Richard de Lucy treated his townsmen almost as knights.<sup>169</sup> Powicke has also shown that recruitment of military men below the level of knight was common and increasingly standardised for the crown.<sup>170</sup> This would seem to confirm the suspicion that the citizens of Chester and the earl's other towns such as Coventry would not sit idle when attacked but also fought to defend their own settlements. It is therefore possible to see a town, if loyal, to be a military stronghold for the earl. This is perhaps especially the case for Salford as it is a plantation in an area with which he had little contact. Salford

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<sup>165</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 716-717.

<sup>166</sup> *Early Yorkshire Charters*, v, pt. 2, pp. 11-12, 15-16.

<sup>167</sup> James Campbell, 'Power and Authority 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 51-78 (p. 68).

<sup>168</sup> BC, no. 435. My own translation of the Latin: *Item, cum burgensis moriatur, heres eius nullum aliud relevium dabit mihi nisi huiusmodi arma, scilicet gladium vel arcum vel lancem.*

<sup>169</sup> Campbell, 'Power and Authority 600-1300', p. 65.

<sup>170</sup> M. Powicke, *Military Obligation in Medieval England: A Study in Liberty and Duty* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1962).

represents a means to assert his rights in the area economically, but also to make a military statement.<sup>171</sup> Similarly, it can be seen therefore with regard to Ranulf's establishment of Beeston castle, which has been described as much as a political and status symbol as a military site, in the centre of the county of Cheshire only a few miles away from Salford.<sup>172</sup>

### Tenants: Religious Tenancies

It is clear that the earl was also interested in creating other tenurial ties. Earl Ranulf founded the Abbey of Dieulacres, Staffordshire, in 1214, although the building of the Abbey itself was to take longer.<sup>173</sup> Unlike the towns, this was a more traditional creation. Founding monasteries was a dwindling fashion in this period. The heyday of building such institutions had been in the eleventh century.<sup>174</sup> Dieulacres was a Cistercian foundation, and in fact was a replantation of a earlier foundation at Poulton in Cheshire. As the Cistercians generally required less desirable lands, and the abbey came with existing wealth, Alexander has characterised this as a miserly grant.<sup>175</sup> It was a cheaper investment, yet it shows the earl was still interested in the relationship it would form. His contemporaries, the earls of Warwick did not do the same. However, William Marshal founded the Abbey of Cartmel, and Duiske Abbey in Ireland.<sup>176</sup> Earl David also founded an institution in Scotland called Lindores.<sup>177</sup> This would suggest that there was still a mood to form these kind of tenancy relationships at this time.

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<sup>171</sup> Towns are known to be used to consolidate a hold on an area, as they not only provide defensive and offensive capabilities but tie this with a resident population, see Swanson, *Medieval British Towns*, p. 13; J. F. Powers, 'Life on the cutting edge: the besieged town on the Luso-Hispanic Frontier in the Twelfth-Century', in *The Medieval Town under Siege*, ed. by I. A. Corfis and M. Wolfe (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1995), 17-34.

<sup>172</sup> R. McGuichen, 'Castle in Context? Redefining the Significance of Beeston Castle, Cheshire', *Journal of the Cheshire Archaeological Society*, 81 (2010 for 2006), 65-82.

<sup>173</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. pp. 627-628; the difference in the date between foundation gift and actual foundation of the abbey has been discussed in V. H. Galbraith, 'Monastic Foundation Charters of the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, 4. 3 (1934), 205-22.

<sup>174</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 230-33.

<sup>175</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, pp. 39-41.

<sup>176</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 21-22, 32.

<sup>177</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, nos. 37-52.

Earl Ranulf also granted his hereditary religious tenancies patronage to maintain their relationship. He granted the family Benedictine Abbey of St Werburgh, 13 charters, although again Alexander is scathing of the amount given.<sup>178</sup> Between 1198 and 1232 he granted the abbey half a bovate of land in Sibsey and the services of Geoffrey son of Acke de Sibsey; in 1208 to 1210 a licence to extend their buildings; in 1208 to 1211 he granted them the tithes of his demesne in Rhuddlan and of his fishery and mills in Englefield, a tenement in Rhuddlan, and pannage and common for pigs in his forests of Englefield and Cheshire.<sup>179</sup> The earl also confirmed the gifts of his ancestors and those of other benefactors to ensure that they were held securely and perpetually by giving confirmations. Thus in 1190 to 1194, he confirmed the gifts to St Werburgh's Abbey made by his predecessors, and their barons and his; in 1191 to 1194 he confirmed the gift of half a salhouse at Northwich made by William de Venables; and in 1194 to 1202 he confirmed his father's gift of the church of Prestbury to St Werburgh's Abbey.<sup>180</sup> The monks therefore received new gifts and security for the others.

There were other similar abbeys the earl established ties with through his charters, which were tied to him through tradition. These are shown in the map below, which also includes the earl's urban tenancies:

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<sup>178</sup> *BC*, nos. 227-239; see also, Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>179</sup> *BC*, nos. 231-32, 235-36.

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 227-29.

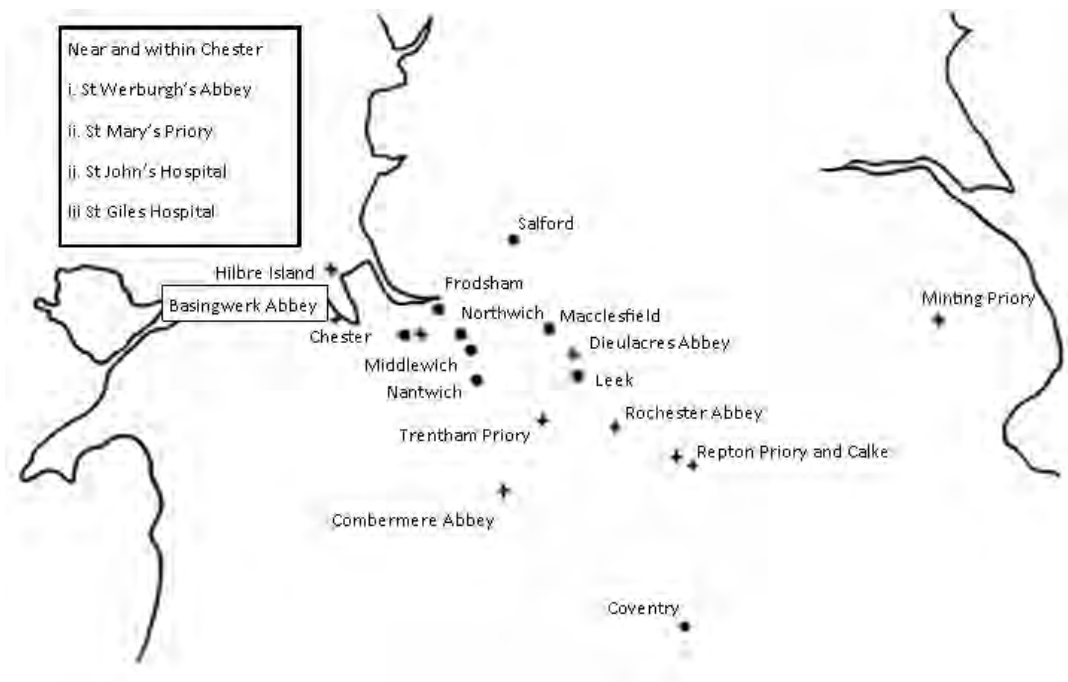


Figure 8 Earl Ranulf's Urban and Ecclesiastical Tenants

Besides St Werburgh's, the earl is also known to be the hereditary patron of two additional abbeys. Combermere in Cheshire was founded by Hugh Malbank, in 1133 and by Earl Ranulf II.<sup>181</sup> The earl's relationship to it as an institution seems similar to that of St Werburgh's Abbey, but to a much-reduced degree. His only contacts in the charters is in 1190 to 1194 when he granted the abbey a carucate in Macclesfield forest, and a confirmation in 1230 of the lands and liberties granted by Hugh Malbank and his son William to the abbey.<sup>182</sup> A similar relationship was established to Rocester Abbey founded by Richard Bacon, a nephew of Ranulf, which was provided in 1191 to 1194 with a confirmation by Earl Ranulf of Richard Bacon's foundation charter.<sup>183</sup>

Outside of these abbeys, the earl also had hereditary relationships to a number of priories to which he granted charters. Minting Priory was founded by Ranulf de Meschin, earl of Chester, and the abbey of Fleury c. 1129 in Lincolnshire.<sup>184</sup> In 1186 to 1200 Earl Ranulf III confirmed the gifts of his grandfather Ranulf II, to Minting Priory, and added the tithes of the assart in the woods of Minting in pure and

<sup>181</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. p. 321; *Annales Cestriensis*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>182</sup> *BC*, nos. 240-41.

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 262.

<sup>184</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vi. p. 1023.

perpetual alms.<sup>185</sup> Here Ranulf provides the patron's duties of protection and maintenance to the priory. In this grant there are also indications that religious duties were expected in return. The earl's relations with the priory of St Mary's Chester, Trentham Priory and Repton priory were also similar. St Mary's was founded by Earl Ranulf II between c. 1129 to 1150.<sup>186</sup> Trentham Priory had been founded by Ranulf de Gernon, Earl of Chester, before 1153.<sup>187</sup> Repton Priory in Derbyshire was founded in c. 1153 by Maud widow of Ranulf fourth earl of Chester.<sup>188</sup> All three priories received at least one charter.<sup>189</sup>

As well as providing grants the earl also provided protection to his ecclesiastical tenants.<sup>190</sup> Between 1208 and 1217 Earl Ranulf notified all that 'I have taken into my protection and custody all that pertains to the work at St Werburgh's of Chester, both in lands and men' and orders that the clerk of the work receives due payment.<sup>191</sup> Four of the earl's charters between 1214 and 1221 also state that Earl Ranulf granted protection to Dieulacres abbey.<sup>192</sup> In c.1230 the earl also re-confirmed in pure and perpetual alms certain charters of Repton and Calke, after inspecting and setting out in detail the estates they referred to.<sup>193</sup> Here the earl is clearly demarcating the property borders to oversee and to protect the abbey's interest. In 1194 to 1203 he also confirmed the exchange between Countess Bertrada, his mother, and the canons of Repton suggesting that he was once again

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<sup>185</sup> BC, no. 203.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., no. 97; see also 'House of Benedictine nuns: The priory of Chester', *A History of the County of Chester: Volume 3*, ed. by C. R. Elrington and B. E. Harris (London: VCH, 1980), 146-50.

<sup>187</sup> George Wrottesley and F. Parker, eds., 'Cartulary of Trentham Priory: Trentham', *Staffordshire Historical Collections*, vol. 11 (London: Staffordshire Record Society, 1890), pp. 300-306; it is possible there was an earlier religious community but this is criticised in 'Houses of Augustinian canons: The priory of Trentham', in *A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 3*, ed. by M. W. Greenslade, and R. B. Pugh (London: VCH, 1970) 255-60, the foundation of a permanent religious house is herein regarded as being the work of Ranulf II earl of Chester, see also Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*. vi, 397.

<sup>188</sup> 'Houses of Austin canons: The priory of Repton, with the cell of Calke.' *A History of the County of Derby: Volume 2*, ed. by William Page (London: VCH, 1907), 58-63.

<sup>189</sup> BC, nos. 223-225, 273.

<sup>190</sup> The role of protector is discussed in Janet E. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 223-24; Janet E. Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069-1215* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 198-205.

<sup>191</sup> BC, no. 233.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., nos. 375-78.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid., no. 274, the charters which are examined and reconfirmed are deemed by Barraclough to be nos. 45, 119, 120, and 147.



taking a patron's role, providing protection, but also acting as a landlord by perhaps giving permission as well.<sup>194</sup>

There are also indications that the earl retained some jurisdiction over his ecclesiastical tenancies. Some charters provide a description of the reservations he retained in his grants. Thus between 1217 and 1218, the earl granted protection for the abbey of Dieulacres and freedom from plea except from him or his chief justice.<sup>195</sup> This would seem to suggest that the earl had jurisdictional rights which he could maintain, in spite of lands being given in *free alms*. However, such charters are rare so it is difficult to speculate whether he generally withheld this right to his ecclesiastical tenants. Free alms tenure has traditionally been seen as completely free of such restrictions, although some have questioned this view.<sup>196</sup>

Indeed, it is likely that the ecclesiastical tenants owed a range of services for their tenancies. The earl seems to have collected some economic returns from his ecclesiastical tenants who held in *free alms* tenure. There are indicators that the ecclesiastical institutions were, in effect, entering a contractual relationship as much as a pious one when the earl granted them lands. A number of grants of rights to the abbey of Dieulacres would seem to suggest that they owe certain dues to the earl for the lands that they held before the grant. In 1217 to 1226 the earl granted the monks of Dieulacres freedom from toll on goods bought or sold in his territories. In 1218 to 1229 he acquitted Dieulacres from paying pannage for its pigs in his woods, and in 1220 to 1225 he granted the monks of Dieulacres freedom from toll on their corn ground in his Cheshire mills.<sup>197</sup> The requirement for these charters would of course seem to suggest before those dates the institutions owed these dues and services. The earl would therefore have a patchwork of relationships based on the lands he had lordship over, which had been granted to the abbey by himself or, in some cases, his tenants. There are also other indications that there may be other economic rights that the earl enjoys. These may include

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., no. 272.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., no. 377.

<sup>196</sup> B. Thompson, 'Free Alms Tenure in the Twelfth Century', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 16 (1993), 221-43.

<sup>197</sup> *BC*, nos. 383, 384, 387.

custody of the abbey's lands when there is a vacancy. The king committed the custody of the abbey of St Werburgh to Thomas of Husseburne during Earl Ranulf's minority, as the crown was acting as the earl's custodian.<sup>198</sup>

There is also some evidence that the earl's ecclesiastical tenants may also have provided some military service. A grant of freedoms from service on lands would suggest that they may owe the earl the services or duties otherwise or previously, which he had then granted away. Consider the grant made in 1214 to 1216 where Earl Ranulf granted Dieulacres Abbey the vill of Byley with freedom from shire and hundred, military duties and all other demands.<sup>199</sup> That such reservations need to be stated suggests that they may be applied otherwise. There are other instances of such grants. In 1211 to 1212 when Earl Ranulf granted a remission to the canons of Trentham of the obligation to provide a foot soldier to serve in Wales.<sup>200</sup> That military service was an apparent factor in the lord tenant relationship, unless granted away, is clearly a possibility. It is also clear from Ranulf's charters that it still retains significance for him.

There were also some other more general services that the earl would have received from ecclesiastical tenancies, including, hospitality.<sup>201</sup> The abbey of St Werburgh's, as a Benedictine monastery had a general duty to provide hospitality as part of the rule of St Benedict. Yet there were efforts to limit it to specific durations.<sup>202</sup> There is perhaps evidence that St Werburgh's provided the earl or at least his men with some form of hospitality from the aforementioned charter from 1194 to 1208 which granted the abbey freedom from feeding the earl's sergeants in its Wirral lands, excepting six foresters.<sup>203</sup> Up until this point, they presumably had to feed his men, but this charter limits it to six men. The fact that this service

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<sup>198</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 31; Ormerod, *History*, i. p. 213.

<sup>199</sup> *BC*, no. 379.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 315.

<sup>201</sup> Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 106-07.

<sup>202</sup> J. Kerr, 'Monastic Hospitality: the Benedictines in England, c.1070-c.1245', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 23 (2000), 97-114; J. Kerr, *Monastic Hospitality: the Benedictines in England, c.1070-c.1250* (Woodbridge, 2007), Ch. 1; Walker, D., 'Hospitium: a feudal service of hospitality', *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society*, 76 (1958 for 1957), 48-61.

<sup>203</sup> *BC*, no. 230.

was granted away also shows that it was likely an onerous one. Other services given to the earl by these institutions may include administrative or literary services as such institutions can serve as a place to make and have records kept which might relate to their patron.<sup>204</sup> The abbey of St Werburgh, for instance, provides the best history of the earls' family.<sup>205</sup> Ecclesiastical tenants would of course also provide religious services for the earl, these could include services such as burial, prayer, and when wanted membership of the order for themselves or their families.<sup>206</sup> Ranulf certainly used these services as he was eventually buried at St Werburgh's and gave his heart to be buried at Dieulacres.<sup>207</sup>

### The Tenancy Relationship

It therefore seems clear that the earl established and maintained relationships with tenants, and that there was a decreasing amount of lands to grant also meant that these relationships were commonly made with hereditary tenants. Yet there is no reason to suggest that this diminished the earl's interest. Rather the earl was aware and probably approved of this development and was able to still interact with tenants in various ways utilising patronage and his role as protector and authority to do so. Considering tenancy as a whole, it is clear the earl still had an interest in these relationships.

It is also clear when comparing the three types of tenancy that there are a number of similarities in the relationships. It is apparent that the earl gave maintenance and protection to all his tenants, and perhaps retained jurisdiction over them. It is also clear that they provide the earl with similar services, economic, military, and administrative, as well as certain *ad hoc* services related to certain groups. While they cannot always be considered standard requirements of the different forms of

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<sup>204</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain*, p. 222.

<sup>205</sup> *Annales Cestriensis*.

<sup>206</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain*, pp. 212-215, 219-221; Janet Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 194-95.

<sup>207</sup> For his burial see 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 87, for the grant of his heart see, *BC*, no. 393.

tenancy, their frequency across the various types suggests that they were still active concerns of the earl in the relationship and services he would desire.

However, some elements of this relationship, acting as a tax man, for instance would not necessarily encourage service. Indeed, all the economic elements of this relationship would imply is that tenants were a resource to be economically exploited and while this may be a benefit of tenancy for the earl, it is limited and does not wholly explain his interest in tenancies, especially as for many types of tenancy it would only provide infrequent or limited returns. Indeed, the knightly tenancies show some services were not always required or exclusive to his own tenants.

Instead tenancy should be seen as a negotiated relationship, as shown with the ecclesiastical and knightly tenants who could request further stipulations to the contract. It was a relationship which therefore required maintenance for it to remain useful and active. That Earl Ranulf participated in negotiating new terms for his relationship and actively reinforced his connections suggests that he was interested in maintaining these relationships.

### Comparison

It is clear that the earl's contemporaries also acted in a similar manner. William Marshal patronised his hereditary ecclesiastical foundation of Pembroke Priory by granting them certain tithes.<sup>208</sup> Pembroke had been founded by Arnulf of Montgomery, earl of Pembroke in 1098.<sup>209</sup> William the Younger also patronised his hereditary religious institutions of Duiske in Ireland.<sup>210</sup>

With regards to their ecclesiastical grants, there is also evidence that the earls of Pembroke obtained economic rewards as well as any spiritual rewards they would have generally obtained through the grants. In the charter William Marshal granted

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<sup>208</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 83.

<sup>209</sup> *Calendar of Documents preserved in France, Illustrative of the History of Great Britain and Ireland: Volume 1, 918-1206*, edited by John H. Round (London: Printed for HMSO by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1899), no. 666.

<sup>210</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 138-39.

to the Leper hospital of Maiden Bradley (Wiltshire) between 1199 and 1219 two knights fees in Maiden Bradley, which the previous owner Manasser Bisset had also granted the hospital, reserving a rent of 20s.<sup>211</sup> William made other such grants, reserving an annual rent in his grant to Notley Abbey, the right to justice of life and limb in a grant to Tintern Parva Abbey, and stipulating an annual payment in his grant to Waltham Abbey.<sup>212</sup> His son also gave grants to Halesowen Abbey for an annual rent although this was later quitclaimed.<sup>213</sup>

William had also inherited an interest in urban tenancies. These included Haverfordwest in Pembrokeshire. He also clearly seems to have attempted to gain its tenants loyalty by granting them a number of rights including the right to have the inheritance to their tenures.<sup>214</sup> He also granted a number of similar charters to various towns in Ireland, including Clonmines and Kilkenny.<sup>215</sup> William the Younger followed his father and granted Haverfordwest a confirmation of his father's charter, legal protection to only be tried in his court, and a merchant guild.<sup>216</sup> He also patronised a number of Irish towns including Carlow, Kilkenny, and Motte.<sup>217</sup>

The nature of their relationships to these urban centres was also similar to Ranulf's. William Marshal and his son, for instance, could obtain reliefs from the town of Haverfordwest as well as some military service, not only to defend the town, but also to accompany its lord. William Marshal's charter granting liberties to the town states:

If the lord or his bailiff is called to parley or to war, those burghers go with him with as many men as they are able saving the safety of his town.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>211</sup> Ibid., no. 73.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., nos. 76, 95, 98.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., nos. 143-44.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid., no. 46.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., nos. 26, 55.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid., nos. 145-47.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid., nos. 127, 161, 169.

<sup>218</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 46 confirmed by William the Younger no. 145. My translation of the Latin: *Item si dominus vel balliuus eius ierit ad parlamentum vel in exercitum. tunc eant burgenses illi cum eo cum quanta gente poterunt salua custodia ville sue.*

Clearly the earls relied on some military service from this town. This is also confirmed by William Marshal the Younger's later charter which provides limitations on the service to only fighting with the earl and in defence of his lands.<sup>219</sup>

The family do not have a comparable *Magna Carta* type charter to give gifts to their knightly tenants, but they do grant them various rights and confirmations as did Earl Ranulf.<sup>220</sup> This would suggest that, like him, they were again trying to maintain an existing legal connection.

Earl David of Huntingdon also granted a number of charters to his hereditary ecclesiastical foundations. In England these include Delapré Abbey, Northampton Priory and Sawtry Abbey founded by Simon de St Liz the earl of Northampton and Earl David's predecessor.<sup>221</sup> David also patronised his family's institutions in Scotland, namely Holyrood Abbey, Kelso Abbey and Arbroath Abbey.<sup>222</sup> His son John patronised his father's foundation at Lindores, as well as his uncle's foundation of Dieulacres.<sup>223</sup> He also patronised St Werburgh's Abbey after inheriting the honour of Chester and St Andrew's Priory in Scotland.<sup>224</sup>

David also confirmed a grant to Sawtry Abbey of mills in Paxton for 50s. 8d. yearly suggesting that he had a economic interest in ecclesiastical tenancies as much as a religious one and underlining the fact that the relationship had a more general interest for him as well.<sup>225</sup> Like the earls of Pembroke, David also granted charters to his knightly tenants which would suggest an interest in knightly tenancy and the services that it provided.<sup>226</sup> David and John, however, did not establish ties to any towns through their charters, although it is apparent that David had an interest in his towns in Scotland.<sup>227</sup>

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<sup>219</sup> Ibid., no. 147.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid., nos. 9-12, 14, 36, 46-49, 86-89, 94, 129, 130, 140, 174.

<sup>221</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, for Delapré Abbey nos. 21, 22; for Northampton Priory, nos. 58-61; for Sawtry Abbey nos. 75-80.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., for Arbroath Abbey nos.5; for Holyrood Abbey nos. 34; for Kelso Abbey no. 35.

<sup>223</sup> *BC*, for Lindores nos. 464-68; for Dieulacres nos. 445-448.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid., for St Werburgh nos. 449-50; for St Andrew's no 469.

<sup>225</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, no. 75.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid., nos, 6-7, 11, 16-17, 25-27, 53-55, 57, 81-83, 86.

<sup>227</sup> Stringer, *David of Huntingdon*, pp. 68-76.

The earls of Warwick also maintained ties to tenants. These were again largely limited to confirmations to tenants of knights' fees. Waleran, for instance confirmed the grant his brother William made of  $\frac{1}{4}$  fee to Roger of Ullenhall.<sup>228</sup> Waleran also made some grants to his burgage tenants. Unlike the other earls, however, he granted mainly to individuals rather than towns in general. These included burghers like, Nicholas Brito, Godwin of Warwick, John son of Richard.<sup>229</sup>

The Warwicks also granted some charters to a number of hereditary religious houses. These included the Priory of St Sepulchre in Warwick.<sup>230</sup> The priory of St Sepulchre had been founded by Henry de Newburgh in 1109.<sup>231</sup> The Warwicks were also concerned with religious services and in some of their charters clearly quitclaimed their rights, except for services such as having a canon in the priory of Kenilworth.<sup>232</sup> However, Waleran did reserve the right for lodging 2 nights annually in a confirmation of a grant given by his brother to Llanthony Priory.<sup>233</sup> He also conceded lands in Minety to Llanthony Priory for a rent of 12d. annually, and the lands granted by John of Kington of his fee to Reading Abbey in return for 6d. annually.<sup>234</sup> As in the other instances this suggests a more general interest in the relationship.

This would seem to indicate that these lords did maintain an interest in tenants as Earl Ranulf did, and therefore tenants must be considered as part of any lordship. Indeed, it is also possible to say that Ranulf was not alone in this regard, but rather just had slightly more success than his contemporaries.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems certain that Earl Ranulf had an interest in establishing relationships to his tenants in their broadest sense. It is also clear that the earl was

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<sup>228</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, no. 184 (1184-1199).

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 156 (1184-1204), 159 (1184-1204), 163 (1184-1204).

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 186 (1184-1204).

<sup>231</sup> 'Houses of Austin canons: St Sepulchre, Warwick,' *A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 2*, ed. by William Page (London: VCH, 1908), 97-99.

<sup>232</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, no. 165.

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 167.

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 168, 175.

not idiosyncratic in having this interest or establishing these relationships. The concern with tenants of various types can be seen in the charters of the earls of Pembroke, Huntingdon, and Warwick. Indeed, while it has often been suggested the earl had greater ties to his tenants due to the nature of his landholding this is not the case. The palatinate status of Cheshire is extremely unclear, and the earl's interest is no more or less than any of his contemporaries.

However, it is apparent that the earl and his contemporaries did not always have an active relationship with their tenants. It is obvious that for many of their tenants their role was only as a figure of authority and tradition. The earls did not frequently go to war, nor were aids or economic duties frequently requested. However, this should not diminish the relationship. It is clear that Earl Ranulf and his contemporaries had active roles in certain tenants' lives. The requirements of service were furthermore not predicated upon an active relationship. Rather the focus of this formal customary or legal relationship should be seen as largely circumstantial in its fulfilment. The utility of these services did of course depend upon the individuals involved and whether the non-active relationships were fruitful. These individuals still had a significant legal relationship to the earl, with responsibilities on both sides.

Tenancy does however, provide an underlying tie which can be built upon. The earl as a tenant of the crown provides service and looks for patronage, he himself recruits his counsellors and officers from tenurial connections. This relationship can also inform other relationships the earl has. Indeed in some respects the tenancy relationship makes demands of the earl and limits with whom he can establish relationship. The power of tenants was illustrated in the Cheshire Magna Carta. Tenancy and the hereditary relationship it creates, therefore, cannot be divorced from a lord's lordship concerns.



## Chapter 5

### Locals:

What role did Localism have in the Relationships Earl Ranulf created?

The methods used to establish lordly power in the lifetime of Earl Ranulf III of Chester are currently unclear. Recent historiography has overturned the influence of a number of traditional theories and has left somewhat of a vacuum.<sup>1</sup> One approach taken to the failure of the traditional models, by the historian David Crouch, was to place new emphasis on another theme in lordship, namely locality.<sup>2</sup> This chapter aims to address if, and how, Earl Ranulf utilised the theme of locality in his lordship.

There are a number of questions to answer when establishing whether Earl Ranulf utilised local connections in his recruitment of followers and formation of his power base. The first question addressed in this chapter will be the nature of locality itself. Localism in the historiography is a vague concept, not only in terms of the specifics of the relationships that are formed, but also what a locality actually is.

Approaching locality as a force for creating relationships also indicates that it should be seen in wider terms. As this thesis also aims to show the multiplicity of different forms of lordship and has shown that Earl Ranulf's lordship and those of his contemporaries are built up of connections with various different types of individuals, it will be necessary to consider any other forms of locality not identified by these historians. These other forms of locality will also, of course, be informed by knowledge of the relationships Earl Ranulf formed elsewhere in his lordship. This discussion comprises the final sections of this chapter. Throughout this chapter, as

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<sup>1</sup> For an overview of the debates see, Marjorie Chibnall, 'Feudalism and Lordship', in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. by Harper, Bill C. and E. van Hout (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2003), 123-34.

<sup>2</sup> David Crouch, 'From Stenton to Mcfarlane: Models of Societies of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries', *TRHS*, 5 (1995), 179-200.

in the previous chapters Earl Ranulf is also be compared with his contemporaries to establish how typical his lordship was with regard to locality.

### Locality and Tenancy

Locality for David Crouch is a theme relating to political power, and he suggests that locality was the prime political community in the Angevin period.<sup>3</sup> Historians like Crouch prioritise the connections lords make with knights and barons. Localism for him required the lord to establish ties to an independent elite. His appreciation of the nature of power in the period relies upon the concept that knights were largely free to do as they pleased.

The support for this approach comes in part from the idea of the creation of a new form of social class in the Angevin period called the gentry. The gentry included the lesser nobility; they were landed, but sat below the magnates in social rank. In this period they were primarily the wealthy knights, but more social classes would arise as time progressed. One key characteristic they shared, however, was a degree of independence. There is some debate over when the gentrification of knights started. Jean Scammell, places the origins of the gentry in the Angevin period, specifically as a result of the legal reforms of Henry II which gave greater rights to the lesser nobility to their lands.<sup>4</sup> Hugh Thomas would argue that the gentry and the move to greater independence was not defined by these legal reforms, although he does suggest that there were Angevin gentry and that independence was an important, if not the entire defining feature, of that group.<sup>5</sup> Peter Coss, a later medieval historian, while refuting that a formal Angevin gentry existed, allowed that individuals were evolving towards a more gentry-like status in this period.<sup>6</sup> Therefore, despite the arguments over the exact dates when a gentry was

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>4</sup> Jean Scammell, 'The Formation of the English Social Structure: Freedom, Knights, and Gentry, 1066-1300', *Speculum*, 68. 3 (1993), 591-618.

<sup>5</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, *Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders, and Thugs: The Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1993), pp. 14-58; for Thomas's definition of the gentry see pp. 193-94.

<sup>6</sup> Peter R. Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 11-12; Coss defines gentry in such a way to make them a late medieval phenomenon, see pp. 8-11.

formed, there is reason to believe that knights were becoming more independent in this period.

However, if these individuals were independent, why did they support lords and what services did they give? The answer to this question is unclear. It is certain that, in the 1215 civil war, localism focused political action to a great degree. That Lincolnshire and its neighbouring counties' knights often rebelled against their lords, including Earl Ranulf, suggests a great degree of independence.<sup>7</sup> This provides a direct contrast to the traditional models of lordship, where fixed and defined relationships are the norm. Such a mercenary attitude to alliances is very much the way that David Crouch envisioned locality functioning in his study of the earl of Pembroke.<sup>8</sup>

However, there are issues with the modern theme of locality being portrayed in this way. The problem comes in part because it was emphasised by David Crouch initially as a theme that was distinct from the traditional theory of feudalism, which saw tenancy as the basis of lordship. This meant that his theory fitted well with the perceived decline of tenancy in importance. However, recent historiography has criticised feudalism and would suggest that, prior to the thirteenth century tenancy was essentially a customary not fixed relationship, so the idea that lesser lords in that period did not have a level of independence is unlikely. Such an approach would validate John Gillingham's contention that the concept of an independent gentry was a theme in the Anglo-Saxon period, suggesting that independence among these classes has always existed and that locality has always been a factor in lordship.<sup>9</sup> It was also shown in Chapters 2 and 4 that the method Crouch used has its deficiencies, especially as a tool for identifying the place of tenants in a lordship.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> J. C. Holt, *The Northerners: A Study in the Reign of King John* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1961), pp. 14-16, 46-49.

<sup>8</sup> Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 170

<sup>9</sup> John Gillingham 'Thegns and Knights in Eleventh-Century England: Who Was Then the Gentleman?', *TRHS*, 5 (1995), 129-53.

<sup>10</sup> See Chapter 2: Magnates, Barons, and Inner Circles and Chapter 4: The Concept of *familiares*.

The problem for this theory is now whether tenancy and locality need to be contrasted. It seems more reasonable that tenants would, by having an existing tie with their lord, wish foremost to be part of his lordship and *vice versa*, and other locals were brought in not to replace, especially in this period, but to complement this. Such a view has since been adopted by David Crouch, although he still seems insistent that the honour is a diminishing force and needs to still be contrasted with locality.<sup>11</sup>

Such an approach would help solve another problem with the theme of locality. This is that there is little way to identify what locality is when historians talk about it. It has often been a conceit of historians, who approach history from the bastard feudal perspective, and therefore ignore the geography of tenancy and the lord's own demesne, that they assume that lords concentrate their area of influence around select but diffuse areas. Indeed, C. Burt suggested that the earls of Warwick had a changeable lordship in the thirteenth century under each earl, and that one, Earl Guy, concentrated his efforts on a particular area in the Midlands.<sup>12</sup> Yet there are no definitions of locality, as a geographical factor what is its range? Nor, in this study, is there a realisation that while the earl may have had an interest in a specific area this did not necessarily negate all his other interests. It is clear that once locality is seen in relation to other more fixed geographic interests it makes more sense. This would also help establish that tenancies could provide a good focus for where the earl was interested.

The problem with the honour as a focus for lordship has always been that it is perceived as being diffuse in England. David Crouch has more recently suggested that part of the concern of lords with establishing coherent geopolitical entities was due to the dispersed nature of honours in England.<sup>13</sup> Yet the diffuse nature of these honours has often been overstated. The majority of the earl of Chester's honours are situated within a certain region and have focal points in certain areas. Chester

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<sup>11</sup> David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 137-58.

<sup>12</sup> Caroline Burt, 'A 'Bastard Feudal' Affinity in the Making? The Followings of William and Guy Beauchamp, Earls of Warwick, 1268-1315', *Midland History*, 34. 2 (2009), 156-80.

<sup>13</sup> Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 137-46.

honour was diffused around the Midlands but had a heartland within Cheshire, Warwickshire and Staffordshire.<sup>14</sup> Lincoln honour was primarily located within Lincolnshire.<sup>15</sup> The earl's contemporaries' honours in England were also more compact than it is often suggested. Huntingdon honour was located mainly around counties in the East Midlands, including Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Rutland, Leicestershire, and Lincolnshire.<sup>16</sup> This would suggest that while they were not concentrated and compact honours they could form the nucleus of a political community bringing in non-tenants who were located near to them.

Peter Coss in a study of the locality of Coventry, was to suggest that, while he saw locality as a separate theme to the honour it was one which could help shape its identity. Features of the honour which were able to do this and create a community were local courts, although he saw this as only one feature which may be supported by others such as proximity.<sup>17</sup> Earl Ranulf was able to support this feudal nexus by granting gifts of rents to ministers in the local area and establishing ties to local officials.<sup>18</sup> Such connections were, however limited in longevity and after Earl Ranulf's death many of the structures he had set up fell apart, in Coss's view due to the fact of the demise of the lordship, the rise of Coventry as its own force, but also economic considerations such as rents became less useful.<sup>19</sup> There is also a perceived decline in the stability within the seignorial class over the period as problems of income and expenditure lead to difficulties for their lordship, which would not have helped maintain the ties the earl created.<sup>20</sup>

That Earl Ranulf had ties with individuals local to his honour, including those who were non tenants, is clear. It is also clear that the honour helped define this relationship. One key relationship was with the Audley barons in Staffordshire. The Audley family were significant landowners holding lands from multiple lords, but

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<sup>14</sup> For a breakdown of the honours lands outside of Cheshire see, Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, pp. 105-12; and also *HKF*, ii.

<sup>15</sup> See, Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, pp. 112-13.

<sup>16</sup> See *HKF*, ii.

<sup>17</sup> Peter Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: A Study in English Society c.1180 - c.1280* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 10-11, 54-60.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 61-81.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, Ch. 6.

not originally from Earl Ranulf.<sup>21</sup> The Audleys seem inclined, however, to seek the help of a local magnate and Henry Audley was attendant at Ranulf's court from 1194 to 1232, witnessing 29 of the earl's charters.<sup>22</sup> Henry seems to have made a determined effort to embed himself in Cheshire as well, as in 1217 he married the daughter of Ralph Mainwaring confirming him as part of the local elite.<sup>23</sup> Between 1217 and 1218 Ranulf confirmed the conveyance to Henry Audley of land in the Lyme (Cheshire) made by Aenora Malbank.<sup>24</sup> She had granted the lands as one of the four daughters and heiresses of William Malbank (II), in return for 100m. and a rent of 40s. annually.<sup>25</sup> In return for his attendance at court Henry also received in around 1217 to 1227 a confirmation from the earl for his gifts in Newhall (Cheshire) formerly of Hugh de Pascy, and Alstonfield (Staffordshire), with the rents of Tunstall, Chatterley, Chell, Thursfield, Bradwell, and Normacot, as well as a confirmation of the earl's right in the mill below his garden in Coventry, and Altregeder mill, with 18 bondmen. These lands were Aenora Malbanks and were likely conveyed to Henry de Audley at the same time that she sold her Cheshire estates.<sup>26</sup> This grant established Henry's position not only in Cheshire, but also arguably, in the earl's second locality surrounding Coventry. Such enthusiasm to join Ranulf's circle also proved useful as Henry was sheriff of Shropshire and Staffordshire on and off between 1227 and 1232.<sup>27</sup> Ranulf therefore was establishing ties to leading men loyal to himself in the localities under his influence, which makes more sense when seen in terms of his other relationships.

A second administrative basis that would possibly give some focus for locality was the shire. However, historians like David Crouch criticise the model of county along with that of the honour as being the most significant political organisations, in other

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<sup>21</sup> The Audley lands are listed in *CChartR*, i. p. 36.

<sup>22</sup> *BC*, nos. 211, 214, 229, 231, 232, 282-83, 309-10, 315, 349, 355-56, 359, 360, 373-74, 378-79, 381, 384, 393-96, 402, 408-09.

<sup>23</sup> Ormerod, *History*, iii. p. 56

<sup>24</sup> *BC*, no. 395.

<sup>25</sup> Ormerod, *History*, iii. p. 390.

<sup>26</sup> *BC*, no. 396

<sup>27</sup> The exact dates are 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1227 to Oct 1229 in Shropshire and Staffordshire (with deputies John Bonet, Robert Leie and William Bromley) and again 7<sup>th</sup> November to Mid. 1232 (with deputy William of Bromley), see A. Hughes, *List of Sheriffs for England and Wales: From the Earliest Times to A.D. 1831* (London: HMSO, 1898), p. 117.

words communities, in favour of locality.<sup>28</sup> Yet Peter Coss does not completely rule out the influence of the county, as he admits that, by the late thirteenth century, beyond doubt, the county was a community of the mind.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, Coss also suggests that the administrative function of the county was the penultimate expression of community for knights before the emergence of parliament.<sup>30</sup> In addition, he finds that the county may have had a role for community formation when suggesting that the strength of the county community from 1200 to 1230s was keeping the crown at bay.<sup>31</sup> It is clear, in the example of Henry Audley above, that Earl Ranulf was interested in recruiting sheriffs. He had relationships with a number across the counties in which he had an interest, and this may be the reason why.<sup>32</sup> Other medieval historians such as J. R. Maddicott also see the county in the Angevin period as a community which could act to bargain with, and hold off the crown, suggesting that the county may be a political focal point for locality as much as tenancies.<sup>33</sup>

The county in this period, however, is not often regarded as one of a class community, which is one of the main reasons Carpenter undertook to attack the idea of county community in her article.<sup>34</sup> Rather as Peter Coss suggested, although the county was a community, it was one which was inclusive and not specifically of the knightly class.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, Hugh Thomas does not disavow the existence of county community as well, but suggests that it was not in the Angevin period one solely representing the gentry.<sup>36</sup> Therefore, it had more limited political use for lordship. A county community due to the dispersed nature of honours would undoubtedly include multiple lords. It is only when the lesser landowners became a gentry and

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<sup>28</sup> David Crouch, 'From Stenton to Mcfarlane', p. 194.

<sup>29</sup> Coss, *The Origins of the English Gentry*, p. 212.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 202-15.

<sup>31</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 118-21.

<sup>32</sup> See Chapter 3: Royal Officers: The Sheriff.

<sup>33</sup> J. R. Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community 1215-1259', *P&P*, 102 (1984), 25-65.

<sup>34</sup> C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', *The Journal of British Studies*, 33. 4 (1994), 340-380.

<sup>35</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 109-21.

<sup>36</sup> Thomas, *Vassals*, p. 168

a county community was formed which would exclude lords, that it would have greater significance for lords to try and enter into relationships with it.

### Economic Locality

There are also other *foci* for creating a locality, one of which is economic. Traditionally, towns and their communities are examined, not only in isolation of each other, but are also seen as communities that were divorced from the rest of a lord's lordship.<sup>37</sup> The reason for this is that their primary concern is seen as having been trade and money, which was distinct from the perceived concerns of the rest of society. However, Peter Coss has shown that Earl Ranulf's knightly tenants provided social cohesion in the locality of Coventry and actually within the city itself.<sup>38</sup> That the earl's knightly tenants and ecclesiastical institutions can promote the earl's lordship in a particular area, including within a town, is not therefore in doubt. The particular aim of this section will be to turn this approach on its head and consider whether the town could also provide *foci* for lordship in a local area as well.

Towns were initially a visual bastion of a lord's lordship. Chester is a significant entity in the earl's Cheshire estates. It is the seat of his lordship. Chester also had a military function. The bulwark of its walls would have been an impressive sight. Like many large towns, a castle also stood at its heart.<sup>39</sup> Towns were initially created for lordship and administrative purposes and were therefore often created around royal or baronial castles, which also provided for the lord's household.<sup>40</sup> It is known that lords were the largest purchasers of goods and great households depended on the markets.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Rodney Hilton, *English and French Towns in Feudal Society: A Comparative Study* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 6-9.

<sup>38</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, especially Ch. 2.

<sup>39</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. p. 282.

<sup>40</sup> Richard Britnell, 'The Economy of British Towns 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1, 600-1540*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 105-26 (pp. 105-10).

<sup>41</sup> Edward Miller and John Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts, 1086-1348* (Harlow: Longman, 1995), pp. 138-40.



As Chester was at the centre of his honour, this often meant that the earl's court and household were present and sometimes resident in the city. It is little surprise therefore that when the earl granted the city a charter, his court and household also witnessed those grants.<sup>42</sup> Many of the witness to these grants are from families whose names are familiar from preceding chapters. Roger de Lacy was the earl's constable, Ralph Montalt was the earl's household steward, Phillip de Orreby his justiciar. These were household officers and leading tenants of the earl in Cheshire.<sup>43</sup> The Vernons were also local Cheshire barons as were others like the Duttons.<sup>44</sup> Clearly, in the earl's grants to the citizens of Chester the most obvious witnesses were the leading county officials. Yet this would also suggest that these men had some interest in the contents of the charter and therefore the town as well.

The witness lists to the charters which the earl grants to other towns also have similar groups of names, illustrating that the earl's grants to towns brought individuals together. Ranulf had also inherited Coventry. The witness list to the only charter the earl grants directly to the city of Coventry, a confirmation of the city's rights and liberties, again includes the names of the earl's leading barons and officers.<sup>45</sup> Men such as Roger constable of Chester, Robert Montalt, Ralph Mainwaring, were Ranulf's closest counsellors. Other names include officers such as Thomas Despenser, Philip Orreby, and William the Marshal, his officers. Many of the other witnesses represent barons within his lordship, such as Warin de Vernon.

In other towns it is interesting to note that some witnesses are more local to those towns. In the charter to Coventry, Simon Tuschet witnessed, and he held lands of the earl in Derbyshire.<sup>46</sup> Roger Camville, another witness, was also a tenant of the

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<sup>42</sup> *BC*, no. 256-58.

<sup>43</sup> See Chs. 2 and 3 above.

<sup>44</sup> Warin de Vernon witnessed the charters, *BC*, nos. 209, 213-214, 226, 232, 240, 242, 244, 256-258, 261, 266, 272, 276, 282-286, 309, 315, 321, 337, 340, 341, 348-350, 353-354, 357, 360, 373-374, 377-379, 381, 386, 383, 389, 400, 402; for the Vernon family see, Ormerod, *History*, iii. p. 130-131; for their lands see under the entries for Richard and Walter Vernon, in Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 723-24; for the Duttons see pp. 100, 243-45.

<sup>45</sup> *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter R. Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), no. 15.

<sup>46</sup> See *HKF*, ii, pp. 28-31

earl in Derbyshire and had interests in Warwickshire as his family founded Combe Abbey, near Coventry.<sup>47</sup> This would suggest that local lords were interested when Ranulf granted charters to local towns. Peter Coss in his study of Coventry, found enough evidence to suggest that a local community existed around Coventry if this should not be stretched too far.<sup>48</sup> Similar communities also existed elsewhere. In Ranulf's grant creating Salford in Lancashire, the witnesses to this charter included some interesting additions, Roger Derby likely held lands in West Derby and Roger Gernet held lands in Kirkby.<sup>49</sup> Both were therefore local Lancashire landowners.

In these grants there is one conspicuous absence, however, and that is the ecclesiastical lords. The interest of ecclesiastics in towns can, however, be postulated in the example of Leek. Between 1207 and 1215 Earl Ranulf also founded the borough of Leek.<sup>50</sup> It was undoubtedly created to form ties to the local area in Staffordshire. Yet it is no coincidence that Leek was established at the same time in Staffordshire as the earl's abbey of Dieulacres was founded in 1214.<sup>51</sup> In 1232 Earl Ranulf granted Dieulacres Abbey the manor of Leek with his heart.<sup>52</sup> This would suggest that the abbey would have had an interest before this date in the town. It is unlikely that they would not have known that the earl was intending to give this grant. Indeed, as the abbey and town were both founded by the earl it is conceivable that he founded the town to provide maintenance for the abbey and between 1220 and 1223 Earl Ranulf had granted Leek church to Dieulacres Abbey.<sup>53</sup> This grant establishes that the abbey had an interest within the town before it received it in total.

It is clear more generally that the church was becoming interested in towns and had various roles in them for, as well as being landlords, they also provided religious provision with churches, care with hospitals, and new orders were gradually being

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<sup>47</sup> For the Camvilles see *Ibid.*, ii, pp. 274-275; see also, pp. 56-57, 151-52, 253-54, 296-97.

<sup>48</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, p. 54.

<sup>49</sup> *Liber Feodorum*. pp. 1106, 1108, 1109.

<sup>50</sup> *BC*, no. 349.

<sup>51</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. pp. 627-28

<sup>52</sup> *BC*, no. 393.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 386.

introduced with towns in mind, such as the Augustinians and, later, the friars.<sup>54</sup> Indeed, churches established within an urban space could become a community themselves. John Doran has suggested that there was a desire within the religious community in Chester, and particularly emphasised by Lucian de Laude of Chester, to look out for each other from predatory outside influences.<sup>55</sup> Hugh de Nonant, bishop of Coventry had enforced his will on the abbey of St Werburgh during the Earl's minority, by getting Robert of Hastings appointed as abbot, which was later overturned by Earl Ranulf.<sup>56</sup>

However, it is through the foundations of Leek and Salford, especially that we can see Earl Ranulf attempting to increase his hold on his lands and the locality. With Chester and Coventry, he inherited a local community. But why would landowners and ecclesiastics be interested in new towns? How could the establishment of towns help form lordship bonds?

The reason that towns could form lordship relationships, beyond those to the town itself, was because they were clearly not independent entities, but part of a local community in which they often formed the economic heart as the main trading centre.<sup>57</sup> Therefore, rather than just seeing them as visual symbols, it is also important to consider how towns acted with regard to the local communities themselves. This approach is validated by how towns are more often now classified. Traditionally, it was their legal status that gave them that classification, but now they are seen as communities with certain distinct features suggesting more of a social construct rather than a legal one.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Julia Barrow, 'Churches, Education and Literacy in Towns 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1, 600-1540*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp. 127-52 (pp. 142-45).

<sup>55</sup> John Doran, 'St Werburgh's, St John's and the Liber Luciani de laude Cestrie', in *Mapping the Medieval City: Space, Place and Identity in Chester C. 1200-1600*, ed. by Catherine A. M. Clarke (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2013), pp. 57-77 (pp. 65-71).

<sup>56</sup> Doran, 'St Werburgh's', (pp. 62-63).

<sup>57</sup> Robert S. Lopez saw them as the nerve centres for commercialisation, see Robert S. Lopez, *The Commercial Revolution of the Middle Ages, 950-1350*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 86-87.

<sup>58</sup> Susan Reynolds criticised how towns have traditionally been classified in *An Introduction to the History of English Medieval Towns* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977), p. 52; it is more common now to see them in a wider sense, D. M. Palliser, 'Introduction', in *The Cambridge Urban History of*

The earl's emphasis on the mercantile and economic role of his new foundations and their impact in the locality can be seen in the foundation charters below. The foundation charter of Leek from between 1207 to 1215 states that:

1. Ranulf Earl of Chester to all future or present to whom the present letter it comes, greeting. Let it be known to you that I gave and conceded and by this my present charter confirmed to my free burghers remaining in my borough of Leek these liberties written below, namely that any of the aforementioned burghers has  $\frac{1}{2}$  acre of land to his *mansuram* and one acre in the plain, and in my forest of Leek timber to his building (*edfica*) and wood for his fire under the view of my forester, and communal pasture to all kinds of livestock in the pasture pertaining to my manor of Leek.

2. And that my aforementioned burghers of Leek throughout all Cheshire should be free and quit of toll over water, in villages, and in all places, and also in the city of Chester, concerning all merchandise, excepting salt in Wiches. And that they may be quit of pannage for all the community of my manor of Leek, and that their corn they may mill in my corn mill after that in the hopper.

3. And that all who gather in the market place and the fair of my aforementioned town, should be quit for the same toll that in other free markets is given in the county of Staffordshire.

4. And the aforementioned burghers for the first three years will be quit of farm, and after the three years elapses each of them will return 12d. of farm annually for all service pertaining to me, and they will be quit of all amercement pertaining to the aforementioned town, for 12d.

5. And the aforementioned burghers during planting shall choose the reeve with my assent and my counsel or that of my bailiffs.

6. And it is allowed to whoever of my burghers to give or sell his burgage to whoever he wishes, unless into religion, saving toll, namely 4d., and saving my rent.

7. And I wish that my aforementioned burghers may be as free as free burghers of other boroughs in Staffordshire. Witnessed by Philip de Orreby then my Justice, Henry de Audley, Warin de Vernon, William de Venables, Hamone de Mascy, Peter the Clerk, Liulph the Sheriff, Richard Fitton, and many others.<sup>59</sup>

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*Britain: Volume 1, 600-1540*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 3-15.

<sup>59</sup> BC, no. 349. My translation of the Latin:

1. *Rabulphus comes Cestrie omnibus tam futuris quam presentibus, ad quos presens scriptum pervenerit, salutem. Notum sit vobis me dedisse et concessisse et presenti carta mea confirmasse liberis burgensibus meis manentibus in burgo meo de Lech has libertates subscriptas, scilicet quod quilibet predictorum burgensium habeat dimidiam acram terre ad mansuram suam et unam acram in campis, et in foresta mea de Lech maeremium ad edificia sua et boscum ad focum suum per visum forestariorum meorum, et pasturam communem ad omne genus pecudum in pastura ad manerium meum de Lech pertinente.*

2. *Et quod predicti burgenses mei de Lech per totum Cestrisiram sint liberi et quieti de toleio in aquis, in villis et in omnibus locis, et etiam in civitate Cestrie, de omnibus marchandis, excepto sale in*

This charter was based upon the charters granted to Chester by his predecessors. The earliest extant charter granted to Chester grants liberties and customs granted by his ancestors, including freedom from inquest and assize as well as other rights including those relating to their chattels. Within the charter granted to Leek we see clauses establishing the rights of the tenants, their responsibilities to the earl, and ensuring the viability of the community (clauses 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7). These clauses are also common in royal charters granted to boroughs and are seen in Earl Ranulf's other foundations.<sup>60</sup>

It is interesting that clauses 1 and 2 also concern their rights to local communal lands and various rights in the local countryside. It is apparent that the distinction between town and country is very fluid in this period. The grant to Frodsham also included a clause providing those burghers with rights to pasture and wood.<sup>61</sup> It has been noticed that many towns, although not all, had fields, at least at the time of *Domesday Book*, tying them to the countryside and that certain burghers had ties or lands on surrounding manors and that local military elites could have an interest in boroughs due to their military significance.<sup>62</sup> Peter Coss has shown that, in the earl's town of Coventry, individuals from the surrounding countryside including both knights and ministers held rents within Coventry itself, which should also, Coss states, be seen in light of a feudal or honorial nexus.<sup>63</sup> Other studies have

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*Wychis. Et quod quieti sint de pasnagio per totam communam manerii mei de Lech, et quod blada sua ad molendina mea molant statim post illud quod erit in tremina et ad vicesimum granum.*

*3. Et quod omnes qui ad forum et ad nundinas predicti burgi mei convenerint, quieti sint per idem tolneium quod in aliis liberis mercatis datur in comitatu Staffordie.*

*4. Et burgenses predicti per primos tres annos quieti erunt de firma, et post tres annos elapsos reddet quilibet eorum duodecim denarios de firma per annum pro omni servicio mihi pertinente, et quietus erit de omni misericordia, que ad predictam villam pertinet, pro duodecim denariis.*

*5. Et predicti burgenses per semetipsos prepositum sibi facient per assensum et consilium meum aut ballivi mei.*

*6. Et liceat cuilibet burgensi burgagium suum dare aut vendere cuicumque voluerit, nisi religioni, salvo tolneo, scilicet quatuor denariis, et salvo redditu meo.*

*7. Et volo quod predicti burgenses mei sint tam liberi ut sunt liberiores burgenses de aliquo burgo de Staffordesiria. Hiis testibus Phillippo de Orreby tunc iusticario meo, Henrico de Aldytheleghe, Warino de Vernon, Willelmo de Venables, Hamone de Masci, Petro clerico, Liulpho vicecomite, Ricardo Phiton, et multis aliis.*

<sup>60</sup> See for instance the records found in *British Borough Charters, 1042-1216*, ed. by Adolphus Ballard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1913); *British Borough Charters, 1216-1307*, ed. by Adolphus Ballard and James Tait (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923).

<sup>61</sup> BC, no. 371.

<sup>62</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 25-29.

<sup>63</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and locality*, pp. 61-81.

shown that towns such as York, even in the later medieval period still had connections to the countryside surrounding them making it more difficult to clearly separate one from the other.<sup>64</sup>

Towns therefore had more than merely economic interest for the local countryside. It has been suggested, for instance, that there was a migration of rural people to towns although the specifics are difficult to determine.<sup>65</sup> James Galloway also believes that there was immigration from the country to towns, but suggests that the picture was more complex as people returned to rural life or maintained it during occupation of the town as well.<sup>66</sup> The flow of people was therefore not just one way, underlining a greater sense of interaction. The Cheshire Magna Carta discussed in the last chapter has a clause (9) which provides evidence of this movement. This clause defines the limitations of the barons villeins gaining freedom within the city of Chester, suggesting that such events were not uncommon.<sup>67</sup> Some historians have also pointed out that for peasants in this period lordship played a large role in their migration patterns, which would indicate that such migrations could help local lordship.<sup>68</sup>

The link between town and country should not, however, be stretched too far as they were separate entities.<sup>69</sup> For Staffordshire Terry R. Slater argued that the topography of the town made it look fundamentally different, although he is less certain that such differences were evident everywhere.<sup>70</sup> But clearly there was also degree of compatibility in their communities.

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<sup>64</sup> Lorraine Attreed, 'Urban Identity in Medieval English Towns', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 32. 4 (2002), 571-92 (pp. 585-92).

<sup>65</sup> David Postles, 'Migration and mobility in a less mature economy: English internal migration, c.1200-1350', *Social History*, 25. 3 (2000), 285-99 (pp. 285-90).

<sup>66</sup> James A. Galloway, 'Urban Hinterlands in Later Medieval England', in *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections, 1100-1500*, ed. by Kate Giles and Christopher Dyer (Leeds: Maney, 2007), pp. 111-30 (pp. 114-19).

<sup>67</sup> For the Cheshire Magna Carta, Clause 9 see Appendix 2.

<sup>68</sup> Postles, 'Migration and mobility in a less mature economy', pp. 290-95.

<sup>69</sup> *The English Medieval Town: A Reader in English Urban History 1200-1540*, ed. by Richard Holt and G. Rosser (London: Longman, 1990), pp. 3-4.

<sup>70</sup> Terry R. Slater, 'Plan Characteristics of Small Boroughs and Market Settlements: Evidence from the Midlands', in *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections, 1100-1500*, ed. by Kate Giles and Christopher Dyer (Leeds: Maney, 2007), pp. 23-41

However, these were not the only clauses which indicate that the purpose of Leek was to interact with the local community. Clauses 2 and 3 refer specifically to the mercantile activity. In the last chapter we looked at how it benefitted the earl economically, but it is clear in these charters that such activity affected the local community as much. Clause 3, especially, suggests that the earl is promoting trade within the city and local area through freeing individuals from tolls on purchases within his market akin to others in the county. That he also mentions the county in clause 7 when giving rights to the burghers suggests that he intends the town of Leek to act in a county-wide sphere of influence not just as a local economic centre for his domains.

Would Leek have had much influence within the county however? In the Angevin period, it is apparent that there was great commercialisation of the economy which brought all types of individuals to trade. The numbers of local fairs and markets increased, but there was also an explosion of urban development which was focused upon trade.<sup>71</sup> Urban centres offered greater trading opportunities, which could profit their lord as well as provide administrative centres. In the late thirteenth century there is clear evidence that landlords, or knights, as well as peasants had to sell their surplus.<sup>72</sup> Generally, a rising percentage of demesne production was being made for the market rather than consumption even in the upper nobility.<sup>73</sup> That this was becoming more prevalent was undoubtedly helped or caused by the inflation of 1200 and over the thirteenth century.<sup>74</sup> This meant that customary payments were less of a focus for the lords from their tenants and demesne farming and market payments were becoming more relevant to land

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<sup>71</sup> Grenville Astill, 'General Survey 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1, 600-1540*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 27-49 (pp. 46-49); Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society*, pp. 79-90; Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 66, 176-180; Edward Miller and John Hatcher, *Medieval England: Rural Society and Economic Change, 1086-1348*, (London: Longman, 1978), pp. 70-74; *The English Medieval Town: A Reader*, p. 1; Heather Swanson, *Medieval British Towns* (Basingstoke: MacMillan 1999), Ch. 1.

<sup>72</sup> Peter Coss, *The Foundations of Gentry Life: The Multons of Frampton and Their World, 1270-1370* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 100-14; Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 140-43.

<sup>73</sup> Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society*, pp. 102-23; Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Rural Society and Economic Change*, pp. 224-29.

<sup>74</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Rural Society and Economic Change*, pp. 64-69.

lordship. Such circumstances also help explain why Hugh Thomas sees the lords of Richmond also cultivating demesne in this period.<sup>75</sup> A similar move to direct and more intensive farming has also been pointed out by Peter Coss in the locality of Coventry, although it may have only begun in the 1220s.<sup>76</sup> Urban markets were, therefore of definite interest to the local area.

By founding a town in a local area and being the lord of a town, the earl had, in essence also gained authority over the economic activity in the area. Paul Courtney also sees towns as an essential part of Marcher lordship, not just as a physical expression of a lords lordship, or a tenancy to be exploited but also a means to transform local society into a monetarised one.<sup>77</sup> The earl therefore actively sought to promote trade by his merchants and the prime focus of any of the grants he made to the towns was towards this end. Such promotion seen at Leek can also be found in a more pronounced manner with Salford. The foundation charter of Salford of 1231 states:

1. Ranulf Earl of Chester and Lincoln to all present and future who inspect the present charter or hear it, greeting. You may know I gave and conceded and by this my present charter confirm that the town of Salford may be a free borough and that the burghers living there shall have and hold all these liberties listed below.
2. Firstly that any burgher has an acre to his burgage and he returns from his burgage each year 12d. for all farm that pertain to the borough.
3. If truly the reeve (*prepositus*) of the town shall charge any burgher concerning any plea and the accused does not come on the day to the court (*Langhemote*) nor any other for him due to illness, he is in my forfeiture 12d.
4. Item, if any burgher impleads another burgher concerning any debt and the same acknowledges the debt, the reeve puts to him the day, namely the eighth, and if he does not come on the day, he returns to me 12d. for forfeiture of the day, and the debt he returns, and to the reeve [he pays] 4d.
5. If any burgher in the borough strikes or beats another burger in anger without blood coming out, he shall make peace with him through the sight of burgesses, saving my justice, nemely 12d.

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<sup>75</sup> Hugh M. Thomas, 'Subinfeudation and Alienation of Land, Economic Development, and the Wealth of Nobles on the Honor of Richmond, 1066 to C. 1300', *Albion*, 26. 3 (1994), 397-417.

<sup>76</sup> Coss, *Lordship, Knighthood and Locality*, pp. 85, 306.

<sup>77</sup> Paul Courtney, 'Urbanism and 'Feudalism' on the Periphery: Some Thoughts from Marcher Wales', in *Town and Country in the Middle Ages: Contrasts, Contacts and Interconnections, 1100-1500*, ed. by Kate Giles and Christopher Dyer (Leeds: Maney, 2007), pp. 65-84 (pp. 77-79).



6. Item, if anyone shall be impleaded in the borough concerning other pleas, and he shall not reply neither to a burgess, nor villains, nor any other, unless in his Portmannemot, that is concerning pleas that pertain to the borough.
7. If any burgher or other appeals another burgher concerning robbery, the reeve (*prefectus*) brings him to respond and to stand justice in the court (*Portmannemote*), under my protection
8. Item, if shall have been impleaded concerning his neighbour or concerning any other concerning anything, which pertains to the borough, and three days have followed, if testimony it will be had of the reeve and of his neighbours that his *adversarius* was lacking during these three days, no [time] after is given to him to respond concerning that plea and the other falls in amercement.
9. Item, no burgher ought to cook bread which it may be to be sold, unless baked in my oven for reasonable customs.
10. If I will have a mill here, those same burghers may mill at my mill they a measure of flour on the twentieth, and if I do not have a mill in the same place, they can mill wherever they wish.
11. Item, the aforementioned burghers are able to choose the reeve of the same borough from among themselves, whomever they wish and remove them at the end of the year.
12. Item, any burgher is able to give his burgage, to mortgage or sell to whoever he wants, unless the heir wants to buy it; but the next heir will be approached, about that purchase, saving my service, thus nevertheless that it is not sold to religion.
13. Item, the burgers are able to distrain their debtors for their debts in the borough, if the debtor acknowledges the debt, unless they are tenants of the borough. The chattel of the burghers ought not to be distrained for any other debt, unless for their own property.
14. Item, the aforementioned burghers and all who shall buy or sell to them wheresoever it may be in my lordship, whether in fair or in market, shall be quit of toll, saving tolls of salt.
15. Whoever breaks the assize whether of bread or ale he will remain in forfeiture of 12d. in three turns, and at the  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn he makes the assize to the town.
16. For the same burghers will have communal free pasture in all the woods, in the plain, in the pasture pertaining to the town of Salford, and quit they may be of pannage in that wood of the town of Salford. The same burghers may reasonably take from the aforementioned wood all necessary for building and for burning.
17. Item, anyone is able to implead on behalf of his wife and his family, and a wife is able to return the farm to the reeve, to do that which ought to be done, and plea on behalf of her husband, if the same perhaps will be elsewhere.
18. If the burgher does not have an heir, he will be able to bequeath his burgage and chattels, on his death, wherever he pleases, saving nevertheless my right, that is 4d., and saving the service pertaining to the same burgage, and namely that that burgage is not alienated to religion.

19. When a burgher dies, his wife will remain in the dwelling with the heir and there she shall have necessities to live, as long as she is not married; and if she wishes to be married, she may leave without dowry and the heir as lord remains in the house.
20. Item, when a burgher dies, his heirs will give no other relief to me unless of this military type, namely of a sword or a bow or a spear.
21. Nobody in the wapentake of Salford, whether hosier, cobbler, fuller, or other such, shall work his office, unless he is in the borough, saving to the liberties of the barons.
22. To the reeve the burghers shall render their farm of the borough at four terms of the year, of course at the birth of the Lord 3d., at the middle of Lent 3d., at feast of St. John the Baptist 3d. and at the feast of St. Michael 3d.
23. All the aforementioned pleas will be resolved in the court of the reeve (*ballivis*) of the lord count in the sight of the burghers.
24. Whosoever wishes to sell his burgage outside religion and depart from the town to depart, will give to me 4d. and he will go freely, wherever he wants, with all his chattels.
25. I truly Ranulf and my heirs, grant all the aforementioned liberties and customs, to the aforementioned burghers and their heirs against all family in perpetual warranty, saving to myself and my heirs reasonable tallage, when the lord king shall make a tallage of his boroughs in England. In memory of which matters I attach my seal to the present letter. Witnessed by Lord William Justice of Chester, Simon de Montfort, Pagan de Chauris, Fulk son of Warin, Gilbert de Seagrave, William de Arden, Richard de Vernun, Roger Gernet, Roger de Derby, Geoffrey de Burun, Hugh de Burun, Simon and John clerks, and many others.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> BC, no. 435. My translation of the Latin text (numbering is mine):

1. *Ranulfus comes Cestrie et Lincolnie omnibus presentibus et futuris presentem cartam inspecturis vel audituris salutem. Sciatis me dedisse, concessisse et hac presenti carta mea confirmasse, quod villa de Salford sit liber burgus et quod burgenses in illo habitantes habeant et teneant omnes istas libertates subscriptas.*
2. *In primo, quod quilibet burgensium habeat unam acram ad burgagium suum et reddet de quolibet burgagio suo per annum duodecim denarios pro omnibus firmis que ad burgum illum pertinent.*
3. *Si vero prepositus ville aliquem burgensem calumpniaverit de aliquo placito et calumpniatus non venerit ad diem nec aliquis pro eo infra Langhemote, in forisfactura mea est de duodecim denariis.*
4. *Item, si aliquis burgensis aliquem burgensem implacitaverit de aliquo debito et ipse cognoverit debitum, prepositus ponat ei diem, scilicet octavum, et si non venerit ad diem, reddat mihi duodecim denarios pro forisfactura diei, et debitum reddat, et preposito iii. denarios.*
5. *Si aliquis burgensis in burgo aliquem burgensem per iram percusserit vel verberaverit absque sanguinis effusione, per visum burgensium sibi pacem faciet, salvo iure meo, scilicet xii. Denariis.*
6. *Item, si aliquis implacitatus fuerit in burgo de aliquo placito, non respondeat nec burgensi nec villano nec alicui alio nisi in suo Portmannemot, scilicet de placito quod ad burgum pertinet.*
7. *Si aliquis burgensis vel alius appellet aliquem burgensem de latrocino, prefectus attachiet eum ad respondendum et stare iudicio in Portmannemote, salvo iure meo.*
8. *Item, si aliquis implacitatus fuerit de vicino suo vel de aliquo de aliquibus, que ad burgum pertineant, et tres dies secutus fuerit, si testimonium habuerit de preposito et de vicinis suis quod adversarius suus defectus sit ad hos tres dies, nullam postea det ei responsum de illo placito et alter cadat in misericordiam.*
9. *Item, nullus burgensis debet furnare panem qui sit ad vendendum, nisi ad furnam meum per rationabiles consuetudines.*

This charter, as does that for Leek, provides a raft of similar rights to the burghers. Interestingly this charter is much more detailed than that of his previous foundation charters. It borrows some elements from his previous charters and includes rights he granted Chester, such as some rights of governance. However, the charter may in fact have also been influenced by the growing legality of the period and the need to define rights and laws which was seen in the production, by

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10. *Si molendinum ibi habuero, ipsi burgenses ad molendinum meum molent ad vicesimum vas, et si molendinum non habuero ibidem, molent quocumque voluerint.*

11. *Item, predicti burgenses possunt eligere prepositum de se ipsis, quem voluerint, et remove in fine anni.*

12. *Item, quilibet burgensis burgagium suum potest dare, inpignorare vel vendere cuicumque voluerit, nisi heres illud emere voluerit; sed heres propinquior erit, ad illud emendum, salvo servitio meo, ita tamen quod non vendatur in religione.*

13. *Item, burgenses possunt namare debitores suos pro debitis suis in burgo, si debitor cognoverit debitum, nisi sint tenentes de burgo. Catalla burgensium non debent namari pro alicuius debitis, nisi pro suis propriis.*

14. *Item, burgenses predicti et omnes sui de quocumque emerint vel venderint, ubicumque fuerit in dominicis meis, sive in nundinis sive in foris, erunt quieti de tolneto, salvo tolneto salis.*

15. *Quicumque fregerit assisam sive pane sive de cervisia remanebit in forisfactura de xii. Denariis tribus vicibus, et ad quartam vicem faciet assisam ville.*

16. *Ipsi autem burgenses habebunt communam liberam pasturam in bosco, in plano, in pasturis omnibus pertentibus ville Salfordie, et quieti erunt de pannagio in ipso bosco ville de Salfordia. Iidem burgenses rationabiliter de predicto bosco capient omnia necessaria ad edificandum et ad arandum.*

17. *Item, quilibet potest esse ad placitum pro sponsa sua et familia sua, et sponsa cuiuslibet potest firmam suam reddere preposito, faciendo quod facere debeat, et placitum sequi pro sponso suo, si ipse forsan alibi fuerit.*

18. *Burgensis, si non habuerit heredem, legare poterit burgagium suum et catalla sua, cum moriatur, ubicumque ei placuerit, salvo tamen iure meo, scilicet iii. Denariis, et salvo servitio ad ipsum burgagium pertinente, ita scilicet quod illud burgagium non alienetur in religione.*

19. *Cum burgensis moriatur, sponsa sua manebit in domo cum herede et ibi habebit necessaria, quamdiu sine marito fuerit; et ex quo maritari voluerit, discedet libere sine dote et heres ut dominus manebit in domo.*

20. *Item, cum burgensis moriatur, heres eius nullum aliud relevium dabit mihi nisi huiusmodi arma, scilicet gladium vel arcum vel lanceam.*

21. *Nullus infra wapentachium Salfordie, ut sutor, peliparius, fullo vel aliquis talis, exerceat officium suum, nisi sit in burgo, salvis libertatibus baronem.*

22. *Prefati vero burgenses dabunt firmam suam de burgagio ad quatuor anni terminos, scilicet ad natale Domini iii. denarios, ad mediam quadragesimam iii. denarios, ad festum beati Iohannis Baptiste iii. denarios, et ad festum beati Michaelis iii. denarios.*

23. *Omnia predicta placita reunt terminata coram ballivis domini comitis per visum burgensium.*

24. *Quicumque burgagium suum vendere voluerit extra religionem et a villa discedere, dabit mihi iii. Denarios et libere ibit, quocumque voluerit, cum omnibus catallis suis.*

25. *Ego vero Rannulfus et heredes mei omnes predictas libertates et consuetudines predictis burgensibus et heredibus suis contra omnes gentes in perpetuum warrantabimus, salve mihi et heredibus meis rationabili tallagio, quando dominus rex burgos suos per Angliam talliare fecerit. In cuius rei memoriam presenti pagine sigillum meum apposui. Hiis testibus domino Willelmo iuticario Cestrie, Simone de Monti Forti, Pagano de Chaurciis, Fulcone filio Warini, Gilberto de Segrava, Walkelino de Arderne, Ricardo de Vernun, Rogero Gernet, Rogero de Derby, Galfrido de Burun, Hugone de Birun, Simone et Johanne clericis, et multis aliis.*

Earl Ranulf's administration of the Cheshire Magna Carta. Thus, the impact of this event combined with the influence of the crowns increasing bureaucracy may have shifted such charters to become more detailed and refined. This was certainly the case in the royal administration.<sup>79</sup>

The charter to Salford grants some similar rights namely to a certain size of lands (clause 2), rules regarding inheritance (clauses, 12, 18, and 19), sale of their burgage (clause 24), access to communal pasture (clause 16), requirement to use the lords mill (clause 10) in return for the payment of a farm (clauses 2 and 22). The more detailed clauses relate to the workings of the judicial system (clauses, 3-8, 17 and 23) within the town and the rights of the burghers therein. This would suggest that these rights were of the utmost importance to define. It also stipulates rights to elect their reeve (clause 11). These clauses are essentially internal to the burgage tenants themselves and provide important indications that Earl Ranulf was providing a solid legal relationship with them.

The more interesting clauses for the establishment of the wider influence of the establishment comes from clauses 9, 14 and 21. Through clause 14 Ranulf promoted trade through his towns by reducing the tolls and dues required by the earl on sales and purchases. This clause implies that the citizens have been placed in a prominent position at the heart of a local economy. The fact that the town's merchants can purchase goods from local villages or sell their stuffs there without toll would encourage trade. The earl by giving away these rights therefore expanded the economy which, as Susan Reynolds has suggested was worth his while.<sup>80</sup> It is also important to note that James A. Galloway highlighted that the urban grip on the countryside in England was weaker and subject to market forces due to the rapid process of urbanisation.<sup>81</sup> Active promotion of the town and the economy was therefore required, but it would not only increase the economic activity providing more taxable trades but also give the earl more influence within his own lands.

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<sup>79</sup> *British Borough Charters, 1216-1307*, pp. xviii.

<sup>80</sup> Reynolds, *An Introduction*, p. 53; see also Swanson, *Medieval British Towns*, pp. 26-29.

<sup>81</sup> Galloway, 'Urban Hinterlands in Later Medieval England', p. 112.

The exception of sale in the Wiches also seen in clause 2 of the charter to Leek, is also important. This is because the Wiches, which produced salt, were the main source of salt in the county of Cheshire and were heavily regulated by rules on the authority of earl.<sup>82</sup> They did not have burgage tenure and therefore would not be classed as a town by some historians.<sup>83</sup> However, it is clear that they were manufacturers and were becoming industrial and commercial entities in the area.<sup>84</sup> Salt was a key staple in the period, required by everybody, and Earl Ranulf certainly tried to retain control of it, which shows the balance that the earl was trying to maintain in managing the economy.

The earl also encouraged trade and investment in his towns by providing regulations for loans and debts. Clauses 4 and 13 specifically detail what the processes regarding debts and their recovery are. The ability to lend money and know that by lending money it is secured by a court, would allow the process to flourish, and perhaps also indicates that a more monetary basis to the economy was being planned. The increase in monetarisation of the economy and protection of credit is seen as a growing theme in the thirteenth century spurred by the needs of merchants.<sup>85</sup> This of course makes trade more likely to increase because it allows individuals to speculate, without already having large cash reserves. It is seen as an essential element of medieval trade.<sup>86</sup> Galloway has shown that by the late medieval period contracts and debts often linked a town to the local countryside which sought commodities.<sup>87</sup> Ranulf therefore also ensured that there was similar regulation in Chester.<sup>88</sup>

Ranulf also encouraged trade with his towns by ensuring monopolies on certain trades, which are often limited to these centres. For instance, in clauses 9 and 21

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<sup>82</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 734-35.

<sup>83</sup> For Tait the town was synonymous with burgage tenure, see James Tait, *The Medieval English Borough: Studies on Its Origins and Constitutional History* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1936).

<sup>84</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 75-77.

<sup>85</sup> Britnell, 'The Economy of British Towns 600-1300', pp. 118-21.

<sup>86</sup> M. M. Postan, *Medieval Trade and Finance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), Ch. 1.

<sup>87</sup> Galloway, 'Urban Hinterlands in Later Medieval England', pp. 119-23.

<sup>88</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, ZCH 4; transcript in *BC*, no. 256.

he limits the production of bread to his ovens and trades practising outside of the town. This protection would also indicate that these towns had markets which provided resources which the earl wished to retain in the town. It is apparent that country villages could also employ craftsmen for their own needs.<sup>89</sup> However, this regulation would stop individuals from competing directly with the town. Regulation and protection of trade were common in the period, but it is uncertain if they helped or hindered in some instance by driving consumers to other markets.<sup>90</sup> The crown, however, throughout the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, sought to regulate trade and prices where it could in order to prevent monopolies and standardise costs.<sup>91</sup>

Towns, however, provide more than just crafts, they also provided goods. In Coventry, a number of residents can be identified from the 1232 Warwickshire eyre, or court, records, which lists the bailiffs and presenting jury of the city.<sup>92</sup> These men included Adam the Vintar, who was probably a merchant of wine based upon his surname. Vintar may be derived from the Latin term for wine, *vinum*. Chester was also a key economic centre, not only due to its own industry and crafts but also as it was a regulated port. *Domesday* identifies a number of laws, which imply port regulation in Chester through a customs procedure:

If a ship were to arrive at or depart from the port of the town without the king's leave, the king and the earl had 40s. from each man who was on the ships.

But if it were to come with the king's peace and with his leave, those who were on board sold what they had undisturbed. When it left, however, the king and the earl had 4d. from each load. If the king's reeve were to order those who had marten pelts not to sell to anyone until [they had] first [been] shown to him [and] he had bought, whoever did not observe this paid a fine of 40s.<sup>93</sup>

Later records exist regarding the port customs, but little is known about them in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, other than that something akin to that found

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<sup>89</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts*, pp. 128-34.

<sup>90</sup> Britnell, 'The Economy of British Towns 600-1300', pp. 125-26.

<sup>91</sup> Britnell, *The Commercialisation of English Society, 1000-1500*, pp. 90-97.

<sup>92</sup> Coss, *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*. p. 47.

<sup>93</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 716.

in *Domesday* was in operation.<sup>94</sup> Customs of course implies two factors. The first that goods were being brought from elsewhere suggesting that more exotic items could be brought in, and secondly that items could be sold to other markets. It is, however, unclear as to the nature of the goods that came and went in the port. Yet a good guess would be wine and wool, as these were traded nationally.<sup>95</sup> International tradeable items also include raw materials as well as items such as wine, and a dense network of trading routes had been set up in this period and after to accommodate such endeavours.<sup>96</sup> The earl and the locality to this port therefore benefited from trade not only in economic terms, but also from the products themselves, to which they would have ready access.

These factors would indicate that towns would have an influence on the local community in terms of providing goods, services, and markets as well as an administrative centre. It has long been suggested that ecclesiastical institutions were drawn to them for trade.<sup>97</sup> That the earl was the visible lord of these ventures would also provide him not only with economic dues, but also local influence as the markets would be run and provided through his grant and protection.

It is surprising, but the earl's contemporaries have less contact with towns despite the general shift to supporting them in the period. Earl David of Huntingdon did ensure that he had contact and established ties to towns in Scotland, but does not seem to have made the same effort in England.<sup>98</sup> His successor John le Scot seems to have followed his father until he acquired his uncle, Earl Ranulf's, estates, at which point he made sure to establish his links to Chester.<sup>99</sup> The Warwicks were also very limited in their patronising and support of trade within the urban sphere in their counties.

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<sup>94</sup> *Chester Customs Accounts, 1301-1566*, ed. by K. P., Wilson, The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, vol. 111 (Liverpool: The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1969), pp. 1-3.

<sup>95</sup> For general trade in this period see, Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Towns, Commerce and Crafts, 1086-1348*, pp. 187-97; for evidence of wine being brought into Chester see, *Chester Customs Accounts, 1301-1566*, p. 2, n. 3.

<sup>96</sup> Miller and Hatcher, *Medieval England: Rural Society and Economic Change*, pp. 79-83.

<sup>97</sup> Janet E. Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire, 1069-1215* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 234-35, 269-71.

<sup>98</sup> For his relationship to towns in Scotland see Stringer, *David of Huntingdon*, pp. 68-76.

<sup>99</sup> *BC*, no. 448.

The Marshals by contrast do ensure that they at least have good relations with their main urban centre within Pembrokeshire, Haverfordwest.<sup>100</sup> Wales, however, had fewer opportunities in this regard: urban expansion was limited in Wales compared to England.<sup>101</sup> However, the Marshals do seem to have noticed the value of establishing economic control, although they are limited in this regard in England, purchasing only one town, Hill Croom.<sup>102</sup> In Ireland they were much more active, founding towns and promoting trade utilising the same means that Earl Ranulf had.<sup>103</sup>

There are, however, limitations to how far economic localities can spread. Earl Ranulf, like his contemporaries did not have urban centres in every county. His closest ties are in Cheshire, Staffordshire, Lancashire, and Warwickshire, with Chester, Coventry, Frodsham, Leek, and Salford. However, the earl did have ties to urban centres in other counties. Richmond was another city to which the earl should have had a connection as he gained lordship of the honour for certain periods in his life. Yet there is no connection to Richmond in his charters. A similar picture emerges in relation to the earl's relationship with Leicester. Leicester, through the actions of the founder of the dynasty of the earls of Leicester, became a seigneurial burgh, with the lord's influence competing primarily with the bishop of Lincoln, although the crown retained some influence there as well.<sup>104</sup> Earl Ranulf, through his mother, gained control of half of the honour in custody and half of the city with the third penny from 1215 until his death in 1232.<sup>105</sup> Yet the earl had very little to do with the city, as it is not mentioned in any of his charters.

Lincoln, like Chester was also at the heart of one of the earl's honours; the honour of Lincoln given to the earl through right of inheritance by King Richard following

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<sup>100</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, no. 46.

<sup>101</sup> Richard Holt, 'Society and Population 600-1300', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain: Volume 1, 600-1540*, ed. by D. M. Palliser (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 79-104 (pp. 99-100).

<sup>102</sup> Crouch, *The Acts and Letters*, no. 49.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, nos, 26, 55, 127, 161, 169.

<sup>104</sup> *Records of the Borough of Leicester: Being a series of Extracts from the Archives of the Corporation of Leicester, 1103-1327*, ed. by Mary Bateson (London: Cambridge University Press, 1899), pp. xii-xiv.

<sup>105</sup> *Records of the Borough of Leicester*, pp. xiv-xvi



the death of the then earl of Lincoln in 1198.<sup>106</sup> The city was much larger than Chester having more houses and more moneyers at the time of *Domesday*. Yet surprisingly the earl has very little to do with the city in his charters and *Domesday Book* provides little information.<sup>107</sup> A reason for this may be the fact that the crown took a more active role in Lincoln and the city is regarded as being a royal burgh. The farm of the city had also been granted to the burgesses themselves by the crown and they were therefore semi-independent.<sup>108</sup>

These three examples would seem to suggest that economic control of an area was difficult to obtain. The crown had an interest in some towns and with the growing independence of towns the role of lords was diminishing. However, it is clear that Ranulf sought to control certain markets where he was able, and this was primarily in the West Midlands and North West, local to the centre of his honours.

### Identities and Local Culture

Lords had many ways to display their power and these can also have a impact on how the earl would be viewed within localities. In previous chapters we have considered some of these factors. Earl Ranulf's interaction with the crown, especially during the coronation, would illustrate his power. His interaction with other lords have been shown to support his lordship. The creation of a group of local supporters among the baronage, his court and demonstrations of largesse to his tenants also are visual reminders of the earl's status. The earl's bureaucracy and administration are further examples and illustrations of his power. All these relationships and interactions serve to promote the earl's image. However, it is unclear whether this identity was used by the earl for his lordship.

One key visual part of lordship which can help address this are the earl's seals which he attached to his charters. Seals clearly acted as authentication for Earl Ranulf. It

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<sup>106</sup> R. Eales, 'Ranulf (III) [Ranulf de Blundeville], sixth earl of Chester and First Earl of Lincoln (1170-1232), magnate', in *DNB* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>107</sup> It was suggested by Tait that the earls' rights in certain towns prior to Domesday, especially the third penny, had been eroded by the time of the survey. Tait, *The Medieval English Borough*, pp. 148-52.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 140, 176.

is supposed that Edward the Confessor may have brought them to Britain as a means of permanent authentication.<sup>109</sup> However, they also served other purposes. Susan Solway has suggested that seals and coins were the 'principal official material symbols attesting to the identity and to the legitimacy of those in power'.<sup>110</sup> For Brigitte Bedos-Rezak seals were the alternatives to individuals who were not present and this had a significant development on the concept of self as individuals become archetypes and known by their social group. Identity is become more impersonal and this impersonal identity the mark of authority.<sup>111</sup>

Seals are produced usually from wax utilising a metal die and affixed to a document by a tag.<sup>112</sup> The design and size of the seal varied over time and in terms of rank. Earl Ranulf had four known seals which have been identified by T. A. Heslop.<sup>113</sup> Three of his seals feature armed men on horseback, one features a heraldic shield.

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<sup>109</sup> P. D. A. Harvey, and A. McGuinnes, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals* (London: British Library and Public Record Office, 1996), pp. 1-8.

<sup>110</sup> Susan Solway, 'Introduction', in *Medieval Coins and Seals: Constructing Identity, Signifying Power*, ed. by Susan Solway (Turhout: Brepolis, 2015), pp. 9-20 (p. 9).

<sup>111</sup> Brigitte M. Bedos-Rezak, 'Medieval Identity: A Sign and a Concept' in *Medieval Coins and Seals: Constructing Identity, Signifying Power*, ed. by Susan Solway (Turhout: Brepolis, 2015), pp. 23-63.

<sup>112</sup> Harvey and McGuinnes, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp. 8-21.

<sup>113</sup> T. A. Heslop, 'The Seals of the Twelfth-Century Earls of Chester', in *Thacker*, pp. 179-97.



First seal of Ranulf III (after a drawing in Ormerod, *History*, i. p. 33)



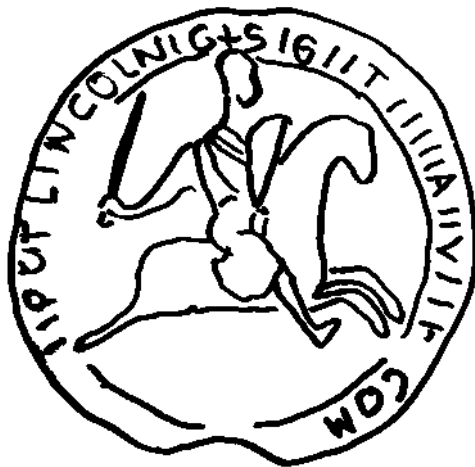
Second seal of Ranulf III (drawing based upon Heslop, Plate IX)



Second seal of Ranulf III (drawing based upon Heslop, Plate X)



Third seal of Ranulf III (after a drawing in Ormerod, *History*, i. p. 33)



Fourth seal of Ranulf III (drawing based upon Heslop, Plate XII)

Figure 9 Earl Ranulf III's Seals

In his choice of image the armed men on horseback are common to his ancestors. Ranulf was known to have had more than one seal as his titles and tastes changed. The first dated around 1181 only refers to the earl as earl of Chester, the second which is two sided refers on one side to Chester and the second includes his titles of Duke of Brittany and Earl of Richmond and was used from, at the earliest, 1190. The third, the shield design was a new fashion in the 1190's and was used from 1199-1200: it refers to the Earl of Chester. A return to the equestrian seal was made later in 1217-18 or 1220 as the fourth seal refers to the earl as earl of Chester and Lincoln.<sup>114</sup>

Ranulf was certainly presenting his position as a lord within the images and his titles shown on these seals. The equestrian seal was common in the twelfth century, with the shield and heraldic device rising in popularity towards the end of the century. Earl Ranulf's return to the equestrian seal, however, may represent his wish to identify as a military man as other lower ranked knights were using heraldic devices.<sup>115</sup> All the earl's seals were between 75 and 90mm in diameter.

The royal seals, while varying in size, are not too much larger than this. The content of royal seals also bears close comparison to Earl Ranulf's seals. On the rear of royal seals there is an image of a mounted knight. This can be seen in seals attached to the charters which Kings Henry II, John, Henry III and Edward I gave to the city of Chester.<sup>116</sup> On the front of the seals there is an image of sovereign enthroned. This provides the first indication that seals presented an image and one which suggested rank and position. It is notable that the charters that John granted when he was a count do not feature the enthroned image that was reserved for the crown. The development of the image of the enthroned monarch as a standard image began in the reign of William II, but was also seen earlier. Royal seals however changed over time and the system of sealing gradually became more complex, and as royal

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<sup>114</sup> Heslop, 'The Seals of the Twelfth-Century Earls of Chester', pp. 192-95.

<sup>115</sup> Adrian Ailes, 'The Knight's Alter Ego: From Equestrian to Armorial Seal', in *Good Impression: Image and Authority in Medieval Seals*, ed. by Noel Adams, John Cherry and James Robinson (London: The British Museum, 2008), pp. 8-11.

<sup>116</sup> See Appendix 5: Seals of the City of Chester.

administration increased more than one seal was required.<sup>117</sup> It is notable that Earl Ranulf's father had also had a more complex sealing process having additional counter seals for administrators, however, we do not see this under Earl Ranulf III.<sup>118</sup> This is slightly strange as it was under Ranulf III that administration and bureaucracy bloomed.

Ranulf's seals also link him to other lords, as the equestrian seal was quite common place.<sup>119</sup> Indeed some of Ranulf's own barons have a similar motif. In the Mobberley priory charters there are a number of extant seals surviving from local lords. Most of these are around the size of a 2 pence piece, 20mm in diameter, much smaller than the earl's. However some bear similar images. Robert of Aldford had the equestrian seal, through which he clearly wished to represent his status.<sup>120</sup>

Most of the other seals on the Mobberley charters show a range of heraldic devices and images, including wheat sheafs, animals, mythical creatures, classical images and abstract symbols.<sup>121</sup> The development of these smaller seals and heraldic devices is seen in partnership with the increasing need to state one's place in society and increasing differentiation in rank over this period, however it must also be noted that humbler people were gradually beginning to use them as well and had simpler designs.<sup>122</sup>

A final form of seal that Earl Ranulf's can be compared to is the ecclesiastical seal. Geoffrey bishop of Coventry granted a charter to Mobberley Priory.<sup>123</sup> Bishops' seals are like the royal seals regular in appearance and shape. They are ovals rather than the rounds most usually found in other seals. The bishop's seal depicts him with the crosier of his office. In this regard the imagery is similar to the royal seals.

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<sup>117</sup> For a discussion of royal seals see, Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, Ch. 2.

<sup>118</sup> Heslop, 'The Seals of the Twelfth-Century Earls of Chester', pp.187-92.

<sup>119</sup> Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp. 43-48.

<sup>120</sup> See Appendix 5: Seals of Mobberley Priory.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp. 51-58, Ch. 5

<sup>123</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/8; See Appendix 4 for the charter and Appendix 5 for the seal.

Importantly, therefore, the seal is being used to present an image which is common to many in that office.<sup>124</sup>

A seal, therefore had a number of uses. It clearly was a tool to help promote the image of status and was important in how one was perceived. That other lords and Earl Ranulf, therefore sought to show their identities is clear. However the usefulness of this for establishing relationships is unclear. Brigitte Bedos-Rezak has suggested that 'seals did not construct social relationships'.<sup>125</sup> They were at their heart a means of authentication and representation. It is only through active interaction with individuals that the identity of lordship can be turned into the creation of relationships.

Identities do not therefore form connections by themselves. For instance, the earl's interaction with the crown by itself signifies his status, but only really constructs a relationship between himself and the crown. Identity while it has a place in lordship as justification for their position must also be supported by action. It is through adding the seal to a charter that the seal becomes useful in establishing and outlining a relationship. The seal as a part of the document can provide a clear illustration of the earl's identity in the relationship.

Identities are therefore important for lordship, however, they have limitations in their ability to establish relationships as they require an action to establish a relationship. One lordly identity with abundant action on the earl's part, which did help the earl in the representation of his lordship was his piety. A key part of a lord's identity was being seen to be pious.<sup>126</sup> Identifying as being pious gave the lord an opportunity to enter into dialogue with a local community and provide an opportunity to establish new relationships.

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<sup>124</sup> Harvey and McGuinness, *A Guide to British Medieval Seals*, pp. 63-69.

<sup>125</sup> Bedos-Rezak, 'Medieval Identity: A Sign and a Concept', pp. 61-62.

<sup>126</sup> David Crouch looked at piety as one of the main characteristics of the new developing noble culture in, Crouch, *The English Aristocracy*, pp. 224-46, see especially p. 224.

## Local Culture

Another *focus* for locality is cultural and at the centre of medieval noble culture was religion. Religion played an important role within society. In many ways it provided a justification for the way society was.<sup>127</sup> How the earl entered into this cultural conversation is a key element in how he dealt with his followers. It has been shown that the lesser nobility definitely used such conversations for their own lordship, by patronising parish churches, yet the role of culture in greater lordships is less well defined.<sup>128</sup> This is in no small part due to the ascendancy of other perhaps more pragmatic approaches to lordship. This final section aims to see what role it had for Earl Ranulf.

The most externally visible and the most useful form of piety for establishing lordship connections would have been ecclesiastical patronage. Yet Earl Ranulf's biographer James Alexander suggests that his relationship to the Church was in some ways less than spiritual. Alexander found that Earl Ranulf was a 'pinchpenny patron', as rather than granting lands he often granted rights, freedoms, and such. It is worth considering Alexander's opinion of the earl's ecclesiastical patronage in full:

Medieval men patronised monasteries for various reasons: tradition, which appears in Ranulf's close ties to St Werburgh, Chester, the family's Benedictine foundation in his *caput*, although in no other case; prestige, of which Ranulf had a superfluity; devotion, of which there is little evidence in his case; spiritual benefits, such as masses for the repose of his and his ancestors' souls, which seldom appear as a motivation in the earl's charters to religion; and economic benefits for the patron which abound.<sup>129</sup>

The earl's relationship to the church, as represented by his grants to religious houses, is much distanced from that of piety. If this presentation is true, this would undermine the concept that the earl had a pious identity and interacted in any

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<sup>127</sup> J. Van Engen, 'Sacred Sanctions for Lordship', in *Cultures of Power: Lordship, Status, and Process in Twelfth-Thirteenth Century Europe*, ed. by Thomas N. Bisson (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), pp. 203-30.

<sup>128</sup> Coss, *The Foundations of Gentry Life*, pp. 164-84.

<sup>129</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 38

meaningful way with local culture to promote his lordship. It would also be in direct contrast to his ancestor Hugh d’Avranches, the first earl, whose grants have been characterised as being “extensive”.<sup>130</sup>

It is necessary, therefore to initially address this criticism. There a number of ways to approach the earl’s piety regarding his grants to ecclesiastical institutions. The first way is to consider his grants and what they contained. Alexander would suggest that his grants were limited, but to understand the earl’s grants it is necessary to identify both the quantity and quality of these grants and provide a comparison. A quantitative breakdown of the earl’s charters to ecclesiastical institutions is found in the table below. The charters made by earls contemporaries, Earls William Marshal and his heir, Earl David of Huntingdon and the earl’s of Warwick, to ecclesiastical institutions have also been added to the table to allow some comparison. It is clear by looking at the totals alone Earl Ranulf granted more charters as an individual than any of his contemporaries.

Earl	Charters			Grants	
	Total	Grants	Confirmations	Lands and Churches	Rights and Rents
Ranulf Earl Of Chester	120	74	46	30	44
William Marshal Earl of Pembroke	55	30	25	19	11
William Marshal, the younger, Earl of Pembroke	26	16	10	9	7
Waleran Earl of Warwick	16	6	10	2	4
Henry Earl of Warwick	2	1	1	0	1
David of Huntingdon	49	30	19	23	7

Figure 10 A Comparison of Ecclesiastical Patronage<sup>131</sup>

<sup>130</sup> Andrew Abram, 'The Pilgrimage and Crusading Activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', in *Crusading and Pilgrimage in the Norman World*, ed. by Kathryn Hurlock and Paul Oldfield (Woodbridge: Boydell, 2015), pp. 125-38 (pp. 126-27).

<sup>131</sup> Numbers compiled from an analysis of the earls acta found in *BC; Crouch, Acta and Letters; Crouch and Dacie, The Newburgh Earldom; Stringer, Earl David of Huntingdon*.



The difference in numbers of charters may, however, also be due to the fact Earl Ranulf held up to four and ½ honours in England (Chester, Lincoln, Richmond, Lancaster, and Leicester), and two on the Continent (Brittany and his lands in Normandy). He also held his lands for the longest period. William Marshal held two honours at different times and expanded into a new lordship in Ireland, which his son inherited. Earl David held only two honours, Huntingdon and Garioch.<sup>132</sup> Meanwhile, the Warwicks only had one. If the numbers of overall charters are divided by the number of their concerns and bearing in mind the time they were all active, the numbers of charters granted by each are roughly equal. This would indicate that the earl was as invested in ecclesiastical patronage as his contemporaries.

The table above, in addition to the quantity of charters, also shows the quality of these grants in a basic quantitative manner. The charters the earls created have been split into confirmations, or charters which grant little but the earl's continuing acknowledgement of an earlier grant or one made by his followers, and substantive grants made by the earls themselves. It is clear from the table that Ranulf grants more charters to religious houses than do his contemporaries. However, in proportion, when the times of activity and number of estates are factored in, they are very similar.

Where there is some difference is in the nature of the grants that each earl makes, as shown in the final two columns. These columns identify the nature of the grants made. While Earl Ranulf granted marginally more rights than he did lands, Earl David granted away more lands. William Marshal also granted more lands than rights or monies. It is only in this respect that Ranulf can be confirmed as a 'pinchpenny patron'. However, it is not certain that he would have been regarded as such at the time and the appellation may be unfair. These grants of rights included a range of rights varying from freedoms like the charter of 1217 to 1232 which granted the nuns of Greenfield (Lincolnshire) freedom from suit at Greetham

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<sup>132</sup> For a discussion of the earl's lands see, Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*.

court, regarding the lands they held of the honour of Greetham.<sup>133</sup> It is certain that the nuns would have received such a grant with great favour.

An explanation of why Earl Ranulf granted fewer charters giving lands is perhaps due to the nature of the society at the time in England, which is where most of his grants were given. In England monastic patronage was going out of favour.<sup>134</sup> There were fewer lands to grant out, which had also affected the ability to reward knights with lands.<sup>135</sup> By the end of the thirteenth century, due to the crisis in landholding, the crown would put limits on what could be granted to the Church, although the effects of the measure are debatable.<sup>136</sup> In comparison, William Marshal and his son were able to grant lands in Ireland to religious houses.<sup>137</sup> Ireland was a new venture and lands were much less well cultivated and available to be granted, and the new Norman lords needed to stamp their mark on the area.<sup>138</sup> Earl David also granted a large proportion of grants in Scotland, which was again easier as it did not entail the same difficulties as in England.<sup>139</sup> Therefore Ranulf's grants are perhaps better compared to the earls of Warwick, to whom he bears a closer relationship. In this comparison we can see Ranulf as being as pious as his contemporaries.

## Culture and Lordship

Having established Earl Ranulf was a comparatively pious man, the question now arises could this piety be used for lordship? By patronising institutions, the earl would have established ties between himself and those institutions. These

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<sup>133</sup> *BC*, no. 413.

<sup>134</sup> David Crouch, *The English Aristocracy: A Social Transformation, 1070-1272* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), pp. 230-33.

<sup>135</sup> This was a factor identified for Earl David of Huntingdon, see Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, pp. 172-73.

<sup>136</sup> Sandra Raban, 'Mortmain in Medieval England', *P&P*, 62 (1974), 3-26.

<sup>137</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 29-31, 32-34, 53-54, 56, 131-339, 160, 187-88.

<sup>138</sup> For the culture of such grants in Ireland see, A. J. Otway-Ruthven, *A History of Medieval Ireland* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1980), pp. 121-22.

<sup>139</sup> For David's grants to Scottish religious houses see, Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, nos. 5, 34-35, 37-52, 71-74; in Scotland knightly tenancies were still actively being created during this period, see, G. W. S. Barrow, *The Anglo-Norman Era in Scottish History* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1980), pp. 129-131; G. W. S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of The Scots: Government, Church and Society from the eleventh to fourteenth century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), Ch. 12.

institutions could provide various services for the earl which could include religious services such as burial, prayer, and when wanted membership of the order for himself or his family, and show an initial point where culture and lordship can combine.<sup>140</sup> However, to see ecclesiastical patronage as a force for establishing lordship connections it is necessary also to examine how such gifts were meant and would be interpreted by others.

For the earl to obtain cultural standing through his relationship to ecclesiastical institutions would necessitate visual indicators. It is commonly known that within the later medieval gentry there was a move to stamp their presence on the local area utilising visible signs of piety by placing their heraldry within the institutions they patronised.<sup>141</sup> Undoubtedly, Ranulf would have done something similar. Indeed, one religious service, which is clear the earl wanted, was particularly visible. This was burial at the abbey of St Werburgh's Chester, and a heart burial at Dieulacres Abbey. Heart burial was more common in England than elsewhere but had a long history. It allowed a lord to divide his body at burial and thereby to be able to patronise his family institution, and to show his personal piety by patronising an institution other than his family mausoleum. It could also show power and wealth as it was a costly procedure requiring separate transport, and in England especially, it has been described as a fashion.<sup>142</sup> The attraction to the abbey of receiving any type of burial was clear, as such an act could establish a relationship that could become hereditary, with the abbey acting as the family institution, and attracting grants from the earl's descendants.<sup>143</sup> Between 1229 and 1232, Earl Ranulf in two charters commanded his heart to be buried at Dieulacres Abbey, which in 1232, just prior to his death, he granted to the abbey.<sup>144</sup> After his death at Wallingford in 1232 his heart was taken to Dieulacres and his body to his

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<sup>140</sup> Janet E. Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain, 1000-1300* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 212-215, 219-221; Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 194-95.

<sup>141</sup> Coss, *The Foundations of Gentry Life*, pp. 164-84.

<sup>142</sup> Estella Weiss-Krejci, 'Heart burial in medieval and early post-medieval central Europe', in *Body Parts and Bodies Whole*, ed. by Katharina Rebay-Salisbury, Marie Louise Stig Sorensen and Jessica Hughes (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2010), pp. 119-34.

<sup>143</sup> B. Golding, 'Anglo-Norman knightly burials', in *The Ideals and Practice of Medieval Knighthood*, ed. by C. Harper-Bill and R. Harvey (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1986), 35-48.

<sup>144</sup> *BC*, no. 392-93.

family's abbey of St Werburgh's at Chester.<sup>145</sup> This was a visible message to those who would have seen the procession that he was a pious man, but also a wealthy lord with ties to these institutions to which others would be connected.

Another visual factor more important to the earl during his lifetime was the ceremony attached to any charter granted to a religious institution. A charter represents a record of a ceremonial event, which is public. In one of the earl's grants to St Werburgh's Abbey in around 1194 to 1202 this ceremony is clearly described:

Just as by my father's charter, which they have, ...and which, in the presence of my father's body to remember him I placed [my own] in ratification of the grant on top of the altar of St Werburgh<sup>146</sup>

This grant to the abbey of St Werburgh's describes a public ceremony in which the earl placed his charter on the altar of the abbey. St Werburgh's was a family institution, which is why it was also supported by Ranulf's father Hugh. The grant of this charter and its ceremony was witnessed by a number of the earl's knights. These men would have seen the earl place the document on the altar. This was a clear symbol that this grant was given not to an individual but to God, as the altar is at the heart of the church and Christianity. In many ways, this grant and its ceremony fulfilled multiple cultural rites for the earl. By granting the charter the earl was following the custom of supporting the church, and he acted as the landlord of the abbey as well. Through the ceremony he was also showing his piety, whilst identifying his hereditary connection to the church and his assumption of his father's role as protector of the institution. For the knightly witnesses it would also be clear that he was adopting his father's role more generally as lord.

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<sup>145</sup> For his death, *Annales. Cestriensis*, p. 58; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 87; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 245; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 311; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', p. 130; John of Fordun, *Chronica Gentis Scottorum: Chronicle of the Scottish Nation*, ed. William F. Skene, trans. Felix J. H. Skene, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1871-1872), i. pp. 281-282, II. p. 277; Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 349, for his burial, 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 87.

<sup>146</sup> BC, no. 229, my own translation of: *sicut carta patris mei, quam ipsi inde habent, ...quam mihi oblatam presente corpore patris mei meminet me in ratihabitionem super altare sancte Werburge posuisse.*

Such a grant was not limited to this one charter. Another describes a similar event this time in relation to an inner city church in Coventry:

Therefore this, my donation and concession, I make public and solemnly in the church of Coventry in the third year of the reign of King Richard in the month of July during the feast of St Abdon and Sennes, and [by] my charter being put on top of the altar with a golden ring...<sup>147</sup>

This ceremony was as visually pious as the one to St Werburgh's Abbey. The church of Coventry has a more convoluted history, however, which makes this gift slightly different. Clearly, Ranulf showed his piety and support of the church by the grant. Yet in Coventry the church institutions were undergoing drastic change in 1193 as the then bishop of Coventry and Lichfield was replacing the priory with a new cathedral chapter. Earl Ranulf was supporting this change visually through this grant, which therefore has political implications in the city as well.<sup>148</sup> This shows that charters could provide a clear lordship and political message to the beneficiary and witnesses.

Another clear way the earl drew men to him through his piety was not through patronage, but through the crusades. Earl Ranulf also took the Cross and became a focus for the crusade endeavour for a period following the civil war with King John.<sup>149</sup> Lordship by the thirteenth century is seen as an essential element in the recruitment and the organisation of the crusades generally.<sup>150</sup> Andrew Abrams has

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<sup>147</sup> Listed in *BC*, no. 219; to be found transcribed in *The Early Records of Medieval Coventry*, ed. by Peter R. Coss (London: Social Science Research Council, 1983), no. 13. My own translation of: *Hanc ergo donacionem et concessionem meam feci publice et solemniter in ecclesia Coventr' tercio anno regni regis Ricardi mense Julii in festo sanctorum Abdon et Sennes et cartam meam super altare ponens anulo aureo de donacione ista ecclesiam Coventr' investivi et imperpetuum confirmavi.*

<sup>148</sup> See above, p. 56.

<sup>149</sup> For Earl Ranulf see, *Annales Cestriensis*, p. 50; 'Annales Monasterii de Theokesberia', p. 64; 'Annales Monasterii de Burton', p. 225; 'Annales Monasterii de Wintonia', pp. 83; 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 289; Morins, 'Annales Prioratus de Dunstaplia', pp. 54-55; Kathryn Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades, c. 1095-1291* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011), pp. 106-09; Paris, *Chronica Majora*, iii. pp. 40, Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. pp. 229-38; James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), p. 81; for Earl John le Scot see, Paris, *Historia Minor*, ii. p. 391.

<sup>150</sup> For the development of lordship's role in recruitment in the crusade movement see, Simon Lloyd, 'The Crusading Movement', in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. by Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), pp. 34-65; Kathryn Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades, c. 1000-1300* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), pp. 44-45, 86-87; Simon Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade, 1216-1307* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1988), pp. 105-07; Powell saw recruitment for the fifth crusade as based around contingents, James M. Powell, *Anatomy of a Crusade, 1213-1221* (Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986), Ch. 4; see also

shown that it had a clear role in Earl Ranulf's recruitment for his crusade.<sup>151</sup> It is apparent that Earl Ranulf when going on crusade in 1218 recruited a following; it is recorded that he took 100 knights.<sup>152</sup> Of those knights there were key local barons such as the Lacy family.<sup>153</sup> It is also clear that the local knightly community followed him, for instance Geoffrey Dutton accompanied John de Lacy and Earl Ranulf on crusade.<sup>154</sup>

There is a good reason as to why such men followed the earl. Despite the fact that Jonathan Riley-Smith and Marcus Bull have shown that the spiritual aspect of the crusade was central to the desire to go, there were also practical concerns involved in the endeavour.<sup>155</sup> These included the need for money. The church and governments, for instance, could provide crusaders, especially lords, with access to cash via taxations and commuting the vow for a cash payment for non-combatants.<sup>156</sup> But this was not uniform, so other sources of cash needed to be found. It has been shown that funds for crusaders came from grants from lords, family, or friends, or by entering into land agreements, that is mortgages, or loans: alienation or sale of estates is deemed a last resort.<sup>157</sup> It is known that Geoffrey

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Christopher Tyerman, *England and the Crusades* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), pp. 176-180.

<sup>151</sup> Andrew Abram, 'The Pilgrimage and Crusading Activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', pp. 136-37.

<sup>152</sup> Kathryn Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades*, p. 107.

<sup>153</sup> Alexander, *Ranulf of Chester*, p. 2; *The Chartulary of St John of Pontefract*, ed. by Richard Holmes, 2 vols. (York: Yorkshire Archaeological Society, 1899-1902), i. no. 21; Powell, *Anatomy*, p. 232.

<sup>154</sup> Manchester, John Ryland's Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 94;

<sup>155</sup> Marcus Bull, *Knightly Piety and the Lay Response to the First Crusade: The Limosin and Gascony, c. 970-c. 1130* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998); Jonathan S. C. Riley-Smith, *The First Crusade and the Idea of Crusading* (London: Continuum, 2003), Ch. 2, especially pp. 47-49; this view has since become standard for textbooks on the topic as well, see, Peter Lock, *The Routledge Companion to the Crusades* (London: Routledge, 2006), pp. 317-18.

<sup>156</sup> Lock, *The Routledge Companion*, pp. 333-37; Christopher Tyerman, *Gods War: A New History of the Crusades* (London: Penguin, 2007), pp. 616-17, 757-58; there are however political issues with raising sums this way, it is noted that the Scots were reluctant to raise monies this way if the beneficiary was likely to be England, see Alan MacQuarrie, *Scotland and the Crusades, 1095-1588* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1984), pp. 129-30.

<sup>157</sup> G. Constable, 'The Financing of the Crusades', in *Outremer: Studies in the History of the Crusading Kingdom of Jerusalem presented to Joshua Prawer*, ed. by B. Kedar, et al. (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi Institute 1982), 64-84; Simon Lloyd, 'Crusader Knights and the Land Market in the Thirteenth Century', *Thirteenth Century England*, 2 (1988), 119-136; Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades*, pp. 44-58; Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, pp. 175-97; Lock, *The Routledge Companion to the Crusades*, pp. 333-37; MacQuarrie, *Scotland and the Crusades*, pp. 129-30; Powell, *Anatomy*, Ch. 5; Tyerman, C., *England and the Crusades* (London, 1988), pp. 185-215; Tyerman, C., *Gods War*, pp. 758-59.

Dutton leased his lands to go on Earl Ranulf's crusade.<sup>158</sup> However, by joining him it is reasonable to suspect that he gained further support.

It is unsurprising therefore that there are other tenants of Earl Ranulf who joined him on crusade.<sup>159</sup> For instance, there was a Richard de Argentem, who is known to be a tenant of the honour of Chester.<sup>160</sup> He went on crusade in 1218, and c. 1219 founded, or more likely commissioned paintings, for a church in honour of St Edmund at Damietta.<sup>161</sup> From the earl's perspective, such individuals would provide the earl with their military manpower and position in the command of the crusade.

Crusading was, however, a dangerous affair, as Jonathan Riley-Smith has made clear, and thus the earl had to rely in no small measure on those individuals who would willingly come with him.<sup>162</sup> This implies that those who did join him were acting within a common cultural drive. Thus, Alvred de Suligny is known to be a tenant of Earl Ranulf and frequent witness to his charters.<sup>163</sup> However, it was only his relative Harsculfo, also a witness to the earl's charters, who is known to have gone on crusade.<sup>164</sup> Perhaps in this instance knight service has been commuted from one individual to another. Such common cultural endeavours would of course help enable the earl to tie individuals more closely into his service. These cultural ties could also link into other factors as family ties could make crusaders more likely to go through tradition and accompanying relatives who were also going.<sup>165</sup>

That Ranulf extended his lordship through his crusade endeavour is clear as he was able to establish new relationships through it. Emericus de Sacy, who was previously absent from the charters of Earl Ranulf, following the crusade appears

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<sup>158</sup> Manchester, John Ryland's Library, Arley Charters, Box 1, no. 94.

<sup>159</sup> Powell, *Anatomy*, pp. 81-83

<sup>160</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 916.

<sup>161</sup> Coventry, *Memoriale*, ii, p. 243; see also *HKF*, ii, p. 239; Powell, *Anatomy*, p. 240; Tyerman, *Gods War*, p. 624.

<sup>162</sup> Jonathan Riley-Smith, 'The State of Mind of Crusaders to the East 1095-1300', in *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Crusades*, ed. by Jonathan Riley-Smith (Oxford, 1995), 66-90.

<sup>163</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 41.

<sup>164</sup> Powell, *Anatomy*, p. 226.

<sup>165</sup> Hurlock, *Britain, Ireland and the Crusades*, p. 87; Hurlock, *Wales and the Crusades*, pp. 127-28; Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade*, pp. 107-108; Lock, *The Routledge Companion*, pp. 322-23, 345; Powell, *Anatomy*, pp. 81-83; Tyerman, *England and the Crusades*, pp. 180-81.

in one of 1224 to 1227.<sup>166</sup> More illustratively, of the Lettres family, Nicholas, Peter, and Walter went on the fifth crusade.<sup>167</sup> Following the crusade the family, through Nicholas de Lettres, seem to have cemented a lasting relationship to the earl, suggesting that they went together or encountered each other while there. Notably absent from the charters before, Nicholas de Lettres begins to appear more frequently after the crusade, witnessing 3 of Earl Ranulf's charters between 1221 and 1230.<sup>168</sup> Indeed, Nicholas even received a confirmation from Earl Ranulf of a grant made to him in c.1230.<sup>169</sup> New relations could therefore be developed by going on crusade and cementing ties through a common cultural event.

However, unlike ecclesiastical patronage, the crusade endeavour had one additional means to help the earl create lordship ties. The best example that piety can have for forming ties is how the crusades are used to re-forge relationships. Undoubtedly the earl would have used the opportunity to reconcile with political dissidents, if only to ensure that they did not cause trouble while he was away. It was known in the period that knights had left on crusade to avoid political issues, which could result in forfeitures.<sup>170</sup> There are a number of examples of knights in the earl's lordship being reconciled in this way. These include his ties to leading magnates and barons such as the Lacy family as well as possibly barons such as Robert Bardulf. The chief evidence for Robert's relationship to the earl and his crusade comes from a statement that, on 30 September 1215 King John gave Robert Bardulf safe passage and that no injury would be done to his possession as he was a crusader, and he urged him to return to allegiance.<sup>171</sup> He had obviously fought against the king and Earl Ranulf in the rebellion, but his crusader status was being used as a tool for reconciliation. This reconciliation came in c. 1217 when Robert returned to England and his allegiance from France, and had writs of restoration directed to the sheriffs of Kent, Lincoln, and Nottingham.<sup>172</sup> He

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<sup>166</sup> *BC*, no. 416; that he was on the crusade see, Powell *Anatomy*, p. 219.

<sup>167</sup> Powell, *Anatomy*, p. 234.

<sup>168</sup> *BC*, nos. 215, 363, 462-64.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 432.

<sup>170</sup> Tyerman, *God's War*, p. 613.

<sup>171</sup> *RLP*, p. 162; *RLC*, i. p. 245.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*, i. 323, 373.



probably went on crusade with Ranulf following the civil war and while the earl and Robert were not close, they seem to have established a normal relationship until his death thereafter. In 1225 Robert died abroad, and his lands were seized by Earl Ranulf III as his chief lord.<sup>173</sup>

Earl Ranulf was therefore both pious and could use his piety to create bonds to men which would help his lordship. However, the next question to consider is how these were used to influence a local area. What kind of men could the earl interact with and call upon through his piety, and how?

### Establishing Cultural Power

Most in depth studies of ecclesiastical patronage have looked at the nature of lords' ties to the institutions involved, focussing on the legal or customary duties for both parties. The final question for this section is to see those ties in a wider context and establish whether the earl could use his ties to religious institutions and his piety to create and have an impact upon a cultural locality. It has been said by some that supporting a religious house, illustrates a lord acting in accordance with his position and stamping his signature on a locality.<sup>174</sup> The question is whether Earl Ranulf was doing this and whether this was a common theme of lordship.

Perhaps the most direct way for the earl to establish domination of the culture in the area was through a new foundation. It would cement the lord's standing as a leading figure by demonstrating his ability to fund such a construction but, depending on the size of the institution, it could also re-focus the local religious culture upon it. Compulsion by the lord has also been identified as a factor in why local tenants gave to the religious house, which would help this process. Foundations represent a large investment by the lord and it is, therefore, understandable that he would have wished it to succeed and thus compelled his

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<sup>173</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 17.

<sup>174</sup> Burton, *Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain*, pp. 73-74; Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 185-93.

tenants to help provide a territorial block.<sup>175</sup> By forcing individuals to provide grants he would also have ensured that they were also invested in the institution and would keep on looking after it.

Dieulacres Abbey was a Cistercian house founded by Earl Ranulf in 1214.<sup>176</sup> The abbey was essentially a re-foundation of Poulton Abbey in Cheshire. Poulton Abbey had been founded by Robert the Butler.<sup>177</sup> However, the Butler family seems to have died out, although it is possible that they were related to some of the butlers in Ranulf's household. It was, therefore, in practice a new institution, although a cheaper foundation. Earl Ranulf, however, did make it new grants at its foundation and over the following years and it has been suggested that the abbey became one of the wealthiest in the county of Staffordshire by the end of the medieval period.<sup>178</sup> Ranulf granted the abbey 18 charters.<sup>179</sup> This made it one of the most patronised institutions by the earl. His grant of his heart between 1229 and 1232 also showed his personal connection to the abbey, which would linger after his death.<sup>180</sup>

It is clear, however, that a number of the earl's leading barons also supported him in this endeavour. Between 1214 and 1217, William Mainwaring gifted the abbey a salthouse in Middlewich.<sup>181</sup> This charter was witnessed by Earl Ranulf and later confirmed by him.<sup>182</sup> Roger Mainwaring would also give the abbey lands in Byley.<sup>183</sup> The Mainwarings were counsellors of the earl. Other members of Ranulf's court also followed suit. His steward Roger Montalt gave lands in Saltney to the abbey.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>175</sup> A 'rallying round' factor for honorial grants was noticed in, Emma Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England 1066-1135* (Woodbridge: Boydell, 1998), p. 169, see also Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 197-98.

<sup>176</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. pp. 627-628.

<sup>177</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, ed. by Geoffrey Barraclough (Chester: The Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, 1957), no. 1.

<sup>178</sup> "Houses of Cistercian monks: The Abbey of Dieulacres." *A History of the County of Stafford: Volume 3*. ed. by M. W. Greenslade, and R. B. Pugh (London: VCH, 1970), 230-35.

<sup>179</sup> *BC*, nos. 375-392

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 392-93.

<sup>181</sup> *Chartulary of Dieulacres Abbey: With an Introduction and Notes*, ed. by George Wrottesley (London: Harrison, 1906), no 124.

<sup>182</sup> *BC*, no. 381.

<sup>183</sup> *Chartulary of Dieulacres Abbey*, no. 119

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 72.

His constable John de Lacy gave the abbey a bovate in Northmoles.<sup>185</sup> Leading barons in the area also gave grants, including the Aldfords, Boydels, and Walters.<sup>186</sup> The fact that the earl's officers also gave grants would suggest that this was a push by the earl to support his institution. His justice Philip de Orreby granted three charters, his sheriff, Liulf Twemlow, granted one, and his sheriff of Chester, Richard Pierrepont, also granted one.<sup>187</sup> That Philip de Orreby, furthermore, witnessed a significant number of these charters suggests that the earl maintained oversight of the abbey and its well-being.<sup>188</sup>

Establishing new foundations, however, was uncommon in this period. It was more common to support existing foundations, rather than form new creations. In these instances compulsion cannot always be considered to be a key motivation for why followers gave grants, as they often had multiple established institutions to which they could provide grants both those of the earl and not.<sup>189</sup> The reason that they would provide grants to such institutions was, of course, because as benefactors they could obtain some of the spiritual services that the patron received.<sup>190</sup> However, there are clear examples within Earl Ranulf's lordship where he and men in the local area patronised his family institutions, which suggests a real collective culture had been voluntarily established.

St Werburgh's Abbey in Chester was a pre-Conquest foundation of secular canons that was re-founded by Earl Hugh of Chester as a Benedictine monastery. It inherited sprawling lands within Cheshire.<sup>191</sup> Ranulf granted the abbey seven

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<sup>185</sup> Ibid., no. 151.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid., for Boydel no. 60; for Aldeford nos. 97, 104; for Arden, no. 105; for Walter no. 133.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid., for Pierrepont no. 129; for Liulf Twemlow no. 100; for Phillip Orreby, 102, 120, 128.

<sup>188</sup> There are 185 charters collected together and transcribed in *ibid.* Philip witnessed 43 (including those issued by Earl Ranulf) namely nos. 2, 3, 6, 21, 32, 60, 66, 70-73, 80, 83-84, 87-90, 94-95, 97-101, 103-106, 108, 117-118, 120-121, 123-124, 129, 151, 164, 167-68, 170, p. 363.

<sup>189</sup> Emma Cownie notes the dispersed nature honours which allowed tenants the opportunity to patronise elsewhere, see, Cownie, *Religious Patronage in Anglo-Norman England*, pp. 175-76. The move away from land grants to any tenants and thus foundations as well, is a marked feature of the later medieval period as was discussed above pp. 181-84; see also Karen Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries and Their Patrons* (Woodbridge: Boydell and Brewer, 2007), pp. 80-93.

<sup>190</sup> Burton, *The Monastic Order in Yorkshire*, pp. 205-10.

<sup>191</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. pp. 212-13.

charters during his lifetime to maintain his contact to it.<sup>192</sup> Interestingly one of the earlier charters confirms:

All donations and dignities and liberties which the earl's ancestors, namely Earls Hugh, Richard his son, and Earl Ranulf, and the other Ranulf my grandfather, and my father Hugh, and the barons in the time of them or in my time, they gave to them [abbey and monks]<sup>193</sup>

This would initially show that the earl and his tenants supported the abbey. This is confirmed as a further one of the earl's charters was a confirmation of his baron William de Venables' grant to the abbey.<sup>194</sup> William granted the abbey half a salthouse in Northwich.<sup>195</sup> His family had previously granted the abbey Astbury church suggesting that, once such ties were established, tradition could also become part of the tenant's relationship with the institution.<sup>196</sup> However, the main benefactor of the abbey from the local baronage was the Verdun family. They granted the abbey 20 charters between the 1180s and 1240s.<sup>197</sup> The Verdun family were leading barons who held lands in Staffordshire and Leicestershire.<sup>198</sup> They also seem to have used the abbey as a repository for their *acta*, and many of their charters are stored in the abbey's cartulary even where the items do not concern the abbey at all. This would suggest that the abbey, as well as forming a cultural centre, was also forming an administrative centre for the family, a similar service that the institution provided the earl. It is clear that, in these grants, a common culture was to be found between the earl and the barons.

These were not the only individuals to grant charters to the abbey during the earl's lifetime however. John de Lacy patronised the abbey, as did Ranulf's stewards the

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<sup>192</sup> *BC*, nos. 227-39.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 227. My translation of the Latin: *omnes donationes et dignitates et libertates quas comites antecessores mei, scilicet Hugo comes et Ricardus filius eius et Rannulfus comes et alius Rannulfus avus meus et Hugo pater meus, et barones in tempore illorum vel in meo eis dederunt.*

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 228.

<sup>195</sup> *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester*, ed. by James Tait (Manchester: Printed for the Chetham Society, 1920). no. 327.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 329.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 131-36, 139, 142, 148, 149, 151-57, 228, 267-68.

<sup>198</sup> Mark Hagger, *The De Verdun Family in England, Ireland and Wales, 1066-1316: a Study* (Unpublished PhD Thesis, The University of St. Andrews, 1998), Ch. 1, especially pp. 1-44.

Montalts.<sup>199</sup> Ranulf's barons the Boydels also granted the abbey a charter.<sup>200</sup> As at Dieulacres, the earl seems to have encouraged his household to establish ties with his institutions forming closer relationships by so doing. Peter the clerk, therefore, as a close member of the earl's clerical household, also granted the abbey a charter.<sup>201</sup> Ranulf's new official Philip de Orreby, the justice, also patronised the institution.<sup>202</sup>

St Werburgh's was at the centre of the earl's lands in Cheshire. Ranulf, however, did not limit his patronage to it alone. It is also clear that Ranulf followed a similar pattern in his other honours. In 1198, Earl Ranulf became earl of Lincoln, and by inheriting that position inherited the family responsibilities for patronising certain ecclesiastical institutions. Revesby was an abbey situated in the east of Lincolnshire; William de Roumare, earl of Lincoln, had founded it in 1142.<sup>203</sup> In 1198 to 1202, Earl Ranulf confirmed the site of the foundation of Revesby Abbey and the grants made by his predecessors, and in 1199 to 1204 gifted the abbey his bondsman, Roger of Stickney.<sup>204</sup> In 1225 to 1226, he also granted the abbey the right of way through his marsh of Bolingbroke, and the marshes of Robert of Rodes and Robert Marmion.<sup>205</sup> The earl is herein taking on the responsibilities of the patron providing maintenance, protection through security, and ensuring the perpetual nature of the gifts of his predecessors. By doing this, he is presenting himself to his new honour as a legitimate heir.

Spalding Priory was another institution the earl inherited. It had been founded by Ivo Taillebois and was patronised by his daughter Lucy and her son William de Roumare and his grandson William III de Roumare.<sup>206</sup> Ivo Taillebois was the first husband of Countess Lucy of Chester, mother of Earl Ranulf II of Chester and William de Roumare, earl of Lincoln. The rights and responsibilities of patron of

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<sup>199</sup> *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester*. nos. 321, 528, 541.

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 82, 83.

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 440.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 441.

<sup>203</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v, p. 453.

<sup>204</sup> *BC*, nos. 288-89.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 290.

<sup>206</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296, f. 8r-9, 378v-379, 388v

Spalding Priory passed into the hands of the Roumare family and subsequently onto Ranulf.<sup>207</sup> Therefore, in 1229 to 1232 Earl Ranulf confirmed the grants to Spalding priory made by Countess Lucy.<sup>208</sup> Here he is acting again as a hereditary lord providing the perpetual security or protection for these grants. The earl also gave the priory maintenance. In 1229 to 1232 he granted the priory freedom from entertaining the earl for three periods of 40 days per year.<sup>209</sup> In this instance, as a cartulary survives, it is possible to see how some of Earl Ranulf's followers were also invested in the abbey. Roger de Lacy, his constable, granted the abbey lands in Hardlethorp, a grant witnessed by Philip de Orreby, Thomas Despenser, Hugh and Tom.<sup>210</sup> These were the earl's household men and officers. It is interesting that the grant was witnessed by the earl as well. The charter was produced before the family rebelled and after Ranulf inherited the honour. This example illustrates the earl's initial attempts to secure a visual demonstration that the earl is in lock step with his counsellor, who was also a local baron.

Another Lincolnshire priory the earl became hereditary patron of was Stixwold, which was founded by Countess Lucy in the reign of either King Henry I or King Stephen.<sup>211</sup> The priory was again a Roumare family institution and had significance for the honour of Lincoln. William de Roumare had granted lands in Hundington and Barkeston.<sup>212</sup> Between 1198 and 1217, therefore Earl Ranulf unsurprisingly confirmed the grants to the nuns of Stixwold made by William of Roumare, and the grants by Turpin of Billingham, Thomas of Welton, Peter son of Alan of Woodhall and Alan son of Walter of Kirkby.<sup>213</sup> This is the only charter given to that priory and would suggest the Earl Ranulf had at least taken over lordship of the priory, guaranteeing its lands.

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<sup>207</sup> "Houses of Benedictine monks: The Priory of Spalding", *A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2*. ed. by William Page. (London: VCH, 1906), 118-24.

<sup>208</sup> *BC*, no. 426.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 427.

<sup>210</sup> London, British Library, Additional 35296, f. 383v

<sup>211</sup> 'Houses of Cistercian nuns: The Priory of Stixwold', *A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2.*, ed. by William Page. (London: VCH, 1906), pp. 146-49.

<sup>212</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, p. 1036.

<sup>213</sup> *BC*, no. 305.

There were, however limits to the number of existing hereditary religious institutions in the earl's purview. Some like those in Cumberland were less useful for his lordship, which is perhaps why Ranulf chose not to patronise them. In Cumberland this includes the priory of Wetheral.<sup>214</sup> However, the earl established ties to other leading magnates within his lordship through patronising their ecclesiastical institutions. It is clear that Ranulf extended his relationship to the Lacy family in this way. The Lacy family had founded Norton Priory and Stanlaw Abbey in Cheshire. Earl Ranulf gave grants to both these houses.<sup>215</sup>

The nature of what this relationship entailed, however, is less clear. In cases where the founding families are unable to support the church any longer, for instance if they have died out or forfeited their lands, the earl perhaps is stepping into the founders' role. Similar actions are known to have been undertaken by the crown.<sup>216</sup> There is another possibility however, namely that the earl is entering a different form of relationship in these instances termed advocacy. On the Continent, this relationship is seen as the control of monasteries by an individual who is not the founder or his assign, separate to the lordship of the abbot, and at times separate from the lordship of the founder who is possibly still alive. The practicalities of this relationship vary with instances and regions.<sup>217</sup> However, David Crouch suggested that the earls of Leicester were taking on such a role in the twelfth century.<sup>218</sup> Advocacy in England is a questionable topic, but it is clear that the relationship, as Susan Wood suggests, has some resonance in this period suggesting vague terms of protection, or being noted as a considerable benefactor.<sup>219</sup> It is unclear whether, in undertaking this role, the earl would have usurped any of the patron's rights. The key factor in each case, however, is that a relationship is not only implied between the earls and the religious institution, but also between the earl and the founders.

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<sup>214</sup> *The Register of the Priory of Wetheral*, ed. by J. E. Prescott (London: Eliot Stock, 1897), p. xii.

<sup>215</sup> *BC*, for Norton, no. 350; for Stanlaw, nos. 208-15.

<sup>216</sup> Stöber, *Late Medieval Monasteries*, pp. 21, 25-33.

<sup>217</sup> Susan Wood, *English Monasteries and Their Patrons in the Thirteenth Century* (London: Oxford University Press, 1955), pp. 328-38.

<sup>218</sup> David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 204-07.

<sup>219</sup> Wood, *English Monasteries*, pp. 16-21; Earl Ranulf II entered a relationship of advocate and defender of Belvoir abbey in c. 1141 see *BC*, no. 50 see also Burton, *The Monastic Order*, pp. 182-83.

The earl was, in effect, providing maintenance and protection for the founders' investment.

However, the relationships established by grants to such institutions are not merely limited to the existing patron. Through these grants the earl would also have connected to other knights who formed a local community. One key family connected to the Lacys was the Dutton family. The Lacys were their primary lords. Roger de Lacy had granted Adam Dutton his lands.<sup>220</sup> The Duttons held lands in Dutton, Cheshire as well as elsewhere.<sup>221</sup> The Duttons, have also been linked to the Lacy family institutions of Norton Priory and Stanlaw Abbey.<sup>222</sup> In 1195 to 1205 the prior of Norton granted Adam Dutton Stokham, which Adam had claimed as part of Sutton Weaver.<sup>223</sup> They had also witnessed the founding of the Lacys' Stanlaw Abbey in 1178.<sup>224</sup> The Duttons witnessed a further two charters made by John the constable to the Abbey and a further five made by his heir Roger.<sup>225</sup> Hugh Dutton, Adam's father, also granted lands to Stanlaw Abbey himself, including a bovate in Eston.<sup>226</sup>

It is clear that some form of relationship was established by the Duttons to the earl through the constable and also this religious association. Hugh Dutton and his family witnessed the earl give grants to the abbey of Stanlaw.<sup>227</sup> That such grants were not exceptional, and that the relationship was much more involved, can also be proved by the fact Adam, Hugh and Geoffrey Dutton also witnessed fifteen of the earl's charters between 1190 and 1229, most dealing with issues affecting Cheshire and Staffordshire.<sup>228</sup> This was a considerable number of charters approaching the same numbers as some of the earl's leading and closest barons.

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<sup>220</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, nos. 6, 8.1, 8.2.

<sup>221</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. p. 475.

<sup>222</sup> Andrew Abram, *Norton Priory: An Augustinian Priory and its Benefactors*, Trivium Publications, Occasional Papers No. 2 (Lampeter: University of Wales, 2007), pp. 28-43.

<sup>223</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, no. 11.

<sup>224</sup> *The Coucher Book, or Chartulary, of Whalley Abbey*, ed. by William Adam Hulton, 4 vols. (Manchester: Printed for the Chetham society, 1847-49), i. no. 1.

<sup>225</sup> *The Chartulary or Register of the Abbey of St. Werburgh, Chester*, nos. 4-5, 16-20.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*, nos 22-23; for the relationship between Hugh and Adam see *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, no. 9.

<sup>227</sup> *BC*, nos. 209-212.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 209, 211-13, 215, 258, 260-61, 282-83, 286, 313, 315, 357, 385.



Of those charters two also included grants to the family itself. Between 1191 and 1194, Earl Ranulf confirmed the gift to Hugh Dutton of Preston (Preston Brook) made by Henry and Juliana de Nuers, and in 1191 to 1203 granted Geoffrey Dutton, Helen, daughter of Jordan of Cheadle, with her lands.<sup>229</sup> Therefore, while Earl Ranulf established ties to religious houses, this also connected him to a community that was often quite tightly knit.

The Duttons also received grants from other individuals including a grant to Adam Dutton from Richard of Aston in 1190 to 1199.<sup>230</sup> Adam had been building up his lands as he had also bought lands from William Chadyov in 1185 to 1190.<sup>231</sup> This would suggest that the Duttons were a rising and ambitious family who would look favourably on having contact with the earl. Geoffrey Dutton did join Earl Ranulf on crusade with the Lacy family.<sup>232</sup>

Ranulf also patronised other religious institutions in Cheshire to consolidate his hold on the county. Between 1198 and 1206, Earl Ranulf patronised Mobberley Priory by granting it a confirmation.<sup>233</sup> As it was a new foundation the earl's grant provided security. Mobberley Priory had been founded by Patrick of Mobberley at the beginning of the thirteenth century.<sup>234</sup> The surviving original charters show that it was a family foundation that was created through grants and confirmations from Patrick's relatives, including his elder brother Augustine, who had granted Patrick his moiety in Mobberley, his niece and her husband William of Notton, and possibly his nephew William, son of Ralph Mobberley.<sup>235</sup> They were also a reasonably influential family, not only able to found a religious institution, but also able to rent out their lands to tenants. A charter detailing the transfer of lands between Henry Castello to Robert Alfric reveals that these lands were held of the Mobberley

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<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 260-61.

<sup>230</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, no. 15.

<sup>231</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 18.

<sup>232</sup> Abram, 'The Pilgrimage and Crusading Activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', (pp. 136-37).

<sup>233</sup> *BC*, no. 300

<sup>234</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vol. 6(1), pp. 478; *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, p. 36; Ormerod, *History*, i. 411, 422-3 no. 9.

<sup>235</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/5-6, 9; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

family.<sup>236</sup> That the grant to the abbey would have helped bring Patrick into the earl's sphere of influence is certain, as between 1195 and 1217, in return Patrick witnessed at least 5 of the earl's charters dealing with matters in Cheshire.<sup>237</sup>

Mobberley Priory, despite being a small institution, also had wider connections than just to the Mobberley family.<sup>238</sup> Once more these are shown in the remaining original charters and not least among them is evidence of a link to Richard of Aldford, who was Patrick Mobberley's immediate lord.<sup>239</sup> He confirmed the foundation grant as well, notably in the presence of the earl's three officers, Philip de Orreby, Peter the Clerk and Liulf the sheriff.<sup>240</sup> This would indicate that the earl and Mobberley Abbey and the Aldford families were coming together over this issue. The Aldford family were a Cheshire family, descending from a man named Bigod in the *Domesday Book* who held lands in Farndon, Lea, Thornton le Moors, Mobberley, Norbury, Nether Alderley, Siddington, North Rode, Congleton, Sandbach, Sutton, Wimboldsley and Weaver.<sup>241</sup> They were one of the leading barons in the region with whom the earl needed to maintain contact.

The Tatton family were also grantors to the priory of Mobberley. The Tattons were also a Cheshire landowning family holding lands in Tatton. The descent of their estates is uncertain but by the thirteenth century they had gained lands there.<sup>242</sup> It was Richard, son of Warin of Tatton who granted the priory his lands in Tatton in two charters.<sup>243</sup> These were confirmed by his family, Alan of Tatton and his wife Petronella.<sup>244</sup> Alan and Petronella also made additional grants to the priory from their own estates as well.<sup>245</sup> The dating of the charters is uncertain, but an approximate date around the time of the foundation would seem reasonable. A number of the earl's officers witnessed the various confirmations and grants by the

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<sup>236</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/23; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>237</sup> BC, no. 194, 224, 225, 240, 286, 300,

<sup>238</sup> For the size of the institution see, F. I. Dunn, 'The priory of Mobberley and its charters,' *Cheshire History*, no. 8 (1981), p. 77.

<sup>239</sup> Ormerod, *The History*, i. p. 323.

<sup>240</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/7; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>241</sup> Ormerod, *History*, ii. pp. 411-12; Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 729-30.

<sup>242</sup> Ormerod, *History*, i. pp. 344.

<sup>243</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/10-11; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>244</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/13-14; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>245</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/15-18; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

Tattons, including Liulf Twemlow his sheriff, Philip Orreby his justice, as well as Peter the Clerk who witnessed Richard's grants and Alan and Petronella's confirmations. His officers' presence would suggest that the Tattons would be aware that the earl was involved in their grants.

The Masy family and the Venables were also involved in the foundation. Hamone Masy confirmed Richard Tatton's grants and was also a witness to the grant made by Petronella and confirmed by her husband Adam.<sup>246</sup> Hugh Venables came to an agreement with the prior to pay 12s. annually for lands he held of them which had been given by the Tatton family to the priory.<sup>247</sup> The Venables were a leading family in Cheshire holding at the time of *Domesday* numerous lands in Eccleston, Alraham, Tarporley, Wettenhall, Hartford, Lymm, High Legh, Wincham, Mere, Peover, Rostherne and Hope.<sup>248</sup> It is expected that these lands would have held tenants.<sup>249</sup> That they were involved with the priory and the Tattons illustrates how interconnected this network was, and how by entering into it through the simple means of granting a charter to a religious institution and ensuring his officers witnessed the grants the earl could have much greater influence in the area. Andrew Abram has highlighted that this was not a new method for the earls in the county. The earl's ancestors along with their lords had used ecclesiastical patronage to help define the "political, cultural and regional identity" of the area.<sup>250</sup>

Ranulf also clearly sought to establish similar ties within his other lands. In Staffordshire, as well as founding Dieulacres, Earl Ranulf established ties to other local religious houses. Between 1227 and 1232 Earl Ranulf granted Hilton Abbey two salt houses in Northwich.<sup>251</sup> Henry de Audley had founded this Abbey in Staffordshire in 1223.<sup>252</sup> Henry eventually became a tenant of the earl in Cheshire and a valuable member of his court.<sup>253</sup> Ranulf, during the initial stages of his

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<sup>246</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/15-16, 19; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>247</sup> Chester, Chester Record Office, DDX 553/24; see Appendix 4 for facsimiles.

<sup>248</sup> Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, pp. 730-31.

<sup>249</sup> Ormerod, *History*, iii. pp. 102-03.

<sup>250</sup> Abram, 'The Pilgrimage and Crusading Activities of the Anglo-Norman Earls of Chester', p. 132.

<sup>251</sup> *BC*, no. 423.

<sup>252</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*. v. pp. 715-16.

<sup>253</sup> *BC*, no. 396.

majority, also granted a charter between c. 1187 to 1194 to confirm the grant to Croxden Abbey of a salt house in Middlewich made by Bertram de Verdun.<sup>254</sup> Bertram de Verdun, lord of Alton, founded Croxden Abbey in Staffordshire in 1176.<sup>255</sup> His family was also known to have been important local landowners and also tenants of the earl, even if their connection to Ranulf was possibly not as strong as it had been in previous generations.<sup>256</sup>

In Shropshire the earl granted a confirmation in 1199 of a grant made by Robert Bardulf to the canons of Lilleshall of land at Nantwich to build a salt house.<sup>257</sup> Lilleshall Abbey was founded by Philip and Richard of Belmeis in c. 1145 to 1148.<sup>258</sup> This grant can be explained as his interest as landlord; Robert Bardulf was a tenant of the earl and this charter may show his permission for the grant as Nantwich (Cheshire) was held of Chester honour.<sup>259</sup> Robert had acquired lands in Nantwich by marrying Aenora a daughter and co-heiress of William II Malbank.<sup>260</sup> Of course, it is also possible that the charter was made to obtain security of the grant. Such security was also requested from the king who in 1199 also confirmed Robert Bardulf's gift.<sup>261</sup> Robert is known to have fought the crown in 1215 but received letters of protection after taking the Cross.<sup>262</sup> His connection to Ranulf is clear although the lack of charters may suggest that the baron kept his independence.

In Warwickshire Earl Ranulf also remitted between 1200 and 1204 the forinsec service due for the hide which Gerard Camville gave the monks of Combe, and between 1200 to 1217 granted a licence to the monks of Combe to acquire certain lands and revenues.<sup>263</sup> Combe Abbey was founded by Richard de Camville in 1150 and the abbey's records can be found in two cartularies, one from the late twelfth to early thirteenth century, and another begun in 1255 with additions to the

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<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 205.

<sup>255</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v. p. 661.

<sup>256</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 260; Hagger, *The De Verdun Family*, Ch. 1.

<sup>257</sup> *BC*, no. 306.

<sup>258</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, vi.i. pp. 262-63.

<sup>259</sup> *BC*, no. 66; see also Williams and Martin, *Domesday Book*, p. 725.

<sup>260</sup> *Facsimiles of Early Cheshire Charters*, p 13; *HKF*, ii. pp. 16-17, 264-65.

<sup>261</sup> *RChart.*, p. 17.

<sup>262</sup> *RLP*, p. 162; for the return of his lands in 1216 see also *RLC*, i. p. 245.

<sup>263</sup> London, British Library, Cotton MS Vitellus, A. I. f.120r; Barraclough, *Charters*. nos. 322-23

sixteenth century.<sup>264</sup> The Camville family were also tenants of Earl Ranulf.<sup>265</sup> His grant to the abbey should be seen firstly in light of his connection to the Camvilles. Gerard, unfortunately, died soon after Ranulf's grant.<sup>266</sup> Gerard's heir Roger, however, seems to have been in contact with the earl and witnessed four of the earl's charters between 1190 and 1200.<sup>267</sup> One key charter was that of 1190, granting David, earl of Huntingdon, in marriage with his sister Matilda.<sup>268</sup> This charter essentially formed an alliance between the earls and represents an important event. Richard also seems to have died in the early 1210s and his heir was a minor. Ranulf seems to have maintained an interest in the family despite this. In 1228 William de Camville alleged his brother Richard was not legitimate. Thus William claimed to be the rightful heir and drew Earl Ranulf into the plea as Gerard held 1 fee in Clifton. The earl, however, pleaded that he only held that fee in his custody with Richard de Camville, son of Gerard, whose ancestors had held it of the earl's.<sup>269</sup>

Due to the failure of the Camville line, the key relationships for the earl to establish through patronising Combe were perhaps to the other donors to the abbey. There were a number of these. Bertram de Verdun also granted the abbey lands in Blakedon.<sup>270</sup> This would suggest that there was a wider group of connections to exploit. Roger Arden also witnessed a charter for Combe Abbey.<sup>271</sup> John Arden and William de Audley also witnessed Gerald of Gurrall grant a charter to Combe Abbey.<sup>272</sup> The Arden's were influential Cheshire tenants of the earl as was William Audley.<sup>273</sup> The fact that they are witnessing charters here suggests that they had wider interests in the earl's lands, or were following their lords interests.

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<sup>264</sup> 'Annales Monasterii de Waverleia', p. 233; for the cartularies see, London, BL, Cotton Vitellus, A. I., Cotton Vitellus D. XVIII; G. R. C. Davies, *Medieval Cartularies of Great Britain and Ireland* (London: The British Library, 2010), p. 56.

<sup>265</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 274.

<sup>266</sup> *Ibid.*, ii. p. 221

<sup>267</sup> *BC*, nos. 220, 268, 272, 295.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 220.

<sup>269</sup> *HKF*, ii. p. 274.

<sup>270</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vitellus, A. I. f.60r

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vitellus D. XVIII, f11v

<sup>272</sup> *Ibid.*, f. 22v.

<sup>273</sup> For William Audley see above, pp. 213-14; for the Ardens see Ormerod, *History*, ii. pp. 37-38.

In Northamptonshire, between 1201 and 1207, Earl Ranulf also granted Northampton Abbey a mill and land at Heyford of the manor of Bugbrooke.<sup>274</sup> Northampton Abbey was founded by William Peverel before 1105 and the abbey's documents can be found in a fourteenth century cartulary dated to around 1313.<sup>275</sup> The Peverel family had died out so the reason for this grant is less certain. It is possible that it came at the behest of the abbey itself or may have been to deepen Ranulf's alliance to David, earl of Huntingdon, who also patronised the abbey, granting it five charters between 1174 and 1219.<sup>276</sup> However, it is still reasonable that Ranulf, as in his other grants was trying to create contacts in the area. The Cauz family, were also patrons of the abbey. William de Cauz son of Roger de Cauz had granted Northampton Abbey lands in *campis de Clayton*.<sup>277</sup> It is possible that William was related to the Cauz family, who were tenants of the earls of Lincolnshire. In 1166 Osbert de Cauz, who had been steward to William de Roumare, is revealed to have held 6 fees of his grandson Earl William III Roumare, and Herbert de Cauz another ½ fee, 2 ½ of these being in Little Limber, Brockelsby, Kelby, and Gainsthorpe.<sup>278</sup> By 1212 Hugh Cauz held 1 fee in Blyborough, 2 fees in Dunstall, ½ fee in Waddingham, all of the earl of Chester.<sup>279</sup> This grant would be one way for the earl to try to establish meaningful ties with the family.

That Ranulf was clearly trying to establish new ties is certain. The map below shows the spread of the earl's ecclesiastical patronage.

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<sup>274</sup> *BC*, no. 336

<sup>275</sup> 'Houses of Austin canons: The abbey of St James, Northampton', *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 2*, ed. by W. R. D. Adkins, R. M. Sergeantson (London: VCH, 1906), 127-130; for the cartulary see, London, BL, Cotton Tiberius E. V; Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 141.

<sup>276</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, nos. 58-62.

<sup>277</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Tiberius E. V, f. 6v

<sup>278</sup> *Red Book*, p. 376.

<sup>279</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 190-91.

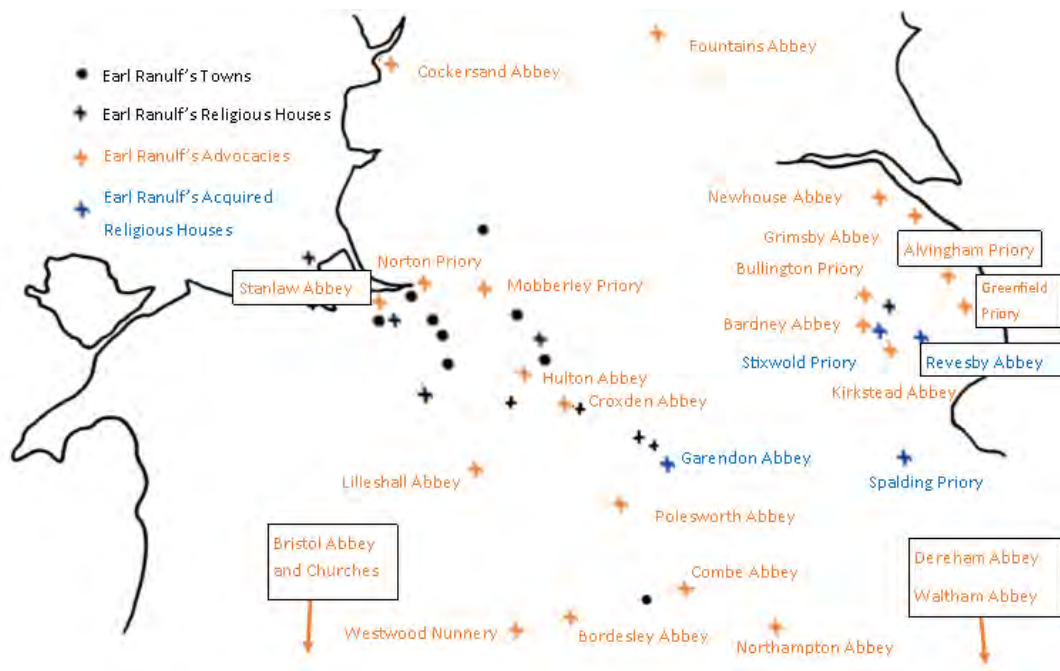


Figure 11 Earl Ranulf's Ecclesiastical Patronage

It is clear that, while there was a grouping around the earl's lands in the East Midlands, there was also a grouping in Lincolnshire. That the earl needed to establish new ties through religious patronage was no more evident, in the honour of Lincoln. This county had few existing connections beyond knightly tenancies to the earl. In a similar vein therefore the earl also established connections to Bullington priory which was founded by Simon, son of William de Kime in 1148 to 1154.<sup>280</sup> The Kime family were barons in the traditional sense as Philip de Kime had to pay £100 relief in 1220 to inherit his father's lands.<sup>281</sup> The family held 3 ½ fees in Lincolnshire of Earl Ranulf.<sup>282</sup> They seem to have been present in the earls of Chester's followings from the time of Earl Ranulf II, Earl Ranulf's grandfather.<sup>283</sup> Simon Kime seems to have been the first of the family to witness Earl Ranulf III's charters however. He witnessed up to 4 charters before he died in 1220.<sup>284</sup> His son Philip witnessed a further 10.<sup>285</sup> One way the earl had reached out to the Kimes was undoubtedly through his connection to Bullington, which comes from a charter

<sup>280</sup> Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, 6.2, p. 952.

<sup>281</sup> *HKF*, ii, p. 105.

<sup>282</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 160-61, 164.

<sup>283</sup> Simon son of William Kime witnessed 9 of Earl Ranulf II's charters, *BC*, nos. 34, 40, 66, 73, 74, 77, 82, 96, 104, Philip Kime also witnessed 4 of Earl Hugh's charters, *BC*, nos. 104, 165-166, 182.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 203, 262, 288, 330, the authenticity of 262 and 330 is uncertain.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 290, 293, 298, 330, 363, 417-421, the authenticity of 330 is uncertain.

he granted in around 1200 to 1205, confirming the gifts to the nuns of Bullington (Lincolnshire) made by Helte Boydel and his wife Idonea, and Alan Boydel.<sup>286</sup> The Boydels were also tenants of the earl, holding lands in Lincolnshire.<sup>287</sup> However, due to the limited nature of the contact between the Kimes and the earl following this, it seems that his attempts at obtaining support through this gift was limited.

Despite their appearance in the earl's court it seems as though the relationship between the Kimes and the earl in its early stages was problematic. In 1215 Philip de Kime's man, Philip de Chauncy was in the custody of a king's officer.<sup>288</sup> This would suggest that the Kimes fought for the rebels in the civil war against Earl Ranulf. Indeed, it is found in 1216 that Philip's lands in Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, and Derbyshire were committed to Geoffrey de Nevill, the royal chamberlain.<sup>289</sup> Philip was also a hostage for his father Simon.<sup>290</sup> Yet it does seem as though the family sought reconciliation in 1217, as Philip returned to allegiance and regained his lands in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.<sup>291</sup> It was therefore not until the 1220s that the Kimes began to appear more often in Ranulf's court.<sup>292</sup> This was perhaps due to a successful business deal as, between 1220 to 1226, Philip de Kime sold Bretby (Derbyshire) to Earl Ranulf for £100.<sup>293</sup> Earl Ranulf then granted it to Stephen Seagrave.<sup>294</sup>

The earl did try to improve his connections in Lincolnshire and notably with the Kimes, following the 1215 civil war. One way to do this was through patronising another abbey. Bardney Abbey was an Anglo-Saxon foundation that had Gilbert of Ghent as advocate. After the Conquest, its records can be found in a cartulary started in the late 13<sup>th</sup> century with additions to the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>295</sup> Earl Ranulf

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<sup>286</sup> The existing charter is likely a forgery but based upon an original; see *BC*, no. 330.

<sup>287</sup> *Liber Feodorum*, pp. 172, 175.

<sup>288</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 241.

<sup>289</sup> *Ibid.*, i. p. 247.

<sup>290</sup> *RLP*, pp. 163, 192.

<sup>291</sup> *RLC*, i. p. 374.

<sup>292</sup> *BC*, nos, 290, 298

<sup>293</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 363.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 363

<sup>295</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 40; 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The abbey of Bardney', *VCH A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2*, ed. by W. Page, (London: VCH, 1906), pp. 97-104; Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 5.



It seems to have developed an interest in the abbey, granting its cell in Hartsholme 2m. annually between 1144 to 1146, and giving Braidwood mill to the abbey in 1149 to 1153 in recompense for the injuries he inflicted on it.<sup>296</sup> William de Roumare had also granted Bardney Abbey lands, showing that his predecessor had seen the value in supporting local institutions.<sup>297</sup> Between 1217 and 1229 Earl Ranulf III confirmed the gift made by Roger of Milly of land in Bucknall to Bardney abbey, re-activating this tie that had lain dormant.<sup>298</sup>

The Kime family were especially involved with Bardney Abbey. Philip de Kime granted Bardney Abbey lands which his sons, Simon, William and Philip witnessed.<sup>299</sup> Philip de Kime, William de Welles, John Hareby and Robert Welleby also witnessed Brian de Insula give a grant to the abbey.<sup>300</sup> Meanwhile, Simon de Kime also granted it a number of charters.<sup>301</sup> That Ranulf's grant to this abbey follows the civil war would suggest that he had seen the problem of loyalty in the area and was trying to consolidate his hold through this means and sought an alliance to these leading barons to do so.

The earl's contact to Bardney Abbey would of course give him wider influence in the area. Other leading knights patronised this house. Gilbert de Benningworth, one of Ranulf's leading tenants in Lincolnshire honour, granted Bardney abbey lands.<sup>302</sup> It is also clear that the Benningworths had ties to Philip de Kime as when Philip granted Bardney Abbey lands, Roger de Benningworth witnessed the charter.<sup>303</sup> The Benningworths were also grantors to the Kimes own institution Bullington, granting it lands in three charters as shown in Gervase Holles (d.1675) copy of its original cartulary which has since been lost.<sup>304</sup> They were also frequent witnesses of the Kime family charters to their abbey of Bullington, Roger and

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<sup>296</sup> *BC*, nos. 77, 96.

<sup>297</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 123<sup>v</sup>

<sup>298</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 115<sup>v</sup>; *BC*, no. 398.

<sup>299</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 137<sup>v</sup>, 141<sup>v</sup>

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 78<sup>v</sup>

<sup>301</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, fos. 89<sup>v</sup>-90<sup>r</sup>

<sup>302</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f 90<sup>r</sup>

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, Cotton Vespasian E. XX, f. 94<sup>r</sup>

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, Additional 6118, fos. 378<sup>v</sup>-379<sup>v</sup>; for the cartulary see Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 21.

William witnessing eight charters of Philip and his son Simon's grants.<sup>305</sup> It is in this example that the creation of a cultural centre to the earl's lands in Lincolnshire can be seen.

Kirkstead Abbey was another such abbey that the earl patronised for a similar purpose. Hugh Brito (son of Eudo) lord of Tattershall founded it in Lincolnshire in 1139.<sup>306</sup> In a charter of 1198 to 1202 however, Earl Ranulf confirmed the gifts to Kirkstead Abbey in Sibsey, the East fen of Bolingbroke made by William of Roumare, his predecessor as earl of Lincoln.<sup>307</sup> Herein he is taking over the earls of Lincoln's hereditary connections. This also extends once more to a relationship as landlord as, in 1198 to 1217, he confirmed to the monastery of Kirkstead lands in Benningworth for a grange with common pasture, as given by Gilbert of Benningworth.<sup>308</sup> Kirkstead was also another location where local barons' interests congregated once more indicated by its cartulary produced in the first half of the thirteenth century with additions to the fourteenth century.<sup>309</sup> Philip de Kime and his son after him both patronised the abbey of Kirkstead.<sup>310</sup> Roger of Benningworth also witnessed a number of the grants made by Philip de Kime to the abbey,<sup>311</sup> and Geoffrey de Benningworth also granted Kirkstead Abbey lands.<sup>312</sup>

Therefore it seems reasonable to suggest that the earl was pious according to the expectations of his age. It is unfair to suggest that because he granted less lands to the church that he was withholding. The earl granted as many charters as his contemporaries and of a similar nature. However, the earl's piety would also have brought him into contact with a range of groups and individuals which would benefit his lordship. This is primarily because piety and lordship in this period are

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<sup>305</sup> Ibid., Additional 6118, fos. 376, 377, 380v

<sup>306</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, f. 2r; 'Houses of Cistercian monks: The abbey of Kirkstead', *VCH A History of the County of Lincoln: Volume 2*, ed. by W. Page (London: VCH, 1906), pp. 135-38.

<sup>307</sup> *BC*, no. 291.

<sup>308</sup> Ibid., no. 292.

<sup>309</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII; Davis, *Medieval Cartularies*, p. 104.

<sup>310</sup> London, British Library, Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, fos. 34r, 169v

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, fos. 4v

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., Cotton Vespasian E. XVIII, fos. 5r, 181r

difficult to separate. It is clear that the outcomes of such contacts helped the earl establish new relationships and to consolidate others with a range of individuals.

The earl's contemporaries also undertook similar patronage for the same purposes if on a much-reduced scale. David Earl of Huntingdon gave grants to a number of religious institutions both those he was connected to via his inheritance of the honour of Huntingdon, and those local to him for which he seems to have become an advocate. His hereditary connections include, Delapré Abbey, Northampton Priory of St Andrew and Sawtry Abbey which were founded by his predecessor Simon de St Liz.<sup>313</sup> He also gave grants to other houses such as Clerkenwell Priory in Middlesex, Hinchingsbrooke Priory in Huntingdonshire, Nuneaton Priory in Warwickshire, and Repton Priory in Lincolnshire, which were all within his locality.<sup>314</sup> Similarly, David granted a number of charters to Scottish houses, including Arbroath, Holyrood Abbey, Kelso Abbey and the Cathedral priory of St Andrews.<sup>315</sup> Therefore, David seems to be forging ties around his centres of power. However, that David used his ecclesiastical connections for his lordship is shown most clearly in his connections to Lindores Abbey, his own foundation. The charters he grants to the abbey include tenants as witnesses from his English lands, like David Lindsey, Simon de St Liz, William Burdet, Robert Bassingham, Walter Olifard, and William Revel.<sup>316</sup> This would indicate that he was bringing his followers into his own cultural pursuits, even taking them outside of their own main spheres of influence in some cases.

David's heir, John le Scot had less time to establish his hold on his lands. However he does seem to have ensured that he was connected to his hereditary tenures. He

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<sup>313</sup> For David's charters see Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, for Delapré Abbey nos. 21-22; for Northampton Priory nos. 58-61; for Sawtry Abbey nos. 75-80. For the foundation of Delapré Abbey see, 'House of Cluniac nuns: The abbey of Delapré', *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 2*, ed. by W. R. D. Adkins and R. M. Sergeantson (London: VCH, 1906). 114-116; for the foundation of Northampton Priory see, "Houses of Cluniac monks: The priory of St Andrew, Northampton." *A History of the County of Northampton: Volume 2*, ed. by W. R. D. Adkins and R. M. Sergeantson (London: VCH, 1906), 102-09; for the foundation of Sawtry Abbey see, Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, v, p. 521.

<sup>314</sup> Stringer, *Earl David of Huntingdon*, for Clerkenwell Priory nos 18-20; for Hinchingsbrooke Priory nos. 32-33; for Nuneaton Priory, no 63; for Repton Priory no. 68.

<sup>315</sup> *Ibid.*, for Arbroath no. 5; for Holyrood Abbey, no 34; for Kelso Abbey no. 35; for St Andrew's Cathedral nos. 71-74.

<sup>316</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 37-52.

gave grants to his father's abbey of Lindores, and his uncles Dieulacres Abbey, and St Werburgh's Abbey in Chester.<sup>317</sup> That John also wished to establish cultural ties to his barons can also be shown by the fact that he continued Ranulf's patronage of the Lacy family house of Stanlaw.<sup>318</sup>

Waleran earl of Warwick granted charters to Leicester Abbey confirming the grant of his tenant Hugh of Arden, showing that he had some concern with establishing ties with barons through religious institutions.<sup>319</sup> Waleran also granted charters to Kenilworth, Nuneaton, and Warwick, all in Warwickshire, suggesting that he also had a degree of local concern in his grants to religious houses.<sup>320</sup> Waleran's heir only gave a grant to Kenilworth, however, suggesting that he did not involve himself as much in local cultural concerns.<sup>321</sup>

The Marshals were like Earl Ranulf, also involved in creating a local cultural sphere of influence. They both granted extensively to Irish houses, including Duiske, Inistoge, Kells, Kilcullen, and Kilkenny.<sup>322</sup> They also granted to their local religious institutions in England and Wales, including at Bradenstoke, Caversham, Gloucester, Llanthony, Maiden Bradley, Margram, Notley, and Pembroke Reading, Tintern Parva, and Winchester.<sup>323</sup> These charters were granted to institutions concentrated in South Wales and South West England. The Marshals were, like Earl Ranulf, becoming part of the local society. That William and his heir were aware that ecclesiastical institutions were linked to lordship concerns, is however best illustrated by Cartmel. Earl William had founded Cartmel Priory between 1189 and 1194.<sup>324</sup> However, he only gave the priory one further charter in 1199 to 1219 of rights to a church in Ireland.<sup>325</sup> This is only a small grant, and although the house is an Augustinian priory, and therefore not as expensive, the grants he gives are much more limited in comparison with those Ranulf and Earl David gave their

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<sup>317</sup> *BC*, for Dieulacres nos. 445-448; for St Werburgh's nos. 449-50; for Lindores, nos. 464-468.

<sup>318</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 461.

<sup>319</sup> Crouch and Dace, *The Newburgh Earldom*, no. 166, for the Ardens see pp. 300-03.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*, for Kenilworth, nos. 164-165; for Nuneaton no. 170; for Warwick no. 186.

<sup>321</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 198.

<sup>322</sup> Crouch, *Acts and Letters*, nos. 32-34, 53-56, 131-39, 160, 162-63, 187-88.

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 17-20, 23-24, 44, 60-63, 73, 75-79, 83, 85, 95, 100, 112, 166, 171, 173, 180, 193.

<sup>324</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 21.

<sup>325</sup> *Ibid.*, no, 22.

foundations. William's heir furthermore, does not support the priory. This would suggest that, as the Marshals lordship interests moved to the south following William's marriage to the Striguil heiress so did their cultural concerns.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it seems reasonable to suggest that Earl Ranulf was able to exercise influence in a number of localities. It is also clear that the earl's influence was able to be used for lordship purposes. However, Ranulf built his local connections around existing interests. The focus to building his local connections included not only his own demesne, but also other administrative structures including his tenancies and possibly the county. Cheshire with its concentrated tenancies naturally helped provide the earl with a base from which he could influence neighbouring counties. It is no surprise that neighbouring Lancashire, Warwickshire, and Staffordshire are focuses for his lordship. In this chapter it is also clearly apparent that tenancy has provided some influence over whom Earl Ranulf established locative ties, therefore the hereditary link seen in previous chapters has again been influential.

However, it is apparent that tenancies and his direct relationship to tenants did not provide the sole focus for the earl's concern with locality. This is most obviously the case in Lincolnshire. The ecclesiastical patronage within this county shows that, while the earl's interest there was undoubtedly kindled by his tenancies, it was through establishing cultural ties to the local community that he was attempting to form a lordship connection. It is also clear that the earl created local ties in other ways. His pious identity undoubtedly helped spread his influence in Lincolnshire, but it was perhaps the economic power he had in Warwickshire, Cheshire, and Lancashire, which would also have helped ensure that his power was known throughout this area.

In his approach to locality Earl Ranulf was very similar to his contemporaries. Earl William Marshal seems to have initially worked to establish ties to local notables in his newly acquired honour of Pembroke and David Earl of Huntingdon also established ties to the leading barons within and neighbouring his honour. A lack

of urban developments and limited ecclesiastical patronage within England meant that these lords had little ability to influence the cultural and economic localities in their lands. However, both earls were more active in their lands outside of England in this regard. The earls of Warwick unlike all the other earls seem to have been much less active in all respects, except in establishing ties to the tenants of their honour. Of all the lords the Warwick's were perhaps the most 'traditional' in their approach to lordship.

## Conclusion

The primary aim of this thesis was to provide a new understanding of Earl Ranulf III of Chester by investigating the earl's lordship, his men, and the source of his power. The second aim of this thesis was to provide a new way to understand medieval lordly power as recent debates have left that topic relatively unclear. The thesis has provided a number of conclusions for both aims by examining the earl's interactions with key elements of his lordship and comparing them with his contemporaries.

In comparing Earl Ranulf with other lords of the period it is clear that he, like many of them, utilised his relationship with the crown and received territorial rewards from it. Where a lord had less contact with the crown, such as the earls of Warwick, their power on a national scale, was diminished. However, Ranulf's relationships to the various kings do not seem to have been close, rather it was service during times of war that brought the earl and the crown together. For his other contemporaries, the Pembrokes and the earls of Huntingdon, their relationships were founded on other ties. For the Pembrokes, while their military expertise was certainly desired, a closer relationship to the leading administrators and greater familiarity with the crown, which was to become familial, afforded them even greater opportunity than Ranulf obtained. The earl of Huntingdon also acted as ambassador between the kings of England and Scotland, which gave him a certain importance, and a slightly different role, but also one which put him in conflict with the kings of England. From the analysis of these relationships it is clear that, while Earl Ranulf benefitted from his ties to the crown, the ties themselves were individual and linked to circumstances not least of which was the relationship to the crown that he inherited from his predecessors, as well as other circumstances in his lordship. Such circumstances undoubtedly ensured that he was to obtain what his predecessors had fought for, but also meant that he was always at a distance from the centre of court and susceptible to court intrigue.

The different connections that the earls had to the crown, however, also affected the earls' other relationships. Ranulf, due to the slightly greater distance that was

maintained between himself and the crown, established connections to a range of leading individuals in the realm. These connections were based primarily upon his familial and hereditary links to certain other leading lords. The purpose of these relationships was undoubtedly concern with consolidating his hold on his local estates, but they also had wider political importance.

The creation of an alliance with other leading lords undoubtedly meant that Ranulf maintained a presence in the royal mind as much as did the Pembrokes, William Marshal and his sons, if in a slightly different way. It also provided the earl with a position of power when interacting with the crown. Ranulf was certainly concerned with royal power as he also established connections to royal officers, both sheriffs and justices. The utility of the relationships which Ranulf established with these royal officers is uncertain, but he was unlike his contemporaries in establishing them, and it is possible that Ranulf, through contacting royal agents in this way, was trying in some way to influence or subvert royal control in the localities.

Ranulf, of course, like his contemporaries was aware of the changing nature of royal government and borrowed from its practices. Ranulf's following, like that of William Marshal and the other earls, also included leading individuals, who can be identified as counsellors. He was undoubtedly following the royal model of lordship in this regard, as leading barons were generally performing more counsellor activities than administrative ones for the crown. He also adapted his own administration to accommodate the changes in the royal administration, creating new officers to interact with the courts and, like the other lords, moved to establish more professional administrators in his lands. One key area where the earl outdid his contemporaries in this regard is in his construction of a large chancery. In certain respects, therefore, Ranulf was at the forefront of advancements in lordship and his administration and bureaucracy was used to secure his hold on his lands, which had grown exponentially in his lifetime due to royal largesse.

A number of Ranulf's counsellors and officers, however, derived their original connection to him through tenancy and the hereditary connection it established, which would suggest that Ranulf had a traditional outlook on lordship. Yet the slightly different status of Cheshire in the earl's lands, undoubtedly also indicates



that the earl would have been more concerned with tenants in that area than perhaps his contemporaries were in their own lordships.

The creation of the Cheshire Magna Carta indicates that the earl had a very different relationship with his tenants in this county. Indeed, the fact that there was little royal oversight through royal sheriffs or justices meant that the earl had a different type of relationship with individuals within Cheshire. However, the differences within the county should not be over emphasised. Within this study it is apparent that whilst Earl Ranulf, through the force of his character and circumstances of his lifetime, was able to obtain a measure of independence for himself in this county, the palatinate status of the county of Cheshire is debateable. Earl Ranulf's power and independence came primarily through his relationships with the crown, who through their grants created one of the most powerful lords in the realm, as well as his wider lordship connections. The individuality of Cheshire can only be discussed in this light.

Despite tenants in Cheshire having a different relationship to the earl it is also clear that Ranulf was concerned with tenancies of various types throughout his lordship. Tenants of knightly, ecclesiastical, and urban status were created and his relationships to tenants were reinforced throughout the earl's lifetime. That he was not alone in this approach is also shown to a degree with the earl's contemporaries. The earls of Huntingdon, Pembroke, and Warwick were shown to have granted individuals lands as well as showing a degree of interest in their ecclesiastical and urban tenants. This thesis has shown relationships to such tenancies brought a range of negotiated rewards, ranging from economic, to political, and religious. The relationship to tenancies, however, also helped the earl to establish other connections as it was a pre-existing tie which could be built upon. One key relationship that was built upon tenancy was local connections.

Localism was also a theme in Ranulf's lordship. However, it is clear that this term is too vague to be completely useful without situating it within other lordship themes. Ranulf's lordship showed that there were a number of different localities in his lordship. The earl's concern with localities also conjoined with the location of his tenancies. Earl Ranulf used economic and social means to control his lands and the

localities around them. He sought control of the urban centres and therefore established himself not only as a leading landowner in the area, but also as lord of the leading market. His patronage of the towns in Cheshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and Warwickshire allowed him to display himself as one of the main permanent authoritative local forces in the area. It brought economic wealth to the earl as well, but also allowed him to push his lordship beyond the limits of his tenancies and demesne into local markets.

The earl's ecclesiastical patronage also allowed him, especially within the counties of Lincolnshire and Cheshire, to enter into a dialogue with local society. He was able to use such patronage to not only establish himself as heir to new acquisitions, but also ingratiate himself with barons and knights who patronised the same institutions. The earl struggled with controlling Lincolnshire particularly after being granted the honour. His role in the civil war meant that he fought many Lincolnshire knights and he was present at the sack of Lincoln. His patronage of ecclesiastical institutions in that county undoubtedly served to reconcile himself to his tenants and knights in the area and present himself as the hereditary lord.

In comparison to his contemporaries, Earl Ranulf established more local influence through these means than they did. William Marshal brought new men and barons into his court, but there is less evidence of him utilising his pious or economic connections to form a local powerbase in England. The Marshals were much more active in this regard in Ireland. Similarly, Earl David had few ties established in England through such means, other than to leading local barons in his court. He was much more active in supporting his local control in Scotland. The earls of Warwick were concerned primarily with their local area, but again this is limited.

The analysis of Earl Ranulf and his comparison to his contemporaries within this thesis also shows that lordly power was based upon a range of connections and relationships in this period that, collectively, can be termed a lordship. This presents a new way to understand power within the period. Whilst it is undoubtedly true that power was also created through exploitation of existing systems and the collection of resources, which can be found in other works on power, the notion that relationships are at the heart of power suggests that power

arose from society. Lordly power itself, particularly arose from the position and outlook of a lord within that society. This gives the analysis of lordly power much more scope for the investigation of its interactions.

Such a view of lordly power allows each lordship to be seen as having individuality, as each lord operated slightly differently in his relationships with the key individuals within their power structures. This is in direct contrast to how lordly power has sometimes been approached. Either a lord's power is based upon legal right and is essentially founded in the structure of society, or it has been placed in other factors such as wealth and the ability for wealth to attract support.<sup>1</sup>

Having said that, the nature of relationships between the earl and his followers varies from individual to individual, and it is possible to see that the relationships are built from ties that were often common throughout the earl's lordship, and those of other lords as well. Some of these themes have been known about for a long time. Those most common among the various groups found in Ranulf's lordship include, familial ties, political ties, hereditary ties, geographic ties, formal (or legal) ties, ties of patronage, cultural ties, and economic ties. These standard relationships are at the heart of lordship, and it is undoubtedly by examining these relationships and how they are used that a lordship can be understood.

It is also important to note that this thesis has shown that these relationships should also not just be considered as one sided. The other participant also has expectations and can limit or advance the effectiveness of the relationship. It was clear in the example of the earl's relationship to the crown, leading counsellors, royal officers, and tenants, that the relationship could fail in times of crisis, such as war. Individuals such as tenants and locals could also have expectations. Indeed, the earl's interaction with tenants in Cheshire may have been dictated to a large degree by expectations within that county and the earl was therefore more restricted in his actions.

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<sup>1</sup> Wealth was identified as the main source of lordly power in, David Crouch, *The Beaumont Twins: The Roots and Branches of Power in the Twelfth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1986), p. 213.

The individuality of lordships, therefore undoubtedly arises from the way these common relationships are used, or are able to be used, and the extent to which they are used within the lordship. The personalities of the lords and their followers as well as the circumstances would undoubtedly affect this. William Marshal's lordship was dictated by his history as a household knight and his position as earl being granted in marriage by the crown. His lack of family relations also meant that he had less ability to establish political alliances. This meant that he was reliant upon the crown, its administrators, and other local connections. Ranulf had similar issues in trying to establish connections in his new honour of Lincolnshire, despite a hereditary tie to the lordship.

Earl David, as he was a member of the Scottish royal family and held lands across borders, had split concerns. This had a great impact on his relationships. He established ties to the crown in England, but they were not close. In order to perhaps aid his position, he was able to establish familial ties in England and sought to do so by joining the large political group headed by Earl Ranulf. However, his political alliances were undoubtedly limited due to his closeness to the crown of Scotland. This split concentration also seems to have limited his ability to form locative ties in his English lands. The earl did have some hereditary ties and seems to have established notable connections to some of his leading tenants and local barons, but did not branch out from these. His bureaucracy was also professionalised, which seems to fit his absentee lordship. David's son John seems to have adopted a mixture of his father's, and later his uncle Earl Ranulf's, methods.

The earls of Warwick were rather reclusive in this period. They seem to have concerned themselves mainly with local affairs. They established contact with their tenants and had a hereditary tie to them, as well as a familial tie to some of their leading men. They also contacted some leading locals but seem to have distanced themselves from the crown and other leading magnates. Their administrations were developed and they seem to have interacted with the new royal administration, even if not trying to subvert it like Earl Ranulf.

It is clear, therefore, that while lordly power can be seen as an abstract thing originating from the inherent structure of society, it was also at its heart really a

collection of relationships and this presents a new model with which to consider it. It is also clear Earl Ranulf in this respect had a complex and successful lordship. He was politically astute and relied upon a range of methods to recruit a following and extend his power and influence. He cannot merely be called a traditionalist.

## Appendix 1: Handlist of Earl Ranulf's Acta

Handlist of the *acta* of Earl Ranulf III of Chester found in Barraclough's Charters of the Earl's of Chester. The numbering from Barraclough's edition has been maintained herein.

202. 1181-1183. A confirmation by Richard archbishop of Canterbury of the gift by Earl Ranulf III of Chester of 40s. to the nuns of Westwood (Worcestershire).

203. 1186-1200. (Belchford) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts of his grandfather Ranulf II, to Minting Priory, and adds the tithes of the assart in the woods of Minting.

204. ? 1187-1189. Earl Ranulf of Chester wrote to his officials at Trévières to instruct them to return to the abbey of Montebourg the tithes of his mill at the pond of Trévières, and the fish in that pond, which they had withheld and the same tithes in the future.

205. ? 1187-1194 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Croxden abbey of a salt house in Middlewich made by Bertram of Verdun.

206. 1188 (3<sup>rd</sup> Feb.)-1189 (15 Nov.) (Coventry) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, confirmed his ancestors grant of Combe (nr. Chipping Camden, Gloucestershire) to Bordesley abbey in free alms.

207. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Bordesley abbey and its monks in free alms quittance from toll and other dues pertaining to their purchases and sales made in Chester for their own use.

208. 1188-1190 (Chester) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond confirmed the liberties and grants of his father to Stanlaw abbey.

209. c.1190-1200 (Frodsham) Earl Ranulf of Chester grants to the monks of Stanlaw freedom to take wild beasts killed on their lands to Chester, that they or their men cannot be impleaded unless a *sacreber* wishes to pursue it, and freedom from the earl's serjeants and foresters.

210. 1194-1198 (Le Mans) Earl Ranulf of Chester wrote to the justiciar of Chester (a writ) telling him that he has given the monks of Stanlaw quittance from forensic service owed concerning their lands in Acton which they held for a term of years from Richard of Aston.

211. 1207-1211 Earl Ranulf of Chester notifies that the abbey of Stanlaw and grange of Stanney, which are the fees of Roger de Lacy, can be disafforested in pure and perpetual alms and that they can be free and quit from pleas and services which pertained to the forest.

212. 1207-1211 Earl Ranulf of Chester grants Stanlaw abbey 20s. annually from the shrievalty of Chester in pure and perpetual alms until better provision can be made.

213. 1208-1211 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester gives quittance to the monks of Stanlaw in pure and perpetual alms regarding toll on salt and other purchases and sales made for their own use.

214. 1210-1215 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Henry Despenser of Willington made by William son of Henry lord of Stapleford.

215. 1221-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in free alms to the monks of Stanlaw quittance from the duty of feeding his serjeants and foresters in their vill of Willington.

216. 1188-1194 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Stephen clerk of Chipping Campden (Gloucestershire) of the church of St Mary of Campden made by Robert the abbot and the convent of Chester.

217. 1188-1199 Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, confirmed the grant that had been given with the consent of his grandfather, Ranulf II, to St Augustine's abbey (Bristol) of Fifehead made by Robert fitz Harding, and that St Augustine's holds it free and quit of all services and exactions owed to him or his heirs.

218. 1188-1192 (possibly spurious) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond granted his tithes of the lands and rents in Coventry to the churches of St Mary, St Michael, St Chad and St Giles, and to his chaplain, Ralph, and his successors in the chapel of St Michaels and those pertaining to it.

219. 1192, 30<sup>th</sup> July (Coventry) Earl Ranulf of Chester grants his recognition of the right of the church of Coventry in the chapel of St Michael (Coventry) and his gift of the other chapels pertaining to it.

220. 1190, August. Earl Ranulf of Chester granted David earl of Huntingdon, in marriage with his sister Matilda, £60 of land divided between Baddow (Essex), and Greetham, Gloulceby, Hemingby and Asterby (Lincolnshire) together with the service of fifteen knights.

221. 1190-1194 (Chester) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, confirmed his grant in free alms to the hospital of St John the Baptist outside the Northgate of Chester, of the site of the house and his protection and rights to preach and collect alms for the poor within Cheshire.

222. 1181-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to the hospital of St Giles (Boughton, Cheshire) the right to collect one handful of flour, corn, rye and barley and other foods from every sack brought into Chester for sale in a cart or on horse, and a boat for fishing over and below the bridge of Chester.

223. 1190-1194 (Middlewich) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, confirmed the gifts of Ranulf II and Hugh II to St Mary's convent (Chester) and granted 40s. from his rents in Wich, a boat on the water of Chester, a free court and the rectory of Over which his father granted in frankalmoign.

224. 1195-1199 (Chester) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, granted in free alms to St Mary's convent, Chester, free multure of corn for their table in his mills, which will be milled first after the earl's or what is in the hopper.

225. 1200-1203 (Chester). Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in free alms Wallescote to St Mary's convent, Chester, excepting his forest rights.

226. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf III of Chester and Lincoln notified that the nuns of Chester having been disturbed by Robert of Grosvenor in the advowson of the chapel of Budworth, and had made Robert to appear before him at court and renounce his claim.

227. 1190-1194, 30<sup>th</sup> June (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in free alms the gifts to St Werburgh's abbey made by his predecessors, and their barons, and his.
228. 1191-1194 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in free alms the gift to St Werburgh's abbey of half a salhouse at Northwich made by William de Venables.
229. 1194-1202 (Walton) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed his father's gift in free alms of the church of Prestbury to St Werburgh's abbey.
230. 1194-1208 Ranulf the sixth earl of Chester granted to St Werburgh's abbey, quittance from feeding the earl's serjeants in its Wirral lands, except for 6 foresters on foot, and freedom from all regarding the manors of Sutton, Eastham, Bromborough and Irby however.
231. 1208-1210 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted a licence to Abbot Hugh and St Werburgh's abbey and convent to extend their buildings as their neighbour Philip de Orreby has on his.
232. 1208-1211 (spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester, son of Hugh, granted to St Werburgh's abbey in free alms the tithes of his demesne in Rhuddlan and of his fishery and mills in Englefield, a tenement in Rhuddlan, and pannage and common for pigs in his forests of Englefield and Cheshire, therefore restoring rights previously granted.
233. ?1208-1217 Earl Ranulf III of Chester notified that he had taken all lands, tithes, rents etc. pertaining to the fabric of St Werburgh's abbey under his protection, and orders that the clerk of the work receives payment.
234. 1181-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to St Werburgh's abbey a single manor.
235. 1198 - 1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted half a bovate of land to St. Werburgh's abbey in Sibsey (Lincolnshire).
236. 1198-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the services of Galrfidi son of Acke de Sibsey regarding his lands in Sibsey to St Werburgh's abbey in return for 10s. annually of which the monks released 20d. annually to Broughton hospital and of the remaining 100d. to feed the poor on the anniversary of his father Hugh under the abbey of Chester.
237. 1181-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to St Werburgh's abbey 100d. in alms on the anniversary of his father Hugh, and 20d. of it thereafter goes to the lepers.
238. 1181-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester quitclaimed to St Werburgh's abbey the enclosed places of the parks of Queredon, Weston, Aston and all other lands overseen by him in Derbyshire.
239. 1208-1228 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant of two bovates in Elton, which Peter the clerk gave the them, one toft in Elton, and 6 lawns which Helias held.
240. 1190-1194 (Macclesfield) (Spurious, but likely based on a real original grant) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in free alms to Combermere abbey a carucate in Wincle (Macclesfield forest) with rights to pasture and certain liberties and privileges.
241. 1230 (Chester) (Spurious, likely a later charter) Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed in free alms the lands and liberties granted by Hugh Malbank and his son William to Combermere abbey.



242. 1190-1194 (Chester) (Spurious, but possibly based on an original) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, confirmed all gifts made to the Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem.
243. 1190-1195 (Martilly) Earl Ranulf of Chester wrote to the revered and most dear Richard bishop of London asking him to aid the canons of Fougères to gain possession of the church of Cheshunt (Hertfordshire) which the previous counts of Brittany had given them, or alternatively to ensure that they receive a pension from Master Osbert who is in possession.
244. 1190-1198 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Robert Lancelyn a boat on the river Dee in return for Robert quitclaiming a house and its lands near the south gate of Chester to the earl.
245. 1193-1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Robert Lancelyn quittance from attending county and hundred courts regarding his lands of Poulton and Bebington and that he and his heirs are to pay 18d. annually to the earl's chamber in lieu of *shirestuth* and *streteward*.
246. 1190-1199 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed his father's grant in free alms to the monks of Poulton.
247. c. 1200 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Poulton abbey in free alms a free boat on the Dee and the right to fish under and above the bridges of Chester and Eaton.
248. 1208-1213 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the abbot and monks of Poulton of the vill of Byley (nr. Middlewich) made by Richard of Aldford in free alms.
249. 1213-1214 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the monks of Poulton of the lands of Bradford and Wethull made by John of Arden in free alms in exchange for the abbey's lands in Aldford.
- 250 1190-1199 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted a boat to fish the Dee to Nicholas son of Robert.
252. ?1190-1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to William Marshal the land previously held by Liegrus and a meadow below Caludon.
253. c. 1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William Marshal of Sutton 40 acres between Coventry and Asthill.
254. c. 1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted permission for William Marshal of Sutton to give the tithes from his demesne and lands at Asthill (Coventry) to maintain a chaplain at Asthill, while rendering 1lb of incense to the church of St Michael (Coventry) annually.
255. 1181-1210 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted 40 acres to Robert Marshall of Stviehall (nr. Coventry).
256. 1191-1194 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the citizens of Chester the liberties and customs granted by his predecessors as well as other new rights.
257. 1191-1194 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted and confirmed to the citizens of Chester a gild merchant with all liberties enjoyed in that gild under his predecessors.

258. 1208-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the citizens of Chester and their heirs, their right to give consent to individuals coming to the city to buy or sell goods, excluding the fairs at the nativity of St John the Baptist and Christmas.

259. 1191-1194 (St James) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, granted the abbey of Montmorel in free alms the plot of land formerly of Walter the Tailor in St James-de-Beuvron.

260. 1191-1194 (Frodsham) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gift to Hugh Dutton of Preston (Preston Brook , nr. Dutton, Cheshire) made by Henry and Juliana de Nuers his wife.

261. 1191-1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Geoffrey Dutton for his homage and service, Helen daughter of Jordan of Cheadle, with her lands.

262. 1191-1194 (Nottingham). (Spurious, but likely based on an original). Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed Richard Bacon's foundation charter of Rocester abbey.

263. 1192 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William of Ferrers, earl of Derby, 10 liberates in Donington (Lincolnshire) and 5 knights fees in marriage to his sister Agnes.

264. c. 1192 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed his father's grant to the monks of Garendon of the right to collect a cart of fuel from Barrow-upon-Soar (Leicestershire) in free alms in return for a boat on the Dee which they had been given by Ranulf II.

265. c. 1197-1207 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Garendon abbey, pasture in Barrow-upon-Soar (Leicestershire), a cart a day to collect fuel from there, and confirmed the gifts of Robert and William de Jorz and Thomas Despenser in his fee of Holywell Hall.

266. 1192-1194 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted lands in Cheshire, formerly of Robert fitz Nigel, to David of Malpas in exchange for £100, unless and until Robert or his heirs repay £100.

267. c. 1194 (Chester) Ranulf, duke of Brittany, earl of Chester and Richmond, granted to Andre son of Mabel quittance of toll throughout the earl's lands and of carrying writs and other customary obligations, and the right to only answer complaint to the earl or his justice.

268. c. 1200 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted permission to Andrew son of Mabel to put nets in the river Dee under Chester Bridge.

269. 1194-1198 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in free alms the grant to the abbey of St Lô of the land and wood of Solerio made by Thomas Castel and Sybil, wife of Henry Merlet.

270. 1194-1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Hugh Boydel his road of Lachford and the passage of the Mersey between Runcorn and Thelwall and that no carts use the passage without his consent.

271. 1194-1202 (Weaverham) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Ranulf of Merton, son of Ranulf, the earl's usher (hostiarius), Merton (Cheshire) in return for keeping one of the earl's horses, and confirmed his office (with its two horses and three oxen annually). For this confirmation Ranulf would give the earl two greyhounds.

272. 1194-1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the exchange between Countess Bertrada, his mother, and the canons of Repton.
273. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to the canons of Repton the perpetual right to collect a cart of fuel daily from Ticknall, and to fish in the Trent.
274. c.1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln re-confirmed in free alms the charters of Repton and Calke priories.
275. 1194-1204 Earl Ranulf of Chester freed the monks of Basingwerk from toll in his lands.
276. 1194-1208 (Chester) (possibly spurious) Earl Ranulf III of Chester freed the free-men of the Wirral of providing food for his serjeants, except six foresters. But during war they should provide and support 12 serjeants.
277. 1196-1197 (Les Andelys) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Barthélemy l'Abbé 100 acres at Trévières for one-tenth of a knights fee.
278. 1198-1200 (Maidenwell, Lincolnshire) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts to the monastery and canons of Newhouse (Newsham, Lincolnshire) of land made by Peter of Goxhill in Killingholme, Ralph of Halton in Halton, William son of Geoffrey in Newhouse, Geoffrey of Turs in Cabourne, and Ralph of Driby in Claxby and Normanby, and takes the canons under his protection.
279. 1198-1200, 25<sup>th</sup> December (St James-de-Beuvron) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to St Melaine of Rennes a rent of land in Normandy.
280. 1194-1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Peter the clerk a boat to fish the Dee at Chester bridge and Eaton.
281. 1199-1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Peter the clerk of land in Castle Street (Chester) where his house is, next to that of Agnes daughter of Ranulf Outhecarle, with freedom from certain services, and also grants him Robert son-in-law of Mary and his children.
282. 1208-1213 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the lands and other properties held by Peter the clerk in Chester.
283. 1208-1216 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to his godson Ranulf and Patrick his clerk, of lands made by their father Peter the clerk.
284. 1208-1216 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Ranulf his godson and son of Peter the clerk, Onston.
285. 1208-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Peter the clerk, his heirs, or anyone he assigns the vill of Thornton, quittance from suit of county and hundred and pleas of forest, of pannage, and feeding the earl's foresters and serjeants.
286. 1208-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts Peter the clerk and his heirs have received in Cheshire and their quittance from suit of county and hundred courts, portmoot, hallmoot, toll, passage, castlework, and other customs and exactions.
287. 1198-1202 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the canons of Holy Cross (Waltham) in alms of 5 spades to dig in the Marsh of Bolingbroke made by William of Roumare.

288. 1198-1202 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms the site of the foundation of Revesby abbey founded by William of Roumare, earl of Lincoln, and the grants made by his successors.
289. 1199-1204 Earl Ranulf of Chester gifted to Revesby abbey in alms his bondsman, Roger of Stickney.
290. 1225-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to Revesby abbey a right of way through his marsh of Bolingbroke, and the marshes of Robert of Rodes and Robert Marmion.
291. 1198-1202 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms the gifts to Kirkstead abbey made by William of Roumare.
292. 1198-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in alms to the monastery of Kirkstead lands in Benningworth for a grange with common pasture, as given by Gilbert of Benningworth.
293. ?1220-1221 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to Kirkstead abbey in alms the site of their mill adjoining Little Fen and other tenements in Metheringham (Lincolnshire).
294. 1198-1203 (Coventry) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the canons of Dereham of the right to dig 4 spits of land in the East Marsh of Bolingbroke made by William of Roumare.
295. 1198-1203 (Great Tew) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the lands of Gilbert of Benningworth and his heirs which he held of William of Roumare.
296. 1205 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Gilbert of Benningworth the land of Richard of Warwick acquired through his marriage to Richard's daughter, Sara.
297. 1205 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Gilbert of Benningworth, his father Roger's lands held of William of Roumare, and additionally rights in the East Fen of Bolingbroke.
298. 1220-1224 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the inheritance of Gilbert of Benningworth of lands in Lincolnshire from his father for 10 fees, excluding the manors of Halton, Irby, Steeping, and Kingthorpe which the earl retained.
299. 1223, November. Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln came to an agreement with Gilbert of Benningworth, who would assign seven bovates in Benningworth to Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln for eight years from 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1223 in return for 40m.
300. 1198-1206 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts to Mobberley priory made by Patrick Mobberley.
301. 1198-1206 (Lincoln) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Nicholas son of Baldwin of Enderby (Mavis Enderby, Lincolnshire) a toft and a croft in Enderby.
302. 1198-1206 (Belchford) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the lands of Alan of Hareby son of Walter, in Miningsby and Kirkby (Lincolnshire) which had been recognised as his right by Robert the Chamberlain of Pontefract in the earl's court of Bolingbroke.
303. ?1198-1207 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Thomas son of Alger of Fleet (Lincolnshire) nine acres in Long Bennington (Lincolnshire) that William of St John had given his father.

304. 1198-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms the grants to Alvingham priory (Lincolnshire) of lands and pastures in Cabourne made by Gilbert of Turs.
305. 1198-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms the grants to the nuns of Stixwold of the church of Hundleby (Lincolnshire), the service of the tenement of Jocelin of Hundleby, and two spades digging in Bolingbroke marsh by William of Roumare, and the grants by Turpin of Billingham, Thomas of Welton, Peter son of Alan of Woodhall and Alan son of Walter of Kirkby.
306. 1199 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the canons of Lilleshall of land at Nantwich to build a salt house made by Robert Bardulf.
307. c. 1199 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William Munitor custody of the earl's orchard and garden at Chester with some pertaining rights.
308. 1199-1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Robert de Quincy 10 liberates of land in Sibsey (Lincolnshire) and 3 knights' fees in Cabourne in marriage with his sister Hawise.
309. 1217-1218 (Spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted his sister Hawise 10 liberates in Waddington (Lincolnshire).
310. 1232, May – October. Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln gave the county of Lincoln to Hawise de Quincy, his sister.
311. 1199-1202 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the rights of the citizens of Coventry.
312. 1199-1202 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Nicholas son of Liulf the site of the mill his brother Simon had held in the earl's park at Coventry.
313. 1199-1203 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to Roger, constable of Chester, a boat to fish the Dee at Chester bridge and Eaton.
314. 1199-1203 (Martilly) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gift to Trentham priory of a boat on the Dee made by Philip of Orreby who had received it previously from the earl.
315. 1211-1212 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in free alms a remission to the canons of Trentham of the obligation to provide a foot soldier to serve in Wales.
316. 1199-1213 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed Robert le Scot's 17 acres of assarted land in Alwardsich and a messuage in Coventry.
317. 1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester assigned to the monks of Longues in alms certain tenements in place of 3 measures of corn from his manor of Trevières.
318. 1200, 7<sup>th</sup> October. Earl Ranulf of Chester agreed to settle a dispute with William de Fougères regarding the marriage portion of the earl's wife Clemence de Fougères, the settlement between William and Geoffrey, her brother, is also here settled.
319. c. 1200 (Semilly (?Martilly)). Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grants to Plessis-Grimoult abbey (diocese of Bayeux) by Philippa of Rosel.
320. ?1200-1201 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to the abbey of Ardennes of 10.5 acres of land in Grouchy made by Philippa of Rosel.
321. 1200-1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester gave the lands of Longdendale with certain rights and liberties to William Neville and his wife Amabilia.

322. 1200-1204 Earl Ranulf of Chester remitted in alms the forinsec service due for the hide which Gerard Camville gave the monks of Combe.
323. 1200-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted a licence to the monks of Combe to acquire certain lands and revenues including those in Coventry.
324. c. 1200 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gift to Martin of Washingborough, his clerk, of two bovates at Kirkby and the bondmen Alan son of Ingelais and Hugh Moderles and their issue, made by William le Grant of Blyton.
325. c. 1200-1205 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms the gift to Lincoln church of two bovates in East Kirkby (Lincolnshire) made by William le Grant of Blyton.
326. 1198-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in alms to the church and the canons of Lincoln one bovate in Hundleby, previously held by Nicholas Bec, but reserving a toft which Colswain held.
327. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gift in alms to the canons of Lincoln of lands in Swaby and Huttoft (Lincolnshire) made by Adam Suligny.
328. 1208-1211 (Winchester). Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts to the church and the canons of Lincoln from his fee in Lincolnshire by various individuals, including lands in Theddlethorpe, Mablethorpe, Reston, Thurlby, Huttoft, Swaby, Langton, Sausthorpe, Keal, Benniworth, Hagworthingham, Claxby, Hameringham, Edlington, Horsington, Skegness and Scamblesby.
329. 1200-1205 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Andrew son of John of Edlington of lands in Edlington (Lincolnshire) made by Radulf son of Simon of Hamingtona.
330. 1200 -1205 (Spurious-but possibly based on an original) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts to the nuns of Bullington (Lincolnshire) made by Helte Boydel and his wife Idonea, and Alan Boydel.
332. 1201 (Brecy) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the monks of Aunay (diocese of Bayeux) exemption from tolls and customs in his lands.
333. 1203 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the abbey of Aunay (diocese of Bayeux) the tenement formerly of Ranulf Columbel in the park of Trévières, and 8s. annual rent from the annual 25s. paid by William Wake for his fee in Trévières.
334. 1201-1204 (Waddington) Earl Ranulf of Chester notified that he has taken the abbey of Savigny and its possessions into his protection and confirmed its lands in Long Bennington (Lincolnshire) with the consent of his wife Clementia.
335. 1220-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in alms to Savigny abbey a rood of land in Long Bennington (Lincolnshire) to increase an existing holding and 11 ½ acres of land and six roods of meadow there also.
336. 1201-1207 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted St James's abbey (Northampton) in alms a mill and land at Heyford of the manor of Bugbrooke (Northamptonshire).
337. 1205 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted John of Préaux Tew for ¼ of a knights fee excepting the land formerly held by Hugh of Coulanges.

338. c. 1205 (Oxford) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Richard son of Robert a virgate at Olney, which Geoffrey son of Osbert holds, and half a virgate pertaining to the earl's mill and six acres of assarts in the wood at Hyde.
339. 1205-1212 (Richmond) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the lands and possessions of the monks of Fountains in his fee in Richmondshire.
340. 1205-1214 Earl Ranulf of Chester ratified the exchange of Cheshire estates in Haslington, Henhull, Hurleston, Acton and Woolstanwood with lands in Great Brickhill, Newhall and Aston (Buckinghamshire) between Warin of Vernon and Auda, his wife, with Aenora Malbank.
341. 1206 (Macclesfield) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed to Robert, son of Robert of Stockport, his heritage of Marple and Wybersley, and a piece of land in Upton and a burgage in Macclesfield held by forest service.
342. 1206-1208 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed in alms his grandfather, Ranulf II's, grant to the monks of Coventry of the right to send two carts daily (excluding feast days) to his wood to collect fuel and materials for repairs and hedging.
343. 1208-1215 (Spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted in free alms to the monks of Coventry around 280 acres of woodland and waste in Exhall and Keresley in exchange for one of the two carts permitted to enter his wood at Coventry and gather fuel.
344. 1208-1215 (Spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester declared the boundaries of the 280 acres granted to the monks at Coventry.
345. 1208-1215 (Spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester released and quitclaimed his and his heirs rights regarding the 280 acres granted to the monks of Coventry.
346. 1181-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the hospital of St John the Baptist, Coventry, 12 acres of assarted land outside Coventry.
347. 1181-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the hospital of St John the Baptist, Coventry, 7 acres of assarted land outside Coventry.
348. 1207-1213 (Leek) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Richard Davenport freedom from suit in county (Cheshire) and hundred (Northwich) courts and freedom from pleas in Middlewich, from finding judges for those courts and jury duties.
349. 1207-1215 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted liberties to the borough of Leek.
350. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gifts to Norton Priory made by William fitz Nigel, constable of Chester, and his heirs, as well as granting two houses in Chester.
351. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William son of Gerard 128 acres in the assarts beyond Quorndon (Leicestershire) with other small parcels of land nearby.
352. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to William son of Gerard of four bovates in Saham (Saughall Massie) in Wirral made by Alan of Tatton and Petronella his wife.
353. c. 1210-1215 (Possibly spurious) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William son of Gerard housebot, haybot and furbot in his lands and quittance from suit at county and hundred court.

354. 1207-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Joel of Norbury, son of Traher, of 25 acres of wood in Norbury made by Hugh de Pascy.
355. 1208 (Lincoln) Earl Ranulf of Chester came to an agreement with Robert of Legbourne where the earl would pay 110 marks Robert owed the Jews of Lincoln, in return for Robert's lands of Raithby and Hallington (Lincolnshire) for 20 years from 3<sup>rd</sup> May 1208.
356. 1208-1213 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the grant to Herbert of Orreby and Lucia, his wife, of Gawsworth made by Richard of Aldford.
357. 1208-1214 Earl Ranulf of Chester disafforested the fee of Thomas Despenser of Barrow (Cheshire) granting him exemption from puture and permission to take all wild animals found there.
358. 1208-1214 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Stephen of Seagrave his 8 virgates in Kegworth (Leicestershire) of Robert son of Nigel's fee, and his holding in Langley, excluding the advowson of the church which the earl retains, to be held free of services excluding scutage at the reduced rate of 3s. a knights fee.
359. 1215-1216 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Ralph Vernon, his clerk, the church of Kegworth (Leics.). Half by reason of his wardship of William Patric, a boy in the earl's keeping, and half the patronage of which Robert Neville and his wife Matilda had remitted to the earl.
360. 1215-1216 Earl Ranulf III Chester granted Richard of Kegworth, his clerk, half the church of Kegworth, which the parson of that church, Ralph de Vernon, had granted to him at the earl's petition.
361. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Stephen of Seagrave the advowson of Kegworth church (Leicestershire).
362. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln notified Richard of Kegworth that he had granted the advowson of Kegworth church (Leicestershire) to Stephan of Seagrave, ordering him to have Stephen as his patron in the future.
363. 1225-1228 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Stephen of Seagrave, Bretby (Derbyshire), previously of Simon of Kime, in exchange for lands in Great Tew (Oxfordshire).
364. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester quitclaimed to Stephen of Seagrave all suits he and his men of Bretby, Rosliston, and Cotes (Derbyshire) did in his wapentakes of Repton and Gresley.
365. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Stephen of Seagrave 2 ½ carucates of land in Seagrave.
366. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Stephen of Seagrave 7 acres of land in Calwedon.
- 366a. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Stephen of Seagrave lands in Calwedon with pasture in the wood of Coventry for 12d. annually.
367. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Stephen of Seagrave Montsorell with pasture in the wood of Querndon and with the fee in Seagrave for ¼ fee.



368. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Stephen of Seagrave wood of Aldermanneshagh and other rights to pasture in augmentation of his tenancy of Montsorell.
369. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln quitclaimed to Stephen of Seagrave and his men in Kegworth concerning enclosing his park of Queredon.
370. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Gilbert of Seagrave all his land of Blyburgh and Tunstall for  $\frac{1}{4}$  fee.
371. 1208-1215 (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester granted liberties to the burgesses of Frodsham.
372. 1208-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted quittance to Richard Pierrepont from finding a doomsman in the portmoot of Chester for the land he holds between that of Richard son of Ralph and Nicholas Kent.
373. 1208-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted William of Barrow, the reeve of Chester, 12 acres between Little Saughall and Blakney wood on the bank of the Dee.
374. 1213-1217 (Spurious, but based on an original) Earl Ranulf of Chester conferred the fee of Aldeford upon John of Arden for two knight's fees.
375. 1214-1216 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted protection to Dieulacres abbey.
376. 1214-1216 (Possibly spurious) Earl Ranulf III of Chester granted protection to Dieulacres abbey and exemption from tallages, aids and dues.
377. 1217, May -1218, June (Chester) Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted protection for the abbey of Dieulacres and freedom from plea except from him or his chief justice.
378. ?1220-1221 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted protection for Dieulacres abbey.
379. 1214-1216 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted to the abbey of Dieulacres the vill of Byley in alms with freedom from shire and hundred, military duties and all other demands.
380. 1229-1232 (Spurious-a copy of 379) Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the grant of the vill of Byley to the abbey of Dieulacres.
381. 1214-1217 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the gift in alms to Dieulacres abbey of a salthouse in Middlewich made by William Mainwaring, and also confirms quittance of toll and suit at wichmoot.
382. 1217-1222 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to the monks of Dieulacres in alms land at Rudyard in order to build their abbey.
383. 1217-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in alms to the monks of Dieulacres freedom from toll on goods bought or sold in his territories.
384. 1218-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln acquitted Dieulacres abbey in alms from paying pannage for its pigs in his woods.
385. 1220-1222 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Dieulacres abbey the mills of Leek and Hulme in return for 'Ruhtonestede' and its possessions in Leeds, Bingley and in Lindsey which was William son of Drew's.

386. 1220-1223 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Leek church to Dieulacres abbey in alms.
387. 1220-1225 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in alms to the monks of Dieulacres freedom from toll on their corn ground in his Cheshire mills.
388. 1220-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted the abbey of Dieulacres William of Foston, his progeny, and his lands in Foston (Lincolnshire).
389. 1221-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Dieulacres abbey land at Cockshut Hay (nr. Rudyard) and freedom from toll and services on their salthouse at Middlewich.
390. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted the monks of Dieulacres, Gonedon and Wetwood.
391. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted the monks of Dieulacres, Sandbach church in alms.
392. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln gave his heart to be buried at Dieulacres abbey.
393. 1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in alms to Dieulacres abbey the manor of Leek with his heart.
394. 1215, June – September. Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the Magna Carta of Cheshire.
395. 1217-1218 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the conveyance to Henry of Audley of land in the Lyme (Cheshire) made by Aenora Malbank.
396. 1217-1227 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted Henry of Audley Newhall (Ches.) formerly of Hugh de Pascy, and Alstonfield (Staffs.), with the rents of Tunstall, Chatterley, Chell, Thursfield, Bradwell, and Normacot. Also of the earl's right in the mill below his garden in Coventry, and Altregeder mill, with 18 bondmen.
397. c. 1217-1224 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln wrote to the justiciar of Chester to take action in a plea of mort d'ancestor between Robert son of Ranulf Grosvenor and Robert son of Robert Grosvenor concerning land in Budworth, and to summon Alice, wife to William of Stretton, and formerly wife of Robert of Grosvenor, grandfather of Robert son of Ranulf, concerning her dowry.
398. 1217-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed in alms the gift to Bardney abbey of land in Bucknall (Lincolnshire) made by Roger of Milly.
399. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf III of Chester granted protection to Bardney abbey.
400. 1217-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Robert son of Salomon in return for his fee in the earl's kitchen, rents of 20s. each from Dernhall and Macclesfield mills and freedom from suit at the hundred court of Edisbury concerning his land at Tiverton. He also granted Withington and his families land at Goulceby in Lindsey, for which Robert returned the families lands Tessy and Aubigny (Normandy).
401. 1217-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the grant to Ranulf Mainwaring of Great Warford, formerly part of Roger Mainwaring's demesne, made by Richard Putra.

402. 1217-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted quittance to Hugh Cholmondeley of suit of court in Chester court and the hundred court of Dudeston (now Broxton) and of providing a judger for his lands in Cholmondeley.
403. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Richard son of Robert of Frodsham, the land formerly belonging to Ranulf the earl's reeve in Frodsham.
404. 1218 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln wrote to Richard Fitton ordering him to return seisin to Alexander of Moulton regarding those lands he had held before the war.
405. 1218-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester granted the burgesses of Chipping Campden (Gloucestershire) and any who come to his market there, freedom from toll. The burgesses also received a fixed penalty of 12d. if any fell into the earl's mercy, excluding shedding blood or felony.
406. 1220-1225 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Robert son of Thurstan Woodford a croft his father had held called Woodford.
407. 1225-1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to Robert son of Thurstan of Woodford a parcel of land in return for his fields at Woodford occupied by the earl's park of Darnhall.
408. 1221-1223 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to William Vernon the wood of Marple and Wybersley with certain liberties.
409. 1221-1225 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Vivian Davenport the master serjeanty of Macclesfield, previously held by Adam of Sutton, in exchange for land in Wilwich.
410. 1225-1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln released to Vivian Davenport the rent of 3s. he rendered for Hysebelesbothes, and Peter the Smith's land, in exchange for Hysebelesbothes which he has quitclaimed.
411. 1222 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln came to an agreement with Llywelyn, prince of North Wales, to marry his daughter Helen with Ranulf's nephew and heir, John the Scot.
412. 1222 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted the nuns of Polesworth 10m. annually from rents in Coventry, until other grants to the same value found elsewhere, and from this they were to pay 2m. annually to the monks of Barberie.
413. 1217-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted the nuns of Greenfield (Lincolnshire) freedom from suit at Greetham court, regarding the lands they hold in Haugh, Wainfleet, Ulceby, Bilsby, Swaby, Thoresby, Huttoft, Claythorpe, Fairford, and Newton held of the honour of Greetham.
414. 1223, 13<sup>th</sup> November. Earl Ranulf of Chester came to an agreement with the prior of Kenilworth in the king's court, giving the prior 2 virgates in 'Sheperung' while the prior recognised Earl Ranulf's right to half the advowson of the church of Stoke (nr. Coventry).
415. 1224, 4<sup>th</sup> -14<sup>th</sup> August (Chester). Earl Ranulf wrote to King Henry III assuring the loyalty of Fawkes de Breauté, and his own intentions to aid the king and his success of persuading Llewelyn prince of North Wales to conclude a month long truce.

416. 1224-1227 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted William Cantilupe junior, Bingley (Yorkshire) for half a knights fee.
- 417-421. 1225-1226 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln came to an agreement with groups of freemen who quitclaimed their rights regarding common pasture in Bolingbroke to Earl Ranulf.
422. 1227-1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the grants to Grimsby abbey of 7 virgates made by Earl Ranulf II and Gilbert of Turs.
423. 1227-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Hilton abbey (Staffordshire), two salt houses in Norwich, formerly held by Richard of Pierrepont, in exchange for a fishpond in his park of Newcastle.
424. ?1228-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester confirmed the possessions of Cockersand abbey held in his fief.
425. c. 1229 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Baldwin de Vere a sixth of the demesne of great Tew (Oxfordshire), 8s. rent from the Southern mill of Tew, and 17 virgates and one and a half cottages in the village.
426. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed in alms the grants to Spalding priory by Countess Lucy.
427. 1229-1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted in alms to Spalding priory, freedom from entertaining the earl for three periods of 40 days per year.
428. 1230, January. Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln wrote to Bishop Hugh of Lincoln, that as patron he has agreed to the candidate of the abbot of St Nicholas of Angers to be prior of Spalding.
429. 1230, 16<sup>th</sup> February – 7<sup>th</sup> March. Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln wrote to Bishop Hugh of Lincoln, revoking his previous letter in favour of Prior John of Kirkby as prior of Spalding, and notifying the bishop he had sent the abbot of Chester and Master Gilbert of Weston as his proctors in this matter.
430. 1232, March. Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln came to an agreement with the abbot and convent of St Nicholas (Angers), regarding the election of the prior of Spalding, where Earl Ranulf is patron.
431. 1232, 8<sup>th</sup> June (Brampton, Huntingdonshire) Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln and the abbot and convent of St Nicholas (Angers), came to an agreement with the bishop of Lincoln and the prior of Spalding, regarding the election, presentation, and institution of the prior of Spalding.
432. c. 1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln confirmed the grant to Nicholas de Lettes, of Wincham and a carucate in Twembrook made by Matilda Venables.
433. 1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln came to an agreement with Roger of Marsey regarding the sale of Roger's lands between Ribble and Mersey.
434. c. 1230 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted quittance to Philip of Orreby of two pigs a year pannage from Alvanley and 14d. annually for streteward and sheriff's stuthe.

435. 1231 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted Salford the status of a free borough, and set out its liberties.

436. 1231, 4<sup>th</sup> July (nr. St Aubin). Earl Ranulf of Chester concluded a peace between England and France with Peter de Dreux, duke of Brittany.

437. 1232 Earl Ranulf of Chester and Lincoln granted to his niece Colette, daughter of the late earl of Arundel, 30 liberates from the manor of Leeds (Yorkshire) as her marriage portion.

## Appendix 2: Transcript of the Cheshire Magna Carta

Transcript of the Cheshire Magna Carta from BL Harley MS 2071, f. 18v. This is a sixteenth century copy of an original charter which has subsequently been lost. The transcript of the charter along with a comparison to other versions can be found in Barraclough, *Charters*, no. 394.

Ranulfus comes Cestrie constabulario, dapifero, iusticiario, vicecomiti, baronibus et ballivis et omnibus hominibus suis et amicis presentibus et futuris presentem cartam inspecturis et auditoris salutem. Sciatis me cruce signatum pro amore dei et ad peccionem baronem meorum Cestresirie concessisse eis et heredibus suis de me et heredibus meis omnes libertates in presenti carta subscriptas in perpetuum tenendas et habendas, scilicet:

1. Quod unusquisque eorum curiam suam habeat liberam de omnibus placitis et querelis in curia mea motis exceptis placitis ad gladium meum pertinentibus, et quod si quis hominum suorum pro aliquo delicto captus fuerit, per dominum suum sine redemptione replegiatur, ita quod dominus suus eum perducatur ad tres comitatus et eum quietum reducat, nisi sacraber eum sequatur.
2. Et si aliquis adventitius, qui fidelis sit, in terris eorum venerit et ei placuerit ibidem morari, liceat baroni ipsum habere et retinere, salvis mihi advocariis qui sponte ad me venerint et aliis qui pro transgressu aliunde ad dignitatem meam venerint, et non eis.
3. Et unusquisque baronum, dum opus fuerit, in werra plenarie faciat servicium tot feodorum militum quot tenet, et eorum milites et libere tenentes loricas aut haubergella habeant et feoda sua per corpora sua defendant, licet milites non sint. Et si aliquis eorum talis sit quod terram suam per corpus suum defendere non possit, alium sufficientem loco suo ponere possit. Nec ego nativos eorum ad arma iurare faciam, sed nativos suos, qui per Ranulfum de Davenham ad advocacionem meam venerunt, et alios nativos suos, quos suos esse rationabiliter monstrare poterunt, ipsis quietas concedo.
4. Et si vicecomes meus aut aliquis serviens in curia mea aliquem hominum suorum inculpaverit, per thwertnic se defendere poterit propter sirevestoth quod reddunt, nisi secta eum sequatur.
5. Concedo etiam eis quietanciam de garbis et de oblacionibus, quas servientes mei et bedelli exigere solebat. Et quod si aliquis iudex aut sectarius hundredi aut comitatus in curia mea in misericordia inciderit, per duos solidos quietus sit iudex de misericordia et sectarius per duodecim denarios.
6. Concedo etiam eis libertatem assardandi terras suas infra divisas agriculture sue in foresta, et si landa aut terra infra divisas ville sue ferit, que prius culta fuit, ibi nemus non crescat, liceat eis illam colere sine herbergacione, et liceat eis husbote et haibote in nemore suo capere de omni genere bosci sine visu forestarii, et mortuum boscum suum dare

aut vendere cui voluerint. Et homines eorum non implacitentur de foresta pro supradicto, nisi cum manuopere inveniatur.

7. Et unusquisque eorum omnia maneria sua dominica in comatatu et hundredo per unum senescallum presentatum defendere possit.
8. Concedo etiam quod, mortuo viro, uxor sua per quadraginta dies pacem habeat in domo sua. Et heres suus, si etatem habuerit, per rationabile relevium hereditatem suam habeat, scilicet feoudum milites per centum solidos. Neque domina neque heres maritetur ubi disparigetur, set per gratum et assensum generis sui maritetur. Et eorum legata teneantur.
9. Et nullus eorum nativum suum amittat occasione, si in civitate Cestrie venerit, nisi ibi manserit per unum annum et unum diem sine calumpnia.
10. Et propter grave servicium quod in Cestresiria faciunt, nullus eorum extra Lymam servicium mihi faciet, nisi per gratum suum et ad custum meum. Et si milites mei de Anglia summoniti fuerint, qui mihi wardum apud Cestriam debent, et venti sint ad wardam suam faciendam, et exercitus aliunde inimicorum meorum non sit in presenti, nec opus fuerit, bene licet baronibus interim ad domos suas redire et requiescere. Et si exercitus inimicorum meorum promptus fuerit de veniendo in terram meam in Cestresiria, vel si castellum assessum fuerit, predicti barones cum exercitu suo et nisu suo statim ad summonitionem meam venient ad removendum exercitum illum ad posse suum. Et cum exercitus ille de terra mea recessus fuerit, predicti barones cum exercitu suo ad terras suas redire poterunt et requiescere, dum milites de Anglia warrdem suam faciunt et opus de eis non fuerit, salvis mihi sericiis suis, que facere debent.
11. Concedo etiam eis quod in tempore pacis tantum duodecim servientes itinerantes habeantur in terra mea cum uno equo, qui sit magistri servientis, qui etiam prebendam non habeat a Pascha usque ad festum sancti Michaelis, nisi per gratiam, et ut ipsis servientes comedant cibum qualem in dominibus hominum invenerint, sine emptione alterius cibi ad opus eorum, nec in aliquibus dominicis baronum comedant. Et in tempore werre per consilium meum aut iusticiarii mei et ipsorum, ponantur servientes sufficientes ad terram meam custodiendam, prout opus fuerit.
12. Et sciendum est quod predicti barones petitiones subscriptas, quas a me requirebant, omnio mihi et heredibus meis de se et heredibus suis remiserunt, ita quod nihil in eis de cetero clamare poterunt, nisi per gratiam et misericordiam meam; scilicet, senescallus petitionem de wrec et de pisce in terram suam per mare deiecto, et de bersare in foresta mea ad tres arcus, et de percursu canum suorum; et alii petitionem de agistiamento porcorum in foresta mea et de bersare ad tres arcus in foresta mea, vel ad cursus leporariorum suorum in foresta in eundo versus Cestriam per summonitionem vel in redeundo; et petitionem de misericordia iudicum de Wich triginta bullonum salis, set erunt misericordia et leges in Wich tales quales prius fuerunt.
13. Concedo igitur et presenti carta mea confirmio de me et heredibus meis communibus militibus omnibus et libere tenentibus totius Cestresirie et eorum heredibus omnes predictats libertates habendas et tenendas de

baronibus meis et de ceteris dominis suis, quicumque sint, sicut ipsi  
barones et milites et ceteri libere tenentes eas de me tenent.

Hiis testibus Hugone abbate sancte Werburge Cestrie, Phillipio de Orrebi  
tunc tempore iusticiario Cestrie, Henrico de Aldithelega, Waltero Deyville,  
Hugone dispensario, Thoma dispensario, Willelmo pincerna, Waltero de  
Coventria, Ricard Phitun, Roberto de Coudrey, Ivone de Kaletoft, Roberto de  
Say, Normanno de Pantulf, Roberto dispensario, Roberto Devieile, Matheo  
de Vernun, Hamone de Venables, Roberto de Masci, Alano de Waley,  
Hugone de Columbe, Robert de Pulfort, Petro clerico, Hugone de Pasci,  
Joceralmo de Helesby, Ricardo de Bresci, Ricardo de Kingesle, Philippo de  
Therven, Lithulfo de Twamlaw, Ricardo Perpunt, et toto comitatu Cestrie.



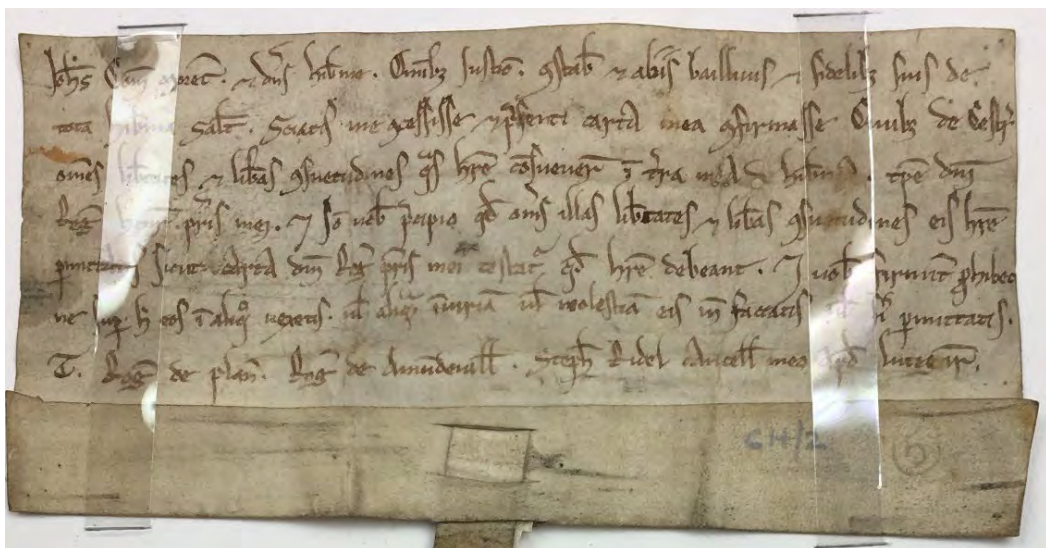
## Appendix 3: The City of Chester Charters

These charters are held by Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Service and are reproduced with the permission of Cheshire Shared Services and the owner/depositor to whom copyright is reserved.

ZCH/1 A charter to the city by King Henry II.

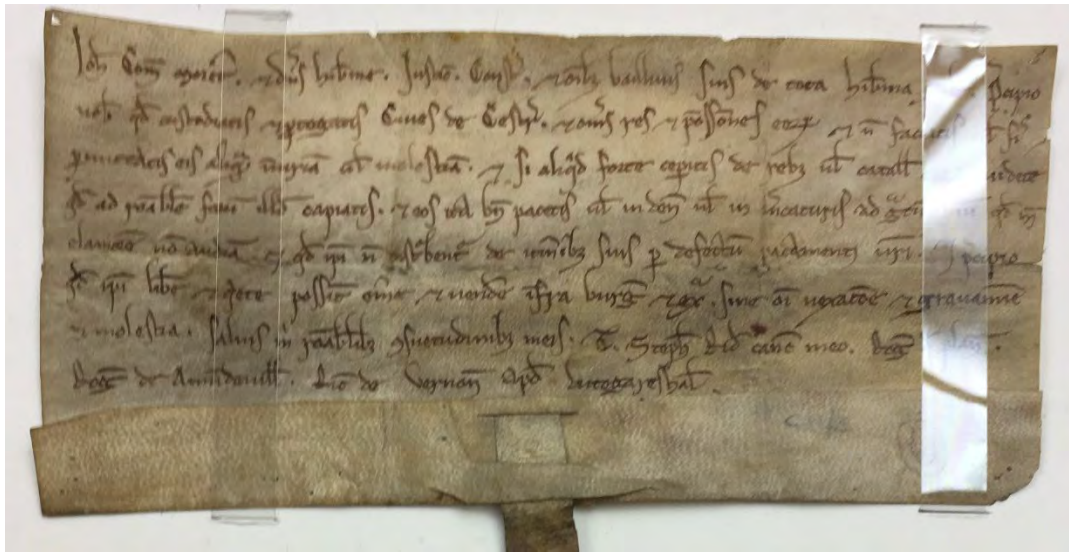


ZCH/2 A charter to the city by Count John.

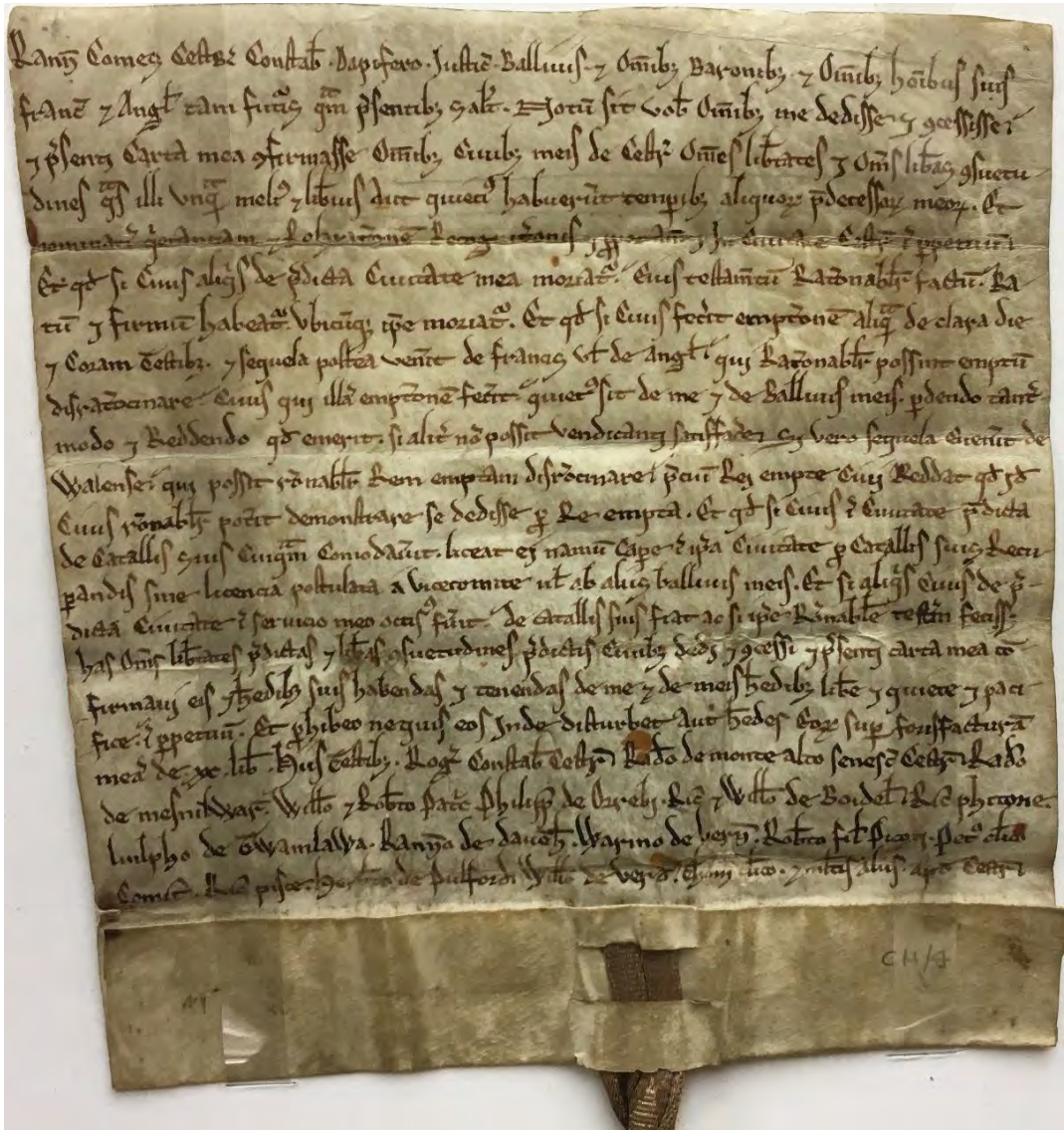




ZCH/3 A charter to the city by Count John.

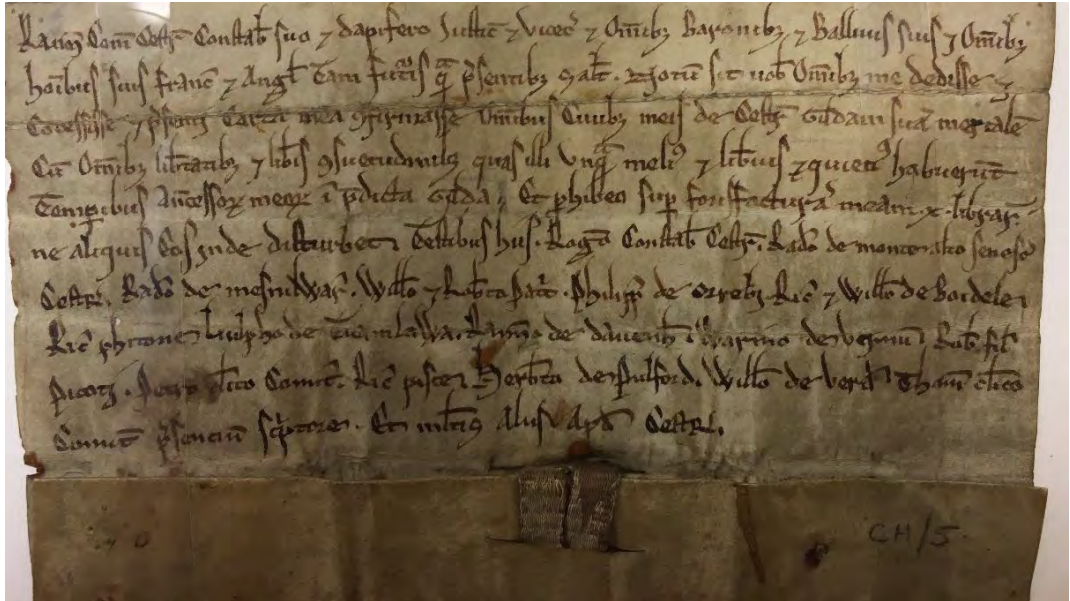


ZCH/4 A charter to the city by Earl Ranulf III.

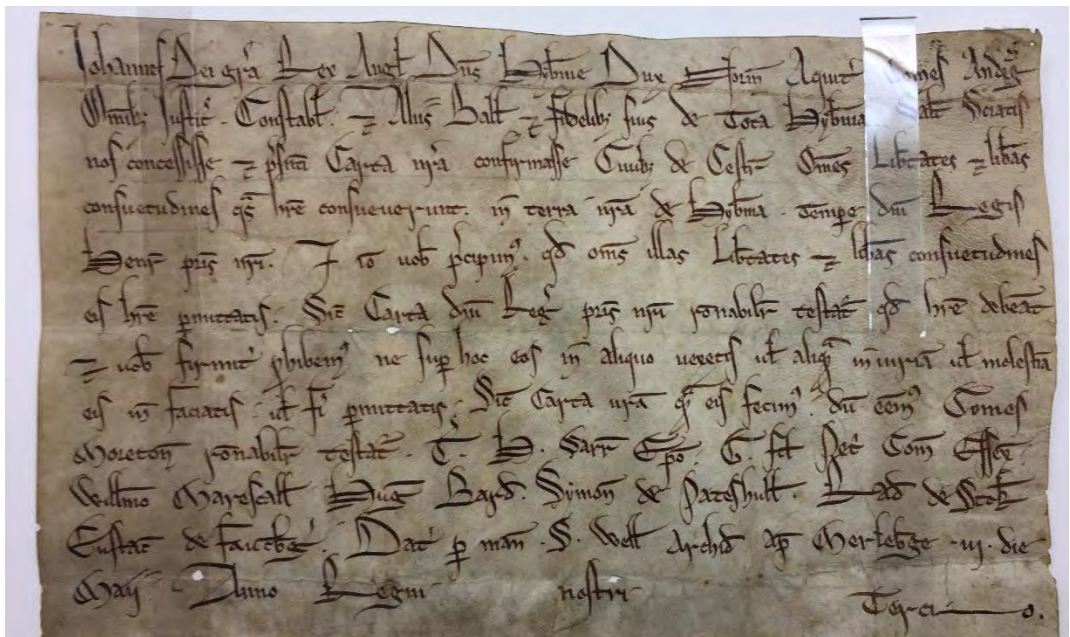




ZCH/5 A charter to the city by Earl Ranulf III.



ZCH/6 A charter to the city by King John



ZCH/7 A charter to the city by Earl Ranulf III.

Ranulph Comes Cestrie. Constab. Dapifer. Iust. vic. Baronibus. militibus. Balliu. & omnibus hominibus suis plebanis & fratribus  
et aliam. Sciat me concessisse & preterea carta mea confirmasse dominicis hominibus meis Cestrie. & eorum heredibus quod  
nullus aliquando gratia memorata quod ad civitatem Cestrie per mare aut per terram venire. emat. aut vendat. nisi ipsi & eorum  
heredes aut per eorum gratiam. nisi in nundinis assilii. in yacuitate sancti Johannis Baptiste. & in festo sancti Andree. Et volo  
quod predicti homines mei & eorum heredes habeant & teneant antea libertatem de me & de heredibus meis in perpetuum.  
libere. pacifice. honorifice. & pacifice. Et prohibeo super fondationem meam decem libras annuatim ad opera mea capi-  
endum ne aliquis eos super dicta libertate impediatur aut gravetur. Testibus. Dno. H. tunc Abbe Cestrie. Ph. de Orseto  
tunc Just. Cestrie. Guis. de veni. Guis. de venat. Pet. clero. Hug. de Wymling. Hug. de. dispensat. Alu.  
de Sulgry. Guis. de pinona. non. parcut. Ita de yeland. David de malo passu. solam de hellest. Hen.  
Kancelles. Hug. & Galfr. de Dutton. Magro Hug. & multis aliis;

CH/7



## Appendix 4: Mobberley Priory Charters

Below are images of the Mobberley Priory charters. These records held by Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Service are reproduced with the permission of Cheshire Shared Services and the owner/depositor to whom copyright is reserved.

DDX 553/1

Sciatis tam futuri q̄ presentis q̄ ego cristiana p̄ncipalin filia w̄non  
p̄ncipalin dedi y ḡcelli ac p̄senti carta mea q̄firmam p̄ccio de  
moatleha v̄na salina i noz w̄icho quā censo de sc̄a domu  
hospit̄al verulabem. illi y hereditib̄ suis tenendam de me y de hereditib̄  
meis. i feodo y hereditate libe quiete reddendo m̄ y hereditibus  
meis. de eo y de hereditib̄ suis singuli anno dimidū q̄archi.  
argenti. c̄licy quadraginta denarios ad festū sc̄i ioh̄is bapt̄e  
y quadraginta denarios ad festū sc̄i michaet̄ p̄ om̄ni seculari  
seruicio y p̄ homagio y seruicio suo. h̄it̄ t̄ctib̄. Rad̄ demensarij. y  
hidulfo de ewalav. Rodulfo de pers̄. Ḡlto de uanabll̄. Ricardo c̄r̄  
Rob̄o de cabeleh y Ḡlto fr̄e suo y hamōe clerico qui scripsit  
h̄ac cartā y multos alios.

DDX 553/2

Sciatis om̄s tā presentis q̄ futuri q̄ ego Anz̄ de ḡulm̄ dedi y ḡcelli y hac carta  
mea q̄firmam p̄ccio de moberleha y homagio y seruicio suo unam salina in noz w̄icho  
illa videt̄ q̄ habeo de hospit̄ali p̄sent̄ illi y hereditib̄ suis tenent̄ de ego y de hereditib̄ meis  
i feodo y hereditate libe quiete y honorifice. ita libe videt̄ ut ego teneo eā de hospita  
li p̄ccio reddendo annuat̄ p̄ om̄i sumo y exactōe m̄ y hereditibus meis ab eo y hereditib̄ suis  
dimidū q̄archi argenti. x̄ den. i festo sc̄i michaet̄. y xl. den. i festo sc̄i ioh̄is bapt̄e v̄n  
ego p̄ccio p̄ccio adq̄rabo usus hospit̄alarias de xl. den. T̄ct̄ Rad̄ de aselub̄.  
Rad̄ de pers̄. h̄it̄ v̄cc̄. Ḡlto de soū. W̄it̄ de v̄r̄ab̄. Rob̄ de cabet̄. W̄it̄  
fr̄e suo. W̄it̄ de hob̄. Roḡ de hob̄. Ḡlto clerico de d̄ub̄. Ḡlto de ed̄st̄. Ric  
ot̄o de Bod̄st̄ s̄p̄ora carta p̄sent̄ y ḡnt̄al̄ alijs ap̄d sc̄l̄y.















DDX 553/14

Sciatis omnes tam presentes quam futuri quod ego Alanus et uxor mea petronella de tacione quodammodo presentibus  
 caris nostris firmamentis de ecclesia sancti Wulfredi de Moddebea et Canonis ibidem de seruentibus pro  
 salute animarum Hamon de masq et Rob de tace et omnium antecessorum nostrorum donationem omnium tenentium  
 quod Ric filius warner dedit ut dicitur in ecclesia sancti Wulfredi et Canonis de moddebea sic etiam predictus  
 Ric filius warner testatur. Saluo formosissimo seruiuo quod sepe dicitur Ric et heredes sui nobis et heredibus  
 nostris tenentur solvere sic gaudent in caris nostris quod habet de nobis et ut huiusmodi concessio et firmatio  
 rata et in cassu permaneat. sigilloz nostrorum appositione autorauimus. Huius testibus philip de ayres  
 petrus daco lulf de thoni. Joh de baye Willelmus filius Rad de medbeyle Ada filius Ranulf thoni  
 de moddebea et multas alios.

DDX 553/15

Omibus sancte ecclesie filiis presentibus et futuris ad quos presentis scripti pervenerint petronella uxor mea de tacione filia  
 hominis uniuscuiusque huiusmodi in huiusmodi potestate et spontanea voluntate mea et heredi meo dedit et concessit et  
 in presentibus carta mea confirmasse deo et ecclesie sancti Wulfredi de moddebea et Canonis ibidem de omnibus  
 in presentibus et pecunia elemosina et tres celliones terre in loco qui dicitur Boehum. quoniam una quorundam tenentium  
 ab eodem Willelmo de moddebea et a Willelmo de braunton. facientes primo et tunc in presentibus huiusmodi de banables  
 de dicta domo tenent. in incrementum terrarum a me et alano viro meo et eadem domum presentibus dedit et concessit huiusmodi  
 et tenendas de me et heredibus meis super eam et eadem libertatem et eadem assuetudinem et per eadem quod dicitur dano  
 ma de domo de moddebea de terris a me et alano viro meo presentibus eadem domum collatis. facte tenentur.  
 Et hoc huiusmodi mea donatio et concessio rata et stabili in posterum permaneat. huiusmodi scripto sigillo meo  
 appositum. Huiusmodi testibus. Willelmo de masq. Willelmo de banables. Willelmo filio suo. Willelmo de ayres.  
 Ric de brombat. Willelmo de moddebea. petro de boehum. magistro andr. Ceteris et aliis.

DDX 553/16

Omibus sancte ecclesie filiis presentibus et futuris ad quos presentis scripti pervenerint Alanus de tacione filius  
 eorum huiusmodi me concessit et spontanea voluntate sponte mea petronelle dedit et concessit et in presentibus carta mea  
 confirmasse deo et ecclesie sancti Wulfredi de moddebea et Canonis ibidem de omnibus in presentibus et pecuniam  
 elemosina et tres celliones terre in loco qui dicitur Boehum. quoniam una quorundam tenentium ab eodem Willelmo de mo  
 ddebea et a Willelmo de braunton. facientes primo et tunc in presentibus huiusmodi de banables de dicta  
 domo tenent. in incrementum terrarum a me et petronella uxore mea eadem domum presentibus dedit et concessit huiusmodi  
 et tenendas de me et heredibus meis super eam et eadem libertatem et eadem assuetudinem et per eadem quod dicitur dano  
 ma de domo de moddebea de terris a me et petronella uxore mea presentibus eadem domum collatis. facte tenentur.  
 Et hoc huiusmodi mea donatio et concessio rata et stabili in posterum permaneat. huiusmodi scripto sigillo  
 meo appositum. Huiusmodi testibus. Willelmo de masq. Willelmo de banables. Willelmo filio suo. Willelmo  
 de ayres. Ric de brombat. Willelmo de moddebea. petro de boehum. magistro andr. Ceteris et aliis.













Omnes & fidelibus presentibus futurisque. Gilbertus de Barton miles fuit in dno. Foris meo accessisse  
 & reddidisse ecclesie sancti Wilfridi de Godburton decimas de premo motidun de Godburton. & de  
 panguagio. & teno. De gardino. & curtilagio. & de omnibus rebus que p annu renouantur. & in huius rei  
 testimonium huic scripto sigillum meum apposui. Huius testibus. Magro huius tunc archidiacono. &  
 Radon decano de Goddelford. Magro huius tunc de pseyby. & the de Longford cano celi.  
 Hugon pson de Chedee. apud acle capello de Mardale. & alii.



## Appendix 5: Exemplars of Seals

Below are examples of seals in charters granted to the City of Chester and Mobberley Priory. These records held by Cheshire Archives and Local Studies Service are reproduced with the permission of Cheshire Shared Services and the owner/depositor to whom copyright is reserved.

### Seals attached to Charters granted to the City of Chester



CH/1 front (Seal of King Henry II)



CH/1 rear (Seal of King Henry II)



CH/2 front (Seal of Count John)



CH/3 front (Seal of Count John)



CH/4 Front (Seal of Earl Ranulf)



CH/4 Rear (Seal of Earl Ranulf)



CH/5 Front (Seal of Earl Ranulf III)



CH/5 Rear (Seal of Earl Ranulf III)



CH/6 Front (Seal of King John)



CH/6 Rear (Seal of King John)



CH/9 Front (Seal of King Henry III)



CH/9 Rear (Seal of King Henry III)



CH/11 Front (Seal of King Henry III)



CH/11 Rear (Seal of King Henry III)





CH/13 (Seal of King Edward I)



CH/13 (Seal of King Edward I)

### Seals on the Charters of Mobberley Priory



DDX 553/1 (Seal of Christina Punterling)



DDX 553/5 (Seal of Augustine of Brethmete)



DDX 553/7 (Seal of Richard of Aldford)





DDX 553/8 Front (Seal of Bishop Geoffrey of Coventry)



DDX 553/8 Rear (Seal of Bishop Geoffrey of Coventry)



DDX 553/10 (Seal of Richard son of Warin of Tatton)



DDX 553/12 (Seal of Richard son of Warin of Tatton)



DDX 553/13 (Seal of Petronella of Tatton)



DDX 553/17 (Seal of Alan of Tatton)



DDX 553/ 18 (Seal of Petronella of Tatton)



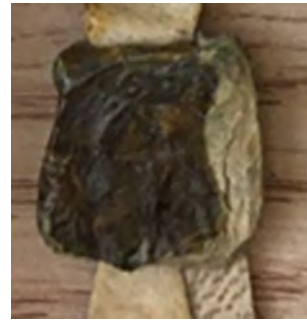
DDX 553/19 (Seal of Hamone of Mascy)



DDX 553/22 (Seals of Robert of Wyninton and Hugh son of Wereford)



DDX 553/23 (Seal of Henry son of William of Castello)



DDX 553/24 (Seal of Hugh Venables)



DDX 553/25 (Seal of Gilbert of Barton I)



DDX 553/26a (Seal of Gilbert of Barton II?)

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Cotton Vitellus D. XVIII (Combe Abbey Cartulary)

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