

Crown and Community in Essex c.1066-1189: Abstract

David Titterington

This work explores the development of the Anglo-Norman landed community in Essex and analyses the role of the Crown in the county's contemporary affairs. It covers a period of conquest, settlement, civil war and strengthening royal government.

The assessment of the role of the Crown primarily focuses upon the relationship between the king and local landowners. It also concentrates on the maintenance and extension of royal rights, the exploitation of royal justice and forest law, the promotion and retention of peace in the county, and the development and use of royal demesne.

Analysis of a community relies upon defining a local group, proving their interest in a locale and subsequently demonstrating community-linked behaviour. Such proof relies upon the use of a number of indices, some of which are drawn from later concepts of County Communities (such as participation in local government and collective identity). Other factors owe their origin to wider anthropological theories (e.g. local custom, familial ties and frequent contact between subjects).

The thesis makes use of the principal primary sources for the period (Domesday, *Cartae Baronum*, monastic chronicles, the Pipe Rolls and extant royal, baronial and ecclesiastical *acta*). Owing to the greater number of surviving primary documents after 1135, it is easier to assess community ties after that date. A wide range of secondary sources also exists, many of which have been utilised and, in some cases, expanded upon.

This research has demonstrated that a community was evident among both the tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants of Essex from the reign of William I and that it advanced during the century that followed his death. This was partially due to the immense tenurial stability of the county at that time. It also shows that royal influence in the county was at a consistently high level, where the Crown normally had more land in Essex than any other individual. This ensured that Essex was one of the most peaceful and prosperous English counties between the accession of William the Conqueror and the death of Henry II.

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Preface

This thesis began in 1995 as a study of the Mandeville family in England, a subject suggested by Professor David Bates. After discovering that a thesis had already been written on this subject, my attention switched to the Vere family. When it became clear that this was also unsuitable for fresh research, Dr Nicholas Vincent recommended that a non-family based approach might be more fruitful. As the county of Essex had been central to the Mandevilles and the Veres, it was sensible to use Essex as the focus for an appraisal of a local County Community. As Norman and early Angevin Essex had a community that did not resemble the textbook County Community, it was necessary once again to revise the title. There was an evident landowning community in Essex at that time and the greatest constant power in the county was the Crown.

When I began this thesis I had visited Essex twice and consequently had no clear perception of the geography of the county. As some of the villages and towns discussed within the pages of this thesis are fairly obscure, I have attempted to add each settlement's designated hundred in parenthesis. I trust that this has been a useful addition and that it adds clarity to the text.

I have written this thesis in many places. I performed the bulk of the basic stages of research in Canterbury, covered much of the primary source material from Brighton, wrote most of the pre-final drafts in Pontypridd and finished the proofs in Cardiff. I have also written material or prepared maps and diagrams in Whitechapel, Letchworth, Ingatestone, Hirwaun and Lewes.

Over the course of this thesis I have made many interesting observations about the county of Essex. Tesco the Domesday burgess, who appeared in an article in the *Daily Telegraph* ('discovery' attributed to David Totterington [*sic.*]) originally featured within this work. Unfortunately I could find no place for

the moustaches of Essex historians or for nineteenth-century football players with unusual surnames.¹

In September 1999 I visited the nearly newly-refurbished Institute of Historical Research to confirm some footnotes. There I met a postgraduate student, Christopher Star, who by a happy coincidence was researching the county community of Essex. I was pleased to discover that he is focusing upon the county during the fourteenth century and I look forward to reading his work.

Acknowledgements

The Graduate School at Canterbury Christ Church College has enabled this thesis to be researched and written. Without the bursary I have received from the School it would not have been possible to complete, or indeed begin, this project. For this support I shall remain permanently grateful. The facilities provided at the Graduate School and within the wider college have been essential to the preparation of this thesis. I have also received a contribution towards my travel expenses, without which I would not have been able to visit such a variety of libraries and Record Offices. The advice, training and contacts that I have enjoyed as a result of my association with the Graduate School have been of tremendous advantage to me during the compilation and completion of this thesis. Particular thanks go to Professor Maurice Vile, Professor Steve Bird, Sarah Dines and Kendra Perrott.

¹ See J.H.Round, *Family Origins and Other Studies*, ed. W. Page (London, 1930), frontispiece, and *TEAS* n.s. xvi (1923), frontispiece, for pictures of Round with his amazing moustache. *VCH Essex* (8 vols., London, 1901-83) ii. 612 discusses Upton Park Football Club (the forerunner of West Ham United) and their England international S.R.Bastard

The most valuable support has been derived from my supervisor, Nicholas Vincent. Professor Vincent has at all times been outstanding. He has tirelessly criticised, advised, encouraged and aided me with this thesis. I have been privileged to have access to much of his own unpublished research (including the collection of Henry II's charters and his work on the fitz Gerold, Mandeville and Montfichet families) and texts from his private library. He has also offered *ad hoc* tutorials when our paths have crossed at Canterbury Cathedral and the British Library. This would be a poorer piece of work without his contribution.

Within my department, acknowledgement must go to those members of staff who have offered me advice and assistance. Dr Roger Wells has been outstandingly supportive and Dr Roger Smith has given me valuable advice and was also kind enough to send me a copy of his article on Kent Custom. Dr Richard Eales, of the history department at the University of Kent, very kindly provided me with a copy of his introduction to the Alecto edition of Domesday Book for Kent. I have also enjoyed the support of many members of staff and students within the department.

Academic research has been made possible through access to many archives, record offices and libraries across England and Wales. Accordingly, my thanks go to the staff of the Records Office at the Cathedral of Christ Church, Canterbury, the British Library Manuscripts Room, the Guildhall Library and Westminster Abbey Muniments Room in London, the Sussex Record Office at Lewes, the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford, the Hertfordshire Record Office at Hertford, the South Glamorgan Record Office in Cardiff and the Powys Record Office at Llandrindod Wells. I have been privileged to have access to the libraries situated at the Institute of Historical Research, the Warburg Institute, King's College and University College in London, the University of Sussex at Falmer, University of Cardiff in Cathays, the Central Library in Brighton and the Sussex Archaeological Society in Lewes. Finally,

I enjoyed the use of three fine libraries in Canterbury, at Christ Church College, the University of Kent and the King's School. I would like to thank all of the staff concerned for their guidance and patience.

Many individuals have facilitated the collection and presentation of data. Particular thanks go to Shonaidh Notman, whose advice on many historical matters has been particularly valued. Dave Smith, a fellow research student at Christ Church College, advised me that Fitzwimarc and Swein are modern schools in Rayleigh. Katherine Eldred assisted me greatly at the Guildhall in London. Steve Collins quite rightly suggested that a synthesis theory was required to explain the origins of Domesday land tenure in Essex (which is, of course, the advice that one expects of a social psychologist). Amanda Thurman and Jason Thomas both advised me that Bernard de Balliol's last resting place is St Mary's Church in Hitchin. Having visited this church I can confirm that this is indeed true.

Mapping has been an important part of this thesis. Originally I attempted to scan eighteenth-century maps and use these as the basis for geographical images, although this proved to be unworkable as I could not find a computer with enough memory to store and re-scale the maps involved. I resolved this issue by scanning the Ordnance Survey-based map in the Phillimore Domesday Essex.¹ I have made amendments to suit my needs and to reflect the discoveries made since its publication. The maps printed in this thesis were originally the idea of Professor Vincent. Steve Collins taught me to use the scanning equipment and relevant software effectively. Graham Boar, Peter Thorogood and Paul Titterington spent days with me, re-aligning the map and cleaning the images (pixel by pixel). Stephen Matthews and Michael Whitlock provided valuable advice in this matter. I finished the master copy of the Domesday map at 11.00 p.m. on 25 December 1995.

¹ Domesday Book: Essex, eds. J.Morris & A.Rumble (Chichester, 1983)

Most of the database work has been completed using Excel and without assistance. However, thanks must go to Sarah Dines (formerly of Neville House) for her very valuable hints on the uses and abuses of Excel for databasing. The text has been prepared using Microsoft Word: thanks to Todd Eardley (for teaching me to use it), John Titterington (for proving that Word was a better package) and Andy Buller (for software support). Joy Jackson has provided some fundamental technical support, for which I am very grateful.

Various drafts have been read and corrected by Graham Boar, Vanessa Hudson, Allison Mullen, Shonaidh Notman, Lynnette Thomas and Andrea Winkler. The pre-final and final drafts have been kindly read and corrected by Professor Vincent. All errors that remain are my own.

Personal acknowledgements

These go to those people who have tolerated my perpetual state of studenthood. In Letchworth, my many friends have been of great service in providing an Essex-free haven. Elsewhere Steve Collins (Canterbury), Matthew Davies (Brighton), Louise Green (Ingatestone), Robert Green (Brighton), Liz Raybould (Brighton), Shonaidh Notman (Canterbury), Caryl Thomas (Liverpool), Gareth and Gwenda Thomas (Hirwaun), Jason Thomas (Middlesbrough), Peter Thorogood (Hastings), Kenni Titterington (Cardiff) and Lachy junior (Herne Bay) have all, in their own ways, been essential to the production of this thesis and I hope to repay the personal debt I owe to each of them. Sid Meier and Jon van Caenegem have made valuable contributions but did cause serious complications.

Appreciation must also go to my family, who have been patient about my infrequent visits in recent years. Particular thanks must go to my mother, who loves history but can't remember dates. I think that my interest in the subject

stems from this. Special thanks go, of course, to Lynnette Thomas. She has made an invaluable contribution to the production of this thesis and without her support it would never have been finished.

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Abbreviations

- Accession E.Amt, The Accession of Henry II in England (Woodbridge, 1993)
- ASC The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, D. Whitlock ed. (London, 1961)
- Becket Materials Materials for the History of Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury, vols. i-vi ed. J.C.Robertson (London, 1875-82), vol vii. eds. J.C.Robertson & J.B.Sheppard (London, 1885)
- BIHR Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research
- Book of Fees Liber Feodorum: The Book of Fees, commonly called Testa de Nevill. Reformed from the earliest mss. by the deputy keeper of the records (3 vols, London, 1920-31)
- CA D.J.Cathcart-King, Castellarum Anglicanum (New York, 1983)
- CAD Catalogue of Ancient Deeds (6 vols., London, 1890-1915)
- Cal Chart R Calendar of Charter Rolls, (6 vols., London, 1903-27)
- Cart Clare Stoke-by-Clare Cartulary, C.Harper-Bill & R. Mortimer eds. (3 vols., Woodbridge, 1982-84)
- Cart Colc Cartularium Monasterii Sancti Johannis Baptiste de Colecestria, S.A.Moore ed. (2 vols., London, 1897)
- Cart Colne Cartularium Prioratus de Colne, J.L.Fisher ed. (Colchester, 1946)

- Cart Eye Eye Priory Cartulary and Charters V. Brown ed. (2 vols., Woodbridge, 1992, 1994)
- Cart Hosp The Cartulary of St John of Jerusalem in England, M.Gervers ed. (2 vols., Oxford, 1982, 1996)
- Cart Lond Early Charters of the Cathedral Church of St Paul, London, M.Gibbs ed. (Camden Third Series, vol. lviii, London, 1939)
- Cart Waltham Early Charters of the Augustinian Canons of Waltham Abbey, Essex, 1062-1230, R.Ransford ed. (Woodbridge, 1989)
- Cart Westm Westminster Abbey Charters 1066-c.1214, E.Mason ed. (London, 1988)
- CAR Cartae Antiquae Rolls, L.Landon & J.C.Davies eds. (2 vols., Pipe Roll Society n.s. xvii, xxxiii, 1939-60)
- CDF Calendar of Documents Preserved in France, illustrative of the history of Great Britain and Ireland, volume i, A.D. 918-1216, J.H. Round ed. (London, 1899)
- Corbett W.J.Corbett, 'The Development of the Duchy of Normandy and the Norman Conquest of England', in J.R.Tanner, C.W. Prévité-Orton, Z.N. Brooke eds., Cambridge Medieval History, 8 vols (Cambridge, 1926), v. 481-520
- CRR Curia Regis Rolls of the Reigns of Richard I, John and Henry III preserved in the Public Record Office (17 vols., London, 1922-90)

- DB Domesday Book
- DM D.C.Douglas, The Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church Canterbury (London, 1944)
- DNB The Dictionary of National Biography (67 vols., London, 1885-1903)
- Domesday Studies J.C.Holt ed., Domesday Studies (Woodbridge, 1987)
- EAH Essex Archaeology and History
- EHR English Historical Review
- EYC Early Yorkshire Charters, vols. i-iii ed. W.Farrer (Edinburgh 1914-16), vols. iv-xii ed. C.T. Clay, Yorkshire Archaeological Society, Record Series, Extra Series (1935-55)
- Fantosme Jordan Fantosme's Chronicle, R.C.Johnston (ed.) (Oxford, 1981)
- Farrer W. Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees (3 vols., London and Manchester, 1923-5)
- FE J.H.Round, Feudal England (London, 1895)
- First Century F.M.Stenton, The First Century of English Feudalism, 1066-1166 (London, 1961)
- Fleming R.Fleming, Kings and Lords in Conquest England,

(Cambridge, 1991)

- Foedera Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae et cujuscumque generis Acta Publica, T.Rymer ed., New Edition, vol. i. part i., A.Clark & F.Holbrooke eds. (London, 1816)
- GdM J.H.Round, Geoffrey de Mandeville (London, 1892)
- GEC G.E.Cokayne, The Complete Peerage (London 1910-59)
- Gilbert Crispin J.Armitage Robinson, Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster
(Cambridge, 1911)
- Hart The Early Charters of Essex, C.Hart ed. (Leicester, 1971)
- Hatton's Seals Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals, L.C.Loyd &
D.M.Stenton eds. (Oxford, 1950)
- HMC Historical Manuscripts Commission
- Govt Hen I J.Green, The Government of England Under Henry I
(Cambridge, 1986)
- Holt & Mortimer Acta of Henry II and Richard I, J.C.Holt & R.Mortimer
eds. (List and Index Society Special Series vol. xxi, 1986)
- HSJ Haskins Society Journal
- JBAA Journal of the British Archaeological Association

- JBS Journal of British Studies
- Keats-Rohan K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, Domesday People: a Prosopography of Persons Occuring in English Documents 1066-1166 I. Domesday Book (Woodbridge, 1999)
- Keefe T.K.Keefe, Feudal Assessments and the Political Community under Henry II and his sons (London, 1983)
- LDB Little Domesday Book
- Loyd L.C.Loyd, The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families (Harleian Soc, ciii)
- Mon W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, ed. J.Caley, H.Ellis & B.Bandinel, 6 vols. (London, 1846)
- MRH D.Knowles & R.N.Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses of England and Wales (London, 1971)
- Oxford Charters Facsimilies of Early Charters in Oxford Muniment Rooms. H.E.Salter ed. (Oxford, 1929)
- P&P Past and Present
- Peerage Studies J.H.Round, Studies in Peerage and Family History (London, 1901)
- PR Pipe Roll
- PRO Public Record Office

- RBE Red Book of the Exchequer, H.Hall ed. (3 vols, London, 1897)
- Recueil L.Delisle & E.Berger eds., Recueil des Actes de Henri II Roi d'Angleterre et Duc de Normandie (3 vols., Paris, 1916-27)
- Reg Regesta Rerum Anglo-Normannorum, 5 vols., vol i (1st ed) H.W.C. Davis ed., vol i (2nd ed) D.R.Bates ed., vol ii C.Johnson & H.A.Cronne eds., vols. iii & iv H.A.Cronne & R.H.C. Davis eds. (Oxford, 1913-1998)
- Rot Chart Rotuli Chartarum, T.D.Hardy ed. (Record Commission, London, 1837)
- Rot de Dom Rotuli de Dominabus et Pueris et Puellis de xii Comitibus [1185], J.H.Round ed. (Pipe Roll Society xxxv, London, 1913)
- SAC Sussex Archaeological Collections
- Sanders I.J.Sanders, English Baronies (London, 1961)
- Serjeants J.H.Round, The King's Serjeants and Officers of State (London, 1911)
- Sheriffs J.Green, English Sheriffs to 1154 (London, 1990)
- Tanner T.Tanner, Notitia Monastica (London, 1744)
- TBGAS Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society
- TEAS Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society

<u>Tengvik</u>	<u>Old English Bynames</u> , G.Tengvik (Nomina Germanica iv, Uppsala 1938)
<u>Torigni</u>	<u>Chronicle of Robert of Torigni</u> , R.Howlett ed. (London, 1889)
TRE	<i>Tempus Regis Edwardi</i>
<u>TRHS</u>	Transactions of the Royal Historical Society
TRW	<i>Tempus Regis Willelmi</i>
<u>VCH</u>	Victoria County History
<u>WAM</u>	Westminster Abbey Muniments

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34v):

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PRO C25

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PRO E40/1832

PRO E40/5268

PRO E40/6692

PRO KB27/79 (King's Bench Coram Rege roll Michaelmas 11/12

Edward I) m.25

PRO KB27/80 m.7d

BL Cotton Vitellius F viii

BL Harl ms. 662 (Dunmow Cartulary)

BL Harl. ms. 3697 (Walden Cartulary)

BL Harl. ms.7041 fol. 7

BL ms. Additional Charter 28314, transcript s.xv

WAM book V

WAM 962

WAM 968

Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DAy T2/2
Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/1
Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/3
Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/5
Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DCw T1/2
Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/D Hv (Verulam) B3
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Davis ed., vol i (2nd ed) D.R.Bates ed., vol ii C.Johnson &
H.A.Cronne eds., vols. iii & iv H.A.Cronne & R.H.C. Davis eds.
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950-9

Chapter One - Introduction

The aim of this thesis is to analyse the birth and development of the Anglo-Norman community in Essex over the period c.1066-1189, and to discuss and assess the relationship that this community enjoyed with the crown. There are three main reasons for doing this. Firstly Essex had more tenants-in-chief than any other English county in 1086, which indicates a diverse and disparate group of landowners in the county from the earliest stage of Norman rule. Secondly, Essex was an English county that reacted positively to Stephen's accession and was almost totally loyal to him for his entire reign. Thirdly, Essex was the focus for revolt against King John and the barons of the county were responsible for the capture of London. Whilst this thesis does not cover the reign of King John, it does analyse the changing relationship between crown and county after the accession of Henry II.

These events raise important questions. How was Essex conquered and governed by the Normans? What system of land organisation was implemented by 1086? How did Essex respond to and suffer from Henry I's government? Why and how did Essex support Stephen? When did the relationship between Essex and the crown turn sour? Each of these issues questions the relationships that inhabitants of the county had with one another, with the king and (where applicable) with their lords or vassals.

As this project began as a county community study, I will initially address the nature of such an inquiry and outline the reasons for not adapting this as a model for the thesis. A discussion of the methods used to define the subjects of the study follows, together with an appraisal of the sources. Finally I will outline the methodology for this thesis and appraise the county of Essex as a unit.

County Communities

County-based groups have been a regular means of conducting historical study for generations, across many periods. The 'county community' has become a standard term for a local group and the specific methods implemented to analyse it. Such studies are still very much in vogue within the historical fraternity.¹ Their existence is based on the premise that a county's history is not just about the actions of the king, *comes* or other magnates. Instead of looking down on the county as just one piece in the national puzzle, the locality was a microcosm of the trends, triumphs and troubles of England.

This thesis concerns both a county and a period that have received little attention from county community enthusiasts. Early modern England has been well-researched in this respect, and the trend has crept backwards through the centuries. An admirable quantity of material dedicated to this particular style for the later medieval period has been created, with reference to specific counties and general theories.² These works have tended to focus on the War

¹ The concept, however, is over three centuries old: see C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', JBS xxxiii (1994) 340-80, 341

² The very many studies undertaken include: E.Acheson, A Gentry Community: Leicestershire in the Fifteenth Century, c.1422-c.1485 (Cambridge, 1992); H.Cam, Liberties and Communities in Medieval England (London, 1963); C.Carpenter, 'The Fifteenth-Century English Gentry and Their Estates' in Gentry and Lesser Nobility in Late Medieval Europe, M.Jones ed. (New York, 1986) 33-60; C.Carpenter, Locality and Polity: a Study of Warwickshire Landed Gentry 1401-1499 (Cambridge, 1992); C.Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England'; P.R. Coss, Lordship, Knighthood and Locality: a study in English Society c.1180 – c.1280 (Cambridge, 1991); P.R. Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', P&P cxlvii (1995), 38-64; R.Fleming, 'Rural Elites and Urban Communities in Late Anglo-Saxon England', P&P cxli (1993) 3-37; J.R.Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community 1215-59', P&P cii (1984) 25-65; J.R.Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', TRHS 5th. ser. xxviii (1978) 27-43; K.B.McFarlane, The Nobility of Later Medieval England (London, 1973); S.Payling, Political Society in

of the Roses, on fourteenth-century social change and on the implications of Magna Carta and the reform movement of 1258-65. When these studies cast a cursory glance over preceding centuries - not a frequent event - vague generalisations are the order of the day. Maddicott speaks of the county community predating the Conquest, although he cites no references to justify this contention.¹

Recently academic interest has turned upon the twelfth- and early thirteenth-centuries, most notably in Hugh Thomas' study of Angevin Yorkshire and Paul Dalton's survey of the same county before 1154.² This trend has become unavoidable, as the same methods used to explore parochialism in the English Civil War can be adapted to explain local events in earlier periods. After

Lancastrian England: the Greater Gentry of Nottinghamshire (Oxford, 1991); A.J.Pollard, 'The Richmondshire Community of Gentry During the Wars of the Roses' in Patronage, Pedigree and Power in Later Medieval England, C.Ross ed. (Gloucester, 1979) 37-59; M.Prestwich, English Politics in the Thirteenth Century (London, 1990) ch. iii., 47-63; N.Saul, Knights and Esquires: The Gloucestershire Gentry in the Fourteenth Century (London, 1981); B.Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth' EHR cviii (1993), 563-588; J.Ward, The Essex Gentry and the County Community in the Fourteenth Century (Essex Record Office, 1991) and Mary Robertson's review, "'Sires remembre we are neyhbours": English Gentry Communities in the Fifteenth Century', JBS xxxiv (1995) 112-18

¹ J.R.Maddicott, 'Magna Carta and the Local Community 1215-59', 25; Maddicott, 'The County Community and the Making of Public Opinion in Fourteenth-Century England', 28. Studies of individual counties for this period exist, although ideas of county community and local identity are not a strong theme: M.D.Costen, The Origins of Somerset (Manchester, 1992); P.Warner, The Origins of Suffolk (Manchester, 1996); T.Williamson, The Origins of Norfolk (Manchester, 1993)

² P.Dalton, Conquest, Anarchy and Lordship: Yorkshire 1066-1154 (Cambridge, 1994); R.Eales, 'Local Loyalties in Norman England: Kent in Stephen's Reign', ANS viii (1985) 88-108; H.Thomas, Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: the Gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 1154-1216 (University of Pennsylvania, 1993). J.C.Holt's The Northerners: a study in the reign of King John (Oxford, 1961) concentrates on the north of England and explains the motives of support and revolt

studies of the War of the Roses, the growth of Parliament and the troubles of Henry III, a similar treatment of the county during political upheaval (with reference to its normal state) has become imperative for John's reign, the Anarchy and the Norman Conquest.¹ The county community is now an accepted facet of English political life and historical analysis from the end of John's reign, although the validity of a textbook 'county community' study prior to this is debatable.

The county community study relies upon specific criteria (generally related to the fourteenth-century) which have been created for the identification of county groupings and the recognition of communal sentiment and activity. Administrative and legal processes are often hailed as evidence of the county group's existence. Maddicott pointed out that both *communitas* and shire could each mean 'court' and 'county'.² As the focus of local administrative activity, the county court attracted the presence of magnates, baronial and royal representatives, local men caught up in legal processes and the normal circus of witnesses, interested parties and spectators. Some processes within the county court gave rise to the need for men to support one another in a neighbourly capacity.³ There are examples of men standing as pledge for one another, recorded when money was levied from the supporters of repeat offenders or defaulters, or when fines were made for favour or for a variety of other reasons. Holt has demonstrated that neighbouring heads of households

¹ Emilie Amt has produced political studies of three counties (Essex, Oxford and Gloucester) during and after Stephen's reign, dealing mainly with tenants-in-chief: Amt, Accession 64-81. There is no specific Essex section in Ann Williams, The English and the Norman Conquest (Woodbridge, 1995)

² Maddicott, 'The County Community in Fourteenth-Century England', 29-30.

³ B.Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth', 567

were of more use in these circumstances than family members, as the latter frequently did not have the resources to offer financial guarantees.¹

The same local officials that ran or attended these sessions were the channels between the locality and central government.² Their appointment indicates the recognition of a cohesive group of people (at least from above) and the existence of a responsible agent whose concern was one specific area (a county or two). The official's post was evidence of the area's individual significance, and the prestige of holding such an office stemmed from recognition throughout that jurisdiction.³ Whilst the selection procedures were open to royal patronage as well as the demands of local worthies, it still had to produce a suitable candidate. In order to gain local acceptance, this system had to return officials who were responsible with an understanding of the area. When counties pooled resources to have the sheriff of their choice, the community's shared objectives were expressed explicitly.

Other motives could dictate the selection of a sheriff. The Exchequer did not simply appoint a popular local man to the post, as being liked was no more important than being efficient, reliable or profitable. David Carpenter argues that after 1194 court favourites gave way to professional sheriffs in the face of higher farms, the application of increments and the transferral of many shrieval duties to other agents (such as custody of castles).⁴ Curial sheriffs, benefiting from negotiated easy terms, returned to the localities after Magna Carta. From 1236 until 1241 sheriffs were custodians, entitled to an allowance in return for custody of the farm. To local alarm, sheriffs were expected to pay larger

¹ J.C.Holt, 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England', published in Colonial England, 1066-1215 (London, 1997) 223-43, 233

² P.R.Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', 49

³ B.Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth', 565-6

⁴ D.Carpenter, 'The Decline of the Curial Sheriff in England, 1194-1258', EHR xci (1976) 1-32, 6-10

increments after 1242, leading to increased personal debt and greater extortion and corruption.¹ Local attachment became less important than finding a willing candidate, as men fined to avoid shrieval duty.

Local officials took their work seriously and held themselves in high esteem for their responsible position. The occupation of a position of such local importance meant that the sheriff represented his county in two ways. The sheriff accounted for Essex (and its poorer, smaller partner Hertfordshire) at the Exchequer, and was the main link between county and central government for many of the lesser landholders. Round expressed the view that Swein of Essex and his progeny (Robert and Henry) used their family name 'Essex' to reflect the family's association with the shrievalty before and after the Conquest.²

Collective identity is a central part of the idea of a county group.³ This may have been expressed through a local forum, or through self-recognition that the group was a community. Once the *communitas* had become a recognised entity and local men started describing themselves, collectively, as 'the community of the county' or 'the men of the community of the county', the existence of that unit is quite naturally proven.⁴ Research focuses on the degree of county interplay rather than its existence. The growth of a community gave rise to documents which were not created by a royal or honorial court. Counties

¹ D.Carpenter, 'The Decline of the Curial Sheriff in England', 22-28

² VCH Essex i (London, 1903) 345. No individual will be referred to as 'Essex' in this thesis, because the lords of Rayleigh after Robert fitz Wymarc (Swein, Robert and Henry) were known as *de Essex* and the Mandeville family were the earls of Essex during the reigns of Stephen and Henry II

³ P.R.Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', 48-9

⁴ Maddicott, 'The County Community in Fourteenth-Century England', 40. The earliest example of this behaviour in Essex occurred in 1204: see below, page 9

submitted their own petitions and statements, airing their commonly held views and providing concrete evidence that they were a fully-interactive unit.

Such identity is closely linked to status gradation and the behaviour reflecting a county group that was made of horizontal, and not vertical, associations.¹

This theory suggests that communities were built by social peers with common interests and lifestyles (horizontal groups on fairly level terms) rather than by lords and vassals (who demonstrate an unequal, vertical relationship). There are various ways that status gradation can be measured. Deciphering status levels is not difficult if the simple feudal pyramid is used as a social model, although this is not entirely appropriate as the simplicity of the model undermines its practical application. Alternatively wealth can be a useful yardstick, as the simple segregation of tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants leaves huge financial disparities between members of the same artificially-constructed social tier. Frequently, but not invariably, lordship and financial clout went hand-in-hand. Whichever system is used to analyse the grades, the central theory remains the same. Members of a community seek the company and support of their peers. Analysis of status - whether that means total wealth, tenorial level or quantity of land held - produces groups of like-minded individuals whose concerns were in all probability mutual.

This model is flawed for an analysis of Essex from the Conquest through to the death of Henry II. Because sources for the study of Essex at this time do not compare with the quantity or quality of information available for later centuries, the application of these rigorous procedures is simply impossible. Even the most basic preliminary measure, the identification of landowners in Essex, produces only a partial picture.

¹ P.R.Coss, 'The Formation of the English Gentry', 49

The tests of community proposed by Coss are not generally applicable for the era in question. Much of the local administrative and legal work, where recorded, has not survived. The hundred rolls do not cover this period.¹ Local officials can be identified but only to a limited degree. Exact shrieval dates can be found for those years with an extant Pipe Roll, whilst the sheriffs before or between those dates are made known only through royal *acta*, Domesday Book and private charters. Apart from the sheriff there were other designated local officers of the crown, including hundred reeves, foresters and custodians of royal manors. These individuals are documented poorly until (and in some cases beyond) 1154. Lists of these crown representatives are even more incomplete than lists of sheriffs. There were other men connected with the shire in indeterminate roles, which can be seen through the direction of notifications regarding the county to them. The small number of formal, recognisable officials was subject to a profound rise in following centuries. Over the period 1066-1189 Essex did not have many of the officers who would be linchpins in future county communities: designated knights of the shire, escheators, coroners and keepers of the peace.

The men of Essex did not address themselves in terms proclaiming a county group or denoting community sentiment during this era. The first recorded example of the county acting together in this way was the successful attempt to remove northern Essex from the royal forest in 1204. In his report on the forest of Essex and the significance of the charter removing the district from the forest, Round stated that '...the men of Essex ("Homines de Essex") made ... [payment] for having this portion of the county thrown out of the forest'.² Whilst this is a significant demonstration of county-wide solidarity and a successful collective struggle to attain a common goal, there is no mention of

¹ The hundred rolls began in 1274: Rotuli Hundredorum, W. Illingworth ed. (2 vols., London, 1812, 1818) i 9; H.M. Cam, The Hundred and Hundred Rolls (London, 1930), 39ff.

² J.H. Round, 'The Forest of Essex', JBA, n.s. iii (1897), 36-42, 41

homines de Essex in the relevant charter.¹ The Pipe Roll of the same year does use that term, relating that 'the men of Essex [owe] 500 marks and five palfreys for disafforestation...'.² This can be viewed as an early step on the road to self-recognition, aided by regular royal repetition of the phrase. From that time the term *homines de Essex* occurred regularly in the Pipe Rolls.

Even the concepts of 'vertical' and 'horizontal' gradation are difficult to apply in this case. W.J. Corbett's classification of tenurial value at Domesday is a useful tool for financial stratification.³ It could be extended to include sub-tenants and differentiate between the lower levels of the county's landowners. This does raise two difficulties. Firstly, the Domesday valuations only relate to 1086 and preceding years. After this time there were various methods for assessing the value of land held, such as Danegeld levies and quantities of knights' fees, but they do not supply adequately comparable figures. Secondly, a concentration on material wealth pays no heed to social status.

An arbitrary decision to include only persons within a specific income bracket would serve to rid the study of its best documented members (at the top) and those individuals of whom practically nothing is known (at the bottom). It might also lead to the removal of the greatest sub-tenants in Essex. The sub-tenant holding more land in the county than a tenant-in-chief was both his fiscal superior and his social inferior. The greatest Domesday sub-tenant in Essex was Adelfolf de Merck, whose holding from the count of Boulogne (the greatest Domesday tenant-in-chief in Essex) covered over 29 hides and brought in an annual income of nearly £59.⁴ As Table 1 demonstrates, Adelfolf's lands in the county would rank him twenty-second if he had held in-chief, between Ranulf brother of Ilger and Henry de Ferrers. Only eighteen of

¹ Rot Chart i 123: no beneficiary is named therein

² PR 6 John 32. Round had consulted the Pipe Roll without revealing it as his source

³ Corbett 510-11

⁴ LDB 27a-29a, 31b-32a, 33a, 34a-b

the county's tenants-in-chief held more land in demesne. Of course, Adelolf himself had probably brought in his own rear tenants but no mention is made of them in Domesday.

Table 1: The Domesday tenants-in-chief of Essex, 1086

Status also brings problems of its own, not least that it is hard to measure in the aftermath of the Conquest. Susan Reynolds remarks that Domesday provides a hierarchy based on 'property or tenure rather than... status or authority'.¹ A frequently used method of status delineation has been service on the grand jury. Application of such a system is impossible for the twelfth century for which very few such lists survive.² Within a clearly defined aristocratic caste system, where the baron and the knight were recognised levels of social standing with their own specific responsibilities, the issue of status can be explained using homogenous terms.³

The use of 'vertical gradation' to define a community (i.e. the complete omission of tenants-in-chief and concentration on sub-tenants) before this precise demarcation became standard practice is a completely different matter. Including and excluding individuals based upon tenorial status has its merits and its drawbacks. The distinction between tenant-in-chief and sub-tenant is clear and unquestionable. However Essex had more Domesday tenants-in-

¹ S.Reynolds, 'Bookland, Folkland and Fiefs', *ANS* xiv (1991) 211-227, 226

² K.Faulkner, 'The Transformation of Knighthood in Early Thirteenth-Century England', *EHR* cxi (1996) 1-23, 12, 14

³ It is very difficult to apply such terms before c.1200. '...although knighthood in the eleventh century implied military proficiency, it carried no social distinction': *First Century* 142. Subtenants of the Essex-based honours of Boulogne and Rayleigh were described as barons in the early part of the twelfth century: *WAM* 962, which was transcribed and published by E.J.L.Scott, 'Two Documents', *The Athenaeum* 2 December 1893, 772-73; J.H.Round 'Two Documents', *The Athenaeum*, 2 December 1893: *First Century* 93-8

No.	Tenant-in-chief	Demesne in-chief	Demesne as tenant	Enfeoffed	Total
1	King William	£517.7.2 + Colchester	-	-	>£517
20	Eustace of Boulogne	£320.7.4	-	£203.17	>£524
30	Geoffrey de Mandeville	£185.17.0	-	£161.8.8	>£347
24	Swein of Essex	£129.10	£17.8.0	£138.1.0	>£284
34	Ranulf Peverel	£99.0.0	-	£148.7.6	>£247
23	Richard fitz Gilbert	£118.16.9	£4.0.0	£117.12.10	>£240
3, 4	Bishop of London	£101.7.0	-	£80.4.10	>£180
33	Ralph Baynard	£91.15.0	£4	£77.13.0	>£173
32	Robert Gernon	£76.17.0	-	£95.16.8	>£172
18	Bishop of Bayeux	£32.1.6	-	£132.17.0	>£164
9	St Mary's Barking	£156.17.8	-	£5.18.8	>£162
25	Eudo dapifer	£83.0.4	-	£68.5.0	>£151
35	Aubrey de Vere	£71.15	£8	£53.15.0	>£133
22	William de Warenne	£29.7.0	-	£90.13.0	£120
5	Canons of St Paul's	£107.13.4	-	-	>£107
7	Bishop of Durham	£100	-	-	£100
6	St Peter's Westminster	£97	-	£2.14.2	>£99
2	Holy Trinity Canterbury	£81.5.0	-	£2	>£83
10	St Etheldreda's Ely	£65.10	-	£8.0.0	>£73
28	Hamo dapifer	£21.14.8	-	£47.18.0	>£69
37	Ranulf brother of Ilger	£46.2.8	-	£22.10.7	>£68
29	Henry de Ferrers	£50.2.0	-	£7.0.0	>£57
27	Hugh de Montfort	£27.2.6	£1	£23.12.6	>£51
36	Peter de Valognes	£23.11	-	£27.0.0	>£50
15	Holy Trinity Caen	£49	-	-	£49
42	Walter the Deacon	£29.8.4	-	£14.10.0	>£43
38	Tihel de Hellean	£31.1.4	£4	£4	>£39
39	Roger de Raismes	£28.17.0	-	£9	>£37
11	Bury St Edmund's	£30.10	-	£5.10.0	£36
14	St Valery's	£31.10.8	-	£2.18.0	>£34
52	Walter de Douai	£19	-	£14	£33
40	John fitz Waleran	£5	-	£28	£33
71	Theodonic Pointel	£14.10.0	£14.15.0	18s	>£30
8	Canons of Waltham	£30.2.0	-	-	>£30
31	The Count of Eu	£30.0.0	-	-	£30
55	Countess Judith	£28.2.8	-	-	>£28
21	Alan of Brittany	5s	-	£26.0.0	>£26
43	Roger Bigot	£4	-	£19.4.0	>£23
17	St Ouen's Rouen	£22	-	-	£22
44	Robert Malet	£6.12.0	-	£15.2.0	>£21
53	Matthew de Mortagne	£21	-	-	£21
26	Roger de Auberville	£20	-	-	£20
57	Sasselin	£15.8.0	-	£2.10.0	>£17
12	St Martin's London	£10	£7.10.0	-	>£17
48	William Peverel	£12	-	£5	£17
41	Robert fitz Corbucion	£2	-	£13.19.0	>£15
56	Frodo the Abbot's brother	£14.14.0	-	10s	>£15
54	Countess of Aumale	£15	-	-	£15
47	Hugh de Gournai	-	-	£14.8.0	>£14
46	Roger of Poitou	£14.5.0	-	-	>£14
76	Robert fitz Rozelin	£12	-	1d.	>£12
81	Otto the Goldsmith	£12	-	-	£12
45	William de Ecouis	£11.10.0	-	-	>£11
16	St Stephen's Caen	£10	-	-	£10
13	St Martin's Battle	£8	-	£0.2.6	>£8
65	John nephew of Waleran	£8	-	-	£8
68	Modwin	£7.18.6	-	-	>£7
66	William the Deacon	£7.10.0	-	-	>£7
61	Edmund fitz Algot	£7.10.0	-	-	>£7
49	Ralph de Limesy	£7.3.0	-	-	>£7
58	Gilbert fitz Thorold	£7	-	-	£7
64	Jocelyn Lonimer	£7	-	-	£7
77	Ralph Pinel	£7	-	-	£7
84	Wulfeva wife of Finn	£7	-	-	£7
79	Reginald the Gunner	£6.10.0	-	-	>£6
59	William Leofric	£6.1.0	-	-	>£6
67	Walter Cook	£5.10.0	-	-	>£5
74	William fitz Constantine	£5	-	-	£5
72	Roger God-save-ladies	£5	-	-	£5
69	Ilbod	£4.11.10	-	-	>£4
51	Ralph de Tosny	£4.5.0	-	-	>£4
86	Thorkell the Reeve	£1.10.0	£2.15.0	-	>£4
60	Hugh de St Quentin	£3.6.0	-	-	>£3
83	Grim the Reeve	£2.13.0	-	-	>£2
19	Bishop of Hereford	£2.10.0	-	-	>£2
78	Robert fitz Godbert	£2.10.0	-	-	>£2
50	Robert de Tosny	£2	-	-	£2
70	Hagebern	£1.3.4	-	-	>£1
63	Adam fitz Durand Malzor	£1.3.0	-	-	>£1
73	Gilbert fitz Solomon	£1	-	-	£1
82	Gilbert the priest	£1	-	-	£1
62	Roger Marshal	18s	-	-	<£1
75	Ansgar Cook	10s.	-	-	<£1
80	Gundwin	10s.	-	-	<£1
85	Edward fitz Swein	10s.	-	-	<£1
87	Stanhard	8s.	-	-	<£1
88	Godwin the Deacon	1s 4d	-	-	<£1

Table 1: the Domesday tenants-in-chief of Essex

chief (eighty-five) than any other county in England, with lands ranging in value from approximately 10% to 0.00001% of the county's total revenue.¹ With a group this diverse, the appellation 'tenant-in-chief' hinders more than it helps.

Simply omitting tenants-in-chief by virtue of the fact that they were too important to care about just one county is a flawed approach. In his Yorkshire study, Hugh Thomas admits that he has excluded tenants-in-chief 'who held more than a handful of knights' fees of the king' whilst including men who held more fees as sub-tenants.² This is a laudable academic proposition that does not work well when applied. The tenant-in-chief with ten fees solely in Essex is a more appropriate subject of study than the sub-tenant with ten fees spread across Essex and two or three other counties. A tenant-in-chief with a castle, abbey and large honour in Essex had an immense interest in the county. As the greatest and most influential landowner in Essex was the crown, it is senseless to dismiss major tenants with strong local interests from a county analysis. To use the language of the county community blueprint, sole concentration on the horizontal ties (where evident) will produce results that ignore the strong vertical structure introduced at the Norman Conquest. Failure to acknowledge that honorial loyalty may have outweighed county sentiment will seriously skew the results of such a study.

¹ Based on a Domesday valuation of the county of c.£5000 and using royal demesne, the estates of Eustace of Boulogne and the lands of Godwin the Deacon as examples. My own conservative calculation of the Domesday value of Essex indicates a total annual income of just over £4800

² H.M.Thomas, Vassals, Heiresses, Crusaders and Thugs: the gentry of Angevin Yorkshire, 11

Table 2: Domesday tenants-in-chief by county, 1086.¹

The only justifiable omission on the grounds of social status is of the group holding land from sub-tenants. These lesser individuals feature fleetingly in Domesday, which can be considered their fifteen minutes of fame. Examples of community activity cannot be derived from the lives of these people: the sources select the subjects of study. Extant accounts of the Domesday inquiry in other counties do involve such men but similar records do not exist for Essex.² Others may judge such an exclusion to be brutal but this is a necessary measure. If this policy were not used, later reigns (particularly that of Henry II) could not be adequately appraised within the allotted space and time.

Defining the group to be examined does require further parameters, besides the dismissal of rear-tenants. To be included in a community study, individuals must have been Essex landowners. This qualification reduces the subjects of study to those landowners with demesne land in Essex as tenants-in-chief or sub-tenants holding from them. It is interesting to observe that only one Domesday tenant-in-chief retained no demesne land in Essex, Hugh de Gournai.³ In the twelfth century the earls of Richmond and Gloucester abdicated all direct responsibility within the county to a single tenant.⁴ These tenants-in-chief, and others who had a small stake in Essex and substantial interests elsewhere, influenced the county without evidence of personal participation in the county group.

¹ The Domesday tenants-in-chief totals do not include the king (who had no demesne in Cheshire and Shropshire) or sundry groups of unnamed burgesses and/or thegns. The counties are listed in order of area, utilising the figures from the 1891 census contained in The Statesman's Year Book (London, 1901). These statistics pre-date the London Government Act 1899, which redrew the borders of the Home Counties.

² C.P.Lewis, 'The Domesday Jurors', HSJ v. (1993) 17-44, 19

³ LDB 89b

⁴ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', TEAS vii (1899) 142-52, 148; W.R.Powell, 'The Essex Fees of the honour of Richmond', TEAS i. 3rd. ser. (1961-5) 179-89, 188-89

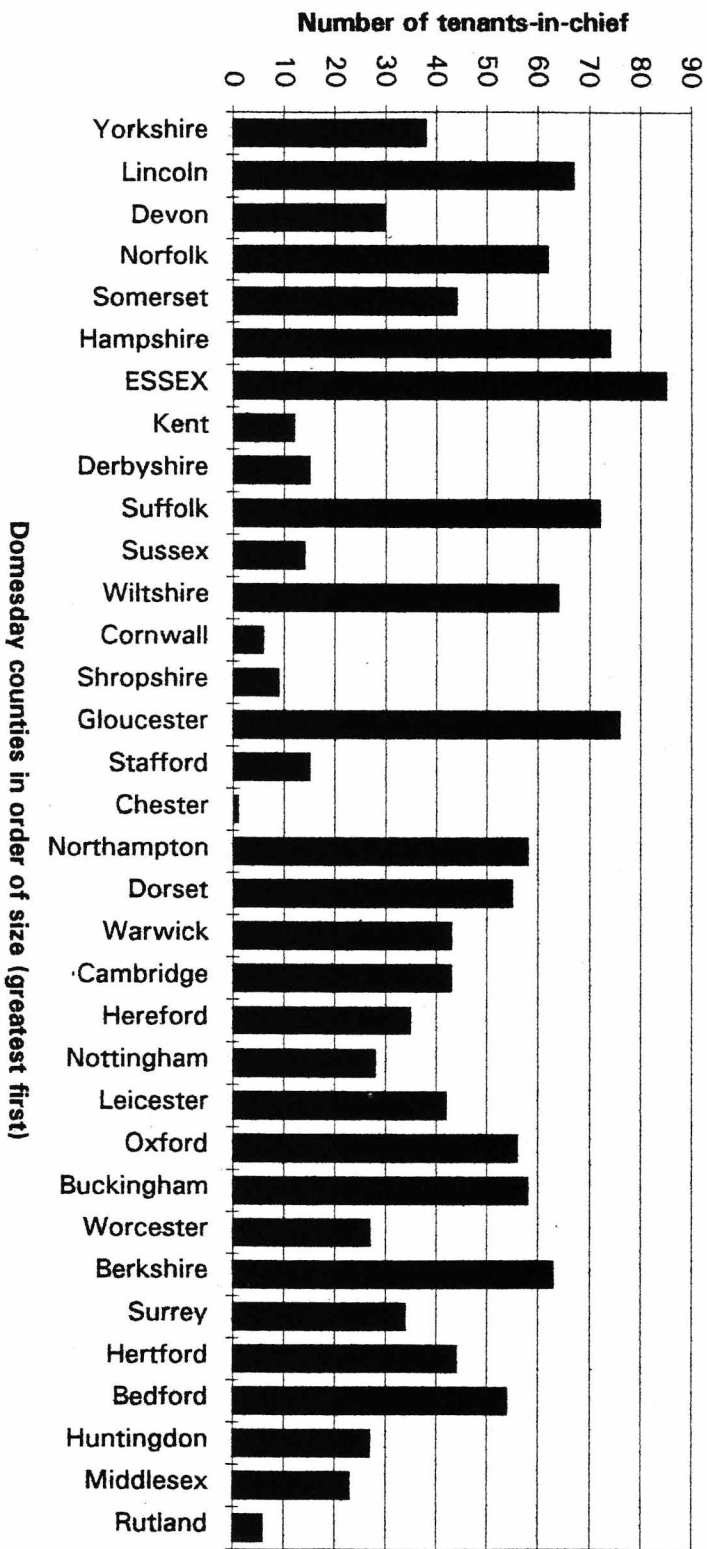


Table 2: Domesday tenants-in-chief by county, 1086

These are the only obvious subjects to omit immediately from study. Whilst it might be ideal to create a rigid framework of restrictions which identified and excluded unsuitable men from the outset, this would prove to be a restrictive practice. At certain stages of the period under observation, gathering together a corpus of local men to study is difficult enough without having to contend with a self-imposed black-balling system. When this group is left with wide initial limits, the questions asked of the sources quickly show which members of the proposed group are suitable candidates. The methods that I have used to assess community activity emphasise contact with Essex.

This desire to avoid the introduction of such technicalities rests, in part, with the variable quantity and quality of relevant sources during the period. Even the most basic preliminary measure (the identification of landowners in Essex) can only produce an partial picture. A primary goal is to identify such individuals, as the possession of land in Essex is an initial requirement for inclusion within a county study. There are four ways of positively identifying landowners in the county, although they cannot (separately or collectively) provide a complete account.

The first means for such an identification is inclusion within a major survey of the county. Domesday Book lists the tenants-in-chief, names the majority of their sub-tenants and generally offers geographical details of land tenure. From this it is a simple exercise to identify the county's landowners in 1086. The next great work to list inhabitants of the county was concerned with knight service rather than land and was organised by honour rather than by county. This source, the *Cartae Baronum* of 1166, is useful for corroborative information but it was not organised to provide separate county-by-county lists of individual knights. The final pertinent survey, the Book of Fees, did not offer a full description of Essex in 1212 or 1219, with a better (but still

incomplete) entry occurring in the 1235-36 return.¹ The fragments available from 1212 and the fuller accounts given over two decades later both post-date the upper limit of this analysis, thus reducing their practical contribution.

The second means again relies on documentation produced for the benefit of the crown. As they were organised on a county-by-county basis, the Pipe Rolls confirm involvement in Essex. Even so, the Pipe Rolls do have their own specific drawbacks. For the 124 years under observation, there are only thirty-six surviving Pipe Rolls (1129-30 and 1154-90). There is also no guarantee that all of the individuals named within Essex section of the Pipe Rolls held land there. Even where this is an inescapable conclusion, the possibility often exists that the land in question was in Hertfordshire rather than Essex, as certain Pipe Roll accounts failed to differentiate adequately between the two counties.

The third means is more straightforward. The adoption of an Essex toponym was evidence of tenure in Essex and in a specific locality. It also demonstrates that the individual concerned considered themselves to be permanently connected with that place. Evidence of an Essex *caput* also falls within this category. Finally, specific grants of land in Essex to an abbey or priory indicate possession before the transaction. This is retrospective evidence and may only prove that land was held in the county before the donation was made. Nonetheless it remains proof of prior tenure.

The main obstacle to the existence of a county community lies in late-eleventh and early-twelfth century social structure. Before 1154 royal power had not developed to a degree where it significantly infringed upon the authority of the honorial court, an institution which was hardly conducive to the development of a multi-honorial community of sub-tenants. The increasing power of royal

¹ Book of Fees (3 vols, London, 1920-31), 120-26, 274-78, 476-90

government under the Angevin kings led to the honour being displaced as the basis of society.¹ This change enabled the circumstances to emerge that allow such a rigidly defined study to work. Stenton, in proclaiming 'the end of Norman feudalism', offered a number of reasons for the decline in honorial power after Stephen's reign. Henry II interfered with the internal and external affairs of honours by obtaining liege homage from honorial knights in 1166, curbing the independence of the palatine counties, ensuring that ideas of custody and ownership were not confused with regard to castles, and placing royal ministers in shrieval positions rather than barons or their cronies.² Henry's pursuit of centralisation provided local officials with increasing power, depriving greater barons of influence, prestige and patronage. Through the exercise of royal power, the county gradually replaced the honour as the parochial unit.

Communities

With the county community proving itself to be an unworkable concept, a more basic definition of parochiality must be sought. There are a number of general concepts defined by anthropologists that demonstrate the behaviour of a group which has a local affinity. Using such criteria in conjunction with extant sources allows the exploitation of that material to outline individuals with local interests and, in some cases, demonstrate the existence of an interactive county group.

In terms of pure theory, a community can be defined through a number of indices. These range from the basic trio of blood (kinship), place (locality) and mind (common sentiment), to a full set of generally applicable qualitative

¹ S.F.C.Milsom, The Legal Framework of English Feudalism (London, 1976)

² First Century, 11, 229-30, 234-42, 223, 231. Cartae Baronum was an 'assertion of the principle that the king has a claim to the allegiance of under-tenants overriding the claim of any immediate lord'

factors (dialect, costume, recognition and treatment of outsiders, ritual and/or religion, frequent inter-personal contact, the marriage arena, joint agricultural activity, burial rituals, centres of local economic activity, administrative delineation, and group action during political crisis).¹ All but one of these demonstrate a permanent sense of local teamwork and camaraderie, whilst the last shows a tightening of individuals into a group in order to achieve a specific purpose.

The communities derived from such tests fall into two very different types of interactive group. The first is a steady, unremarkable and largely invisible set, bound by everyday examples of neighbours demonstrating parochial behaviour. Whilst it is logical to assume that it existed, the evidence for such a group can be sketchy (particularly in the earlier years of Norman rule) and much of its justification stems from anthropological research. The other group exhibits characteristics associated with communities caused by adversity. When the inhabitants of an area feel threatened, they unite in order to struggle heroically against the real or perceived danger.

This 'common interest' criterion provokes attention and is often more tangible than the general growth of community attachment. It is no secret that Essex was highly (although not completely) loyal to Stephen.² Painter, following the work of Round, cheerfully portrayed a revolt centred on Essex, Lincolnshire and the North in 1214-15. His construction of the links between the Twenty-five barons of Magna Carta is an important concept.³ The Twenty-five were

¹ A.M^cFarlane, Reconstructing Historical Communities (Cambridge, 1977) 1, 10, 11

² See below, chapter iv

³ S. Painter, The Reign of King John (Baltimore, 1949) 288-95; F.M.Powicke, Stephen Langton (London, 1928) 127. They followed Round's suggestion that the greater Clare clan were largely responsible for the rising of 1214-16; FE 472. McFarlane suggested that a diagrammatic representation of ties, using lines to connect the names of involved persons, could indicate inter-personal interaction: A. McFarlane, Reconstructing

linked through active participation in revolt and by an impressive variety of other bonds. Round and Painter went through these incidences carefully (family ties, marital association, geographical proximity, service in Normandy and personal co-operation).¹ A scan of the Twenty-five and their connexions is a strong indicator of the alignment of the major landowners of Essex in the penultimate year of King John's reign.

Many of the other indices have been well-utilised in other studies. The sacrament of marriage is often seen as an instrument of social bonding. Marriages formalised the alignment between families and made neighbours kinsmen.² Costume and colour, in the form of heraldry, can be used to see the effect those family ties had upon one another.³ Local historians have often commented upon the similarities in the coats-of-arms borne by the Vere, Mandeville, Clare and Montfichet families, further evidence of neighbourly association.⁴

Historical Communities, 19. When applied to the Twenty-five Barons of Magna Carta such a system produces a veritable spider's web between twenty-four members of the group, leaving only Serle the Mercer (the Mayor of London) unattached

¹ Holt has stated that in discussing family ties, particularly in the case of 1215, we must remember that this is only one facet of inter-personal ties: 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England III: Patronage and Politics', 240, 242

² B. Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth', 566: J.C.Holt, 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England III: Patronage and Politics', 238

³ A.Ailes, 'Heraldry in Twelfth Century England: the Evidence', in D.Williams ed. England in the Twelfth Century (Woodbridge, 1990) 1-17

⁴ See J.H.Round, 'The Abbeys of Coggeshall and Stratford Longthorne', TEAS n.s. v (1895) 139-43, where he pointed out that the arms of Montfichet were those of Clare reversed, and that the quarterly or and gules of the Mandevilles was echoed in the quarterly gules and or of the Veres. For further discussion on the similarity of shields and emblems, see J.A.Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England, 344-45: J.H.Round, 'The Introduction of Armorial Bearings into England', Archaeological Journal li (1894) 43-48

The recognition of 'outsiders' (and therefore the concepts of 'us' and 'them') is a common theme throughout history. Normally the focus is on the outsider and the treatment meted out to them. The outsider in a medieval county is not just a victim: he serves as proof of that county's shared values. The behaviour of the stranger serves to emphasise the normative trends of a county group.¹

Although religion was the monopoly of the Church Universal in the centuries under analysis, local ritual and attachment survived through a number of channels. Regions or counties had their own bishoprics and attachment to a local bishop (but not Essex), or their own variation on the monastic theme (but not Essex). Essex enjoyed a combination of official control from St Paul's and strong influence from Ss Etheldreda (at Ely), Edmund (at Bury) and Peter (at Westminster). Ancient Benedictine houses held land in Essex, supplemented by later foundations in favour of the Benedictines and a wide range of newer orders. The county was dominated neither by the great houses of black monks more common in the south-west, nor the later massive grants to the Cistercians, Praemonstratensians or Gilbertines typically found in Wales and northern and eastern England.

The existence of local patron saints and religious shrines was applicable to Essex. The county had its own saint, Osyth, and a monastic house was dedicated to her.² As her feast was used to date some local events, she was

¹ B. Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth', 582: David Nirenberg, Communities of Violence (Princeton University Press, Chichester, 1996)

² Osyth was beheaded by Vikings when she refused to deny Christ but she bravely picked up her head and walked for three miles to the church of Ss Peter and Paul: The Lives of the Women Saints of our Contrie of England, C. Horstmann ed. (Early English Text Society vol. lxxxvi, London, 1886) 97-98. Osyth was buried at 'Ailsburie' by her parents, suggesting that she originated from modern Buckinghamshire. For the blurring of the myths of St Osyth and St Sitha, see S. Sutcliffe, 'The Cult of St Sitha in England: an introduction', Nottingham Medieval Studies xxxvii (1993) 83-89, 83-84. Whilst a village

evidently considered to be relevant and important in Essex.¹ At Montacute in Somerset, a large crucifix was discovered during the Confessor's reign. This was brought to Waltham (Holy Cross) by Tovi, standard-bearer to Canute.² Harold, founder of the priory, was allegedly cured of paralysis there and was later (reputedly) interred there.

Religious ritual did shape communities in other ways. The growth of mausolea ensured a family's loyalty to a particular house, and examples of patronage are evidence of a continued interest in a particular house and its locale. Essentially the family's residence and burial chamber were one and the same, a central feature of the family seat.³

The frequency of inter-personal contact is difficult to establish. Charter attestations are the best example of combined presence, whether in the royal or baronial *curia*.⁴ Nonetheless these indicate a formal role, evidence not so much of group feeling and enterprise as adherence to the demands of feudal obligation. Less common, but more meaningful, are the stray references to personal connection in the Pipe Rolls, which provide evidence of the personal

was named after St Osyth, no parish churches in Essex have been dedicated to her:

W.Addison, 'Parish Church Dedications in Essex', *EAH* ii (1966-70) 34-46, 39

¹ The inquisition into the venison in the forest of Essex (1239) is dated '*Die Dominica proxima post festum sancte Osithe*': *Select Pleas of the Forest*, G.J.Turner ed. (Seldon Society xiii, London, 1901), 69: London Guildhall Library ms. 25, 122/1486 (undated but probably *post* 1166, based on attestations) confirms two annual payments of rent, one to be made on the feast of Ss Peter and Paul, the other on the feast of St Osyth

² *VCH Essex* ii. 166: W. Addison, *Epping Forest: Its Literary and Historical Associations* (London, 1945), 1-4

³ B.Golding, 'Anglo-Norman Knightly Burials', in C.Harper-Bill & R.Harvey eds., *The Ideas and Practice of Medieval Knighthood* i. (Woodbridge, 1986) 35-48

⁴ D.R.Bates, 'The Prosopographical Study of Anglo-Norman Royal Charters' in *The Prosopography of Britain and France from the Tenth to the Twelfth Century*, K.S.B.Keats-Rohan ed. (Woodbridge, 1997) 89-102

acquaintance that locality undoubtedly brought. Demonstration of community behaviour together with proof of Essex tenure and (where possible) residence are the two factors which must be sought in order to prove (or disprove) any notion of community.

Sources and utilisation of source material

Inevitably the model used for later community studies must be (at least partially) discarded and replaced with a system that fully exploits extant relevant source material. Furthermore as this is a study of crown and community the methods employed have to reflect every focus of research. The royal tenurial stake in Essex was high from the beginning of Harold's reign in January 1066.¹ Royal demesne was the largest single body of land in the county for the entire period under observation.² For this reason many minor Essex landowners were associated with manors and estates that were held directly of the king or were part of escheated honours under long-term royal control.

Before the second quarter of the twelfth-century, communities can only be viewed through three different sources, which hint rather than shout that the county had the credentials to confirm the existence of a local *communitas*. Domesday Book is the first and greatest of these sources. Holt's incisive summary of Domesday's purpose is of great assistance here. If it can be taken as read that Domesday was a confirmation charter, then the document is a prime example of neighbours agreeing upon (or arguing over) rights of tenure and the limitation of their estates.³ Consigning older ideas of economic evaluation to the dustbin relieves us of the notion that the only important intra-

¹ For the wide Essex estates of Harold II, see Ann Williams, 'Land and Power in the Eleventh-Century: the estates of Harold Godwinson', *ANS* iii (1980) 171-87, 172

² Except, arguably, for the period 1154-9: see below, chapter v

³ J.C.Holt, '1086', in *Domesday Studies*, 41-64, especially page 62

county issue was the fiscal relationship between the sheriff and the geld-paying public. Domesday also provides a great wealth of useful additional information. Family relationships, details of antecession, manorial values, evidence of personal interaction and the improvement of an area (capital investment, castle building, monastic endowment, etc.) can all be derived from Domesday in addition to the basic facts of tenancy. Domesday gives the county blueprint for the possession of land. This enables summaries of the geographical range of the fledgling honours, and assessments of the effects that changing honours had upon one another and on Essex.

Two other species of source allow at least a semblance of a picture to be drawn for the periods preceding and succeeding Domesday. Chronicle narratives - a product of monastic learning - offer a mixed bag of details that lend colour and a subjective perspective to the affairs of the day. Like the English monasteries, chronicles (such as those written at Dunmow, Walden and Waltham) became more numerous after the dark days of the second quarter of the twelfth century. The other source, royal, baronial and ecclesiastical *acta* (charters, confirmations, notifications) also have a higher rate of creation and survival with the passage of time. Monastic cartularies form a large and important share of the original documents and printed primary sources used within this thesis.¹ These records ensure that, with chronological

¹ Unpublished documents relating to St Paul's, London (London Guildhall Library ms.25/122 series), Walden (BL Harleian ms.3697), Little Dunmow (BL Harleian ms.662 and Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, D/DAY T2/2 series), St Martin-le-Grand (WAM book v), Thoby (Essex Record Office, Chelmsford, D/DP T1 series) form part of this research, together with published cartularies and collections of Essex charters including: Cart Clare; Cart Colc; Cart Colne; Cart Eye; Cart Hosp; Cart Lond; Cart Waltham; Cart Westm; M.Chibnall ed., Charters and Customals of the Abbey of Holy Trinity Caen (Oxford, 1982); C.Hart ed., The Early Charters of Essex (Leicester, 1971); W.O.Hassall ed., Cartulary of St Mary Clerkenwell (Camden Third Series, vol. lxxi, London, 1949); W.O.Hassall, 'The Essex Properties of the Nunnery of St Mary Clerkenwell', TEAS xxiii (1942-45), 18-48; J.S.Macaulay & I.M.Russell, 'Colchester Hall (Takeley) Charters',

advancement, the background level of continuously produced material followed a recognisable upward trend.

These are the only regular features through the centuries under analysis, variously offering tenurial information, confirmations of rights, details of family relationships and the existence of personal interaction. Grants demonstrate the influence and/or possessions of both donor (before) and recipient (after); confirmations denote the healthy relationship between patron and patronised; and notifications (generally royal) indicate the existence and action of local officials. In each case, a witness list demonstrates that the donor made his grant in the presence (and with the acknowledgement) of the signatories. The witness list assists the historian in the process of dating *acta* and the verification of their authenticity; it also shows that those witnesses supported the action taken. This is particularly significant during times of political strife, as witnesses revealed their allegiance by their presence.

These three sets of sources carry the narrative for the first sixty-three years after the Norman Conquest, before the first surviving Pipe Roll. The two notable features are the uniqueness of Domesday - the experiment was not repeated - and the increasing number of surviving *acta* with the passage of time. Yet whilst neither source is severely limited, the information available for those decades does lack a certain depth. Domesday defines the outgoing Anglo-Saxon community and provides an almost exhaustive list of new

TEAS xxii (1940), 66-86; R.B.Patterson ed., Earldom of Gloucester Charters: The Charters and Scribes of the Earls and Countesses of Gloucester (Oxford, 1973). Many Essex houses have no extant cartulary and few (or no) records survive for the houses of Prittlewell, Barking, Hatfield Peverel, Hatfield Broad Oak, Wix, Stansgate, Horkesley, Coggeshall, Stratford, Woodham Ferrers, St Botolph's Colchester St. Osyth Blackmore and Beeleigh/Great Parndon: Mon i. 21-24, 436-46; iii. 294-97; iv. 432-35, 513-14; v. 36-40, 166-60, 451-52, 586-88, 624-26; vi. 104-107, 308-11, 552, 901

landowners and tenants. The Domesday community of the county is immediately in evidence but vanishes almost as soon as it appears.

The *acta* add a third dimension to some of the Domesday tenants-in-chief. The vast majority of these documents that can be dated pre-1100 are royal in character, whilst surviving personal grants and attestations invariably involved the upper ranks of society whose interests were not confined to one county. Discussions of the Essex community at this stage must involve that group, as passing over them would render most of the *acta* material irrelevant. Domesday provides the cast for the county community: the *acta* and the chronicles contribute a plot.

Documents to support analysis of the twelfth-century community evolved dramatically. By 1128 the situation had not altered markedly since the Conqueror had commissioned his feudal masterpiece. The chance survival of the 1129-30 Pipe Roll provides the first step to recognising a more detailed community.¹ That isolated document confirms the tenure of many Essex landowners and the names of some of the county's new personnel. It also proves that Henry I was deeply interested in protecting his forest privileges and that financial favour was one of his tools of patronage. For this piece of work the main purpose of the Pipe Roll is to confirm the names of the Essex players. There are some hints of co-operation, such as intra-county marriages and men standing pledge for one another's debts, but the main benefit of this document is to confirm some of the county's landowners prior to Stephen's reign. Looking forward from the Pipe Roll and backward from *Cartae Baronum*, Essex participants in the Anarchy can be identified.

The century after the Conquest was a developmental stage. The fledgling knightly classes - obscured by sources, checked by the honorial system - can

¹ PR 31 Hen I 52-60

only be individually identified on occasion and rarely display the many qualities demonstrating their worthiness to earn the term 'county community'. In that first century of rule by the Conqueror and his descendants, a high number of Essex sub-tenants only came to light *en masse* twice, in 1086 and 1166. Whilst Stephen's government produced a large amount of documentation, this is dwarfed entirely by the steep upward curve of recorded information created by the Angevin administrators after 1154. The interpretation of documents from the second half of the twelfth century relies far less on intimation and guesswork.

After 1154 the almost unbroken run of surviving Pipe Rolls assist in pushing the annual information total ever higher. That Henry II enjoys a reputation for being an innovative administrator may owe some of its credence to the missing Pipe Rolls of Stephen.¹ Their loss - as their creation is not a matter for serious doubt - has been lamented by Crouch.² Yoshitake noted that payments to the Exchequer were made *tale* in 1154-5 across eastern (pro-Blois) England, whilst in the stable west they were made *blanch*.³ He tentatively suggests that some of form of centralised Exchequer procedure continued throughout Stephen's reign. Annual Pipe Rolls from 1154 change the perspective of a county study, as they continually illustrate the relationship between local lords and the king's representative for Essex, the sheriff. The names included within the Pipe Rolls are by no means a thorough account of Essex, yet they tie men into the county schema who might otherwise be overlooked.

Henry II's next contribution to the county community study was the charters of the barons. The *Cartae Baronum* offers the names and enfeoffments of all the

¹ For a general discussion of the character of Henry II, see 'Conquering Kings: some Twelfth-Century Reflections on Henry II and Richard I' in J.Gillingham, Richard Couer de Lion (London, 1994) 105-118

² D. Crouch, 'The Hidden History of the Twelfth Century', HSJ v (1993) 111-30, 111

³ K. Yoshitake, 'The Exchequer in the Reign of Stephen', EHR ciii (1988) 950-9, 958

Essex knights who held of barons completing returns. Sadly these entries frequently paid no heed to shire division or manorial location; some even failed to distinguish between *de veteri* and *de novo*.¹ Those entries that speak of tenant *x* holding *y* knights' fees in the vill of *z* are rare and immediately prominent as a consequence.² Only the inclusion of a toponym, patronym or some other familial signifier can link the names in the Cartae with the Pipe Rolls or Domesday.

Essex, like most other English counties, suffered from a surfeit of Williams, Roberts, Ralphs, Richards and Geoffreys during the twelfth century. Many of these men are untraceable because their description in the *Cartae Baronum* is limited to a Christian name, which gives little or no indication of their family, lands, home county or relationship with former or future tenants of the honour. Moreover, as the charters were initially organised by honour rather than by county, there is scope for Essex knights to be listed under a completely different county. Richard de Marcy, for example, held four knights' fees *de veteri* of William, earl of Gloucester in 1166. These were listed within the Gloucestershire section of the *Cartae Baronum* and represented Marcy's entire holding.³ Marcy appeared in the Pipe Roll returns for Essex, during the financial years 1164-5 and 1165-6, and can only be positively identified as an Essex landowner at that time because of those two entries.⁴ Other documents

¹ The Essex honours that failed to separate their old and new enfeoffments were the see of London, Hedingham (Aubrey de Vere) and Eye: RBE i 186-7, 352-3, 411

² For examples of this, see the returns made by the abbey of Westminster, William of Windsor and Richard de Lucy; RBE i 189, 315-6, 351-2

³ RBE i 290

⁴ PR 11 Hen II 17; PR 12 Hen II 124

produced by Henry II's prolific administration offer further material for analysis.¹

Round solved some of these mysteries in pursuit of his claim that 'manorial descent, as I have often observed, is the backbone of county history'.² Within studies of the sub-tenants of larger honours the success rate has been poorer. Richard Mortimer's survey of the Clares led him to concede that some attempts to trace families degenerated into 'total chaos'.³ Not only were some families untraceable. The shifts within landholding patterns, without explicit details of alienation or inheritance, are well-nigh impossible to follow from one estate to another. Finally the *Cartae* did not include returns from minor tenants-in-chief, including the serjeanties-in-chief. Serjeanties, as Round noted, were not liable for scutage.⁴ Their omission from Henry II's great feudal survey lends support to ideas that the *Cartae* were demanded for financial reasons.⁵

For other counties later feudal surveys provide full accounts of tenure that rival Domesday for detail and revert to the county-then-honour format that was abandoned in 1166. The great returns in the Book of Fees for 1212 and 1236 can offer answers to the puzzles of the twelfth-century. However Essex was not fully documented in either of these returns and so they do not assist in assigning locality to earlier landholdings. The first documents of the

¹ Rot de Dom, for example. I have also been fortunate enough to enjoy the use of preliminary drafts of the edition of Henry II's charters, through the kindness of Professor Vincent

² J.H. Round, 'The Manor of Colne Engaine', TEAS n.s.viii (1913) 192-98, 192

³ R. Mortimer, 'Land and Service: the Tenants of the Honour of Clare', ANS viii (1985) 177-97, 181

⁴ Serjeants 23

⁵ Keefe believes that *Cartae Baronum* owes its existence to the aid demanded by Henry II on the occasion of his eldest daughter's wedding: Keefe 13-14. Stenton dwelled upon Henry's need for liege homage and an audit of scutage payments: First Century 137n., 182-3

thirteenth-century to offer information of this quality on Essex honours are within the Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem. These honorial Inquisitions are the most comprehensive source to confirm honorial composition in Essex after *Cartae Baronum*, but almost a century separates the earliest Inquisitions from the 1166 survey.

The surviving evidence certainly makes the vertical study a more attractive proposition than the horizontal. Eleventh- and twelfth-century baronial imitations of the royal court are visible through explicit (but rare) descriptions of honorial officials, analysis of charter attestations and the use of Domesday and its satellites.¹ Discussions of honours, when they include subtenants as well as land within their remit, relate the direct structure of lord and vassal given by Domesday.² This phenomenon continues with twelfth-century studies. *Cartae Baronum* lends a bias towards the study of the honour rather than the shire, although it did confirm the existence of liege homage amongst the knights of all the honours concerned.³ The lists of tenants - admittedly of variable quality - provide a fair to good picture of honorial composition. Thus the barony, and the relationships that the subtenants had with one another and their lord, has been a more widely utilised focus than the county.⁴

The late eleventh- and early twelfth-century study is a different animal to a comparable survey from the beginning of Henry II's reign. Earlier studies suffer the inescapable problem of lower quantities of evidence, so the system for analysis of the county group needs to be adaptable enough to deal with alternate circumstances. Failure to observe such a fact will lead to a study that is dismissive of the earlier period or awash with superfluous detail for the

¹ J.F.A.Mason, 'Barons and their Officials in the Later Eleventh Century', *ANS* xiii (1990) 243-62; *First Century* 42-83

² R. Mortimer, 'The beginnings of the honour of Clare', 131-41

³ *First Century* 11

⁴ R. Mortimer, 'Land and Service: the Tenants of the Honour of Clare', 177-97

latter. As the Domesday study shows, conclusions about community must be drawn from limited amounts of information.

The sources do allow a description of the crown's links with Essex and invite discussion of the growth of community. Royal power can be monitored through the successful exploitation and protection of the forest, and through the quantity of direct control of land and castles that the king enjoyed in Essex. That same royal influence is apparent through crown dealings with local men. The county's honorial system was subject to thorough reorganisation at the hands of Henry I, Stephen and Henry II. Where extant, royal administrative documents reveal contemporary crown interest in Essex and the (chiefly financial) relationship between the king and local men.

A community of Essex is visible through a number of indices gained from source interpretation and a basic appraisal of group structures. Landowning in the county remains a primary qualifying factor but there are many other attributes that need to have been at least partially demonstrated in order to merit inclusion. Inter-marriage within the county reflects a local bias in the selection of spouses and evident positive communication between neighbours. Local royal officials from Essex may not be evidence of local selection but the introduction of non-Essex administrators shows whether or not the county respected and tolerated the imposition of outsiders. Monastic documents reveal, through grants and attestations, connections within the county that went beyond honorial gravitation. Houses which attracted land and witnesses from around the county, irrespective of honour (most notably the abbey of St John the Baptist at Colchester), clearly show an emergent loyalty to the locality. Burial of sub-tenants at a principal local house rather than the honorial mausoleum depicts a parochial attitude. This seems to indicate that some Essex houses were seen as local rather than baronial monasteries.

As these examples show, when definitions of community are applied to the primary sources they can quickly separate suitable from unsuitable subjects of study. There were men who were clearly tenants-in-chief with land in Essex rather than Essex tenants-in-chief. Nevertheless tremendous care needs to be exercised prior to exclusion. Hugh de Montfort, Domesday tenant-in-chief in four counties, held over half of his land in Kent (see table 3) but established his *caput* at Haughley in Suffolk.¹ He did hold a relatively small amount land in Essex, which was largely subinfeudated. Because of the small proportion of local demesne land (less than 10% of his national total) and his evident personal preference for Suffolk, Hugh is not a candidate for inclusion in this survey. Whether he should be placed within a similar survey of Kent or Suffolk is quite another matter.

County	Demesne (in-chief)	Demesne (as subtenant)	Enfeoffed	Total
Kent	£110	£50 8s. 4d ²	£80 8s.	£240 16s.4d
Norfolk	£69	-	£28 ³	£97
Suffolk	£46 10s.	-	£15 10s.	£61 19s.
Essex	£22	-	£35 / 6d	£57 / 6d
Total	£247 9s.	£50 8s. 4d	£158 18s. 6d	£456 15s. 10d

Table 3: location and value of Hugh de Montfort's lands in England, 1086

¹ Sanders 120-1: DM 65-70

² And 300 eels: DB 11b

³ And 7,160 herrings: LDB 407a-b

Three further examples stress the need to appraise the local loyalties of tenants-in-chief carefully. Ranulf brother of Ilger held a small collection of lands which appears to have escheated after his death, prior to being granted to the Clares.¹ The central problem with a tenant such as Ranulf is that whilst his largest demesne bloc was in Essex, his interests were spread throughout the region.

His wife was the daughter of Ralph Taillebois (who had no land in Essex) and his most valuable demesne manor was Stanstead in Hertfordshire.²

Furthermore, Ranulf was the Domesday custodian of royal demesne with an annual value of £95 in Huntingdonshire and he later served as sheriff of the same county.³ He was an unexceptional tenant-in-chief with a weak Essex bias. His apparent connections with Essex were limited to his scattered demesne lands and his custody of the royal manor of Benfleet (Barstable).⁴

The lands of Swein of Essex again show a strong emphasis upon land in Essex and the retention of that land in demesne. Swein, as the county's third greatest tenant-in-chief in 1086, would be a prime candidate for automatic exclusion under the strict county community schema. Swein was eminently powerful and had no obvious connection with an ordinary sub-tenant holding two fees in the county. However, Swein and his descendants are an important part of this survey, for a number of persuasive reasons. Swein built the first recorded post-Conquest castle in Essex (at Rayleigh) and probably held another castle at Clavering.⁵ Swein's family were named after the county, Swein served as a

¹ W.R.Powell, 'Domesday Book and Feudal Topography', *EAH* xxi (1990) 48-56, 49

² *DB* 138b

³ *DB* 203b: *Sheriffs* 48

⁴ *LDB* 80a-81b, 1b

⁵ *CA* 143, 146

County	Demesne (in-chief)	Demesne (as subtenant)	Subinfeudated	Total
Essex	£41 6s.	-	£12 17s.	£54 3s.
Herts.	£17	-	£2 10s.	£19 10s.
Suffolk	£2 2s.8d	-	£11 10s.4d	£13 13s.
Norfolk	-	-	£10 1s.4d	£10 1s.4d
Hunts.	£7	£2 10s.	-	£9 10s
Beds.	-	£3	£3	£6
Middx.	-	-	£2	£2
Cambs.	10s.	-	-	10s.
Total	£67 18s.8d	£5 10s.	£41 18s.8d	£115 7s.4d

Table 4: location and value of Ranulf brother of Ilger's lands in England, 1086

royal official in Essex, and his son founded a monastery at Prittlewell.¹ About 80% of his land (by value) was in Essex together with approximately 75% of his demesne land. Domicile is a key concept in the development of a

¹ Sheriffs 39: VCH Essex ii 138-41

community, and Swein was undoubtedly an Essex man. Swein's family left a huge impression on the county in the centuries after their extinction. In 1198, when Serlo de Marcy and his wife Emma de Lucy recognised William Barun's rights to land at Chrishall (Uttlesford), the land was described as being near the house of *Wimarka*, Swein's grandmother.¹ Powerful as they were, Swein and his family had no home other than Essex.

County	Demesne (in-chief)	Demesne (as subtenant)	Enfeoffed	Total
Essex	£135 5s.	£7 18s	£143 19s.	£287 2s.
Suffolk	£48 5s.	-	£9	£57 5s.
Hunts.	-	-	£6	£6
Oxon.	-	-	60s.	£3
Total	£183 10s.	£7 18s.	£161 19s.	£353 7s.

Table 5: location and value of Swein of Essex's lands in England, 1086

Eudo *dapifer* was a permanent fixture in the households of the first three Norman kings and a regular attestor of royal charters.¹ His lands were spread across eleven counties in the south and east of England, including a substantial

¹ Feet of Fines for Essex p.15 no.60. Fitzwimarc and Swein are modern schools in Rayleigh

(but not dominant) share in Essex. Eudo's honour court appears to have been held alternately at Arkesden (Uttlesford) and Walbrook in London and so he cannot be portrayed as an Essex-based man whose primary interests were solely in the county.²

County	Demesne (in-chief)	Demesne (as subtenant)	Enfeoffed	Total
Essex	£83/4d	-	£68 5s.	£151 5s 4d
Suffolk	£57 5s.	-	15s 10d	£58/10d
Beds.	£32 10s.	£4 1s 4d	£20 11s	£57 2s.4d
Cambs.	£18 5s.	-	£20 4s 6d	£38 9s.6d
Herts.	£19 12s.	-	£15 1s.	£34 13s.
Norfolk	£10 2s.	2s	£10 7s.	£20 11s.
Northants.	£5	-	£7 10s.	£12 10s.
Hunts.	£12	-	-	£12
Hants.	£6 10s.	-	-	£6 10s.
Berks.	£1.10s.	-	-	£1.10s
Lincs.	14s.	-	-	14s.
Total	£246 8s 4d	£4 3s 4d	£142 14s 4d	£393 6s

Table 6: location and value of Eudo dapifer's lands in England, 1086

However Eudo was granted the town and castle of Colchester by Henry I, he founded the first post-Conquest monastery in Essex at Colchester and after his

¹ C.W.Hollister, 'Magnates and "Curiales" in Early Norman England' in Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions (London, 1986) 97-115, 109, 110, 113

² N.Denholm-Young, 'Eudo Dapifer's Honour of Wallbrook', EHR xlvi (1931) 623-29

death (and burial at Colchester) his honour and rights remained a source of heated dispute.¹ How should Eudo be treated?

He certainly cannot be categorised in the same manner as Swein, whose attachment to Essex was apparent in everything he did. Eudo's marriage provides the best indication. His wife, Rohaise, was a Clare and the widespread nature of their lands is no indicator of Eudo's local affinities. Eudo's stage was far greater than any single county. During his lifetime he was a creature of the king rather than an outstanding local citizen. Swein was potent but parochial: Eudo must be viewed as a powerful regional influence. Like Stephen of Blois or Geoffrey II de Mandeville, Eudo had a vital influence upon Essex without ever being an 'ordinary' member of a county group. His attachment to Essex was not his only local affiliation but without an appraisal of his activities the study will be incomplete.

With community indices there is greater scope for the specific removal of individuals (typically tenants-in-chief). They also justify the presence of major families within the study, whilst placing limits on the degree of involvement that can be assumed. Inevitably this study will mainly focus upon well-documented sub-tenants and middling Essex-based tenants-in-chief. I feel it is important to recognise that creating rigid strata (especially within the higher echelons of society) and refusing to recognise community-linked behaviour by proscribed individuals is not the best way to approach a county study during this era.

Tenants-in-chief must be treated with some caution and more pragmatism. Naturally, the absentee magnates with little (or no) demesne land, a non-Essex *caput*, a lack of interest in local monastic investment and a proven commitment to a different area merit little attention. Conversely, a study of

¹ C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', *History* lviii (1973) 18-28, 27-28

Essex during the reign of Henry I without Eudo *dapifer* or of the Anarchy without Geoffrey de Mandeville would be principled folly.

Essex was well-blessed with large and small tenants-in-chief from the time of Domesday, and it was also home for many of these lords. An examination of Sanders' baronies reveals a high level of *caput* placement in Essex.¹ In some schools of thought major tenants-in-chief cannot be contenders for county community membership, but their influence has to be regarded as important. Just as earls and barons copied royal behaviour (document styles, patterns of patronage, household organisation, etc.), so lesser landowners followed the noble example. The nobles can also be used to demonstrate the existence of patterns which, whilst not drawing them fully into the community, certainly shows them behaving in a surprisingly parochial way. Finally, the activities of the nobles can be used to ask questions of the suitability of methods used to define county community. What held true in later centuries need not be entirely applicable for the post-Conquest county.

Thus their inclusion must be carefully controlled. Above all else, land use defined county attachment. The retention of demesne land is a fundamental factor for participation in the local community. Without that personal interest a tenant-in-chief merely became an absentee landlord, and can therefore play no part in a survey such as this. Whilst a landowner with thousands of demesne acres in Essex may seem an odd companion for a one-fee knight, their mutual interest in Essex is evident.

The format for study is a familiar one, that of progressive chronology. Whilst the idea of thematic division has its merits, the sources for this period are so diverse that the traditional method of reign-by-reign analysis is most suitable. Such a style illustrates the gradual changes in the county over decades,

¹ Sanders 4, 52, 71, 83, 102, 120, 121, 129, 130, 139, 151

focusing on one group of individuals and their relationships during one period and its unique circumstances. The application of community theories to a time rather than a subject enables a broad view of the visible group and its evident activity. Studies such as this are about assessing development and analysing both the causes and effects of change. Individual subject handling can create a stop-and-start formula which does nothing to aid visualisation of contemporary community structure.

Essex

The benefits of county study need little endorsement here. No locality ever truly conformed (or conforms) with national trends and averages. For the historian, choosing a focus and establishing limits for the subject of study are essential initial decisions in research. Selecting the county offers a fixed, non-artificial structure for the study of a mutable group, which is my response to Christine Carpenter's brilliant contention that this is '...the easy way of doing local history, since government records are arranged by county'.¹ Counties are (largely) unchanging units that cannot be altered to provide favourable results, an important parameter in historical research. Also, her statement is not entirely true, as the largest single source produced by royal government in the twelfth century (*Cartae Baronum*) was organised by honour, not by county, and it contained very few geographical references.²

Nevertheless, counties are an ideal unit for the community study and this is partly because generations of historians have seen fit to write about them. Essex has an enviable collection of secondary sources for such a study and has benefited from the attentions of many historians, especially John Horace

¹ C. Carpenter, 'Gentry and Community in Medieval England', 342

² RBE i 186-445

Round.¹ Round's contribution to our understanding of the county's history is immeasurable, and his treatment of subjects as diverse as local genealogy and medieval sheep farming is a treasure chest for a study such as this. The central role of the localities, especially Essex, in the Magna Carta dispute has already been discussed exhaustively by Round and others.

Round's fearsome reputation still casts a shadow over the historians of Essex. Stenton told us that 'his strength lay in analysis rather than synthesis, in the power of his attack upon individual problems, and the insight with which he perceived the inadequacy of accepted explanations.'² Subsequently most local research has been conducted in the same style. Individual issues have taken precedence over thematic studies, such as communities. One notable exception has been Jennifer Ward's study of the fourteenth-century county community of Essex, although this made no mention of a group in preceding centuries.³ Furthermore Round left such a huge volume of work (some of it still awaits publication) that it has effectively discouraged other historians from making Essex the subject of fresh academic research.

A study of Essex requires some appreciation of its relationships with neighbouring counties. Like Norfolk and Suffolk, or Derbyshire and

¹ Round is also claimed by Sussex, as he was born at 15 Brunswick Terrace, Brighton on 22 February 1854 and he subsequently spent much of his life there. D.Stephenson, 'The Early Career of J.H.Round: The Shaping of a Historian', *EAH* xii (1980) 1-10, includes a picture of 15 Brunswick Terrace, although the building has since been refurbished and now bears a plaque to commemorate Round's residence

² *First Century* 1. In his tribute Stenton neglected to mention that Round launched a particularly savage attack on Freeman just after the latter's death, or that Hubert Hall gave up medieval history after working with Round. For his particularly energetic assault on Walter Rye, see J.H.Round, 'The Legend of Eudo *dapifer*', *EHR* xxxvii (1922) 1-34

³ J.Ward, *The Essex Gentry and the County Community in the Fourteenth Century*, 1, mentions (general) county petitions to the crown by 1200, without citing any references that relate to Essex.

Nottinghamshire, Essex (in conjunction with Hertfordshire) was part of a dual-county shrieval partnership. Thus Essex was frequently regarded as an independent county within a larger integral unit, which has wider implications for local administrative activity and the character of the county. Pipe Roll entries often failed to differentiate between Essex and Hertfordshire, which is evidence of a somewhat fluid perception of the counties' affairs by the sheriff and/or the Exchequer.

At least this is the accepted view of local shrieval jurisdiction after the Conquest. After 1154 Pipe Roll entries begin *Essex et Heortfordscira* (or equivalent) and records for the two counties were combined and gradually became a collection of entries that did not specifically relate to either county. Prior to this blending process the evidence for joint shrievalty is less convincing. Within the prominent documents of 1086 and 1129-30 the counties shared the same shrieval arrangement. At Domesday Peter de Valognes was sheriff of Essex and of Hertfordshire too.¹ In 1129-30 Essex and Hertfordshire were listed separately, consecutively, under a joint heading and with the same co-sheriffs (Aubrey de Vere and Richard Basset) for the second half of the year, and the same sheriff (William of Eynesford) for the first six months.² At face value this seems to be more than a coincidence. For the first two major surviving royal records to have the same sheriffs, in spite of the passage of four decades, is evidence of a strong trend.

However, exceptions to this rule are surprisingly easy to find. The last is within the fragmentary returns for the first year of Henry II's reign, where the two counties are listed and headed separately but consecutively.¹ This is innocuous enough in itself, but the counties had *different* sheriffs. In that final financial year of Stephen's reign Richard de Lucy was sheriff of Essex, and

¹ DB 132a-133a, 135b, 141a, 142a: LDB 1b, 3a, 4b, 6a, 90b

² PR 31 Hen I 52-60 (Essex), 60-63 (Hertfordshire)

Guy fitz Tyece and Henry of Essex had each served as sheriff of Hertfordshire for six months. There is further, less explicit evidence in earlier royal *acta*, from both Stephen and Henry I.

It was extremely rare for these *acta* to be specifically addressed to the sheriff of either county. Henry I described Aubrey de Vere simply as 'sheriff' and Hugh of Buckland as sheriff of Hertfordshire but the remaining *acta* for Essex were vaguely addressed.² There are no extant royal *acta* for Stephen's reign that name or address either a sheriff of Hertfordshire or a sheriff of Hertfordshire and Essex. Notifications were sent to the sheriff of Essex, Maurice sheriff of Essex and Richard de Lucy justiciar of Essex.³ The Mandeville charters confuse the issue further. Stephen's second charter offered '*justicias et vicecomitatus de Londonia et de Middelsexa... et justicias et vicecomitatus de Essexia et Heortfordscira*'.⁴ Conversely the Empress' second charter to Geoffrey II de Mandeville confirms his right to the shrievalty of London and Middlesex, and the shrievalty of Essex, and the shrievalty of Hertfordshire.⁵ The evidence for a continuous and generally recognised administrative pairing is not overwhelming.

The shrieval unit of Essex and Hertfordshire was evidently a post-Conquest creation. During the Conqueror's lifetime, Valognes' grip on the two counties was obviously a new and late arrangement. In Hertfordshire he had succeeded

¹ RBE ii 650-1

² Reg ii nos.1539, 684. Other *acta* were more general: no.661 (the Mandeville confiscation) was to the barons of Essex and Hertfordshire; nos. 519, 775, 863, 1090, 1119, 1261, 1498, and 1518 were to all (the barons of) Essex; nos. 861 and 1551 were to the barons of Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk; and no.1105 was to all of the king's lieges of Essex and London.

³ Reg iii no.40 for the sheriff; no.544 for Maurice the sheriff; nos. 545, 546, 547, 549 and 559 for (Maurice) the sheriff and Richard de Lucy the justiciar.

⁴ Reg iii no.276

⁵ Reg iii no.275

to Ilbert but in Essex he had been preceded by Robert fitz Wymarc, Swein of Essex and Ralph Baynard.¹ Separate sheriffs had been commonplace during the first decade of Norman rule, and there is no concrete evidence to suggest that this shrieval pairing was anything more than an irregular feature before Michaelmas 1155. However, Mandeville's tenure of his many shrievalties may shed light upon an administrative anomaly in Essex. In later centuries the county courts of Essex and Hertfordshire met at Writtle and Hertford respectively, except for the sessions that immediately followed Easter and Michaelmas. These two sessions of the general county courts met at Stratford Langthorne (Becontree) and Cheshunt (Hertfordshire). Both sites are nearer to London than many parts of the counties concerned, which led Palmer to suggest that these locations were selected at the behest of Mandeville to make his shrieval work more convenient.²

The external and internal boundaries of Essex have been discussed at length elsewhere.³ Essentially the delineation of Essex was a product of the Treaty of Wedmore (878) and was almost entirely marked by watercourses. The only district that had less than absolute frontiers was the north-western portion of the county. Later amendments to this border has caused the loss of Great Chishill, Little Chishill and Heydon from Essex.⁴ This same process has also occurred, albeit to a greater extent, in south-western Essex. London has encroached upon the county's natural frontiers and captured the whole of Becontree hundred together with parts of Chafford hundred.

¹ DB 132b, 133a, 142a (Ilbert); LDB 98a (Robert); 1b, 2b, 6b, 7a, 19b (Swein); 1b, 6a (Baynard)

² R.C.Palmer, The County Courts of Medieval England 1150-1350 (Princeton, 1982), 7-8

³ M.Christy, 'The Essex Hundred Moots: an attempt to identify their meeting-places', TEAS xviii (1928) 172-97

⁴ LDB 33b, 38a, 52b, 62b, 100b, 103b, 19b, 97a. They became part of Cambridgeshire in 1895: Serjeants 125: VCH Essex ii 210

Figure 1: the hundreds of Essex in 1086

As an entity Essex pre-dated the Norman Conquest and its borders were unchanged by that event. Yet the direct influence of Essex was not limited by those official boundaries. The county described in Domesday recalled the jurisdiction of Essex manors stretching to eight settlements then outside the county. Hatfield Regis (or Broad Oak) possessed three berewicks in Hertfordshire TRE; Amwell, Hoddesdon and Hertford.¹ These manors had been severed from Hatfield by 1086.² Another royal manor, Newport, had an outlier in Cambridgeshire (Shelford) in 1066 and 1086.³ Possession of the manor of Waltham Holy Cross brought Bishop Robert Losinga of Durham twelve houses in London and the profits of one of the city gates. Twenty-eight houses and half a church in London belonged to the manor and nuns of Barking, and the Count of Eu gained seven houses in the same city through his possession of Thurrock.⁴

The greatest quantity of inter-county jurisdiction arises in the case of Suffolk.⁵ The town of Harkstead was attached to the royal manor of Brightlingsea and one house in Ipswich belonged to Geoffrey de Mandeville's manor of Moze.⁶ Manors in Hinckford hundred were particularly blessed with influence in Suffolk. Richard fitz Gilbert and Aubrey de Vere enjoyed jurisdiction over a total of twenty burgesses in Sudbury, and Ranulf Peverel and John fitz

¹ LDB 2b

² DB 132a, 137a-138a, 139a-140b, 142a

³ LDB 7a

⁴ LDB 15b, 18a, 63a

⁵ An extremely detailed account of all of the actual or possible jurisdictional anomalies can be found in H.C.Darby, The Domesday Geography of Eastern England (London, 1957), 211. Darby concentrates more finely upon the relationship between Essex and Suffolk

⁶ LDB 6a, 286b, 59a-b, 411b

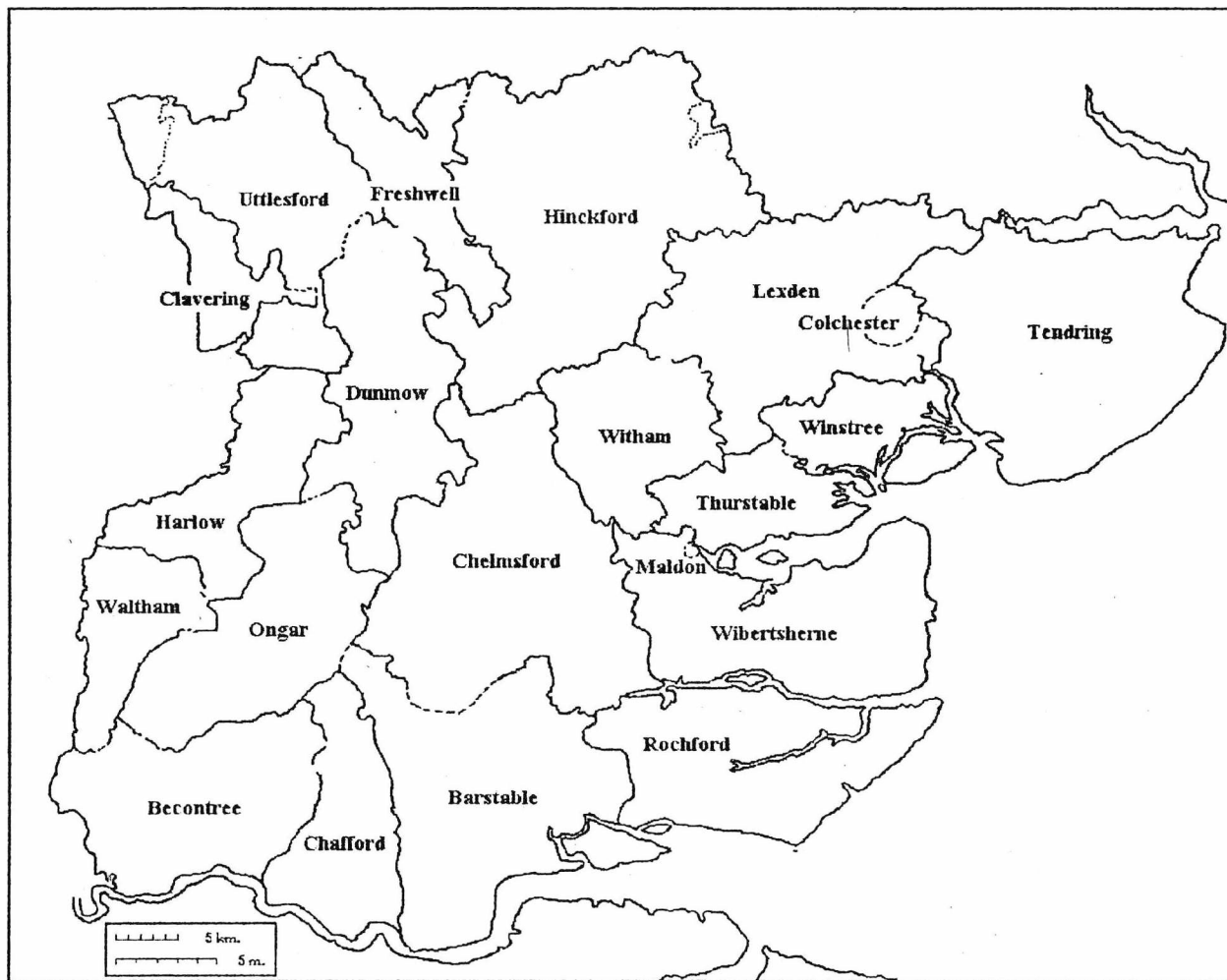


Figure 1: the hundreds of Essex in 1086

Waleran were owed dues from the same town.¹ Furthermore, John's manor of Bures (Hinckford) had fifteen pertinent acres of land described as '*in comitatu de Sudfolc*'.²

It has been assumed that *Grauesanda* within the Honour of Boulogne was another non-Essex manor roped into the county schema. Powell has recently demonstrated that this was not the case and that the manor was (West) Tilbury in Essex rather than Gravesend in Kent.³ Strangely Essex was not largely affected by a similar influx of jurisdictional colonisation. Odo's manor of Chalk (Kent) reputedly had the right to a hide of land in Essex.⁴ This is somewhat difficult to place, as it had apparently been the property of Godwin son of Dudeman prior to its appropriation by Ranulf Peverel. There is no Godwin son of Dudeman in the Essex folios of Domesday, and no recorded association of Peverel and any Godwin.

Figure 2: Essex and its neighbours: jurisdictional anomalies 1066-1086

Any attempt to set Essex entirely apart from its neighbours will fail. Essex was not a sundered region, and is more accurately described as core rather than periphery. It was an area immediately adjacent to England's largest city, not a Palatine Marcher county. Similarly there are no renowned tales of medieval Essex uniting in notorious rebellion as there are for other regions or counties. There was no event quite on the scale of the men of Louth murdering their earl in 1329, nor did the county claim to have its own system of local custom as

¹ LDB 40a, 76b, 74a, 84a-84b

² LDB 84b

³ W.R.Powell, 'Essex Domesday Topography since 1903: Place name identifications and problems', EAH xvi (1984-5), 40-47, 42

⁴ DB 9a

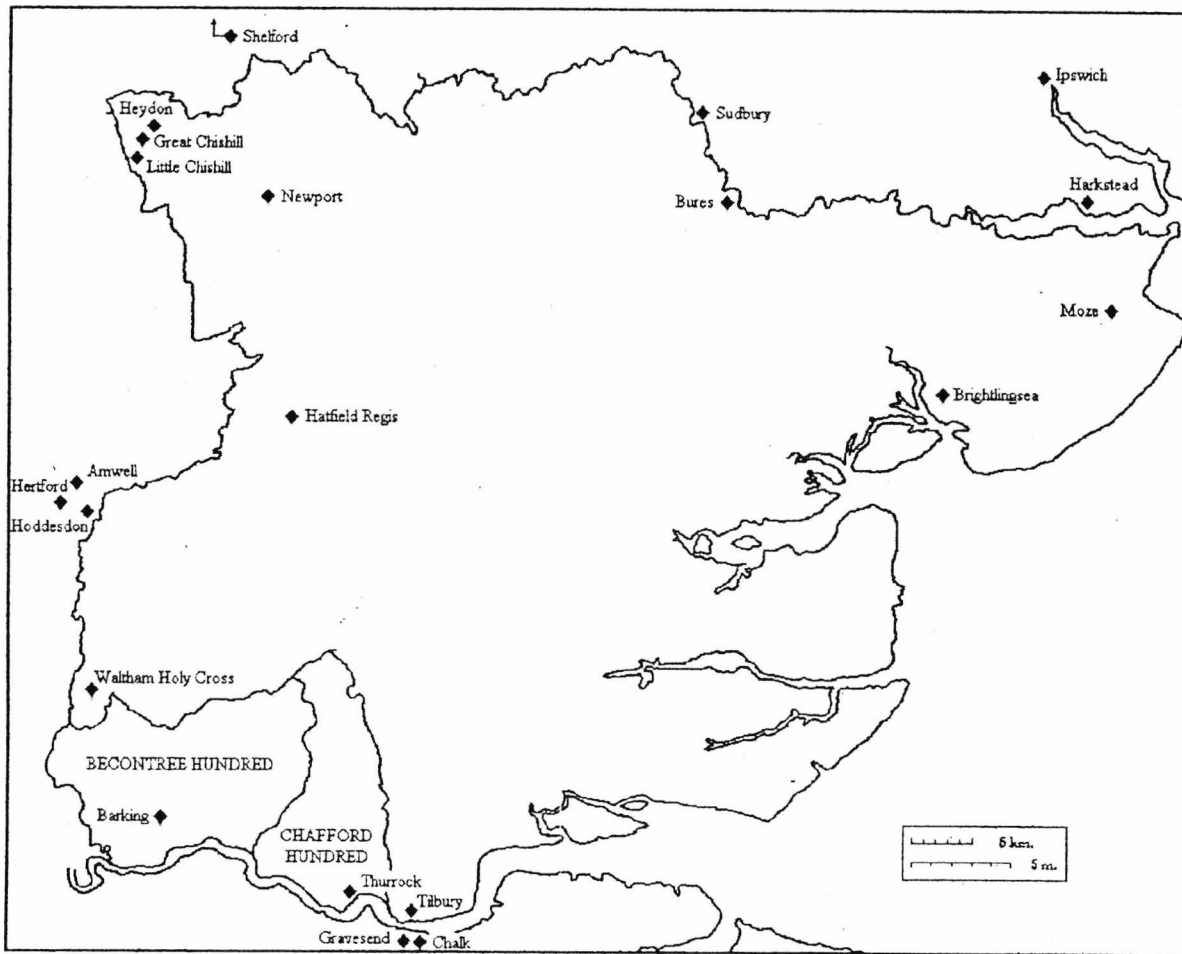


Figure 2: Essex and its neighbours: jurisdictional anomalies 1066-86

Kent did.¹ Whilst Essex was prominent during the crises of 1141-44 and 1214-16, the county group never solely indulged in outrageous behaviour and its most notorious son remains Robert Devereux.

Essex did possess unique attributes and unusual combinations of common features. These can be seen in the centuries preceding this study. Like Sussex and Kent, Essex was one of the last Anglo-Saxon kingdoms. Unlike any of their contemporaries, the East Saxon royal dynasty did not claim descent from Woden (Odin or Lugh). They were said to be the progeny of a less reputed deity, Seaxnet, who may be equated with the fertility god Freyr.² The kingdom of the East Saxons comprised of modern Essex, London, Middlesex, part of Hertfordshire, and perhaps some land in Surrey.³ After the incorporation of Essex into Wessex, Essex was conquered by the Danes.⁴ Essex was essentially a Saxon land with a strong Anglian affinity. During the Confessor's reign it was initially part of the earldom of East Anglia; after 1053

¹ B. Smith, 'A County Community in Early Fourteenth-Century: The Case of Louth', 573, 580-2; R.Eales, 'An Introduction to the Kent Domesday', in A.Williams & G.H.Martin (eds.), The Kent Domesday (London, 1992), 1-49, 10; R.Smith, 'The Swanscombe Legend and the Historiography of Kentish Gavelkind' in R Utz & T.Shippey, (eds.), Medievalism in the Modern World: studies presented to Leslie Workman (Brepols, 1998), 85-103

²C. Hutton, The Pagan Religions of the Ancient British Isles (Oxford, 1991), 265, 268; R. Simek, Dictionary of Northern Mythology (Woodbridge, 1993), 276. Seaxnet was also known as Saxnot and his close association with the Saxon tribes is evident from his name

³ B.Yorke, 'The Kingdom of the East Saxons', Anglo-Saxon England xiv (1985) 1-36, 27-8. Much of this, including London, was lost to Mercia by the early ninth century: ibid 32-5

⁴ C.Hart, The Danelaw (London, 1992), 115-25; J.H.Round, 'Norse Place-names in Essex', TEAS n.s. xvi (1923), 169-82. Surviving Scandinavian place-names in Essex are in the east and north-east of the county, at Arkesden (Uttlesford), Clacton, Frowick, Thorpe-le-Soken, Kirby, Skighaugh, Thorrington (Tendring), Audley (Hinckford) and Goulands (Rochford): P.H.Reaney, The Place-names of Essex (English Place-name Society xii., Cambridge, 1935) 564, 516, 334, 349, 352, 340, 345, 353, 430, 181

it was transferred to Leofwine's Home Counties earldom.¹ Similarly Essex was considered part of East Anglia for the purposes of Domesday, yet its land was measured in Saxon hides rather than Anglian carucates.²

Essex is an attractive proposition for a community study because of the common ground it shared with other English shires. As a home county many of the elements under discussion are immediately applicable to other south-eastern counties. This enables comparisons in a number of fields, demonstrating the validity of a study such as this for other shires. The methods used in this work are particularly apt for Essex but translate well for further county analyses.

¹ F.Barlow, Edward the Confessor (London, 1970) 197, 358-9: VCH Essex ii. 210

² VCH Essex i. 333

Chapter Two - Domesday Essex

On the eve of the Norman Conquest Essex was a county that had strong links with the outgoing king, Harold Godwinson. As earl of East Anglia and, latterly, earl of Wessex and *subregulus*, Harold had been granted or taken possession of a sizeable proportion of the county.¹ Domesday relates that many manors in Essex had been under Harold's control on the day that Edward the Confessor was alive and dead. Furthermore, the Conqueror generally treated Harold as his own antecessor and so Harold's personal lands largely became William's. Since almost all of Harold's key possessions in Essex were royal demesne in 1086, it can be assumed that Harold had retained these lands after becoming king.

The size of Harold's Essex holding was more comparable with his successor's than the Confessor's. It is generally believed that Edward the Confessor had no land in Essex at all, which is possibly not quite true.² Cnut took thirty hides at Southminster (Wibertsherne) from the bishop of London, which the bishop *recuperavit tempore Regis Willelmi*.³ As no TRE landowner is named, one can tentatively postulate that the saintly Confessor may have enjoyed possession of the stolen territory. At Writtle, the bishop of Hereford had two hides and twenty acres of land, *una fuit tempore regis Edwardi in ecclesia et alia in feudo regis*.⁴ This hide had either been held by the Confessor or it was an uncharacteristic recognition by Domesday of Harold's regal status.⁵

¹ Fleming 78, 88-9, 96-8: VCH Essex i. 336-7

² '[we] are struck by the salient fact that in Essex not a single manor had been held by Edward the Confessor': VCH Essex i. 336

³ LDB 10b

⁴ LDB 5b

⁵ The latter scenario is more likely, as a later entry described the two hides as *una fuit in ecclesia t.r.e. et alia feudo Haroldi*: LDB 26a. It is possible that the hide was taken over

Nonetheless, Southminster was only worth £8 in 1086 (£12 TRE). Harold's entire demesne lands were worth a little more (just over £543 by 1086 valuations) which was the beginning of a trend seen throughout the county's history thereafter.¹ Almost every king increased (or at least maintained) the amount of direct control and immediate lordship that the crown enjoyed in Essex, a process initiated by Harold Godwinson. William the Conqueror took the lion's share of Harold's lands, although ten other post-Conquest lords secured part of the spoils and reduced the quantity of land held by the crown.²

Table 7: royal demesne in Essex under Edward the Confessor, Harold Godwinson and William the Conqueror.³

Round postulated that certain of Harold's manors were 'ancient demesne' and still possessed two of the qualities which indicated direct royal control: the five-hide groupings and the provision of farm for a number of nights (*noctes*

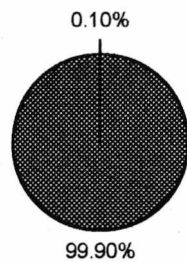
by Harold after Edward's death (thus causing the confusion over TRE tenure) but the simplest and most logical explanation is that Harold was accidentally recognised as king on this occasion

¹ LDB 1b-3a, 4b-7b, 14b-15b, 26a-27a, 31a, 55a, 63a, 84a, 90b, 95a, 106b

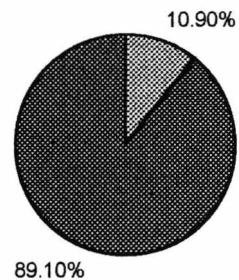
² By 1086, a share of Harold's lands had been granted to the bishop of Durham (at Waltham), the bishop of Hereford (at Writtle), the count of Boulogne (Gravesend, Notley, Rivenhall, Witham, Newland Hall and Frinton), Hamo *dapifer* (Ryes), Robert count of Eu (Thurrock), John fitz Waleran (Notley), Robert fitz Corbucion (Leyton), Ralph of Limésy (Chigwell) and Modwin (Witham), together with Harold's lands at Feering and Ockendon which were exchanged with Westminster Abbey (LDB 15b, 26a, 26b-27a, 31a, 32b, 55a, 63a, 84a, 85a, 90b, 95a, 14b-15a)

³ These figures are based upon a TRW county valuation of £5000 per annum. Edward the Confessor's figures assume that he did hold land worth £9 at Southminster and Writtle but it must be noted that this is a highest-possible figure. He may, as Round asserted, have held no land at all

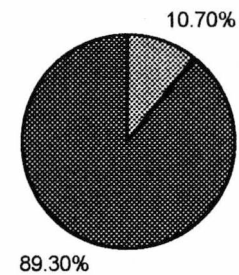
Edward the Confessor



Harold II



William I



■ Royal demesne ■ Other land

Table 7: royal demesne in Essex under Edward the Confessor, Harold Godwinson and William the Conqueror

de firma).¹ The five-hide system is evidence of rigid tenurial organisation and 'farm' denotes the system that grew up to support an itinerant royal court. Earl Harold had taken control of these royal manors in Essex for personal advantage. Newport (Uttlesford), Lawford, Brightlingsea (both Tendring), Writtle and Baddow (both Hinckford) paid nights' farm as their TRE assessment, and all save for Baddow were held by Harold.²

The crown's relationship with the county went beyond personal (formerly comital) rule through land tenure, as a large proportion of influential Anglo-Saxon landowners became followers of the Godwinson clan. The cronyism practised by the family to further their faction's fortunes has already been thoroughly studied.³ It is sufficient to report that through the system of personal commendation Harold's ties with local landowners were wide and diverse before he had assumed the throne.⁴ Harold's strong influence in the county was a source of reliable support for him prior to and during his reign, but it also proved to be the county's undoing in 1066. Because Essex had a high number of loyal Godwinson adherents, the campaigns of 1066 depleted the local elite and ultimately deprived them of a Godwinson figurehead.

Some of this Anglo-Saxon support for Harold is noted in Domesday. Alric of Kelvedon fought against the Normans at sea and when he returned he became sick.⁵ An unnamed thegn left his manor of Paglesham (Rochford) to Harold's housecarls, survived the Conquest but eventually died as an outlaw in

¹ VCH Essex i. 334, 336. Round's view is supported by Ann Williams, 'Land and Power in the eleventh-century: the estates of Harold Godwinson', 174

² LDB 5a-7a, 21b-22a. Baddow was held by Ælfgar of Mercia.

³ Fleming 71-81

⁴ LDB 5b, 26b, 54b, 55a, 59a, 61a, 75a, 101a

⁵ LDB 14b. Alric *cecidit in infirmitate* when he returned from the battle

Yorkshire.¹ After the decisive and bloody battles of September and October 1066, the lives of many warriors capable of offering resistance to the Normans had been ended. This had the effect of making Essex easy prey to the invaders and there was no Anglo-Saxon resistance of note in Essex.² Of course, not all of the major Anglo-Saxon tenants died on Senlac Hill. Following his coronation one of William's first actions was to lead his forces into East Anglia, which included the acceptance of submissions at Barking.³

Ann Williams has analysed the national trends of land retention among the Anglo-Saxons, leading her to suggest that 'there is something paradoxical in the fact that the English survived best in those areas where they resisted the longest'.⁴ Two major trends further affect a discussion of Anglo-Saxon survival in Essex. Some natives adopted Norman names and survivors were less likely to be found in the south and east of England.⁵ An appraisal of this topic must acknowledge the presence of the semi-native survivors Robert fitz Wymarc and his son Swein, together with their ten Domesday vassals whose names were Teutonic or Scandinavian (Siric, Thorkell, Alured, Alfith, Aelmer, Eadmer, Godman, Ansgot, Leofstan and Gunner).⁶ Of these, only Gunner held the same land (in Totham, Thurstable) that he had TRE. Naturally, their other subtenants may have changed their names to something more socially acceptable.

¹ LDB 59a: Ann Williams, 'Land and Power in the eleventh-century: the estates of Harold Godwineson', 178-9

² VCH Essex ii. 210

³ R.H.C.Davis & M.Chibnall (eds. & trans.), The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers (Oxford, 1998), 160-1

⁴ A.Williams, The English and the Norman Conquest, 97

⁵ H.Tsurushima, 'Domesday Interpreters', ANS xviii (1996) 201-22, 211-12: A.Williams, The English and the Norman Conquest, 84, 96. Williams cites the example of Robert *latimer*, an interpreter

⁶ LDB 42a-b, 45a-b, 46b-47a, 48a-b

A sizeable minority of the lesser tenants-in-chief had Anglo-Saxon names. Just over a dozen of the individuals listed towards the end of the Essex Domesday return were Anglo-Saxons, together (presumably) with the unnamed King's free men.¹ For these few, possession at Domesday rarely lasted far beyond 1086. The lands held by Sasselin and Wulfeva wife of Finn both passed to Eudo *dapifer* in later years.² Survival was not widespread and these were unusual cases. Some Anglo-Saxons were not immediately removed and a favoured few were embraced by the new administration. This was a temporary state of affairs and, other than exceptional individuals (such as Edward of Salisbury), charter attestations from survivors in high places had ceased by 1071.³ The chronology of the Conquest posited by Fleming asserts that hundredal grants were the last major stage of the process, dating from the final decade of William I's reign.⁴ As there were no hundredal grants in Essex this supports the notion that Essex was apportioned thoroughly and quickly, leaving few remnants of the TRE tenurial order.

The increased local power of the crown after January 1066 created the blueprint for Norman governance of the county. The principal TRE landowner had been Harold, whose lands were generally under royal control in 1086. That some of Harold's manors were not royal demesne in Domesday was explained in certain cases (grants and exchanges) and not in others. It is clear there had been alienations from Harold's lands since the Conqueror's demesne in the county, although based upon Harold's, was smaller. Nonetheless, the king's lands in Essex were the most valuable group in the county with an annual value of £517, plus an unrecorded value for Colchester.⁵

¹ LDB 92b-94b 95a-96a, 97b-99a

² Reg i. (1st ed) no.442: Cart Colc p.18: Farrer iii. 199, 201, 202, 220

³ Fleming 174-6

⁴ Fleming 180-1

⁵ Colchester was farmed out for £30: Corbett 538

This strong royal presence in the county explains the absence of a rape system in Norman Essex. Block grants had been used across much of the south coast to reward Norman followers and protect vulnerable coastlines.¹ This system manifested itself in the form of county-wide grants (Cornwall and Chester, for example) or swathes of land within counties (the Sussex Rapes and Holderness), the precedent being the great marcher lordships of pre-Conquest Normandy (such as Meulan).² Drawing parallels between Essex and Sussex are unavoidable, as both counties had been the springboard for successful conquests during the eleventh century: Essex by the Danes, Sussex by the Normans. Land division in Sussex was tightly organised, based upon block-grants of land to trusted and powerful intimates. Whether reward or defence was the initial motivation for such large grants, Sussex was well protected by loyal men who had been justly rewarded for their (continuing) contribution to the success of the English Enterprise.

Essex, with its history of Danish invasion, could well have been a prime candidate for a rape system had it not been for the defensive provisions made by Harold prior to the Conquest. It is Fleming's claim that north-eastern Essex was a carefully controlled environment. Harold's demesne manors guarded strategically important locations.¹ In this case the sensitive area was the Roman road between Chelmsford and Colchester, which lay across the Blackwater and Colne rivers. Because of the large number of tributaries to the rivers, this area was particularly vulnerable to lightning attacks in small boats.

William evidently believed that this system was beneficial as he retained much of its structure. The defensive manors of Writtle, Witham and Lexden, together with the principal manors of Tendring hundred at Lawford and

¹ Fleming 146-64

² L.F.Salzman, 'The Rapes of Sussex', *SAC* lxxii (1931), 20-9: Fleming 147-8

No. ²	Tenant-in-chief	Demesne in-chief	Demesne as tenant	Enfeoffed	Total
1	King William	£517.7.2	-	(n/a)	>£517 ³
20	Count Eustace	£320.7.4	-	£203.17.0	>£524
30	Mandeville	£185.17.0	-	£161.8.8	>£347
24	Swein of Essex	£129.10	£17.8.0	£138.1.0	>£284
34	Ranulf Peverel	£99	-	£148.7.6	>£247
23	Rich. fz Gilbert	£118.16.9	£4	£117.12.10	>£240
3, 4	Bp of London	£101.7.0	-	£80.4.10	>£180
33	Ralph Baynard	£91.15.0	£4	£77.13.0	>£173
32	Robert Gernon	£76.17.0	-	£95.16.8	>£172
18	Odo of Bayeux	£32.1.6	-	£132.17.0	>£164
9	Barking Abbey	£156.17.8	-	£5.18.8	>£162
25	Eudo <i>dapifer</i>	£83.14.0 ⁴	-	£68.5.0	>£151
35	Aubrey de Vere	£71.15	£8	£53.15.0	>£133
22	Warene	£29.7.0	-	£90.13.0	£120
5	St Paul's Canons	£107.13.4	-	-	>£107

Table 8: The value of Essex lands held by the top fifteen tenants-in-chief in 1086

Brightlingsea and the boroughs of Maldon and Colchester, remained in royal hands.¹ It must be remembered that these were but a few large royal manors

¹ Fleming 96

² The place occupied by the individual or house in the list preceding the section detailing tenure: LDB 1a

³ Together with Colchester, which was let for farm at £30 but was probably worth well over £100: LDB 107a-b: Corbett, 538

⁴ Inclusive of 1oz. of gold, valued at 15s. (LDB 51a)

amid many smaller settlements. In the event of attack, limitation rather than prevention of damage would have been the only attainable goal.²

Another structure which may have been retained from Anglo-Saxon Essex was the domination of Rochford hundred by Robert fitz Wymarc. His lands and influence within the hundred were the major feature of the Norman honour of Rayleigh. Robert, an Anglo-Breton and former counsellor of the Confessor, owned lands across southern England prior to the Conquest.³ The family was unique in Essex as Robert and his son Swein held lands in the county *TRE, post* and *modo*. These passed from, through and into their hands without any evident pattern. Before 1066, Robert had land in Rochford at Eastwood, Plumberow, Ashingdon and Sutton, all of which were part of Swein's dominion in 1086.⁴ Robert was then credited with obtaining lands *post mortem regis Edwardi*, at Shoebury, Littlethorpe, Little Wakering and Sutton.⁵ Asheldham fell under his control after the arrival of the Normans.⁶ Whether or

¹ LDB 1b-2a, 4b-6b, 7b, 104a-107b. Essex was regained from the Danes through the strategic towns of Colchester, Witham and Maldon, which dominated the road and the Blackwater estuary: C.Hart, The Danelaw, 119-20

² Judith Green suggests that this policy extended to the introduction of other lords into manors to protect the coast and the Thames estuary. She lists the manors of West Ham (Becontree, held by Robert Gernon and Ranulf Peverel), East Ham (Becontree, Robert Gernon), West Thurrock (Chafford, William Peverel), Fobbing (Barstable, Eustace of Boulogne), Burnham (Wibertsherne, Ralph Baynard), Down Hall (Wibertsherne, Ranulf Peverel), Michaelstow (Tendring, Ralph Baynard) and Dovercourt (Tendring, Aubrey de Vere): J.A.Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England, 82. Although this is a very reasonable theory, William Peverel was a peripheral figure in Essex and his involvement in a defensive scheme seems dubious

³ In Cambridgeshire (DB, 193b, 200b, 201), Essex, Herefordshire (DB, 186b, 187), Hertfordshire (DB, 134, 137b), Huntingdonshire (DB, 205b, 207), Somerset (DB, 92b), Suffolk (LDB, 287b, 295b, 395) and Wiltshire (DB, 74b).

⁴ LDB 45a-b.

⁵ LDB 44a, 44b, 45a, 45b,

⁶ LDB 46a

not he held three of Swein's most valuable Domesday manors (Rayleigh, Great Wakering and Canewdon) is difficult to assess, as they show no return for ownership TRE.¹

The honour of Rayleigh was formed by a combination of inheritance and expansion during and after 1066. Rochford hundred was divided between secular and ecclesiastical lords in the same fashion as every hundred in the county, but in 1086 Swein held a far greater proportion of land than any other lord in any other hundred. He held 62% of the land in Rochford hundred as a tenant-in-chief, which accounted for 60% of the wealth.² Whilst it was clearly not a block grant, it was a controlling influence and an obviously deliberate method of protecting the south-eastern coast. Had there been any reservations about the family's loyalty they would not have been allowed to control such a sensitive district, which had no royal demesne. Swein also enjoyed the profits of justice from Rochford and Clavering hundreds.³ Swein was evidently confident about the long-term stability of his tenure, building a castle at Rayleigh and planting a vineyard there too.⁴ The family had earned the trust of the Conqueror and the level of patronage marks them out as local favourites of the king.

Essex was not in need of tenurial overhaul and the imposition of a block-grant structure to defend the coast. Strategic outposts in the north and a fledgling honour of Rayleigh had existed since before the Conquest and because the system was retained, Essex was still exposed to a high degree of direct royal control. Its proximity to London assisted in this process, as it was not considered a remote district in need of firm control from a local viceroy.

¹ LDB 43b-44b

² Ecclesiastical tenants accounted for 18% of the income and 20% of the land, leaving 22% of the income and 18% of the land between eleven other secular tenants.

³ LDB 45b, 46b

⁴ LDB 43b

Because of this there was no opportunity for semi-autonomous honours to develop in Essex, as these grew out of county grants or smaller block units.¹ One of the most obvious and immediate conclusions that can be drawn from the Domesday return is that almost every tenant-in-chief's collection of lands was characterised by a lack of territorial consolidation. Other than Swein, with his controlling interest in the hundred of Rochford, only Geoffrey de Mandeville (in the west) and Richard fitz Gilbert (in the north) had estates which displayed dominance in one area.

Figure 3: The honours of Clare, Pleshy and Rayleigh in Essex in 1086

This was not a common trend. The majority of Domesday lords in Essex possessed fragmented estates, which can even be seen (to a lesser extent) within these three lords' holdings. Other secular honours had the same lack of consolidation within their lands. Ranulf Peverel of London's estates covered over 150 hides but were spread across thirteen different hundreds.² The greatest remaining secular honours (Boulogne, Peverel of London and the Baynard barony) displayed a wide geographical spread. In this respect the county was a microcosm of the country. Royal policies that prevented the creation of solid land-blocks and made use of existing lordship patterns brought security to the king, ensured that royal servants had land across the country and prevented the isolation of individual barons.³ Scattered lordships were a national reality that also applied to the localities, as the following maps show.

¹ Prime examples of such grants include the Palatine County of Chester, Robert of Mortain's dominance in Cornwall and the Rapes of Sussex

² LDB 71b-76a

³ First Century, 65-6

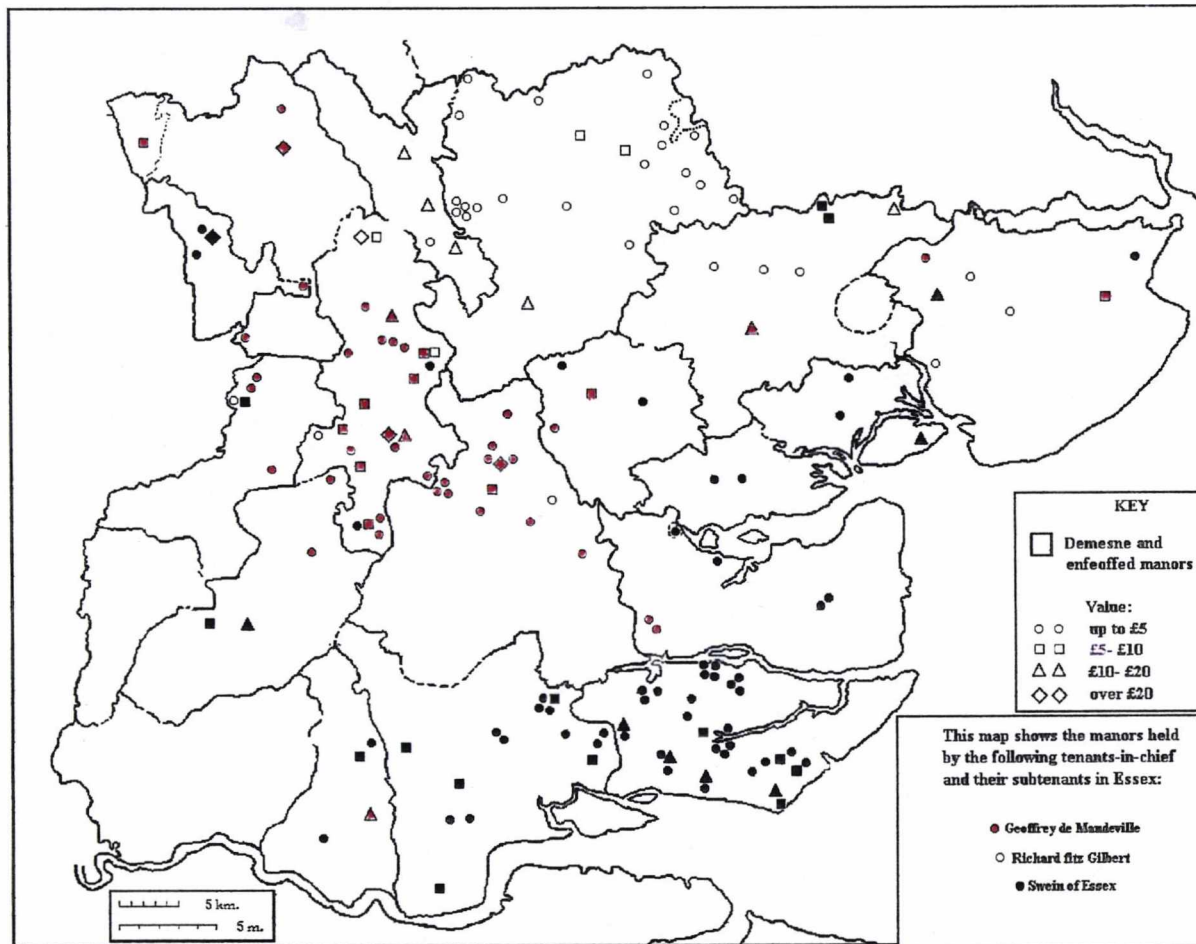


Figure 3: The honours of Clare, Pleshy and Rayleigh in Essex in 1086

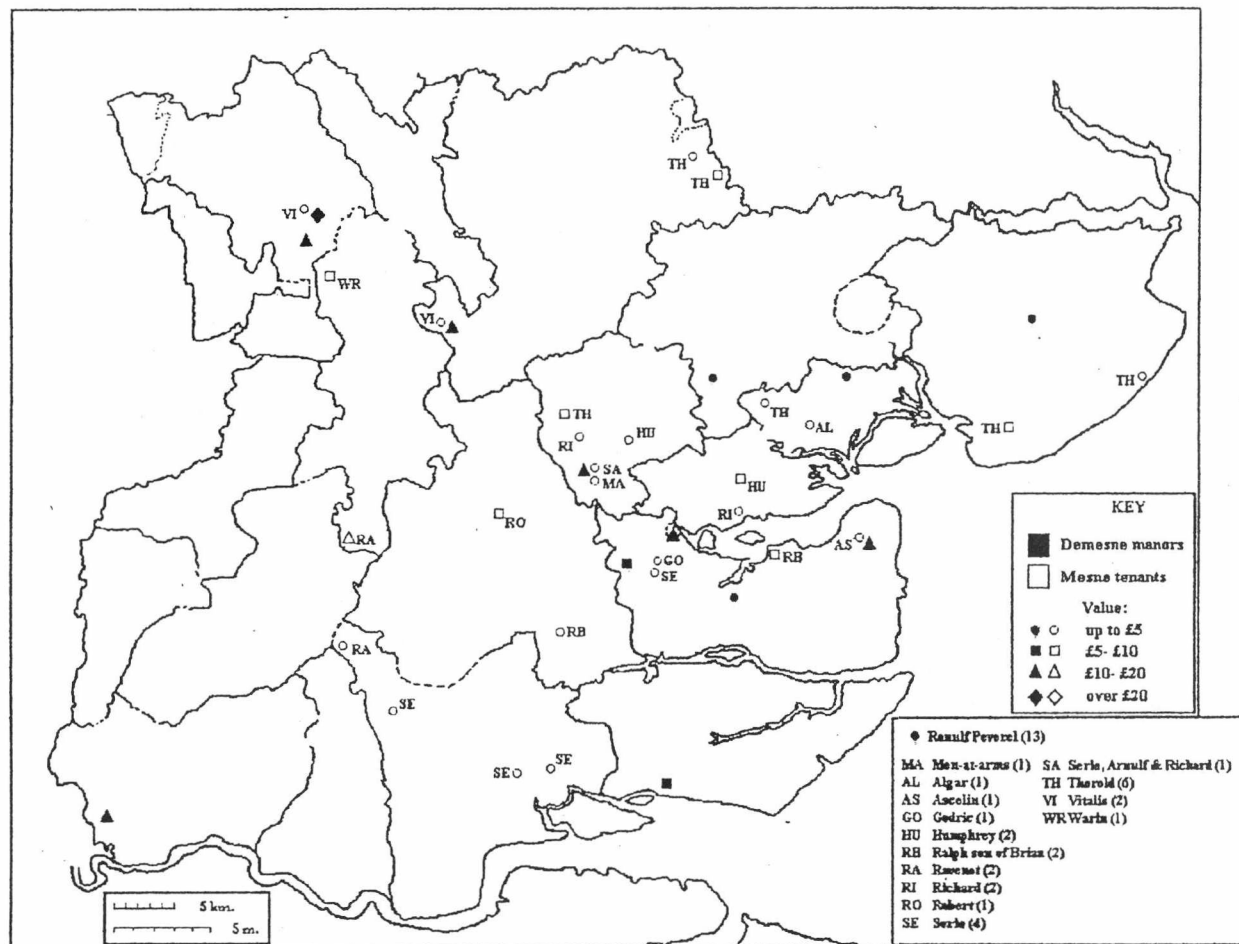


Figure 4: The Estates of Ranulf Peverel in Essex in 1086

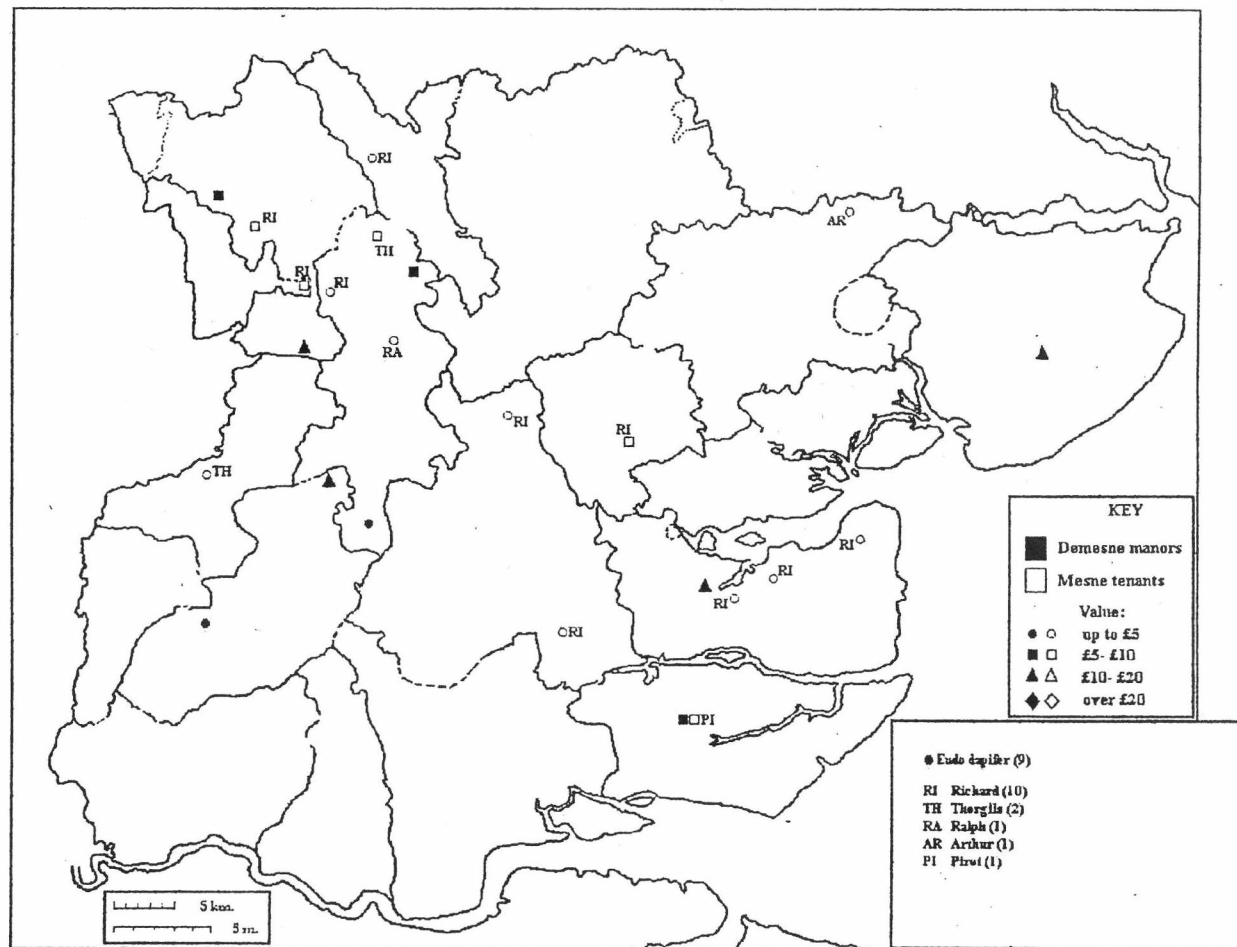


Figure 5: The Estates of Eudo dapifer in Essex in 1086

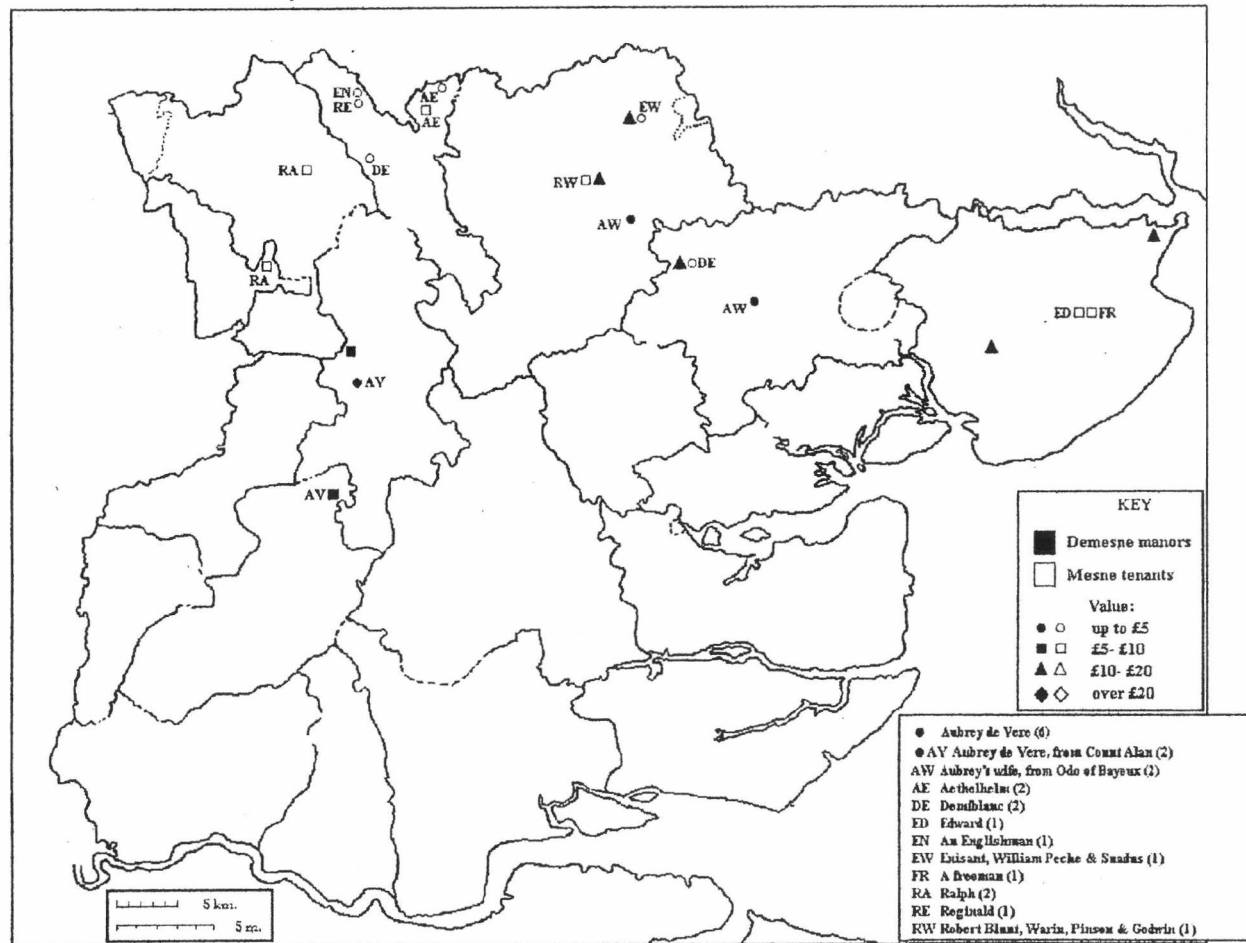


Figure 6: The Estates of Aubrey de Vere in Essex in 1086

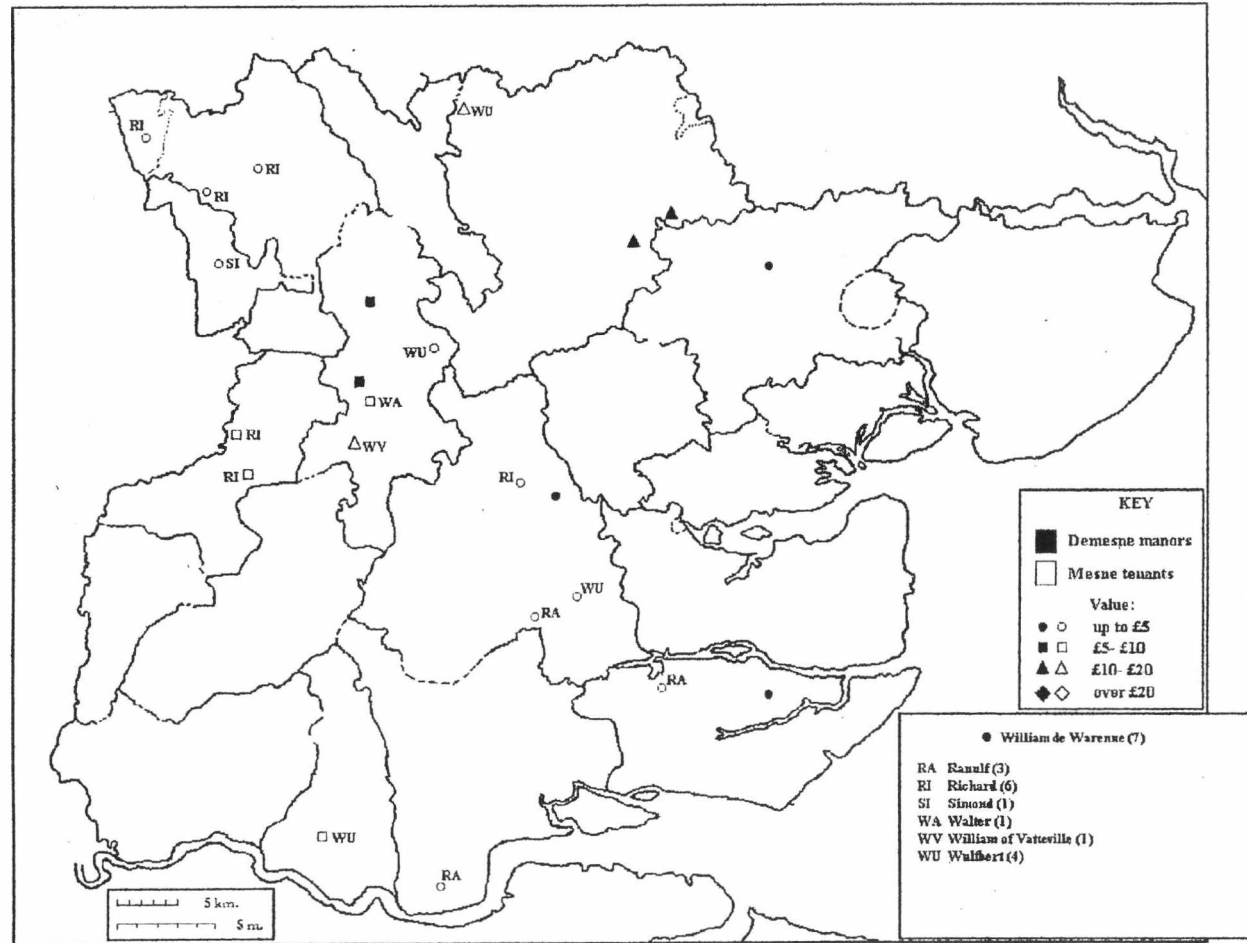


Figure 7: The Estates of William de Warenne in Essex in 1086

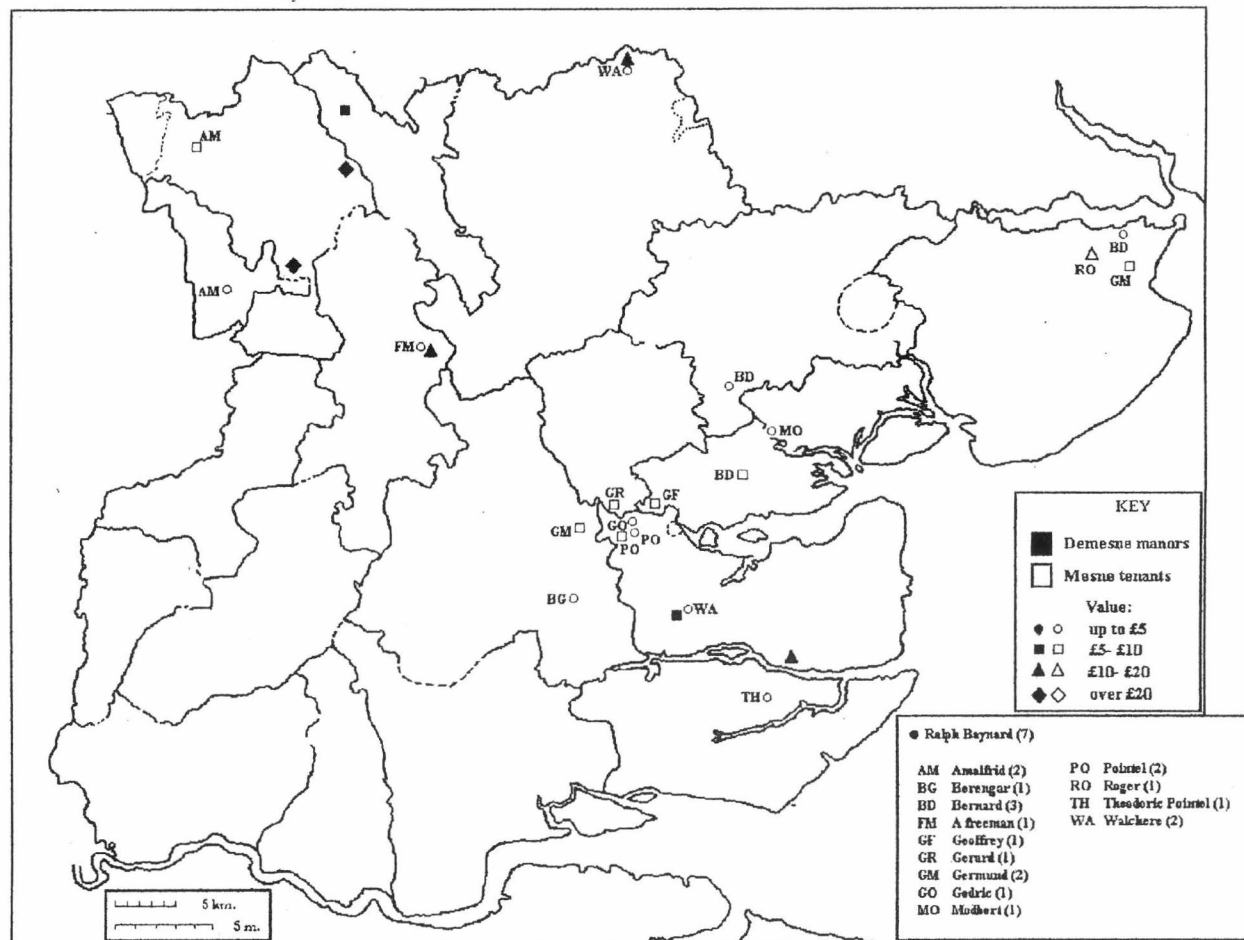


Figure 8: The Estates of Ralph Baynard in Essex in 1086

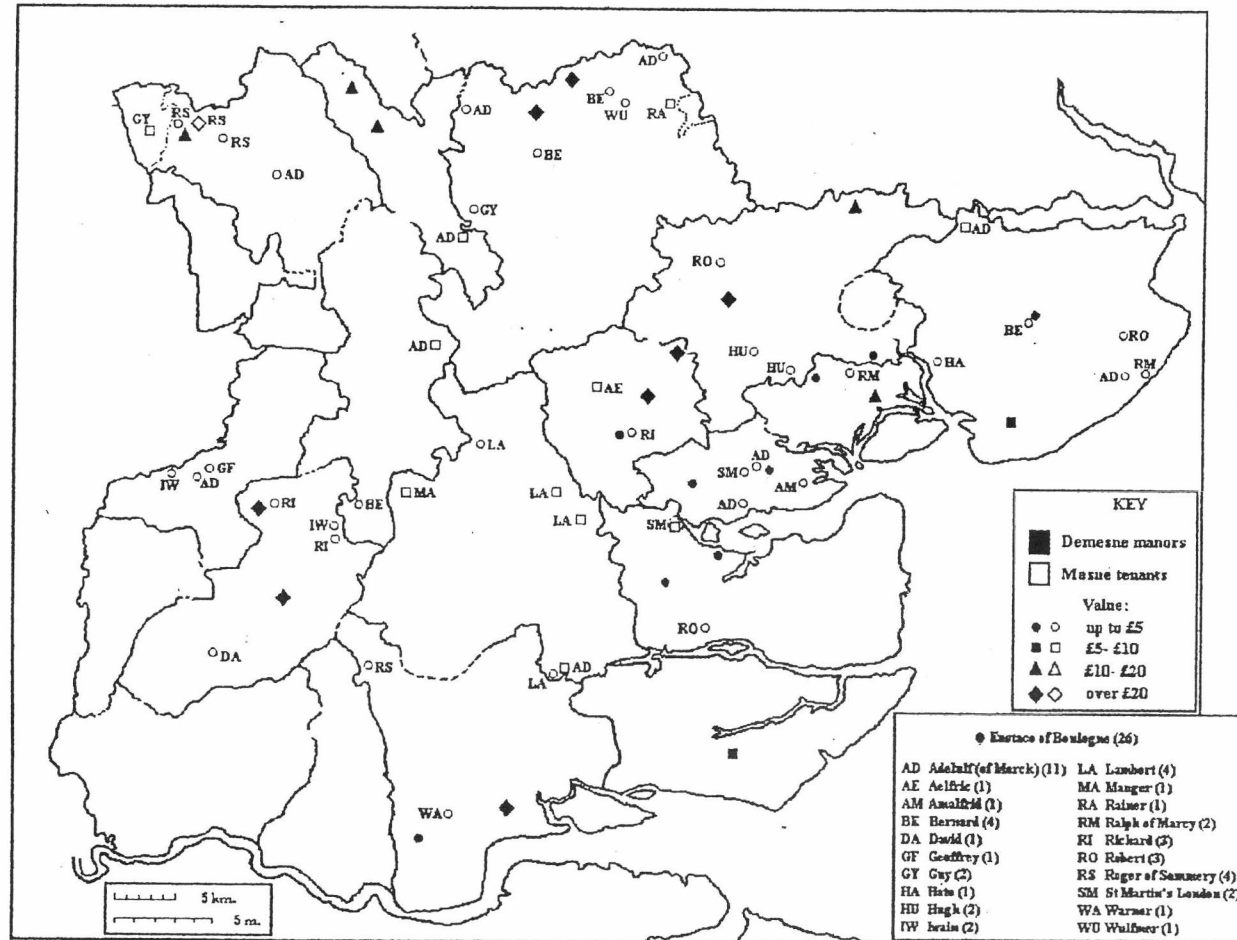


Figure 9: The Estates of Eustace of Boulogne in Essex in 1086

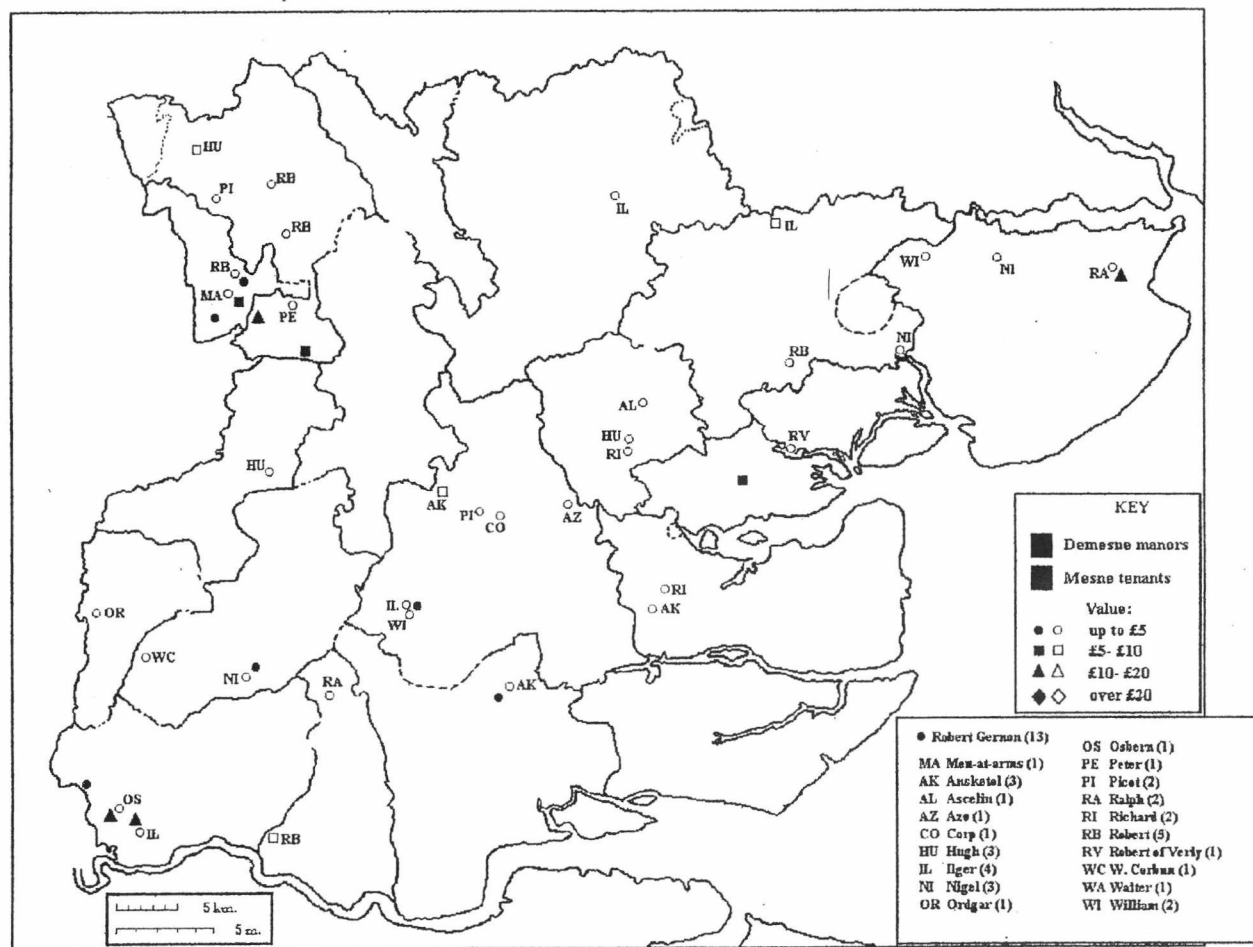


Figure 10: The Estates of Robert Gernon In Essex in 1086

Part of the reason for the emergence of these patterns was that antecession had been utilised as a means of distributing land, an effective means of implementing the Conquest. The lands of the new aristocracy can be explained, at least partially, in terms that imply a structure of inheritance. In theory, the estate of a great Saxon nobleman or thegn was passed intact to a Norman lord.¹ Robin Fleming's analysis of post-Conquest land tenure led her to conclude that antecession was generally the initial means of land distribution. Block grants based on hundreds and wapentakes followed antecession, except in Sussex, Kent and the March where block grants were immediately made.² This theory is based upon the idea that major TRE landowners were directly replaced by individual Normans whilst lesser TRE landowners were displaced to make way for compact lordships. The issue of royal control in the settlement process is evident in such organisation. Fleming claims that '...in the shires where antecessorial and hundredal grants left a clear imprint, we have evidence of a settlement firmly controlled by the king.'³

The concept of the antecessor was alluded to regularly. Royal demesne in the east and the lands of Swein in Rochford had been largely acquired from Harold and Robert fitz Wymarc respectively. Eustace of Boulogne received land because it had been his antecessor's at Tey.⁴ The unexplained possession of other lordships by Eustace's antecessor (Engelric the Priest) was all the licence Eustace required to own them in 1086: it did not matter how Engelric

¹ See F.M.Stenton, Anglo-Saxon England (3rd.ed., Oxford, 1971), 626: D.C.Douglas, William the Conqueror (London, 1964), 271-2

² Fleming 179-80

³ Fleming 181

⁴ Count Eustace's main antecessor in Essex was Engelric the Priest, founder of St Martin-le-Grand in London: LDB 29b

had acquired them.¹ Some were even described as *invasiones* but no action was taken to recover them.²

Ranulf Peverel had an unnamed antecessor in Essex, a connection that gained him land in Vange, Terling, Willingale Doe, Prested and Plunker's Green.³ This antecessor was probably Siward of Maldon, since all of his lands in Essex passed to Ranulf, but the references could allude to Brictrmer or Aelmer instead.⁴ Land devolved from Wulfwin to Aubrey de Vere, but an antecessorial relationship was not made explicit.⁵ Frodo the Abbot's brother had a predecessor named Ordgar and Leofwin was probably Roger de Auberville's antecessor, although neither inherited all of the lands concerned.⁶ Ralph de Limésy had an unnamed antecessor, who may have been called Hardwin.⁷ Without any direct reference being made, Geoffrey de Mandeville clearly 'inherited' property in Essex from Ansgar Staller, Hugh de Montfort from Guthmund, Richard fitz Gilbert from Withgar and Hamo *dapifer* from Goti(ld).⁸

¹ At East Donyland, Colne, Tollesbury, St Osyth, Frinton, Little Holland, Lawford, Tendring, Chrishall, Chishill, Elmdon, Elmdon Lee, Crawleybury, Bendysh Hall, Newnham Hall, Little Bardfield and Shopland; LDB, 30a, 32, 33, 34

² Engelric removed Newland Hall from the royal manor of Writtle, and annexed Little Baddow, Runwell, Little Waltham and Boreham; LDB, 31a-b. None of these were listed among the annexations

³ LDB, 71b, 72a-b, 74b, 75a

⁴ LDB 72a-b, 74b

⁵ LDB 77b, 78a.

⁶ LDB 20b, 92a, 92b, 103b for Ordgar. The name Leofwin occurs thirty-three times in the Essex pages of Domesday but only twice in connection with Roger: LDB 52a, 103b

⁷ LDB 90a-b. Ralph's antecessor had annexed royal demesne. None of the TRE tenants of Ralph's manors were named apart from Harold but Hardwin added land at Brunton (Hinckford) TRW

⁸ LDB 57b, 58a, 59a, 60-62, 63a (Mandeville); 53, 54a (Montfort); 38b, 39, 40b, 41a-b (Clare); 54b, 55b, 56a (Hamo): J.A.Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England, 81, analyses antecessors and successors in Essex

Ansgar is a good example of an antecessor because Mandeville received all of his land in Essex.¹ However, Ansgar also held land in seven other counties, and Geoffrey did not obtain Ansgar's estates in Devon and Somerset and only part of his lands in other counties.² It was recorded that Mandeville held land unjustly in Surrey, at Clapham, because Ansgar had not held it.³ Evidently claims of antecession were used as a justification for tenure and as antecession could not be claimed in this case, doubt was cast over his legitimate ownership of Clapham. There are no hard and fast rules in Domesday Essex for land movement. In some cases there is no common thread linking entries together, and in others we are denied the opportunity to judge because of insufficient information.

Table 9: the antecessors of Geoffrey de Mandeville in Essex

Mandeville also held land that he derived through sole antecession, but he shared the spoils of other TRE estates (see Table 9).⁴ This may be proof of antecession through commendation (or other pre-Conquest arrangements), as some of his other sole antecessors may have been Ansgar's men or relatives. Had they placed themselves and their lands under Ansgar's protection, Mandeville could claim that his antecessor's rights of lordship were also heritable. These two systems of association and inheritance were neither understood nor acknowledged by the Normans. Anglo-Saxon kinship

¹ Together with all his lands in Berkshire and Oxfordshire: DB 62a, 160a

² DB 95a, 111a, 112b: Fleming 115

³ DB 36a

⁴ Robin Fleming has not yet produced material of this kind for LDB as her vast Domesday database merely covered the entire first volume. For a comparable table showing the TRW lords of Buckinghamshire and their antecessors see Fleming 119, and R.Fleming, 'Domesday Book and the Tenorial Revolution', ANS ix (1986) 87-101, table facing p.87

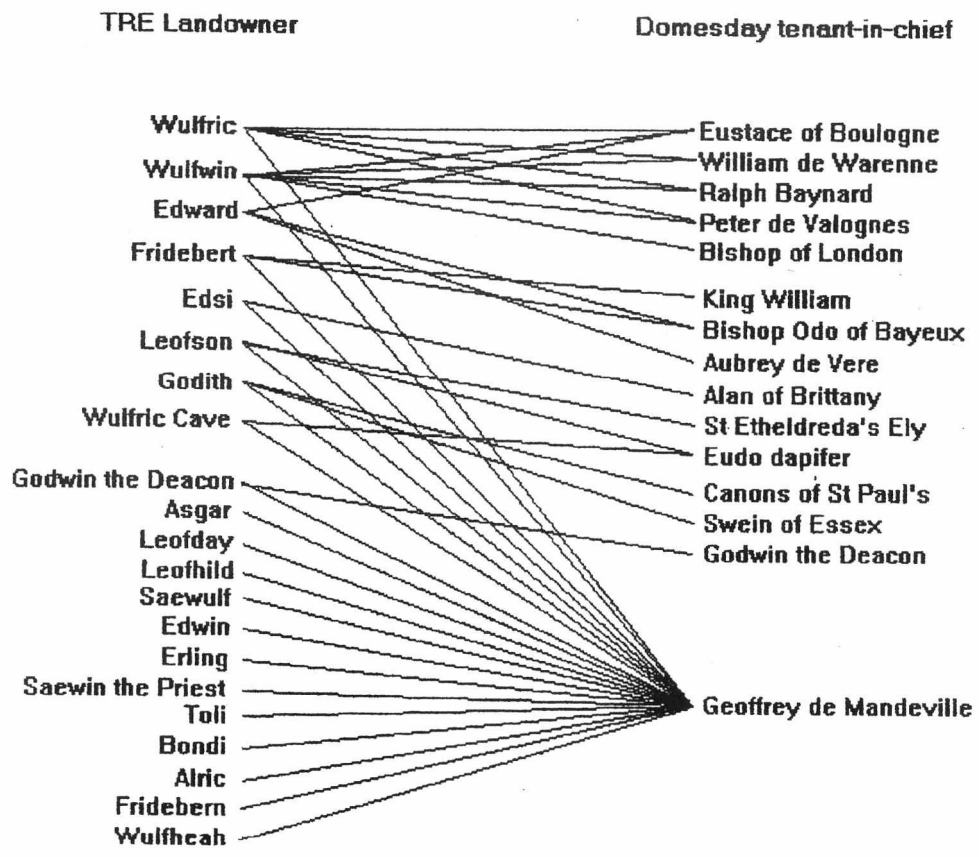


Table 9: the antecessors of Geoffrey de Mandeville in Essex

networks were immensely complicated and heritability only occasionally followed the normal Norman pattern of primogeniture.¹ Personal commendation entailed lordship disassociated from land tenure, which was largely ignored by the Normans simply because no land was involved in the arrangement.² Land tenure and lordship went hand-in-hand in Normandy but in Anglo-Saxon England rights of lordship, tenure and justice could be divided between several parties.³ Whether or not specific commendation arrangements existed will never be known but it is evident that Geoffrey's lands were derived from a large number of people without an explicit justification of tenure being cited.⁴ It may be that the very many TRE tenants of lands that eventually fell to Mandeville were associated with Ansgar and that Mandeville quite rightly assumed both Ansgar's mantle and the lands of those men who were commended to Ansgar.

The links between TRE tenants and several Domesday lords is not proof of joint antecession, where the lands of a TRE owner were shared between two or more Norman tenants-in-chief. Less savoury methods were used to gain land, not least by Geoffrey de Mandeville.⁵ There is also a distinct possibility that some of the Anglo-Saxon landowners named were two (or more) different people as Domesday often failed to distinguish between individuals with common names.

¹ Fleming, 139

² Maitland described commendation '...as the slightest bond that there can be between lord and man': F.W.Maitland, Domesday Book and Beyond (Cambridge, 1897) 68.

Stephenson argued that commendation was a stronger system: C. Stephenson, 'Commendation and Related Problems in Domesday', EHR lix (1944) 289-310

³ See R.A.Brown, Origins of English Feudalism (London, 1973) 43-5; Maitland, Domesday Book and Beyond, 67-8, 72 -4

⁴ Fleming 193n.

⁵ The Mandeville annexations are listed in LDB 100a-b.

Antecessors could be shared and evidence shows that this could be by design rather than by accident. There is a detailed account of the division of Brictrmer's lands in the entry for Falkenham, Suffolk.¹ According to this, Brictrmer's lands were divided between Engelric the Priest, Ranulf brother of Ilger and Ralph Pinel. In Essex, Brictrmer had held land TRE that fell to Engelric (and then to Eustace of Boulogne), Ranulf Peverel, Robert Gernon and Ralph Pinel.² Ilger's brother was not mentioned in connection with Brictrmer in Essex; he was 'co-heir' to Brictrmer's estate in Suffolk alone. Roger Bigod inherited lands from the Gael estate in Norfolk but not in Essex.³ Antecession was not ultimately an exclusive right to land across England (as the example of Ansgar shows) or even within one shire.

In other cases this is difficult to prove, as there is often no explicit relationship between an Anglo-Saxon lord and his men. Domesday does not always explain possession but it offers antecession as the most frequent justification for tenure. Recorded direct grants from the king (e.g. Moze to Geoffrey de Mandeville) were something of a rarity, which suggests we should seek explanations for tenure elsewhere.⁴ Antecessorial succession, whether by order of the king or by a Norman entering a private arrangement with the incumbent, seems to have been widespread. The Falkenham example also shows that it could be temporary (Engelric was listed as a successor and then became a predecessor himself) and unwieldy. The frequent absence of a reference to an explicit antecessor/successor relationship has led to assumption without proof of status by historians.

¹ LDB 424a

² For Pinel, see LDB 97b, at Bromley and *Westnanetuna*, both in Tendring; Gernon, LDB 63b, Howbridge, Witham; Count Eustace, Fobbing, Barstable (LDB 26a), Harlow (LDB 27b), Fyfield and Laver, Ongar (LDB 31a)

³ LDB 7b, 35b

⁴ LDB 59b

Antecession is an incomplete explanation of Domesday land distribution in Essex. Naming the TRE tenant provided evidence of tenurial right under such a system, so the (frequent) omission of that information dilutes the argument for antecession. Major TRE landowners made ideal antecessors, as their lands could be allotted without too much difficulty or dispute. Lesser Anglo-Saxon landowners were far less suited to such a system, as the universal application of antecession would have been an administrative nightmare. A complete explanation for land tenure must be created from a synthesis of theories, as antecession fits an unconvincing proportion of Domesday manors and villas.

Robin Fleming has attacked the lingering idea that the Normans retained the boundaries of Anglo-Saxon lordships. She has hypothesised that such ideas of tenurial continuity are based upon selective analysis, which ignore the low use of antecession in the Midlands and the north of England.¹ That antecessorial succession was a method of granting land is beyond question. It must be recognised that it was not the only system of land allocation to be used, as fresh grants of varying scales (from entire counties to individual manors) are also recorded, together with further grants of confiscated land, sales and exchanges.² Antecession was undoubtedly utilised but it was not the only means for the division of the country after 1066. It was unworkable with small quantities of land, particularly if the TRE owner had loyalties and obligations to a number of other men.³ According to Fleming, approximately 60% of the land that was held by the secular tenants-in-chief in Essex does not appear to have been derived through antecession.⁴ Against this, it is worth considering that almost three-quarters of the entries that specifically related to land in Essex named the tenant on the day the Confessor was alive and dead. Even

¹ R. Fleming, 'Domesday Book and the Tenurial Revolution', *ANS* ix (1986) 87-101, 88, 90

² R. Fleming, 'Domesday Book and the Tenurial Revolution', 94, 101

³ Fleming, 126-27

⁴ Fleming, 194

when no obvious connection can be found, the inclusion of this information cannot be entirely dismissed as superfluous detail.

Robin Fleming argues that aggressive methods were used to gain control of land in the county, which counters ideas of an entirely orderly conquest. Fleming has postulated that a large measure of the Norman Conquest was extra-legal and that private conquest by a 'kleptocracy' was widespread.¹ The fact that such care was paid to naming a TRE tenant reveals just how important that information was, in order to justify possession. The pages of Domesday, and especially Little Domesday, list many illegal seizures and annexations, a demonstration that land had been taken using military means or strong-arm measures.² The eighty-seven annexations presented towards the end of the Essex return are the most apparent, as they were the ongoing disputes that are indicative of contention and unlawful tenure.³

Within the main text there are numerous claims of misappropriation and records of disputed land. Swein the sheriff was accused of stealing one hide and thirty acres from Hatfield Broad Oak (Harlow) after losing the shrievalty.⁴ There are other indications that Swein was not entirely blameless in his

¹ Fleming, 183-214, esp. 210

² Fleming, 193-4. Robin Fleming also assessed the total quantity of legal information provided by Domesday in each county. In Essex there were 365 incidences of the use of specific legal terms (such as exchange, grant, seizure, etc) more than any other county apart from Norfolk and Suffolk: R.Fleming, Domesday Book and the Law, xxviii-xxix, 275-312. The most detailed accounts of annexation and other reasons for tenure occur in the Little Domesday counties. For a list of Essex disputes, see P.Wormald, 'Domesday Lawsuits: a Provisional List and Preliminary Comment', in C.Hicks ed., England in the Eleventh Century: Proceedings of the 1990 Harlaxton Symposium (Stamford, 1990) 61-102, 91-92, 96, 97, 100, 102

³ LDB 99a-103b: Fleming, 214

⁴ LDB 2b. Hatfield was another property that had been Harold's.

dealings as a royal official.¹ Robert Gernon and Richard fitz Gilbert had taken land and men from the royal manors of Newport (Uttlesford) and Lawford (Tendring), when they were in Swein's care. Twenty-four acres of woodland at Littlebury (Uttlesford) found its way, wrongfully, into William Cardon's hands, and ten acres of land at Tollesbury (Thurstable) was given by Swein to Odo, one of his men. Round noted that several men, and Aubrey de Vere's wife, were guilty of 'a little wrongful increase'.² Of course, one could quite legitimately argue that the only Normans (and associated parties) who did not enjoy 'a little wrongful increase' were those that had stolen a great deal of land from the rightful Anglo-Saxon owners. An entire country was unlawfully annexed: these are largely the unsettled legal disputes between those who had sufficient influence to have their claims heard.

Antecession (or equivalent) and annexation are explicit and separate descriptions but Engelric the Priest's annexations were legitimised by Count Eustace's inheritance of them.³ Potentially, antecession offered the opportunity to gain land without honouring or respecting the prior claims of any other party. Eustace was the lord of men commended to his antecessor, a privilege denied to the other Domesday tenants-in-chief of Essex.⁴ Eustace also owned Birch Hall (Lexden) and Orsett (Barstable) outright, which Engelric held of St Paul's TRE.⁵ This is an unusual example of antecession being used to engineer a clean break with the past. Eustace was in a better position to justify his possession of these lands, as there can be little doubt that a less significant figure (i.e. Engelric) would not have carried sufficient

¹ LDB 6b, 7a, 18b, 19b.

² VCH Essex i 343, 346, 348. One could argue that the entire English Enterprise was wrongful and that these actions must be seen in perspective

³ At Langenhoe, Fyfield, Newland Hall, Little Baddow, Runwell, Little Waltham and Boreham; LDB 28a, 31a-b.

⁴ At Stanford Rivers: LDB 30b

⁵ LDB 26b, 32b

influence to retain these lands. The ultimate proof of legitimate ownership was another instrument of apportioning land *de novo*, the royal grant. As England's conqueror and the Confessor's 'rightful successor', William's possession of land and subsequent distribution of the same to his

Tenant-in-chief	No. of accusations of seizure in Essex
Richard fitz Gilbert	32
Engelric the Priest	14
Geoffrey de Mandeville	9
Theodoric Pointel	6
Ranulf Peverel	5
Hamo <i>dapifer</i>	4
Hugh de Montfort	4
Aubrey de Vere (and his wife)	3
Godwin Woodhen	3
Ralph Baynard	2
Waleran	2
Thorold	2
24 other individuals	24
	—
	109

Table 10: Individuals accused of annexation in Essex, 1066-86

followers could only be described as unlawful if the Conquest itself was illegitimate. Domesday ended any doubts about tenurial rights, as it awarded royal recognition and approval of the *status quo* in 1086.¹

Reports of annexation disputes were recorded in several counties' Domesday returns. *Invasiones* was a subsection for each of the three East Anglian counties. It also surfaced under the name *clamores* in Yorkshire, Huntingdon and Rutland in DB, and as *terra occupate* in Exon Domesday.² These show that disputes were still in progress over land twenty years after the invasion had taken place, further proof of the need for settling differences of opinion over land. It is particularly impressive to note that the surviving Anglo-Saxons of Essex indulged in extra-legal conquest at their countrymen's expense. Engelric was especially energetic in this capacity and was credited with the annexation of more land than the majority of the Normans. It could be argued that Engelric was found to be accountable because he was an Anglo-Saxon and that similar behaviour from Norman invaders was more likely to be overlooked. It is certainly apparent that the ongoing disputes over annexation were largely between Normans and that the interests of dispossessed TRE landowners were rarely considered in this process.

Round's view was that whilst '...we have cases in which Norman lords obtained virtually the whole possessions of great English landowners, ...we have also abundant instances of fiefs formed from numerous small estates, and a certain number in which the lands of an English holder were broken up and divided between two or more of those who shared in the spoils of England.'³

¹ J.C. Holt, '1086', 62

² V.H.Galbraith, The Making of Domesday Book (London, 1961) 73. Patrick Wormald suggests that some counties had more recorded land disputes than others because lay tenants-in-chief '... needed encouragement such as they only received in some shires': P.Wormald, 'Domesday Lawsuits: a Provisional List and Preliminary Comment', 68

³ VCH Essex i.353

Round considered that a greater authority entirely controlled the distribution of land. His top-down model, although supported by occasional references to grants in Domesday, leaves little room for the concept of private enterprise. He seemed to assume that TRE landowners (such as Mandeville's Wulfric, Wulfwin, Edward and Fridebert) had their honours dismembered by royal command and would not concede that the Norman barons may have ordered the divisions themselves. He also did not envisage that those four names, and many others, were common and that they were in fact several, less important, undifferentiated men.

Round's general argument (that antecession was a factor in the new honorial pattern but not the exclusive means of land allocation) still appears to be an accurate appraisal. It must be noted that Essex was one of the first counties to acknowledge Norman rule. The Domesday return suggests that this was a messy affair, where precedents governing the disposal of land to individuals were not yet fully developed. Claims of antecession must have been based upon the belief that this justified tenure but this concept does not account for the tenorial patterns of the entire county in 1086. It seems that individual Normans displayed initiative by effecting local conquests for personal gain and they were not always punished for their actions. The position of surviving TRE landowners does not appear to have been addressed in the early stages of the Conquest. Some (such as Engelric the Priest) were left alone whilst others suffered permanent and immediate confiscation of land.¹ Deorman of London the financier lost a hide of land at *Gyddesdune* (unidentified) which was

¹ Engleric was still politically active in May 1068 when he petitioned the Conqueror for confirmation of the foundation of St Martin-le-Grand: Reg i. (2nd ed) no.181. He may have survived until 1069 when he witnessed a charter in favour of Exeter Cathedral, although the date of this *acta* is not certain: Reg i. (2nd ed) no.138

restored to him by the Conqueror.¹ This was in the hands of St Peter's Westminster in 1086.²

Questions over annexation focus upon the degree of royal control that was exercised during the Norman settlement. In a nutshell, defined honours clearly based on antecession and/or block grants indicate a high level of organisation, whilst annexation indicates ad hoc settlement without central control. Essex had an evident antecessorial pattern, although it was neither universal nor always made explicit. 'True' block grants by hundred did not exist: lands pertaining to Pleshy (Mandeville), Clare (Richard fitz Gilbert), Rayleigh (Swein fitz Robert fitz Wymarc) and the *terra regis* between Colchester and Chelmsford bear some resemblance to block structures. The implementation of the three major means of land disposal is apparent but it leaves a question unanswered: to what degree did Norman (and associate) lords conquer Essex without reference to royal authority through violent means?

Essex does not seem to have been a troublesome conquest, nor is there any extant record that describes it as the scene of prolonged fighting, excessive killing or large-scale invasion. In spite of the freelance conquest undertaken by some of the Normans, there is no record of conflict between invader and native. Manorial values in Domesday suggest that much of the county was left physically intact by the Normans, as those values did not suffer any great decline.³ Even where there was a short-term or long-term drop in income, this does not necessarily indicate the effects of war. Agricultural and tenurial re-

¹ Reg i. (2nd ed) no. 107

² LDB 15a

³ Decreasing manorial values in the south-east have been viewed as evidence of harrying by the Normans: F.H.Baring, Domesday Tables for the counties of Surrey, Berkshire, Middlesex, Hertford, Buckingham and Bedford and the New Forest (London, 1909) 207-

organisation may have been to blame for this instead.¹ There is also no chronicled evidence of Anglo-Saxon defiance in Essex, which explains why there was no mention of waste in the county in 1086. The local population has been estimated to have increased by over 14% over the period 1066-1086 and the value of manors rose by 17%.²

Violence and annexation must be separated at this point. Manorial values increased and yet there were frequent references to annexation, which could not have been conducive to economic development if the acquisition of land had been a particularly aggressive process. The case for wholesale private conquest by Norman lords is only realistic if it can be accepted that the natives did not resist and that wronged parties automatically sought redress through legal channels. There is no scope for theories that depict Essex as a battleground, as the county was in a very good economic condition in 1086.³ The financial information available in Domesday generally supports the concept of a peaceful and undamaged county. If references to annexation are viewed as challenges to title, made by men seeking to make fresh conquests and right wrongdoings through the processes of justice, the scenario is far less sinister.

The tenurial structure of Essex evolved at a time when rules over land allocation had not yet been fully formulated, much less applied.¹ A great deal of land was held without any obvious reason for tenure, which suggests a

¹ Fleming, 123-5

² R.W.Finn, Domesday Studies: The Eastern Counties (London, 1967) 186, 191

³ Domesday manorial valuations for Essex generally (although by no means exclusively) show no change or a small rise in value between *TRE* and *post* (i.e. Norman occupation), with rises being commonplace by 1086. It could be suggested – and this is merely conjecture because there is no evidence – that values may have dropped in the years following 1066 due to annexation and that these values fully recovered by 1086, masking earlier unrest

rather haphazard colonisation process. Furthermore, the landholding structure was very disorganised, as several tenants-in-chief held land of other tenants-in-chief. Robin Fleming's suggestion is that disorganisation occurred because one elite replaced another and in effecting their Conquest, people were not always following the same guidelines.² Continental ideas of lordship based upon land and service clashed with the Anglo-Saxon laws that were being maintained by monastic houses and local administrative process. The great adventure of the Conquest called for warriors, who were then forced to justify their part in the successful reduction of England. Annexation disputes reflect the changing needs of the Normans in Essex. Having broken the Anglo-Saxon hold in the county, they sought to recoup disputed land from fellow conquerors. Furthermore, contended lands appear to be scraps rather than major prizes. The largest parcel of Essex land labelled an annexation in the king's despite was Hugh de Montfort's three hides and nine acres (in an unnamed place) and very many more were less than a virgate.³

There were anomalies in landholding other than the various states of decay evident within the collapsing Anglo-Saxon structure. Essex had more tenants-in-chief than any other county in England in 1086. This figure may have been bolstered by the lack of severe editing applied to Little Domesday, as such a procedure would have bracketed some of the lesser tenants-in-chief with 'the King's free men'. As Little Domesday is widely considered to be a pre-final draft, comparisons between its content and that of Domesday proper must not be taken at face value.⁴ It is obvious that Essex had some very important

¹ J.C.Holt, 'The Introduction of Knight Service in England', *ANS* vi (1983) 89-106

² R.Fleming, *Domesday Book and the Law*, 82-85

³ *LDB* 99a

⁴ V.H.Galbraith, *The Making of Domesday Book* 185, 205. *LDB* is best described as an 'unabridged circuit return': A.R.Rumble, 'The Domesday Manuscripts, Scribes and Scriptoria' in *Domesday Studies*, 79-97, 80. See also *LDB* 9a, 17a for lists of tenants in the forthcoming quire, which indicates that *LDB* was a bound circuit return

tenants-in-chief - including Alan of Brittany, Roger of Poitou and William Peverel of Nottingham - who merely held token manors in Essex.¹ An explanation for their possession of these manors can only be conjectural but, as these three became great lords in northern England, their Essex manors may have constituted an immediate prize and/or temporary residence in the early stages of Conquest.

With manorial incomes generally stable or increasing and with population levels growing, the county had not been exposed to undue economic damage. The only significant change was the declining number of ploughteams in the eastern (coastal) hundreds of the county. Finn suggested that this may have been a deliberate royal policy to protect the coast.² Devastation denied invaders subsistence, although changes in agricultural practice or high animal mortality may be just as plausible an explanation. Tendring, the northernmost coastal hundred, had been invaded and settled by the Danes, an event which may have encouraged the Normans to forestall a repetition.³

A healthy level of trade in the county was reflected by the high number of burgesses in Maldon (c.180) and Colchester (c.273).⁴ Henry I confirmed a market at Hadstock (Freshwell), which was under the jurisdiction of the abbot of Ely and had been in existence TRE.⁵ Unlike other urban centres Colchester did not suffer any recorded destruction or heavy-handed re-organisation, which

¹ LDB 35a-b, 89a, 90a

² R.W.Finn, Domesday Studies: The Eastern Counties, 184-5

³ C.Hart, The Danelaw, 119, 125; R.W.Finn, 'Changes in the Population of Essex 1066-86', EAH iv (1972) 128-33, 133

⁴ LDB 5b-6a, 104a-107b. Colchester did not meet Susan Reynolds' definition of a modern town ('When it has a Boots... it is a town'; S.Reynolds, 'Towns in Domesday Book', in Domesday Studies, 295-309, 296) but it did have a burgess called Tesco: LDB 106a

⁵ R.H.Britnell, 'Essex Markets Before 1350', EAH xiii (1981) 15-21, 15; Reg ii. no. 1576

accounts for the goodwill payment of 100s. to the sheriff in gifts.¹

Surprisingly, the construction of Colchester castle did not merit any reference in Domesday and there is no record of the destruction of property in Colchester, unlike other towns where houses were demolished to make way for a new castle.²

The markets of Essex do not appear to have been adversely affected by the Conquest, although the same cannot be said for many of the abbeys and priories with land in the county. Seizure of monastic land had been common practice in pre-Conquest Normandy and England.³ Whilst this behaviour was frowned upon (by the crown) in the late eleventh century and mechanisms existed for the church to seek redress, regular reports of land seizure from monasteries in post-Conquest England indicates that respect for church land was not a generally held value.

Monastic patronage of county land in the wake of the Conquest was only used to favour houses based outside Essex. The relationship between the secular lords and religious houses was, in certain cases, extremely strained. Domesday relates that many of the Anglo-Saxon foundations complained of private conquest at their expense. In certain situations this was almost justifiable. The lands of St Etheldreda's Ely pertained to a house that had supported revolt, causing Round to describe the abbey as 'the special prey of

¹ LDB 107a: S. Reynolds, 'Towns in Domesday Book', 309: Fleming, 194-7

² For a discussion of urban displacement for the construction of castles, see Fleming, 195-97. Explicit urban renewal (and the consequent displacement of burgesses) occurred in Norwich, Shrewsbury, York, Winchester and Nottingham. More implicit work was carried out at Ipswich, where the drop in the number of burgesses indicates destruction and difficulty. There is no mention of building work in Colchester, nor is there any indication of the number of burgesses TRE (there were 273 in 1086): LDB 104a-107b

³ For examples of this, see D.R.Bates, Normandy Before 1066 (London, 1982) 206-7

the Norman spoiler'.¹ Ely's claims for restoration were partly met before 1075 but many lands were permanently lost to them.² In other cases accusations of annexation were hypocritical. St Paul's and St Peter's Westminster had both indulged in annexation themselves, and held manors in 1086 which they could not prove they legally owned.

Only one new foundation in Essex dates from the Conqueror's reign. Takeley (Uttlesford) was founded as a thank-offering to St Valery-en-Somme by the king.³ Patterns of local patronage had yet to be established and so there were few Essex monasteries at this time. There were only two pre-Conquest foundations in Essex, Waltham Holy Cross and St Mary's, Barking.⁴ Neither had been granted any more land in Essex by 1086 (or at least did not relate that they possessed land by virtue of Norman patronage).⁵ Both held lands in Essex that had been subject to predation.⁶ Outside the county, Waltham had

¹ LDB 18b-19b: VCH Essex i. 340-1: FE, 459-61: R.W.Finn, Domesday Studies: The Eastern Counties, 81-95: R.W.Finn, 'The Essex entries in the Inquisitio Eliensis', EAH i. (1961-65) 190-5: E. Cownie, 'The Normans as Patrons of English Religious Houses, 1066-1135', ANS xviii (1995) 47-62, 53-4

² Reg i. (2nd ed) no. 117. Other lands proved to be irretrievable, such as the manor of High Easter (LDB 60a-b). High Easter had been held by Ansgar as a tenant of Ely TRE: Geoffrey de Mandeville successfully claimed that this was all the licence he required to hold it in-chief

³ MRH, 93. St Valery, where the Conqueror had awaited a fair wind prior to invading England, was granted the lands of Thorkil the Reeve: LDB 20b-21a: R.A.Brown, The Normans and the Norman Conquest (2nd ed., Woodbridge, 1985) 132-4: D.J.A.Matthew, The Norman Monasteries and their English Possessions (London, 1962), 30

⁴ Barking received a confirmation charter, Waltham did not or none survives: Reg i (2nd ed.) no.10

⁵ LDB 15b-19a

⁶ LDB 16b, 57b, 17b-18a. St Mary's Barking had more salt-pans in Essex than any other landed interest: L.Keen, 'Coastal Salt Production in Norman England', ANS xi (19XX), 133-133-79, 173-74

suffered further confiscation but Barking had retained its lands in Middlesex, Surrey, Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire.¹

Some London-based houses were particularly favoured. St Peter's, Westminster, received the manors of Feering (Lexden) and Ockendon (Chafford) from the king in exchange for Windsor, and were granted land at Moulsham (Chelmsford) and Benfleet (Barstable).² Geoffrey de Mandeville granted them land at Tilbury (Barstable) for the soul of his first wife, Ascelina.³ Hugh de Montfort and Mauger each annexed one of the abbey's men, and Robert the Lascivious took half an acre at Wennington (Chafford) but these were the only recorded incidents to Westminster's detriment in Essex over the period.⁴ According to Domesday the monks themselves had taken possession of the manor of Kelvedon (Ongar) without a royal writ allowing them to do so, although there is a pertinent royal *actum*.⁵ Domesday states that Ailric fought King William and gave Kelvedon to Westminster on his return. William I's writ, by contrast, orders that the monks be resealed of Kelvedon as it was granted by Aethelric and confirmed by King Edward. This difference of opinion was either caused by a covetous Domesday commissioner or (probably) a capable monastic forger.

¹ VCH Essex ii. 116, 166, lists these as grants. However, it is clearly noted in Domesday that Barking had held Lidlington (Bedfordshire), Slapton (Buckinghamshire) and Tyburn (Middlesex) TRE, whilst no information was offered about prior tenure or a new grant with regard to Weston (Surrey): DB 211a, 146a, 128b, 34a

² Cart Westm nos. 9, 10, 41: LDB 14a, 15a: Mon i 301 no.xxxvii: Reg i (2nd ed) nos. 290, 299, 300, 324, 333: B.Harvey, Westminster Abbey and its Estates in the Middle Ages (Oxford, 1977), 27-28

³ Cart Westm, no.23: Gilbert Crispin, p.127 no. 1. This grant does not seem to have been honoured

⁴ LDB 14b, 15a, 100a

⁵ LDB 14b-15a: Reg i (2nd ed) no. 302

The bishop of London and the canons of St Paul's also profited from the Conquest. Norman bishops had held the see of London since Edward the Confessor's reign and had already begun to put Norman ideas into practice.¹ St Paul's was not radically changed by Norman demands for ecclesiastical change, as its pre-1066 customs included 'an embryo prebendal system ... [and] the canons had some say in the recruitment of new canons and the management of chapter lands.'² Effectively St Paul's was semi-Norman before the Conquest and it remained so after the Conquest, as there was a strong Anglo-Saxon presence among the canons long until the early twelfth century.³ Support for the bishopric of London was also assured by the good working relationship between William I and the Domesday bishop, Maurice. Maurice, formerly archdeacon of Le Mans, had been Royal Chancellor since c.1078.⁴ There were additions to 'the land of the bishop of London' at Layer Marney (Winstree) and Laindon (Chafford), and an entire fee (*feudum episcopi Londoniensis*) was created for him from the lands of the dispossessed.⁵ The bishop also staked claims to former properties at Warley (Chafford) and Southminster (Wibertsherne), which were accepted by King William.⁶ The canons had become involved in the tenorial mêlée of post-Conquest Essex, annexing land at Norton, Navestock (both Ongar) and Barling (Rochford).⁷

¹ R.A.Brown, The Normans and the Norman Conquest 90, 108, 221n.

² W.R.Matthews & W.M.Atkins (eds.), A History of St Paul's Cathedral and the men associated with it (London, 1957) 18

³ Before c.1110, there were eighteen canons with Germanic names at St Paul's: J. Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1066-1300: St Paul's London, revised edition by D.E.Greenway (5 vols., London, 1968-), i. 4, 27, 36, 40, 47, 49, 57, 65, 73, 74, 77, 79, 85, 89

⁴ J. le Neve, Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1066-1300: St Paul's London i. 1: D.R.Bates, William the Conqueror (London, 1989), 149: W.R.Matthews & W.M.Atkins (eds.), A History of St Paul's Cathedral and the men associated with it 19

⁵ LDB 9b-12b

⁶ LDB 10a-b

⁷ LDB 13a-14a

The canons also complained that they had been the victims of annexation: Peter de Valognes, Geoffrey de Mandeville and Ralph Baynard were all accused of stealing their land.¹

St Martin-le-Grand was founded by Engelric, antecessor of Eustace of Boulogne. At Engelric's request, the foundation was confirmed on 11 May 1068 by the king and the college's lands were listed in full.² St Martin-le-Grand was then badly despoiled by its new patron once Engelric had been replaced by Count Eustace. St Martin's retained one manor in-chief, at Good Easter (Dunmow), was reduced to holding Hoddesdon (Hertfordshire), Tolleshunt (Thurstable) and Maldon as sub-tenancies and lost Stanford (Ongar), Fobbing (Barstable), Bendysh (Freshwell), Chrishall (Uttlesford), Rivenhall (Witham) and Ongar altogether.³ The fate of St Martin's sole hide at Benfleet is unknown.⁴ St Ouen of Rouen had held land at West Mersea (Winstree) since Edward the Confessor's reign, which had been targeted by the Norman Waleran and the Anglo-Saxon Engelric.⁵ It is indicative of the chaos of Conquest Essex that ancient Anglo-Saxon foundations were both predators and prey, whilst an established Norman house fell victim to both Anglo-Saxon and Norman aggression.

Two other ancient foundations from outside the county had weathered the conquest without losing land in Essex. Christ Church, Canterbury (described as Holy Trinity) had retained its TRE lands, and the monks had appropriated

¹ LDB 12b, 13b. The canons of St Paul's may have been victimised because of the high quantity of Anglo-Saxons among their number. Before c.1110, there were eighteen canons with Germanic names at St Paul's: J. le Neve, Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1066-1300: St Paul's London i. 4, 27, 36, 40, 47, 49, 57, 65, 73, 74, 77, 79, 85, 89

² Reg i. (2nd ed) no. 181

³ DB 137b: LDB 20b, 32a, 29a, 30b, 26a, 34a, 33a-b, 27a, 30b-31a

⁴ LDB 14a

⁵ LDB 22a: Hart no. 63: MRH 94: VCH Essex ii 196-7; Tanner 118

an additional hide at Lawling (Wibertsherne).¹ Christ Church had suffered the loss of Newington (hundred), although this was recovered at Penenden.² Bury St Edmund's, an abbey left unmolested within and beyond Essex, gained three hides of land at Harlow after 1066.³

Monastic patronage was not just royal. Norman houses were granted land in Essex by the king, as was Battle Abbey.⁴ Baronial patronage, where known, indicates that local men showed no support for the Essex houses. William of Écouis granted the church and land at Moreton (Ongar) to St Etienne of Caen before 1077, of which there is no record in Domesday.⁵ Similarly, the grant of land at Chaureth (Dunmow) by Richard fitz Gilbert to Bec was not recorded in Domesday.⁶ Grants of tithes to Bec from Hugh de Gournay and Henry de Ferrers were also not recorded in Domesday, although tithes were not a major feature of the survey.⁷ Another grant in favour of St Etienne of Caen was made by Waleran fitz Ranulf before 1077. His manor of Panfield (Hinckford) was granted, by a lost charter, to the abbey but the confirmation by William I has survived.⁸ Each of these grants displays the same tendency to honour old promises made in Normandy before commencing new projects in England.⁹ Janet Burton suggests that many of these were 'little more than economic units

¹ LDB 8a-b, 103a

² Reg i (2nd ed) no. 69 (1a)

³ A.Gransden, 'Baldwin, Abbot of Bury St Edmunds, 1065-97', ANS iv (1981) 65-76, 76: LDB 19b

⁴ LDB 20b-22a: CDF 141-2: E.Searle ed., The Chronicle of Battle Abbey (London, 1980) 48-65

⁵ Reg i (2nd ed) nos. 45, 54: Hart no.75: LDB 88b-89a, 22a

⁶ Hart no.78: LDB 103a: CDF 156-57

⁷ Reg i (2nd ed) no. 167

⁸ Reg i (2nd ed) nos. 45, 54: Hart, nos. 86, 88: MRH 91: VCH Essex ii. 197-9: Tanner 120

⁹ For further examples see Fleming 170-1, 172

designed to administer the British estates of foreign houses'.¹ Matthew's explanation was one of sentimental attachment when he said that 'not until the families began to identify themselves with their new homes in England did they foster English monasteries.'²

This pattern of monastic patronage reveals a cursory relationship between Essex landholders and the county. No baronial grant of land or rights was made to an existing Essex house and all grants of this nature were directed at existing houses based outside Essex and, in some cases, outside England. When Geoffrey de Mandeville founded Hurley, his steward Thorold granted two-thirds of the tithes of Ockendon (Chafford) to the priory.³ That Thorold, an Essex-based mesne tenant of the county's third greatest landowner, should elect to support his lord's new foundation demonstrates a lack of parochialism. By making this grant, he confirmed the contemporary superiority of honorial responsibility over ties to his locality. Mandeville's inclusion of the phrase *mei capud honoris* in the same charter (with reference to Hurley) may indicate that he was not initially based in Essex. Stenton maintained that this was a common event in late-eleventh century England and that calling a monastery a *caput* was merely a symbolic gesture.⁴ Symbolic gesture or not, it was made outside Essex.

The continuing wealth of and economic investment in the county was achieved in spite of the political instability it suffered in the aftermath of the Conquest. The annexations and inevitable disputes over land tenure did not damage the county's productivity, raising questions over the scale and severity of land contests. The financial details of Domesday suggest that Essex was an extremely pacific and largely unremarkable county. There was no waste and

¹ J.E.Burton, Monastic and Religious Houses in Britain 1000-1300 (Cambridge, 1994) 29

² D.J.A.Matthew, The Norman Monasteries and their English Possessions 28

³ Gilbert Crispin, pp.132-34: Hart, no.93: LDB 57b-58a

⁴ First Century, 62-3

few prominent individuals were engaged in active revolt. Of the foreign tenants-in-chief, only two are known to have rebelled against the Conqueror. The rebels, Roger of Poitou and Ralph de Gael earl of East Anglia, were not recorded as being actively rebellious in Essex.¹

However, Roger of Poitou's Domesday lands suggest some measure of conflict.² In every variable respect (value, population, livestock and ploughs) his lands endured a decline in quantitative value. As this is more marked between his acquisition of the lands and the Domesday survey, the figures indicate the seizure of chattels and suggest resistance. His lands were confiscated during 1086 and a central question is whether or not the local survey was made after his rebellion. The use of present (*habet, tenet*) and past (*habebat, tenuit*) tenses for Roger's lands in different counties led Mason to suggest that he rebelled after Hampshire, Essex, Suffolk, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire were surveyed, during the survey of Yorkshire and before the Domesday commissioners visited Norfolk, Derbyshire and the embryonic county of Lancashire.³

However, this should not be taken at face value. As David Bates has noted, Odo of Bayeux's lands were included within the *terre regis* in some counties and accounted for separately in others, even though he had been imprisoned four years earlier.⁴ The return for Odo's lands in Essex gave no indication that

¹ For details of the careers of and revolt by Ralph de Gael, earl Waltheof of Huntingdon and others, see C.P. Lewis, 'The early earls of Anglo-Norman England' *ANS* xiii (1991) 207-224. For Roger of Poitou's career, C.P.Lewis, 'The King and Eye: a study in Anglo-Norman politics', *EHR* civ (1989) 569-89; V.Chandler, 'The Last of the Mongomerys: Roger the Poitevin and Arnulf', *BIHR* lxii (1989) 1-14

² *LDB* 89a-b

³ J.F.A.Mason, 'Roger de Montgomery and his sons', *TRHS* 5th.ser. vol. xiii (1963) 1-28, 14-15

⁴ D.R.Bates, 'The Character and Career of Odo bishop of Bayeux', *Speculum* l (1975) 1-20, 15-17

the bishop had been dispossessed and incarcerated, suggesting inconsistency in Domesday.¹ If Roger's act of revolt post-dated the Essex return for Domesday, the declining values must reflect diseased or dying animals coupled with a local population decrease and a loss of ploughs which were collectively unrelated to distraint. Arguments of loss of value after forceful disseisin are more plausible, although the marked drop in value recorded at Bradfield may indicate a deliberate policy of spoiling the remote Tendring hundred.² Bradfield was valued at 40s. in 1066, 30s. when Roger acquired it and only 5s. in 1086. Bradfield's original value had decreased by 25% when he acquired it and by 1086 its value had decreased by seven-eighths.

Ralph de Gael's lands tell a slightly different story. He held only one manor in Essex, at Great Sampford (Freshwell), together with a small quantity of land at Little Bentley (Tendring), having a cumulative value in 1086 of less than £27.³ Great Sampford passed into royal hands, whilst Little Bentley was held by Hervey de Espinay of Count Alan of Brittany in 1086. Ralph's rebellion and subsequent removal occurred in 1075, thus obscuring any evidence of contemporary damage.⁴ One of Ralph's allies, Earl Waltheof, held one manor in Essex at Walthamstow (Becontree).⁵ No decline in revenue is evident from Domesday. It is particularly remarkable that this event, the Earls' Revolt, which involved Bretons, Normans, Danes and Anglo-Saxons taking up arms in England and in Brittany, was not supported by any of the other Essex Bretons.⁶

¹ LDB 22b-26a

² LDB 89b

³ LDB 7b, 35b

⁴ For a summary of the rebellion, see R.A.Brown, The Normans and the Norman Conquest, 173

⁵ LDB 92a

⁶ K.S.B.Keats-Rohan, 'The Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest', ANS xiii (1990) 157-72, 167

Gael's revolt reveals the differences between the Breton groups in England during the Conqueror's reign. Post-Conquest settlers in Essex have and will always attract the label 'Anglo-Normans' but it is not a thoroughly accurate term.¹ Two tenants-in-chief had long-standing interests in England which predated the Conquest and both were of Breton extraction: Robert fitz Wymarc and Ralph de Gael.² Both of these non-Normans had connections with the former Anglo-Saxon administration. Like Waltheof, the rebellious earl of Huntingdon, they were indicative of continuity between the Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Norman regimes.³

Other Bretons were evident in Essex, some of whom were associated with the honour of Richmond.⁴ The Vere family (eventual earls of Oxford) held land in-chief and of Count Alan of Brittany.⁵ The Espinays, who gave their name to Willingale Spain (Dunmow), were the count's other main tenants in Essex.⁶ Hardwin of Scales, who was credited with the annexation of royal demesne at Great Chesterford (Uttlesford) also belongs to this group.⁷ The Helion (Helléan) family were Bretons, although their Domesday representative (Tihel) held land in-chief with no evident connection to the count.⁸ Tihel was a sub-tenant of the bishop of Bayeux, which may suggest that he was associated with

¹ K.S.B.Keats-Rohan, 'The Bretons and Normans of England 1066-1154: the family, the fief and the feudal monarchy', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* xxvi (1992) 42-78

² *VCH Essex* i.345-6, Keats-Rohan, 'The Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest', 159; C.P.Lewis, 'The French in England Before the Norman Conquest', *ANS* xvii (1995) 123-44, 128-29

³ For details of the careers of and revolt by Waltheof, Ralph and others, see C.P. Lewis, 'The early earls of Anglo-Norman England'

⁴ Keats-Rohan, 'The Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest', 159-60, 170-1

⁵ *LDB* 76a-78a, 35a-35b

⁶ *LDB* 35a-35b. Epinay is near Rennes: *Keats-Rohan* 254-55

⁷ *LDB* 3b The family may have originated from the district near Fougères in north-eastern Brittany: *Keats-Rohan* 244-45

⁸ *LDB* 81b-82b

those north-eastern Bretons that had close links with Bayeux's brother Robert of Mortain.¹ However Helléan (Morbihan: arr. Pontivy) lies in north-western Brittany, which casts some doubt over such an affinity.²

Keats-Rohan posits that the Bretons found in the east of England at Domesday were likely to have entered England after 1066 and in association with Count Alan.³ Conversely, Gael's followers were neither eager to remain in England nor welcome to stay.⁴ As Tihel de Helléan was the only Breton in Domesday Essex to have no apparent connection with Count Alan, this is a wholly practical argument.⁵

The remainder of the barons of Essex were loyal to the crown.⁶ General peace among the new tenants-in-chief in Essex was only to be expected by virtue of the fact that the newcomers largely had good ties with the king and were not likely to rebel against him. The first generation of continental settlers was (largely) still alive in 1086 and their central concerns were implementation of the Conquest, protection of their new lands and adding to their estates. This stable situation contributed to the county's peace, in spite of the diversity of the new landowners.

Walter of Douai and Roger de Raismes were Picards, whilst the only Aquitanian to be connected with the county (Reimund Giral) and one of the

¹ LDB 24a: Keats-Rohan, 'The Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest', 159, 161-2

² Tengvik 91

³ Keats-Rohan, 51, 56

⁴ Keats-Rohan, 45-6

⁵ J.H.Round, 'Helion of Helion's Bumpstead', TEAS n.s. viii (1913) 187-91, 187. It is likely that the family were originally associated with Ralph de Gael but survived Gael's disgrace: Keats-Rohan, 51, 247

⁶ Except for the case of Eustace of Boulogne, although he may have held no land in the county before 1067

two Angevins (Osmund of Anjou) were merely named in retrospective asides.¹ By 1086, neither Reimund or Osmund were tenants in the county. Osmund's nephew Guy remained in England as a tenant of the count of Boulogne, a somewhat ironic arrangement in view of the future enmity between the counts of Anjou and Boulogne.² The number of men from these groups in Essex was minimal compared with quantities found in many other counties.³ The large Boulonnais presence in Essex has already been highlighted.⁴ John Horace Round discussed the connections between Essex and Boulogne exhaustively.⁵

Eustace count of Boulogne held a tenth of Essex in 1086, second only to the king himself in landed income from the county. The Boulonnais were extremely successful in the first half of the twelfth century. The first two rulers of Jerusalem after the First Crusade were the brothers of Eustace III of Boulogne. Eustace II was one of the most colourful characters to be involved in the Conquest. He had been married to the Confessor's sister Goda, was praised for his heroism at Hastings and was the first foreign lord to attempt a hostile invasion of Norman England.⁶ He then recovered his English lands, became one of the ten greatest Domesday lords and died a discreet death. One of the greatest problems with the Boulonnais is in attempting to establish when

¹ LDB 91a-b, 5a, 66a, 2b; VCH Essex i.354; Tengvik 87, 109; G. Beech, 'The Participation of Aquitanians in the Conquest of England 1066-1100', ANS ix (1986) 1-24, 21. In 1066, Normandy, Boulogne and Flanders were at peace: H.J.Tanner, 'The Expansion of the Power and Influence of the Counts of Boulogne Under Eustace II', ANS xiv (1991) 251-77, 270

² Keats-Rohan 36-7; LDB 29a

³ VCH Essex i. 349-50

⁴ For a discussion of Eustace and his relationship with England and Normandy, see H.J.Tanner, 'The Expansion of the Power and Influence of the Counts of Boulogne under Eustace II'

⁵ Peerage Studies 147-180; VCH Essex i.343-4; FE, 462-4

⁶ Peerage Studies 147, 150; H.J.Tanner, 'The Expansion of the Power and Influence of the Counts of Boulogne under Eustace II', 270-74

Eustace III succeeded Eustace II as count of Boulogne.¹ We can be sure that the Boulogne lands in Essex were still held by the Count Eustace who had initially gained possession of them, as there is no record of inheritance in Domesday. This may indicate a late grant to Eustace III or (probably) the survival of a penitent Eustace II. The large swathe of Essex brought under the control of Count Eustace is of significant national interest because of the accession of Count Stephen of Boulogne to the English throne in 1135.

Influential as the Boulonnais were, the majority of the newly settled landowners were Normans. The count of Boulogne and his tenants were little more than a minority group by comparison. It is possible to further divide the Normans, into western and eastern groups. Very few Essex tenants-in-chief, where origin can be determined, came from the modern départements of Manche or Calvados in western Normandy. If it is assumed that most Norman sub-tenants had been local followers of tenants-in-chief in the duchy, it is safe to suggest that the largest proportion of Essex landholders of Norman origin at Domesday were from Eure or Seine-Inferieure.

The only tenants known to have emerged from Manche were Ranulf Peverel, Peter de Valognes, Matthew de Mortagne, Hugh de St Quentin and Hamo *dapifer*.² Apart from Peverel, none of these men held a large share of Essex land.³ From further east in Calvados came Eudo *dapifer* (a native of Ryes),

¹ Round criticised Freeman for stating that Eustace III was the Domesday count and believed instead that Eustace II may have lived until 1093: Peerage Studies 152. Heather Tanner, followed by Kathleen Keats-Rohan, insists that he died in 1087: 'The Expansion of the Power and Influence of the Counts of Boulogne under Eustace II', 276: Keats-Rohan, 196. Judith Green asserts that Eustace III was *in situ* by 1086: J.A.Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England, 42

² Keats-Rohan 355: Tengvik 101, 113, 117: Loyd 50

³ LDB 54b-56b, 78a-79b, 91b, 93a-b. Peverel's wife Ingelrica was rumoured to have been the Conqueror's mistress: Mon iii. 294

Roger Bigod and Robert Gernon.¹ Gernon's lands have not yet been positively identified, but his close links with and eventual succession by the Montfichets are persuasive factors in associating him with the later Montfichet barony of Stansted Montfichet.²

The central issue to note is that whilst the eastern Normans dominated the post-Conquest group in Essex numerically, they did not dominate the prominent positions within the county. Of the county's ten greatest baronial tenants, three were non-Norman (Count Eustace, Aubrey de Vere and Swein), one was from Manche (Ranulf Peverel), two were from Calvados (Eudo *dapifer* and Robert Gernon) and only four were eastern Normans: Ralph Baynard, Richard fitz Gilbert, William de Warenne and Geoffrey de Mandeville.³ The most powerful lords in Essex, who were those with the greatest number of sub-tenants, were a very diverse company. The westerners also held a high number of royal and local offices. Hamo, Eudo and Bigod were all current or future royal stewards, Gernon was the forester of Essex and Valognes was the Domesday sheriff.⁴

From the limited details made available by Domesday and contemporary charters, honorial organisation was already becoming complicated. Ideas of carefully organised settlement can be partially discarded as tenurial disorganisation seems to have been rife. Certain tenants-in-chief were also mesne tenants and some sub-tenants already held land of different honours. Aubrey de Vere held land at Roding (Ongar) and Canfield (Dunmow) from Count Alan and Aubrey's wife held Napsted (Hinckford) and Aldham

¹ Loyd 14, 40, 139

² Gernon held a fee of the bishop of Bayeux at Conde (Condé-sur-Noireau, Calvados, arr. Vire): Keats-Rohan 328

³ Keats-Rohan 327: Loyd 57, 71, 111-12

⁴ Reg i. (1st ed) pp. xxiii-iv: LDB 5b: Sheriffs, 39

(Lexden) of the bishop of Bayeux.¹ Three tenants-in-chief, Swein, Theodoric Pointel and Tihel de Hellèan, were also sub-tenants of Odo of Bayeux.² Richard fitz Gilbert was a sub-tenant of Eudo *dapifer*, Swein held land of Richard fitz Gilbert, Hugh de Montfort was a tenant of Swein, Pointel held from Ralph Baynard and Thorkell the Reeve was a tenant of Swein and Geoffrey de Mandeville.³

There is less evidence to demonstrate that individual sub-tenants held land of various honours, although families doing this were more common. A central problem with an analysis of this phenomenon is that many sub-tenants were known only by their Christian name. The Watevilles held land from two different honours in Essex in 1086. William de Wateville held Roding (Dunmow) from William de Warenne and Robert de Wateville held Hempstead (Freshwell) of Richard fitz Gilbert.⁴ There were also two members of the Marcy family in Essex, Ralph and Serlo. Both were tenants of Hamo *dapifer*, whilst Ralph also held of the honour of Boulogne.⁵ The identification of Serlo, known only by his Christian name in Domesday, was initially made by Round.⁶ As future Serlos in Essex tended to be members of the Marcy family, it is logical to assume that this Serlo was their ancestor. Additionally, Ralph de Marcy and Serlo the unurnamed were the two principal tenants of Hamo *dapifer* in Essex in 1086. Ralph de Marcy and Richard de Marcy

¹ LDB 35a-b, 24a

² LDB 23a-24a

³ LDB 50a, 4a, 44b, 69a, 71a, 42b, 58a

⁴ LDB 36b, 41b

⁵ Serlo (de Marcy)'s Domesday lands consisted of land at *Ateleia*, Dunmow and Roding: LDB 54b-55a. *Ateleia* has not yet been positively identified. Powell considers that it may be Tylde in Ramsden Crays: W.R.Powell, Essex in Domesday Book (Essex Record Office Publication ciii, 1990) p.26

⁶ A theory already aired by Round, who suspected 'that Hamo's tenant Serlo was a De Marci as well as Radulfus': J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar' 149n.

fulfilled the same roles in 1166 as tenants of Hamo's heirs, the earls of Gloucester.¹

Ralph de Marcy is the earliest concrete example of a sub-tenant who held lands from two different honours through a marriage between Essex-based tenants. He held land in Essex at Faulkbourne, Notley (both Witham), Rayne (Hinckford) and Ryes (Harlow) from Hamo *dapifer*, steward of William the Conqueror.² He also held land of the honour of Boulogne at Abberton (Winstree), Frinton (Tendring) and Laver (Ongar), together with Higham (Suffolk).³ Ralph, we would presume, entered England as part of Hamo's retinue because Marcy (La Manche: arr. Avranches) lies about forty kilometres from Hamo's Norman stronghold at Torigny-sur-Vire (La Manche: arr. St-Lô, cant. Torigny).⁴ Ralph, at some time before 1086 and for some unspecified reason, then acquired a stake in the Boulogne estate.

The most plausible explanation for this is that Ralph's wife, Ida, had brought these lands to him through marriage. Stephen of Mortain, as count of Boulogne (c.1125-35), confirmed to St John's Abbey Colchester their right to hold the land at *Hecham* (Higham) which Ida wife of Ralph de Marcy had granted to them during the lifetime of Eudo *dapifer*.⁵ This almost certainly

¹ RBE i. 290. In spite of the obviously separate descent of the lands held by the Marcys of Hamo *dapifer*, Kathleen Keats-Rohan holds that Serlo was probably Ralph de Marcy's son: Keats-Rohan, 334. She suggests that Serlo married Mabilia the daughter and heir of Junain (or Iwain), who was also a sub-tenant of the honour of Boulogne: LDB 27a, 31a: Keats-Rohan, 334. No date has yet been suggested for this marriage

² LDB 54b-55a. Ryes was called *Siriceslea* in 1086 and there is no apparent connection between this Essex settlement and Ryes in Calvados

³ LDB 28a, 30b, 32b, 303a. 120 acres at Laver were held by one 'Ralph' from the count of Boulogne in 1086. Later grants of land from Laver by the Marcys suggest that the Domesday Ralph was Ralph de Marcy

⁴ Tengvik 97: Loyd 50.

⁵ Cart Colc p.49

indicates that the Boulogne territories were brought to the Marcys before 1086 by Ida (whose Boulonnais name further strengthens this argument). Stephen's confirmation of Ida's grant makes no mention of Ralph as co-benefactor, even though the grant was made before Eudo's death and thus prior to February 1120. Ralph's apparent lack of involvement is likely to have stemmed from his indirect connection with the Higham land. This is probably the earliest example of post-Conquest settlers in Essex undertaking inter-honorial marriage, one of the strongest signs of intra-county affinity and the growth of a local community.

Recorded local marriages were confined almost entirely to the tenants-in-chief, whilst other factors suggestive of the growth of local community among the sub-tenants did not happen or were not recorded. As there was little recorded monastic investment in Essex, contemporary private charters are something of a rarity. Domesday is the principal source for the period, and Domesday was organised by and concerned with the honour. Therefore the tenurial associations between lords and vassals are clearly marked out, with little to suggest any other kind of relationship in the county. The adoption of English toponyms by the Normans in Essex was non-existent at this stage. The outgoing order did display this characteristic (for example, Aelfric of Alderford, Aelmer of Borley, Wulfric of Brundon, Ledmer of Hempstead, Edric of Easthorpe and Siward of Maldon) but there had not been sufficient time (or, perhaps, inclination) for the Normans of Essex to adapt a similar sense of local identity.¹ This did occur in other English counties by Domesday. Examples include Richard son of Count Gilbert, who was frequently described as being 'of Tonbridge', Richard's brother Baldwin of Okehampton and Picot of Cambridge.² The converse process, of a settlement

¹ LDB 101b, 103a, 81b, 72b: C.Hart, The Danelaw 640-7

² This phenomenon has been discussed by Judith Green, The Aristocracy of Norman England, 343. The sons of Count Gilbert of Brionne had, to all intents and purposes, lost their ancestral lands in Normandy (together with the comital dignity) and so took English

being named after its lord, had not yet begun in Essex either. Hatfield Peverel (Witham), Berners Roding (Dunmow) and Woodham Ferrers (Chelmsford) are examples of this process in action, although these were known simply as *Rodinges*, *Hadfeld* and *Udeham* in 1086.¹

Communities had been brought intact from Normandy, as honorial representatives settled on English manors in the same county as their neighbours from Normandy. In Essex local communities were not transplanted from a Norman locality to a land-block as most honours were disparate entities. In the Domesday landholding patterns lie the seeds of community in Essex, as honorial and local relationships were not the same. The best documented examples of inter-honorial marriage concern the lords of the honours with land in Essex, whilst at this stage evidence for similar marriages among sub-tenants of different honours is minimal. Whilst the tenants-in-chief were by no means the best representatives of the trends of Essex sub-tenants, their marriages continually reinforced local landholding patterns.



There are examples of closer ties being established through marriage within the honorial framework. In Essex, one tenant-in-chief married the sister of one of his own sub-tenants and one sub-tenant married his lord's daughter. Tenant-in-chief William de Warenne married Richard Guet's sister (Guet held five Essex manors of Warenne) and Walter Tirel married Adeliza, daughter of

toponyms. Green suggests that the toponym refers to the family castle, which would explain why Richard fitz Gilbert was both 'of Clare' and 'of Tonbridge'. Round's observations on the 'stamp of the Conquest' (VCH Essex i. 356-7) indicate that the Normans in Essex did not take local toponyms. Instead of doing this, villages were renamed after them

¹ LDB 60b-61a, 72a, 57a

Richard fitz Gilbert.¹ These furnish further evidence that clear social distinctions between tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants cannot be applied when assessing the various factors that contribute to an appraisal of 'community'.

On the whole, marriages within the county were not well recorded and they offer a disappointing quantity of appropriate detail. Table 11, which shows marital ties between Essex landowners, would be just as useful as an illustration of marriages between Domesday tenants-in-chief in Suffolk. Count Eustace of Boulogne, Richard fitz Gilbert, Eudo *dapifer*, Geoffrey de Mandeville and Peter de Valognes also held land there.² These tenants-in-chief do demonstrate individual factors of community (in this case connection and alliance through marriage), although in this case these trends apply to a region rather than a specific county.

Table 11: marriages between Essex tenants-in-chief by c.1090

At this time royal agents in Essex were generally tenants-in-chief, not necessarily of the first rank but tenants-in-chief nonetheless. The information available is incomplete, to the point where it can be argued but not conclusively proved that Geoffrey de Mandeville held the office of sheriff of Essex. The last sheriff of the Anglo-Saxon period was Robert fitz Wymarc, although it is not clear whether he continued to act in this role after the

¹ F. Anderson, "'Uxor mea"; the first wife of the first William of Warenne', SAC cxxx (1992) 107-29, 107; LDB 36a, 37b-38a, 41a; H.R.Luard ed., Annales Monastici iii. (London 1866) 429; VCH Surrey ii (London, 1905) 65; FE, 472. Warenne's daughter Edeva married Gerard son of Hugh de Gournai: D. Gurney, Records of the House of Gurney (2 vols., London, 1848, 1858) 22. Peter de Valognes married the sister of Eudo, although recently it has been suggested that the Eudo in question was not the *dapifer*: Keats-Rohan 7

² LDB 281a

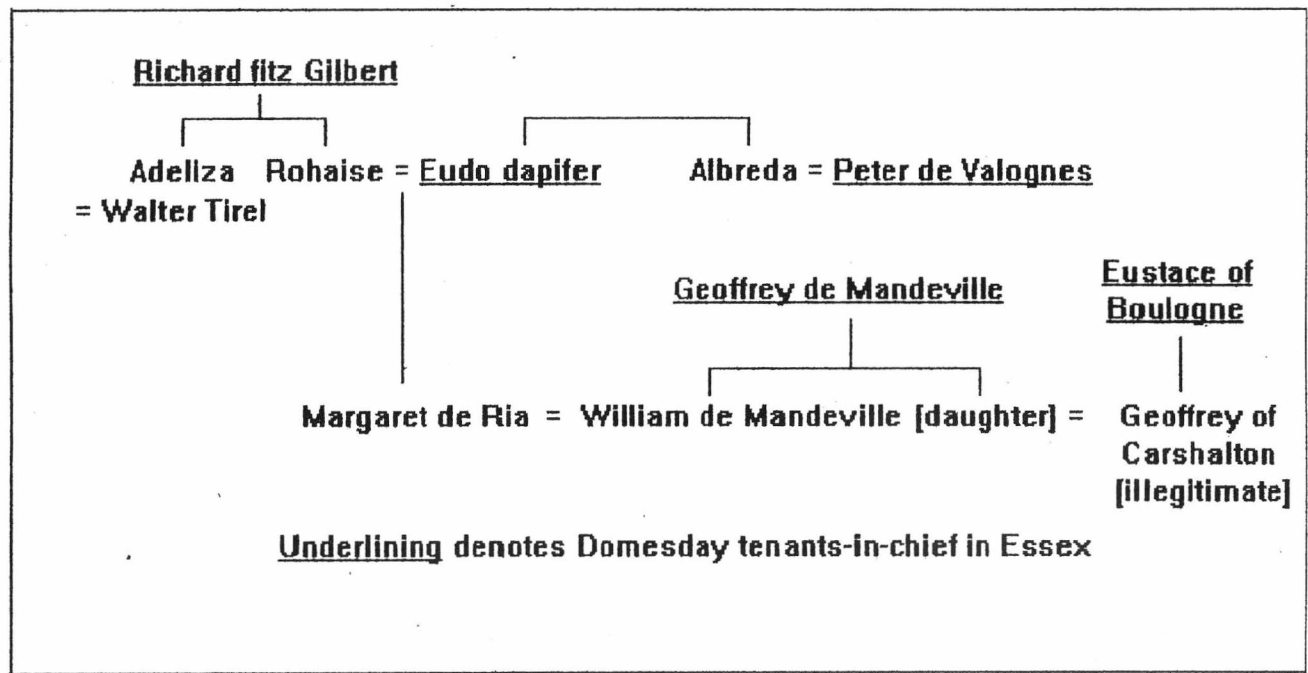


Table 11: marriages between Essex tenants-in-chief by c.1090

Conquest or if his son Swein took over the office immediately.¹ Swein of Essex certainly held the office before 1086, another 'native' appointment which ensured continuity and stability.² That Robert and Swein were not dispossessed is normally explained by their Breton connections but they were also experienced local administrators.³ Their knowledge of the county and ability to communicate with both victor and vanquished was a contributory factor to peace and administrative stability in Essex during the early years of the Conqueror's reign.⁴

The first definite Norman sheriff was Ralph Baynard, possibly preceded by Geoffrey de Mandeville.⁵ Baynard was replaced before Domesday by Peter de Valognes, a less important tenant-in-chief.⁶ The selection of sheriffs from the higher levels of Essex society was mirrored in the choice of some other local officials. Robert Gernon was made the king's forester, a title with which his successors (the Montfichets) continued to be associated.⁷ Forest administration in Essex had been introduced with alacrity and left in the capable hands of a powerful local man. The importance of the forest to the king is apparent through this appointment. Royal manors in Essex which were not farmed by the sheriff had local custodians, again tenants-in-chief, such as Ranulf brother of Ilger and Otto the Goldsmith.⁸ Ranulf was sheriff of Huntingdonshire during the reign of Rufus and Otto may have been sheriff of

¹ Sheriffs 39

² J.A.Green, 'The Sheriffs of William the Conqueror' ANS v (1982) 129-45, 132. If Robert fitz Wymarc's services had been retained, it would not have been an isolated case: W. A. Morris, The Medieval English Sheriff to 1300 (Manchester, 1927), 42-3

³ VCH Essex i. 345-46

⁴ A.Williams, The English and the Norman Conquest 84-5, 96

⁵ LDB 1b, 6a: Sheriffs, 39

⁶ LDB 1b

⁷ LDB 5b

⁸ LDB 1b, 3b, 4a

London and Middlesex *temp.* Henry I.¹ Other royal manors in Essex had custodians with no land in the county but responsible offices elsewhere: Picot sheriff of Cambridgeshire, Ranulf sheriff of Surrey, and (to a lesser extent) Godric *dapifer*, possibly sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk under Rufus.²

Judith Green noted several national trends in shrieval office during this period. She argued that the introduction of Norman sheriffs was gradual rather than immediate, that changes in personnel were frequent, that many of those selected had links with Odo of Bayeux and/or William fitz Osbern, that few originated from western Normandy and that they were a 'mixed bag' as far as land tenure was concerned.³

Essex certainly corresponded well with her views. Robert and Swein were not Norman, even though they cannot be described as being truly Anglo-Saxon either. In terms of wealth Mandeville, Swein and Baynard were all among the county's wealthiest ten landholders in 1086, whilst Valognes was not as well-endowed within the county. Viewed nationally, these same men held lands of very different values. By Corbett's classifications, Mandeville was a class A baron (lands valued at £750 and above), Baynard was class B (£400-£650), Swein class C (£200-£400) and Valognes class D (£100-£200).⁴ The figures available for Robert fitz Wymarc also place him in class D, although the accuracy of his Domesday record of landholding must be questioned.⁵

¹ Sheriffs 48, 57, 76

² LDB 3b, 4a, 5a, 7b: Sheriffs, 29, 78, 60

³ J.A.Green, 'The Sheriffs of William the Conqueror', 140, 145

⁴ Corbett 510-11

⁵ LDB 42a-48b provides details of the sixty-seven manors and smaller parcels of land within Swein's honour in Essex. Of these forty-two (63%) name the TRE tenant, fourteen (21%) disclose that there was a TRE tenant without giving any name(s) and eleven (16%) omit this information altogether. Consequently the TRE picture is not exact and any final figure for Robert fitz Wymarc's holding must be considered potentially incomplete and possibly in need of upward revision

Valognes was the only member of this group known to have originated from western Normandy.¹ Four or five men holding the shrieval office over a space of twenty-one years does indicate rapid turnover in comparison to the reign of Henry I. The only one of these sheriffs known to have connections with Odo of Bayeux was Swein, who held just under five hides from the bishop at Stambridge (Rochford) and Creeksea (Wibertsherne).² Most significantly, all of these sheriffs were Essex tenants-in-chief. Surprisingly, no information exists for royal castellans in Essex before 1086.

Castles

There were probably three castles in Essex by 1086, at Clavering, Rayleigh and Colchester. Only Rayleigh is mentioned by Domesday, and as the castle was said to be built by Swein it almost certainly post-dated the Conquest.³ Clavering had been in existence since before 1052, if it was the 'Robert's Castle' alluded to in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle.⁴ Clavering castle was not named in the 1086 survey, raising doubts about its survival of the conquest and the authenticity of the identification.⁵ Both of these fortifications were in the

¹The family came from Valognes (La Manche): Tengvik 117

² LDB 23b

³ *In hoc manerio fecit Suen' suum castellum*: LDB 43b: CA, 146

⁴ ASC 1052 E, p.125. This suggestion was made by Round, 'The Castles of the Conquest', Archaeologia lviii (1902) 313–340, 328

⁵ CA, 143: LDB 46b-47a. Cathcart-King considered that 'as it will have been a stone castle from the first, the earthworks having virtually no command, this date would be remarkable.' The argument is that a construction of this nature should have drawn more contemporary attention than a passing reference in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. This theory has been supported by Harfield, who undermines his own scholarly authority by stating that Robert fitz Wymarc and Swein were Normans and by claiming that Cathcart-King thought Robert's Castle was probably in Herefordshire (which he did not): C.G.Harfield, 'A Handlist of Castles Recorded in the Domesday Book', EHR cvi (1991)

hands of Swein of Essex in 1086 and his undisputed possession of these castles demonstrates that he was not considered to be a threat. Clavinging, in the north-west of Essex, commanded the northbound Roman road and Rayleigh (Rochford), in the south-east, was at the centre of the honour's greatest collection of manors. Evidently Swein was highly trusted. Apart from his less than honest dealings as sheriff, he did nothing to abuse that trust.

The huge royal castle of Colchester was also absent from Domesday, although it was built during the reign of William I and appears to have been designed by the White Tower's architect.¹ The castles of Colchester and Rayleigh both stood near the eastern coast in the midst of the two maritime territories held by the king and Swein. Their early existence and tenure by the block-holder provide further evidence of a deliberate policy to protect the coast through local tenurial domination.

Two other castles may have been raised at this time. There is no contemporary record to corroborate claims that Ongar and Pleshy were built in the eleventh century, although Cathcart-King considered that they were probably constructed by 1100.¹ A discussion of the existence of these castles is purely conjectural but as the two tenants-in-chief concerned (Count Eustace and Geoffrey de Mandeville) were so powerful in Essex, construction of fortifications by either cannot be simply dismissed. As each of these castles would form the *caput* of the respective honours, there are grounds for

371-92, 376, 389. Tonbridge Castle was not recorded in Domesday either, yet it was held by the rebels against Rufus in 1088: CA 235

¹ The architect may have been Gundulf, bishop of Rochester: H.M.Colvin ed., The History of the King's Works (4 vols., London, 1963-82) i. 28-31. Cathcart-King described Colchester castle as having an 'enormous Norman keep (by far the largest in existence) CA 143. For a full account of the castle's dimensions and architecture, see G.T.Clark, 'Some Account of the Keep of Colchester Castle', Archaeological Journal xxxix (1882), 239-56

considering that work commenced sooner rather than later. Eustace also spent much of Rufus' reign in exile as a supporter of Robert Curthose and (from 1096) on crusade, with Curthose.² If the date suggested by Cathcart-King is accurate, Ongar must have been constructed during the Conqueror's reign.³

To conclude, Domesday Essex was a county with great variety in its influences and population. With existing Anglian and Saxon traditions, the county was conquered with ease (to a greater or lesser extent) by Bretons, Normans, Angevins, Aquitanians, Poitevins, Picards and Boulonnais.⁴ With a large quantity of tenants-in-chief, of variable standing locally and nationally, Essex possessed a tenurial structure that was based upon a combination of antecessorial succession, the private conquest of land and (to a lesser extent) the use of the grant system. It had been both a temporary base for the conquerors of the north and a centre of permanent occupation for the families who had built or would build castles, monasteries and new lives in Essex. The stable political relationship between England and Normandy did not pressure the landowners of Essex into English monastic investment, a situation that would change once England and Normandy had different masters.⁵

Honours in Essex consisted of manors spread across the county in an almost random pattern, with the lesser fiefs demonstrating a greater degree of subinfeudation. This situation was caused by the immediate needs of the conqueror and his barons, apportioning Essex before most of England had been tamed and distributed.⁶ Nevertheless, Essex did not become a county free from Anglo-Saxon lordship overnight; in fact, removing the last vestiges

¹ CA 146

² C.W.David, *Robert Curthose, Duke of Normandy* (London, 1920), 47, 51, 222

³ An opinion shared by Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 142-52, 144

⁴ For Osmund of Anjou, see *LDB* 2b

⁵ E. Cownie, 'The Normans as Patrons of English Religious Houses, 1066-1135', 60

⁶ *First Century* 64-66

of local Anglo-Saxon land ownership took ninety-seven years.¹ Outside Rayleigh, the conquest of Essex was still in progress. The presence of smaller Anglo-Saxon landowners in Domesday reveals that in Essex the Norman settlement, though almost complete, had not yet been fully implemented. An important result of the Conquest was that it set out the internal, honorial boundaries of Essex which (in most cases) endured for a century and more. This corresponds with the national pattern observed by Stenton.¹

The one point of over-riding importance here was the growth in royal demesne in the county, which in the space of twenty years had blossomed from virtually nothing to over 10% of the county's landed wealth. Even the great non-royal honours further contributed to the unique status of Essex. The honour of Boulogne was comparable in size and value to the royal demesne, whilst the honour of Rayleigh was the fourth greatest in the county and a dominant influence in Rochford hundred. Neither honour was governed by a Norman: both had over half of their (English) land in Essex. Major Norman individuals had a stake in Essex but, with the exception of the Mandevilles, Ralph Baynard and Ranulf Peverel, these were not on a par with their holdings in other counties. Many Essex sub-tenants found themselves holding land on the periphery of an honour, within an area characterised neither by royal nor baronial influence.

With no new monastic foundations in the county, few sources detailing local monastic patronage and minimal records of the lives of sub-tenants and lesser tenants-in-chief there is little to recommend the use of the word 'community' by 1086. Bearing in mind the weakness of the sources, and a dependence on the anecdotal evidence provided by Domesday for this kind of information,

¹ The Honour of Rayleigh remained with Robert fitz Wymarc's descendants until 1163: Sanders 139

County	Demesne (in-chief)	Demesne (as subtenant)	Enfeoffed	Total
Essex	£320 7s.4d	-	£203 17s.	£524 4s.4d
Kent	£80	-	-	£80
Hants.	£80	-	-	£80
Herts.	£62	-	£14 7s.4d	£76 7s.4d
Surrey	£42	-	-	£42
Suffolk	£25	-	£3 10s.	£28 10s.
Cambs.	£20	-	£18	£38
Norfolk	£14 10s.	-	£3 14s.	£18 4s.
Somerset	£11	-	£19 10s.	£30 10s
Beds.	-	-	£21 7s.	£21 7s
Hunts.	-	-	£14 10s.	£14 10s.
Oxon.	-	-	£2	£2
	£654 17s.4d	-	£300 15s.4d	£955 12s.8d

Table 12: national value of the honour of Boulogne in 1086, by county.²

this is unsurprising. As the Domesday group was (in the majority of cases) the first generation of settlers, it was too soon for adherence to a county group to assert supremacy over loyalty to an honour. The existing personal ties between king and baron, and tenant-in-chief and sub-tenant, would not contribute to the growth of local community at this early stage.

¹ *First Century* 57

² See R.W.Finn, *An Introduction to Domesday Book* (London, 1963) 104, where he asserts that the West Saxon shilling was 5d.-48s.-240d. rather than 12d.-20s.-240d. These figures entirely follow the latter formula, as he limited the scope of this discovery to Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Dorset

Tests of community bring derisory results, which can be blamed partly on the weakness of documentation for lesser tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants. The marriage of Ralph de Marcy cannot have been an isolated occurrence, but it is the only confirmed link of this nature between the honours of the county.

Domesday showed that the outgoing landowners of the county were an interdependent group and that personal ties of commendation, judicial rights, tenurial links and kinship systems all existed to bind the inhabitants of Anglo-Saxon Essex together. Domesday's organisation demonstrates the place of the tenant in the honour and precious little else. Tenants-in-chief holding land of one another and marrying into one another's families is an insufficient basis for a discussion of community links. However, both the sheriff and the forester of Essex had (or it can be assumed that they had) their own courts by 1086 and it was from bodies such as these that a 'community' eventually developed. The administrative systems harnessed and developed by the Normans enabled the growth of contact between local men.

Local rebellion and political strife were only connected with schemes that involved other counties or regions. In-fighting among the Normans (and other groups) was restricted because their power in England was jeopardised from two fronts. England had already been invaded (through Essex) and conquered by the Danes during the eleventh century. Whilst this had proved to be temporary, like earlier (and less successful) Danish invasions, it was a precedent which did not bode well for a disunited army of occupation. Threats from the natives aside, there was no safeguard against complete confiscation of lands by the crown in the event of revolt, as Odo of Bayeux, Ralph de Gael, Waltheof and Roger of Poitou discovered. The major post-Conquest difficulties that Essex suffered were annexations, together with the inevitable claims and counter-claims connected with disputed possession. However, annexation disputes did not become blood-feuds and there is absolutely no evidence to support any claim of serious conflict in the county. These were the principal problems in Essex, a county where the Conquest was certainly

successful. Laying private conquest aside, Essex neither suffered from nor caused any major problems. The Norman settlement in the county did little to earn the antagonism of the crown, except where landowning individuals were involved in schemes centred elsewhere.

The early years of Norman rule had a significant impact for all of England. Every county suffered fundamental change in its structure of authority, partly implemented by individuals acting outside royal authority. For Essex, this was the only serious impact of the Conquest. Through Domesday, it can be seen that the transition from Godwinson-dominated shire to Anglo-Norman county was relatively smooth. There is little evidence of despoilation and no record of wasted, valueless manors. Essex had not been beaten into submission, for there had been no need. It is all too easy to reflect that the Norman Conquest was a success but in Essex there was no organised or concerted revolt in need of suppression. Castle-building mainly seems to have occurred as part of a larger coastal defence policy, which hardly conveys a message of resolute native resistance.

Domesday Essex tells of conquest achieved through collaboration, apathy and native weakness rather than confrontation. The methods used to conquer Essex are known but the specific incidents leading to displacement often went unrecorded. It is ironic that there are better records for disputes between the new masters of Essex than there are for the processes that initially won them power.

Chapter Three - The Norman Kings

During the reigns of Rufus and Henry I, Essex was subjected to little initial change (under William II) followed by massive re-organisation under Henry I. Both kings faced similar political problems prior to 1106, mostly in the shape of Robert Curthose, but reacted to his activities and the behaviour of Essex-based barons in strikingly different ways. From the records of their treatment of Essex, Rufus seemed more apt to demonstrate patience and forgiveness than his vengeful and controlling younger brother.

Both reigns shared common features in terms of baronial behaviour. The Conqueror's companions were, in many cases, of comparable age to their adventurous duke. Most of the Domesday tenants-in-chief of Essex had died by 1100, whilst a few continued into the reign of Henry I. The personal nature of widespread patronage and intimate relationship with the crown was slowly replaced by a tenurial system which owed its origins to the actions of dead men. At the time of Domesday there were very few men who had already inherited land from their fathers. Swein of Essex was the greatest of them, succeeding to his father's lands after 1066 and holding the shrievalty during the same period. Details of annexations suggest that John fitz Waleran had not been one of the conquerors of Essex, as Waleran had appropriated land at Henny and Halstead (both Hinckford hundred).¹ Hugh de Gournai was a second-generation settler, although there is no proof that he had gained his lands in Essex through succession rather than a fresh personal grant.² Even before Domesday, many Essex-based English honours were displaying characteristics associated with heritability. The two decades after Domesday saw the passing of most of the Domesday lords of Essex and for the majority of honours succession was a smooth process.

¹ LDB 101b

² D.Gurnay, The Record of the House of Gournay (2 vols., London, 1848, 1858), i. 22

Heritability was not a foregone conclusion at this stage. Holt holds that no land in England could be held *jure hereditario* and that all English lands were classed as acquisitions.¹ As this was still an explosive issue in 1215, it would be folly to argue otherwise.² It must be emphasised that it was rare for an Essex-based honour to undergo the same tortuous path as succession to the Senlis honour of Fotheringay/earldom of Huntingdon.³ Whilst confiscation, typically for revolt, was not an unusual practice, blatantly ignoring the apparent heir's claim to his inheritance was uncommon in Essex. The only obvious case during the period 1086-1135 was that of the Mandeville claim to the estates of Eudo *dapifer*, a situation of Henry I's making that he never resolved. An explanation for the curious inheritance of the Gernon lands by the Montfichets might be found in the disinheritance of the Gernon family rather than attempts to show that the Montfichets were his legitimate heirs. Baronial succession was largely a smooth process in Essex. Unfortunately we have no idea what the price of an untroubled succession was. The 1129-30 Pipe Roll only related one payment of relief by an Essex-based tenant-in-chief.

As we would expect, the earliest surviving Pipe Roll shows that all of the major Domesday tenants-in-chief were dead (or displaced) by 1130.⁴ The last of the Domesday tenants-in-chief appears to have been William de Raismes. Roger and Robert de Raismes each paid £16 13s. 4d. (25 marks of silver)

¹ J.C.Holt, 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England II: Notions of Patrimony', in *Colonial England, 1066-1215*, 197-221, 216. R.H.C.Davis, 'What Happened in Stephen's Reign', *History* xlix (1964) 1-12, 5-6

² See clause 2 of Magna Carta 1215, printed in J.C.Holt, *Magna Carta* (Cambridge, 1992), Appendix vi. p.450

³ For a discussion of this see J.Hudson, *Land Law and Lordship in Anglo-Norman England* (Oxford, 1994), 116-117: *Sanders* 118-119

⁴ Adeliza daughter of Richard fitz Gilbert was described as *uxor Walteri Tirelli* rather than *vidua*, although this is somewhat superfluous as he was a Domesday subtenant, not a tenant-in-chief, and he had left England under a cloud in 1100: *PR 31 Hen I* 56: *LDB* 41a

towards their outstanding reliefs of £50 on their father's land in 1130.¹ The round figures involved are indicative of a newly acquired debt. This was the initial instalment, which may suggest that William was but lately dead, or that the debt had been left uncollected/unpaid since his death. Roger de Raismes did not make any more payments towards the relief, as he died during the period Michaelmas 1129- Michaelmas 1130. Elsewhere he was fined forty marks for making a park without royal licence. Having paid ten marks he was forgiven the remainder '*quia mortuus est*'.²

Between 1086 and 1100 few alterations were made to the tenurial fabric of Essex. William Rufus' reign was not characterised by dramatic sweeping changes in lordship, in spite of sporadic rebellion. The 1088 revolt in favour of Robert Curthose was supported by at least five powerful barons with land in Essex: William Count of Eu, Roger Bigod, Gilbert fitz Richard of Clare, Count Eustace of Boulogne and the recently-restored Odo bishop of Bayeux.³ Only one of these five suffered the generally anticipated consequence of treason. Odo's lands were confiscated permanently, an official and final recognition of their place within the royal demesne.⁴ Odo's Domesday return had been an empty recognition of tenure. Between his imprisonment in 1082 and banishment in 1088 he had enjoyed control of his estates for only one year.

This confiscation altered Essex marginally. Odo's demesne lands (if retained) supplemented Rufus' own to push royal demesne further ahead within the county, although there is evidence that Odo's honour was used for widescale

¹ PR 31 Hen I 54

² PR 31 Hen I 58

³ C.W.Hollister, *Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions*, 100

⁴ D.R.Bates, 'The Character and Career of Odo bishop of Bayeux', *Speculum* 1, 1-20 (1975), 2

patronage.¹ The botched revolt of 1095 in favour of Stephen of Aumâle had even less effect. The only known rebels with an Essex connexion were Gilbert fitz Richard (again) and William of Eu (again).² The former was forgiven, probably for his work as a whistleblower. The latter was blinded and castrated. The Count of Eu's fall from grace had a minimal impact on Essex, as his land in the county consisted of a solitary manor, West Thurrock, with an annual revenue of £30.³ It is also possible that Robert Malet of Eye forfeited his English lands after joining the rebels of 1088, as Roger of Poitou was granting land and rights from the Malet honour during Rufus' reign.⁴

In spite of these confiscations, the baronies within Essex were not subject to any major reorganisation. Eudo *dapifer* obtained lands that had belonged to a

¹ In Kent the honour of Odo bishop of Bayeux formed part of the county farm in 1129-30: PR 31 Hen I 64. Such a designation was not used in Essex, which suggests that Odo's former sub-tenants were regarded as tenants-in-chief. The problem with assessing the disposal of Odo's lands in Essex is that most of it had been sub-infeudated. His Essex lands were worth just over £164 at Domesday, with £32 1s. 6d. retained in demesne. Odo's demesne manors valued at over £5 were Great Burstead and Dunton (both Barstable, LDB 22b) and no other tenant-in-chief had land there. The abbey of Stratford Langthorne held both Great Burstead and Dunton before 1253 but the lands were not listed in Henry II's confirmation charter: VCH Essex ii. 130-33; Mon v. 587-88. Stratford had land at Great Burstead by 1185, as the monks moved there when Stratford was flooded: MRH 126, 130; Mon v. 586. The honour of Peverel of Dover, created from Odo's honour, received some land in Essex including the Cramville land at Rainham (Chafford) and Dengie (Wibertsherne): Book of Fees 277, 582, 590, 901; Sanders, 151. After 1100 Rualon de Avranches, lord of the honour of Folkestone, had an interest in Odo's former manor of Stanton Harcourt (Oxfordshire): Reg ii. no. 528; Govt Hen I, 271-2; DB 155b; Sanders 45. Rualon also had land in Essex, presumably acquired from Odo's estate: PR 31 Hen I 58

² C.W.Hollister, Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions, 104

³ LDB 63a. The Eu manors were later granted to Walter fitz Richard de Clare, after which they were held by the Clare and Marshal earls of Pembroke: Sanders, 110-11

⁴ C.P.Lewis, 'The King and Eye: a study in Anglo-Norman politics', 578-82. The honour of Eye was regularly used as a source of royal patronage from that time

minor tenant-in-chief, Wulfeva wife of Finn, together with mysterious post-Domesday grants of land at *Sollanda* and the manor held by Leofstan brother of Dereman.¹ These lands were worth a useful £10 by 1086 prices.² Eudo's new possessions reflected his senior position in court and cast him quite definitely as the established royal favourite within Essex. The unimpressive scale of his new acquisitions cannot hide the fact that he was one of only three beneficiaries of fresh lands by royal grant in Essex during the reign of William II. From the surviving *acta* it is very clear that having Rufus as king caused lean times for the Essex baronage. The changes wrought during William's thirteen years would have an immense impact on Essex in forthcoming years. A grant made to his favourite, Robert fitz Hamon, would eventually provide Robert of Gloucester with a larger share of Essex. Against this, Rufus' support of Roger of Poitou (to Robert Malet's detriment) brought the honours of Eye and Lancaster together for the first time.³ This pairing was eventually bestowed upon Stephen of Blois.

The other grant made from royal demesne was a little more substantial. Rufus bestowed all of the manors formerly held by his mother, Queen Matilda, upon Robert fitz Hamon.⁴ This grant is of great immediate interest, as it introduced a new baron into Essex. A member of Robert's family (i.e. his brother, Hamo *dapifer*) was a Domesday landowner in the county but Robert's interests in Essex were non-existent prior to the grant. The manors concerned (although

¹ *Reg i* (1st. ed.) nos.442, 435, 399. There was no Domesday vill in Essex called *Sollanda*, nor was there any mention of a Dereman brother of Leofstan. Derman was one of the king's lesser burgesses in 1086: *LDB* 104b. *Scopelanda* (Shopland, Rochford) was Boulonnais demesne in 1086: *LDB* 34b

² *LDB* 52a-b, 98a-b

³ For the connected histories of the honours of Eye and Lancaster over the period 1087-1113, see C.P.Lewis, 'The King and Eye', 576-87

⁴ F.Barlow, *William Rufus* (London, 1983), 93; J.A.Green, 'William Rufus, Henry I and the Royal Demesne', *History* lxiv (1979), 337-52, 341

not enumerated by Orderic) were worth £44 by 1086 valuations.¹ This was enough to place Robert within the twenty-five greatest landowners in Essex, on a par with the lands held by the Valognes or Raismes families. Robert fitz Hamon's manors, together with those of his brother Hamo, were inherited by Robert's daughter. She was married to Robert of Gloucester, bastard son of Henry I. Gloucester, no stranger himself to royal patronage, held no land in Essex save that gained through marriage. He was the recipient of local favour through other means, receiving pardons of murdrum and Danegeld of £14 in 1130.²

Henry I's reign was in striking contrast to that of William Rufus. This cannot simply be ascribed to his longevity. By 1113 Henry had already done far more to change the landholding pattern of Essex (and of England) than his elder brother had. Henry altered the tenurial structure in Essex by employing four different methods of land re-distribution. He confiscated land, granted land from the royal demesne, refused to automatically recognise the right of succession and changed the basic structure of honours through amalgamation or partition.³ Rufus had used most of these methods (apart from honorial dissection) but Beauclerc was rather more vigorous in his employment of them, particularly after the demise of any serious opposition to his rule in 1106.⁴

¹ Assuming that Rufus only granted those manors that were formerly held by the queen and had remained in royal demesne, Robert fitz Hamon gained possession of land at Shalford (£22), Finchingfield (£18) and Childerditch (£4): LDB 3b, 4a, 5a

² PR 31 Hen I 56, 57, 60

³ Davis aired the idea that Henry I enriched new men without damaging royal demesne by granting land to them that had belonged to other tenants-in-chief: R.H.C.Davis, 'What Happened in Stephen's Reign', 8-9

⁴ By the terms of his coronation charter, Henry I (falsely) pledged that heirs should gain their inheritance through 'a just and lawful relief': W.Stubbs & H.W.C.Davis (eds.), Select Charters and other Illustrations of English Constitutional History from the earliest times to the reign of Edward I (9th ed., 1913), 116-19

Henry's alterations can be readily appreciated by comparing the Domesday barons with the group holding baronies at the end of his reign. Certain honours, at least inside the boundaries of Essex, were essentially unaltered. The honours of Boulogne, Richmond, Lewes, Clare, Rayleigh, Tutbury, Hedingham, Valognes, Bigod and Hamo *dapifer* were all held by the same families, following the accepted course of inheritance.¹ Robert Gernon's lands had passed, for reasons not clearly known, to William de Montfichet.² This did little to alter the pattern of land in the county. Although Montfichet had not held land in-chief in the county prior to this, he inherited Gernon's estates intact.

To set against this there were some quite dramatic alterations in the Essex baronage. Hollister surveyed three of the honours with land in Essex: Malet of Eye, Mandeville of Pleshy and Warenne of Lewes.³ The latter cases demonstrate Henry's prudent kingship and his lenience at a price. William de Warenne backed Curthose's last bid for the English throne, suffering confiscation in 1101 and being reinstated in 1103. William de Mandeville's crime was not treason, or at least this has not been proved. When Ranulf Flambard escaped from the White Tower he had been a prisoner in Mandeville's custody.

¹ Only two of these Honours had provided heiresses, those held by Hamo *dapifer* and Boulogne

² Sanders 83: Miss Fry, 'Some account of Robert Gernon and his successors, the barons Montfichet', TEAS o.s. v (1873) 173-207. It cannot be assumed that the Montfichet inheritance was based upon family ties, as there is no evidence that William de Montfichet married into the Gernon family. Montfichet is believed to be the William of Letchworth who held large quantities of land in Hertfordshire of Gernon in 1086: DB 137b-138a. 'William' held Fryerning (Chelmsford) and Ardleigh (Tendring) of Gernon in Essex: LDB 67a, 67b-68a

³ C.W.Hollister, Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions, 129-36, 117-28, 137-44.

In each case Henry I acted in a manner that revised landholding patterns and changed baronial behaviour. Warenne was forgiven and was granted lands in the district of his Norman *caput* (Bellencombe). Conversely Mandeville felt the king's wrath. His three premier manors (Saffron Walden, Great Waltham and Sawbridgeworth) were taken from him and granted to his father-in-law, Eudo *dapifer*. Warenne had no further reason to support Curthose or the Clito, as he had been granted the land of Clito's guardian, Elias of St Saens. Mandeville's reduced honour survived with the added burden of a £2210 debt but he expected to be recognised as the heir to Eudo's valuable estates.¹ The Malet estate escheated to the crown in 1106.² Like the Mandeville manors, the four Essex manors in the honour of Eye passed through royal hands. Together they were worth only £21 and their new owner, Stephen of Mortain, derived much more benefit from the larger spread of Suffolk manors.³ Stephen's other acquisition via the king within Essex, the lands of Roger le Poitevin, brought in only half as much in 1086.⁴

Henry found ways to reward his subjects without granting land. Perhaps the most interesting grant of all was that made to Aubrey de Vere. Aubrey succeeded to Robert Malet's title as Master Chamberlain of England in 1133, but not to his lands.⁵ The separation was the subtle mark of a king who was utterly incapable of matching his father's tenurial rewards. With less land available for redistribution and hereditary noblemen to placate, Henry faced the problem of patronage with fewer resources.⁶ His land grants were comparatively meagre in Essex but far exceeded those of his elder brother. In

¹ C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 19-20, 24-25

² C.P.Lewis, 'The King and Eye', 580

³ LDB 88a-b

⁴ LDB 89a-b

⁵ Reg ii no.1777

⁶ Govt Hen I, 191

other cases, estate and office were not sundered. Eustace de Barrington received land in association with his appointment as a forest official.¹

All of the remaining recorded alterations to lordship were mainly of benefit to Stephen, Eudo *dapifer*, the Clares or Henry I himself. Stephen's new-found wealth and territory was already noteworthy in 1113; in addition to Eye he had been granted the comital title of Mortain together with its pertinent lands.² Mortain brought Stephen nothing in Essex, so in 1113 his sole possessions in the county were the four aforementioned manors from the honour of Eye. In 1125 he gained the honour of Boulogne through marriage, and a year later he was granted Roger le Poitevin's honour of Lancaster.³ Eye and Lancaster can be viewed as trimmings because they were merely remote manors associated with a non-Essex *caput*. It was only with his succession to Boulogne that he rose to the highest stratum of the Essex landholding group. Such influence was boosted by local grants in favour of close family members. From 1129 Henry of Blois was dean of St Martin-le-Grand, by virtue of being bishop of Winchester.⁴ Stephen and Henry's eldest brother, Thibaud count of Blois, was granted the overlordship of St Martin-le-Grand's manor of Maldon by Henry.⁵

Eudo *dapifer*'s honour was the most volatile of those based in Essex. It was developing, slowly under Rufus and massively under Henry I. Eudo received

¹ Reg ii no.1518. This was unusual practice. Cronne stated that it was 'one of the few known grants of Henry I of a forest office': H.A.Cronne, 'The Royal Forest in the Reign of Henry I', in H.A.Cronne, T.W.Moody & D.B.Quinn eds., Essays in British and Irish History in honour of James Eadie Todd (London, 1949) 1-23, 19

² R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen 1135-54 (3rd ed., Harlow, 1990), 7

³ R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen 1135-54, 7. Davis suggested that the grant was made in 1126 as Stephen founded Furness priory in the same year

⁴ WAM bk. v. xxviii: W.R.Powell, 'St Mary, Maldon and St Martin-le-Grand, London', EAH xxviii (1997), 142-50, 142-4

⁵ W.R.Powell, 'St Mary, Maldon and St Martin-le-Grand, London', 142

further grants over the period 1100-c.1103, together with a confirmation of all lands held under William II.¹ These grants entitled him to the town, tower and castle of Colchester, the manor of Witham and the Mandeville manors of Great Waltham (Chelmsford), Saffron Walden (Dunmow) and Sawbridgeworth (Hertfordshire).² Other grants brought him the lands of the Domesday tenants-in-chief Roger of Auberville and Sasselin, together with the manors of Brightlingsea (Tendring), Mundon (Wibertsherne), East Stanway and Lexden (both Lexden).³ The Conqueror's policy of retaining tactically important coastal manors in Essex had apparently been abandoned. Responsibility for coastal defence through the possession of key tactical manors had been turned over to Eudo. The grant of another large royal manor, Benfleet (Barstable), together with Childerditch (Chafford) was made in favour of Otto the Goldsmith and confirmed to Otto's son William at some stage between 1116 and 1127.⁴

Having been greatly improved during his life, Eudo *dapifer's* honour was quickly divided after his death. He died early in 1120 and before the end of that year some of his subtenants were being recognised as holding their land in-chief. Both Fulco *dapifer* (of Layer Breton, Winstree) and Robert de Erlea (of Ardleigh, Tendring) received confirmation of such tenurial change.⁵ Later, Hamo de St Clair would hold the future baronies of Eaton Socon and Walkern in-chief, both of which were by-products of Eudo's honour.⁶ Eustace of Boulogne also acquired some of the steward's lands, as did Richard de

¹ Reg ii no.564

² Reg ii nos.552, 519, 661

³ Farrer iii 166-7

⁴ Reg ii no.1524

⁵ Reg ii nos.1231, Farrer iii 200

⁶ Sanders 40, 92. Hamo de St Clair was farming Eudo's escheated honour in 1129-30: PR 31 Hen I 139

Sackville.¹ These grants bypassed the claims of Eudo *dapifer*'s young grandson, Geoffrey II de Mandeville.

The Clares were Henry's counsellors and military supporters, and were particularly close to the king before 1106 and after 1120.² The most frequent Clare attestors, Roger de Bienfaite and Gilbert fitz Richard, received land in England from their royal master. Gilbert's new estates emerged from those of Geoffrey de Coutances in Northamptonshire, whilst Roger's new lands came from the lands of Ranulf brother of Ilger.³ Walter and Robert, the younger Clare brothers, fared better. Robert acquired the Baynard barony (worth approximately £440 in 1086) whilst Walter was granted lands from William of Eu's honour.⁴ Robert became a magnate within Essex and Walter gained West Thurrock. Nevertheless, three honours that had been partly or mainly located in Essex were granted to the same family. It is also noteworthy that this particular generation of Clares were the recipients of greater royal patronage from Henry I than the next. Richard fitz Gilbert received nothing from Henry I.

Thus all of the major Domesday tenants-in-chief in Essex are accounted for, bar one. Henry I had granted out a reasonable quantity of land in the county, some of which had been his own. In order to compensate for the loss of

¹ Farrer iii 168; P.M.Barnes ed., 'The Anstey Case' in P.M.Barnes & C.F.Slade eds., A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton (PRS, London, 1962), 1-24; P.A.Brand, 'New Light on the Anstey Case', EAH xv (1983), 68-83, 76-8, 80

² J.C.Ward, 'Royal service and reward: the Clare family and the crown, 1066-1154', ANS xi (1988) 261-78, 268-70

³ W.R.Powell, 'Domesday Book and Feudal Topography', 49; J.C.Ward, 'Royal service and reward: the Clare family and the crown, 1066-1154', 271; LDB 79b-81b. Roger was credited with holding 20 hides in Essex, but Ranulf had over 40 hides in the county in 1086.

⁴ J.C.Ward, 'Royal service and reward: the Clare family and the crown, 1066-1154', 272.

Colchester, Witham and other lands he permanently retained one honour, that of Peverel of London.¹

A simple analysis of land transfer demonstrates dramatic changes within Essex and two points are particularly worthy of note. Firstly, Henry redesigned the baronial blueprint of the county but saw no reason to retain his own new designs. Eudo's honour is a case in point. Much of Eudo's land remained *in manu regis* after 1120, whilst other parts passed into the control of subtenants who became new tenants-in-chief. As far as Henry was concerned grants to Eudo were made for the duration of the steward's life and were not permanent alienations from the royal demesne. Secondly, Henry ensured that he enjoyed the benefit of escheats and confiscations, however briefly. Hollister suggested that Eye was confiscated c.1110 and granted c.1113.² The honour of Lancaster was seized in 1102 and remained in royal hands for up to twenty-four years. Hatfield Peverel was absorbed into royal demesne and does not appear to have been used by Henry I to enrich local barons.

In 1130 royal demesne in Essex and Hertfordshire had evidently slipped from its Domesday value. Judith Green's figures show that the *terra regis*, royally-controlled estates and boroughs in the two counties were paying only £579 in 1129-30.³ She calculated that Essex and Hertfordshire had a cumulative value of £901 in 1086, of which £517 (plus the revenues of Colchester) were from Essex. Clearly royal demesne had diminished in value. This is a joint assessment, so it cannot be taken at face value as evidence of the depreciation of royal demesne in Essex without assessing the alterations made to the tenurial pattern of Hertfordshire over the same period. Using figures for the two counties together, revenues from the counties' farms dropped by almost

¹ Sanders 120: PR 31 Hen I 60

² C.W.Hollister, *Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions*, 133; Davis, *King Stephen 1135-54*, 7

³ J.A.Green, 'William Rufus, Henry I and the Royal Demesne', 351

36% compared with the national average of -31%.¹ There is a strong case for the suggestion that there was an 'ancient farm' value for Essex that was in use by 1129-30. The similarity of the 1129-30 and 1170-71 figures indicates that the combined county farm for Essex and Hertfordshire had not changed greatly over the course of forty years.²

Another explanation for falling values has been proposed by Grant. He suggests that land fell in value when it was afforested and Essex reflected such a trend as it was almost entirely covered by royal forest in 1130.³ Whilst this is not entirely true, the grants made to Eudo initially dented royal revenue, as did unspecified grants of land in Essex. These are readily identifiable through the exemption lists in the Pipe Roll, especially the remissions of Danegeld.

Various theories have developed to explain the system of levying Danegeld. Judith Green claims that Domesday makes it plain that all royal and non-royal demesne was liable for geld.⁴ By 1130 manorial demesne was not exempt from Danegeld, if it ever had been. In Rutland, a county small enough to trace land tenure accurately, Green showed that subtenants were granted exemptions when their own lords were not.⁵ As this is the case, the Danegeld exemptions for Essex in 1130 cannot be used as a gazetteer of current tenants-in-chief, or a similar clearly delineated liable group. Tenants-in-chief and subtenants were

¹ Calculations based on the figures compiled by Judith Green, 'William Rufus, Henry I and the Royal Demesne', 351

² By my own calculations the county farm for the year 1170-71 was approximately £590 blanch: PR 17 Hen II 117-19

³ R.Grant, The Royal Forests of England (Stroud, Glos., 1991), 11. The myth of Essex lying entirely within the Royal Forest stems from the map in M.L.Bazeley. 'The Extent of the English Forest in the Thirteenth Century', TRHS 4th ser. iv (1921), page facing p.140: N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', EHR cxiv (1999) 899-928, 917

⁴ J.A.Green, 'The Last Century of Danegeld,' EHR xcvi (1981) 241-58, 245

⁵ J.A.Green, 'The Last Century of Danegeld,' 250

equally liable in Green's estimation, so the only true benefit of the Danegeld exemptions is to provide a list of those Essex barons basking in the royal favour in 1130. As geld was levied at a rate of two shillings per hide, the figures give a minimal indication of the tenorial magnitude of each exemptee.¹

The 'barons' of the Exchequer were exempt, as were the demesne lands of the sheriffs.² Therefore the remissions pertaining to Roger of Salisbury and Aubrey de Vere can be considered total rather than partial. Aubrey de Vere was pardoned £4 and this was (in all probability) his entire assessment. Thus his demesne lands in Essex in 1130 consisted of about 40 geldable hides. Roger of Salisbury was pardoned 38s. 6d., indicating a little over 19 geldable hides of land in Essex. For other barons, the figure is potentially lower. William de Warenne was pardoned £6 in geld; this indicates that he had at least (but not at most) 60 geldable hides in Essex. The figures provided underpin assessments of landed wealth but can only be used to establish a minimum number of geldable hides. The analysis of Danegeld liability benefits from a closer examination of those who were obliged to pay (see Table 13). The Pipe Roll of 1129-30 only lists the names of those who were liable and exempt, with no indication of whether or not this was the entire quota.

Realistically Danegeld remission can be seen as a direct measure of royal patronage. Exemption from the levy was very obviously advantageous. A pardon could not exceed a liability, but the freedom from that liability was within the king's power. Henry I's use of this privilege was one of the means by which he appeased his landowning subjects. That this was not limited to

¹ J.A.Green, 'The Last Century of Danegeld,' 242

² J.A.Green, "'Praeclarum et Magnificum Antiquitatis Monumentum": the Earliest Surviving Pipe Roll', *BIHR* lv (1982) 1-17, 5

the mightier subjects of England shows Henry as a king who tried to build relationships with local landowners.¹

For the most stable honours, their 1129-30 Pipe Roll entry is securely cushioned between the relevant passages in Domesday and *Cartae Baronum*. These baronies were carefully retained within the hands of one house that defied genealogical accident or financial ruin. Consequently little needs to be said about some of the individuals listed. Aubrey II de Vere, Richard II fitz Gilbert, William II de Warenne, Roger de Valognes, Maurice of Windsor, William de Montfichet, Hasculf de Tany, Robert of Gloucester, William fitz Otto, Robert de Vere, and Roger fitz Richard all held Domesday honours with land in Essex, through inheritance or grant.² Ecclesiastical lords, such as the archbishop of Canterbury, the abbess of Holy Trinity Caen, the bishop of Ely, the abbess of Barking, the abbot of Westminster and the abbot of St Étienne, Caen, were all Domesday landowners.³

These are the readily identifiable names on this list, although some others require no great explanation. The queen's extensive lands included those held by Adeliza of Louvain at Waltham.⁴ St John's Colchester had been founded by Eudo *dapifer* c.1096-7.⁵ Those honours in royal hands are relatively easy, in most cases, to link with Domesday. The demesne lands of Othuer fitz Earl,

¹ Govt Hen I 184

² LDB 76a-78a, 38b-41b, 36a-38a, 78a-79b, 86a-87a, 63b-68b, 84a-85a, 54b-56b, 98a, 79b-81b

³ LDB 8a-9a, 21b-22a, 18b-19b, 17b-19a, 22a. For a discussion of the lands pertaining to La Trinite in England, see M.Chibnall ed., Charters and Customals of the Abbey of Holy Trinity Caen, xxiv-xxix

⁴ Cart Waltham nos.16-18

⁵ MRH 62; VCH Essex ii 93-102; Tanner 121

<i>Name</i>	<i>Total exemption from Danegeld</i>	<i>Lands held in Essex by family/house in 1086?</i>
In the queen's land	£8 4s	
William de Warenne	£6	✓
Robert of Gloucester	£5 16s 6d	✓
Bishop of Ely	£4 7s	✓
William de Montfichet	£4 3s 9d	✓
Aubrey de Vere	£4	✓
Demesne of Othuer fitz Earl	£3 12s	
Archbishop of Canterbury	£3 9s	✓
Demesne of William Peverel	£3 3s 6d	✓
Monks of Colchester	£3 2s	
Abbess of Barking	£2 16s	✓
Roger de Valognes	£2 10s	✓
Roger fitz Richard	£2	(✓)
Roger of Salisbury	£1 18s 6d	
Alvred Gernon	£1 13s	✓
Robert fitz Siward	£1 10s 7d	
Richard fitz Gilbert	£1 7s	✓
Walter de Ansfreville	£1 6s	
Adam <i>Camerarus</i>	£1 3s	
Hasculf de Tany	£1 3s	✓
Humphrey de Bohun	£1	
John bishop of Lisieux	£1	
William de Tresgoz	£1	
Monks of Bec	18s	
Richard de Beauchamp	18s	
Ralph fitz Robert fitz Stephen	16s	
Richard fitz Urse	16s	
William fitz Otto	16s	✓
Ingelran de Belramo	14s 6d	
Maurice of Windsor	14s	✓
William d'Aubigny <i>brito</i>	14s	(✓?)
Ralph of Felstead	12s 8d	✓
Hamo de St Clair	12s	✓
Matthew and William	10s	
Ralph fitz Algot	10s	✓
William <i>monachus</i>	10s	
Abbess of Caen	9s	✓
Ranulf de Vengeons	8s	
Matthew Peverel	6s	
Ralph Peche	6s	
William Marisco	6s	
Henry <i>arborarius</i>	5s 9d	
Demesne lands of Eudo dapifer	5s	✓
Grimbald the leech	4s 6d	
Adam <i>Canonico</i>	4s	✓
Gerard de Pinkeny	4s	
Abbot of Caen	3s 6d	✓
Ingelran de Abernon	3s 4d	
Ralph Rotundo	3s	

Table 13: remissions of Danegeld in Essex in the 1129-30 Pipe Roll.¹

¹ PR 31 Hen I 59-60

William Peverel of London and Eudo *dapifer* were all at farm.¹ This can be seen in the Danegeld exemptions for the first three. The geld exemption was applied not to the whole honour but merely to the demesne lands.² In each case the demesne was at Henry's disposal, but there would be little point in levying Danegeld (or exempting some or all of the payment) on directly controlled royal lands.

To this small group can be added the Boville estate, which was expressly described as being at farm.³ The Bovilles were not Domesday tenants-in-chief, nor was the name Boville mentioned in that book. In 1166 Otuel de Boville held 6½ knights *de veteri* of the Mandeville Honour, and one knight *de veteri* of Gralent de Tany.⁴ In 1130 Gralent's father, Hasculf, paid £2 towards regaining demesne land held unjustly by William de Boville.⁵ Quite how much of this land was in the king's hand is unclear, but the royal agent in the Boville lands paid 23 shillings for the right to the farm for a year.⁶ William de Tresgoz was an Essex landowner, holding some or all of his lands of the honour of Peverel of London.⁷ In 1171-2 the honour of Geoffrey de Tresgoz was pardoned scutage, which suggests that William held his land in-chief in 1130.⁸

¹ PR 31 Hen I 59-60, 135, 139; LDB 49a-51b, 71b-76a for the estates of Eudo *dapifer* and the honour of Peverel of London. There are no details for the extent of Othuer's demesne, which was farmed by Hugh de Monte: PR 31 Hen I 53

² PR 31 Hen I 60; '...In dominio terre Eudonis dapiferi .v.s. ...In dominio terre Otueri filii Comitis .lxxij.s. ...In dominio terre Willelmi peverelli Londoniensis .lxiiij.s. [et] .vj.d.'

³ PR 31 Hen I 60. Adam of Dunmow held the land of William de Boville at farm.

⁴ RBE 345, 353. Like the Gweres lands, this may have been held in royal hands pending the elimination of the Mandeville overdraft

⁵ PR 31 Hen I 53

⁶ PR 31 Hen I 60

⁷ See below, chapter V

⁸ PR 18 Hen II 44

After these established stable barons, major ecclesiastical demesnes and the lands directly put out to farm by the king comes a final, more disparate group. These were, on the whole, men introduced to Essex post-Domesday. Using Domesday (where applicable), *Cartae Baronum* and Henry I's charters it is possible to piece together the backgrounds of these new men. Also within this group fall the properties granted to churchmen and the church after 1086, particularly those that were not accompanied by a fanfare of charters (such as St John's Colchester).¹ A group thus far characterised by tenants-in-chief loses its homogeneity.

No matter how much information comes to hand, it is difficult to reproduce the vivid tenorial detail of Domesday. Grimbald the Leech was the royal physician, who was forgiven 4s. 6d. in Danegeld in Essex in 1130.² He also witnessed twenty-three royal *acta* between 1101 and 1126.³ It is easier to hypothesise about Grimbald's career progression than it is to tie him down to a location within Essex. Grimbald attested royal material in England and in Normandy, occasionally as a sole witness, frequently among great company. Given that Grimbald was a healer, he had evidently learned his skills in an ecclesiastical environment. It was quite normal for his name to appear after those of the bishops but before those of the *comes* in royal charters, a good indication of a churchman.

¹ Reg ii nos.577, 677, 1096*, 1114, 1204, 1205, 1230, 1498, 1512, 1513, 1619, 1822, 1823,1824

² PR 31 Hen I 60. Stubbs repeated Gervase of Canterbury's story that '...Henry was inclined to remit [Danegeld], partly under the advice of his physician Grimbaud...': W.Stubbs, *Constitutional History of England* i. (6th.ed., London, 1897), 340: W.Stubbs ed., *The Historical Works of Gervase of Canterbury* (2 vols., London, 1879-1880) ii 71

³ Reg ii nos.528a, 544, 567, 654, 683, 758, 804, 812, 943, 961, 972, 980, 988, 1015, 1015a, 1017, 1037, 1089, 1245, 1296, 1299, 1363, 1439

Grimbald also had an evident association with the abbey of Abingdon. Almost half of the *acta* that bear his name as a witness were issued regarding that abbey. It would not be implausible to consider that Grimbald had formerly been a physician within Abingdon, and that his great skill in healing had brought him to the king's side. It is purely conjecture but Grimbald may have risen into royal service through the excellent reputation of Abbot Faricius of Abingdon. It was he that effected the miraculous cure of Geoffrey fitz Aubrey de Vere that gave rise to the foundation of Colne Abbey, c.1100.¹

Hamo de St Clair was at Rouen in 1120 to witness the grant of lands from the estate of Eudo *dapifer* to Robert de Erlea and Fulco *dapifer*.² He witnessed two confirmations of the rights and lands of St John's Abbey Colchester in c.1127, and was a witness of the grant of Michael of Hanslope's lands to William Mauduit.³ Whilst Hamo was evidently interested in the affairs of Essex (the Mauduit grant attracted many prominent Essex barons to London), the details of Hamo's own lands in the county are at best sketchy.⁴ There is no royal grant confirming his tenure as a tenant-in-chief. The honour he eventually acquired was partitioned during the early years of Henry II's reign. Hubert de St Clair gained possession of Walkern, whilst Eaton Socon became the land of Hugh I de Beauchamp.⁵

¹ Mon iv 95. Geoffrey was healed of a critical disease by Faricius. When Geoffrey died shortly afterwards (presumably of something else) he left lands to Abingdon which became the demesne of Earl's Colne, a daughter of Abingdon: Cart Colne p. i. Faricius and Grimbald worked together as royal healers: J. Stevenson ed. Chronicon Monasterii de Abingdon (2 vols., London, 1858) ii 50

² Reg ii no.1231

³ Reg ii nos.1512, 1513, 1719.

⁴ Farrer iii 279-80, 287-91: Govt Hen I 272-3

⁵ Sanders 40, 92

Ralph Peche was granted Chevelly, Cambridgeshire, under the terms of a charter issued at the prayer of Roger fitz Richard de Clare.¹ The charter links Peche with Roger de Bienfaite's patronage and Cambridgeshire, but there is no evident reason for the 6s. remission of Danegeld that he received in Essex in the Pipe Roll.²

Some of the new Essex barons had a distinctly Norman character. Ingelran de Belramo had paid 20 marks of his debt into the Norman treasury, to Nigel the nephew of Roger of Salisbury, a demonstration of the flexible methods of payment available within the Anglo-Norman *regnum*.³ He also had the farm of Great Sampford as 'Godard' *pincerna* had held it.⁴ Ingelran de Abernon witnessed three royal charters issued in Normandy. He was with the king at Avranches in 1113, and in Rouen in c.1119.⁵ Walter de St Martin witnessed two royal *acta* in 1131 and at least one of these was given in Rouen.⁶ Richard fitz Urse witnessed the same two *acta*, together with a notification of an exchange of land between Fécamp and Nigel fitz William, the nephew of Robert earl of Gloucester, in c.1128.⁷ A royal statement from an elusive date

¹ Reg ii no.1776* &n., which is obviously spurious. It has been suggested that the charter was later copied and that the name 'Nigel the bishop's nephew' was anachronistically amended to Nigel bishop of Ely. Accepting that this error had been made can push the date of issue back as far as 1127, which would end doubts about the document's validity

² PR 31 Hen I 60. William Peche had held land of Richard fitz Gilbert at Gestingthorpe and of Aubrey de Vere at Belchamp Walter: LDB 39a, 77a. Both of these properties were in Hinckford hundred, so if they had been inherited by Simon Peche (see Table 2, murdrum exemptions) they could not have been his only Essex manors

³ PR 31 Hen I 54

⁴ PR 31 Hen I 54. Great Sampford was a royal manor farmed in 1086 by Godric *dapifer* (LDB 7b). Ingelran paid 180 marks for this right. Great Sampford's annual revenue was £30 in 1086

⁵ Reg ii nos.1015, 1015a, 1207

⁶ Reg ii nos.1689-90. Walter was not pardoned Danegeld, but was pardoned forest pleas (see Table 3, below)

⁷ Reg ii no.1562. Reginald fitz Urse was pardoned 9s in 1158; PR 4 Hen II, 133

during Henry's reign (1107-35) tells us that Richard was married to Maud, daughter of Baldwin de Boullers and Sibyl of Falaise.¹

A third man listed within the Essex section of the Pipe Roll attested both of the 1131 *acta* and the same Fécamp notification, together with an 1131 grant in favour of Envermeu in Arques.² This was William Martel, who later attested three grants in England related to Essex properties. He witnessed two charters confirming the grants of Eudo *dapifer* to St John's Colchester, and the grant of the land and office of William God-Save-Ladies to William de Glanvill (1131-3).³ The absence of William God-Save-Ladies in 1129-30 might be explained by the presence of Ralph 'de Felsteda' among those pardoned Danegeld. Felstead was the main property within the *Salt les Dammes* serjeanty.⁴

Some men are virtually impossible to identify in conjunction with land. John bishop of Lisieux was a frequent attestor of royal charters and an intimate of the king, but there is no record of a grant being made to him in Essex. Henry *arborarius* (the rigger) was the subject of a notification sent by the king prior to 1133 in order to establish whether he or St Paul's owned a hithe at Fleet, on the Thames.⁵ Henry was exempted Danegeld in Essex and Middlesex in 1130.⁶ Walter de Ansleville witnessed a judgement of a dispute involving the abbey of Gloucester in 1127.⁷

¹ Reg ii no.1923 &n. Sibyl was said to be Henry's niece but has been variously described as one of his illegitimate daughters or a distant cousin.

² Reg ii nos.1562, 1689-90, 1696

³ Reg ii nos.1822, 1823, 1835; LDB 96b. Martel, like Walter de St Martin, was not pardoned Danegeld but was pardoned murdrum (see table 2)

⁴ LDB 96b

⁵ Reg ii no.1843

⁶ PR 31 Hen I 60, 152

⁷ Reg ii no.1485

Humphrey de Bohun was a royal steward, possibly prior to 1130.¹ He may have been granted land in Essex in conjunction with his office but the quantity and location of this land is unknown. The same enigma exists in respect of the 19 hides held by Roger of Salisbury. William de Aubigny *brito* had married Cecily, daughter of Roger Bigod and Adeliza (daughter of Robert de Tosny). William may well have derived all of his land in Essex from his mother-in-law's marriage portion; this became Cecily's marriage portion.² There are no extant charters granting William land in Essex.

For the remainder of those granted exemptions from the payment of Danegeld information is sparse. Ralph fitz Algot may have inherited the lands of Edmund fitz Algot, a minor Domesday tenant-in-chief.³ Adam *canonico* was the son of Bruning the Canon. He had been granted, c.1115x1118, his father's lands at Epping and Lambourne.⁴ Alvred Gernon was active in Stephen's early years, and a Ranulf Gernun owed half a knight *de veteri* to the Montfichet honour in 1166.⁵ He granted land at Oakley to the abbey of Savigny during the reign of Henry I, to right the wrongs of his father Ranulf.⁶ This grant attracted attestations from Walter Maskerel and Maurice de Frientona (Frinton, Tendring hundred). Robert fitz Siward witnessed the charter of liberties granted to the city of London c. 1130-33.⁷

¹ Reg ii p.xii: Govt Hen I 236

² Govt Hen I 229. Robert de Tosny's land in Essex consisted of one hide at Chiswick (Uttlesford): LDB 90b

³ LDB 93b-94a

⁴ Reg ii no.1984: Cart Waltham nos.11, 13, 14

⁵ Reg iii no.399: RBE 351

⁶ CDF p.292 nos.807, 808: J.H.Round, 'Great Birch, Easthorpe and the Gernons', TEAS n.s. xii (1913), 88-93, 93

⁷ Reg ii no.1645: F.M.Stenton, Norman London: an Essay (Historical Association, London, 1934), 17-18. For an account of the disputed authenticity of this charter, see C.W.Hollister, 'London's First Charter of Liberties: is it Genuine?', in Monarchy, Magnates and Institutions 191-208

The monks of Bec were granted two-thirds of the tithes of Roger fitz Richard's demesne, but it was not just the Clares who were Essex patrons of the great Norman abbey.¹ Hugh de Gournai, William Malet, Hugh de Montfort and Henry de Ferrers also granted land to Bec in Essex.² William de Tresgoz, William *monachus*, Ralph fitz Robert fitz Stephen, Ranulf de Vengeons and Matthew Peverel were all attesting charters after Henry I's death.³ A Roger de *bellocampo*, possibly Richard de Beauchamp's son, held land of Aubrey de Vere in 1166.⁴ Some of the individuals concerned are absent from other contemporary records. Adam *Camerarus*, William *marisco*, Gerard de Pinkeny, Matthew and William, and Ralph Rotundo all fit into this category.

The murdrum pardons offer the only intentional geographical confines in the whole of the Pipe Roll. Murdrum fines were imposed on the hundreds of Barstable (20 marks), North Chelmsford (*Nortchemelesford*, 15 marks), Witham (15 marks) and Lexden (20 marks).⁵ This list is potentially very useful. Each of the twenty-five recipients of a pardon necessarily had land in one (or more) of these four hundreds.⁶ Of course, this is an aid to the process

¹ Reg ii no.1967, and no.1015a for a grant to Bec from Roger's mother Adeliza. Richard fitz Gilbert retired to Bec c.1088: DM 41

² M.Morgan, The English Lands of the Abbey of Bec (London, 1946), 147: Reg ii nos.1013, 1303, 1349: for other (non-Essex) grants made by the Gournai and Clare families, see Select Documents of the English Lands of the Abbey of Bec (Camden Third Series lxxiii, 1951), nos. xii, xxxix

³ Reg iii nos.276; 117,195, 843; 242; 546-9; 276. William *monachus* was killed at Arques in 1145

⁴ RBE 352

⁵ PR 31 Hen I 56. Murdrum fines had been fixed at 46 marks by William the Conqueror, a figure accepted by Henry I earlier in his reign. However, by 1130 no murdrum fine reached this level: J.A.Green, 'Earliest Surviving Pipe Roll', 8

⁶ Witham was a half-hundred; Chelmsford was a hundred and North Chelmsford was not a recorded administrative district prior to 1130

of elimination but cannot be used to place the lesser-known tenants in a specific geographical area. Land tenure cannot be determined using simple algebra and matching Domesday tenancies to the 1130 barons. William de Tresgoz, for example, was pardoned 8 shillings. This debt could have been incurred in any one of the four hundreds in question.

The total amount of debt forgiven was £17 3s 9d, but the fines totalled 70 marks (£46 13s 4d), although there is no indication of whether the pardons were total or partial, or of how individual debt was calculated. Thus it is impossible to determine individual responsibility, or add the debts up to place certain men in certain locations. Using Domesday it is possible to show which honours had land in which hundreds in 1086. This is a beginning, as it shows that some or all of the Domesday lands in the hundreds concerned were still in the hands of the respective families. This list of murdrum pardons is worth little in itself, the most noteworthy point being the existence of a new district, North Chelmsford hundred. Fresh divisions of hundreds, whether for the purposes of administrative jurisdiction or simply to clarify the area under discussion, appeared again in 1161. Two of the hundreds were described as *West Uselesford* (Uttlesford) and *Nord Chelmesford*.¹

As with the Danegeld exemptions, the old Domesday dynasties can be identified with ease and it is apparent that they were still holding land in the hundreds named. Otto the Goldsmith did not have lands in these hundreds in 1086 but had subsequently been granted land in Barstable hundred.² Like the Danegeld exemptions, the list contains minor men whose interests and influence in Essex were limited. Simon de Hommet was succeeded by

¹ PR 7 Hen II 66-7

² LDB 98a: Reg ii no.1524

<i>Name</i>	<i>Total Murdrum exemption</i>	<i>Known to have held land in the hundreds of:</i>		<i>Wit</i>	<i>Lex</i>
		<i>Barst</i>	<i>Chelm</i>		
William de Montfichet	£3 12s	✓	✓	✓	✓
Robert of Gloucester	£2 7s	✓		✓	
Robert of Essex	£2	✓		✓	✓
Abbess of Barking	18s	✓	✓		
Demesne of Othuer	16s				
Robert Fitz Siward	14s				
Simon de Hommet	12s 6d				
The monks of Bec	11s				
Abbot of Colchester	10s 7d			✓	
William fitz Otto	10s	✓			
Robert fitz Stephen	9s				
Aubrey de Vere	8s 6d				✓
Hasculf de Tany	8s			✓	
William Martel	8s				
William Marisco	8s				
William de Tresgoz	8s				
In the queen's land	7s 6d				
Nigel <i>nepos episcopi</i>	6s 8d				
Humphrey de Bohun	5s 2d				
Torell Naparus	4s 7d				
Laurence of Rouen	4s 5d				
Simon Peche	3s				
Robert de Vere	2s 8d	✓	✓	✓	✓
Westminster Abbey	15d	✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 14: remissions of murdrum in Essex in the 1129-30 Pipe Roll.¹

Richard de Hommet in the early years of Henry II's reign.¹ Simon Peche held land of the Helions in 1166.² Robert fitz Stephen attested during Stephen's reign.³ Laurence of Rouen and Torell Naparus were extremely obscure men.

¹ PR 31 Hen I 56

Forest offences again reveal the names of local men who were released from debts for forest trespasses.⁴ However, whilst pardons were granted for pleas of the forest and of assart, no provision was made in Essex for pleas of doe or stag. Anyone committing an unauthorised killing of the king's game was open to a stiff financial penalty, without pardon. Walter fitz William owed 30 marks and Robert fitz Richard, a royal favourite, 100 marks, both for pleas of doe.⁵ Jordan *Baard* owed 10 silver marks and one dexter for a plea of stag, whilst Hamo fitz Serlo de Marcy owed £21 6s 8d (which was probably an old debt, as it is an irregular sum) for the same plea.⁶

Strikingly over half of the Pipe Roll entries for the county are concerned with pleas associated with the royal forest. Considering that in 1086 the entire known administrative staff of the royal forest of Essex consisted of Robert Gernon and an ex-swineherd, this is a clear example of administrative development.⁷ The district under forest law, generally held to be the higher ground towards the west of the county, spread as far as the border with Suffolk in the north-east.⁸ That a large proportion of the county was under forest law cannot be disputed in view of its wide remit. Forest revenues were more

¹ Richard de Hommet of Essex was pardoned 4s 3d in 1156: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18. Henry II's confirmation charter of Richard de Hommet's lands does not seem to have included any property in Essex: Delisle Recueil ii 16-17

² RBE 357

³ Reg iii no.242

⁴ For a detailed account of the administration of the royal forests see G.J.Turner ed., Select Pleas of the Forest (Seldon Society xiii, London, 1901), ix-cxxxiv, especially xiv-lxxv for information about forest officials, forest courts and forest eyres

⁵ PR 31 Hen I 55

⁶ PR 31 Hen I 54

⁷ LDB 5b. H.A.Cronne, 'The Royal Forest in the Reign of Henry I', 19, 22

⁸ J.H.Round, 'The Forest of Essex', 37. Round noted that Fisher, in his work on the forests, failed to use the 1129-30 Pipe Roll

profitable in Essex than Danegeld, 'a striking testimony to the profits that could be made' from increased afforestation.¹

Some members of this group were interactive and demonstrate the basic ties between landholders within their county. Herbert fitz Dudeman, for example, bought three tofts (*mansiones terre*) from William fitz Hugh de Buckland and granted them to St Saviour's, Bermondsey.² Whilst this charter is spurious, a grant of some nature explains the presence of the monks of Bermondsey within the Pipe Roll entries for Essex.³ Herbert is mentioned nowhere else, although he may have been of English descent and could have been holding land directly of the king within the escheated honour of William Peverel of London.⁴ Warner de Lusors was another shadowy character. In c.1114 he witnessed a (spurious) charter of general confirmation to Hoyland, and a confirmation of forest rights for Peterborough.⁵ During Stephen's reign he was far more active.⁶ Bernard de Balliol carried the standard at the Battle of the Standard in 1138 and is buried in St Mary's Church, Hitchin, Hertfordshire. He was not an active attestor of Henry I's *acta*, but undertook

¹ J.A.Green, 'The Earliest Surviving Pipe Roll', 8

² Reg ii no.1990*: Richard Guet, subtenant and brother-in-law of the first William de Warenne, granted land at *Cowyk* (Quicksbury, Harlow) to Bermondsey in 1098: H.R.Luard ed., Annales Monastici (5 vols., London, 1864-69) iii 429: VCH Surrey ii. 65

³ PR 31 Hen I 57

⁴ DB 9a: Godwin son of Dudeman held one hide in Essex that belonged to Chalk in Kent *tempus Regis Edwardi*. Ranulf Peverel (father of William Peverel of London) held it in 1086, but he had no subtenants called Godwin

⁵ Reg ii nos.1039-40.

⁶ Reg iii nos.28, 34, 37-8, 129, 150, 165, 198-9, 202-3, 224, 239d, 240, 243, 251, 293, 344, 503-5, 508, 511-13, 515, 519, 539, 542, 573, 583, 633, 649, 658-9, 696, 788, 896, 932. Henry II's confirmation of the lands of Fulk de Lusors in January 1155 included his custody of the forests of Northants, Hunts and Bucks: Report on the Manuscripts of Lord Middleton preserved at Wollaton Hall, Nottinghamshire (HMC, London, 1911), 2-3

<i>Name</i>	<i>Total exemption from pleas of:</i>		<i>landowners in Essex at Domesday</i>
	<i>forest</i>	<i>assart</i>	
Roger de Raismes		£26 13s 4d	✓
Archbishop of Canterbury		£13 6s 8d	✓
Herbert fitz Dudeman		£13 6s 8d	
Stephen of Mortain		£13 6s 8d	(✓)
Ranulf de Valognes	£10		
Abbess of Caen		£6 13s 4d	✓
Ingelran de Marck	£4 13s 4d		✓
Roger fitz Richard		£4 13s 4d	(✓)
Bernard de Balliol	£3 6s 8d		
Abbot of Battle	£3 6s 8d		✓
William de Warenne		£3 6s 8d	✓
Abbess of Barking		£3	✓
Adeliza Tirel	£2		✓
Maurice of Windsor	£1 13s 4d		✓
Laurence of Rouen		£1 10s	
John bishop of Lisieux	£1 6s 8d		
Robert of Gloucester	£1 6s 8d		(✓)
Walter de St Martin	£1 6s 8d		
Hallingbury	£1 6s 8d		
Alvred Gernon	£1		
Bermondsey abbey	13s 4d		
Edmund the clerk	13s 4d		
Richard fitz Urse	13s 4d		
Roger of Salisbury	13s 4d		
Warner de Lusors	6s 8d		
William Marisco	6s 8d		

Table 15: remissions of pleas of forest and pleas of assart in Essex in 1129-30.¹

¹ PR 31 Hen I 56-8, 59

this duty during Stephen's reign.¹ Once again, many of the named individuals within the exemptions and remissions listed in the Pipe Roll pertain to men without any evident connection to the Domesday county record.

The record is equally poor for those men who were named outside the exemptions, although with a few it is possible to find an explanation for their involvement in Essex. These men were pardoned nothing and therefore cannot be considered men Henry I deliberately sought to court at that time.

Obviously there are some exceptions, such as Robert fitz Richard (ancestor of the fitz Walters of Little Dunmow) who had been granted all of Ralph Baynard's holdings. Generally this group were chance participants in this particular Pipe Roll. They did not attest many (or any) royal charters and did not bear family names apparent in 1086 or 1166. As a whole the group are relatively obscure.

There were exemptions other than Robert fitz Richard. William of Hastings' wife was Juliana, who owed a feudal aid of £7.² In 1166 Robert son of William of Hastings accounted for knights *de veteri* in the settlements of *Bromlega* (Bromley), *Eistane* (Easton), *Cestreforde* (Chesterford) and (*Wix*) *Wikes*, which were all part of Walter the Deacon's Domesday honour.³ A Robert de Monteviron witnessed a grant to William de Beauchamp at Vaudreuil in c.1128, although Hugh is harder to place.⁴ Hugh 'de Monte' paid £65 12*d* [*sic*] for custody of Othuer's lands and two silver marks for the right

¹ Reg iii nos.859-60

² Reg iii no.58. Waleran died before 1086 and his small honour was held by John fitz Waleran at Domesday. John's daughter and heir Maud married Hasculf de Tany: Sanders 4: LDB 84a-85a.

³ RBE 358-9; LDB 86b-87a: J.A.Clarence Smith, 'Hastings of Little Easton', EAH ii (1966-70) 1-13, 101-122: L.Landon, 'The Barony of Little Easton and the Family of Hastings', TEAS xix (1930) 174-9

⁴ Reg ii no.1550

<i>Name</i>
Alvred de Chafford
Alvred <i>clericus</i> the reeve
Edward
Eustace de Walda
Geoffrey de Marck
Gilbert blund'
Hamo de Marcy
Hugh de <i>Canceleio</i>
Hugh de Monte Virun
Hugh fitz Ansketil
Hugh fitz Ernuceon
Hugh fitz Stephen
Jordan Baard'
Joscelin Trenchefoil
Manasser de Gweres
Picard de Domfront
Ralph fitz William
Richard canon of Waltham
Richard fitz William fitz Saer
Robert de Raimes
Robert fitz Richard
Rualon de Avranches
Walter fitz William
William of Hastings
William fitz 'Tole'
William fitz John de <i>Marchiamesleda</i>
William Lelutre

Table 16: individuals not pardoned debt in the 1129-30 Pipe Roll.¹

¹ PR 31 Hen I 52-60

of his mother's *maritagium*, suggesting that Robert had died c.1129 if he was Hugh's father.¹ Rualon de Avranches (*Abrinc'*) was sheriff of Kent over the year 1129-30, and had witnessed two charters at Winchester in 1121.² He held land of the abbot of Ramsey, and was chastised for not paying service and aid to his ecclesiastical lord.³ Rualon also had a dispute with the abbey of Abingdon in the early years of Henry's reign, over the manor of Stanton Harcourt in Oxfordshire.⁴ This manor had been nominally held in demesne by Odo of Bayeux in 1086, so Rualon was another recipient of Odo's lands, including some of those in Essex.⁵

Other individuals were far less prominent. William Lelutre's name means 'otter' and he was joint sheriff of London in 1129-30, but little more is known about him.⁶ Notifications of Eudo *dapifer*'s tenure of Witham and the grant of Hatfield Broad Oak to St Botolph's Colchester were sent to the bishop of London, Hugh de Buckland and Alvred the reeve.⁷ A Ralph fitz William attested in London, 1121-2, and was accused of seizing land in Bedfordshire before 1127.⁸ Gilbert *blund* attested a charter of Stephen count of Mortain before 1125, in favour of the priory of Eye.⁹

¹ PR 31 Hen I 53, 54. Hollister urged us to remember that there are 'a suspiciously high number of barons who allegedly died c.1129' in Sanders: C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 22. The outstanding £65 for the custody of the lands of Othuer looks to be the unpaid portion of a larger sum which had been a round figure

² Reg ii nos.1283, 1284, 1728n, p.467

³ Reg ii no.1860a

⁴ Reg ii no.528: Govt Hen I, 271-2

⁵ DB 155b: Sanders 45

⁶ PR 31 Hen I 149: Serjeants 293: Govt Hen I 260

⁷ Reg ii nos.519, 863

⁸ Reg ii nos.1364, 1533

⁹ Cart Eye i. no.19

Clearly many men had been introduced into Essex by no known means. As an example of this, Othuer fitz Earl's tenurial power in the county is far from clear, as he may or may not have held land in addition to the Mandeville manors.¹ Hugh de Monte (probably *Montevirun*) accounted for the old farm of Othuer's land, rendering £65 12*d.* to the Exchequer in 1130 and gaining exemptions from Danegeld and murdrum fines.² The Danegeld exemption on Othuer's lands (72*s.*) exceeded those granted to the demesne of William Peverel of London (63*s.* 6*d.*), which suggests that the minimum hidage of the two estates was 36 and 32 hides respectively.³

Othuer may also have enjoyed control of the Mandeville heir and honour through his marriage to Rohaise daughter of Eudo *dapifer*. From the limited quantity of material detailing his activities outside the royal court, it seems that Othuer was involved in the day-to-day affairs of the county. He was present at the baronial court of Eustace of Boulogne c.1107x1118 and attested a charter in favour of William fitz Ralph de Marcy during the same period.⁴ Marcy, a tenant of Boulogne and a vassal of Robert of Gloucester, also held land of the bishop of London. Marcy is a prime example of a man whose loyalties were with a plurality of lords within one county. The true extent of Othuer's ties with Essex cannot be known but he had extensive connections with families whose lands and loyalties lay with Essex rather than any particular lord.

¹ Othuer is known to have held only Saffron Walden and Great Waltham in Essex. These two manors had a combined demesne value of £110 in 1086, which would tally with Hugh de Monte's account if he had custody of the Mandeville manors under generous terms in 1130: Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 20, 25. However, no information is available for lands held by Othuer and subsequently removed from his escheated estate

² PR 31 Hen I 53, 60, 56

³ The honour of Peverel of London covered over 165 hides in Essex in 1086, of which Ranulf held about 80 hides in demesne: LDB 71b-76a

⁴ WAM 968 (a transcription of which, by Edward Scott, appeared in *The Athenæum*, 2 December 1893, pp.772-3): London Guildhall Library ms.25,122/240

This is a prime example of land acquisition in Essex without any surviving royal or baronial *acta* giving licence to it, particularly as Othuer's unknown lands were being farmed by the equally mysterious Hugh de Monte in 1129-30. Danegeld exemptions were listed separately for Essex and Hertfordshire, which prevents any tenurial confusion being caused by the dual-county shrieval system.¹ As Tables 13-16 show many of the men listed in the Pipe Roll had no evident link with Essex from Domesday or later royal grants, in spite of them paying money, or being forgiven debt, that accompanied tenure.

Many of those in receipt of Danegeld, murdrum and forest exemptions or pardons were Essex landowners since the Conqueror's reign or from more recent grants by Rufus or Beauclerc. There were also a large number of men whose tenure in Essex can first be demonstrated in 1130 and followed into subsequent generations, but not traced before that date. In view of the diminishing value of royal demesne this large group must be viewed, at least in part, as the recipients of royal lands in Essex during the reigns of William I's sons. The quantity of tenants not holding in-chief from the Danegeld exemption list is also difficult to judge. Tenure in-chief tended to leave better records, so the lack of evidence for individuals such as Gerard de Pinkeny probably indicates that they were subtenants.

Whilst it does not entirely explain their presence, the 1129-30 Pipe Roll provides the county historian with a list of current members of the local community.² Post-Domesday, pre-*Cartae Baronum*, this is the only detailed report concerning the principal members of the Essex landowning community from 1086 to 1154. It does not list all of the barons of Essex, nor does it give

¹ PR 31 Hen I 59-60, 62

² Or, to put it more eloquently, 'we may collect from it a more authentic list of the distinguished persons of England sixty or seventy years after the Conquest': PR 31 Hen I xxi

the reliable and repetitive detail of Domesday. With regard to the local community, some general facts emerge immediately.

Apart from specifically being a financial and judicial record, the Pipe Roll offers important information about the county's residents. It confirms involvement within Essex in 1130 and verifies that individuals were alive or, in some cases, dead. It also offers some detail of blood relationships, inheritance, marriages and local office. Robert fitz Siward fined fifteen marks for the widow and office of Hugh de Quivelly (*Chivilli*).¹ Again, this was a 'new' debt in that he made the first payment towards a round figure in 1130. Round identified Hugh's office as that of usher of the Butlery (*ostarius Butellarie*), although his wife's identity remains unknown.² The serjeanty does not appear to have been held in conjunction with a specific parcel of land. It was variously identified by Round with Writtle, Boreham and Little Waltham. All fall within the northern half of Chelmsford hundred. The serjeanty had returned to the Quivelly family in or by 1172 when another Hugh held the office. He was succeeded by his son William in 1200.

Picard de Domfront owed the sum of £168 4s 7d for the lands of Matthew of Mortagne.³ Such an irregular amount suggests that he (or his predecessor) had paid some of the debt already, although he contributed nothing to it in 1130. Robert de Mortagne (*Mauritan*), Matthew's nephew, had owed this money to the Crown. It was a huge sum of money if it solely pertained to Essex, as Matthew of Mortagne's fee in the county consisted of two manors (Great Easton and Margaretting) which yielded only £15 per annum at 1086 values.⁴

¹ PR 31 Hen I 53

² J.H.Round, 'A Butler's Serjeanty', *EHR* xxxvii (1921) 46-50, 49

³ PR 31 Hen I 53

⁴ LDB 91b

Matthew, or Robert, may have fallen foul of the same process of being financially paralysed that the king employed against Geoffrey de Mandeville.¹

Other men were paying for the right to ancestral lands, the implication being that the payment of relief to the king indicates tenure in-chief and recent inheritance. Geoffrey Mauduit (*maledoctus*) fined seven marks for relief, paid five and was forgiven two.² Manasser de Gweres similarly owed seventeen marks for the paternal estate, paying ten.³ According to the Pipe Roll the king made Manasser's father hold his lands from Geoffrey de Mandeville, but it is unclear which Geoffrey de Mandeville had been granted the Gweres lands as a subtenancy. If they had been granted to Geoffrey I de Mandeville, then the Gweres evidently held land associated with Saffron Walden or Great Waltham that had passed to Eudo *dapifer* (and possibly to Othuer fitz Earl) before entering royal control. As the payment was made to the crown, it is logical to suggest that the Gweres lands were held in-chief in 1130. The Mandevilles regained lordship of the Gweres estate before 1166, when they claimed that the fee of Roger de Gweres consisted of four knights' fees of the old enfeoffment.⁴ The Gweres case demonstrates the complication of land tenure issues after Henry I had interfered with the composition of the Mandeville honour. Geoffrey II de Mandeville himself still owed the king an enormous amount of money for his patrimony, with an outstanding sum of £866 13s 4d in 1130.⁵

¹ At Henry I's direction, William de Mandeville was deprived of his principal demesne manors (Sawbridgeworth, Walden and Waltham, which had a cumulative Domesday value of £160) in favour of Eudo *dapifer*, until he paid a huge debt of £2,210 3s. to Eudo: C.W. Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 19-20

² PR 31 Hen I 55

³ PR 31 Hen I 55

⁴ RBE 345

⁵ PR 31 Hen I 55

The contexts of other payments of relief were less obvious. William fitz John de *Marchiamesleda* (and his mother) paid four marks (out of ten) and Hugh fitz Anschetil two ounces of gold for their fathers' (unspecified) lands.¹ Ralph fitz William owed ten silver marks and one dexter for his bride's hand and land, whilst Hugh fitz Stephen owed ten marks for the return of his own lands.² Quite how these people fitted into the tenurial structure of Essex is unclear. They certainly had nothing to do with the great households of the county, whose tenants and visitors demonstrate the existence of local community ties.

Private charter witness lists provide valuable evidence on the households of the greater honorial barons. Between c.1107 and 1118 Eustace of Boulogne confirmed that G. son of T. of Mashbury had proved his rights to lands within the honour, at the count's court, in the presence of the count's barons.³ This document has been of interest for theorists of feudalism: Round noted that the words *sive in nummis sive in exercitu sive in guarda* is indicative of knight service (and as Stenton later noted, of scutage), whilst the feudal court also merited a reference.⁴ For the purposes of this study, the charter offers confirmation of presence at a feudal court in Essex.⁵ The witnesses shed some light on the contemporary composition of the honour and the relationship between the liegemen of Essex. *R de Sumeri* was almost certainly Roger de Sumeri of Elmdon, Domesday tenant of the honour of Boulogne.⁶ *Fulco* and *M. de Merc* were (quite obviously) members of the Merk family, although this is their only appearance in surviving historical documents. Their relationship

¹ PR 31 Hen I 59. No-one held land referred to as *Marchiamsleda* in 1086

² PR 31 Hen I 55

³ WAM 968

⁴ E.J.L.Scott, 'Two Documents', 772-73; J.H.Round, 'Two Documents', 807: First Century 93-4

⁵ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 143-4

⁶ LDB 33b

with the Boulonnais Domesday tenant Adelolf de Merk can be guessed at but not proved.

E. de Latimier de Renuale was not the Domesday tenant of Rivenhall in Witham hundred (the Count held this in demesne in 1086) and there was no Domesday tenant of the honour with that name.¹ A Ralph Latimer had annexed thirty acres at Farnham (Claving hundred) before 1086, although the report of this action did not link him with the count.² *V. camerario* and *B. pincerna* were evidently comital officials, although Eustace had no sub-tenants in Essex with names beginning with 'V' in 1086 and only one 'B', Bernard, holding Plesingho, Belchamp, Toppesfield and Tendring.³ Of course, the passing of between twenty-two and thirty-two years since Domesday could well have introduced more men with those initials into the Count's household.

V. filius E. again gives an abbreviation for an unrecorded or non-existent Domesday tenant. *A. de Bora'* can perhaps be associated with the Domesday Lambert of *Borham* (Boreham, Chelmsford hundred), whilst *P. loolt* (Loholt) was identified by Round as a member of the family holding Tollesbury (Thurstable) of the honour of Boulogne.⁴ *V. de Cristesale* was again absent from the 1086 survey, as Chrishall (Uttlesford) was comital demesne at that time.⁵ *R de Caio* belonged to a family without any apparent Essex connection.

The most interesting attestor is probably *R de Mercesale*, who attested a contemporary Vere charter and may have been the son of Nigel of

¹ LDB 27a

² LDB 101a. A Latimer was an interpreter: H.Tsurushima, 'Domesday Interpreters', 211-12: A.Williams, *The English and the Norman Conquest*, 84, 96

³ LDB 27b, 29a, 33a

⁴ LDB 31b, 32a: Round, 'Two Documents', 807-8

⁵ LDB 33a-b

Mercheshalam (Mark's Hall, Lexden).¹ Such a link would indicate that a tenant of Hugh de Montfort's honour of Haughley was associating himself with the count of Boulogne and the lord de Vere. Haughley had passed to Alice de Montfort after her brother Robert was banished in 1107.² Alice was married, perhaps by this time, to her first husband Simon de Moulins. *R de Bernieres et H de Bernieres frater suus* were from the family of Hugh de Bernières, a major tenant of the Mandeville honour of Pleshy.³ Again this suggests that the honorial court at Stanford Rivers had a broad appeal for non-Boulonnais tenants, but it is a further indication of the polarisation of Essex politics after the demise of the Montfort and Mandeville families.

Through their attendance of the Boulonnais court, this isolated incident could be taken to suggest that both Othuer fitz Earl and Simon de Moulins had a close relationship with the count of Boulogne. Certainly the honour of Boulogne was the ascendant force in the county in the 1120s, after gaining control of part of Eudo *dapifer's* honour and then forming the basis of a larger unit incorporating Eye, Mortain, Lancaster and eventually royal demesne. New men of power and established sub-tenants in Essex can be linked, definitely or tentatively, with the Boulonnais court at Ongar. Tenants of unstable honours are recorded in the company of barons who enjoyed royal favour.

The close links between the count of Boulogne and other tenants-in-chief is again visible in a charter of 1106. By the terms of this document, Eustace of Boulogne withdrew his claim to lands held by St Paul's.⁴ The land concerned is immaterial (it was in London) but the place at which the charter was issued is of great significance. Eustace stated that *hec concessio facta est in*

¹ Cart Colne no.31: LDB 53b-54a

² Sanders 120-1

³ LDB 60b, 61a

⁴ Cart Lond no.198

*Lundon'... in domo Willelmi Bainardi.*¹ Just as other lords were to be found in Eustace's hall at this time, Eustace himself attended the gatherings of other Essex-based lords. On this occasion he was accompanied by several members of his family and Roger de Somery, one of the Boulonnais tenants.

The most apparent index of locality for this period is that of monastic foundation and patronage. Between Domesday and the death of Henry I monastic investment in Essex was heavily increased, denoting a stronger sense of personal connection with the county. By 1 December 1135 there were seventeen monastic establishments in Essex. Ten of these were Benedictine (two of which were nunneries), three were Cluniac, three Augustinian and one followed the rule of the order of Savigny. The county's foundations were almost universally baronial. Many of the families who had a recognised *caput* in Essex established a house at this time. The second and third generations of Anglo-Normans had developed a deeper sense of local attachment than their fathers. Small grants were still made to non-Essex houses with lands in the county. Both Ranulf Peverel and Peter de Valognes made grants in favour of St Paul's, although both were surviving members of the first generation of settlers.² Ranulf Peverel appears to have been buried within the cathedral church of St Paul's.³

The first and greatest monastic foundation of this period was Eudo *dapifer's* establishment of the abbey of St John the Baptist at Colchester.⁴ This Benedictine house was probably established 1096-7.⁵ Eudo, Domesday baron

¹ For an account of the Baynard family see R.Mortimer, 'The Baynards of Baynard's Castle' in C.Harper-Bill, C.J.Holdsworth & J.L.Nelson (eds.), Studies in Medieval History presented to R.Allen Brown (Woodbridge, 1989) 241-53

² Cart Lond nos.56, 62

³ Cart Lond no.219

⁴ Cart Colc pp.1-3

⁵ MRH 62; VCH Essex ii. 93-102: Tanner 121

though he was, can be classed as a second generation Norman because of his longevity. As he died in February 1120, it can be safely assumed that Eudo had played no part in the conquest of England. Colchester was the most important foundation of this era. Some of the manors granted in the foundation charter are indicative of the movement of lands into Eudo's hands after Domesday. Pitsea had been in the hands of Wulfeva wife of Finn and Brightlingsea had formerly been royal demesne.¹ Eudo's grant of Wulfeva's land was probably influenced by a potential dispute over ownership. Eudo's relatives by marriage, the Clares, were the beneficiaries of most of Finn the Dane's land through antecession by 1086. Their claim to Finn's wife's lands was a strong one. Granting this land to an abbey put the matter beyond argument, to Eudo's eternal spiritual benefit.² Gilbert fitz Richard de Clare quitclaimed his right to the land in c.1104, a grant witnessed by Eudo's tenants (including Hamo de St Clair and Ralph de Amblia).³

The foundation charter also demonstrates that the confiscated Mandeville manors were not treated as a permanent acquisition by the steward. His general grants of land and service throughout his manors were made *exceptis Witham et Waltham Sabrichesworthe et Waledena*, indicating that he saw himself as a custodian (rather than the owner) of Great Waltham, Saffron Walden and Sawbridgeworth. The steward, a faithful and ever-present royal servant, died at his Norman castle of Préaux early in 1120 but was buried at Colchester on 28 February.⁴ Eudo's interests spanned the Channel and he kept the company of kings but his affection for Essex was plain. Even after his

¹ LDB 6a, 98b

² Farrer suggested that the Clare interest in Pitsea had been given to Eudo with Rohaise: Farrer iii.220

³ Cart Colc p.141. This named Hugh as abbot of St John's. He was the first abbot and was consecrated in 1104 but left soon after, due to a dispute with Eudo (Ibid, xix)

⁴ Farrer iii 167: Cart Colc p.xviii

death, St John's Abbey continued to benefit from its association with Eudo. They were holding Eudo's honour at farm in 1129-30.¹

Later grants and attestations indicate that this was the county's most favoured monastery, as individuals making and witnessing donations were lords and sub-tenants of many different honours. The original patron's death without a clear heir may have caused some of these activities. In 1120 Eudo's heir was, technically, the young Geoffrey II de Mandeville. The disgrace of the Mandevilles and the active empire-building by Stephen of Blois in Essex resulted in the counts of Boulogne enjoying a central role in the abbey's affairs until 1154. Before 1125 Eustace III, count of Boulogne, confirmed tithes granted by Eudo to Colchester, as the king had granted some of the dead steward's manors to the count.² Stephen of Mortain confirmed many of the same tithes before 1125, which shows that he had taken control of Boulogne lands in Essex before he became count.³

Eudo's principal sub-tenants maintained benefaction to the abbey and grants by the St Clair family during this period are highly evident. William de St Clair, at an unknown date, granted the church of Hamertone *cum corpore meo*.⁴ In a charter dated 1123 Hamo de St Clair granted the tithes of *Aedgareslawe* to Colchester, where he too would eventually be buried.⁵ Neither of these settlements seems to have been in Essex. William de St Clair also granted all of his land at Greensted (Colchester) to St John's, which he probably acquired

¹ PR 31 Hen I 139: Govt Henry I 183

² Cart Colc p.47-8: VCH Herts iii 260, iv.27. In its published form the charter is spurious, as Eustace is suspiciously described as *Eustachius dei gratia Bolonie comes*

³ Cart Colc p.48-9. Stephen is described as *Stephanus comes de Moretonio* in this charter. He became count of Boulogne after the retirement of Count Eustace III to Cluny, c.1125: CDF 1385: Sanders 151

⁴ Cart Colc p.155

⁵ Cart Colc pp.157, 160

after Henry I had granted the entire town to Eudo.¹ From the St Clair example it seems evident that, as one would expect, families within Eudo's honour continued to support the house and use the abbey as a mausoleum. It must also be noted that Colchester quickly became the focal point of monastic activity for many other inhabitants of Essex.

Serlo de Muntalurone granted a hide of land next to Pitsea (Barstable) to Colchester. The hide by Pitsea corresponds with the Domesday land at Vange.² Serlo's grant has not survived but the confirmation made by his lord William son of Ranulf Peverel, lord of the honour of Peverel of London, is in the cartulary.³ William de Raismes, a minor tenant-in-chief, granted the tithe of *Boituna* and half an acre of land *pro anima Eudonis dapiferi domini mei*.⁴ This probably refers to Boyton Hall (Hinckford), held by Richard fitz Gilbert in 1086.⁵ William, who died *ante* 1129, was the son of Roger de Raismes who held nothing in Essex of Eudo or the Clares in 1086.⁶ A rational explanation for this (if the identification is correct) is that Boyton Hall formed part of Rohaise de Clare's marriage portion which Eudo then granted to William de Raismes.¹ If this is an accurate summation it is indicative of the steward's utilisation of local men to fulfil his quota of knights instead of bringing in outsiders.

Colne priory, established by Aubrey de Vere prior to 1107 as a dependency of Abingdon, became the burial place for the first lord Vere and most of his

¹ Cart Colc pp.154-5: LDB 104a

² LDB 71b-72a

³ Cart Colc p.142

⁴ Cart Colc p.149

⁵ LDB 40a

⁶ Sanders 139

successors.² Earl's Colne, like St John's Colchester, was another Benedictine foundation. Royal confirmation of grants to the abbey attracted baronial attestations from other Essex tenants-in-chief, notably Hamo *dapifer*, William Peverel of Nottingham, Eudo *dapifer* and Robert Malet.³ Only the two stewards had any concentration of land in Essex but even so, their appearance within the witness lists must be seen in the context of their frequent presence in the royal retinue.

The Colne charters also provide an example of a local royal official, Alvred the sheriff, granting land to the priory before 1114x1122.⁴ As this was a grant of tithes at Canfield (Dunmow) it must be assumed that he held land there from the Veres or was a generous neighbour holding of another tenant-in-chief.⁵ In the same archiepiscopal confirmation, Colne's rights to tithes and mills at Bures (Hinckford) and Sible Hedingham (Hinckford) were endorsed. Neither settlement fell within the Domesday lands of the Veres, which means that Colne, like Colchester, enjoyed multi-honorial patronage from an early stage.⁶

¹ Land at Bollington Hall (Clavering), known at Domesday as *Bolituna*, was held by Robert Gernon, Swein of Essex and an unnamed free man, none of whom had any apparent connection with Eudo *dapifer* or William de Raimes: LDB 65b, 101a

² Cart Colne i no.49: MRH 64: Mon iv 95-103: VCH Essex ii 102-5: Tanner 122

³ Cart Colne i nos.2, 3: Reg ii nos.981, 1089

⁴ Cart Colne i no.9, pp.60-1. Alvred was probably under-sheriff to Hugh de Buckland: Sheriffs 40

⁵ Aubrey de Vere held land at Canfield in-chief and as a tenant of the Breton counts in 1086: 'Richard' (a tenant of the Mandevilles) and Warenne also had land in the Canfield villages: LDB 35a, 76a, 36b, 61b

⁶ Sub-tenants of John fitz Waleran and Richard fitz Gilbert held Bures in 1086, and tenants of Roger de Raimes and Roger Bigod held Sible Hedingham: LDB 39b-40b, 84b, 82b, 87b

Other Vere charters in favour of Colne before 1135 attracted witnesses betraying a sense of local rather than honorial alignment. There were two attestations from Pagan *forestario*, one from Robert de Mercheshale and one Richard Pinel.¹ In 1086 Ralph Pinel was listed as minor tenant-in-chief whose service was claimed by Geoffrey de Mandeville and by 1166 Pinel's fee owed four fees *de veteri* to the Mandeville honour.² Nigel of *Mercheshalam* (Mark's Hall, Lexden) was the only recorded landholder in that settlement in Essex at Domesday and was a tenant of Hugh de Montfort.³ Pagan, like Alvred the sheriff, is of interest because he was a local official.

Hubert de Montchesney made a grant to Abingdon (Colne's mother house) in 1115 of land in Essex at Stanstead, which was confirmed to Colne by Hubert's son Hugh.⁴ A Hubert (probably the same) held Stanstead Hall (Hinckford) of Robert Malet in 1086 and a Hubert de *Montechanesi* held twelve fees of the honour of Eye in 1166.⁵ Hubert's support of Colne coincided with the early years of Stephen of Blois' control of the honour of Eye. Hubert granted land to Eye at its foundation by Robert Malet but failed to witness a single charter from Stephen to Eye priory over the period c.1113x1135.⁶ Whilst it is quite possible that Hubert was not eager to associate himself closely with the future king, he did have a poor relationship with Eye priory. Before 1113 Hubert received orders from Queen Matilda (as regent), directing him to return those lands that he had unlawfully taken from the priory.⁷

¹ Cart Colne i nos.31, 32, 34

² LDB 97a-b: RBE 346

³ LDB 53b-54a

⁴ Cart Colne i nos.64, 65

⁵ LDB 88a: RBE 411

⁶ Cart Eye i nos.1, 19-22

⁷ Cart Eye i no.26

Four other Benedictine foundations date from this period. Aubrey II de Vere established a house at Hatfield Broad Oak, a dependency of St Mélaïne of Rennes, by c.1135.¹ This ensured that the Veres were the most prolific monastic patrons in the county at that time. William fitz Ranulf Peverel founded the abbey of Hatfield Peverel, a dependency of St Albans, probably after 1100.² Walter Maskerel established an independent Benedictine nunnery at Chich (known as Wix) during the period 1123-33, in association with his family.³ As Round has demonstrated, Walter's wife was Ermengard, heiress of the Boulonnais tenant Robert.⁴ Robert's two knights' fees, at Birch Hall and Shreeves, were used by Ermengard to favour St Osyth's and St Botolph's respectively. Their intra-county marriage and the couple's benefactions denote a strong attachment to Essex, although they do not appear to have shared the same monastic tastes. The fourth of the Benedictine houses was caused by royal patronage (Bedeman's Berg) and was probably not more than a hermitage, subsequently granted to Colchester.⁵

There was a degree of diversity in monastic foundation and patronage that reveals a respect for the work of reforming movements. Matilda, queen of Henry I, had adopted the Augustinian canons as her favoured order and through her example three Augustinian houses were established in Essex

¹ MRH 67; Mon iv 432-5; VCH Essex ii 107-10; Tanner 127. This foundation was an obvious demonstration of the Breton origins and connections of the Vere family: Keats-Rohan 131

² MRH 67; Mon iii 294-7; VCH Essex ii 105-7; Tanner 121

³ MRH 268; Mon iv 513-4; VCH Essex ii 123-5; Tanner 124; L.Landon, 'The Barony of Little Easton and the Family of Hastings', 174-5; J.A.Clarence Smith, 'Hastings of Little Easton': C.N.L.Brooke ed., 'Episcopal Charters for Wix Priory' in P.M.Barnes & C.F.Slade eds., A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton (PRS, London, 1962), 45-63

⁴ J.H.Round, 'The Manor of Colne Engaine', 196-7; LDB 32b-33a. Shreeves was not recorded in Domesday

⁵ MRH 59; VCH Essex ii 94

during Henry I's reign.¹ Geoffrey Baynard established the house of Little Dunmow in 1106.² The Dunmow cartulary details grants made to the house by other families, notably the Warenne earls of Surrey.³ St Osyth's was founded by Richard I Belmeis, bishop of London, in 1121.⁴ Two years later, the prior of St Osyth's, William of Corbeil, was elected archbishop of Canterbury.⁵ St Botolph's Colchester was founded before 1106 but the founder's identity is uncertain.⁶ St Botolph's is traditionally recognised as the oldest house of Augustinian canons in England, a demonstration of progressive attitudes among the Essex baronage.⁷

Support for the Cluniacs was also strong. Cluniac influence spread through England via William de Warenne's foundation at Lewes. The monks of St Pancras sent their fellows from southern Sussex into new foundations across the country, which included Prittlewell and Stansgate in Essex. The Cluniac Rule was also followed at Thetford, Suffolk, a house established by Roger Bigod. Thetford would later gain a dependency of its own in Essex at Little Horkesley. All of the patrons involved in this scheme were Essex landowning

¹ J.E.Burton, Monastic and Religious Orders in England 1000-1300, 46

² MRH 164: VCH Essex ii 150-4: Tanner 123

³ BL Harl. ms.662 f.29a. The central problem with this cartulary is that almost all of the recorded grants end *hiis testibus etc* which deprives the study of valuable demonstrations of community links through attestation. It also makes the dating process difficult

⁴ MRH 173: VCH Essex ii 157-62: D.Bethell, 'Richard of Belmeis and the foundation of St Osyth's', EAH ii. (1966) 299-328. St Osyth's major claim to fame was that abbot William of Corbeil left the abbey in 1123 to become archbishop of Canterbury

⁵ D.Knowles, C.N.L.Brooke & V.C.M.London eds., The Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales: 940-1216 (Cambridge, 1972), 183

⁶ MRH 155: Mon iv 601-7: VCH Essex ii 148-50: Tanner 123

⁷ M.R.James, 'Manuscripts from Essex monastic libraries', TEAS xxi (1937) 34-46, 34: J.E.Burton, Monastic and Religious Orders in England 1000-1300, 45: C.H.Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism (Harlow, 1989), 167

families in 1086, although Warenne and Bigod were powerful men in many counties, with the former holding more land in Essex than the latter.

Table 17: the Cluniac family in Essex

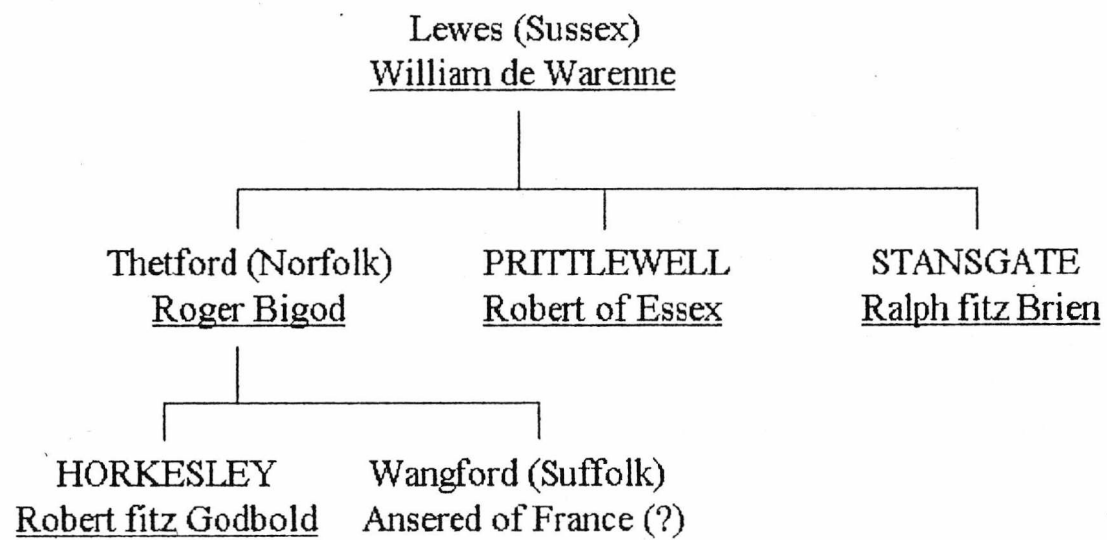
Stansgate and Prittlewell were both founded prior to 1121. Stansgate's patron was Ralph fitz Brien and his foundation is worthy of note because he was a sub-tenant.¹ Ralph held 9½ hides at Stansgate from Ranulf Peverel in 1086, including some land that Ranulf had annexed.² This looks to be the first incidence of a Domesday subtenant of Essex establishing a monastic house within the county. It is also a good example of a monastic establishment being founded upon land of questionable tenure. This pattern, seen most frequently in the March, allowed a landowner to feel the benefit of land when their ownership was insecure. It was better to alienate land to a monastery than lose possession of it. By making a grant to a monastery, both founder and family would reap spiritual rewards for their act of generosity. The Peverel honour had probably escheated by the time this grant was made, by a man who appears to have been one of the last surviving members of the Domesday group.

A house at Prittlewell was founded after the death of a greater resident of the county, Swein fitz Robert fitz Wymarc.³ Swein had been the third richest lay landowner in the county in 1086; after his largely unnoticed death his son

¹ MRH 102: VCH Essex i 530, ii 141-2: Tanner 131. Ralph also founded an alien priory at Great Bricett (Suffolk), 1114x1119: MRH 181

² LDB 74b, 99b. He also held land at Rettendon: LDB 75a

³ MRH 102: VCH Essex ii 138-41: Tanner 130



Capitals denote houses founded in Essex
Underlined individuals held land in Essex

Table 17: the Cluniac family in Essex

Robert inherited the estate.¹ Prittlewell was established in the heart of the family's hundred, Rochford, and within five miles of Swein's castle at Rayleigh.² Before 1127 Robert son of Godbold had established another Cluniac house at Little Horkesley.³ This second foundation is of great interest as Robert fitz Godbold (or Godebald) was described as a 'baron' of Robert fitz Swein in a charter of Gilbert Crispin.⁴ Through these two small Cluniac foundations, sub-tenants had created their own local monastic houses and through their investment confirmed their attachment to Essex.

The final foundation made in the county during Henry I's reign was the establishment of a Savignac house at Stratford Langthorne by William de Montfichet on 25 July 1135.⁵ Montfichet's patronage of a tells us that his influences came from elsewhere. His abbey of Stratford was the first Savignac house in Essex, and only one of two to be created in the county. Stephen founded Coggeshall by 1142, and both Stratford and Coggeshall were later absorbed into the Cistercian group together with the entire congregation of Savigny.⁶ All of the other Savignac houses were in the north, the March, the Isle of Wight and Devon.⁷ Montfichet's patronage of Savigny, an order strongly supported by Stephen of Blois, can be viewed as an example of

¹ Swein was still alive in 1100, and probably for longer: Cart Lond nos.17, 20. He was undoubtedly dead prior to Prittlewell's establishment, which was in all likelihood founded to honour his memory. For a dubious Prittlewell foundation charter (witnessed by Warin fitz Gerold), see Mon i 22-23

² LDB 44a, 43b

³ MRH 100: VCH Essex ii 137-8: J.H.Round, 'The Horkesleys of Little Horkesley', TEAS xxi (1937) 284-91, 284-5

⁴ Gilbert Crispin, p.135

⁵ MRH 126: VCH Essex ii 129-33: Tanner 126

⁶ MRH 117

⁷ MRH 115-27

Stephen's influence in Essex in 1135 and the support he enjoyed among the barons of the county. Savigny was also patronised by Alvred Gernon.¹

Grants to houses outside Essex were still made, although they did not form the same high proportion of the total that occurred in the time of the Conqueror. The count of Brittany granted land at Manhall in Saffron Walden to Bury St Edmunds.² William de Warenne made a grant of the church of Leaden Roding to his foundation at Castle Acre in Norfolk and of the church of High Roding to Lewes priory.³

Bermondsey priory and St Pancras, Lewes, were both in receipt of multi-honorial patronage from Essex. Geoffrey Baynard granted the church of Ashdon to Lewes, in association with his brother Ralph.⁴ This particular grant is very interesting because Ralph Baynard held Ashdon in demesne in 1086.⁵ Although the grant was not made to an Essex house, it serves to demonstrate that by the time of the grant (1096x1100), other members of the Baynard family held land within the honour and there were evidently no plans afoot to found the priory at Dunmow. Geoffrey Martel, tenant of the Mandevilles, and Roger, a tenant of John fitz Waleran, both made grants to Bermondsey priory.⁶ Martel had granted land at Monksbury in Little Hallingbury (Harlow) and Bigods (Dunmow).⁷ Roger had granted the tithes of Fyfield (Ongar).¹

¹ CDF p.292 nos.807, 808: Round, 'Great Birch, Easthorpe and the Gernons', 93. There were two Domesday manors called Oakley (*Accleiam, Adem*), one of which was held by Robert Gernon in demesne and one by Germund of Ralph Baynard: LDB 67b, 70b

² D.C.Douglas ed., Feudal Documents of the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds (London, 1932), p.152 no. 169: Hart no.104: LDB 35b

³ Mon v 49: L.F.Salzman ed., The Chartulary of the Priory of St Pancras of Lewes i. (Sussex Record Society xxxviii, 1932), p.40: Hart nos.105, 109: LDB 36b

⁴ Mon v 14: Hart no.121

⁵ LDB 71a

⁶ Mon v 86, 96: VCH Essex i pp.508 n.11, 545 n.3: Hart nos.110, 113

⁷ LDB 60a

Whilst monastic grants in Essex were not exclusively made to houses based in Essex, there were emerging patterns of strong local patronage. In some respects these followed national trends. Few new monasteries were founded in the latter of years of William II's reign, Norman alien priories became increasingly scarce over the same period and in Henry I's reign the number of new foundations in England was very high.² Only one abbey had been founded in Essex before 1100 (at Colchester) but there was a marked growth in local monastic investment during the period 1100-35. These trends are evidence of parochial activity, although such behaviour was evidently caused by a widespread attitude of Norman settlers preferring '...to give English lands to houses situated in England, the majority of which had no obvious connection with any "homeland" across the Channel.'³

The level of monastic investment indicates that Essex landowners had become more interested in the county and that local amenities were multiplying. In other respects, fabric development had tailed off. New castles in the county were few and far between. Hedingham was constructed 1130-40, although this Vere fortification cannot be satisfactorily ascribed to either Henry I's or Stephen's reign.⁴ A castle at Saffron Walden was in existence in 1139, a date which suggests that building was begun by Geoffrey de Mandeville shortly before that time or that the castle was built by Eudo *dapifer*.⁵ As there is no mention of the castle in the grant to Eudo, it was probably not built by the Mandevilles prior to Henry's confiscation of the manor. The five castles built (or probably built) before this period, at Colchester, Rayleigh, Clavering, Ongar and Pleshy, were all controlled by local barons over the period c.1102-

¹ LDB 84b

² E.Cownie, 'The Normans as Patrons of English Religious Houses', 58-9

³ E.Cownie, 'The Normans as Patrons of English Religious Houses', 59

⁴ CA 145

⁵ CA 147

1120. The grant of Colchester to Eudo removed the only royal castle in Essex from crown control, although it was back in the king's hand from 1120. The St Clair family received custody of the castle, although there is no indication of any hereditary grant of the castellanry.¹ Pleshy was not removed from the Mandeville family (raising questions about whether or not the castle had been built by the time that the Mandeville manors were confiscated, c.1103) and the other three castles were securely held by the counts of Boulogne and Swein and Robert of Essex.²

Henry's policies with regard to castles were quite straightforward in Essex. He did not feel it was necessary to take castles in peaceful areas into royal control and he did not raise any evident objection to the construction of new fortifications. Towards the end of the reign it is noticeable that any attempt to control Essex would depend upon the support and goodwill of Geoffrey de Mandeville and Robert of Essex. The relatively small number of castles in Essex constructed between 1066 and 1135 undoubtedly influenced Stephen's decision to court Geoffrey de Mandeville's favour.

Just as the number of castles was not increased greatly, the quantity of markets and fairs in Essex was not subject to any large rise. There was one new recorded fair in the county, which was granted to the canons of Waltham Holy Cross by Queen Matilda, between 1108 and 1115.³ It is quite possible that the fair of Newport was established during Henry I's reign, although it was first mentioned in 1141 when it was closed.⁴

¹ PR 31 Hen I 138-9

² For the date of the Mandeville confiscation, see C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 19

³ Cart Waltham no.15

⁴ Reg iii no.99

The number of sheriffs appointed in Essex was high in the four decades after Domesday. Initially, the shrievalty under Rufus appears to have been retained by Peter de Valognes, with no reliable evidence of any other sheriffs representing the county between Domesday and 1100.¹ Writs addressed to Swein of Essex c.1099 - 1100 show that he was a local royal official, possibly the sheriff or (probably) one of the hundred reeves.² There were at least five sheriffs in Essex under Henry I, together with other individuals who may have been acting in a shrieval or semi-shrieval capacity.³ Shorter shrieval terms were more common in the latter years of Henry I's reign across England.⁴

Of the sheriffs, Hugh de Buckland probably held the position from c.1100 to c.1115. The numerous charters referring to Hugh as sheriff seem to indicate that he held the post for over a decade.⁵ It is likely that Alvred the sheriff held office with or under Hugh, as *acta* addressed to him also involved Buckland.⁶ Hugh appears to have been succeeded by Aubrey de Vere, who was sheriff by 1121 and probably held the post until 1123 or later.⁷ Aubrey may have been sheriff for the entire period c.1115 - c.1128. He was succeeded in (or before) 1128 by William of Eynesford, although Hamo de St Clair may have held the office in 1127.⁸ The central problem with the period 1086-1129 is that there is no concrete and universal collaborative evidence of status after Domesday and before the earliest surviving Pipe Roll. For the year 1129-30 more facts are discernible about the shrievalty but for the period 1130-35 it is impossible to tell who was sheriff of Essex. Notifications addressed to Hamo de St Clair

¹ Sheriffs 39

² Cart Lond nos.17, 20

³ Sheriffs 39-40

⁴ Govt Hen I 205-6

⁵ Reg ii nos.519, 522, 661, 688, 775, 862, 863, 1010, 1090, 1105, 1119

⁶ Sheriffs 40: Reg ii nos.519, 863

⁷ Sheriffs 40: Reg ii nos.1261, 1518, 1524, 1539, 1551

⁸ Sheriffs 40: Reg ii no.1498

between 1130 and 1133 concerning Colchester may have been directed to him as sheriff of Essex or as custodian of Colchester.¹

The link between the shrievalties of Essex and Hertfordshire was demonstrated within the 1129-30 Pipe Roll. Aubrey de Vere, Richard Basset and William of Eynesford were each described as sheriffs of the two counties.² Within the Essex section of the Pipe Roll there are few entries relating to individuals who were not landowners within Essex or Hertfordshire. Because they were not local men, these people did not account for any transgression in Essex or receive any pardon for financial exaction. Both Richard Basset and William of Eynesford were among the small number of men to be involved in the affairs of Essex in 1129-30 without holding land there. Their presence was purely professional, acting in a shrieval capacity without a local interest. This was a break with normal practice, as the post-Conquest sheriffs of Essex were all landholders in the county under William I and William II. Under Henry I, this 'rule' was relaxed.

Hugh de Buckland was the first sheriff of Essex to have held the post (1100x1115) without being a local landowner.¹ Peter de Valognes and Swein of Essex were both tried and trusted men. Their work in local governance on behalf of Rufus marked a policy of continuity in the leading personnel of Essex government. Henry I's men were all new to the shrieval position, taking the office out of the hands of the four families who held it over the period 1066-1100. It is immediately clear that Henry I did not follow the policy of appointing sheriffs of Essex and Hertfordshire from the highest echelons of local society that was implemented by his brother and father. Aubrey de Vere and Hamo de St Clair (if he was sheriff) were local men, who held land in-chief and were generous patrons of local monastic houses. Neither can be

¹ Reg ii nos.1821, 1822, 1824

² PR 31 Hen I 52

considered a magnate of a great standing. Aubrey was not one of the major Essex landowners, even though Essex was the central county of his honour, and he was a sub-tenant of the honour of Richmond. St Clair was a tenant-in-chief by default and had only enjoyed such status since the death of Eudo *dapifer* in 1120.

Hugh de Buckland's appointment to the shrievalty is indicative of Henry I's need for trustworthy local officials in the early years of his reign. Judith Green noted that he was one of Rufus' sheriffs who were 'given additional responsibilities' after the accession of Henry I.² Hugh was the first professional sheriff of Essex, holding a similar position in Berkshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire, London and Middlesex.³ However, Buckland was not a local landowner.⁴ Alvred cannot be adequately identified. He may have been Alvred Gernon, Alvred of Chafford or Alvred the clerk, *prepositus* of Stanford.

There was also an increase in the recorded number of men associated with the management of the royal forest. Judith Green has suggested that the personnel associated with the forest frequently had a hereditary character, as knowledge of the locality was essential for deterring poachers and spotting transgressions.⁵ The Montfichets inherited Robert Gernon's office, chief forester of Essex, as well as his lands. Other officials associated with the forest do not seem to have been appointed through family ties. Eustace de Barrington, appointed to the forest of Hatfield Broad Oak, had no explicitly stated connection with Adam, his predecessor in that capacity.⁶ William

¹ Sheriffs 39

² Govt Hen I 196

³ Sheriffs 25, 26, 28, 39, 40, 47, 56, 57

⁴ Govt Hen I 237-8

⁵ Govt Hen I 165

⁶ Reg ii no.1518

d'Aubigny *brito* had no hereditary claim to the management of Essex forests either, as he was a first-generation settler from Brittany.¹ Another previously unnamed forest official was Robert Adelelm, who was probably one of William d'Aubigny's named associates.²

By the death of Henry I Essex was a much-changed county. Royal demesne had unquestionably been reduced, although the degree of reduction is uncertain. The number of tenants-in-chief remained high, with radical changes in personnel. The Conqueror's intimates and their successors obliged Henry or risked falling by the wayside. Henry's reign was one of successful transition, as Essex shows. Unlike his father Henry did not have an entire country to dispose of for the purposes of patronage. Unlike William Rufus he was not afraid to displace the less useful and less trustworthy members of his baronage in order to promote security and clear land for further grants. His policy of patronage utilised a plethora of incentives over which he retained tight control. The sale or grant of heiresses and wardships, the reduction of outstanding sums to royal government, the forgiveness of those same sums, the promotion of subtenants and the pardons of new obligations gave Henry a veritable arsenal of perks that did not require the alienation of royal demesne. Reliance on traditional financial means was boosted by increased exploitation of the royal forest in Essex. Henry also retained local control by holding onto jurisdictional privileges, which Stephen was far more ready to grant out.³

Most importantly of all, Henry showed measured restraint with his patronage. The greatest recipients of his generosity - Roger of Salisbury, Robert of Gloucester and Stephen of Blois - were his own creatures. He did not attempt

¹ PR 31 Hen I 56, 57: Govt Hen I 287

² PR 31 Hen I 59. William probably administered the forest eyre, as his plea and that of his associates from the forest was accounted for by the sheriff. Adelelm was pardoned a debt for William d'Aubigny's sake.

³ Govt Hen I 184

to win the hearts and minds of established baronial families with a deluge of gratuities. Stephen's failing can at once be seen in his creation of a herd of earls within his first half-dozen years as king. By c.1138 Gilbert fitz Gilbert de Clare had received the rape of Pevensey *and* the Norman lands of his uncle Roger *and* the lands of his uncle Walter in England and the March *and* he was made an earl.¹ Stephen's advancement of Gilbert in such a manner was not the action of a wise king, and it still failed to guarantee Gilbert's loyalty. Henry I faced no such problems, having created no such rods for his own back.

It is easy to suggest that Henry I kept England under control through oppression and made his successor's task impossible. Within Essex there are numerous examples of the many harsh methods that Henry I is accused of using to subjugate landowners. Round pithily talked of 'forest pleas as thick as fleas' in the county and this was a wholly accurate observation.² However, the 'severe' forest law and the massive extent of the royal forest in Essex under Henry I did not provoke a backlash during Stephen's reign. Round claimed that he demonstrated his weakness by granting charters affirming disafforestation in Essex and issuing licences to assart.³ Conversely, Vincent suggests that requiring licenses to assart indicate that forest law was upheld and that those assarts confirm the maintenance (and perhaps expansion) of the forest boundaries in Essex.⁴

Essex was certainly a peaceful county between 1087 and 1135. There were few reports of physical violence within Essex over this forty-eight year period. In 1130 Alvred of Chafford was fined forty shillings for flogging a peasant

¹ J.Ward, 'Royal service and reward: the Clare family and the crown, 1066-1154', 275

² GdM 378

³ J.H.Round, 'The Forest of Essex', 37-8

⁴ N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', 915-16

(*pro rustico verberato*).¹ That this was recorded at all is quite remarkable. Royal power and local justice must have been thorough for this crime to be noted and punished, whilst Alvred's actions were evidently considered to go beyond the bounds of normal behaviour. In the same year there were six murdrum fines levied within the county, compared with one in Hertfordshire.² Whilst this is by no means an accurate method for assessing the number of suspected killings in the county, it is indicative of a small amount of background violence. In each of these cases, a 'Norman' had been found dead within the hundred and no murderer had been produced within five days.³

At Barling (Rochford), William Malet had infringed on the rights of the canons of St Paul's after the death of William II and was ordered to restore their property.⁴ It is somewhat ironic that Malet had committed a transgression on land which had been annexed by St Paul's in the wake of the Conquest.⁵ A more serious crime was perpetrated in Wennington, where armed men broke into the church at night.⁶ However, whilst Essex was peaceful before 1135, Henry I was responsible for the greatest crisis in the county during the twelfth century. The main bone of contention in Essex under Stephen would be the rights and lands of the Mandevilles.

Henry's confiscation of Mandeville manors, his failure to restore them after the death of Eudo *dapifer* and his imposition of a huge amercement were enough to cause a deep-rooted sense of insecurity and disaffection in the Mandeville family. Further to this, Henry ignored Geoffrey de Mandeville's legitimate claim to his grandfather's lands. Henry could have averted a major crisis if he

¹ PR 31 Hen I 55

² PR 31 Hen I 56, 61

³ Govt Hen I 80, 111

⁴ Cart Lond no.40

⁵ LDB 13b-14a

⁶ Gilbert Crispin p.149 no.31: Cart Westm no.84

had initially punished William de Mandeville and later recognised the rights of Geoffrey de Mandeville. Instead he promoted disaffection and discord by recognising Eudo's subtenants as tenants-in-chief and using the steward's lands to patronise other Essex-based barons. Henry had strengthened royal rights in Essex and, in this case, had dismembered an honour to promote closer ties between the crown and greater subtenants. Obviously the success of such tactics would depend on the competence of his successor.

Three of the greatest Essex families had accrued heavy debts during Henry's reign. Geoffrey de Mandeville was still paying off the debts incurred by his father over twenty years before, which stood at £866 13s 4d in 1130.¹ Aubrey de Vere had also discovered that losing prisoners was an expensive pastime. He had been amerced £550 and 4 warhorses for this crime, together with a hundred marks for forfeiting the shrievalty of the counties of Essex and Hertfordshire.² Richard fitz Gilbert was paying for land that he had been granted in 'Wal'.³ The debt stood at £43 6s 8d, an irregular sum which suggests an old debt. Richard also owed the king 200 marks, which Henry had lent him to assist with his debt to the Jews. It is interesting to note that these three families would all rebel against Stephen.

From the 1129-30 Pipe Roll it is abundantly clear that Essex was a county dominated by the Boulogne faction. The lines of battle between heiress and usurper were drawn during the last decade of Henry I's reign. Whilst Robert of

¹ PR 31 Hen I 55: C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 22

² PR 31 Hen I 53: Govt Hen I, 187

³ PR 31 Hen I 53. Richard fitz Gilbert's debts in 1129-30 give the first indication that Jews had been introduced to Essex after the Norman invasion. The first Jew to be named in Essex was Isaac fitz Rabbi in 1156-7, and Abraham the Jew was mentioned in 1162: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 72: PR 8 Hen II 69. Whilst both were probably based in Colchester, there is no evidence to indicate that this was their home. David Stephenson's research led

Gloucester had gained an interest in Essex, it was far outweighed by the influence of his cousin. Stephen's possession of three honours with land in Essex, including the greatest honour in Essex, brought him immense tenurial power. His local influence reached further, as lands in the county were held by close family members, proven allies and known associates of the counts of Boulogne. Whichever way the succession went in December 1135, Essex would support Stephen of Blois.

him to conclude that individual Jews in Colchester were not named until the 1180s:

D.Stephenson, 'Colchester: A Smaller Medieval Jewry', EAH xvi (1983-84) 48-52, 51

Chapter Four: Essex Under Stephen

Stephen's accession to the English throne in 1135 lifted direct royal influence in Essex to unprecedented levels. Stephen's land in the county consisted of the scraps attached to the honours of Eye and Lancaster (granted to him by Henry I), the Witham-based honour of Boulogne (which was Stephen's *jure uxoris*) and his greatest prize, the royal demesne (inclusive of the honour of Peveler of London and part of the honour of Eudo *dapifer*). King Stephen was the most powerful and wealthy of all the Essex landowners, standing head and shoulders clear of the next largest honours. The various elements of his lands combined to form a compact and impressive powerbase in Essex. By Domesday figures, Stephen's royal and comital Essex lands were worth well over £1300 (approximately 25% of the value of the county's lands). The next two greatest honours were Pleshy and Rayleigh, worth £347 and £284 respectively.¹ Whilst the Mandevilles did exercise a significant local influence, their Essex lands in 1135 were worth only a fraction of Stephen's.

It is therefore of no great surprise to discover that Essex was a comparatively pacific county for much of Stephen the Usurper's reign. A high royal profile and a natural conservatism among the local barons were enough to keep Essex (largely) uninvolved in the dispute between king and empress. Moreover Stephen had been the primary Essex tenant-in-chief since c.1125. He was a man with strong local influence and, for better or for worse, the barons and knights of Essex knew what to expect from the count of Boulogne when he

¹ These figures employ the Domesday calculations presented in Chapter 2. The figures are not prescriptive, as it is difficult to assess the value of the lands retained by the crown from the *dapifer*'s estate and it is impossible to adjust the figures to accurately account for inflation. Furthermore, Pleshy was probably worth less than the Domesday value in 1135 because of the confiscation of the three main manors under Henry I, and certainly worth much more after the various grants made to Geoffrey de Mandeville by Stephen

became king. The honour of Boulogne ensured stability, creating a similar situation to Kent where churchmen who were never openly aggressive dominated the county.¹ Cronne's opinion of Kent, '...which saw little fighting and suffered, relatively speaking, very lightly...' applies just as well to Essex.² It is ironic that Round's work on the 'Anarchy' was centred upon one of England's most ordered counties.³

Peace in Essex and commitment to Stephen's cause went hand-in-hand, although these factors often had different weightings on individual lists of baronial priorities. Of the local tenants-in-chief in 1135, only three soon became pro-Angevin (Robert of Gloucester, Hugh Bigod of Norfolk and Robert de Bampton of Devon) whilst the remainder were at least nominally royalist.⁴ The traumas of 1141 caused a large number of the king's supporters to disavow his cause or distance themselves from it (including, from Essex, the earls of Essex, Oxford, Sussex, Derby, Richmond, and one or both of the two Earl Gilberts). Of these, all returned (at least temporarily) to the royalist fold. Two members of Stephen's 'faithful three' following the debacle at Lincoln in February 1141 were Essex landowners, William de Warenne and Simon de Senlis.¹ Of the two committed royalists and three Angevin supporters, all bar Warenne were middle or low ranking tenants-in-chief in Essex.

The only truly local baronial family with demonstrable pro-Angevin sympathies were the Helions of Helion Bumpstead. The family were largely

¹ R.Eales, 'Local Loyalties in Norman England: Kent in Stephen's Reign', 93-6

² H.A.Cronne, The Reign of King Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England (London, 1970),

3

³ J.H.Round, Geoffrey de Mandeville (London, 1892)

⁴ Robert de Bampton was the co-heir of Walter de Douai, who had a small holding in Essex in 1086 and a considerably larger one in the Angevin south-west of England: see LDB 91a-b: Sanders 5

absent from the records of Stephens' reign. William de Helion, who died in 1155, attested several charters of the Empress in the 1150s.² The service of ten knights' fees pertaining to William de Helion was granted by the Empress to Aubrey de Vere in 1141, which may suggest that the Helion lands had been confiscated by Stephen.³

Angevin supporters who were landowners in the south-east of England tended to have greater interests elsewhere. By 1135 Henry I's greatest favourites, Robert of Gloucester and Stephen of Mortain, had already developed extensive landed interests and insinuated themselves into the tenurial fabric of a great many counties. Even at that early stage, the lines of battle were drawn. Robert's powerbase was in the southern Marches; Stephen's spread from Suffolk to Sussex.

Primary and secondary accounts of the civil war tend to omit Essex because it was not really involved. The sieges, battles and campaigns were largely fought out in the Midlands and the Thames Valley. As the armies of the king and the empress did not meet in Essex, the involvement of the county in the war was as a source of patronage and revenue for the Crown. Lovingly drawn maps of the various campaign movements and developments leave Essex reassuringly blank.⁴ It is certain that Essex was never a theatre of the cousins'

¹ GdM 120. The third member of this distinguished trio was Waleran of Meulan. For an explanation of Senlis' loyalty to Stephen, see R.H.C.Davis, *King Stephen*, 67

² Sanders, 121: Reg iii nos.112, 334, 432, 748, 909: CDF p.207 no.592, p.466 no.1280

³ Reg iii nos.634, 635

⁴ M.Chibnall, *The Empress Matilda* (Oxford, 1991) shows that no castles were held for the Empress east of Wallingford over the period 1142-8 (p.119), no religious houses received charters from the empress east of Missenden (Bucks) except those at London and St Benet Holme (p.128) and Matilda's itinerary between 1139 and 1148 demonstrates that the only time she ventured east of Oxford was during 1141, when she passed through or by Essex on her way from St Albans to Westminster (p.142). H.A.Cronne, *The Reign of King Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England*, 137, shows the major arenas of war

struggle. The empress, try as she might, never had the necessary degree of influence within Essex to carry war into the county.

Emilie Amt's study of Essex during Stephen's reign led her to conclude that 'with one or two spectacular exceptions, the major hereditary tenants-in-chief steered clear of active political involvement during Stephen's reign, though most of them remained in Stephen's camp.'¹ She relates isolated occurrences of violence and turbulence: Gilbert de Clare's abuse of his position as Gilbert de Montfichet's guardian; Hugh Bigod's occupation of five fees belonging to William de Raismes; and Hubert de Montchesney's seizure of an abbey's manor.² Her appraisal is flawed, partly because she has not fully described the level of local violence and partly because she has chosen examples of unruly conduct that did not actually occur in Essex. Gilbert de Clare alienated a Montfichet fee and presented a clerk of his own choice in Buckinghamshire.³ Whether the Montfichet fee in question lay in Essex is unknown. Montchesney's heinous seizure of monastic land happened at Little Melton, Norfolk, and (as Amt specifically states) Hugh Bigod's occupation of Raismes land took place in Suffolk.⁴ Within her description of Essex during the Anarchy the only definite conflict within Essex was that of the Mandeville saga, although again her examples offer no indication that blood was spilt in the county by its earl. After Earl Geoffrey's death Turgis d'Avranches

coinciding with the location of manors pertaining to the palatine earldom of Chester, none of which were in Essex

¹ Accession 65

² The Letters and Charters of Gilbert Foliot, Z.N.Brooke, A.Morey & C.N.L.Brooke eds. (Cambridge, 1967), 416: A.Morey & C.N.L.Brooke, Gilbert Foliot and his Letters (London, 1965), 221-22: RBE 351: Accession, 68-9

³ Gilbert de Montfichet's father William attested early charters of King Stephen and died after April 1137: Reg iii 69, 594

⁴ A.Saltman, Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury (London, 1956), 355-6

occupied Saffron Walden (Uttlesford), at the king's direction. Turgis rebelled, was subdued and then replaced.¹

Essex was far less peaceful than Emilie Amt considers. It was not going to be a battleground but there were a large number of recorded clashes of interest that she has not noted. Fighting in Essex took place at Saffron Walden, between Turgis d'Avranches and (possibly) Reginald fitz Count, and at Waltham, between Geoffrey de Mandeville and William d'Aubigny *pincerna*.² Mandeville is also alleged to have seized Godbold of Writtle, forcing Godbold to sell his lands at Boreham (Chelmsford) in order to meet the ransom demand.³ Abbot Gervase of Westminster complained that Geoffrey Bataille and Richard de Francheville had encroached upon the abbey's manor of Kelvedon (Witham), which brought stern words from the Papal Legate rather than the king.⁴

St Peter's was not the only monastic house to suffer from an outbreak of covetousness. The canons of St Martin-le-Grand had their manor at Maldon annexed by the bailiff of Thibaud count of Blois and the Templars were

¹ Gesta Stephani, K.R.Potter & R.H.C.Davis eds. (London, 1976), 174-77; H.A.Cronne, The Reign of King Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England, 55-56

² The dispute between Mandeville and Aubigny was related in GdM 322-3; see also The Waltham Chronicle: an Account of the Discovery of Our Holy Cross at Montacute and its Conveyance to Waltham, L.Watkiss & M.Chibnall eds. (Oxford, 1994), 78. Aubigny was the second husband of Henry I's queen Adeliza of Louvain and thereby in receipt of her dower, which included Waltham, although Stephen's Queen Matilda also claimed Waltham. Reginald fitz Count may have displaced Avranches: see Reg iii no.914n. Round related the story of Avranches' capture after his rebellion in the Archaeological Notes of TEAS n.s. viii (1900) 329; see also The Book of the Foundation of Walden Monastery, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds. (Oxford, 1999), xx

³ Book of Fees 125; GdM 214

⁴ Cart Westm no.199. A Geoffrey Bataille also occurred in the 1168-9 Pipe Roll: PR 15 Hen II 128

obstructed in their attempts to hold a fair at Witham.¹ St Martin-le-Grand, of which the counts of Boulogne were patrons, was victimised by another of Stephen's continental allies, Baldwin of Wissant.² Reginald de Warenne was ordered to leave the lands of St John's Colchester at East Donyland (Lexden) alone and Malcolm de Senlis was told to re-seise the same monks with Tey (Lexden).³ St Osyth's had their lands at Stow (Stow Maries, Wibertsherne) seized by William de Tresgoz, a situation that appears to have been rectified through the intervention of Thibaud count of Blois and his brother Henry, Papal Legate and bishop of Winchester.⁴ Forester Humphrey de Barrington is said to have ridden his horse into the church at Waltham before suffering a demonic seizure.⁵

Local strife began to occur very early in Stephen's reign. In 1136 John fitz Anfrid annexed Stisted (Hinckford), which his father had held as a tenement of the Archbishop of Canterbury.⁶ There is, however, no record of rioting in Essex. A riot claimed the life of Aubrey II de Vere in London on 5 May 1141.⁷ Nonetheless, this is a petty catalogue of atrocities in comparison to many other English counties. These activities are also not indicative of a county in the grip of civil war. They demonstrate that there was an attitude of

¹ W.R.Powell, 'St Mary, Maldon and St Martin-le-Grand, London', 142, 144: Cart Hosp i. no. 8

² Reg iii no.557

³ Reg iii nos.226, 239d. Senlis may have been acting as a local royal official, although there are no other incidences of him acting in this capacity in Essex

⁴ London College of Arms, Vincent ms.88. Stow Maries was held by tenants of Geoffrey de Mandeville and Walter the Deacon in 1086: LDB 62a, 63a, 86b

⁵ The Waltham Chronicle: an Account of the Discovery of Our Holy Cross at Montacute and its Conveyance to Waltham, L.Watkiss & M.Chibnall eds., 82

⁶ J.C.Holt, 'Feudal Society and the Family in Early Medieval England, II: Notions of Patrimony', 218: A.Saltman, Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, 271-2

⁷ J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', ANS xiv (1991) 91-114, 109: Sanders 52

opportunism among certain elements in the local community and, tellingly, that such action in Essex was usually curbed by the king.

Essex did have the distinction of being the base of operations for Geoffrey II de Mandeville and his revolt of 1143-4 was, for many, the defining event of the Anarchy. After obtaining generous concessions from Stephen, he deserted the king to join the more benevolent empress and then became a royalist once more at a higher price.¹ His revolt and subsequent arrest in 1143 were inextricably linked. Stephen had humbled Mandeville without warning and Mandeville's final revolt can be seen as a mistimed strike for the empress, or as an independent attack on the treacherous Stephen. As Geoffrey's cohorts in this action were William de Say and the Earl Bigod rather than Angevin regulars, freelance rebellion is an attractive label.² The empress could not lend assistance and was no doubt wary of the faithless magnate. Moreover Geoffrey attacked two important monastic houses as part of his campaign, St Etheldreda's Abbey, Ely, and Ramsey Abbey. Ely and the Mandevilles had long been at odds. The ancient house had claimed that a valuable part of the Mandeville honour had been inappropriately absorbed from the estates of Ely in the early years of the Conquest.³

Thus he became the most notorious magnate of the period. Geoffrey de Mandeville was the personification of baronial misbehaviour: he was the

¹GdM 51-3 and 140-4 for the texts of Stephen's charters to Mandeville, and 88-94 and 166-72 for those of the empress. Mandeville's faithlessness has been the subject of debate, although it is (probably) impossible to accurately judge how many times he changed sides

²Hugh Bigod had declared Stephen's claim to throne void in 1136, and was created earl of Norfolk by the empress in 1141. Whether due to isolation or inclination, he played no significant part in the concert of Angevin campaigns; J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', 99; G.J. White, 'The End of Stephen's Reign', *History* lxxv (1990) 3-22, 6

³In 1086 Ely claimed the right to Mandeville lands in Essex at Shellow Bowells and High Easter: LDB 62a, 60b

Anarchist. No one campaign so vividly caught the imagination of contemporaries or historians and so many analyses of the reign are styled 'anarchy studies'.¹ Whilst Mandeville and William d'Aubigny burnt one another's houses in the Waltham area, Mandeville's Flemish mercenaries looted a church that was used by local people for the safe keeping of their possessions.² The Walden chronicle also relates that Mandeville's final revolt began with attacks on royal manors and villages.³ Yet it must be remembered that Mandeville's deliberate antagonism of the king and the church was not wholly perpetrated in Essex.

Ely is over twenty miles from the northern border of Essex and Ramsey Abbey is further still. One cannot rule out the plundering of the estates of Ely in Essex by Mandeville but one can dismiss the same happening to the estates of Ramsey, as the latter had no land in Essex. Geoffrey's choice of Ramsey (in the Fens) as a base took advantage of defensive topographical features that his Essex lands lacked.⁴ The only land in Essex comparable to the Fens is the marshy and inhospitable lower half of the North Sea coast. This was in the possession of Stephen (to the north) and Stephen's reliable allies the lords of Rayleigh (to the south). Perhaps Mandeville considered that any attempt to recover his confiscated fortifications in north-western Essex (certainly Pleshy

¹Such as GdM, H.A.Cronne, The Reign of King Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England, N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', E.King, 'The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign', TRHS xxxiv (1984) 133-153 and E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign (Oxford, 1994)

²The Waltham Chronicle: an Account of the Discovery of Our Holy Cross at Montacute and its Conveyance to Waltham, L.Watkiss & M.Chibnall eds., 78- 80. That Mandeville needed mercenaries may indicate that some of his vassals were unwilling to support him as his actions became more desperate

³The Book of the Foundation of Walden Monastery, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds., 14

⁴Mandeville's tactical skills were remarked upon by Davis, who called him '... a past master at refusing battle': R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen, 81

and Walden, together with some or all of Great Easton, Stebbing, and Elmdon) would be futile, as they were not suitable for protracted and successful revolt.¹

Mandeville's pre-rebellion career is of great use in the analysis of loyalties in Essex. The charters that granted to him by the king and the empress both carry witness lists of immense local importance.² Stephen's first charter (S1) was witnessed by six men with local connections: Henry of Essex of Rayleigh (but not yet Haughley); Turgis d'Avranches; William de St Clair; William of Eu; Richard fitz Osbert; and William fitz Alvred.³ The last three of these men held fees of the Mandeville honour, the latter one fee *de novo*.⁴ The king's second charter (S2) was more impressive, commanding the attention of the local comital group. Those witnesses with an interest in Essex were the earls Warenne, Ferrers, Arundel, Senlis, Hertford, Pembroke and Richmond, together with Robert de Vere of Haughley, Richard de Lucy and Turgis d'Avranches.⁵ Stephen's charters show that during his periods of (what might be described as) ascendancy, he brought most of the powers of Essex with him.

¹ Henry II obviously believed that the Mandeville castles were dangerous, as he ordered their slighting in 1156: W.L.Warren, Henry II (London, 1973), 68. Pleshy appears to have been retained by the king from 1158 until 1169: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 134; PR 15 Hen II 123: The Book of the Foundation of Walden Abbey, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds. (Oxford, 1999), xxi

² There has been intense debate regarding the dates of these charters: see the series of essays exchanged by Davis and Prestwich: J.O.Prestwich, 'The Treason of Geoffrey de Mandeville', EHR ciii (1988) 283-312; R.H.C.Davis, 'The Treason of Geoffrey de Mandeville: comment', EHR ciii (1988) 313-17; J.O.Prestwich, 'Geoffrey de Mandeville: a further comment', EHR ciii (1988) 960-66; R.H.C.Davis, 'Geoffrey de Mandeville: a final comment', EHR ciii (1988) 967-68; J.O.Prestwich, 'Last Words on Geoffrey de Mandeville', EHR cv (1990) 670-71; R.H.C.Davis, 'Last Words on Geoffrey de Mandeville', EHR cv (1990) 671-72

³ GdM 51-3: Reg iii no.273

⁴ RBE 346

⁵ GdM 140-4: Reg iii no.276

Matilda's first charter (M1) to Geoffrey was issued at Westminster in the summer of 1141 and was witnessed by a collection of churchmen and western barons. The only two names that had any relevance to Essex among the attestors were Nigel bishop of Ely and Robert of Gloucester.¹ Her 'second' charter (M2) was even less impressive, with Gloucester being the only Essex baron present.² Nevertheless, Matilda seemed to expect defections from Essex, as the imminent treachery of Gilbert of Pembroke, Aubrey de Vere, Henry of Essex and Peter de Valognes was obviously anticipated.³

There was simply far too much royal influence for the county to degenerate into chaos. The honorial system allowed major rebels (Gloucester, Bigod) to own land in Essex that was peripheral to their struggle. The Essex royalists - the king, Henry of Essex, Richard de Lucy, William de Warenne, the early Geoffrey de Mandeville - were an influential and powerful deterrent for proposed Angevin aggression. Was Essex also pacified by a sizeable group of pragmatic neutrals? I would suggest not. Most of the barons of Essex of any importance declared allegiance; the most influential nobleman with a sizeable amount of land in the county whose guarded neutrality seemed evident was the Earl Clare.⁴ It is clear that during more 'stable' periods of Stephen's reign, the

¹ GdM 91-5: Reg iii no.274

² GdM 166-72: Reg iii no.275: M.Chibnall, 'The Charters of the Empress Matilda' in G.Garnett & J.Hudson eds., Law and Government in medieval England and Normandy (Cambridge, 1994) 276-93, 282

³ There is no evidence that Henry of Essex broke faith with Stephen. Pembroke was torn between his need to protect his English estates and his desire to reclaim family lands in Normandy and Wales, which would cause him to rebel twice: J.C.Ward, 'Royal Service and Reward: the Clare Family and the Crown, 1066-1154', 275-77

⁴ Ascertaining his allegiance is a problem caused partly by having two men called Gilbert de Clare among the earls in the county during this reign. Earl Gilbert de Clare of Pembroke's loyalty to Stephen seems to have been fairly solid, except for participation in rebellion in 1141 and 1148. Earl Gilbert de Clare of Hertford offers less for us to judge

barons of Essex were remarkably loyal. Leedon's work with charter evidence over the years 1149-53 demonstrates that major landowners Henry of Essex, William de Warenne and Aubrey de Vere were all regular attestors of the king's charters, together with Richard de Lucy.¹

Another important question to ask regards the behaviour of the sub-tenants of rebellious tenants-in-chief. It could be postulated that a loyal follower would carry his lord's war into Essex, or leave royalist territory to fight at his lord's side. There is little to suggest that this occurred among the Essex tenants of Angevin supporters. Maurice of Tilty, a tenant of the Earl Ferrers, was a loyal follower of Stephen. He frequently attested Mandeville charters but does not appear to have supported the revolt of the early 1140s and served as sheriff later in the reign.² William Martel, a third- or fourth-generation tenant of the Mandevilles, was a faithful adherent to Stephen's cause.³ Another important development at this time was the new arrangement made between Aubrey de Vere and the counts of Brittany. At some stage between 1136 and 1142, the Veres were granted the service of the Breton tenants William d'Espagne, Michael fitz Judhael and Osbert Masculus, who held in excess of four fees between them.⁴ This abdication of tenurial responsibility for lesser tenants-in-chief shows honorial reorganisation on a local basis. It was also of benefit for

and his death in 1152 hampers accurate appraisal of his steadfastness during the final years of Stephen's reign. Certainly Round was of the opinion that Mandeville would have enjoyed less success in his final campaign without the 'friendly neutrality' of the Clares and Veres: GdM 209

¹ J.W.Leedon, 'The English Settlement of 1153', History lxxv (1980) 347-64, 363

² Sheriffs 40

³ LDB 57b, 60a, 61a-b, 62a. Ralph Martel held one fee *de veteri* of the Mandevilles in 1166: RBE 346. Cronne highlighted the contribution made by Aubrey de Vere, William Martel and Henry of Essex to Stephen's administration: H.A.Cronne, The Reign of Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England, 272

⁴ W.R.Powell, 'The Essex Fees of the Honour of Richmond', 185

the stability of Essex, as the Richmond tenants were less likely to rebel after losing their direct relationship with a distant lord.

Honorial loyalty to royalist tenants-in-chief is more apparent. Richard de Lucy seems to have been introduced to Essex through a grant made before 1152 by Stephen. A charter of Stephen's son William of Blois confirmed Lucy's tenure of Ongar, Stanford Rivers (both Ongar), Chrishall (Uttlesford) and an unidentified Roding (Ongar or Dunmow), all of which were granted to him by Stephen.¹ Three other tenants of the honour of Boulogne (Richard de Anstey, Osbert Martel and Turolde of Boreham) witnessed the confirmation, demonstrating that honorial ties and responsibilities were still important in Essex.

Lucy's family are believed to have entered England during the reign of Henry I. The family came from Lucé (Orne, arr. Domfront) and Richard de Lucy held land *de veteri* in Kent, Suffolk and Norfolk in 1166, for which he performed castle-guard at Dover.² In the same year, Earl Reginald of Cornwall stated that Richard de Lucy *tenet de antiquo feodo x. milites, et de feodo Ade Malherbe ix. milites.*³ Clearly Lucy, in spite of his connection with the rebellious west country barons, was unwilling to carry their war into eastern England. De Lucy was certainly an asset to Stephen, as he was apparently a man with a strong character who caused fear in others.⁴

¹ Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 144-45. All save 'Roding' were demesne manors in 1086: LDB 30b, 31a, 33a-b. The villages that constitute 'the Rodings' cover a large district in Ongar and Dunmow hundreds. When the particular Roding village is unidentifiable, the hundred cannot be successfully identified.

² RBE 352: Loyd 55: J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 149: F.West, The Justiciarship in England 1066-1232 (Cambridge, 1966), 37-39

³ RBE 261

⁴ For a discussion of Richard de Lucy's reputation, see H.G.Richardson and G.O.Sayles, The Governance of Medieval England from the Conquest to Magna Carta (Edinburgh, 1963), 313

The two lines of Marcys (one branch tenants of the counts of Boulogne, both branches tenants of the earls of Gloucester) are absent from extant records of Stephen's reign. It is worth remembering that the Faulkbourne Marcys were sub-tenants of Boulogne through one of their own marriages, and that they were vassals of the families that Stephen and Robert of Gloucester had married into. The Marcy family did not have a deep-rooted relationship with the earls of Gloucester that had been nurtured over previous generations in Normandy and their direct ties with Stephen were equally weak.

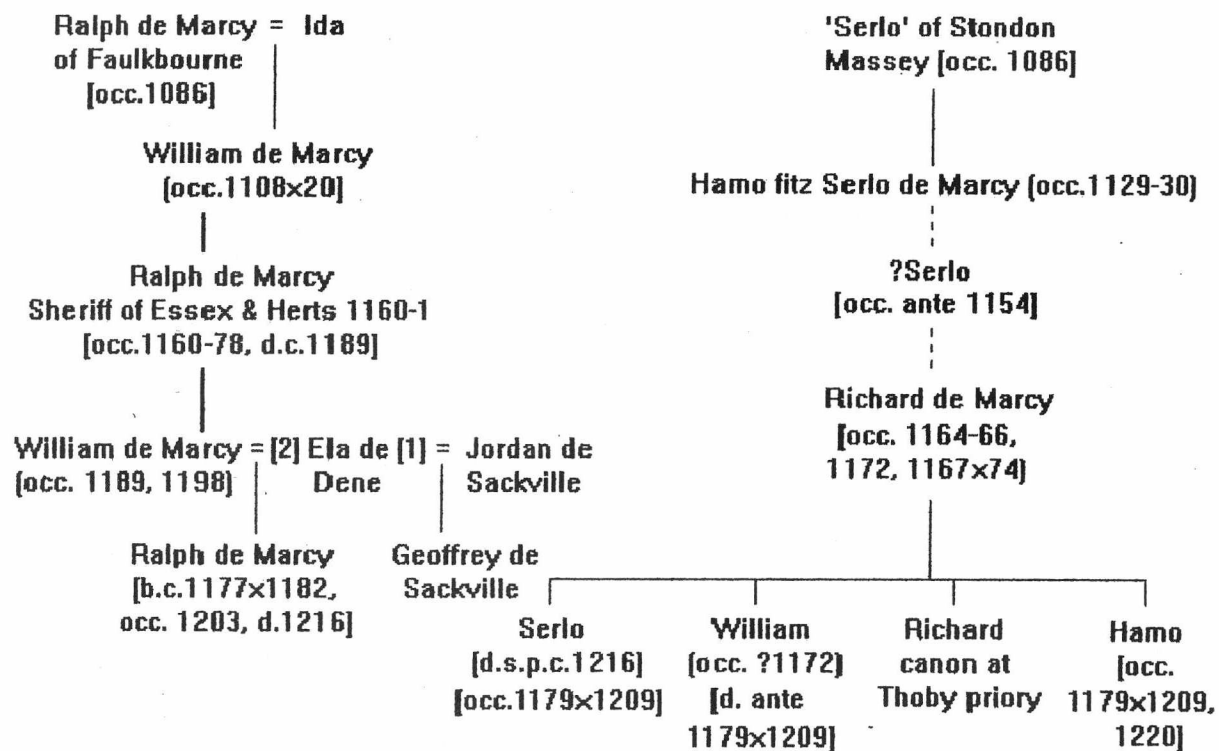
Table 18: the Marcy families in Essex, c.1066 - c.1200.¹

William de Marcy appears to have been the representative of the Faulkbourne branch during the reign of Stephen. Quite how much of a part he played, for either side, in the wars of the time is difficult to judge. The only possible representative of the Marcys of Stondon Massey was the Serlo who witnessed a charter of Richard de Lucy in favour of St John's Abbey, Colchester.² The association with Lucy, another tenant of the honour of Boulogne in Essex, suggests that this Serlo was quite possibly the son (or brother) of Hamo fitz

¹ BL Harl ms. 662 ff.29a, 54b; Essex Record Office, Chelmsford ms. D/DP T1/1474; London Guildhall Library ms. 25,122/240: LDB 54b-55a, 28a, 30b, 32b, 303a: RBE 290, 500, 504, 505, 576, 611; PR 31 Hen I 54, 59; PR 7 Hen II 64; PR 11 Hen II 17; PR 12 Hen II 124; PR 24 Hen II 35; PR 1 Ric I 29; CRR ix 260; T.D.Hardy ed., Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum in Turri Londinensi (2 vols., London, 1833, 1844), i. 244b, 258-9, 332b; Cart Colc pp.49, 147, 209; R.B.Patterson ed., Earldom of Gloucester Charters, p.111 no.115; Rot de Dom 70; J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 142-52; Farrer i. 211

² Cart Colc p.147

Table 18: the Marcy Families in Essex, 1066-c.1200



Serlo de Marcy who occurred in 1129-30.¹ As the next identifiable Marcy in this branch, Richard, named his eldest son Serlo and a younger son Hamo it would be logical to assume that his father had been called Serlo rather than Hamo.

Although it was not compiled until 1166, *Cartae Baronum* can be used to obtain some measure of the amount of aggression that occurred in the localities after 1135. It provides the names of knights enfeoffed since Henry I's death, although the date of its compilation obscures the true statistics of enfeoffment before Stephen's death. All enfeoffments over the period 1135-66 fell under the blanket term *de novo*, which constitutes nineteen years under Stephen and the first twelve of Henry II's reign. Arguments can be constructed to show that certain honours were busily enfeoffing new knights for the war effort. Without more precise evidence there is no way of telling when these knights were enfeoffed or if any were dispossessed after Henry II's accession.

Cartae Baronum was not recorded in a county format, so the honours based within and without Essex provide detail that may or may not relate to the county. Thomas Keefe has produced a breakdown of the figures contained within the *Cartae Baronum*, which are particularly useful when assessing the numbers of knights who were newly enfeoffed within the document (see table 17).² In some cases there are no figures available, which tends to be an indication of royal control in 1166 and thus they offer no information for new enfeoffments in many of the Essex honours. This is unfortunate, because details for the honours of Peverel and Boulogne would be extremely interesting to see. Estimates for escheated or unresponsive honours are possible using later enfeoffment lists or scutage payments within the Pipe

¹ PR 31 Hen II 54, 59

² Keefe 157-88. Keefe uses a county abbreviation system that ignores convention and does not utilise easily recognisable forms. Confusing county abbreviations include D, W, C and He

Rolls. Keefe's figures principally show that the number of new enfeoffments of honours connected with Essex was slightly higher than the national average of 7.8%.¹ Without the returns from the honours *in manu regis* the new enfeoffments indicate a growth rate of 8.7% (across all honours which included Essex lands). Inclusive of estimates for those honours that did not return *cartae*, the figure for the Essex baronies is unlikely to exceed 150-190 new fees.²

The totals highlight the double-figure new enfeoffments of the earls of Norfolk, Essex and Gloucester. All three were actively involved in the fighting. Robert and William of Gloucester increased their enfeoffments by a figure under the going rate (5%), and their new knights were not necessarily enfeoffed on the comital demesne. The earls of Gloucester had access to plentiful supplies of land in the March with which to reward new vassals. Conversely Bigod and Mandeville did not have the unrestricted opportunity to overrun a neighbouring country and yet their enfeoffments were, pro rata, much higher (18% and 11% respectively). Mandeville territory did increase dramatically with Stephen's second charter to Earl Geoffrey, although most of the sixty new fees that granted to Earl Geoffrey were in the hands of Henry fitz Gerold (largely in-chief but partly as Mandeville tenants) by 1166.³ Thus both active earls artificially bolstered the level of enfeoffment for Essex and seem to have undertaken large-scale enfeoffment at the expense of demesne land.

¹ Keefe 43

² Just over 1200 of the fees within the 2092.15 total were listed within *Cartae Baronum*. Based on this, the remaining 892 fees within royal control would have produced an extra 77 fees with a similar growth rate of 8.7%

³ GdM, 140-4, for Stephen's generous grant to the earl of Essex: N.C.Vincent, 'Warin and Henry Fitz Gerald, the King's Chamberlains', 236, 245-46

Tenant/ Honour	Old enf.	Dem.Kts	New enf.	Total	Quota
See of Ely	65.75	0	6.50	72.25	40
See of London	36.14	0	0	36.14	20
Bury St Edmund's	52.50	0	0.25	52.75	40
Westminster	24.23	0	0	24.23	15
Wm. d'Aubigny	84.50	0	13	97.50	-
Hugh Bigod	135.75	0	25	160.75	-
Roger de Clare	141.91	0	7.75	149.66	-
Walter fitz Robert	63.50	0	3.25	66.75	50
William of Ferrers	69.50	0	9.33	78.83	60
Henry Fitz Gerold	52.86	0	7.20	60.06	-
Wm. of Gloucester	261.50	0	13	274.50	-
Robert of Hastings	10	0	2.25	12.25	10
Robert of Helion	10	0	0.31	10.31	-
G. de Mandeville	98.33	0	11.50	109.83	60
Gilbert Montfichet	47.50	0	0.70	48.20	40
Rich. de Raismes	6	(3.50)	0.50	10	10
Wm. de Raismes	8	0	0.25	8.25	-
Gralent de Tany	4	3.50	0	7.50	7.5
Geo. de Valognes	2	0	2.50	4.50	-
Rob. de Valognes	29.33	0	2	31.33	30
Aubrey de Vere	-	-	-	30.13	30
Boulogne	-	-	-	122*	-
Eye	-	-	-	90.50*	-
Haughley	-	-	-	56.10*	-
Huntingdon	-	-	-	45*	-
Lancaster	-	-	-	79*	-
Peverel of London	-	-	-	58*	-
Rayleigh	-	-	-	58.33*	-
Richmond	-	-	-	187.50* -	-
Walkern (St Clair)	-	-	-	10*	-
Warene	-	-	-	140*	60
Totals	>1203.30	>7	>104.59	2092.15	>472.5

Table 19: Old enfeoffments, new enfeoffments and demesne knights for honours with land in Essex listed in *Cartae Baronum*.¹

¹ In some cases, there are no figures available, which tends to be an indication of royal control. For this reason, there is no information for new enfeoffments in many of the Essex honours. Such honours related no information through the *cartae* but estimates (indicated thus *) are possible using later enfeoffment lists or scutage payments within the Pipe Rolls

Few other honours show a direct relationship between local participation in the war and new enfeoffment. Sadly Aubrey de Vere completed his *carta* incorrectly, failing to differentiate between the three classes of fee.¹ Aubrey was the guardian of the Raismes minors, whose joint barony showed little new enfeoffment despite Aubrey's involvement.² Another minor under the care of an important magnate was Gilbert de Montfichet, ward of his uncle Gilbert de Clare of Pembroke.³ The Montfichet honour underwent even less recorded new enfeoffment. William de Ferrers held little in Essex, although he was involved in the Midlands skirmishes. He granted Maurice of Tilty, sheriff of Essex under Stephen, half of one fee.⁴ Finally, Walter fitz Robert's honour of Little Dunmow showed only a small quantity of new enfeoffment (just over three fees). For many honours there were few changes recorded *post*-1135 and, where there was increase, there is often no way of telling which county or region bore the honorial increases.

Stephen's reign was not a period that saw an economic downturn in Essex, as there was evidently still a demand for new markets and fairs. The first new fair of the reign was established in 1141 at Saffron Walden.⁵ This was owned by Geoffrey de Mandeville, and reflects the wealth of north-eastern Essex (lying close to the Great North Road) and the prominence enjoyed by Mandeville at that time. The Knights Templar were granted the right to hold a fair at Writtle later in the reign, which formed part of a series of grants from Stephen.⁶ Stephen also granted a fair to the house of St Osyth at Clacton

¹ RBE 352-3

² Accession 66: Sanders 139

³ Accession 66, 68. The minority went unacknowledged by Sanders (p.83)

⁴ Accession 67-8

⁵ Reg iii no.99: R.H.Britnell, Essex Markets Before 1350, 16

⁶ Reg iii no.848: R.H.Britnell, Essex Markets Before 1350, 16

(Tendring).¹ When the greatest landowner in Essex granted a fair to the house of the county's most revered saint, Henry of Essex and Richard de Canville were at hand to witness the charter. However, the growth in the number of markets was no match for the investment made in castles in Essex during Stephen's reign.

Castles

In his *Castellarium Anglicanum*, Cathcart-King noted that the castles of Essex were thin on the ground, with the highest concentrations occurring on the (eastern) seaboard and on the north-western border with Hertfordshire.² By 1154, seven castles had definitely been constructed in Essex; Clavering (*ante* 1053), Rayleigh (*ante* 1086), Colchester (*ante* 1087), Pleshy (*ante* 1143), Saffron Walden (*ante* 1139), Hedingham (1130-40) and Ongar (*ante* 1156).³ Stansted was the Montfichet *caput* and whilst no date can be placed upon its construction, the longevity of the honour and scale of the work undertaken suggests that it was a permanent fixture in that part of Essex.⁴ Superficially this confirms the royal supremacy in Essex during the Anarchy; Clavering and Rayleigh were held by the loyal Henry of Essex, Richard de Lucy (who held the castle of Ongar) did not waver in his allegiance and the St Clair guardians (Hamo and Hubert) safely held Colchester.⁵ Aubrey de Vere of Hedingham

¹ PRO C56/50 (Confirmation Roll 6 Henry VIII) m. 12 no. 5. N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', *EHR* cxiv (1999) 899-928, 907, no. x. p.925

² CA 142. These were still pitifully small quantities of castles compared to the dense clusters of fortifications in the March

³ CA 145-7

⁴ LDB 65a: CA 147. The Montfichet honour and the castle of Stansted were in the hands of a minor, who was the ward of Gilbert de Clare. It cannot, therefore, be assumed that Stansted was a reliable royalist fortress for the entirety of Stephen's reign

⁵ Ongar Castle was thought by Round to have been the (Essex) *caput* of the honour of Boulogne by 1120 because of the record of a baronial court at neighbouring Stanford

was not a serious rebel, whilst the two remaining castles were Mandeville properties. Thus the defensive works of Essex that can be dated accurately were, by and large, constantly held by the royalist camp or confiscated before Mandeville's final revolt.¹ The castle situation suggests that there was tension in the vicinity of the Mandeville castles, which were guarded by Clavering, Ongar and (probably) Stansted Mountfichet. Under Stephen Essex was the scene of a protracted and eventually empty stand-off, with new castles being constructed by protagonists who never fought. This militarisation process is all the more evident through the study of ruined strongholds.

We are apt to forget that just as winners write history, surviving fortifications are a testament to their efficacy and victory. Essex was the home of a number of castles whose existence has only been recognised through the work of the archaeological fraternity. Such specimens tended to be basic in their design and they have left no mark in written record and little material evidence beyond the remnants of a motte.²

There can be little doubt that these were rude fortifications, as few have left any traces of stone in their construction. The singular lack of royal licenses or any other literary clue suggests that they were generally adulterine, hurriedly constructed and used for only a short period.³ The proliferation of castles in Essex of this kind must have been linked to political events in the county.

Rivers, whilst Lucy held Ongar (and other lands of the honour of Boulogne) before 1152: WAM 968: Round, 'Two Documents', 807: First Century 93-4: J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 143-45

¹ H.A.Cronne, The Reign of King Stephen 1135-54: Anarchy in England, 54: R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen, 79

² CA 142-8

³ It is thought that Mandeville's inferior construction at South Mimms (Herts) '... was perhaps as powerful a symbol of the lordship he sought to gain as time and resources allowed': C.Coulson, 'The Castles of the Anarchy' in E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign, 67-92, 81

They were probably not created as part of the process of Conquest, as Essex was a quiet county at that time. There was no evident trouble in Essex before Stephen and by John's reign the wooden castle was not a feasible defensive structure. Whilst the evidence does not point unwaveringly at the days of Stephen of Blois, the likely date of the construction of the majority of these castles is between c.1135 and c.1144.

The central area to study in such an investigation is the north-western quarter of the county. In the vicinity of the two politically problematic fortresses (Pleshy and Saffron Walden) lay Clavering to the west, Stansted Mountfichet to the south-west and Ongar to the south. A further nine extant strongholds lie in the same area: Elmdon, Chrishall, Rickling Hall (all Uttlesford), Canfield, Great Easton (both Dunmow), Felsted, Stebbing (both Hinckford), Berden (Clavering) and Magdalen Laver (Ongar). Some, in spite of their absence from contemporary documents, were clearly the work of particular families. Rickling Hall was built in Domesday royal demesne, which, if it had remained unalienated, must be credited to Stephen or his agents.¹ Magdalen Laver (near Pleshy), Elmdon and Chrishall (both near Walden) were all manors within the honour of Boulogne in 1086.² Stephen was the only lord of that honour who had the opportunity to create earthworks on Essex demesne lands, but it is unlikely that he caused all three to be built.

Chrishall was granted by Stephen to his younger son William, who in turn subinfeudated it to Richard de Lucy.¹ In spite of Matilda's grant of that manor to Geoffrey de Mandeville in her second charter, there is no evidence that Geoffrey ever had seisin. Conversely Elmdon did fall into Mandeville's lap. By his second charter Stephen granted the service of three knights from Adam de Summery of Elmdon out of the honour of Boulogne to the honour of

¹ LDB 7a: CA 146

² LDB 30b, 33b, 33a: CA 145, 144, 143

Pleshy.² There was no evident alienation or recorded subinfeudation of Magdalen Laver, so fortifications there were, in all probability, the work of Stephen.³ Berden was within the honour of Rayleigh, and its unrecorded status must indicate that Henry of Essex (or a predecessor) built it prior to 1163.⁴

The four remaining castles are more problematic, as the Domesday honorial structure provides several options for suggested builders. Canfield (Dunmow) was certainly built by an Aubrey de Vere, before 1214, and Felsted (Hinckford) was probably built by one of Roger God-Save-Ladies' successors.⁵ Stebbing (Hinckford) was located on land held in 1086 by Henry de Ferrers and Ranulf Peverel; the latter seems the more likely option.⁶ Finally, Great Easton (Dunmow) was either controlled by the rebel Mandeville or the ultra-loyal William de Warenne; either way, it lay in the shadow of Stebbing and was deep inside Mandeville heartland.⁷ As Mandeville was granted extra land at Easton by Stephen (from the lands of Robert of Bampton, an Angevin supporter), it suggests that once again Stephen provided the raw material for a Mandeville offensive.⁸

¹ GdM 168

² GdM 143. Sumeri held six knights of the Mandevilles in 1166: RBE 345

³ It was Boulonnais demesne in 1086: LDB 30b

⁴ LDB 47a: CA 142-3. As it was in royal hands after 1163 the construction of a castle would appear in the Pipe Rolls, as no custodian was likely to build one without claiming recompense

⁵ LDB 35a, 76a, 96b: CA 143-4

⁶ LDB 56b, 47a: CA 147. Stephen granted many of Peverel's escheated manors to Geoffrey de Mandeville. Whether royal demesne or Mandeville demesne, Peverel's Stebbing was the more likely to become fortified. Robert de Ferrers granted the demesne manor of Stebbing to Maurice de Tilty by 1140: Reg iii no.308

⁷ LDB 36a, 61b: CA 144

⁸ GdM 143

The general picture that can be gleaned from these castles is one of Mandeville aggression and royalist containment. Across the border in Hertfordshire, a line of castles supports such a theory. Whilst Bishop's Stortford and Anstey pre-date Stephen, Brent Pelham and Little Hadham look to be constructions similar to those found in north-western Essex.¹ Anstey was part of the honour of Boulogne, whilst Pelham, Hadham and Stortford were all within the lands of the see of London, which dominated the west bank of the Stort to the north of Bishop's Stortford.² In the far north-east of Hertfordshire, Barkway had been a Mandeville manor since before 1086, and an unchronicled and badly damaged motte and bailey is another memorial to Mandeville rebellion and royalist suppression.³ Of course, this entire process of constructing castles to contain the treacherous Mandeville had no bearing on the earl of Essex's final revolt. When Stephen arrested Mandeville in 1143, the earl was forced to surrender all of his castles.

The remnants of unclaimed fortifications may seem a weak source for discussion on baronial rebellion in Essex and the scale of disruption that it caused. Setting these castles into the framework of the Mandeville honour vividly shows that the disturbance of the peace affected the Mandeville lands and those of their neighbours. The Mandeville honour was a substantial entity, partly due to Stephen's influence, and the sheer quantity of land at Mandeville's disposal indicates that Essex was rocked by his revolt. Admittedly, it was a short-term rebellion that had no lasting positive consequences for the Angevins. For Essex this was an uncharacteristic quickening of the pulse. A high background level of baronial loyalty ensured

¹ DB 137a, 134a, 133b: CA 217-20

² Land at 'Anastiam' (Anstey) formed part of the land-grant in Stephen's second charter in Mandeville's favour but there was no mention of the castle: GdM 141: Reg iii no.276: P.A.Brand, 'New Light on the Anstey Case', 71

³ DB 139b: CA 219

that containment measures were forthcoming and the Mandeville revolt was not allowed to continue unimpeded.

Ruined castles such as these must have been constructed for a purpose and for so many to have risen indicates measures as extraordinary as the times that caused them. Essex knew nothing of the extremes of politics between the Conquest and Magna Carta, except for the events surrounding Geoffrey de Mandeville's decline and fall. The abandoned fortifications in the area of his activity were not needed before or after the early 1140s. The non-Mandeville castles may be a positive indicator of continuing loyalty to Stephen during an especially difficult period of his reign. Of course, the greatest irony is that neither the Mandeville castles nor the fortifications built to contain them were used during the earl of Essex's final fatal revolt. It was Stephen's confiscation of these castles that proved to be the final humiliation for Mandeville, and he consequently opposed Stephen from Ely and Ramsey.

Stephen's first recorded sheriff of Essex was the same Geoffrey de Mandeville, although the policy of entrusting one man with the combined offices of *comes* and *vicecomes* in Essex was quickly abandoned because of Mandeville's actions. Mandeville was probably assisted and certainly succeeded by Maurice of Tilty.¹ Tilty's family were Ferrers and Mandeville tenants, and may have held land from other lords in Essex.² Stephen evidently believed that using sub-tenants was a safer means of administering a county. The last of Stephen's sheriffs, Richard de Lucy, also served as justiciar of Essex.³ Green describes Lucy as a 'key agent' rather than a magnate, which indicates that Stephen sought men of great administrative capability and local authority rather than massive tenorial power.⁴ Whilst Lucy and Tilty both had

¹ WAM bk. V f.29a: Sheriffs 40

² J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', 100

³ Reg iii nos.545, 546, 547, 559: RBE 650

⁴ J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', 109

connections with troublesome earls, their loyalty was absolute. However, Henry of Essex was sheriff of Hertfordshire at the end of Stephen's reign, which suggests that Stephen was still not afraid to introduce a very powerful local lord into shrieval office.¹ This was no gamble, as Henry of Essex had been unquestionably loyal, so this cannot be viewed as a simple attempt to control a county through a man of great influence within Essex.

Grants of hundredal jurisdiction were also common, with monastic houses becoming the primary beneficiaries of such grants. St Mary's Barking was granted the hundreds of Barstable and Becontree, the former bringing them a revenue valued at £16 per annum.² Bury St Edmund's received the half-hundred of Harlow from Stephen, and Queen Matilda gave the half-hundred of Witham to the Knights Templar.³ Various forms of patronage in the Templars' favour may have been related to their financial support of Stephen's government.⁴ As King notes, hundredal jurisdiction provided lords and institutions with potentially profitable local authority.⁵

Stephen's Essex was, as we have seen, one of the most peaceful English counties. From this comparative oasis of calm comes evidence that royal authority was still being obeyed, courted and utilised in the field of forest law. The recent discovery of two of Stephen's *acta* concerning the forests of Essex confirms that forest law was upheld locally during his reign.⁶ The charters relate to Havering-atte-Bower (Dunmow) and Felsted (Hinckford). Round's claim that there was 'a general outburst of assarting' under Stephen ignores the

¹ RBE 651

² Reg iii nos.34-6

³ Reg iii nos.761, 845-7

⁴ J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', 105

⁵ E.King, 'The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign', 138-39

⁶ N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', 910-12, no. i. p.921, no. xi. pp.925-26

fact that awareness of these assarts comes from the royal licenses issued by Stephen.¹ It seems far more likely that Stephen carefully controlled the forests and that these writs are evidence of his strength. Requesting and gaining a license to assart was evident acknowledgement of the necessity of involving the king in any decision involving the royal forest. Whether or not Stephen was overly generous with his concessions is immaterial, as his weakness is best measured by the recognition of his lordship and rule.

Surviving Essex charters shed some light on the career of Roger de Fraxinet, a regular witness of Stephen's *acta*. He attested at least twenty-seven of Stephen's charters, fifteen of which were connected with land and rights in Essex.² These included the quittance for assarts in favour of Holy Trinity Caen at Felsted (Hinckford) and the similar grant in favour of St Paul's at Runwell (Chelmsford).³ Whilst his attestations were concerned with the forest in Essex, they have little else to unite them; they were all in (scattered parts of) western Essex, and all were in favour of (immensely different) ecclesiastical institutions. Fraxinet's involvement in these, and the grants of free warren to St John the Baptist's, Colchester, at East Donyland (Lexden), Weeley and Brightlingsea (both Tendring) may have further implications for Fraxinet's position, although it brings a fifth monastic house into the Essex equation and widens his field of activity to include the two north-eastern hundreds of the county.¹ Fraxinet's position in Stephen's government is undeniable, although his itinerant witnessing makes him difficult to tie to one particular county. Essex, through accident or by design, is the county with which he has the

¹ Round alerted us to the possibility that the barons of Essex used the civil war as an opportunity to clear large areas of the forest of Essex for personal use rather than engage in open revolt: J.H.Round, 'The Forest of Essex', 36-42, 39

² Reg iii nos.34-8, 137, 223, 225, 227, 229-30, 236, 565, 846 (for Essex) and 89, 158, 203, 446, 448-50, 477, 502, 570, 842, 847, 860 (non-Essex), together with two charters in N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', no. i. p.921, no. xi. pp.925-26

³ Reg iii nos.137, 565

greatest obvious association, and it is logical to assume that he held office connected with (the forest in) the county.

Fraxinet's attestations seem to have occurred later rather than earlier in Stephen's reign, which brings a difficult issue to the fore. Fraxinet does not appear in connection with Essex after the accession of Henry II: not as a landowner, nor as an official. This is surprising, as most of Henry II's administrators in Essex brought substantial experience from the previous government with them. Fraxinet's fate is unknown, yet for some reason his career did not continue under Angevin rule.

The Barrington family had been involved in the management of the forest since the reign of Henry I.² Before 1141, Geoffrey de Mandeville granted land at Shepreth in Cambridgeshire to Eustace de Barrington.³ This charter was witnessed by Geoffrey's wife Rohaise, together with Ranulf de Berners, Geoffrey (of Tilty) *dapifer*, William de Eu, Humphrey de Rochelle, Aelard *constabularius*, Fulk de Nodar, Geoffrey de Canewdon, Eustace de Schelnelega (Shelley, Ongar hundred), Raymond de Bures, Maurice fitz Geoffrey (of Tilty), G. de Gernon, Hugh de Cramavill and two Mandevilles, William and Ralph. Berners, Tilty, Eu, Rochelle, Nodar (Nuhers) and Shelley

¹ Reg iii nos.227, 236, located in Tendring and Lexden

² The Barringtons were tenants of the Montfichets, although the location of the land held of the Montfichets was not made explicit: Chelmsford, Essex Record Office D/DBa T2/5. The land held by the Barringtons at Hatfield in connection with their arboreal office was a sergeanty-in-chief: Book of Fees 276, 345, 1347, 1361

³ Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/1. Another charter, which can be dated 1141-44, confirms a grant of land in Hatfield and Writtle to Humphrey son of Eustace de Barrington: Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/3. This was made by Earl Geoffrey, although there is no mention of *antecessorum meorum* or *patris* (or *fratris*) *mei*, which suggests that this was still Geoffrey II de Mandeville

were Mandeville tenants but not all were exclusively Mandeville tenants.¹ By 1166 Berners also held land *de veteri* from Ely, the fitz Gerolds (probably from within the lands of Eudo *dapifer*) and the bishop of London.² Tilty held land, *de veteri* and *de novo*, of the earl Ferrers.³

Some of the witnesses were not Mandeville tenants. It is likely that Geoffrey of Canewdon was a tenant of Henry of Essex, as Swein held the entire village in 1086.⁴ Similarly Raymond of Bures was probably a tenant of the Hertford Clares, as Bures was a Clare manor in 1086 and Silvester de Bures was the only representative of the family in 1166, holding a third of a fee *de veteri* of the earl Clare.⁵ 'G. de Gernon' was a Montfichet tenant.⁶ Similarly there was no Cramvill recorded in the 1166 return, although a Henry Cranavill paid 10*m. pro foresta* in Essex in 1178.⁷

It would seem that prior to 1144 local officials and the tenants of other Essex barons enjoyed good terms with Mandeville, which is not surprising given that he was a prominent baron, a royal favourite and the linchpin of local administration. What is surprising is the lack of evidence to suggest that Mandeville's revolt was widely supported by the men he associated with so

¹ RBE 345-7. Eustace de Shelley is not apparent in the 1166 list and had no obvious successor. However, Shelley was part of the Mandeville honour in 1086: LDB 57b

² RBE 365, 355, 187

³ RBE 337, 339

⁴ LDB 44a

⁵ LDB 39b, 40a

⁶ As the Montfichet honour had originally been held by Robert Gernon, a Montfichet connection is most likely. Ranulf Gernon held half a fee *de novo* of the Montfichets in 1166: RBE 351

⁷ PR 24 Hen II 36. The Cramvilles were tenants of the honour of Peverel of Dover, holding land at Rainham (Chafford) and Dengie (Wibertsherne): Book of Fees 277, 582, 590, 901, 1359, 1361: Sanders 151. Those manors had formerly been part of Odo of Bayeux's Essex honour: LDB 24a-b

frequently. Whether it was through respect for the king who had built Mandeville's power or fear of the royal count of Boulogne's power in Essex, local officials held the royal line when Mandeville broke ranks.

The administrators of Essex were of great value to Stephen and were undoubtedly responsible for upholding order through their loyalty. There were three known sheriffs in the county between 1135 and 1154: Mandeville, Maurice of Tilty and Richard de Lucy.¹ Tilty and Lucy were reliable agents of the crown, as were the forest officials Eustace de Barrington and Roger de Fraxinet. Gilbert de Montfichet, who had a hereditary interest in the royal forest, was less active on the king's behalf because of his minority. The Montfichet minority increased the burden placed on other forest officials. Eustace de Barrington and his son Humphrey began the reign with responsibility for the royal forest at Hatfield (Harlow) and Writtle (Chelmsford), later adding Havering (Becontree) and Wethersfield (Hinckford) to their portfolio.²

A fourth forest official, Adam de Beaunay, may have been associated with the royal manor and forest of Havering. Beaunay's association with the royal administration and the forests can be seen in royal writs regarding assarts at Barnston (Dunmow) and the rights of the abbey of Coggeshall (Witham).³ The date of the Barnston writ is of particular significance, as it indicates that

¹ Sheriffs 40-41

² Reg iii nos.39-42. Barrington Hall is in the north of the parish of Hatfield Broadoak, which confirms that the Barrington family enjoyed custody of the royal forest at Hatfield in Essex rather than Hatfield in Hertfordshire. The grant of forest custodies at Havering and Wethersfield to Eustace de Barrington (1138x1148) was probably made in response to the death of forester William de Montfichet, who was alive in April 1137: Reg iii. nos.42, 69, 594

³ Reg iii no.318: R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen, p.168 no. 207d: N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', 908

Beunay, together with co-addressee Henry de Essex, had responsibility with regard to monitoring assarts in the Mandeville honour prior to Mandeville's rebellion (the writ can be dated 1135x1141).¹ Beunay may have been active on Stephen's behalf for most of the reign, as the undated Coggeshall writ was issued between 1147 and 1154. He certainly was not confined to one part of Essex, as the hundreds of Witham and Dunmow are on opposite sides of the county.

Establishing other royal agents is a difficult process, partly because there are no Pipe Rolls for Stephen's reign. Royal writs were addressed to many local men who held no explicit office, some of whom were major tenants-in-chief. Walter fitz Robert was charged with ensuring that the monks of St John's Colchester held their land at Tey (Lexden) peacefully, whilst Maurice de Haia and Hugh fitz Stephen were charged with ensuring that St Botolph's Colchester enjoyed their rights in the Tendring hundred.² Hamo de St Clair was involved in the administration of Colchester in the early 1140s when a royal writ, concerning the rights of St Botolph's within Colchester itself, was addressed to St Clair and sheriff Mandeville.³

One local royal agent had no apparent part in the governance of Essex under Stephen. William fitz Otto the Goldsmith was the representative of a family that had held land in the county since Domesday at Gestingthorpe (Hinckford) and were later granted the manors of Benfleet (Barstable) and Childerditch (Chafford) by Henry I.⁴ William fitz Otto's adherence to the Angevins is suggested by the empress' writ of Midsummer 1141, directing sheriff Geoffrey

¹ Hugh de Berners, tenant of Geoffrey I de Mandeville, held 2 hides at Barnston in 1086:

LDB 60b

² Reg iii nos.239c, 212

³ Reg iii no. 210

⁴ LDB 98a: Reg ii no.1524

de Mandeville to seize William of the manor of Benfleet.¹ William fitz Otto did not attest any extant *acta* during Stephen's reign and the empress' writ is the only indication of support for either side.

Clearly the biggest difficulty experienced by royal administration was the loss of Geoffrey de Mandeville, who was central to the workings of local government in the London region. However the demands placed upon Mandeville required him to have under-sheriffs, thus ensuring some semblance of continuity when Maurice of Tilty assumed full control of the shrievalty in Essex. Mandeville's direct replacement in Essex was Richard de Lucy, who exercised local authority in the office of county Justiciar. Lucy's jurisdiction in this position was remarkable.

A confirmation in favour of St John's Abbey, Colchester allows a closer examination of the management of the honour of Pleshy after the death of Geoffrey II de Mandeville. Mandeville had granted land at Waltham to St John's, which Richard de Lucy confirmed to the abbey.² Lucy's involvement can only be dated *ante* 1154 or 1157x63 because of the presence of Maurice (of Tilty) as sheriff. However, the latter date is inapplicable because Geoffrey III de Mandeville had attained majority and gained seisin of his family's lands by that time. Lucy's confirmation confirms the central role he played in administering Essex during Stephen's reign.³ Tilty's presence is also of

¹ Reg iii no.316. Sir Henry Barkly suggested that Otto fitz William (d.c.1198) married the daughter of Robert fitz Harding of Berkeley (Glos.), who was elevated to the status of baron before 1166 by Henry II: H.Barkly, 'The Otto Family' from the President's Address, TBGAS xi (1886-7) 221-42, 232-34; Sanders 13, 14; Reg iii no.309. There is no indication that the family held land of fitz Harding in 1166: RBE 298

² Cart Colc p.147

³ Lucy also gained ten knights' fees of Eudo *dapifer*'s honour, which were formerly held by William de Sackville and later held by Richard de Anstey: N.C.Vincent, 'Warin and Henry Fitz Gerald, the King's Chamberlains', 246; P.A.Brand, 'New Light on the Anstey Case', 142-52

interest, as he was a Ferrers vassal and a former associate of Geoffrey de Mandeville.

The implication of this charter is that Lucy was the keeper of the Mandeville lands, which is further reinforced by his custody of the White Tower.¹ Stephen evidently felt that it was not necessary to recognise Geoffrey III de Mandeville's lands and tenure (unlike the Empress) as he had a reliable agent *in situ*.² Lucy was certainly granted a share of the Mandeville lands after Geoffrey de Mandeville's revolt, as he was in possession of part of Ickleton (Cambs).³ Lucy also had seisin of ten knights' fees from the Sackville estate within the honour of Eudo *dapifer*. These were withheld from Warin fitz Gerold when he was granted the Chamberlainship of the king's treasury and the greater part of Eudo *dapifer*'s honour in the early part of Henry II's reign.⁴ Lucy was a reliable and essential part of local administration and he was certainly well rewarded for his loyalty.

Monastic investment during Stephen's reign is of especial interest for two reasons. The period 1135-54 saw a great national increase in patronage, particularly in favour of the Cistercians and women's orders.⁵ Stephen's own landed wealth in Essex would influence the pattern of monastic growth. As king and leading baron, Stephen's example in Essex should have been an immense influence on the benevolent actions of Essex-based lords.

¹ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 146

² Reg iii no.277

³ N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', 903; Reg iii 242; VCH Cambs vi 232-5

⁴ PRO KB27/79 (King's Bench Coram Rege roll Michaelmas 11/12 Edward I) m.25, PRO KB27/80 m.7d

⁵ J.E.Burton, Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300, 73

Six new monastic houses were founded in Essex during Stephen's reign, three of which were founded by Stephen and his queen. These were fashionable establishments, made in favour of Savigny at Coggeshall (Witham) and the Knights Templar at Cressing (Hinckford) and Witham.¹ Coggeshall was founded between 1137 and 1142 (probably 1140), Cressing in 1137 and Witham between 1138 and 1148.² The high proportion of royal investment in monasticism indicates that the majority of the barons of Essex did not feel that their lands were so insecure that it was better to obtain spiritual benefit from the land before losing control of it. One tenant-in-chief who clearly did enjoy insecure tenure was Geoffrey de Mandeville. He founded a Benedictine house at his newly-restored manor of Walden (Uttlesford), which had been one of three manors held within the honour of Eudo *dapifer* from the early years of Henry I's reign.³ Mandeville was evidently eager to exercise a judicious grant of the manor before he lost control of it again.⁴ Michael Capra, a tenant of the earls Clare of Hertford, founded the Augustinian priory of Ss Mary and Leonard at Ginges, commonly called Thoby (Chelmsford).⁵ The last house to be established in the county was the Cistercian abbey of Tilty.⁶ The earl Ferrers and his tenant Maurice of Tilty founded this house on 22 September 1153. As an average of ten new houses were founded per see during Stephen's reign, six new foundations indicate that monastic investment in Essex (which

¹ MRH 117, 193, 196: R.H.C.Davis, *King Stephen*, 166-168

² MRH 117, 293, 296

³ MRH 79: C.W.Hollister, 'The Misfortunes of the Mandevilles', 19

⁴ This behaviour was repeated by the Fitz Gerald family in Sawbridgeworth, where insecure tenure was reflected in their use of the manor for patronage: N.C.Vincent, 'Warin and Henry fitz Gerald, the King's Chamberlains', 247

⁵ MRH 176

⁶ MRH 126

was, of course, only part of the diocese of London) was higher than in many other counties.¹

This pattern is remarkable, as none of the residents of Essex followed Stephen's choice of monastic orders during his reign. William de Montfichet founded the first Savignac house in Essex at Stratford Langthorne (Becontree) in July 1135 and Stephen established the second (and last) by 1142 at Coggeshall. All but one of the baronial foundations in Essex during Stephen's reign reflect a choice that paid no heed to the king or more modern orders. Mandeville's patronage of the Benedictines was no doubt influenced by the Veres and by the tradition of establishing a great house of black monks to found a family mausoleum. Similarly, Capra's small scale grant was made in favour of the same order that was already locally established at Dunmow and St Osyth.

Walden Abbey was traditionally founded in 1136 by Geoffrey de Mandeville, who was anachronistically styled as 'Earl'.² Mandeville's foundation charter did not have an ostentatious list of national witnesses and is a simple demonstration of clerics, members of the family and local vassals meeting for a special religious occasion.³ Representatives from Waltham and the Templars were present, together with the archdeacon of London, Mandeville's wife

¹ 'The total of 171 foundations over the seventeen English dioceses gives an average of ten per parish ...': C.Holdsworth, 'The Church' in E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign, 207-29, 218

² Harl. ms.3697 f.18a. The foundation date of 1136 is treated 'with caution by historians, but it may well be correct': The Book of the Foundation of Walden Abbey, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds. (Oxford, 1999), xx

³ Round assured us that the list of *teste* is thoroughly flawed, as William bishop of Norwich did not hold that office until 1146, two years after Geoffrey de Mandeville's death: GdM 45. The royal confirmation of the abbey's foundation has the dating limits May 1140 x June 1143: Reg ii no.913: The Book of the Foundation of Walden Abbey, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds. (Oxford, 1999), xvi-xvii

Rohaise, his son Arnulf and an 'Earl' Gilbert de Clare. Five of Mandeville's tenants were also present, including the contemporary representatives of the established Gweres and Nuers families.¹ Newer Mandeville tenants were also present, including William fitz Alvred, Humphrey de Rochelle and Warin and Henry fitz Gerold.² All three were described as holding their Mandeville fees *de novo* by 1166. Walden also received patronage from other Essex magnates, including Alice de Vere and Walter fitz Robert.³

Michael Capra's foundation of Thoby can be dated (possibly) between the death of Richard de Sigillo bishop of London (1150) and the election of Richard de Belmeis bishop of London (September 1152), as neither feature in the proem.⁴ The foundation charter and its subsequent recognition provide evidence of honorial and governmental stability in Essex. His charter was witnessed by *Rodberto preposito hundredi*, which shows that local officials were still active and that their involvement in the affairs of county tenants was welcomed. Stephen's confirmation of the foundation demonstrates that his blessing was still regarded as being essential.⁵ Furthermore, his charter made reference to a (lost) confirmation issued by Earl Richard de Clare. Sub-tenant Capra's foundation was recognised by his lord and by the king, which is evidence of a fully-functional honorial system. Capra's grant was also confirmed by Theobald Archbishop of Canterbury.⁶ This is a valuable insight

¹ Adelard de Guerr' and Fulk de Nuers were witnesses. Manasser de Gweres held one fee *de veteri* of the Mandevilles in 1166 and the fee of Ralph de Nuers consisted of four fees *de veteri*: RBE 346

² RBE 346-7. Humphrey de Rochel was succeeded by William de Rochel

³ Harl. ms.3697 ff.21b, 199b

⁴ Essex Record Office, Chelmsford ms. D/DP T1/37. The charter was certainly issued no later than 1152 as it was endorsed by Richard de Clare: Sanders 35

⁵ Essex Record Office, Chelmsford ms. D/DP T1/273: Reg iii no.877 (where the date c.1142 x 1152 is suggested)

⁶ Essex Record Office, Chelmsford ms. D/DP T1/290

into the activities of the earl of Hertford, who clearly did not dismiss the involvement of Stephen in this venture.

Stephen's confirmation of Thoby was appropriately addressed to *omnibus fidelibus suis Essexie*. It was witnessed by two men, Richard de Canville and Hugh de Essart, who evidently contributed to peace and stability in Essex and were regular attestors of royal charters like Richard de Lucy, Roger de Fraxinet and Warner de Lusors. Canville and Essart appear to have been local sub-tenants, of the earls of Oxford and Hertford respectively. Richard de Canville held one fee of the Veres in 1166 and witnessed over sixty royal charters during Stephen's reign.¹ The Essarts were tenants of the Clares, holding lands which had been within the honour of Clare in 1086.² Essart was a frequent attestor of charters during Stephen's reign, witnessing sixteen royal *acta*.³ Fraxinet was a regular attestor of Essex charters, although there does not seem to be any evidence of a local tenorial connection.

Tilty was founded by one of Stephen's most loyal local men, together with his lord Robert de Ferrers. Tilty's choice of the Cistercians does reflect some support of Stephen's favoured orders. There were close links between the Cistercians and the Knights Templar, and the Order of Savigny had joined the Order of Cîteaux in 1147.⁴ Tilty was the only Cistercian house to be founded in Essex, although both Stratford Langthorne and Coggeshall had become

¹ RBE 353: Reg iii nos.5, 30, 85-7, 89, 103, 106, 118, 127, 136, 140, 140a, 179, 185, 191, 221-2, 226, 232, 239, 239a, 241-2, 246, 249-50, 275, 294, 300, 358-9, 413, 427, 442, 454-5, 457, 483, 486-7, 489-90, 494, 503, 508, 566, 577, 583, 589, 593, 611-12, 614, 664, 715, 739, 742, 744, 775, 817, 864-5, 877, 942, 957, 993. Richard de Canville was pardoned 33s.4d. scutage in 1162, so he may have also held land in-chief or of an escheated honour: PR 8 Hen II 71

² Cart Colne nos.83, 84: LDB 40a, 101b, 102a, 103a. There were no men called 'Essart' recorded as tenants of the honour in 1166

³ Reg iii nos.37, 38, 102, 403, 404, 515, 577, 583, 658, 659, 661, 797, 831, 857, 877, 896

⁴ J.E.Burton, Monastic and Religious Orders in Britain 1000-1300, 69

Cistercian abbeys prior to Tilty's foundation. Just as Capra and Clare demonstrated that local honorial ties had not been damaged by Stephen's reign, so Ferrers and Tilty provide evidence that the tenants of the earl of Derby enjoyed a similarly undamaged relationship.

Queen Matilda founded Cressing during the spring of 1137 during a rare visit to Normandy.¹ Local Normans and members of the queen's household, none of whom had any obvious connection with Essex, witnessed the foundation. Between the creation of Eustace fitz Roi as count of Boulogne (1146 or 1147) and the death of Earl Gilbert of Pembroke (1148 or 1149), Stephen, Matilda and Eustace issued charters granting and confirming the manor of Witham to the Templars together with the jurisdiction of the half-hundred.² On this occasion Gilbert of Pembroke, Richard de Lucy and Roger de Fraxinet made attestations. Finally, Stephen's confirmation charter towards the end of his reign also had a large complement of local attestors, including Richard de Lucy, Earl Roger de Clare and Richard de Canville.³ After c.1147 the Templars experienced some problem in holding their market at Witham, as Baldwin of Rochester was presenting them with unrecorded difficulties.⁴ A notification was sent to Richard de Lucy, probably in his office of county justiciar, to control the actions of what appears to have been a member of the Marck family.⁵ Another Marck expressed his preference for the Knights

¹ Reg iii no.843: Cart Hosp i. no.2

² Reg iii nos.845-7: Cart Hosp i. nos.4-6

³ Reg iii no.865: Cart Hosp i. no.1

⁴ Cart Hosp i. no.8

⁵ Eustace de Merck, representative of Newsells branch of the descendants of Adelfolf de Marck and the founder of Newsells chapel, gained a licence for his foundation from Walter the abbot of St John's Colchester (c.1164-79), and Eustace's brother was known as Baldwin 'de Roucestrie': VCH Herts iii 175, 260: Cart Colc p.47: RBE 502: Harl. ms.7041 fol. 7

Hospitaller over the Templars in 1148, when Ingelram de Marck granted the Hospitallers six acres of land at Dunmow.¹

In view of the establishment of two Templar houses in Essex at the king's behest, the grass-roots support that the Knights Hospitaller received in Essex at the same time was surprisingly strong.² The earliest grant was probably the five acres at Heydon (Uttlesford) that Hugh Furet bestowed on the Hospitallers, c.1125x50.³ Peter de Valognes confirmed a grant of land at Lambourne (Ongar) made by his tenant William de Bosco in 1148.⁴ Other tenants-in-chief made grants in their own right. Both Alice of Essex (sister of Aubrey de Vere and sister-in-law of Henry of Essex) and Hubert de St Clair made grants to the Hospital, with the latter having his charter witnessed by Henry of Essex.⁵ Richard de Essart, who was also a patron of Colne, granted land at Halstead (Hinckford) to the Hospitallers.⁶ Clare tenant Richard Witing supported the Hospitallers with small quantities of land and property in Hanningfield (Chelmsford) for the soul of his lord, Earl Gilbert of Hertford.¹ Gilbert's confirmation of Alvred de Bendaville's grant of Chaureth church (Dunmow) has survived, together with the initial grant that was witnessed by

¹ Cart Hosp ii. no. 161. The first identifiable Marck of Dunmow was Ingelran, who almost certainly appeared in the year 1129-30 for pleas of forest. In 1184 Simon de Merck owed 20m. *pro habenda terra que fuit Engelranni de Merch de feodo Bolonie*. Simon held two fees of the honour of Boulogne in 1194-95 and 1201, and in 1212 those two fees included land at *Donmawe* (Dunmow) and *Ronewelle* (Runwell). Simon de Merc was charged scutage on Dunmow during the year 1215-16: PR 31 Hen I 57, PR 30 Hen II 133, PR 31 Hen II 15, PR 7 Ric I 226, Rotuli de Oblatis et Finibus in Turri Londinensi, ed. T.D.Hardy (London, 1835) 162, Book of Fees 578, PR 17 John 16

² Round remarked that 'Essex appears to have stood pre-eminent for its benefactions to the Order': J.H.Round, 'The Order of the Hospital in Essex', TEAS n.s. vii (1903) 182-6, 183

³ Cart Hosp i. no.283

⁴ Cart Hosp i. no.220

⁵ Cart Hosp i. nos.392, 300

⁶ Cart Hosp i. no.262

sheriff Maurice of Tilty.² Most of the grants were small and they were often vague (such as Eustace de Curtun's grant of land in Tendring hundred) but they were numerous and demonstrate the popularity of the Knights Hospitaller at that time.³

Quite apart from patronising monastic orders that few other landowners in Essex cared for, Stephen also supported some of the greater houses with land in the county.⁴ One of Stephen's earliest grants of land in Essex was in favour of St Peter's, Westminster. For the soul of his departed uncle Henry, Stephen granted forty acres of assarts in the royal manor of Kelvedon (Witham).⁵ In or after 1141 Stephen granted St Paul's 240 acres of assarts at Runwell (Chelmsford), which was witnessed by Henry of Essex and Richard de Lucy.⁶

St John's Abbey, Colchester, still attracted grants from a wide section of the county's landowning group. Robert de Sackville granted a manor to the abbey, which was attested by his lord Count Eustace over the period c.1146x1153.⁷ Queen Matilda confirmed the Boulonnais manor of Donyland (Lexden) to St John's, which was quitclaimed by the tenant Henry de Merc in 1135x52.⁸ The queen granted him East Donyland in return (1148x52), inclusive of the service of Geoffrey de Tresgoz.⁹ Tey (Lexden), another manor in the honour of Boulogne, was granted to Colchester by Turgis fitz Hardekin and confirmed

¹ Cart Hosp i. nos.286, 298

² Cart Hosp ii. nos.111, 112

³ Cart Hosp i. no.291. Gervers considered that Curtun's grant was at Bradfield (Tendring)

⁴ Geoffrey de Tresgoz was a local supporter of Stephen's foundations. He granted land at Tolleshunt to Coggeshall: R.H.C.Davis, King Stephen, 167

⁵ Reg iii no.932: Cart Westm no.114

⁶ Cart Lond no.39

⁷ Cart Cole p.131

⁸ Cart Cole pp.36, 36-7: LDB 30a

⁹ Reg iii no.224

by Queen Matilda.¹ William Martel, Stephen's *dapifer*, confirmed the grant made by Osbert fitz Hugh of half a hide at Kelvedon (Witham).² Evrard of Boxted (Lexden), probably another tenant of the honour of Boulogne, granted land at Boxsted to St John's *cum corpore meo*.³ Although his charter was undated, one of his younger sons confirmed the grant 1163x87, which suggests that the original grant was made during Stephen's reign.⁴

Grants from other honours were still being made to St John's from diverse members of the county group. During his lifetime Gralent de Tany granted a rent, at some stage over the period 1130x1180.⁵ Hamo de St Clair, whose brother William de St Clair was buried at Colchester, confirmed his brother's grants and made a fresh grant of *Edgarslawe* in 1137.⁶ As the grant was made *pro anima Gunnore sue coniugis*, it may have followed her death. There is no indication that Gunnora was buried at Colchester. Hamo's second wife, Margaret de Chesney, was from a family of Norfolk-based tenants of the honour of Eye, with lesser tenurial interests in Essex.⁷ Whilst Hamo still patronised Colchester, he clearly did not restrict all of his interests to Essex. Hamo's son, Hubert, granted Colchester his mill at Lexden together with his father's body.⁸ Hubert's grant attracted an impressive witness list, headed by Henry of Essex and including representatives of the local *Amblia* and *Haia*

¹ Cart Colc p.36: LDB 29b

² Cart Colc p.143. For much of Stephen's reign, William Martel 'seems to have been the king's sole steward', witnessing at least 181 royal charters: Reg iii xvii

³ Cart Colc pp.150-1: LDB 29b

⁴ Cart Colc pp.151-2

⁵ Cart Colc p.153: Sanders 4

⁶ Cart Colc pp.156-7

⁷ Cart Colc pp.159-60: for a full account of the Chesneys, sheriffs of Norfolk, see J.H.Round, 'The Origins of the Stewarts and their Chesney Connection', The Genealogist n.s. xviii (1902) 1-16, 13

⁸ Cart Colc p.160

families.¹ Richard de Francheville, who had encroached on the property of Westminster Abbey, sought forgiveness through grants to St John's.² Even Walter fitz Robert, a tenant-in-chief with a priory of his own at Little Dunmow, granted land at Woodham Walter (Wibertsherne) to Colchester.³

Robert de Raismes sent a notification to Robert de Sigillo, bishop of London, of his grant of the church of *Arleia* to St John's.⁴ This can be dated 1141-c.1142, during Robert's episcopate (1141-51) and prior to the death of Robert son of Roger de Raismes, nephew of Robert fitz William de Raismes (c.1142).⁵ Interestingly the grant was made *pro animabus parentum meorum qui iacent ad id monasterium*, which once again shows that the abbey was a mausoleum for Essex-based families. The Raismes notification was witnessed by Hugh of Messing and Ansketil fitz Hugh, who belonged to a family long associated with the Raismes dynasty. An Ansketil held 16 acres at Messing (Lexden) from Roger de Raismes in 1086.⁶ In 1166 Ansketil of Messing held one fee of the Raismes honour of Rayne.⁷ The latter Ansketil was still alive in 1175/76.⁸

Colne priory attracted investment from its patrons and the tenants of other honours, especially if they were granting land that lay in Hinckford hundred. The Vere family enjoyed a special position in Essex in Stephen's reign, as

¹ Geoffrey de Amblia held two fees *de veteri* of Henry fitz Gerold in 1166 and Ranulf de Haia held two-thirds of a fee *de veteri* in the same honour: RBE 354, 355

² Cart Colc p.165

³ Cart Colc p.166

⁴ Guildhall ms.25,122 / 541: Cart Lond no.95

⁵ GdM 309

⁶ LDB 83a

⁷ RBE 356. In a (very obviously) forged charter of Henry II, Hugh fitz Ansketil was confirmed in his right to three fees of the Raismes barony: Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/D Hv (Verulam) B3

⁸ PR 22 Hen II 6

marriage had brought them strong connections with the dominant local families. When he inherited the honour of Hedingham in 1141, Aubrey III de Vere was related to the Clares through his mother, Alice de Clare, and he was the brother-in-law of Geoffrey de Mandeville (d. 1144) and Robert brother of Henry of Essex.¹ Aubrey's brother was reputedly a canon at the Augustinian house of St Osyth.²

In c.1153 Stephen confirmed a grant made to Colne by Euphemia, second wife of Aubrey III de Vere, of land in Ickleton (Cambridgeshire) which had been formerly held by Geoffrey de Mandeville.³ Euphemia's grant was apparently made on her deathbed, *cum corpore meo*, attracting attestations from household and local clergy, Aubrey and Gilbert de Vere, Roger de Beauchamp (a non-Vere tenant) and Robert *constabulario*, probably Robert de Vere of Haughley.⁴ The 1148 charter of Adeliza wife of Aubrey de Vere, granting a mill at Ashbridge (Suffolk), was witnessed by Hubert and Ralph de Hispania, tenants of the Vere family in Essex.⁵

¹ For the Vere pedigree see Cart Colne p.94

² J.H.Round, 'Who was Alice of Essex?', TEAS n.s. iii (1889) 243-51, 245

³ Cart Colne no.5. The possession of this manor by the Vere family is evidence that the Mandeville's lands were used by Stephen to patronise other local families. Consequently, Euphemia's grant may indicate perceived insecurity of tenure. Henry II later granted ten marks worth of land at Ickleton to the Maison-Dieu of Montmorillon in Poitou (dép. Vienne) for the soul of William of Blois, count of Boulogne and earl Warenne (d.1159): PRO E40/6692: J.H.Round, Ancient Charters (London, 1888) i. pp.63-4, no.38: B.Golding, 'Anglo-Norman Knightly Burials', 42. Land at Ickleton was also granted to Richard de Lucy: N.C.Vincent, 'New Charters of King Stephen with Some Reflections upon the Royal Forests During the Anarchy', 903

⁴ Cart Colne no.56

⁵ Cart Colne no.57

Richard de Beauchamp, a tenant of the Clares of Hertford, granted land at Bures (Hinckford) to Colne.¹ Richard de Essart also granted land to Colne at 'Hareng' in Braintree (Hinckford) and 'Godelief' in Alphamstone (Hinckford), which suggests that he too was a Clare tenant.² Surprisingly they did not attest one another's charters to Colne and none of the witnesses were common to both sets of charters. William of Bures was quite probably another Clare tenant who patronised Colne, although his charter of *ante* 1148 was simply a confirmation of another grant of land at Bures, made by his father.³ It seems that the Clare tenants within Hinckford hundred were more eager to patronise the local Vere house of Colne than the honorial house at Stoke-by-Clare.⁴ However, the priory at Clare was not neglected by men with land in northern Essex. Before 1155, tenant-in-chief William de Helion granted the church and land at Helions Bumpstead (Freshwell) to that priory.⁵

Robert fitz Humphrey granted land in Colne itself to the priory, a grant that he dedicated to the soul of his lord, Count Eustace son of King Stephen.⁶ Robert was lord of Pentlow (Hinckford) within the Boulonnais honour and attracted a unique attestation from Richard de Tracy, who appears to have been a member of a Devon-based family.⁷ Colne also received land at Tey (Lexden) from Ernald *anglicus* and at an unspecified place (but almost certainly

¹ Cart Colne nos.58, 59

² Cart Colne nos.83, 84: LDB 40a, 101b, 102a, 103a

³ Cart Colne, no. 90: LDB 40b

⁴ The Clares were generous patrons of non-Clare foundations and it could be argued that their tenants were merely following the example of their Clare lords: R.Mortimer, 'Land and Service: the Tenants of the Honour of Clare', 195; J.C.Ward, 'Fashions in Monastic Endowment: the foundations of the Clare Family, 1066-1314', Journal of Ecclesiastical History xxxii (1981) 427-51

⁵ Cart Clare ii no.282.

⁶ Cart Colne no.94

⁷ Sanders 104

Gestingthorpe, Hinckford hundred) from William fitz Otto the Goldsmith.¹ Ernald's tenorial situation is unclear but William fitz Otto was a minor Essex tenant-in-chief with Angevin sympathies.² Colne was becoming a popular local house, for a very specific geographical area. The large number of grants from Hinckford hundred and the grants from neighbouring hundreds are suggestive of local affection for the priory.

Under the patronage of the counts of Boulogne, St Martin-le-Grand in London did not share the same wide scale support among the lesser landowners of Essex. It did, however, attract grants from its patrons, from other magnates and from families holding of the honour of Boulogne. Between 1146 and 1153 Count Eustace son of Stephen made a grant of land at Mashbury (Dunmow) to St Martin-le-Grand, although no record of witnesses has survived for this.³ During his years as an earl, Geoffrey de Mandeville granted the church of St Mary at Newport (Uttlesford) to the canons of St Martin-le-Grand.⁴ Mandeville's grant, evidently made over the period 1141-44, was witnessed by his wife Rohaise and the Ferrers tenant (and local official) Maurice of Tilty. The charter also appeared to have been attested by Gilbert the sheriff, which suggests that Mandeville had both his under-sheriffs in his company at the time.⁵

Another notification was sent from Geoffrey de Merc and Aitrope his son to Richard bishop of London, restoring tithes at Sortegrave (Shortgrove,

¹ Cart Colne, nos.95, 96

² In 1086 Otto the Goldsmith held a small but valuable manor at Gestingthorpe in Hinckford hundred: LDB 98a

³ WAM book V f.16a

⁴ WAM book V f.29a

⁵ Probably Gilbert Proudfoot, a contemporary sheriff of London and Middlesex: Sheriffs 58: J.A.Green, 'Financing Stephen's War', 110

Uttlesford) to St Martin-le-Grand.¹ Merc's grant, which was made over the period 1152-62 during Belmeis' episcopate, is just one example of the plurality of patronage practised by smaller local landowners. Geoffrey and Aitrope were tenants of the honour of Boulogne, although they were not of the same standing as their forebear Adelolf de Marck. His lands had been divided, probably in the early twelfth century, forming two distinct groups by 1212. One of these was centred on Little Bardfield (Freshwell) and also included land at Latton (Harlow), Shortgrove (Uttlesford), Weston Hall (Hinckford), Holland, Lawford (both Tendring) and Runwell (Chelmsford).² This was probably the same Geoffrey de Marck who answered for pleas of forest in 1129-30.³ Geoffrey, his wife Ada and son 'Eitrope' occurred c.1165, granting six acres at Bardfield to the Hospitallers.⁴ A Geoffrey de Marck and his (unnamed) brother witnessed a charter to Westminster Abbey c.1144x1156.⁵ Geoffrey's confirmation of the restoration of tithes to the canons of St Martin-le-Grand (1152x1162) at Shortgrove was the earliest appearance of his son Aitrope.⁶ Aitrope was listed within the Pipe Rolls over the period 1176-78, offering concrete confirmation that he had succeeded to his father's lands by Michaelmas 1176.⁷

¹ WAM 962

² LDB 27a-b, 28b-29a, 31b, 33a, 34a: Book of Fees 500, 575, 578

³ PR 31 Hen I 57

⁴ Cart Hosp ii. no.174. The date is an approximation based on formulae, as there were no witnesses to the grant

⁵ Cart Westm no.267

⁶ During the episcopate of Richard II Belmeis: WAM 962

⁷ PR 23 Hen II 153, PR 24 Hen II 36. Aitrope fitz Geoffrey de Merck should not be confused with Aitrope fitz Hugh fitz Geoffrey, who also appeared in the Pipe Rolls over the period 1176-8 (PR 23 Hen II 152, PR 24 Hen II 36: see also some confusion in Cart Waltham p.168 no.254). As this was another uncommon name Aitrope fitz Hugh was probably the nephew of Aitrope fitz Geoffrey, although there is no contemporary record (or indeed any record at all) of a Hugh de Merck. Aitrope fitz Hugh was still alive during

As these are the only four recorded occurrences of Geoffrey de Marck and they are only separated by about 36 years it would be quite reasonable to assume that they were one and the same, although this is not based on any hard fact. Unfortunately the traditional 1166 confirmation of status cannot be applied to Boulogne tenants, as this was one of the honours that escaped inclusion within *Cartae Baronum*. What this does demonstrate is that Geoffrey patronised a house that was an honorial concern, possibly prior to Stephen's death and almost certainly before the Boulonnais honour escheated in 1159. He also supported the Knights Hospitaller, who were a popular cause in Essex during Stephen's reign and attracted a greater number of recorded patrons in the county than the Templars. Geoffrey and his Marck cousins did support the houses connected with their lords, the counts of Boulogne (St John's Colchester, St Martin-le-Grand) whilst expressing an interest in their own projects. This seems to provide evidence of honorial integrity, combined with the group interaction that took place irrespective of honorial bias.

However, the canons of St Martin-le-Grand did experience difficulties with their land at Maldon. For Thibaud of Blois, a grant of overlordship of Maldon was evidently not enough and Thibaud's bailiff, Walter de Provin, annexed the canons' land there.¹ Geoffrey de Mandeville, who also claimed overlordship of Maldon, was ordered to rectify the situation.² Wadlac (sometimes known as Oswald) of Maldon deprived them of a house and Walter de Provin had been his accessory in this crime.³ Whilst this is a petty argument and was not on the

the abbacy of Adam of Colchester, witnessing a concord between the abbot and Ralph Morel, c.1196 x c.1237 (*Cart Colc* pp.241-2)

¹ *Reg* iii no.543: W.R.Powell ed., 'Short Studies in Topography and Family History', *EAH* xxvi (1995) 162-73, 163: W.R.Powell, 'St Mary, Maldon and St Martin-le-Grand, London', 142, 144

² WAM book V f.86a

³ WAM book V ff.20b, 85b, 86a: *Reg* iii. 545

same scale as the problems experienced in many other parts of England, it was a confrontation between a servant of the Count of Blois and a house governed by the bishop of Winchester. For the king's brothers to be embroiled in a miserable affair such as this just shows that the seeds of disturbance were present in the most innocuous areas. Henry of Blois was an influential man in Essex, as he was also dean of Waltham in the early eleven-forties.¹ Walter de Provin (Provins: modern *dép.* Seine-et-Marne) is an interesting example of how men from Blois/ Champagne followed their count and his brothers to England and thence to Essex.

Monastic investment in Essex during Stephen's reign occurred at a rate comparable with the rest of England. The national average of ten new monastic houses per diocese was reflected in the establishment of six new houses in Essex alone. However, Holdsworth's statement that '... the number of houses existing at the death of Henry I (some of which had a long history back to the tenth century) increased by at least fifty per cent in his successor's reign...' is not true for Essex.² On 25 October 1154 there were twenty-three monastic establishments in Essex, seventeen of which pre-dated Stephen's rule.

Monastic investment was not low but did not compare favourably with the quantity of foundations made within the county during previous reigns. The three private foundations of Stephen's reign explain this trend. The only tenant-in-chief to found a monastery was Geoffrey de Mandeville (at Walden), whilst the establishments at Tilty and Thoby were made by sub-tenants. All of the other greater Essex dynasties had established monastic houses before 1135. Whilst patronage of existing houses was commonplace, few of the Essex-based barons considered that a new foundation was appropriate. This may

¹ *Cart Waltham* p.13 no.23

² C.Holdsworth, 'The Church', 216-17

indicate that many of the families felt secure in their tenure of lands in a peaceful county. Mandeville's foundation of Walden displays the same motives as many other owners of disputed lands but he was a unique case in Essex. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that Mandeville was the last of the greater Essex-based barons to found a monastery or priory in Essex.

Small grants, particularly in favour of St John's at Colchester, reflect the greatest phenomenon of Stephen's reign. In spite of the large number of honours and the conflicting attitudes of some of the tenants-in-chief with lands in Essex, support for the premier Essex house still came from tenants-in-chief, sub-tenants and England's ruling family. Boulonnais sub-tenants (Boxted and Sackville) supported St John's, as did major barons (Walter fitz Robert), lesser barons (Hubert de St Clair, Robert de Raismes, Gralent de Tany) and Queen Matilda. Local support for Colne Priory from Vere and Clare tenants were of further benefit to Hinckford hundred's house, whilst the Hospitallers enjoyed multi-honorial patronage from across the county. There was certainly no move towards the polarisation of patronage during Stephen's reign.

As Stephen's reign came to a close, the true colours of many Essex barons became more obvious. Essex was a royalist county. It was pro-Stephen because Stephen was king and Essex had opposed the empress because she had threatened the security of England's anointed ruler. The aftermath of Eustace's death in 1153 shows Essex falling neatly into line with Stephen's attitude of resignation. Eustace had been count of Boulogne, son and son-in-law of kings, and a power in Essex in his own right. His death increased the inheritance of William of Blois, already *comes jure uxoris* (in the footsteps of his father) after marriage to Isabel de Warenne.¹ Acceptance that William was better

¹ Sanders 128-9

sued to honorial rather than national rule came at Colchester, where Duke Henry met the Archbishop of Canterbury and the king's barons.¹

Negotiations at Colchester centred on William's inheritance, and it was fitting that this should be confirmed by the Plantagenet duke in an impregnable castle deep inside the honour of Boulogne. Soon after, the Treaty of Winchester confirmed Henry's right to Essex (and the rest of England) but it is significant that the negotiation process had taken place, in part, in one of the most royalist counties.

It would be inaccurate to state that Essex was a peaceful county under Stephen. Essex was more pacific than most (and perhaps all) other English counties but tranquillity in Essex was relative rather than absolute. In economic terms, Essex was productive in 1154 and it was not ruined by the Anarchy. As with the Domesday figures, this measure is indicative of a county that did not suffer long-term damage during a traumatic period. Examples of conflict reflect petty personal skirmishes rather than political battles.

Tenurially Essex was exposed to little change. The great houses of Montfichet, Warenne, Clare and Baynard were stable and saw few alterations over the two decades of Stephen's rule. The most substantial enduring grant was made to Henry of Essex, who obtained control of the honour of Haughley.² Stephen certainly catered for his favourites, although these rewards for loyalty did not match the attempt Stephen made to purchase the support of Geoffrey II de Mandeville.

Whilst the Mandeville honour had been inflated and finally confiscated, no permanent measures were introduced to end the family's place in the county.

¹ White, 'The End of Stephen's Reign', 11

² Sanders 121

The Mandevilles were deprived of their lands and castles but significantly the honour was not granted to another family. Although some Mandeville lands were used for the purpose of royal patronage, no measures were taken to finally disperse the honour.¹ Stephen did not make the same mistakes as Henry I in his treatment of the premier Norman honour in Essex. Conversely, he did not finally resolve the situation either. Mandeville possession of the honour of Peverel of London and the honour of Eudo *dapifer* was still a feasible concept in 1154, although Richard de Lucy had been granted ten fees from Eudo's lands. Whether through economic imperative or an unwillingness to create further antagonism, Stephen retained control of both honours after 1144.

As in 1135, there was no earl of Essex in 1154. Stephen again may have decided against creating another earl after 1144 for fear of inflaming pro-Mandeville sympathies. Alternatively, his abandonment of the policy of creating earls may have been a recognition of the consequent inherent danger for the localities. Mandeville, as earl, can be seen as the royally designated leader of the county. That his mandate rested upon Stephen's authority is manifest through the behaviour of the barons and knights of Essex in 1143. Mandeville did not enjoy the active support of his peers and neighbours. Realistically, the true representative of the landholding community of Essex was the lord that governed London. Without an earl, the governance of Essex suffered no adverse effect. As White notes, 'we know of more royal writs addressed to Essex than to any other shire in the middle and later years of the reign'.² Stephen also visited Essex regularly. He is known to have been at Saffron Walden in 1145 and at Hedingham in 1152, and he also issued charters

¹ Stephen's unwillingness to visit the sins of the father upon the child can also be seen in his lenient treatment of the boy William Marshal: S.Painter, William Marshal: Knight-Errant, Baron and Regent of England (London, 1971), 14-15

² G.White, 'Continuity in Government' in E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign 117-43, 133

at Romford, Barking, Colchester, Earl's Colne, Newport, Pleshey, Witham and Writtle.¹

It is apparent that the period 1141-42 was the only time that royal control of Essex was in jeopardy. After Stephen's defeat at Lincoln and the empress' entry into London many of the barons of Essex wavered in their support for the king. This event precipitated the re-alignment of Clare, Mandeville, Vere and others but the stability that followed in London was reflected in Essex. In some ways it is remarkable that no event during Stephen's nineteen years was momentous enough to finally turn Essex against the house of Blois. The smooth administration of the county together with the aptitude and loyalty of its administrators played an important part in this process.

Royal administration, the forest law and royal law continued to function in Essex through the efforts of a large number of local men, who carried the burden of local government during and after Mandeville's defections and revolt. Both Lucy and Tilty were reliable administrators, whose talent was also recognised by Henry II. Forest officials Barrington, Beaunay and Fraxinet effected capable management of the forests in the absence of a mature Montfichet forester. Hundredal administration was clearly functional, with Robert, *prepositio* of the hundred (probably Chelmsford hundred) witnessing the foundation charter of Thoby, Maurice de Haia and Hugh fitz Stephen receiving writs in regard of Tendring hundred and Hamo de St Clair acting on the king's behalf in Colchester. Monastic houses were granted hundredal jurisdiction in the hundreds of Harlow (to Bury St Edmund's), Witham (to the Knights Templar), Becontree and Barstable (both to St Mary's Barking). This is an unprecedented quantity of information available with regard to the local administration of the county. There was certainly no breakdown in government within Essex, nor did the county lose contact with the king. Essex

¹ Reg iii xxxix-xliv (for Stephen's itinerary) nos.503-4, 251, 375-6, 33-5, 216, 218, 223, 225, 235-6, 238, 239c-d, 9, 226, 42, 240, 609, 208-9, 231

did not need an earl for local administration to function, although it was not disrupted by the presence of an earl. Local administration continued to function effectively, largely through the work of men with local interests. In this respect there was no difference in the situation between 1135 and 1153.

That this was achieved in Essex was, of course, of benefit to the royalist cause. The fact that the Colchester mint continued to function contributed to the stability of Stephen's government in eastern England.¹ The production of coinage is viewed as evidence of support of Stephen's rule. It is no coincidence that two issues of Stephen's coinage (types II and VI) were produced at mints in counties which offered Stephen some of his staunchest support: Norfolk, Suffolk, Kent, Sussex and Essex.² Royalist policies towards mints reflected the reliance of the crown on those counties that were most loyal. Stephen re-opened the mint at Colchester, which was probably closed by Henry I, and Stephen may also have opened a new mint at Maldon.¹

The involvement of Essex in the troubles of Stephen's reign was peripheral. Within the county there had been a minimal, though not negligible, amount of conflict. The disputes between landowners in the county and the difficulties suffered by certain monastic houses cannot be disregarded. These were minor disputes and the most obvious elements of conflict remain the rebellion of the earl and the building of about twelve new castles. Essex has always been considered a backwater during the Anarchy. The stability of Essex helped to

¹ K.J.Stringer, The Reign of Stephen: Kingship, Warfare and Government in Twelfth-Century England (London, 1993), 58. For general discussion of numismatic issues, see E.King, 'The Anarchy of King Stephen's Reign', 147-52

² M.Blackburn, 'Coinage and Currency' in E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign, 145-205, 165-66. Types III, IV and V are associated with those areas where freelance minting and privately issued coinage were the norm: R.H.C.Davis, The Reign of King Stephen, 84-85

ensure Stephen's continuity, not least through its financial contribution. Essex weathered the storm of Stephen's reign surprisingly well. In terms of administrative continuity and (general) adherence to Stephen's rule, Essex was very different to the majority of contemporary English counties.

¹ M.Blackburn, 'Coinage and Currency' in E.King ed., The Anarchy of Stephen's Reign, 155, 160

Chapter V - Henry II and Essex

In spite of the preceding years of conflict Henry II acquired a peaceful and comparatively prosperous Essex. The first two Pipe Roll returns for Essex in the new reign demonstrate a county in possession of a functional local administration and without the burden of massive damage to its infrastructure.¹ That Essex was accounted for 1154-5 and that a return was made for the entire year sets it apart from other English counties.² No waste was claimed in 1154-5, although £42 9s was spent on restocking.³ In 1155-6 the royal manor of Newport was restocked at a cost of £12 and Danegeld waste totalling £61 4s. was recorded.⁴ The waste figure represented 27% of the county's Danegeld liability, raising questions about the nature of Danegeld waste.

Danegeld waste was not a blanket term applied to any uncollectable debt but a designation that recognised the inability of a locality to meet a quota established prior to Stephen's reign.⁵ Waste could be an explicit phrase, referring to outright devastation (as in the Midlands). Alternatively the designation could refer to the existence of areas which had been overly taxed or subjected to asset stripping, as settled regions outside the main arena of military activity were expected to provide contested loyal areas with financial assistance. Essex had been exploited to finance campaigns rather than ruined

¹ RBE 650-1: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16-18, 21

² Accession 149, discusses the absence of Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire and Rutland from the copy of the 1154-5 returns and the presence of other county returns covering only part of the financial year

³ RBE 651. Richard Eales discusses the qualitative and quantitative implications of low Danegeld payments with regard to a loss of royal control: R.Eales, 'Local Loyalties in Norman England: Kent in Stephen's Reign', 89-90

⁴ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17. A further 7s was written off as waste in 1156-7: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 73

⁵ Judith Green defines waste as 'land from which no tax was forthcoming, for whatever reason': J.A.Green, 'The Last Century of Danegeld', 252

by war. This fatigue earned a relatively unexceptional level of Danegeld exemption.¹

The re-stocking of royal manors in 1154-5 and 1155-6 may have been required as a result of military action, or it may have been necessary due to poor management or even an inability to pay for the upkeep of the royal manors in question. When assessing the condition of an area, it must be remembered that the relationship between waste and restocking is tenuous at best, as Danegeld related to all demesne land and restocking to royal manors. Nationally 24% of the Danegeld was written off as waste, which does not suggest that the private lands of Essex were particularly devastated.² The cost of re-stocking was also a very average figure.³

In 1154 Henry's major task was to gain and retain the loyalty of the men of Essex. When Henry had secured the throne, Essex still had a nobility that had been pro-Blois with a strong Blois-controlled honour of Boulogne dominating the county. Stephen's former favourites and administrators largely governed Essex, with Richard de Lucy holding the shrievalty until Michaelmas 1157.⁴ Angevin support in Essex had been lukewarm at best, at least until 1153, and in William of Blois the county boasted a ready-made pretender.

After quelling the sporadic rebellion that occurred in other parts of the country early in his reign, Henry turned his attention to East Anglia in 1157. The primary problem was that Henry's demand for the destruction of adulterine fortifications before 1154 had been ignored because of Stephen's unwillingness to insist on their removal. Henry required that the earls of Norfolk and Surrey

¹ Accession 142, 139

² Accession 137

³ Over a two year period just over £55 was spent on re-stocking Essex, just over 10% of the value of the 1155-6 county farm and manor farms: Accession 144.

⁴ RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 72

surrender all of their castles, in the same year that Geoffrey de Mandeville's defensive works in Essex were destroyed by royal decree.¹ Warren even suggests that further castle razings in East Anglia went unrecorded.² This was also the year that Henry of Essex was disgraced during the Welsh campaign, ultimately leading to his demise in 1163. Within the space of twelve months King Henry had disciplined two of the county's three greatest barons (Blois and Mandeville) and fortuitously witnessed the political suicide of the third.

Henry also had to respond to established patterns of patronage and instituted change with alacrity. *Terre date* payments that can be associated with Stephen's supporters went missing from the Pipe Rolls within a year of Henry's accession.³ Walter fitz Robert was removed half way through the 1154-55 financial year, which strongly suggests that he was collecting this benefit by the previous king's gift.⁴ The houses of Stratford, a Montfichet foundation, and Barking, which had purchased hundredal rights from Stephen, were struck from the list, as were Hubert de St Clair, Osmund Peisson and Reginald fitz Urse.⁵ Amt suggests that this is extremely tenuous evidence of drastic change.⁶ Peisson and fitz Urse may not have even held *terre date*, as the source is ambiguous. What is clear is that Peisson vanished from the records of Essex after this time, whilst Reginald fitz Urse re-appeared in subsequent years. He received a pardon of 9s. for tallage in 1157-8 and a 9s.

¹ PR 2-3-4 Hen II, 132: R.A.Brown, 'Framlingham Castle and Bigod 1154-1216' in *Castles, Conquests and Charters* 187-208, 190-91

² W.L.Warren, *Henry II*, 68

³ For a summary of returns made for the lost PR 1 Hen I, see RBE 650-1

⁴ RBE 651. During the financial year 1154-5, Richard Talbot and Hugh de Longchamp gained £24 15s. in *terre date* payments in Herefordshire: RBE ii. 650. *Terre date* seems to have been granted in Essex, although the term was not used

⁵ RBE 650-1

⁶ *Accession* 77

pardon for Danegeld in 1161-2.¹ Eight years later he was actively involved in the murder of Thomas Becket.²

However, Amt's decisive pronouncements over Hubert de St Clair are woefully incorrect.³ He was not disinherited after Michaelmas 1155, as he was already dead. He was killed in or before July of that year, when he was apparently shot whilst standing next to the king during the siege of Bridgnorth.⁴ Of Stephen's former supporters in receipt of *terre date* in Essex, it was only de Lucy that explicitly continued to receive this payment.⁵ *Terre date*, land that was removed from the royal demesne and would otherwise have contributed to the sheriff's income, was offset against the county farm total in the sheriff's return to the Exchequer. The system of accounting for it in this way does not seem to have operated before Stephen's reign, as the 1129-30 Pipe Roll shows no similar procedure. The administrative process originated with Stephen, although the practice of making grants from the royal demesne that would affect the county farm certainly began before his reign.

Whilst the system was retained, the recipients were quickly changed by Henry of Anjou. The Montfichet Cistercian house of Stratford Langthorne lost its *terre date* at Havering (valued at £10) at about Michaelmas 1155.⁶ The payment went instead to the hospital established at Hornchurch (Becontree) by

¹ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 133: PR 8 Hen II 71

² Reginald fitz Urse, William de Tracy, Hugh de Morville and Richard *brito* killed Becket on 29 December 1170: *Becket Materials* iii 128

³ *Accession* 76, 157

⁴ Hugh Mortimer, who had refused to surrender the castle of Bridgnorth, submitted to Henry II on 7 July 1155: W. L. Warren, *Henry II*, 60-1: Hubert's death is related by C.L.Sinclair Williams, 'A Valiant Constable of Colchester Castle', *EAH* xx (1989), 30-33. Williams has based his story on the account given by Ralph Niger in his *Chronicon* (MS. Cotton Vespasian D.X.), a copy of which is printed with his article

⁵ RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 73, 132

⁶ RBE 650-51

Henry II and St Bernard of Clairvaux, which was dependency of the Austin canons of the Alpine congregation of Montjoux.¹ Furthermore, the hospital at Hornchurch enjoyed *terre date* valued at £25, which is an even stronger indication of a royal negative attitude towards the Montfichet house at that stage of the reign. Further alterations to the local power structure followed this removal of benefaction from men and institutions not favoured by Henry.

1157 was a crunch year in Essex, as the Pipe Rolls fully betray. Favoured figures in the fiscal year 1155-6 were suddenly left out in the cold, receiving little or no royal patronage in the year to Michaelmas 1157. Henry of Essex received almost £41 in pardons of tallage and Danegeld in 1156; in 1157 he was pardoned 20s. 2d. in murdrum fines.² He subsequently received no further recorded pardons or remittances in Essex. Fabian *capellano* also received a double pardon (tallage and Danegeld) in 1155-6, with nothing to follow.³ This was a harsh downturn for both men but some Essex landowners suffered worse setbacks. Aubrey de Vere, having proffered £500 for his father's office of Chamberlain in 1154-5, was pardoned nothing until Michaelmas 1168.⁴ Gilbert de Montfichet was pardoned £9 tallage in 1156 but owed 200 marks, two hawks and two falcons at the Michaelmas session of 1158.⁵ By Michaelmas 1160 he was free of debt but he still owed the same four hunting

¹ PR 5 Hen II 4; PR 6 Hen II 10; PR 7 Hen II 64; PR 8 Hen II 69; Oxford Charters nos. 35, 39; Delisle Recueil nos .235, 722; J.H.Round, 'Hornchurch Priory', TEAS n.s. vi (1898) 1-12; Hornchurch Priory: a Kalendar of Documents in the Possession of the Warden and Fellows of New College Oxford, H.F.Westlake ed. (London, 1923) v, p.45. no.168

² PR 2-3-4 Hen II, 17, 18, 74

³ PR 2-3-4 Hen II, 17, 18

⁴ RBE 651, PR 14 Hen II 44

⁵ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18, 133. This debt may have been Gilbert's relief. If it was, then Gilbert was very young (or may not have been born) when his father died, as William de Montfichet last attested Stephen's charters in April 1137: Reg iii 69, 594

birds.¹ Whilst both were among the county's most powerful and influential barons, Henry made no attempt to purchase their affections.

The spring of 1157 also appears to have been Henry II's first visit to Essex since becoming king. He was at the de Lucy castle in Ongar in April (possibly) and certainly at Colchester between 23 and 28 May, visiting Waltham and Writtle a few days after.² This expedition took place at about the time when the earls' castles in East Anglia were confiscated or destroyed. Whilst at Colchester, Henry issued a charter in favour of Faversham, significantly witnessed by Faversham's patron William of Blois.³ Henry's only subsequent recorded visit took place in June 1177, when he journeyed to Waltham.⁴ This was an extraordinary contrast to Stephen, who had regularly visited the county.

A number of charters were issued in Essex by Henry II, mostly at Colchester. It was there that Henry confirmed the grants made to Faversham Abbey, in the company of Archbishop Theobald, William of Blois (d.1159), Henry of Essex, Richard de Lucy, William Martel, Warin fitz Gerold, Thomas Becket and William de Chesney, among others. Many of these witnesses would not look out of place among the attestors of one of Stephen's charters. Almost all of the other charters issued by Henry II at Colchester only had witnesses that were present for the Faversham grant. Theobald of Bec, archbishop of Canterbury

¹ PR 5 Hen II 4: PR 6 Hen II 11: PR 7 Hen II 65: PR 8 Hen II 69. The end of the debt coincides with him accounting £10 per year for the old farm of *Westmelna* (Westmill in Hertfordshire) in 1162-63: PR 9 Hen II 23: PR 10 Hen II 37: PR 11 Hen II 16: PR 12 Hen II 123. Westmill was held by Robert Gernon and Robert de Tosny in 1086: DB 138a

² R.W.Eyton, Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II (London, 1878), pp.25-27: The Chronicle of Battle Abbey, E Searle ed. (Oxford, 1988) 174

³ Mon. iv 573: C.T.Clay ed., EYC viii, 17. Faversham was the mausoleum of Stephen, Matilda and Eustace, whose endowment had been specifically guaranteed by Henry II in his treaty of Winchester/Westminster with Stephen in 1153: Reg iii no.272

⁴ R.W.Eyton, Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II, 216

(d.1161) and Warin fitz Gerold (d.1158x61) were both frequent attestors of the Colchester charters, as were Henry of Essex (disgraced 1163) and Chancellor Becket. It would not be unrealistic to suggest that all or most of these charters were granted at the same time, or on the outward and return legs of a journey further into East Anglia.

A confirmation charter to Ely and a grant of free warren to St John's were both solely witnessed by Warin fitz Gerold at Colchester.¹ The hermitage of Bedeman's Berg, a dependency of St John's, Colchester, had two royal charters issued in its favour, one witnessed by Richard de Lucy and one in the presence of Warin fitz Gerold and Henry of Essex.² The king's confirmation of the Westcastle area of Colchester to St John's was given *teste me ipso apud Colecestriam*.³ Other charters in favour of Colchester was witnessed solely by Becket, and by de Lucy and Archbishop Theobald.⁴

Finally, the monks of Colchester received two charters confirming their exemption from Danegeld and murdrum. The first (and main) charter was witnessed by Archbishop Theobald, Henry of Essex, Warin fitz Gerold, Richard de Lucy and a group of men who were *curiales* rather than men with local connections: Manasser Biset, Patrick earl of Salisbury, and Robert earl of Leicester.⁵ The second, which lists sundry small estates not included in the first charter, dates from about the same time, with Archbishop Theobald, Warin fitz Gerold and Robert de Beaumont among the witnesses.⁶

¹ Cambridge University Library ms. D. & C. Ely Charters 9c: Cart Colc p.29

² Cart Colc p.29

³ Cart Colc p.24

⁴ Cart Colc pp.40-1, 57-8

⁵ Cart Colc p.20

⁶ Cart Colc p.19

A confirmation in favour of Bury, issued at Colchester, was attested by Archbishop Theobald, Warin fitz Gerold, Roger de Clare, Aubrey de Vere, Hugh earl of Norfolk and Robert de Beaumont.¹ Warin fitz Gerold was the sole witness to a charter in favour of Colne at Colchester.² A contemporary charter in favour of Bridlington Priory was granted at Waltham, with attestations from Becket, Warin fitz Gerold, Hugh earl of Norfolk, Richard de Canville, Manasser Biset and William Longchamps.³ The royal charter in favour of the hermitage at Bicknacre (forerunner of the Augustinian house at Woodham Ferrers founded in 1175) was issued at Writtle and witnessed by Becket, earl Hugh, Henry of Essex, Richard de Lucy, Warin fitz Gerold, and Humphrey de Barrington.⁴ A charter in favour of Humphrey de Barrington, granting him the land of Geoffrey the forester of Hatfield, was attested by Biset and Warin fitz Gerold at Havering.⁵

The multiple attestations of a small group of men that did not survive Henry's first ten years of rule is indicative of a brief but fruitful trip to Essex by Henry II. A (probably spurious) charter in favour of St Osyth's Priory was allegedly issued at Waltham.⁶ If this charter had ever been issued, it may have at the same time as a charter regarding Bury St Edmund's.⁷ As this charter was witnessed by the bishops Richard of Ilchester (of Winchester from 1173) and John of Oxford (of Norwich from 1175), it was certainly issued at a later stage than most of the other Essex charters. Thus Henry II only made two definite visits to Essex during his entire reign of thirty-five years.

¹ Feudal Documents from the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds, D.C.Douglas ed. (London, 1932) p.105 no.101

² Cart Colne, no.8, p.5

³ Mon. vi 286-7

⁴ MRH 147-8: Mon. vi 446

⁵ Holt and Mortimer 29 no.8

⁶ Mon vi 310-11

⁷ Douglas Feudal Documents 104-5 no.100

In Essex, Henry faced early problems with the quantity of royal demesne at his disposal. Stephen had quite happily granted out portions of escheated honours to his followers and favourites, together with land from his own demesne. The new Angevin king had some hard choices to make as he needed to reward those who had kept faith, placate existing landowners and ensure that the crown was financially healthy. His successful governance of Essex would rely heavily on the careful maintenance and expansion of his resources and rights. However, he did have a relatively unspoilt county to work with and a succession of escheats made his task easier. One might suggest that this spate of deaths, frequently without obvious successors, was a fortunate sequence of events for Henry II.

During the course of the reign Lanvaley's acquisition of the St Clair honour and the royal retention of Haughley and Rayleigh were the most notable shifts in power away from Stephen's baronial supporters in Essex. The Rayleigh-Haughley confiscation was enabled by the death of William of Blois in 1159, which left Henry of Essex politically isolated when he was already facing charges of cowardice. The death of Stephen's son further advanced the size of royal demesne in Essex through the escheated honours of Boulogne, Eye and Lancaster.¹ Additionally, William's death freed the Warenne heiress, Isabella, for marriage to a suitable Angevin candidate, the king's half-brother Hamelin Plantagenet.² Within nine years of his accession, the two largest baronies in Essex (Boulogne and Rayleigh-Haughley) were in the hands of Henry II.

Henry II also endorsed some of the more useful individuals and families who were already influential in Essex. Richard de Lucy was positively encouraged

¹ For the royal confiscation of the honours of Boulogne, Eye and Lancaster, and the subsequent grant of lands outside Essex to Matthew of Flanders, see J.H.Round, 'The Counts of Boulogne as English Lords' 171-75

² EYC vii 13, 18-20; Sanders 129

by Henry II, Maurice of Tilty was embraced by the new royal administration and even Geoffrey III de Mandeville was gradually admitted into the royal favour. He was forced to perform penance for his father's sins through having his castles dismantled and receiving his (incomplete) hereditary privileges piecemeal. He was not deemed to be his father's heir, was only accepted as earl in January 1156, did not receive the third penny of the shire until Michaelmas 1157 (although it was backdated for two years) and did not become involved in royal government until 1166.¹

Whilst families did fall from grace, there is no evidence to confirm that Henry II exacted wide-scale retribution against former Blois followers in Essex for their support of Stephen. There is also no doubt that he rewarded his own followers well in the county. The remaining royal-controlled manors from Eudo *dapifer*'s honour had been the cause of much disquiet during the Anarchy. This was the inheritance demanded by and offered to Geoffrey II de Mandeville, and later denied to Geoffrey III de Mandeville. Over fifty knights' fees from Eudo's honour were granted in-chief to Warin fitz Gerold, the chamberlain of the treasury.² This was the major 'new' honour in the county and certainly the most striking.

Eudo's honour, which had been the cause of anxiety in Henry I's reign and outright blackmail under Stephen, had the potential to be as problematic for Henry II. In 1154 Robert son of William of Gloucester was granted the entire honour of Eudo *dapifer*. William of Gloucester was effectively the recipient of the grant as Robert was a boy. Crouch suggests that the grant was made by

¹ Oxford, Bodleian Library ms. Rawlinson B102 fo. 57r (copy supplied by Dr Vincent): PR 2-3-4 Hen II 72, 132, PR 12 Hen II 123; Sanders 71

² H.G.Richardson and G.O.Sayles, The Governance of Medieval England from the Conquest to Magna Carta (Edinburgh, 1963), 437; N.C.Vincent, 'Warin and Henry Fitz Gerald, the King's Chamberlains', 252-53. Whilst the grant specifies locations outside Essex, it did not list any within the county

Henry (as duke) to favour an Angevin partisan during the uncertain months before Stephen's death.¹ Retaining Earl William's support was vital to the Angevin cause at that time and it was not a politically sensitive decision as the Mandeville heir was still too young to object to the grant. Evidently courting the Gloucesters was not considered to be important once Henry was king. Although the younger Robert of Gloucester survived into early adulthood, his tenure of Eudo's honour had ended by 1157.

Richard de Lucy's lands also developed during Henry's reign, partly through royal patronage. By 1174 his 'honour of Ongar' consisted of land from the honours of Boulogne, Mortain and Gloucester, together with hundredal rights in Ongar and £80 *terre date* from Hatfield Regis (Harlow).² Henry used other small land grants to introduce new men to the county. Henry de Canville was granted Fobbing (Barstable), which was taken out of the honour of Boulogne.³ Richard son of Alcher Venator was confirmed in his right to his father's 2½ virgates of land in the soke of Waltham.⁴ Henry II granted the manor of *Clavinges* to Robert fitz Roger as one knight's fee, which refers to Clavering formerly of the honour of Rayleigh.⁵ In a rare display of patronage from the Angevin king to Aubrey de Vere, Henry II granted him the manor of Hempstead Hall (Freshwell).¹

No charter survives of the grant of lands in Essex made to Henry II's youngest brother William Longchamps. Nonetheless, from the lands later held by

¹ D.Crouch, 'Earl William of Gloucester and the end of the Anarchy: new evidence relating to the honor of Eudo *dapifer*', *EHR* ciii (1988) 69-75, 74

² J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 145-50

³ *Cal.Chart.R.* 1226-57 51-2: *LDB* 26a

⁴ *Cart Waltham* no.281

⁵ *Rot.Chart* 6, 187b. Alice de Vere, widow of Robert fitz Swein of Rayleigh and mother of Henry of Essex, married Roger fitz Richard *nepos* of Hugh Bigod and their son was Robert fitz Roger of Clavering: J.H.Round, 'Who was Alice of Essex?', 251

Longchamps' *familiares*, it would seem that Longchamps held some or all of the lands of the honour of Peverel.² Longchamps himself had land at Maldon (a Domesday Peverel manor), which was listed as *terre date* in the early years of Henry II's reign.³ Three of William's men, Geoffrey de Tresgoz *dapifer*, Robert Mantel and Eudo fitz Erneis, held lands in Essex but none were included within the 1166 honorial survey as tenants-in-chief or subtenants.⁴ The Tresgoz family had held land in Essex in 1129-30 and on Geoffrey de Tresgoz's death (1170-1) his lands were accounted for by the sheriff, suggesting that he was the tenant of an escheated honour.⁵ Both Robert Mantel and Eudo fitz Erneis were associated with former demesne Peverel manors. Robert established the priory of Beeleigh in Little Maldon and Eudo was described as *Eudo filii Ernisi de Depeden* (Debden) in 1174.⁶ Finally Henry II confirmed a grant made by Longchamps to Stratford of land at *Hamma*.⁷ As East Ham and West Ham were held by the abbey of Westminster, Robert Gernon and Ranulf Peverel at Domesday, there is only

¹ Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DPr 145 fo. viii

² William Longchamps' *familiares* included Richard Brito, who felled Becket whilst shouting 'Hoc habeas pro amore domini mei Willelmi, fratris regis': Becket Materials iii 142. Becket was blamed for Longchamps' premature death (of a broken heart), as he blocked the proposed marriage between Longchamps and Isabella de Warenne: EYC vii 13-14

³ LDB 73a, 75a; RBE 650; PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 72, 132; PR 5 Hen II 4; PR 6 Hen II 10; PR 7 Hen II 64, 65; PR 8 Hen II 69; PR 9 Hen II 22; PR 10 Hen II 36

⁴ Geoffrey, Robert and Eudo witnessed Longchamps' charters regularly between 1154 and 1164: Hatton's Seals pp.299-300; CDF nos.185, 789; London, College of Arms ms. Glover A. fo. 132r.; Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300 309; F.M.Stenton ed., Facsimiles of Early Charters from Northamptonshire Collections (Northants Record Society, 1930) p.24 no.6: CAD v.507

⁵ PR 31 Hen I 56, 60, PR 17 Hen II 124, PR 18 Hen II 44. The connection between the honour of Peverel of London and the Tresgoz family was also evident in 1130, when William de Tresgoz was farming the escheated honour: PR 31 Hen I 135

⁶ LDB 73a, 73b, PR 18 Hen II 144, PR 20 Hen II 74, MRH 186

⁷ Hatton's Seals p.282 no.413

one likely explanation of William's tenure prior to his grant.¹ Finally, the first time that the Honour of Peverel of London appears in the Pipe Rolls in Henry II's reign is during the year to Michaelmas 1165.² This, of course, coincides with the early death of William Longchamps.³

Marriage was another useful tool of patronage and once again Henry brought in outsiders. The Breton Lanvalei's marriage to the daughter of Hubert de St Clair secured his land and position in Essex. Isabella de Warenne was considered as a bride for William Longchamps before being married to Hamelin Plantagenet in 1164.⁴ Once again this marriage introduced new blood and another reliable Angevin into Essex.

William Longchamps, Geoffrey Monk, Chancellor Thomas Becket, and Manasser Biset were granted land in the county before 1156, as the Danegeld exemptions for that year verify.⁵ They regularly received reward or remittance from the Exchequer. Lanvalei, Biset, and Warin and Henry fitz Gerold were in receipt of generous pardons, whilst William *frater Regis* had £22 of *terre date* land in Maldon from 1154-5 and was pardoned murdrum, Danegeld and tallage.⁶ The scale and longevity of these benefits is proof that Henry did not neglect his own men once he had planted them in a county. For example, Lanvalei was in receipt of financial benefits in Essex by 1181 amounting to £72 19s. 5d., and Longchamps of thirteen separate incidences of patronage by 1164 totalling over £44.⁷

¹ LDB 14b, 64a-b, 72b

² PR 11 Hen II 20

³ Longchamps died in Rouen, 30 January 1164: Torigni, p.221

⁴ Sanders 129; EYC viii 13, 18

⁵ PR 2-3-4- Hen II 17

⁶ RBE 650; PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 18, 72, 73, 132, 133; PR 5 Hen II 4, 5; PR 6 Hen II 10

⁷ William Longchamps was pardoned murdrum in 1155-56, 1157-58, 1158-59 and 1160-61 (PR 2-3-4 Hen II 73, 132; PR 5 Hen II 5; PR 7 Hen II 66, 67), *dono comitatus* in 1155-

Fresh land grants of any substance were a rarity. Royal demesne was more frequently granted out on a small-scale, and sometimes short-term basis as *terre date*. Throughout Henry II's reign *terre date* was a common means of exercising patronage and there is evidence to suggest that these specified grants were not always considered heritable.¹ For some men enjoying this form of patronage the benefit ended with their respective deaths. For Durand of Boulogne, William Puf and William Longchamps the final *terre date* records marked both the end of the grant and the end of their lives.² Conversely, Eudo fitz Erneis was paid Oliver fitz Erneis' allowance immediately after the latter's death (by the writ of Glanville) and both Richard de Lucy junior and Herbert de Lucy enjoyed the 100s. of land in the hundred of Ongar that had been held by Richard de Lucy senior.³ However neither Richard junior nor Herbert gained possession of the massive £80 grant that Richard held in respect of Hatfield.⁴

56 and 1157-58 (PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18, 133) and was probably the 'W' who was the recipient of a danegeld pardon of £14 18s 6d in 1161-62 (PR 8 Hen II 70). William de Lanvalei was pardoned Danegeld in 1155-56 and 1161-62 (PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17: PR 8 Hen II 71), *dono comitatus* in 1155-56 and 1157-58 (PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18, 133), murdrum in 1155-56 and 1166-67 (PR 2-3-4 Hen II 73: PR 13 Hen II 155) and fines for assarts and forest offences in 1167-68, 1169-70, 1171-72, 1176-77 and 1180-81 (PR 14 Hen II 44: PR 16 Hen II 107: PR 18 Hen II 44: PR 23 Hen II 146, 149: PR 27 Hen II 106)

¹ The only *terre date* payments in Essex that had did not come from an explicitly named manor were the payments made to the hospitals of Gravesend and Newport. We can only presume that these payments were made from locally held land and that no mention was made of the source of the funds as it would have been superfluous detail

² For their final payments, see PR 33 Hen II 19: PR 32 Hen II 38: PR 10 Hen II 36

³ PR 29 Hen II 19: PR 26 Hen II 2: PR 28 Hen II 98.

⁴ The revenues from Hatfield were not granted to anyone after Richard de Lucy's death, indicating that they were paid to the county farm from that time: PR 25 Hen II 52: PR 26 Hen II 1-2

Henry's introduction of favourites was rapid, as both the *terre date* and fixed payments show. At Michaelmas 1156 £12 18s. 7d. was paid to unnamed sources in fixed wages, an identical figure to the following year.¹ It is logical to assume that the wages paid in the autumn of 1157 to Ralph Claudio, Terric *Elemosinarius* (the Almoner), Simon *Cocus* (the cook), Richard Sazun, Turstin infirmo, Ansgar de Cambrun, John Minutor and Ralph Parker had been made to a similar or identical group twelve months before. William Longchamps, who was explicitly connected with Maldon from Michaelmas 1156, held land that was annually rated at £22.² After 1158 Richard de Lucy was awarded land valued at £80 in Hatfield and 100s. in Ongar.³ Prior to this Richard was allowed £80 19s. 7d. in Hatfield and 100s. in Ongar in 1155 for no specified reason, and £140 of the county farm and 100s. in Ongar, which was simply called *dona* in 1156 and in 1157.⁴

Those who benefited from the *terre date* grants during the period 1155-88 were a diverse group. It included an immediate royal kinsman and two of his *familiares* (William Longchamps, Oliver fitz Erneis and Eudo fitz Erneis), the Justiciar Richard de Lucy, the local earl (Geoffrey III de Mandeville), a Treasurer (Richard fitz Nigel), a sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire (Robert Mantel), two monastic houses (the canons of Waltham and of St Bernard) and two houses for the sick (Gravesend Hospital and Newport Infirmary), the relatives of local favourites (Richard de Lucy junior, Herbert de Lucy and William fitz Alcher) together with three less renowned men (Robert de Taiden, William Puf and Durand of Boulogne).⁵ The largest single grant of *terre date* during Henry II's reign was made to Richard de Lucy, who received £80 from

¹ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 72

² PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18

³ See, for example, PR 2-3-4 Hen II 132: PR 5 Hen II 4: PR 6 Hen II 10

⁴ RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 72

⁵ Oliver fitz Erneis, brother of Eudo fitz Erneis, was a tenant of the honour of Peverel of London: RBE 505

Hatfield and a further £5 from Ongar from 1157-8 to 1178-9. William Longchamps benefited from £22 of the Maldon revenues from 1155-6 to 1163-4. When the total *terre date* paid in Essex is seen in the form of a graph (see Table 20) the deaths of these two men is apparent from the marked drop in moneys claimed by the sheriff in the subsequent year.

In the earlier years of Henry II's reign references to *terre date* were only made within the account for the county farm. There was no recorded *terre date* from the honour of Boulogne until 1181 and none from the honour of Rayleigh until 1185.¹ Grants of *terre date* at Waltham seem to have been instituted in c.1172-3 with a grant of 26s. in favour of Aucher the royal parker, with a further grant made by the king's writ at Easter 1177.² These three royally controlled districts accounted to the Exchequer separately, as did the borough of Colchester and the other escheated honours which listed no *terre date* at all.

This might be a sign that Henry II initially considered Boulogne and Rayleigh permanent additions to royal demesne, to be kept largely intact. The first confirmed *terre date* in the Boulonnais honour, when Ralph *brito* claimed £2 for William Puf's lordship of Tey, is only a late reference because the *Honor Bolonie* was sparsely described in the Pipe Roll (or absolutely omitted) before that time.³ At the Michaelmas sessions from 1174 to 1178 Ralph listed several

¹ PR 27 Hen II 109; PR 31 Hen II 43. There is, however, a suggestion that three fees from the honour of Rayleigh were granted to William de Theydon by Henry II in or from 1163: A.L.Browne, 'The de Theydon Family', TEAS n.s. xxi (1937) 84-88, 84-85

² Cart Waltham no.282; PR 23 Hen II 156

³ Ralph *brito* may have farmed the honour of Boulogne for the entire period from 1158-59 to 1182: P.M.Barnes ed., 'The Anstey Case' in P.M.Barnes & C.F.Slade eds., A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton (PRS, London, 1962), 1-24, 5, 14; PR 28 Hen II 100. Ralph also farmed other escheated honours, such as Rayleigh and Haughley. At Michaelmas 1168 Ralph stated that he did not need to render account for the land of Henry of Essex, nor for the knights of that honour: PR 14 Hen II 46. This suggests that Ralph *brito* accounted for these Essex-based honours directly to the crown, which

men who held villis of that Honour together with respective exemptions for payment.¹ *Terre date* is not mentioned, but the inclusion of *Willelmo Puf .xl.s in Teia* on three consecutive occasions is undoubtedly more than coincidence.² Whether or not the honour of Haughley was initially considered a permanent alienation is unclear, but it was granted to Geoffrey count of Perche in 1187.³

Table 20: Essex Terre Date 1154/5 - 1187/8

Fixed wages were not a generally heritable commodity, either. The lengthy *liberatione constituta* sections of the Pipe Rolls show few examples of recognisable heirs acquiring their father's payments. William *Infans'* wages passed to his son Robert by order of Glanville, Robert fitz Turstin succeeded his father in 1169 and Ralph Parker and his son also followed this trend.⁴ More normally the wages fell out of circulation or were passed on to an unrelated deserving cause. Berard's wages were awarded, by the king's writ, to Geoffrey le Megre the following year.⁵ Geoffrey le Megre's wages passed in

explains their frequent omission from the Pipe Rolls and the lack of detail regarding grants and alienations from those honours

¹ PR 20 Hen II 75: PR 21 Hen II 78: PR 22 Hen II 10: PR 23 Hen II 154-5: PR 24 Hen II 47

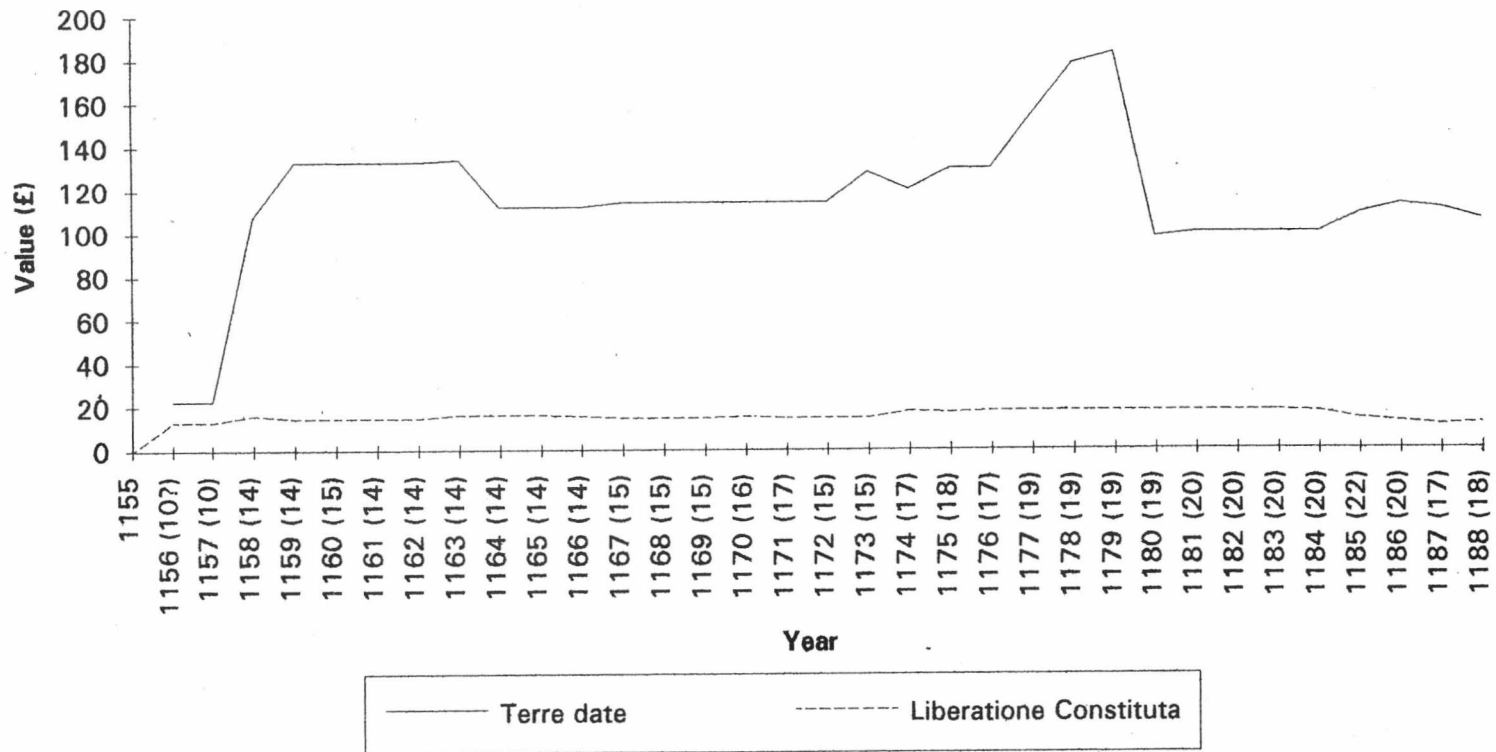
² The figures from Boulogne in those years are not included within the table as (a) they are not described as *terre date*, (b) there are no corresponding figures for the following years to include and (c) their isolated inclusion would severely alter the appearance of the table. A total of £38. 10s. worth of undefined exemptions were in the hands of William de Mandeville, Eustace de Merck, William Puf, Robert de Costentin, Richard de Lucy and John de Merck in 1178-79. The figure was £27 15s. the previous year as Richard de Lucy and John de Merck were granted their lands half-way through the fiscal year, it was £17 in 1176, £14. 10s. in 1175 and £12 at the time of the original grants (made before Michaelmas 1174)

³ Sanders 121

⁴ PR 31 Hen II 12: PR 15 Hen II 122: PR 16 Hen II 103: PR 11 Hen II 15: PR 12 Hen II 122

⁵ PR 25 Hen II 51

Table 20: Essex Terre Date & Fixed Wages 1154/5 - 1187/8



turn to Philip *armiger*, and the hermit (*incluso*) of Writtle was granted the payment made to Gilbert the chaplain after his death.¹ Richard Malbanc seems to have gained, in 1175, the awards granted to Master Everard, who had in turn received the wages formerly given to John Adubedent.² Malbanc's last payment was not awarded to anyone else, nor was Geoffrey fitz Ralph Parcar's.³ There was a gentle decline in the number of people receiving fixed wages towards the end of Henry's reign, and a similar drop in the quantities being paid. This may indicate that local huntsmen, parkers and other minor royal servants were not replaced or that they were maintained from another source.

The new king's masterstroke was his courtship of Richard de Lucy. De Lucy emerged from the wreckage of Stephen's government with his good reputation intact, producing local government records for Essex that were probably the best in England in the opening year of Henry's reign.⁴ De Lucy was one of the first sheriffs to re-stock royal manors in the new reign, which can be viewed as evidence of his experience and competence as a sheriff.⁵ After leaving the shrievalty, he went on to account for the borough of Colchester, from 1158 to 1178.⁶ As a capable professional, de Lucy's loyalty and commitment were expensive commodities. His numerous financial benefits in Essex were

¹ PR 31 Hen II 12

² PR 21 Hen II 70; PR 17 Hen II 118

³ PR 31 Hen II 12; PR 30 Hen II 129

⁴ The 1154-5 Pipe Roll return is an abridgement, making detailed criticism difficult. As sheriff of Essex, Lucy actually accounted to the Exchequer *and* accounted for an entire year, efforts which surpassed those of most of his contemporaries. Dorset, Essex, Lincolnshire, Staffordshire, Surrey and Wiltshire were the only English counties with accounts that began at Michaelmas 1154 in the Exchequer year 1 Henry II (1154-55): H.G. Richardson and G.O. Sayles, The Governance of Medieval England from the Conquest to Magna Carta (Edinburgh, 1963), 259

⁵ RBE 651: Accession 147

⁶ PR 5 Hen II 7; PR 24 Hen II 38

annually worth over £85, exclusive of *dona* and exemptions from payment.¹ Later, probably during the early stages of the Young King's revolt in 1173-74, Henry II granted the hundred of Ongar to de Lucy.² The price was high but the end was worthwhile, as the stability and continuity that de Lucy brought to the crown was essential. Quite apart from his experience as a local official under Stephen, de Lucy was also a major tenant of the honour of Boulogne, holding almost ten knights' fees of the count in Essex.³ The appropriation of de Lucy to the Angevin royal household deprived the count of Boulogne of a capable servant, although his loyalty was quite obviously being bought.⁴

Trade in Essex did not seem to be expanding at a tremendous rate under Henry II. Only one new market was definitely established in the county before 1190, that of Rayleigh. The market, founded by the king, was first mentioned in 1181.⁵ However, a lack of new markets is not compelling evidence of financial retardation, as there is no record of the vitality of existing markets. There is a chance reference to the fishing industry in Colchester in a charter of Aubrey de Vere in favour of Colne.⁶ Thomas of Colchester owed the earl 500 herrings for his fee, which Aubrey granted in turn to his family's house.⁷

¹ RBE 650-1: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 17, 18, 72, 73, 132, 133, 134: PR 5 Hen II 5, 6, 7: PR 6 Hen II 10, 12

² Foedera 46: Delisle Recueil no.442: J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 130. J.C.Holt & R.Mortimer eds., Acta of Henry II and Richard I (List and Index Society Special Series vol. xxi, 1986) no.193 p.115 provides dating limits of 1170x1173

³ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 149

⁴ William of Blois had to make do with the administrative support of Ranulf de Glanville: R. Mortimer, 'The Family of Rannulf de Glanville', BIHR liv (1981) 3-16, 10

⁵ PR 27 Hen II 108: R. H. Britnell, 'Essex Markets Before 1350', 16

⁶ Cart Colne no.41

⁷ Herring rents were not uncommon in Suffolk, and other eastern counties, in 1086: H.C.Darby, The Domesday Geography of Eastern England, 134, 185, 194, 196, 206, 369, 377

Whether this an indication of the existence of a herring fleet or a herring market (or in all probability both) is unknown.

The financial health of other Essex lords, and of the county, can be judged through the development of economic infrastructure, personal debt, and patronage. Recipients of royal patronage or individuals with debts to the crown are suggestive of personal plenty or hardship, although they are not absolute indicators of the fiscal situation of local men. Through the activities of financiers it is possible to piece together some information regarding trade and personal debt. William Cade of St Omer is suggestive of trade between his native Flanders and England, although surviving records would seem to indicate that his main business was usury.¹ He was believed to have been engaged in the wool trade and enjoyed royal patronage, including a 24s. Danegeld pardon in Essex in 1161-2.² Cade was assigned private debts to repay his loans to the crown and this business linked him with many prominent Essex men, including tenants-in-chief and men from various Essex honours. A list of his debtors, which benefits from the later addition of a county designation, brings to light some thirty-eight Essex debtors, including tenants who were omitted from *Cartae Baronum* and did not feature in the Pipe Rolls.³ This shows the crown farming the debts of its tenants, demonstrating the complex procedures underlying the apparent simplicity of payments recorded in the Pipe Rolls.

¹ H.Jenkinson, 'William Cade, a Financier of the Twelfth Century', *EHR* xxviii (1913) 209-227; H.Jenkinson, 'A Money-lender's Bonds of the Twelfth Century', in *Essays in History presented to R.L.Poole*, H.W.C.Davis ed. (Oxford, 1927) 190-210, 195-99

² *PR 8 Hen II* 71

³ The list appears in Hilary Jenkinson, 'William Cade, a Financier of the Twelfth Century', 220-7. For Essex references, see lines 2, 13-15, 20, 27, 29-30, 38, 47, 49, 57, 60, 65-6, 69, 71, 75, 80, 83, 88, 90, 95, 101-2, 120, 130, 135-6, 138, 141-2, 152, 167, 170, 172, 188-9

Cade's debtors also included Essex tenants-in-chief, such as Guy Rufus the Dean of Waltham, Henry de Canville, Henry fitz Gerold, Walter fitz Robert, Roger de Clare, William of Gloucester, Gilbert de Montfichet and Geoffrey de Mandeville. Henry fitz Gerold's pledge for his debt was the king, whilst the others generally guaranteed payment *per plegium hominum suorum*. Other personal pledges given illustrate connections that transcended honorial or familial norms. The earl of Clare stood pledge for Robert fitz Humphrey's £30 debt, even though he was a tenant of Walter fitz Robert and/or Aubrey de Vere.¹ Robert certainly held nothing from the honour of Clare in 1166.²

Other identifiable tenants came from many honours, frequently owing money to the same source as their lords. Maurice fitz Geoffrey (of Tilty) of the Ferrers honour used his manor of Woodham as security on the debt.³ Anselm Camdavenie (the Count of St Pol) and Henry de Kemeseth were Mandeville tenants, Roger de Glanville's pledge was his lord Gilbert de Montfichet, Reginald de Cruce held of the earl Clare, and William de Piron was a tenant of either the Montfichets or the Bigods (or possibly both).⁴ Earl Geoffrey de Mandeville stood as pledge for the debts of his vassal Sewale de Oseville.⁵ Men standing pledge for one another in this way, within and without the honorial system, is a clear sign of a nascent county community.

¹ RBE 348, 353

² RBE 403-7

³ RBE 337, 339

⁴ RBE 345, 349, 405, 396, 350. Kemeseth was listed as Henry de Comeset. William de Piron held one fee of Hugh Bigod in 1166, and William de Piro one fee of the Montfichets

⁵ H.Jenkinson, 'A Money-lender's Bonds of the Twelfth Century', 207: RBE 345

The Church

The patronage of local monastic institutions reveals the strength of the crown in Essex. The size of grants to such houses and their origin is evidence of individual wealth, particularly when a new house was founded. As under Stephen, half of the new houses after 1154 were founded by the king, which might suggest that the crown was the only benefactor that could genuinely afford such investment. However, most families had either established their own family abbey or priory already, or were regular patrons of an existing house. Assessment of disposable income through evidence of monastic patronage must pay heed to supporting grants as well as foundation.

The county saw seven new foundations between 1154 and 1189, and one re-foundation. A Hospitaller preceptory at Little Maplestead was founded, drawing grants from William fitz Audelin and his wife Juliana.¹ Another Augustinian house, Blackmore, was founded by John de Sandford 1152-62.² The Cistercian abbey of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St Nicholas at Beeleigh was founded by sheriff Robert Mantel in 1180.³ Canons moved there from Great Parndon which had been established *ante* 1172. Waltham became an abbey in 1184, after Henry II had turned it from a collegiate church into a priory in 1177.⁴ Henry made several grants to Waltham in 1184.⁵ Hospitals were established at Brook Street, South Weald (1163-87), Hornchurch (in 1159 by Henry II), at Little Maldon (c.1164) and at Newport by 1156-7.⁶

¹ MRH 305

² MRH 148

³ MRH 184, 186: CAR i no.178

⁴ MRH 178. It has been suggested that this was part of Henry's penance for the murder of Becket: Cart Waltham xxiv

⁵ PR 30 Hen II 10, 53, 56, 129

⁶ MRH 323, 347, 376, 379. Newport was probably a royal foundation, as the town was in the hands of the king in 1086: LDB 7a

That Mantel should establish a house in Essex is a demonstration of his ties with the county and of his desire to be recognised as important local figure, as he was an important royal official. Another sheriff, Maurice de Tilty, lost control of his small priory of Woodham Ferrers (established in 1153), as substantial debts from his prior shrieval duties were written off when he passed his rights of patronage to the king.¹

Henry's policy of re-organising wages and *terre date* also extended to the monastic houses of Essex. The bishop of London, the greatest ecclesiastical tenant-in-chief in Essex, received only one pardon from Henry in the Pipe Rolls for the entire reign.² Battle, Bec and Bermondsey all enjoyed immediate favour in the form of pardons. Battle was pardoned a total of 13s. 8d. tallage in 1155-6 and 1157-8, Bec 30s. 9d. in Danegeld and tallage in 1155-6 and a further 13s. 6d. in 1157-8 and the Warenne-backed Bermondsey 11d. in tallage in 1155-6 for their Essex lands.³ Bury St Edmund's derived patronage in Danegeld and tallage pardons in 1155-6, and Hatfield received 10s. in 1154-5.⁴ For all of these houses, remittance via the Pipe Rolls ended in 1158.⁵ St John's Colchester received 100s. annually for tithes in Hatfield from Michaelmas 1155, 20s. in alms from the year 1158-9, and a pardon of 45s. tallage in 1157-8, together with a charter exempting them from Danegeld and murdrum.⁶

¹ Maurice owed the king £280 6s 8d at Michaelmas 1164: this debt remained on the Pipe Rolls until Michaelmas 1178, when he paid £5 5s 10d and was pardoned £275 / 9d, *pro ecclesia canonicum de Wudeham*: PR 10 Hen II 37: PR 22 Hen II 2: MRH 126: Mon v 625

² The bishop was pardoned £4 Danegeld in 1162: PR 8 Hen II 70

³ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 18, 133; 17, 18, 134; 18

⁴ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 18: RBE 650

⁵ Later Bec was pardoned almost 7s. in murdrum over a five year period: PR 29 Hen II 22: PR 31 Hen II 16: PR 34 Hen II 35-6

⁶ RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 72, 133, 134: PR 5 Hen II 3: PR 6 Hen II 10, 12: Cart Colc p.20 As 100s. was paid to Colchester *pro decimis de Hadfeld* in the first year of Henry's reign, this payment was probably retained from Stephen's years as king

Henry's charters to these houses granted them various permanent financial exemptions.¹

Within the Pipe Rolls, the infirmary of Newport, the Knights Hospitaller, the Knights Templar, the monks of St Ouen of Rouen and the newly-founded Hospital of Montjoux (at Hornchurch Priory) all received regular pardons and alms.² The composition of this group can be partially attributed to monastic fashions, certainly in the cases of the Military Orders. Henry also maintained strong links with some of the older houses that had land in Essex, through patronage and, in one case, through personal connection. Henry's illegitimate daughter Matilda was abbess of St Mary's Barking by 1179.³ Ely had been despoiled at least twice during the previous two decades, initially by Geoffrey II de Mandeville and later by Eustace son of Stephen. St John's Colchester was an abbey supported by a wide variety of Essex landowners, so like Ely it was a generally recognised good cause. Support of those two houses did Henry's public reputation no harm at all.

St John's Colchester was granted the Westcastle area outside Colchester by the king.⁴ Grants from other Essex landowners were still frequent and tended to involve many other local landowners as witnesses. When Alexander de Limesy and his wife Rohaise de Amblia granted the fee of Erneis of Takeley to the abbey, they involved almost thirty local attestors, just in the grant and

¹ Cal.Chart.R. 1341-1417 285, 286-7, 389: San Marino, Huntington Library ms. BA29 (Battle cartulary) fo.36v (24v, 34v): Mon vi 1067-8: Douglas Feudal Documents 105 nos.100, 101: Cart Colc p.17: Cart Lond no.44

² RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17, 18, 72, 132, 133, 134: PR 5 Hen II 3, 4, 5: PR 6 Hen II 10: MRH 323: J.H.Round, 'Hornchurch Priory', TEAS n.s. vi (1898) 1-12

³ D.Knowles, C.N.L.Brooke & V.C.M.London eds., The Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales: 940-1216, 208: for a charter of Henry II to Barking to his daughter as abbess of Barking, see Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DP T16

⁴ Cart Colc p.24

initial confirmation.¹ Limesy was a tenant of Henry fitz Gerold making a grant to Eudo *dapifer's* great foundation, attracting witnesses from other honours and from local administration.² Local landowning witnesses included Walter de Haia and Henry de Neville, a tenant of the Bigods.³ Reginald fitz Brun does not occur in the Pipe Rolls but Gilbert fitz Brun was a burgess who farmed Colchester.⁴ Another contemporary burgess was called Nicholas fitz Brun.⁵ Justices-in-Eyre Robert Mantel and Roger fitz Reinfred attested, as did Ralph *brito* custodian of the escheated honours of Boulogne, Rayleigh and Haughley. The large number of local men, including local royal officials, taking part in this process of patronage is indicative of the existence of a local community.

Colne was still patronised by a number of local men, although they generally made small grants of tithes and rents. Both Geoffrey (III) and William (II) de Mandeville issued charters in Colne's favour, as did their half-brother Simon de Beauchamp.⁶ Ralph fitz Adam, probably a Clare tenant, granted land at Middleton (Hinckford), which was witnessed by Richard de Essart amongst others.⁷ Essart, a local official under Stephen, was less conspicuous during Henry II's reign. He too made a grant in favour of the priory.⁸ John de Tresgoz and William fitz Geoffrey made grants from the lands they held of the earls of Oxford to Colne.⁹

¹ Cart Colc pp.337-8: J.S.Macaulay & I.M.Russell, 'Colchester Hall (Takeley) Charters', TEAS xxii (1940) 66-86, 71-73

² RBE 355

³ RBE 396, PR 24 Hen II 36

⁴ PR 26 Hen II 7: PR 29 Hen II 26, *etc*

⁵ PR 26 Hen II 7: PR 34 Hen II 40

⁶ Cart Colne nos.51, 52, 62, 86

⁷ LDB 40a: Cart Colne no.76

⁸ Cart Colne no.85

⁹ Cart Colne nos.89, 93

Stephen's foundation of Coggeshall was not snubbed by Henry II. He issued a charter of protection and confirmation to the Cistercian Abbey early in his reign, which was attested Chancellor Becket, Henry de Essex and William Longchamps.¹ By this charter, it is evident that Coggeshall had been patronised by Geoffrey de Tresgoz, a member of Longchamps' retinue, and had also received land from the honour of Geoffrey de Mandeville. The Mandeville grant had been made from the manor of *Neweseles* (Newsells, Hertfordshire), which had been acquired by the Mandeville family from the honour of Eudo *dapifer*.² Henry's confirmation of this grant was a necessary formality, as the land at Newsells had almost certainly been granted to the abbey by Geoffrey II de Mandeville and subsequently might have been claimed by the Fitzgerolds at a later date.

Grants to the Hospitallers in Essex continued, once again commanding the attention of sub-tenants in the county. Aitrope de Merck granted an acre at Latton (Harlow) from his lands within the honour of Boulogne, Gralent de Tany granting land he held in-chief at Fyfield (Ongar) and Ralph de Marcy land at Laver (Ongar).³ Perhaps the most important of all was the grant of land at Fryerning (Chelmsford) together with the church, made by Gilbert de Montfichet, c.1170.⁴ This grant had a remarkable witness list, with attestations from three of the other remaining great landowners in the county (Aubrey de Vere, Walter fitz Robert and Richard de Clare). The presence of Henry fitz Gerold, Hamelin Plantagenet and William de Mandeville would have completed the list, which illustrates how few baronial magnates were left in Essex in 1170. A subsequent Montfichet charter in favour of Fryerning did not have the same calibre of witnesses but two members of the Barrington

¹ Delisle Recueil no.185

² DB 139a

³ Cart Hosp i. nos.279, 287

⁴ Cart Hosp ii. no.183

family (who, like the Montfichets, were connected with the forest) were present for the grant.¹

The abbey of St John the Baptist in Colchester still attracted grants from a variety of sources in Essex. Aubrey de Vere granted five acres at *Borfleta* to Colchester and Ralph de Marcy made a small grant from his home manor of Faulkbourne.² Marcy's grant was dated *in secundo anno post mortem beati Thome archiepiscopi*, an interesting reminder of the significance given to Becket's murder by his contemporaries. The Marcy grant teasingly lists four Marcy witnesses without explaining their relationship with one another (Richard, William, Robert and Walter). Richard and William were almost certainly members of the Stondon Massey branch of the family (see Table 18). A grant of land at Bulphan (Barstable) made by Serlo de Marcy a decade later was attested by four members of the wider Marcy family, Ralph, William, Richard and Hamo.³ Over a century after the Conquest, the distant Marcy lines were evidently still in contact. Another Boulonnais tenant, Jordan de Sackville, confirmed his father's grant of Wicham to St John's *cum corpore suo*.⁴ One confirmation stood as a reminder of the difficulties experienced by the Mandevilles in prior reigns. Both Geoffrey (prior to his creation as earl) and William de Mandeville confirmed the grants made by their father concerning the three disputed manors of Sawbridgeworth, Walden and Great Waltham.⁵ The charters were attested by representatives of the tenant families of the Mandeville honour (Berners, Nuhers, Rochelle, Leidet).

¹ *Cart Hosp* ii. no.184

² *Cart Colc* pp.151, 209

³ *The Cartulary of St Bartholomew's Hospital*, N.J.M.Kerling ed. (London, 1973), p.131, no.1407. Richard and Hamo de Marcy also witnessed Serlo's confirmation of the charter: *Ibid* p.131 no.1408

⁴ *Cart Colc* p.132: for a select Sackville genealogy, see P.A.Brand, 'New Light on the Anstey Case', 69

⁵ *Cart Colc* pp.146-7

Other houses did not fare as well with grants from Essex landowners. St Paul's did not receive much fresh patronage during Henry II's reign. Their only major grant in Essex was the church of Boxted, by the hand of Hugh de Boxted.¹ A charter of Henry II confirms a grant made to Stratford Langthorne by William Longchamps, an interesting example of the local patronage exercised by the king's brother in Essex.² Before 1180 Westminster was engaged in a dispute over the church at Feering (Lexden). The abbot of Westminster, Walter, claimed that the church had been misappropriated by its clerk, Ranulph. This spat brings to light an extremely interesting fact: Ranulph the clerk of Feering was the brother of the deceased Pope Hadrian IV.³

Charters to Walden reveal that the abbey's founders still enjoyed the support of important local people and that their tenants were reliable attestors. Earl Geoffrey de Mandeville's confirmation of the lands of Robert fitz Pagan at Thorley was witnessed by Maurice fitz Geoffrey (of Tilty), Warin fitz Gerold, Hugh de Canville, Fulk de Nodar (Nuhers), Humphrey de Barrington and Hugh *forestarius*.⁴ Roger *brito*, the lord of neighbouring Chesterford (Uttlesford, now in Cambridgeshire), granted land there to Walden.⁵ William de Langley made a grant of half an acre at Elmdon (Uttlesford) *cum corpore suo*, a grant witnessed by Humphrey de Rochella, William de Wenden, Abold de Wenden and Michael de Wenden.⁶ The Mandeville tenants were regular attestors of charters concerning the honour, which included grants of land to

¹ London Guildhall Library ms. 25, 122 / 1436: Cart Lond, nos. 91-2

² Hatton's Seals p.282 no.413

³ Cart Westm no. 208

⁴ BL Harl. ms. 3697 f.239b

⁵ Harl. ms. 3697 f.76a

⁶ Harl. ms. 3697 f.222b: William de Rochel held three-quarters of a fee from Mandeville in 1166: RBE 347. John de Wenden held three fees of the Montfichets in 1166: RBE 350. William fitz John de Wenden was named in the 1179-80 Pipe Roll: PR 26 Hen II 5

other tenants. When William de Mandeville confirmed Roding to Geoffrey fitz Walter for one knight's fee, the witness list shows the participation of the major families holding of the honour.¹ Apart from the attestation of Aubrey de Vere, the witness list included Ralph de Berners, Richard and John de Rochella, and Sewale de Oseville.²

This indicates that the honorial system, at least within the Mandeville barony, was healthy. The list of witnesses who were vassals reveal the continuance of honorial courts and society based upon lordship, rather than a cross-honorial county society. It is particularly remarkable that Mandeville honorial structure was so strong, in view of the fact that it had been held by the crown for ten years after 1144. Quite apart from losing control of the honour, it also seems that it was Geoffrey II de Mandeville who moved the *caput* to Walden. The Walden Chronicle states that Mandeville regularly summoned his men to his new base at Walden, establishing it as a centre for conducting business and celebrating feasts.³ Effectively, Geoffrey II de Mandeville regained control of Walden, moved the heart of his honour from Hurley to Walden and then died during a rebellion that led to the entire honour escheating. In spite of these major setbacks and changes, the honour (as a social unit) was still demonstrating signs of tremendous vitality.⁴

A charter of Henry II in favour of Coggeshall Abbey also demonstrates that the honour was still a strong structure. The text is a simple royal confirmation of an agreement between Coggeshall and the family of Godwin *clericus*.⁵

¹ Cart Westm no.464

² Oseville and Berners each held four fees of the Mandevilles in 1166: RBE 345. Oseville also made a small grant in favour of Wix priory: PRO E40/5268

³ The Book of the Foundation of Walden Abbey, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds., 4-6

⁴ For the creation of the original Mandeville *caput* at Hurley, see Gilbert Crispin, pp.132-34

⁵ PRO C56/52 (Confirmation Roll 7 Henry VIII part 2) m.2 no.7

Henry's *acta* was a recognition of the decision made by the honorial court of Boulogne at Tey (Lexden) and the custodian of the honour, Ralph *brito*.¹ The language of the charter (*baronibus et militibus de honore Bolonie*) shows that the honorial court was continuing to function, with the royal custodian acting in place of the count and the king affirming its decisions. Henry II was not making any evident effort to remove the honorial courts of escheated honours.

Other grants indicate that honorial loyalties and monastic patronage were not always strongly connected. Richard de Marcy made an interesting local grant to the priory of Little Dunmow. An undated, unwitnessed charter relates his grant of forty pigs (*quadraginta porcor*) to the priory.² This may relate to a local custom, known as the Dunmow Flich.³ By the terms of this curious tradition, 'he which repents not of his marriage eyther sleeping or waking in a year and a day may lawfully go to Dunmowe and fetch a gammon of bacon'.⁴ The story and oath of contentedness related by Dugdale were recorded in the seventeenth century, although the practice is said to have been started by Robert Fitzwalter, a favourite of Henry III. Robert Fitzwalter of Little Dunmow (d.1235) succeeded to his father's lands in 1198. This grant may be evidence that the Flich is older than previously thought, as Richard de Marcy died during Henry II's reign. Of course, the explanation could be very simple. Richard may just have been a competent and generous pig-farmer in a county where it was relatively easy to farm pigs.

Richard owed the service of four knights to the honour of Gloucester in 1166.⁵ He was more visible than his ancestors but was only named in the Pipe Rolls

¹ Tey was part of the honour in 1086: LDB 29b

² BL Harl ms. 662 f.29a

³ VCH Essex ii 152

⁴ Mon vi 149

⁵ RBE 290

over the period 1164-66.¹ He was still alive when Richard de Lucy was granted over-lordship of the Gloucester fees in Essex (1167x73).² When Ralph de Marcy (of Faulkbourne) made a grant in favour of St John's Colchester in 1172, the witnesses included Richard, William, Robert and Walter de Marcy.³ It would be reasonable to assume that the first two witnesses were the lord of Stondon Massey and his son.

Richard was succeeded by his son Serlo, another patron of the Baynard's priory at Dunmow. It was to them that he granted all of the land held by Robert fitz Siward at le Bedelesland (Sandon) from Richard de Marcy, who was described as Serlo's father.⁴ The grant was made for the benefit of the souls of his mother, father and brother William. Ralph prior of Dunmow (1179-c.1209) then confirmed Robert fitz Siward's tenure.⁵ This charter attracted three Marcy witnesses: 'Serlo de Marcy, and Richard and Hamo his brothers', and noted that the grant had been made by Serlo *pro animabus patris et matris sue et pro anima Willelmi fratris suis*.⁶ Furthermore, a confirmation charter in favour of the Hospitallers, dated 17 September 1189, included half an acre in Essex *in feodo Serlonis de Marci*.⁷ Serlo also acquired land in the honour of Boulogne through marriage by Michaelmas 1196.¹

Other houses outside Essex benefited from grants of Essex land. Lands and rents granted to the nunnery of St Mary's Clerkenwell tended to be minor. The largest grants made to them were the churches of Totham and North Weald

¹ PR 11 Hen II 17: PR 12 Hen II 124

² R.B.Patterson ed., Earldom of Gloucester Charters, no.115

³ Cart Colc p.209

⁴ BL Harl ms. 662 f.54b

⁵ D. Knowles & R.N.Hadcock, The Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales 940-1216, 171

⁶ Essex Record Office, Chelmsford ms. D/DAy T2/2

⁷ J.C.Davies ed., CAR ii no.611 pp.189-90

Basset, courtesy of Maurice de Totham and Henry of Essex. More commonly they received small rents, and land grants varying between two and thirty acres.² Clerkenwell's influence in Essex amounted to a broad collection of rights from the far corners of the county, from some extremely obscure tenants.³

Elsewhere, William de Helion granted the church of Bumpstead to the Clare family priory at Stoke-by-Clare, and Robert de Grainville granted Stambourne church to the same priory.⁴ William de Raismes granted the church of Bradfield and William de Bosco the church of Theydon to St Bartholomew's Priory in London.⁵ Royal confirmation of the latter was witnessed by many men connected with Essex: Richard de Lucy, Aubrey de Vere, Simon de Beauchamp, and Geoffrey de Say. The royal confirmation of the foundation of Beeleigh brought Mantel's local administrative fellows to the fore as witnesses, including Ranulf de Glanville.⁶ Ralph fitz Stephen had been a Justice-in-Eyre with Mantel, William de Bendeng' was an Essex landowner and Thomas fitz Bernard was a local forest official.⁷

Bicknacre at Woodham Ferrers received more support from the county in its previous incarnation as a hermitage. Henry II's confirmation charter at Writtle (which was probably issued in 1157) carried attestations from Hugh Bigod,

¹ Feet of Fines for Essex p.10 no.9

² W.O.Hassall ed., Cartulary of St Mary Clerkenwell, nos.2, 9, 10

³ W.O.Hassall, 'The Essex Properties of the Nunnery of St Mary Clerkenwell', 3-31. The house held land at Bowers Gifford (Barstable hundred), Dunmow (Dunmow), Eastwood, Shoebury (both Rochford), Fyfield (Ongar), Latton (Harlow), Leyton, Wanstead (both Becontree), Mountnessing (Chelmsford), Steeple (Wibertsherne-Dengie), Thurrock (Chafford), Arkesden (Uttlesford), Langford, Totham and Osea Isle (all Thurstable).

⁴ Cart Clare i. no.5: Earldom of Gloucester Charters no.174

⁵ E.A.Webb, Records of St Bartholomew's Priory (2 vols., London, 1921) i 479-80 no.6

⁶ CAR i no.178.

⁷ PR 26 Hen II 7

Henry of Essex, Richard de Lucy, Warin fitz Gerold and Humphrey de Barrington.¹ A later royal charter in favour of the new Augustinian priory was attested by Richard de Lucy, William de Lanvalei, Roger fitz Reinfred and Robert Mantel.² To see some of the county's senior administrators attesting this Essex charter at Westminster is interesting, but the variety of lands granted to the priory by Maurice is evidence of a highly complicated local feudal structure. The Tilty family apparently held land of six different tenants-in-chief in Essex. Maurice granted four hides from his Warenne fee, a hide and three virgates from the lands he held from Walter fitz Robert, half a hide from the fee he held of Hamo *Cocus*, land and rights at Woodham from the Ferrers honour, sixty acres from Warin fitz Gerold's fee and a carucate of the Montfichet fee.¹

The king made the greatest displays of benefaction towards the houses of Essex. Selected institutions and orders benefited greatly from his patronage. Private grants were, as ever, typically minor with occasional exceptions. The grants made by barons and their tenants often displayed parochial tendencies, with inter-honorial grants and attestations being common. Monastic interest reveals that Essex did have some sense of county solidarity and mutual support, although foundations such as Clerkenwell show that the lords of Essex did not exercise absolute geographical prejudice with regard to monastic investment.

Henry II's reign was another peaceful reign for Essex. Civil war threatened the county on only one occasion and whilst castles were readied, the preparations proved to be unnecessary. When it did occur, Essex-related trouble in Henry's early years as king was to his benefit. Hubert fitz Hamo de St Clair had been allowed to continue as hereditary castellan of Colchester, although he was

¹ Mon vi 446

² Mon vi 446 no.2

killed within a year of Henry's accession.² His daughter and heiress was quickly married off to a royal partisan, William de Lanvaley. Henry of Essex, hereditary constable through his possession of the Montfort honour of Haughley, dropped the royal standard and fled during a *mêlée* in Wales in 1157.³ Whilst the king's offensive was only temporarily halted, the constable's career was over. He was disgraced and finally challenged to judicial combat by Robert de Montfort in 1163. Defeated and castrated, Henry's honours escheated and he retired to Reading Abbey.⁴

The Young King's revolt of 1173 was the first time that the loyalty of Essex was tested. In Warren's opinion, Henry's major concern in Essex was not outright invasion but the misuse of local power during a time of adversity.⁵ Whilst Henry fortified his own castle of Colchester, he also took control of Richard de Lucy's castle of Ongar. Of the four openly revolting earls (Norfolk, Leicester, Derby and Chester) two had land in Essex, Hugh Bigod and William de Ferrers.⁶ William of Gloucester's loyalty was a matter for speculation, and south-eastern England faced the prospect of a Flemish invasion.⁷ Hugh Bigod and the Flemish mercenaries threatened Dunwich and took the castle of Haughley in Suffolk before being routed by royalists.⁸ Gilbert de Montfichet fortified Montfichet's Tower in London against the king

¹ Mon vi 446 no.2

² C.L.Sinclair Williams, 'A Valiant Constable of Colchester Castle', 30-33

³ W.L.Warren, Henry II, 70

⁴ H.E.Butler ed., The Chronicle of Jocelin of Brakelond (London, 1949), 68-71: R.Howlett ed., William of Newburgh, Historia Rerum Anglicarum (London, 1884), p.108: Torigni, 122. For an explanation of this punishment, see Deuteronomy 23:2. Montfort defected to the Young King in 1173: Torigni, p.257

⁵ W.L.Warren, Henry II, 141

⁶ Ferrers' efficacy in battle was questioned by Fantosme. He suggested that Earl William was better suited to kissing than fighting: Fantosme v.99

⁷ W.L.Warren, Henry II, 122-3, 129

⁸ Fantosme vv. 90-1, 99: W.L.Warren, Henry II, 129-31.

(although he does not appear to have lost it as a consequence) and the Clares were rumoured to support the rebellion.¹

Richard de Lucy led the king's forces in the north and midlands, capturing Leicester and repelling the Scots.² Bigod's son Roger proved his worth during the conflict, supporting the royalists Humphrey de Bohun and William earl of Arundel.³ Walter fitz Robert was another noted follower of the king's cause. Like Roger Bigod, Walter fought against the Flemish contingent in East Anglia.⁴ This clearly shows that the war was not a re-run of the Blois-Angevin contest with the same alliances. The Montfichets had been reliable followers of Stephen, as had de Lucy, Arundel and Walter fitz Robert.

Over the period 1172-3 payments were made from the farm of Essex and Hertfordshire to support the Tower of London and local castles.⁵ Two captains and sixty sailors aboard two boats from Colchester spent fifteen days at Sandwich, for which they were paid £4 *per breve Ricard de Luci*.⁶ William de Ware the parker, Osbert de Ware (both evidently from Hertfordshire) and

¹ Fantosme v. 173, p.187n: R.A.Brown, 'A List of Castles' in Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers, 114: H.M.Colvin, The History of the King's Works i. 21: CA 271. Johnston suggests that the *Clarreaus* were the earls Richard de Clare and William of Gloucester, Richard's father-in-law. I seriously doubt that any chronicler would call Gloucester, arguably the most powerful earl in England, a 'Clare'. A Clare group would have included the young earl Richard, possibly Strongbow and not the loyal Walter fitz Robert. As the chronicle is held to be more or less contemporary (Fantosme p.xxiii), it cannot be claimed that Gloucester was called a Clare with reference to his death *s.p.m.* in 1183 and the eventual inheritance of his earldom by Gilbert de Clare

² Fantosme vv. 80, 82-9, 156-8, 163, 174-5: W.L.Warren, Henry II, 129-31.

³ Fantosme vv. 102-3

⁴ Fantosme vv. 100, 103-4

⁵ PR 19 Hen II 13, 22

⁶ PR 19 Hen II 13

former sheriff Nicholas *decanus* made fines for their lands.¹ None were recorded as debtors to an impatient Exchequer, which may suggest that all three had been suspected of and punished for treason. By Michaelmas 1174 Ralph *brito*, keeper of the honour of Boulogne, had been installed in Colchester castle whilst it was rebuilt, during a period when money was also spent on the castles of Walton (Suffolk) and Hertford.² In Essex, the most notable aspect of the Young King's revolt was the fact that local government continued to function seamlessly.

In the aftermath of the revolt the Pipe Rolls do not betray any evident sign of retaliation against the vassals of the earls Bigod and Ferrers in the county. Bigod's demesne manor of Finchingfield was confiscated in 1172-3 and the following year land at Woodham belonging to the earl Ferrers was also in the sheriff's hand.³ This would seem to indicate that their vassals in Essex did not play an explicit part in the revolt. During the Young King's second foray against his father in 1183, Henry II ordered the arrest of Leicester, Gloucester and others.⁴ This may have been a wise pre-emptive strike, or possibly just paranoia. Either way, there was no bloodshed in Essex or the rest of England in that year. Work was undertaken on Colchester castle but no other preparations for war were made in Essex.⁵

Essex was, once again, a docile county. The most violent recorded incident in the county was the hanging of a thief in Maldon without a royal official being present.⁶ Henry II's pre-emptive strikes were partly responsible for the

¹ PR 19 Hen II 21

² PR 19 Hen II 13; PR 20 Hen II 67, 75; H.M.Colvin, *The King's Works* ii. 615

³ PR 19 Hen II, 20; PR 20 Hen II 74

⁴ W.L.Warren, *Henry II*, 592

⁵ PR 29 Hen II 19; H.M.Colvin, *The King's Works* ii. 615

⁶ PR 31 Hen II 17. The unruly citizens of Maldon paid their amercement in full and without delay

maintenance of order. Those who were involved, or suspected of involvement, in revolt could be subjected to rapid counter measures. Anselm Camdeveine, count of St. Pol and tenant of the Mandeville family in Essex, had his lands seized in 1188 after the outbreak of war between Henry II and Philip Augustus.¹

Castles

The strength and stability of English government during this period is reflected in the total number of new and private castles constructed in the county over the entire thirty-five year period. There is no evidence to suggest that any of the county's castles were built at this time. The demolition of the Mandeville fortifications in 1157-8 was proof of a serious (and high-handed) royal policy towards castles.² Henry was eventually satisfied that Mandevilles were of no further threat, as reconstruction of Pleshey was licensed later in his reign.³

In 1154 all of the county's major castles were in the hands of King Stephen, controlled by his supporters or were held by families baronial families that had played no significant part in the war. The Veres held Hedingham and Canfield, the Montfichets had Stansted (Mountfichet), Henry of Essex owned Rayleigh, and Ongar was held by Richard de Lucy.⁴ Pleshey and Saffron Walden were still *in manu regis* when Henry II became king, as Geoffrey III

¹ PR 34 Hen II 39: J.H.Round, 'The Counts of St Pol in Essex and Kent', W.R.Powell ed., EAH xxvii (1996) 193-201, 195

² PR 2-3-4 Hen II 132

³ CA 146. There is no evidence that the castle of Saffron Walden was ever rebuilt

⁴ Many of the fortifications that were probably constructed under Stephen (such as Rickling, Laver, Easton) have no recorded history at all and so control of these fortifications under Henry II can only be guessed at, particularly as their existence is a matter for debate

de Mandeville was still a minor in the early years of the Henry II's reign.¹ Only Colchester was under permanent royal control, held by King Stephen's die-hard constable Hubert de St Clair. Stephen was loyally served by the majority of the castle owners in Essex for the majority of his reign, which explains the low number of royal castles in the county in 1154. Henry II was more direct and was obviously reluctant to base his castles policies on the whims of local magnates.

Within ten years of Henry II's accession Rayleigh had been brought under permanent royal control and the Mandeville castles had been 'slighted'.² In 1154 there were seven confirmed baronial castles in Essex, two of which were confiscated Mandeville castles, and one royal construction, which was well below the national average of five private castles to each royal castle.³ In 1163, before Pleshy was rebuilt, the ratio was two to one.⁴ De Lucy and the Mandevilles were both active in Henry's government at the highest level. The only castle to be held against the king was Stansted, when Gilbert de Montfichet sided with the rebels in 1173. Curiously the castle does not appear to have been destroyed, unlike so many other rebel-held fortifications.⁵

¹ In a Mandeville charter of not later than 1155, Henry fitz Gerold's seal was used as Geoffrey was not old enough to be knighted and acquire a seal of his own: PRO ms. E40/1832

² W.L.Warren, *Henry II*, 68: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 134: PR 15 Hen II 123: The Book of the Foundation of Walden Abbey, D.E.Greenway & L.Watkiss eds. (Oxford, 1999), xxi

³ R.A.Brown, *Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers* (Woodbridge, 1989) 97-8, 101-20, originally published as 'A list of castles, 1154-1216', *EHR* lxxiv (1959) 249-80

⁴ Brown calculated that the national average in 1214 was just under two private castles to one royal castle. Private castles in 1164 were Hedingham, Great Canfield, Stansted and Ongar. Royal castles were Colchester and Rayleigh

⁵ W.L.Warren, *Henry II*, 141. There is no record of it being dismantled in the Pipe Rolls. The castle is said to have had 'little or no history': CA 147. Furthermore, Gilbert does not appear to have lost control of Montfichet Tower in London: R.A.Brown, 'A List of

Henry seized and destroyed local castles to prove his domination of the county. He particularly imposed his will when he saw control as essential to the defence of Essex and, by inference, London. He 'occupied' Ongar when Richard de Lucy was fighting the Scots in 1173, and placed Colchester under the control of Ralph *brito* at the expense of its hereditary constable, Lanvalei.¹ In Essex, Henry used this opportunity to demonstrate that all castles were ultimately royal possessions and that castellans could not expect uninterrupted custody of one particular fortification.²

His personal mastery of Rayleigh and Colchester saw a final end to the Norman Kings' coastal defence strategy, which involved partial or total baronial responsibility. The 'Rape' of Rochford had remained a stable part of the Essex coastline for a century, whilst Colchester was largely managed by Eudo *dapifer* and his tenurial successors. For the first time, the king directly protected the entire North Sea coast of Essex. His expenditure on these two castles was not particularly high, which suggests that they were either in very good condition or that they were thought to be at little risk of attack. Brown showed that Henry II spent over £80 on Colchester and almost £26 on Rayleigh, which is miniscule compared to the money spent on Dover (over £6000), Nottingham (£1816), Winchester (£1233) or Windsor (£1475).³ These four are extreme cases, as two had been heavily involved in the civil war and one was a developing royal residence, but during the only two years when

Castles' in Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers, 114; H.M.Colvin, The History of the King's Works i. 21: CA 271; F.M.Stenton, Norman London: an Essay, 8-9

¹ Warren, Henry II, 141: PR Hen II 67

² R.Allen Brown considered that Ongar castle was restored to Richard de Lucy and that it was a baronial castle until 1204: R.A.Brown, 'A List of Castles', in Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers, 274

³ H.M.Colvin, The Kings Works, ii. 630; R.A.Brown, 'Royal Castle Building in England, 1154-1216', in Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers 55-64

money was spent on Essex castles it amounted to less than 4% of the national castle budget. Furthermore, initial spending on Colchester (£50) and Rayleigh (£25 19s 4d) was made in 1172-3, and the only later monies to find their way to support an Essex fortification was Colchester's £30 4s 6d in 1182-3.¹

Clearly investment in Essex was only a reactionary measure and local castles were only readied when the rest of the country was under threat.

Royal officials

The growing strength and size of local government provides further evidence of stability and increasing royal control. Local officials were often men of Henry's own choosing. As 'new men' within Essex many owed their status entirely to the king. Elevation to local office and continued royal patronage frequently went hand-in-hand, and at least one of the local officials was guilty of a little cronyism himself.

Richard de Lucy was not a 'new man' by any stretch of the imagination but his ascent did continue under Henry II. It is also easier to follow the success of this outstanding royal servant under his second crowned master. Apart from his massive financial benefits and the grant of the hundred of Ongar, de Lucy also gained reward through political office (particularly as Chief Justiciar) and forest advantages.² De Lucy did not just attract royal patronage. Between 1167 and 1173 William of Gloucester granted the Essex lands and vassals of his vast earldom to Richard de Lucy, to be held for the service of ten knights.³ De Lucy had already been enfeoffed with one knight's fee at Chigwell by Gerard de Limesy, which he granted in turn to Ralph *brito* between 1157 and

¹ R.A.Brown, Castles, Conquests and Charters: Collected Papers, 45-54

² For Richard de Lucy's background and career, see DNB xxxiv 246-48

³ R.B.Patterson ed., Earldom of Gloucester Charters, no.115 : Delisle Recueil no.311 for royal confirmation: J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 148-9

1163.¹ Ralph, whose name suggests that he was a Breton, held land of the old enfeoffment from Bretons William d'Aubigny *brito* and Robert de Helion, and also held land of the honour of Boulogne and from the Clares *de novo*.²

This all shows the mounting respect given to Richard de Lucy by his contemporaries. Grants of an honour's entire holdings in one county were rare enough in Essex, the only prior occurrence being the Breton count's similar agreement with Aubrey de Vere.³ The earl of Gloucester put Richard de Lucy in above the Marcy family, whose lands made up seven of the ten Gloucester fees.⁴ The Marcys had been in Essex since before 1086, as had the Limesy family.⁵ Clearly de Lucy was held in high regard within and without Essex, although the holders of the ten fees in question (Richard and Ralph de Marcy, and Maurice de Totham) did not attest the grant.

Richard de Lucy's patronage of Ralph *brito* pre-dated Ralph's work within local administration. Ralph and Richard would act together as royal agents in Essex for many years. The fact that Ralph had been enfeoffed by Richard de Lucy and then went on to manage the county's major escheated honours indicates that the county's top administrator was able and willing to exercise patronage within government for the benefit of his vassals. Ralph *brito* farmed the honour of Boulogne in 1158-59 and from 1165 until 1182.⁶

¹ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 150. Round's date is based on the attestation of *Moricio vicecomite*.

² RBE 328, 357, 582, 405

³ W.R.Powell, 'The Essex Fees of the Honour of Richmond', 187

⁴ J.H.Round, 'The Honour of Ongar', 148

⁵ LDB 90a-b

⁶ P.M.Barnes ed., 'The Anstey Case' in P.M.Barnes & C.F.Slade eds., *A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton* (PRS, London, 1962), 1-24, 5, 14: PR 28 Hen II 100: for a charter naming Ralph as *custos* of the honour of Boulogne, see PRO C56/52 (Confirmation Roll 7 Henry VIII part 2) m.2 no.7

In 1168 he was farming the honours of Henry of Essex, although he stated that he did not have to account for them.¹ A year later he began accounting for them, and continued to do so until he fined 1000*m.* to give up the farms of Rayleigh, Haughley and Boulogne in 1182.² He reduced this debt to £342 14*s.* 5*d.* in 1186, and probably died during the following year as he made no further payments towards the debt.³ He was certainly dead by Michaelmas 1188, as his personal lands were in the king's hand at that time.⁴ Henry de Cornhill was granted control of the farms of the escheated honours.⁵

The sheriff was the only royal official listed within Essex in the Pipe Rolls of 1154-6. That there were other officers of the crown working in the county is well-known. There were hundred-reeves (mostly unknown), constables of Colchester (the St Clairs, followed by the Lanvaleis) and hereditary foresters (the Montfichet and Barrington families). Further officials emerged during Henry's reign, whose principal concerns were with escheated honours, ecclesiastical vacancies and with justice.⁶ Much of this information is only available because of the existence of the Pipe Rolls.⁷

¹ PR 14 Hen II 46

² PR 15 Hen II 129; PR 16 Hen II 110; PR 17 Hen II 134; PR 18 Hen II 45; PR 19 Hen II 23; PR 20 Hen II 74; PR 21 Hen II 78; PR 22 Hen II 10; PR 23 Hen II 154; PR 24 Hen II 47; PR 25 Hen II 129; PR 28 Hen II 100, 103

³ PR 32 Hen II 13; PR 33 Hen II 123

⁴ PR 34 Hen II 32

⁵ PR 28 Hen II 103; PR 30 Hen II 134; PR 31 Hen II 42; PR 32 Hen II 197; PR 33 Hen II 19; PR 34 Hen II 28

⁶ That escheated honours and vacant sees were farmed out prior to 1154 is no secret, but few details remain of such arrangements. Adam of Dunmow was farming the land of William de Boville in 1129-30: PR 31 Hen I 60

⁷ For example, it is only possible to derive accurate identifications of and dates for sheriffs after 1154

Under Henry II Essex (and Hertfordshire) had eight sheriffs, all of whom were men with local connections: Richard de Lucy (1154- Michaelmas 1157); Maurice of Tilty (Michaelmas 1157- Christmas 1160 and Michaelmas 1161- Michaelmas 1163); Ralph de Marcy (Christmas 1160 - Michaelmas 1161); Otuel de Boville (Michaelmas 1163- Michaelmas 1164); Nicholas *decanus* (Michaelmas 1164- Easter 1169); Stephen de Beauchamp (Easter 1169- Easter 1170); Robert Mantel (Easter 1170- Michaelmas 1181); Otto fitz William (from Michaelmas 1181).

It is immediately apparent that the social position of the sheriff of Essex was declining. De Lucy was the most important and powerful member of this group but even he was inferior to the majority of his predecessors, many being of comital stock.¹ De Lucy was a tenant-in-chief, which sets him apart from his shrieval successors.² Maurice of Tilty was the first of Henry II's sheriffs to hold no land of the king.³ He was primarily a tenant of the earl Ferrers and his father had been Geoffrey II de Mandeville's *dapifer*.⁴ Tilty married Hawise, sister of Robert *brito*.⁵ Like Tilty, Otuel de Boville was another sheriff who was the sub-tenant of honours outside royal control.⁶ He held land of the Tanys and the Mandevilles in 1166.⁷ Stephen de Beauchamp, another short-lived sheriff, held of the Clares and was later reported to have held two and a

¹ RBE 650: PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 72

² RBE 351

³ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 131: PR 5 Hen II 3: PR 6 Hen II 9: PR 7 Hen II 63: PR 8 Hen II 69: PR 9 Hen II 21

⁴ RBE 339, 347: Harl. ms. 3697 f.66b-67a. Tilty held one-third of a fee from the Mandevilles, which was *in manu regis* in 1166

⁵ Harl. ms. 3697 f.184a. Robert *brito* occurred in the Essex section of the Pipe Rolls in 1165-6 and may have been the same Robert *brito* who held one fee of William d'Aubigny *brito* in 1166: PR 12 Hen II 127: RBE 328

⁶ PR 10 Hen II 36

⁷ RBE 345, 353

half fees in Essex of the honour of Peverel.¹ Sheriff Robert Mantel also held of the escheated honour of Peverel, which certainly included the manor of Little Maldon.² Ralph de Marcy of Faulkbourne, sheriff for a meagre nine months, was another tenant of an escheated honour.³ As it has been shown, he was a tenant of the honours of Gloucester and Boulogne. Nicholas *decanus* (or sometimes *clericus*, assuming that they were one and the same person) was definitely an Essex landowner after serving as sheriff, as he made a fine of 40s. in respect of his lands and chattels in 1172-3.⁴ Finally, Otto fitz William was a direct descendant of the Domesday Otto the Goldsmith.⁵ Otto held land in-chief at the ancient family manor of Gestingthorpe (Hinckford) and he was also a tenant of the honour of Boulogne. Their Boulonnais land was at the village of Belchamp Otton (Hinckford).⁶ William fitz Otto and his son Otto were witnesses to a Helion charter in favour of the Hospitallers, c.1155x1165.⁷ Thus the primary royal official for Essex had been a local man for the entirety of Henry's reign.

The pattern of shrieval appointment and replacement corresponds well with the national picture. Essex conformed to this not once but three times. Maurice of Tilty was replaced by Ralph de Marcy at Christmas 1160 for nine

¹ PR 15 Hen II 122; PR 16 Hen II 105; RBE 403, 591; Rot de Dom 69n.

² PR 18 Hen II 44; BL Cotton Vitellius F viii fo.23v

³ PR 7 Hen II 64

⁴ PR 19 Hen II 21. Nicholas *sacerdos* held a fraction of a fee from Simon de Beauchamp of Bedford in 1166: RBE 320. Nicholas archdeacon of London, the son of Nicholas Crocemannus, occ. ante 4 May 1162 and Sept 1189: J. Le Neve, Fasti Ecclesie Anglicanae 1066-1300: St Paul's London, 9. Whether or not this was the same man is a matter of debate

⁵ H.Barkly, 'The Otto Family' from the President's Address, 233-42

⁶ Rot de Dom 73

⁷ Cart Hosp i. p.240 no.419

months, only to regain his position from Michaelmas.¹ Julia Boorman suggests that '1160-1 was a year of large-scale change in personnel in the shrieval office, often at an unusual point in the year.'² Tilty was permanently dismissed in the autumn of 1163 at a time when many sheriffs with long-standing administrative careers were removed.³ Beauchamp's dismissal occurred at a time when many sheriffs, particularly newer officials, experienced a night of long knives during the aftermath of the Inquest of Sheriffs at Easter 1170.⁴ In spite of this high turnover of personnel, Essex sub-tenants were replaced with other Essex sub-tenants. The era of the royal official being a member of the local community had been established, and he was typically (though not universally) the tenant of an escheated honour.

An old idea was resurrected with Mantel's immediate appointment as sheriff in Beauchamp's place. Bucking the national trend, Mantel was granted the hereditary shrievalty of Essex and Hertfordshire.⁵ Mantel may have proved himself to be a capable representative in the retinue of William Longchamps and he certainly enjoyed a position of trust with Henry II prior to the grant being made.⁶ The charter states that Mantel had escorted the king's daughter Maud to her marriage in Saxony. Hereditary shrieval tenure was a generous grant and may be an indication of reward or that Henry II was attempting to

¹ Marcy's return shows that he was not a very effective sheriff: he owed over £70 from a shortfall in the county farm, unpaid murdrum and other liabilities: PR 7 Hen II 65-7

² J.Boorman, 'The Sheriffs of Henry II and the Significance of 1170', published in G. Garnett & J. Hudson (eds.), Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy (Cambridge, 1994) 255-75, 265

³ J.Boorman, 'The Sheriffs of Henry II and the Significance of 1170', 266

⁴ J.Boorman, 'The Sheriffs of Henry II and the Significance of 1170', 255, 267

⁵ Rot. Chart. 125b: PRO C25 (copy acquired from Dr Vincent): J.H.Round, 'The Mantels of Little Maldon', TEAS n.s. xx (1933) 254-61

⁶ Robert Mantel was evidently connected with William Longchamps' household, where he held office. In a damaged manuscript, *Robert Mantel ... meo* is a witness to a charter of Longchamps: BL Cotton Vitellius F viii fo.24r

buy the loyalty of Mantel. There seems to be no indication that Mantel had a hereditary claim, particularly as the only sheriff that had held shrieval office under similar terms had been Geoffrey II de Mandeville.¹

This also occurred during an era where significant changes were taking place in the shrieval office. As justices-in-eyre were introduced and individual manors were removed from the county farm to be managed by appointed royal custodians, the sheriff began to exercise less direct control over the county.²

With Richard de Lucy's retirement in 1178, Colchester was accounted for by a large number of people. Geoffrey fitz Benedict took over from 1178 until 1182.³ He was a burgess, and may have been identical with his successor, Geoffrey *dispensator*.⁴ Richard fitz Urse and Gilbert fitz Bruning farmed Colchester 1183-5.⁵ Gilbert was a burgess.⁶ In the following year 'G.... ed' (illegible) farmed the borough.⁷ Once again this might suggest the involvement of Gilbert fitz Bruning but that is merely conjecture. Finally Baldwin, a priest of Colchester, was farming Colchester from 1186-8.⁸

Ralph Parker was *custos* of Havering from 1159.⁹ He was the Ralph fitz Solomon who had custody of the king's garden and palace in the park of Havering, *sicut pater eius Salomon parcarius melius et quietus vel plenarius*

¹ Reg iii nos.275, 276

² D.Carpenter, 'The Decline of the Curial Sheriff in England', 2, 3-4

³ PR 25 Hen II 129: PR 26 Hen II 7: PR 27 Hen II 106: PR 28 Hen II 102

⁴ PR 28 Hen II 102: PR 29 Hen II 26: PR 30 Hen II 143: PR 29 Hen II 26

⁵ PR 30 Hen II 142: PR 31 Hen II 20. The latter is damaged but suggests that Richard fitz Urse was farming Colchester with another, presumably Gilbert.

⁶ PR 28 Hen II 102

⁷ PR 32 Hen II 19

⁸ PR 33 Hen II 129: PR 34 Hen II 39

⁹ PR 6 Hen II 10: PR 7 Hen II 64-5: PR 8 Hen II 68: PR 9 Hen II 21: PR 10 Hen II 36: PR 11 Hen II 15

tenuit et habuit tempore H. regis avi mei, as confirmed by a charter of Henry II.¹ Custody of Havering was evidently considered a heritable office. Ralph's son, Ralph (fitz Ralph) Parcar, took over by Michaelmas 1165 and continued until 1169.² Ralph's son (or brother) Geoffrey fitz Ralph Parker became the next *custos* of Havering, holding the office from 1169 to the end of Henry's reign.³

During the early part of the reign, Waltham was farmed by a large number of people. Otuel de Cruis was farming Waltham when it first appeared in the Pipe Roll, from 1162 to 1163.⁴ John *clericus* and Puhier farmed Waltham 1163-4, and Puhier was replaced during the following year by Alcher Venator and Ralph Naper.⁵ Guy *decanus* solely farmed Waltham over the periods 1165-9, 1170-3 and 1174-5, and managed the farm with John fitz Adam for one year to Michaelmas 1170.⁶ From 1173-4 the sheriff accounted for Waltham.⁷ Alcher Venator returned to farm Waltham in 1175.⁸ He then accounted with William Naper from 1177 to 1184.⁹ Naper accounted alone for the rest of the reign.¹⁰ This later stability could be explained if it is assumed

¹ Foedera 42. The grant was attested by one local witness, Warin fitz Gerold

² PR 12 Hen II 122; PR 13 Hen II 151; PR 14 Hen II 35; PR 15 Hen II 122

³ PR 16 Hen II 103; PR 34 Hen II 30

⁴ PR 9 Hen II 24. Waltham appears as a separate account as it was traditionally the queen's dower land: Cart Waltham lxiii

⁵ PR 10 Hen II 38; PR 11 Hen II 26

⁶ PR 12 Hen II 128; PR 13 Hen II 159; PR 14 Hen II 48; PR 16 Hen II 111; PR 17 Hen II 126; PR 18 Hen II 47; PR 19 Hen II 24; PR 21 Hen II 79. This was probably Guy Rufus, dean of Waltham (1162-77), who was also a central figure in the general eyres of 1168-70: Cart Waltham no.280 pp.188-89; H.G.Richardson & G.O.Sayles, 'The Governance of Medieval England', 203

⁷ PR 20 Hen II 76

⁸ PR 22 Hen II 10; PR 23 Hen II 155

⁹ PR 24 Hen II 37; PR 25 Hen II 51; PR 26 Hen II 7; PR 27 Hen II 14; PR 28 Hen II 101; PR 29 Hen II 25; PR 30 Hen II 34

¹⁰ PR 31 Hen II 21; PR 32 Hen II 19; PR 33 Hen II 128; PR 34 Hen II 36

that the canons of Waltham Holy Cross largely accounted for the royal manor until it was re-founded in 1177, whereupon Naper was introduced by the king.¹ It could be argued that Otuel de Cruis, John *clericus* and Guy *decanus* were all connected with the collegiate church. The sheriff's custody of the manor in 1173-4 coincided with a period of political instability.

Only one of the county's gaols is named (Newport) but there may have been a second. Geoffrey de Mandeville was operating two gaols in 1166.² Alwin de Newport seemed to be the senior gaoler of Newport in the 1170s. He was operating the town's gaol in 1172-3 (with Quintin and his brother Richard), 1176-7 (with Richard Fot) and 1178-9 (with Quintin).³

For all of these local but important posts, men were chosen who did not generally feature anywhere else in the Pipe Rolls. Apart from the sheriffs and Geoffrey de Mandeville, none of these men had any place in the retinues of local barons. Many of Henry II's administrators seem to have been appointed because of their place outside the traditional honorial structure. The selection of burgesses and canons to work in local government may have been mere pragmatism (owing to the literacy of churchmen and the numeracy of merchants) but it brought in a new, non-knightly group to run royal affairs in the county.

Men of Essex did also play a part in more distant royal activities. Roger fitz Reinfred and Robert Mantel are the most notable, as both were Essex men and worked as Justices-in-Eyre. They covered the southern circuit (including Essex) in 1179 with Ralph fitz Stephen, William fitz Stephen and Roger fitz Reinfred.⁴ Ralph of Hastings, the lord of Little Easton, was the Queen's

¹ Cart Waltham xxiv

² PR 12 Hen II 123. It may have been in Hertfordshire

³ PR 19 Hen II 13: PR 23 Hen II 144: PR 25 Hen II 52

⁴ PR 25 Hen II xxi

dapifer.¹ At least three serjeanties were based in Essex at this stage, those of the keepership of the royal larder, the serjeanty of the butlery and waferer serjeanty.²

The principal forest officials were members of the Montfichet and Barrington families. Their connection went beyond their work in royal service, as the Barringtons held (undisclosed) land of the Montfichets.³ The Montfichets were granted the hereditary office of Forester of Essex and Henry II granted Barrington the land of Geoffrey the forester of Hatfield.⁴ Other minor local men were also connected with the forest in Essex. Hugh *forestarius* (the forester) occurred as a witness to an Essex charter c.1174x1181.⁵

Henry's royal forest policies are further evidence of constrictive royal control in the localities, which raised extra money and would cause enormous resentment. Round maintained that 'with Henry II the forest law revived in all its severity'.⁶ For example, Henry demanded retrospective payments for transgressions of the forest law in 1176.⁷ The fact that he could do this is evidence that royal authority was extremely strong. That he did this demonstrates that he wanted to restore the draconian policies of Henry I.

Tight control of the forest can be seen through grants of rights and privileges. The grant made to Richard de Lucy of the right to assart 100 acres in Ongar

¹ Douglas Feudal Documents 97-8 no.87

² Serjeants, 183-5, 228-9, 236-7

³ Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DBa T2/5: BL ms. Additional Charter 28314, transcript s.xv

⁴ Chelmsford, Essex Record Office ms. D/DCw T1/2: Holt and Mortimer 29 no.8

⁵ Cart Lond nos.256, 257

⁶ J.H.Round, 'The Forest of Essex', 39

⁷ W.L.Warren, Henry II, 140

and district is evidence of a watchful king with full control over the forests.¹ Of course it also shows the quantity of favour that de Lucy received from the king, as part of the wide variety of benefits that he derived from the king. Robert Mantel's grant of woodland rights in and near Maldon was of a similar character, as he was a favourite enjoying the rights granted by a king who guarded his privileges jealously.² Further assarts were evident through royal *acta*, such as the grant made to Ralph de Arden for a 40 acre assart at Messing.³ William de Mandeville was allowed to assart 350 acres at seven locations.⁴

The size, scale and scope of the Essex return in the last Pipe Roll of Henry's reign is another testament to the changes that occurred in the county during his reign.⁵ The stability of the country and local administration ensured that records of debts and obligations were not lost or unrecorded as they were under Stephen. There was only one recorded royal official at work in Essex in 1155-6, as Richard de Lucy farmed both the county and Colchester.⁶ At Michaelmas 1188 there were at least eight. Otto fitz William was sheriff and Henry Cornhill farmed the honours of Rayleigh and Haughley. Ralph archdeacon of Colchester, Roger fitz Reinfred and Michael Belet heard pleas in the county, William le Naper farmed Waltham, and John Boidin farmed Colchester. Debts remained from the general eyres undertaken by Alan de Neville and Roger fitz Reinfred and the forest eyre of Geoffrey fitz Peter. The county was well-governed and overseen thoroughly by a large number of royal officials, most of whom can be linked with land in Essex.

¹ CAR ii no.586

² PRO E32/13 (Essex Forest Eyre c.1280) m.6d

³ PRO (Cartae Antiquae Roll 31) m.2d no.19, s.xiii in

⁴ CAR ii no.603

⁵ PR 34 Hen II 30-40

⁶ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 16, 21

In the year to Michaelmas 1156, *terre date* was collectively valued at £22 13s. 4d. in Essex.¹ In the last full financial year of Henry's reign the figure was over three times higher. The lands held by those beneficiaries was valued at over £104.² *Terre date* demonstrates two important trends in Essex. The growth of these grants, and of fixed wages, was intense in the first few years of Henry's reign. Support for his rule was assured as long as he paid for it. In Essex, the total amount granted underwent severe upward and downward swings through the involvement and death of Justiciar Richard de Lucy. The other feature, which is less obvious, is the quantity of smaller windfalls for lesser men who would remain unknown were it not for these grants. Henry did not initially court the Mandevilles, he snubbed the Clare cadet Walter fitz Robert, and he neglected William of Blois.

Henry seems to have worked at winning the county's grass-roots support. This process is visible through the new grants and in the selection of sheriffs. With Richard de Lucy's elevation to the justiciarship, Essex no longer had any more sheriffs of comital or quasi-comital rank for the remainder of Henry's reign. His reliance upon and patronage of lesser members of the aristocracy at the expense of major noblemen brought a different breed of man to the forefront in Essex. This was an era when local men became professional administrators, relying upon the authority of the crown rather than their own standing to work effectively.

¹ PR 2-3-4 Hen II 17-18

² PR 34 Hen II 29, 30-31, 39

Chapter VI - Conclusion

Royal power in Essex was at a continuously high level over the period in question. This was a new departure, as directly-controlled crown lands in Essex were non-existent at the beginning of 1066. The peace enjoyed by the county was achieved through the increasing control of land by the crown and the underlying support of local magnates. Tenants-in-chief who did not adhere to the king were ousted, partly because of a general lack of backing from their neighbours. The creation of a county with diverse tenure was largely responsible for this phenomenon. No Essex-based magnate, other than Stephen of Mortain (before 1135) and William of Blois (after 1154), had enough power within the county to present a serious and lasting threat to royal authority in the county. The only rebellious magnate to disrupt the peace of Essex to any notable degree was Geoffrey II de Mandeville. The most anarchic period of the history of Essex between 1066 and 1189 was almost certainly (and quite unsurprisingly) the pre-Domesday period of the Conquest.

That Crown land was a constantly increasing element is a matter for little debate. As table 21 shows, honours were more readily assimilated into royal demesne as time passed by. The only reign to show any kind of loss was that of Henry I, as he granted out much escheated land and probably granted more than he gained during the second half of his reign.

Stephen's generous grants in favour of Geoffrey de Mandeville were quickly recovered and this was not an exercise that Henry II chose to repeat. It is remarkable to note that Richard de Lucy, in spite of the favour shown to him by the king and his own great support of Henry, controlled a hybrid honour built of royal demesne and land held as an honorial tenant. This was in spite of the fact that the escheated honours held by Henry

II after c.1164 were worth approximately 25% of the county's Domesday wealth.¹

Table 21: Escheated honours with land in Essex, c.1086 - 1189

Honorial tenure was fluid but honorial structure was surprisingly resilient. Escheated honours were retained and administered as separate entities and the only honour that was fundamentally dismembered was the holding of Odo of Bayeux. Eudo *dapifer*'s honour demonstrated the permanence of the honorial structure in Essex. Although his escheated honour had been the subject of several grants, whether in part or in-chief, it retained much of its original form. The lion's share of his Essex lands were held by the Fitzgerolds in 1189, whilst the Lanvalei family controlled that part which had been granted to the St Clairs. Eudo's honour and that of Ranulf Peverel of London retained their former lords' names long after they had fallen under royal control. The four major honours to remain in baronial hands until 1189 were those of Clare, Mandeville, Montfichet and the Baynard barony of Little Dunmow. Clare lands had quietly grown under exceptionally stable familial circumstances, whilst the Mandeville lands had been diminished under Henry I, and enlarged and diminished under Stephen. Remarkably the confiscated manors of Saffron Walden, Great Waltham and Sawbridgeworth, which had caused so much trouble and ill-feeling, were back under Mandeville control during the reign of Henry II. The Montfichet honour appears to have been seamlessly acquired from Robert Gernon and the Baynard barony was not greatly affected by the transition from Baynard to Clare cadet control.

¹ The Essex lands of the honours of Boulogne, Eye, Lancaster, Rayleigh, Haughley and Peverel of London, together with the land of the bishop of Bayeux, were collectively worth c.£1100 in 1086. However, their composition had altered somewhat over the course of a century and such a parallel is simply added for the sake of comparison

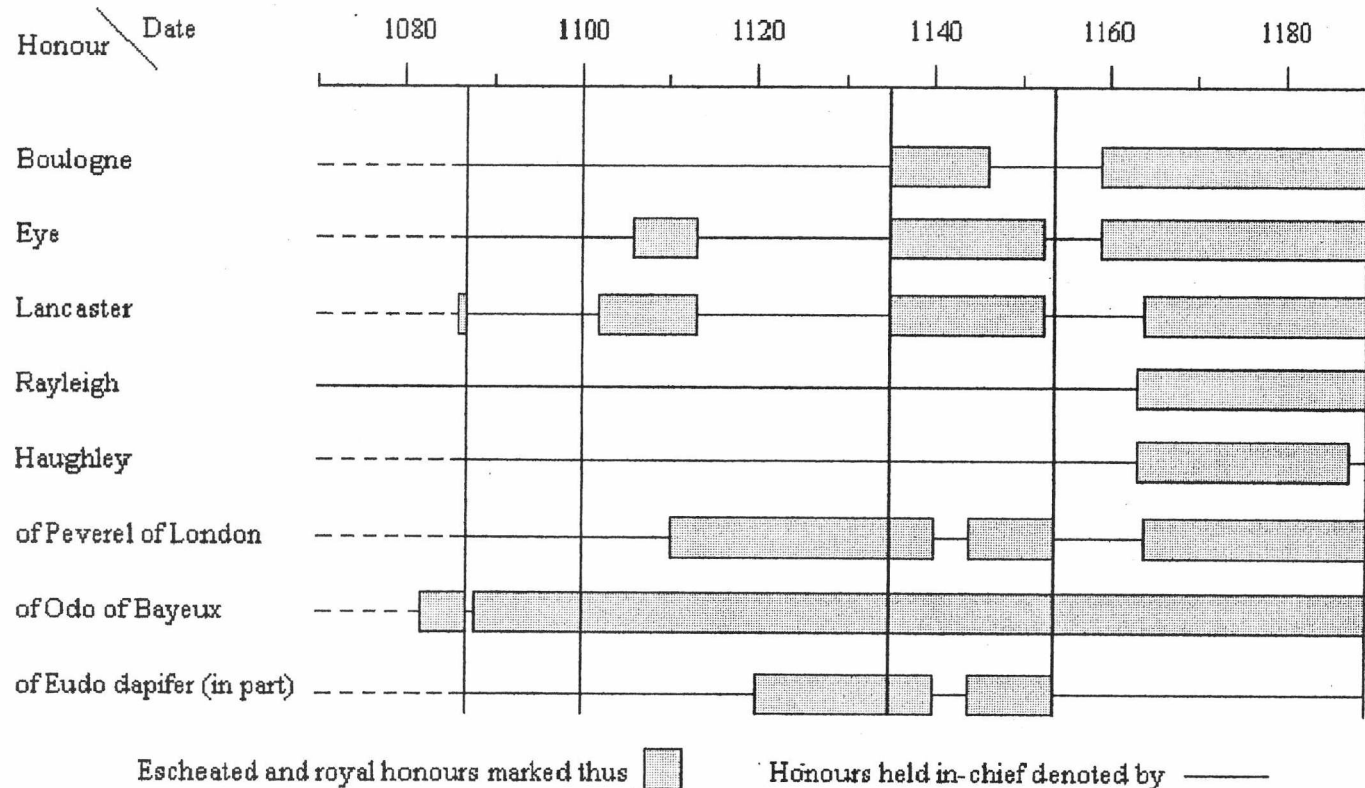


Table 21: Escheated honours with land in Essex. c.1086 - 1189

The large number of monastic foundations under Henry I demonstrates that the county was stable from an early stage. Essex was evidently seen as a residential county by a large number of families, both through their high number of monastic foundations and their *caput* placement in Essex. The non-honorial patronage of many of the local monastic houses further suggests some measure of local attachment to the county from a number of residents. This is further proved by the requests for burial in these houses by local men and their families.

Monastic patronage in Essex reveals the enduring popularity of St John's, Colchester. This abbey attracted land, money and corpses from across the county and from many honours. Colne also experienced patronage that paid no heed to honour and attracted a large amount of support from the tenants holding land in Hinckford hundred. New foundations could be labelled conservative, as Essex men were particularly predisposed to supporting Benedictine and Augustinian houses. The white monks were not supported to the same degree, although Essex was not the desert that the Cistercians sought.¹ Intensively-cultivated Essex, with its many villages and comparatively high population, was not suitable for an order which specialised in grange economies in the wilderness. Other fashionable orders did receive generous grants of land in Essex. The Templars were favoured by Stephen, whilst the Hospitallers received more general grass-roots support from much of the county.

Essex did demonstrate a large amount of intra-county contact, through marriage and charter attestation. Essex-based barons (Vere, Mandeville, Fitzwalter, Montfichet) witnessed one another's charters and their own tenants were not averse to witnessing charters concerning their neighbours from other

¹ C.H.Lawrence, Medieval Monasticism: Forms of Religious Life in Western Europe in the Middle Ages (2nd ed., Harlow, 1989), 175

honours. Local marriage appears, where recorded, to have been commonplace. The inter-marriage of men and women resident in Essex was already occurring during the Domesday generation and many examples of this trend can be found in successive decades. Of course, those men who married outside the county frequently demonstrated local interests in other ways, and new men who married into the county can be seen patronising local monasteries and witnessing local charters. Whilst this was too early to find an intensely parochial county community, it is still plain to see that men had a sense of affinity with their locality and their neighbours.

The community of Essex had an 'insider' as sheriff for the overwhelming proportion of this period. Local landowners dominated the post, from the Domesday tenants-in-chief (Valognes, Mandeville, fitz Wymarc) through to the tenants of escheated honours (Lucy, Marcy, Mantel). The local character of other officials - foresters, gaolers, custodians of royal manors and honours - is perhaps only to be expected as local knowledge would be at least advantageous and at times essential for the fulfilment of their duties.

Castles in Essex were not numerous in comparison with the March or Borders and adulterine constructions can be confidently dated 1135-54, as there was little need for large numbers of fortifications at any other stage during the period. The pre-Domesday period was a more aggressive time than Stephen's reign but Domesday itself shows that the construction of fortifications was not a widespread measure. There was a growing tendency for castles to be royally controlled under Henry II, which reflected the national trend.

The forest of Essex never passed out of strong royal control. The Conqueror established the royal forest in the county and its limits and rights were famously (and jealously) guarded and extended by Henry I and Henry II. Stephen has a reputation for being less severe than Henry I but the growing evidence from his reign shows that his authority over the forest had not been

undermined and that he would not be questioned in his mastery of it. Henry II could not have enjoyed such a degree of power in the royal forest if Stephen had allowed the entire structure to collapse.

Essex was a stable county that brought in reliable revenue to the crown for the entire period under observation. Its proximity to London was without doubt a major factor. Steadfast and loyal servants in Essex could realistically anticipate royal reward, recognition and promotion. The honorial structure in Essex was as valuable for peace as the nearness of royal government. There was no clearly dominant power in Essex until 1135, when Stephen merged the county's two greatest collections of land, the royal demesne and the honour of Boulogne. In 1159 Henry II furthered this extensive royal influence in the county, when he gained control of the honours of Boulogne, Rayleigh and Haughley. From Domesday (or before), the Crown controlled at least one tenth of the land in the county and within fifty years of the Conqueror's death over a quarter of Essex was royally controlled. This was the central reason for peace in Essex. Nobody was ever more powerful than the Crown.

