

THE KNIGHTS OF EDWARD I

An investigation of the social significance of knightly rank in the  
period 1272 - 1307 based on a study of the knights of Somerset.

BY

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## Synopsis

The subject of this thesis is the social significance of knighthood in England during the reign of Edward I. The introduction outlines the process whereby knightly rank became associated with landed wealth. Evidence discussed in the second chapter points to the existence of many knights. The personal relationships between them indicate a defined social group. Next it is argued that the failure from the late 13th. century of many landholders to take knighthood was prompted by financial considerations but the group retained its integrity. The fourth and fifth chapters investigate the nature of the knights' lordship and reveal great variations in their social and economic power. The following chapter shows that inheritance underpinned the changing composition of the knightly group into which freemen might prosper. It is then suggested that territorial and family solidarities were more instrumental in determining alliances between knights and greater landholders than feudal tenurial ties. It is next shown that military and administrative service occasionally overlapped but those aspects of service were crystallizing respectively around the retinues of the magnates and the lesser knights active in the counties. The conclusion suggests that the cult of knighthood legitimized the social position of all knights. The total land holdings of the knights were 1,7,000 acres.

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## Abbreviations.

Among the short titles and abbreviations used the following might require elucidation

B.L.	British Library
<u>Berkeley MSS.</u>	J.Smith, <u>The Berkeley Manuscripts</u> , ed. J.Maclean (Gloucester, 1883-5)
Cant. & York Soc.	Canterbury and York Society
<u>Complete Peerage</u>	G.E.Cockayne, <u>Complete Peerage</u> , revised edn. by Vicary Gibbs and his continuators (1910-40)
Devon R.O.	Devon Record Office
Duchy of Cornw.O.	Duchy of Cornwall Office
<u>E.H.R.</u>	<u>English Historical Review</u>
Exeter City R.O.	Exeter City Record Office
Glos.R.O.	Gloucestershire Record Office
Hist.MSS.Com.	Historical Manuscripts Commission
<u>Liber Quotidianus</u>	<u>Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobiae</u> , ed. J.Nichols (Society of Antiquaries, 1787)
Maxwell-Lyte, <u>Some Som.Mans.</u>	H.C.Maxwell-Lyte, <u>Historical Notes of Some Somerset Manors formerly connected with the Honour of Dunster</u> (Som.Rec.Soc. extra series 1931)
Moor, <u>Knights of Edw.I</u>	C.Moor, <u>Knights of Edward I</u> (Harleian Society, lxxx-lxxxiv)
Morris, <u>Welsh Wars of Edw.I</u>	J.E.Morris, <u>The Welsh Wars of Edward I</u> (Oxford, 1900)
<u>Parl.Writs</u>	<u>Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons</u> , ed.F.Palgrave (1827-34)
<u>Proc.Som.Arch.Soc.</u>	<u>Proceedings of the Somersetshire Archaeological and Natural History Society</u>
P.R.O.	Public Record Office
Rec.Com.	Record Commission
Sanders, <u>Eng.Baronies</u>	I.J.Sanders, <u>English Baronies</u> (Oxford, 1962)
Som.R.O.	Somerset Record Office
Som.Rec.Soc.	Somerset Record Society
<u>Trans.B.G.A.S.</u>	<u>Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society</u>
<u>V.C.H.</u>	<u>Victoria County Histories</u>

Unless specified otherwise, all manuscripts cited are in the Public Record Office, London

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

At the end of the 11th. century the style of knight, the Latin miles, had a technical implication. It was applied to warriors who fought mounted on horseback and armed with helmet, hauberk, shield and sword. The style itself carried no particular social distinction. It was derived from the Old English cniht, a word which described the serving man or retainer found in the households of the late Saxon lords. In the minds of the conquered Anglo-Saxons, the miles of the early Norman period occupied the same menial position as the cniht. Nevertheless although many knights in the early Norman period were attached to the households and retinues of the newly settled foreign magnates, the view was an oversimplification. Soon after the Conquest there was a marked lack of homogeneity in the standing of the knights <sup>1</sup>.

The knights constituted the backbone of the Conqueror's army. William I's primary concern was to ensure that such warriors were readily available for the defence of the realm. Accordingly he charged the land which he granted his followers with the obligation of providing knight service. As tenants in chief holding their land from the Crown they were responsible for the discharge of their military obligation. While the ecclesiastical tenants in chief early favoured the planting of military men on their lands, the lay magnates continued to use household knights or hired warriors into the 12th. century. The process of subinfeudation in which the obligation of providing for the knight was associated with the knight's fee, a piece of land transferred to a sub-tenant, was slow. It was largely completed by the mid 12th. century although the Cartae Baronum returns of 1166 reveal that part of the military obligation of

1 F.M.Stenton, The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166 (Oxford, 1961), 131-7, 142-3.

several tenants in chief was still chargeable on their demesne lands. For the performance of that service they relied on either household warriors or hired professionals <sup>2</sup>.

At the beginning of the 12th. century the knights included a miscellany of small landholders and household retainers. They were not all distinguished members of society <sup>3</sup>. The dividing line between them and the mercenaries, some of whom also held land on a small scale, was not firmly drawn. The tenure of small estates was characteristic of several knights whose holdings were extended in the Domesday inquest of 1086. The returns realised from such holdings, either through the cultivation of the soil or through the exaction of rents, were minimal and barely sufficed to cover the costs of cavalry service <sup>4</sup>. The low social position of the knights was not peculiar to England but was common to large parts of north-west Europe, where they were dependent on the territorial magnates and enjoyed only minute holdings and rents <sup>5</sup>.

The rank of knight began to acquire social merit throughout north-west Europe in the course of the 12th. century and more particularly in the period between 1180 and 1220. Men of higher social standing, with more extensive property, wealth and power than the knights of the late 11th. century, assumed the rank and used the title of knight. By the end of the 12th. century the most prominent members of society took knighthood. The process, which represented not a rise of the knights in social standing but a change in the attitude of higher social groups towards knightly rank and service, was facilitated by the elaboration of

2 Ibid. 137-40; H.M.Chew, The English Ecclesiastical Tenants in Chief and Knight Service (Oxford, 1932), 112-22.

3 Cf. E.King, 'Large and Small Landowners in Thirteenth-Century England', Past and Present, xlvii. 27-9; F.R.H. Du Boulay, The Lordship of Canterbury (1966), 92-3.

4 S.Harvey, 'The Knight and the Knights' Fee in England', Past and Present xlix, 19-30.

5 L.Génicot, L'économie rurale namuroise au bas moyen âge, ii. Les hommes - la noblesse (Louvain, 1960), 63-77; cf. P.Van Luyn, 'Les milites dans la France du XIe siècle', Le Moyen Age, lxxvii.

ideal patterns of knightly life and conduct in the late 12th. and early 13th. centuries. The presentation of the knights' role as lying in deeds of arms and in the defence of religion and justice, together with the enhancement of the values of courage and loyalty, served as a catalyst in the formulation of an aristocratic ethos which Centred on the figure of the knight <sup>6</sup>.

In England from the later 12th. century the rank of knight was being urged on wealthier landholders as the result of factors which brought about an identification of the rank with the possession of landed wealth. The division of knights' fees led to a decline in the number of landholders able to provide knight service. Such fragmentation was a consequence of the rapid assimilation of feudal military tenure to free tenure which rendered restraints on the alienability of military tenures meaningless. The rights of the feudal lord over military tenures were weakened by the acceptance of hereditary right. The tendency towards assimilation with other forms of tenure was probably accelerated by the petty assizes enacted in Henry II's reign, particularly that of novel disseisin of 1175, by which seisin was protected. The interests of the tenant by knight service as a landholder, the creation and maintenance of viable economic units, the settlement of land on relatives and clients, endowments to satisfy their religious aspirations and to secure influence and favour, triumphed over the military commitment which was the basis of his tenurial obligation <sup>7</sup>.

As a result of the division of knights' fees responsibility for providing knights became fragmented. Tenants in chief experienced

6 Cf. G.Duby, 'Situation de la noblesse en France au début du XIIIe siècle', Tijdschrift voor Geschiedenis, lxxxii. 309-15; 'The Diffusion of Cultural Patterns in Feudal Society', Past and Present, xxxix, 3-10; Génicot, L'économie rurale namuroise au bas moyen âge, ii. 77-84.

7 E.King, 'Large and Small Landowners', Past and Present, xlvii. 27-31, 45-7; cf. Du Boulay, The Lordship of Canterbury, 60-1, 105.



difficulties in exacting the full service owed by their tenants. In the early 13th. century the servicium debitum demanded by the Crown of many of its leading tenants was replaced by a new quota, often greatly reduced in amount <sup>8</sup>. It had become impossible to levy the feudal army on the basis of the knights' fees as assessed in the 12th. century. The increasing exaction of scutage in place of military service from the mid 12th. century was partly in response to the early obsolescence of the feudal tenurial system as a means of raising a force of cavalry <sup>9</sup>. By the later 13th. century the practice of referring to the quantity of knight service attached to a piece of land was largely a conservative gesture serving a fiscal purpose. The knight's fee retained its chief importance as a unit in the exaction of feudal incidents <sup>10</sup>.

From the later 12th. century the costs involved in performing the military duties of a knight increased. The rise was in part the result of a general inflation of the currency which led to a doubling of some prices between 1180 and 1220 <sup>11</sup>. The costs also rose with the elaboration of the defensive armour of both warrior and mount. Boiled leather was superseded by chain-mail. The increased weight of armour required sturdier horses which were the product of selective breeding. The mount was the most expensive single item in the knight's equipment. In Edward I's campaigns horses were valued at the outset and the Crown undertook to replace those lost on service. In the 13th. century to chain-mail was added plate-armour, initially of a primitive and rudimentary nature <sup>12</sup>. The provision of a complete set of equipment by a knight represented a considerable capital outlay far beyond the means of many military

8 I.J.Sanders, Feudal Service in England (Oxford, 1956), 59-67.

9 Cf. Stenton, The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166, 178-88.

10 See pp. 191-2.

11 P.D.A.Harvey, 'The English Inflation of 1180-1220', Past and Present, lxi. 16-18.

12 Chew, The English Ecclesiastical Tenants in Chief and Knight Service, 89-90.



tenants. As costs increased so did the amount of land needed to support a knight. At the same time the knights' fees, which were originally charged with fulfilling that need, were fragmenting into a mass of small holdings.

Only those landholders with sizeable estates could sustain the burdens of knightly rank. Although the assumption of knightly rank was not solely determined by compliance with a monarch's intermittent enforcement of the obligation to provide knightly service, the group on which the obligation was deemed to fall has to be defined <sup>13</sup>. The group was not selected arbitrarily but within the overall framework of society. The king relied on his right to exact military service directly from his subjects. The type of service to be performed by the various social groups and the weapons they were to hold were determined in relation to the value of the property they possessed. Important steps in that development were the promulgation of the Assize of Arms in 1181 and its subsequent re-enactments, particularly that of 1242, in which the provisions were updated and gradually widened. The Assize was reissued as part of the Statute of Winchester of 1285. The men liable to provide knight service occupied the highest rung of the social ladder.

In the reign of Henry II the librate, the amount of land with an annual value of one pound sterling, was used as a criterion in determining the obligation to provide knight service. At various times it was held to fall on men holding from ten to twenty librates. Under Henry III and Edward I the obligation to take knighthood or to provide knight service similarly fell on various groups. The fluctuation in the level of landed wealth quoted was probably related directly to the military requirements of the Crown. Nevertheless the level of wealth cited rose during the two reigns. Save for 1256 when holders of fifteen

13 For most of what follows see M.Powicke, Military Obligation in Medieval England (Oxford, 1962), passim.

librates, excepting tenants in socage tenure alone, were distrained the minimum level for the provision of knight service after 1240 was twenty librates. The writ issued on 10 December 1241 for a distraint of holders of twenty librates or more to take knighthood was an important step in associating the obligation to knight service with that group. Nevertheless the continuing failure to increase the number of knights led to further definitions of the obligation to take knighthood and attempts at enforcement. The articles of the eyre formulated in the 1250s placed the obligation on the tenant of a whole knight's fee as well as on the holder of twenty librates. By the later 13th. century the value of the land had ousted the integral fee as the basis of distraint. In 1265 the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset was ordered to distrain those landholders with twenty librates or a whole fee worth £20 a year to take knighthood <sup>14</sup>.

In 1282 landholders with thirty librates were called upon to equip themselves with horses and arms. The terms used on that occasion were generally employed when the provision of knight service was required. From 1292 the amount of land considered adequate to sustain a knight was settled at forty librates and it remained at that level with a few exceptions for the rest of Edward I's reign. On 6 February 1292 writs were sent to the sheriffs ordering them to distrain the forty librate holders provided that the latter had held their lands in fee and inheritance during the previous three years <sup>15</sup>. Clearly not all forty librate holders were knights. On 10 February 1295 the Treasurer was ordered to hold an investigation into the number of knights and others with forty librates or more of land <sup>16</sup>. On 13 January 1296 the same group, both knights and non-knights, was requested to be prepared to

<sup>14</sup> Close R. 1264-8, 110; cf. Parl.Writs, i. 214, 216.

<sup>15</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 257.

<sup>16</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 267-8.

set out on service <sup>17</sup> and in 1300 they were ordered to muster at Carlisle by 24 June for an expedition against the Scots <sup>18</sup>. In 1293 and 1312 the holders of forty librates were distrained to take knighthood <sup>19</sup>. Nevertheless in 1296 a distraint was ordered on those holding thirty librates <sup>20</sup> while in 1297 the service of the twenty librate holders was demanded for a proposed expedition to the Continent <sup>21</sup>.

In the later 13th. century the provision of knight service and the assumption of knighthood was deemed to be the responsibility of free men possessing landed wealth. Military tenure of itself did not provide the basis for sustaining knightly rank. The tenant of several fractional knights' fees, held from a multiplicity of lords and scattered through the countryside, was liable if their total value, taken either by themselves or with any other lands he held, reached or exceeded the level at which the obligation was held to fall.

Socage and free serjeanty tenures, as well as tenure by barony or by knight service, were included when holdings were valued for the purpose of enforcing knight service. That was not true in the distraint of 1256 in which socage tenure was exempted. The sheriff of Somerset was ordered to release his distraint upon John le Rous since the latter's property in Lamyatt was held in socage <sup>22</sup>. By 1285 the distinction between military and socage tenures held by prominent freeholders was blurred. The survey of knights' fees made that year included the Lamyatt property, then held in socage by Roger le Rous for a rent of 13s.4d. <sup>23</sup>. The survey also recorded the land held in socage by Giles de Flury in Cloford <sup>24</sup>. Certain types of free tenure, however, did not carry the obligation to knighthood.

17 Parl.Writs, i. 278.

18 Ibid. 330.

19 Cf. E 198/3/5; C 47/1/7.

20 Parl.Writs, i. 280.

21 Ibid. 285.

22 C 55/2 m.2d.

23 Feud.Aids, iv. 295.

24 Ibid. 277.

The Statutum de militibus of 1278 which set down the extent of knightly obligation exempted land held in burgage tenure and sokemen on ancient Crown demesne were not liable provided they were tallageable. In the case of lay fees held by clerics and socage tenures held from mesne lords liability was determined by reference to precedent <sup>25</sup>.

In the late 13th. century military tenures continued to be subject to feudal incidents, escheat and wardship, the payment of aids and scutage. The obscuring of the distinction between military and other free tenures led to the latter becoming liable for such payments. In the Statute of Westminster of 1275 it was stipulated that holders of socage tenures were to pay the aids generally exacted by a landholder from his military tenants. The aid was to be assessed at the rate of 20s. for every knight's fee or twenty librates <sup>26</sup>.

As the performance of knight service and the assumption of knightly rank came to be defined by the Crown as obligatory for wealthier landholders, the rank itself became a mark of social distinction. The assumption of knighthood was marked by a ceremony in which the sword, the weapon particularly associated with the knight as warrior, and belt were conferred on the candidate. The ceremony was a visible expression of the ability of the recipient to afford the proper equipment and accoutrements of a knight.

The subject of the following thesis is the social significance of knightly rank in the England of Edward I, 1272-1307. It is based primarily on an investigation of those knights who held lands in the county of Somerset. Much preliminary work in identifying the knights of the late 13th. century and in collecting material relating to them was carried out by C. Moor, the results of whose labours were printed

25 M.Powicke, Military Obligation in Medieval England, 106.

26 W.Stubbs, Select Charters (Oxford, 1890), 450.

by the Harleian Society <sup>27</sup>.

The area covered by the following study is that of the ancient county, the boundaries of which remained unchanged until 1844. At the latter date there were several minor alterations in the south and south-east when a few parishes were transferred to Dorset and Wiltshire respectively and boundary changes also affected the parishes next to Bristol <sup>28</sup>. Thirteenth-century Somerset lacked any geographical unity. It incorporated a remarkable diversity of landscape and scenery, including the fenland levels, the upland moors of Exmoor and the Mendips, which underlay a varied agrarian economy and pattern of settlement. Nevertheless the county and its institutions, notably the county court which provided the mechanism through which the local communities were administered, imposed a sense of corporate identity on the communities making up the county. Furthermore the county court was the forum in which the knights, as the most powerful members of the local communities, acted as the political leaders of county society and as the agents of the royal government.

27 C.Moor, Knights of Edward I (Harl.Soc.lxxx-lxxxiv(1929-32)).

28 V.C.H.Som. ii. 173-4.

## CHAPTER II

### THE KNIGHTS OF SOMERSET

In the 13th. century the term miles was increasingly employed in contexts in which any interpretation of it in a military sense, as used in the narratives and other records of campaigns, would be misplaced. Although the social implications of knightly rank came to supersede the military, the style miles was not applied without qualification to every landholder of a certain social position. It was necessary to receive knighthood in the ceremony of dubbing before the title might be used. John of Clevedon was knighted on 6 January 1293<sup>1</sup>. Earlier in 1289 when he witnessed a deed he was not numbered among the knights<sup>2</sup> but in 1294 he was one of the knights accompanying John Giffard on campaign in Wales<sup>3</sup>. Walter of Romsey, who was dubbed at the feast of the Swans on 22 May 1306<sup>4</sup>, was styled as a knight in 1311<sup>5</sup>, but not in earlier documents ascribed to the reign of Edward I<sup>6</sup>. Another Swan knight, John de Knoville, first appears bearing the style miles in a deed dating from 1306<sup>7</sup>.

The evidence for distinguishing the knights is provided by the use of the style miles in charter witness lists. The charters have survived as either original documents or transcripts in 14th. century cartularies. Some charters were recorded in the Chancery enrollments of letters patent and of charters. The latter are of little use for identifying knights since the documents, many of which were submitted by religious houses in the 14th. century for royal confirmation, were frequently enrolled in abstract with the dating and

1 E 198/3/5.

2 K.B.27/120 rot.6.

3 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 61-2.

4 E.Ashmole, The Institution, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter (1672), 38-9.

5 Devon R.O., TD 51, ff. 128v.-129.

6 Montacute Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.viii), pp.145-6, 151.

7 Beauchamp Regs. (Som.Rec.Soc.xxxv), 81.



attesting clauses omitted <sup>8</sup>. The information gathered from witness lists can be supplemented from lists of members of sworn juries and from documents originating from the administration of military campaigns.

The practice of distinguishing knights by title in charter witness lists began in the middle of the 13th. century. By Edward I's reign it was customary but the word miles was not always applied where to do so would have been appropriate. A deed of 1280 recorded the quit claim of rights in Edington by Walter of Downhead and Walter the Fleming to John FitzGeoffrey. While Walter of Downhead and John were styled as knights no attempt was made to distinguish those witnesses who had taken knighthood <sup>9</sup>. John de Columbers, Matthew de Furneaux and Geoffrey of Stawell used the style miles before 1280 while Robert of Brent, John de Cogan, Walter of Shapwick and William Trivet later appeared as knights <sup>10</sup>. The omission of the style in such charters surviving in transcript may have arisen from the neglect of the clerk making the copy, but it might conceivably reflect the relative looseness in the drawing up of private deeds, which were not issued from royal or ecclesiastical chanceries, in the earlier part of the reign <sup>11</sup>.

In the charters which knights witnessed, the act of attestation implied free status. As witnesses the knights invariably took precedence over the non-knights. The rank of knight was clearly the principal distinction among free men. No other titles were employed to distinguish by wealth, lineage or tenure some men from others. The style miles adequately expressed the social distinction of the wealthier and more prominent landholders including many tenants in chief per baroniam. A deed confirmed in 1287 dealing with land in Sparkford in the south-east of the county was witnessed by three local knights.

8 Cf. Cal.Chart.R. 1327-41, 312-18.

9 Hylle Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.lxviii), p. 54.

10 See App.I.

11 Cf. Transcripts of Charters relating to Gilbertine Houses, ed. F.M.Stenton (Lincoln Rec.Soc.xviii), pp. xxxiii-xxxiv.

They were all baronial tenants of the Crown but were distinguished solely as milites <sup>12</sup>. Hugh Lovel, who was overlord of the land concerned <sup>13</sup>, held the barony of Castle Cary to the north-east. Roger de Moels had estates to the east about North Cadbury where he held half the barony. Robert FitzPain was lord of half of the Dorset barony of Powerstock <sup>14</sup> but his extensive estates included land in Cary Fitzpaine and Bridgehampton, west of Sparkford <sup>15</sup>.

The use of the style baro as a distinction was extremely limited. The term, which had the general meaning of homo in a feudal sense as the man of a lord, was on some occasions applied more particularly to Crown tenants per baroniam. It appeared in a charter confirmed in 1291 recording the grant by Gloucester Abbey to the Bishop of Bath and Wells of the advowson of Burnham church <sup>16</sup>. Among the witnesses Robert FitzPain, John Tregoz and John de Vesey were described as barones. John Tregoz, lord of the Herefordshire barony of Ewyas Harold <sup>17</sup>, was lord of Burnham manor <sup>18</sup>. John de St. Lo and Robert de Panes, landholders near Bath, were styled as knights <sup>19</sup>.

In itself tenure per baroniam accorded a tenurial rather than a social distinction to the landholders. They were subject to a different scale of penalties in the administration of justice <sup>20</sup>. In the payment of relief, exacted from military tenants on entering their holdings, the baronial tenant owed £100. The amount was reduced in 1297 to 100 marks. The tenant by knight service (per militiam) was assessed for relief at the rate of £5 a knight's fee <sup>21</sup>.

The baronial tenants of Edward I did not correspond to the ancestors of

<sup>12</sup> Cal.Pat. 1279-88, 478.

<sup>13</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 306.

<sup>14</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 28, 68, 72.

<sup>15</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 285 ; C 134/48 no.5.

<sup>16</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 404.

<sup>17</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 43.

<sup>18</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 276.

<sup>19</sup> See Below.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I (Som.Rec.Soc.xliv), 252.

<sup>21</sup> I.J.Sanders, Feudal Service in England, 98-103.



the later medieval baronage. That group constituted an aristocracy of the wealthiest and most distinguished members of society. It crystallized initially around the receipt of an individual summons to attend parliamentary assemblies <sup>22</sup>. In the summonses issued under Edward I the divorce between baronial tenure and possession of landed wealth and position was already manifest. John de Columbers, who was probably the least wealthy baronial tenant in Somerset <sup>23</sup>, was not summoned. William Russell (d.1311), who held half of North Cadbury barony, was also not requested to attend. John de Moels, the lord of the other half of that barony <sup>24</sup>, was summoned in 1297 and 1299 <sup>25</sup> but his predecessors Nicholas and Roger had held prominent posts in the royal household <sup>26</sup>. In 1297 and 1299 writs of summons were addressed to Henry de Lorty (d.1321) <sup>27</sup> who held Stoke Trister (Cucklington) by barony <sup>28</sup> but later neither his nor his successor's presence was requested. Wealthy landholders on the other hand were summoned regularly. Writs were frequently addressed to John de Mohun and Simon de Montagu <sup>29</sup>. John (d.1330) was lord of Dunster which was probably held by barony <sup>30</sup>. Simon was a prominent member of the court circle and a wealthy landholder in Somerset where his main estates were held by knight service <sup>31</sup>.

The knights and leading landholders in local groupings.

The choice of witnesses, whose function was to safeguard by their testimony the transaction of which the deed was the written record, was

22 K.B.McFarlane, 'The English Nobility in the later Middle Ages', 12th.Int.Cong.Hist.Sciences (Vienna, 1965), 338.

23 See p. 65.

24 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 68.

25 Parl.Writs, i. 739.

26 See p. 218.

27 Parl.Writs, i. 877.

28 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 84.

29 Parl.writs, i. 740, 742.

30 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 114.

31 See p. 64.

dictated by several considerations. The factors operating either singly or in various combinations included the nature of the transaction, the occasion and place at which the deed was drafted and the standing of the parties involved. It was customary to associate with a transaction those landholders in the neighbourhood of the property it concerned. They had knowledge of local matters. The maintenance of and changes in the pattern of land tenure was dependant on the acquiescence of the knights who, as it will be shown, effectively controlled the local communities <sup>32</sup>. Their acquiescence was implied in attestation. It was in that context that knights and other prominent free men acted frequently as witnesses <sup>33</sup>.

Local groupings of landholders were called upon to witness documents of which they probably only knew the general terms. Witnesses were not necessarily present when a grant was made or a deed compiled. In 1304 Robert Martin granted his son property in west Somerset, in Withycombe, Cutcombe and Watchet. The deed was dated from Piddle Walterston in Dorset. The witnesses included Simon de Raleigh, Andrew Luttrell, Simon Roges, Roger Perceval, Adam le Bret, Geoffrey of Luccombe and John of Merriott <sup>34</sup>. They were prominent landholders in the area north-east of Exmoor <sup>35</sup>.

Such groups figured prominently among witnesses to deeds issued on behalf of the most prominent landholders of their neighbourhood particularly in important matters. In 1295 Roger de Moels, whose estates lay in North Cadbury and its neighbourhood, granted Elizabeth of Clevedon custody of the lands of William Lisle in Wanstrow, Blackford and Wilkin Throop near Horsington. Among the witnesses were Walter Pauncefot, John of Blackford

<sup>32</sup> See chapters IV and V.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Transcripts of Charters relating to Gilbertine Houses, ed. F.M.Stenton, p.xxxi.

<sup>34</sup> H.C.Maxwell-Lyte, Some Somerset Manors, (Som.Rec.Soc.extra ser.1931), 52.

<sup>35</sup> See below ; for Geoffrey of Luccombe see Feud.Aids, iv.302 and for John of Merriott see Maxwell-Lyte, op.cit., 35.

and Peter du Boys <sup>36</sup> who held land in the vicinity of North Cadbury near Blackford and Wilkin Throop. They were the principal landholders in Compton, Blackford and South Cadbury respectively <sup>37</sup>.

Over a period of years there was a marked continuity in the knights and other prominent free landholders witnessing deeds relating to a particular locality. Between the various parts of the county the composition of the groupings of such persons differed radically, reflecting the limited disposition of the property of that social group from which most of the knights were recruited.

At the beginning of Edward I's reign several landholders near Bath were knights <sup>38</sup>. They witnessed charters concerning property on the outskirts of Bath, in Twerton, Sockerwick and Bathford <sup>39</sup>. Adam of Charlcombe's property presumably lay north of Bath in the present-day suburb of Charlcombe and that of John of Weston to the west of the city in the suburb of Weston. Hubert Hoesse came from a family with lands and interests in Tadwick to the north-east <sup>40</sup>. In 1280 Hubert was elected to a grand assize concerning common rights in Norton St. Philip about six miles south of Bath <sup>41</sup>.

The other knights in the group held property slightly further from the city. Thomas of Bayeux held land in Twerton to the south-west. John de St. Lo was a landholder in Newton and Publow, to the west. The property of Ellis Cotel lay farther south-west including land in Camerton <sup>42</sup>. He presumably also held the land in White Ox Mead south of the city which his son William later held. William succeeded his father in 1301 <sup>43</sup>. Ellis also

<sup>36</sup> Hook Manor, Donhead St. Andrew, Arundell MSS. G/1883, no. 346.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric. I - Edw. I (Som. Rec. Soc. vi), pp. 327, 335; Just 1/1285 rot. 6d.

<sup>38</sup> See fig. I

<sup>39</sup> Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 219-20; Som. R. O., WHb 9/366-8, 371-2, 374-7, 383-4; 11/551-2.

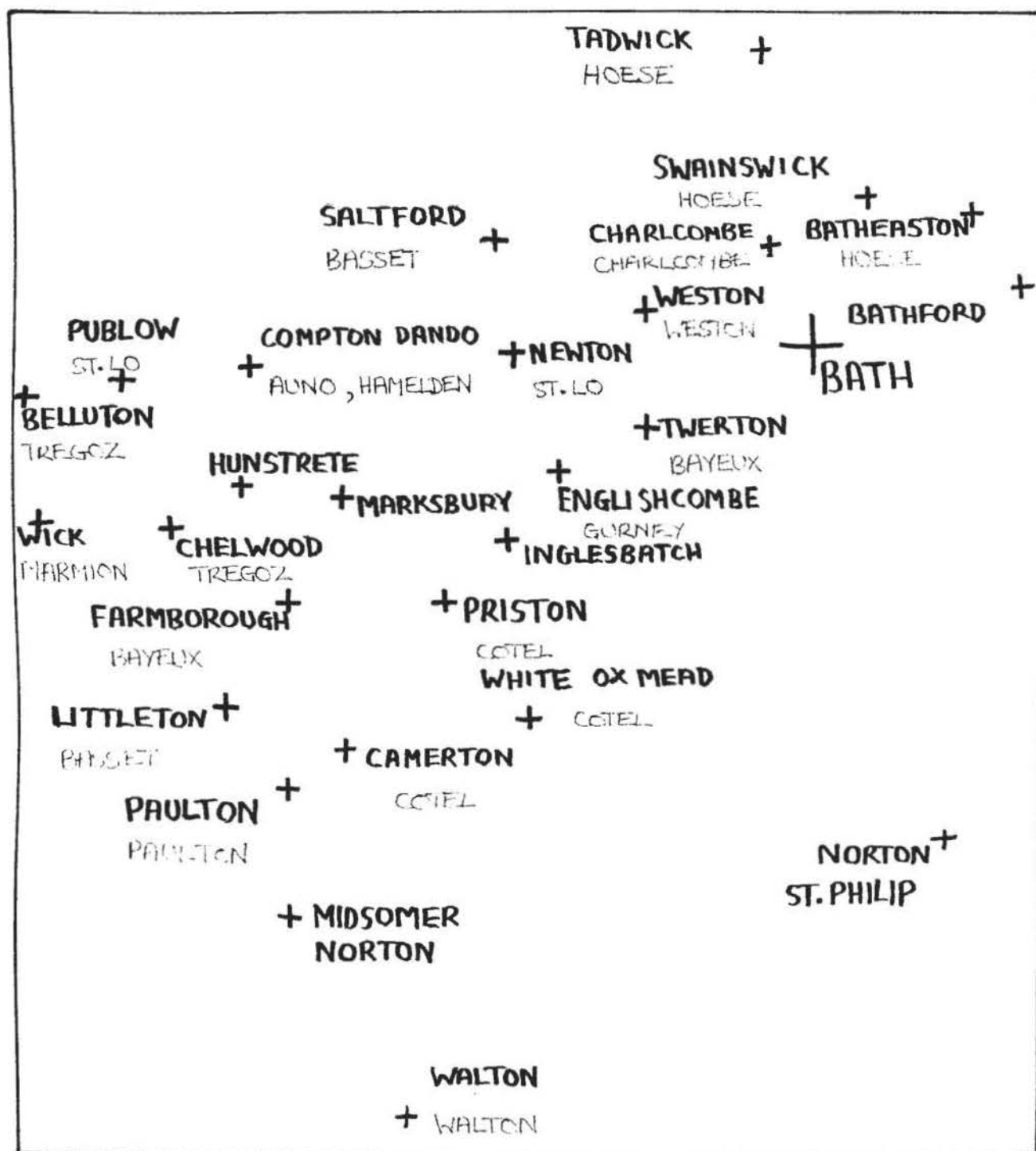
<sup>40</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 311

<sup>41</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw. I (Som. Rec. Soc. xlv), 312-13

<sup>42</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 279; cf. 311

<sup>43</sup> Glastonbury Feodary, (Som. Rec. Soc. xxvi), 108; cf. *ibid* 11

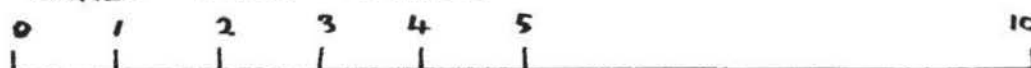
FIGURE 1: LANDHOLDING FAMILIES BELONGING TO THE KNIGHTLY GROUP IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF BATH



WALTON - NAME OF SETTLEMENT

WALTON - NAME OF KNIGHTLY LANDHOLDING FAMILY

SCALE : 1 INCH = 2 MILES



has interests in near-by Priston where he quitclaimed a pasture to Bath Abbey <sup>44</sup>. Robert Marmion evidently held land in his wife's right in Wick and Hinton <sup>45</sup>.

The last four knights mentioned were frequently named with others in charters dealing with land south-west of Bath. Ellis Cotel attested a grant of land in Midsomer Norton close to Camerton, together with the knights Roger of Paulton and Alan of Walton <sup>46</sup> who were presumably substantial landholders in Paulton and Walton. Thomas of Bayeux, who also had rights in Farmborough <sup>47</sup>, figured in a deed dealing with land in near-by Hunstrete together with John de St.Lo <sup>48</sup>. As late as 1305 Thomas was associated with his neighbour Thomas de Gurney, also a knight, in a deed relating to property in Inglesbatch <sup>49</sup>. That place is south-west of Englishcombe where Thomas de Gurney held land <sup>50</sup> and close to Thomas of Bayeux's holding in Twerton where the deed was drawn up. John de St.Lo and Robert Marmion were the principal witnesses to a series of deeds in which the knight Alexander de Auno disposed of property in Compton Dando early in the reign <sup>51</sup>. Compton lies between John's former holdings in Newton and Publow. John and Robert also witnessed several transactions involving land south of Compton in Chelwood, Marksbury and Hunstrete. The other knights named in that series of deeds, which are either undated or of the early 14th. century were Alexander de Auno, Thomas of Bayeux, Edmund Basset, Laurence de Hamelden, John Tregoz and Thomas of Wellesley <sup>52</sup>. They were all, with the possible exception of the last named, local landholders.

44 Bath cartularies (Som.Rec.Soc.vii),(1) p.71

45 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I (Som.Rec.Soc.vi), p.376

46 B.L.Harl.MS.316,f.59 and v.

47 Feud.Aids,iv. 311

48 Glastonbury Cart.ii (Som.Rec.Soc.lxiii),p.558

49 Som.R.O., WHb 10/474.

50 Feud.Aids,iv. 313

51 B.L.Harl.MS. 316, ff.66-8

52 Glaston.Cart.ii, pp.550-62

The relationships between the knights in any particular part of the county were consolidated by ties of a personal nature. John Tregoz held the small manor of Chelwood and was lord of land at Belluton near Publow <sup>53</sup>. Although his principal estates lay in Herefordshire his influence was felt in north-east Somerset. Laurence de Hamelden served under him during the Scottish campaign of 1298 <sup>54</sup>. Laurence had presumably inherited the land earlier acquired by Thomas de Hamelden from Alexander de Auno in Compton Dando <sup>55</sup>. After John Tregoz's death in 1300 his widow Joan married Laurence <sup>56</sup> who in her right held Chelwood manor <sup>57</sup>.

There are many examples of family ties between knightly landholders who were neighbours. There was a high degree of intermarriage within the knightly group. Edmund Basset and Thomas of Bayeux were related by blood. In the middle of the 13th. century property in Catcott, Saltford and elsewhere was inherited by two sisters, Mary and Isabel. Mary, who married Joyce of Bayeux, was the mother of Thomas. Isabel's son and heir Anselm Basset <sup>58</sup>, who died in 1280 <sup>59</sup>, was the father of Edmund <sup>60</sup>. Edmund was evidently a younger son. He had a brother John Basset <sup>61</sup>, a knight, who shared with Joyce and Thomas of Bayeux property in Winford and Catcott in 1285 and in Saltford in 1303 <sup>62</sup>. At the latter date Edmund held land in Hinton and Littleton <sup>63</sup> and he later inherited the Saltford property <sup>64</sup>.

The network of family ties between the leading landholders of a particular locality extended to persons equivalent in social standing to

53 C 133/94 no.9 ; Feud.Aids, iv. 311.

54 E 101/6/40.

55 B.L.Harl.MS.316, ff.66v.-7.

56 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 432, 449.

57 Feud.Aids, iv. 311.

58 Glaston.Feod. 79; Glaston.Cart. ii, pp.388-9; Close R. 1261-4, 286.

59 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 226-7.

60 Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 297.

61 C.Moor, Knights of Edward I, i(Harl.Soc.lxxx), 51.

62 Feud.Aids, iv. 290-1, 311.

63 Ibid. 309.

64 Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p.147.



the knights. Such persons were also leading free landholders in the local communities. In west Somerset the knights were, as elsewhere in the county, drawn from the most substantial landholders <sup>65</sup>. William le Bret held land in Sampford Brett and Torweston <sup>66</sup>. Simon Roges's property included Porlock manor further west <sup>67</sup>. Simon de Raleigh's main estate lay in Nettlecombe but by 1298 he also held land in Cutcombe <sup>68</sup>. The latter property was probably held in the right of his wife Joan who may have been the sister of Laurence le Tort <sup>69</sup>. Laurence, who held land in near-by Oule Knowle in Carhampton <sup>70</sup> was not a knight but was a member of a family with important landed interests in Cutcombe <sup>71</sup>.

Simon de Raleigh, who was evidently the son of the knight Warin de Raleigh <sup>72</sup>, was also closely related by marriage to some of his neighbours. Warin's daughter Maud married Matthew de Furneaux <sup>73</sup> who succeeded to an estate in Kilve after 1285 <sup>74</sup>. In about 1270 Warin's daughter Elizabeth married Andrew Luttrell <sup>75</sup> who later held East Quantockshead <sup>76</sup>. Warin evidently shared the confidence and trust of Andrew's father Alexander Luttrell who, before setting out on crusade in 1270, nominated him as his attorney <sup>77</sup>.

Between the knights and prominent landholders of the area north and north-east of Exmoor there were many more ties by marriage. Ralph FitzUrse of Williton, who was not a knight, married Alexander Luttrell's daughter Eleanor at the beginning of the reign <sup>78</sup>. Matthew de Furneaux's sister

<sup>65</sup> See Fig.II

<sup>66</sup> Feud.Aids,iv. 275

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. 295

<sup>68</sup> Ibid. 303; Collinson, A History of Somerset (Bath, 1791),iii. 58

<sup>69</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, p.298; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 368; cf.78-9

<sup>70</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 77

<sup>71</sup> Feud.Aids,iv. 303; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 92-4

<sup>72</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, op.cit., 367

<sup>73</sup> Ibid. 317

<sup>74</sup> Feud.Aids,iv. 275, 303

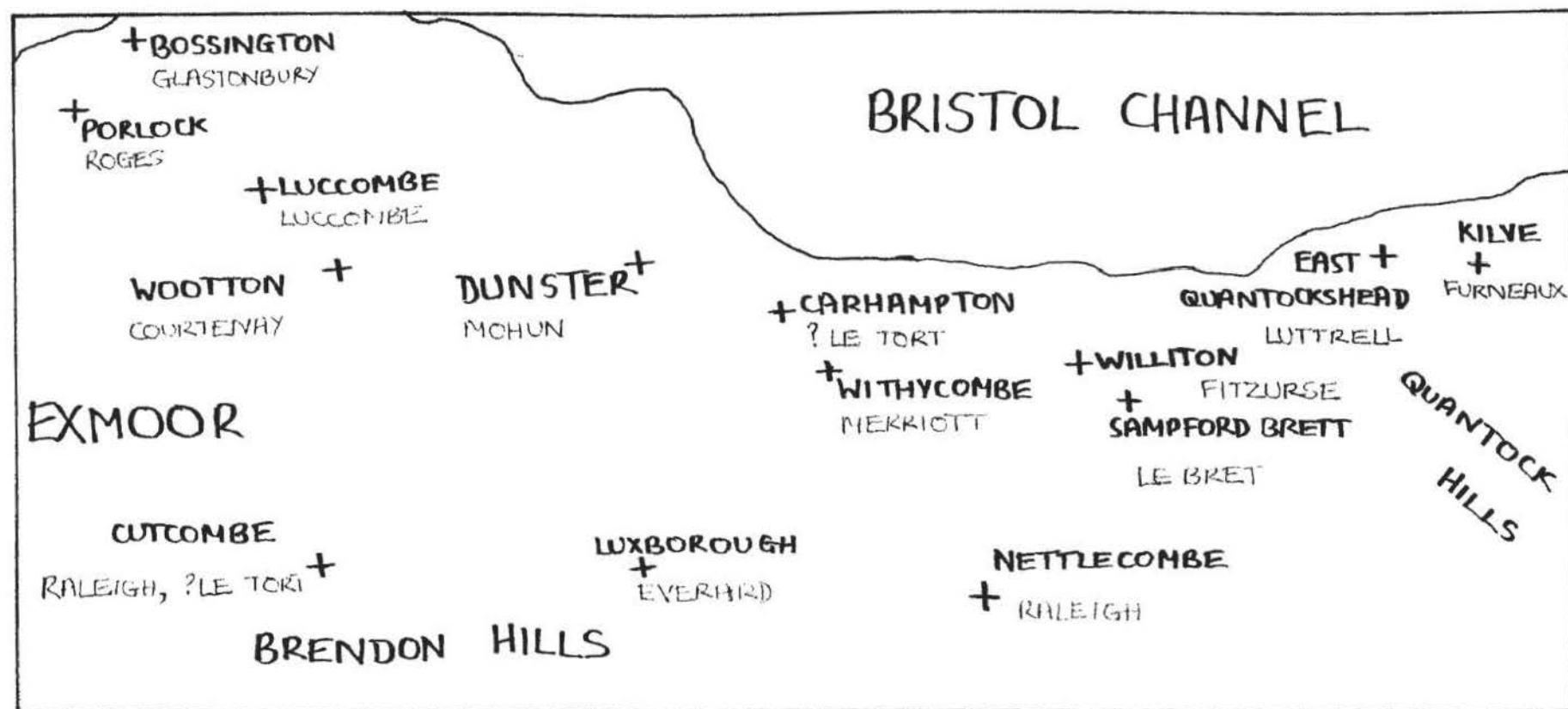
<sup>75</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, History of Dunster,i. 67-9; Som.R.O., L 22/1; Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I(Som.Rec.Soc.xli), 24-6

<sup>76</sup> Feud.Aids,iv. 275

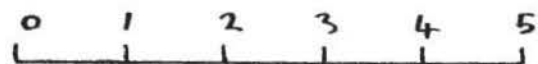
<sup>77</sup> Close R. 1268-70, 278; Som.R.O., L 22/1

<sup>78</sup> Som.R.O., L 33/1

FIGURE 2: LANDHOLDING FAMILIES BELONGING TO THE KNIGHTLY GROUP NORTH-EAST OF EXMOOR



SCALE : 1 INCH = 2 MILES



PORLOCK : NAME OF SETTLEMENT

ROGIES : NAME OF KNIGHTLY LANDHOLDING FAMILY



Denise married John Peverel, another local landholder <sup>79</sup>.

Not all knights were closely integrated in the local groupings. Henry of Glastonbury acquired land in west Somerset in Bossington and in Heathfield near Taunton by marriage with Alice, the daughter and sole heir of Laurence Talbot <sup>80</sup>. Henry witnessed a grant made possibly in 1307 by John de Mohun to the Dunster burgesses <sup>81</sup>. Henry was not however a long-standing or established member of the local knightly group. His father Robert had been a household knight of Henry III <sup>81</sup>. By 1297 Henry himself was a member of the retinue of Henry III's grandson Thomas, earl of Lancaster, in whose service he remained. At the beginning of the reign of Edward III he was in the service of Thomas's brother Henry <sup>83</sup>.

The close personal ties between the knights were expressed on important social occasions. The leading landholders customarily assembled for the baptism of a son or daughter of one of their number <sup>84</sup>. Gilbert de Knoville who held land in Puckington <sup>85</sup> acted as godfather about 1276 to John, the son of John of Merriott, his neighbour in Lopen and Merriott <sup>86</sup>. In 1313 John de Erlegh of North Petherton attended the funeral of Nicholas de Langelond of South Brent <sup>87</sup>.

The local groupings of knights and leading freeholders changed composition over a relatively small distance. The interests and influence of most knights followed their lands which usually were not widespread. The knights who held land south of Bath were not those mentioned above

<sup>79</sup> Just. 1/1330 rot.7d.; cf. Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 51.

<sup>80</sup> See pp. 172-3.

<sup>81</sup> Som.R.O., L 8/1; Maxwell-Lyte, History of Dunster, i. 282-3.

<sup>82</sup> Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 209.

<sup>83</sup> J.R.Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322 (Oxford, 1970), 62.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, pp. 52-3.

<sup>85</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 291.

<sup>86</sup> K.B.27/151 rot.4; cf. C 133/42 no.6.

<sup>87</sup> Longleat MS.10655, rot.18.

whose property lay south-west of the city<sup>88</sup>. The knights named in charters concerning Hemington<sup>89</sup> included John of Laverton and his son-in-law Robert de Panes. Through his marriage with John's daughter Amabilia, Robert acquired the estate in near-by Laverton<sup>90</sup>. Oliver de Dinham held the neighbouring manor of Buckland<sup>91</sup>. In the right of his wife Isabel, widow of John de Courtenay, he was lord of Hemington<sup>92</sup>. Roger of Lockington held land in Holcombe south-west of Hemington<sup>93</sup>.

The Hemington witnesses include Henry and Alexander de Montfort, Giles de Flury and Henry de Merland. They represented the chief landholding interest in the neighbourhood of Frome, south-east of Hemington, at the beginning of the reign. Giles de Flury held land in Cloford<sup>94</sup>. He was presumably the successor of the knight, John de Flury, who witnessed grants of land near Frome in the middle of the century<sup>95</sup>. Henry de Merland was a proprietor in Orchardleigh<sup>96</sup> and like Giles was evidently not a knight. The de Montforts had property in Nunney<sup>97</sup>. As well as appearing in the Hemington deeds, they headed, with members of other local knightly families, the local landholders attesting charters concerning land in Frome and its neighbourhood, including Wells and Marston Bigot<sup>98</sup>. The other important landholders near Frome included Walter of Downhead, John of Laverton, Robert de Panes and Alan of Walton. William Branch was lord of Frome hundred in the right of his wife Joan who was succeeded in 1279 by their son Nicholas<sup>99</sup>. Ellis de la Mare presumably

88 See Fig.III.

89 Devon R.O., TD 51, ff.103-5.

90 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 112-13; Feud.Aids, iv. 277.

91 C 133/89 no.3.

92 Plac.de quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 694-5.

93 Feud.Aids, iv. 273.

94 Ibid. 277.

95 Longleat MSS. 4946, 4952.

96 Feud.Aids, iv. 276.

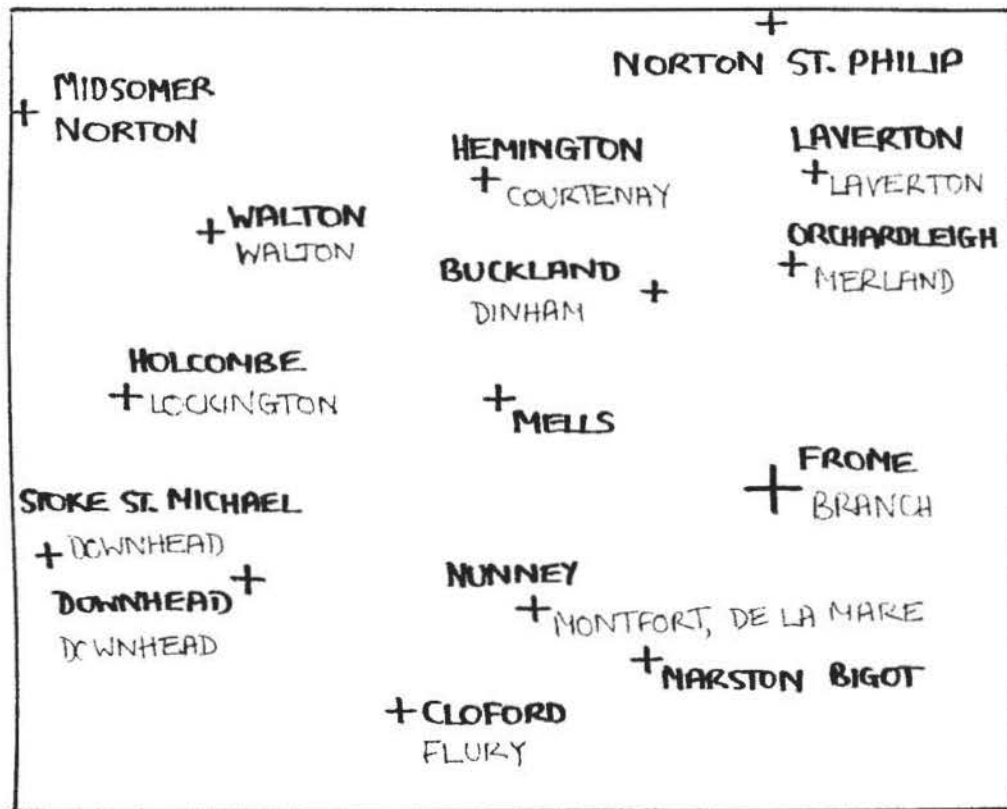
97 Ibid. 277.

98 Longleat MSS. 4946, 4962, 5003, 5005; Glastonbury Rentalia (Som.Rec.Soc. v), 226-8; Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 330.

99 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 151; Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 124; Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 195; Feud.Aids, iv. 276.

FIGURE 3 : LANDHOLDING FAMILIES BELONGING TO THE

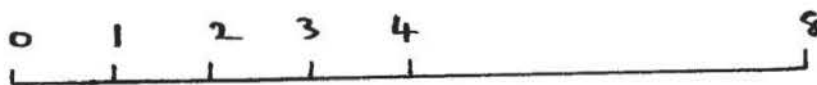
KNIGHTLY GROUP IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF FROME



WALTON : NAME OF SETTLEMENT

WALTON : NAME OF KNIGHTLY LANDHOLDING FAMILY

SCALE : 1 INCH = 2 MILES



held land in Nunney where his son Nicholas had an estate later <sup>100</sup>.

A few knights belonged to several groupings since their property was more widely spread. Walter of Downhead, who held land in Downhead and Stoke St. Michael in the east of the county <sup>101</sup>, also had property in the west in Staunton near Dunster and in Almsworthy in Exford <sup>102</sup>. About 1271 he witnessed Henry de Newburgh's quitclaim of three knights' fees in Shurton, Broomfield and West Quantockshead to John de Mohun, lord of Dunster <sup>103</sup>.

The size of the knightly group.

Between 1272 and 1307 the knights of Somerset were drawn from about one hundred and fifty families <sup>104</sup>. The figure does not include a handful of the most prominent families whose Somerset property was peripheral to their main estates which lay elsewhere. Chief among such landholders were the de Clare earls of Gloucester, Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, and the Mortimers of Wigmore. The earls of Gloucester were overlords of much land in the north-east of the county. Save from their manor of Easton in Gordano the land was held from them by military tenants, many of whom were knights <sup>105</sup>. Henry de Lacy had demesne estates in the south-east of the county in Henstridge, Charlton Horethorne and Kingsbury. He was also overlord of Stratton manor in Kilmersdon hundred <sup>106</sup>. The Mortimers had property in Bridgewater, Milverton and Odcombe, part of the inheritance of William Briwer (d.1226). His land there was eventually divided between his

100 Close R. 1268-72, 379-80; Feud.Aids, iv. 277

101 Feud.Aids, iv. 294; cf. Just. 1/1310 rot.8d.

102 Feud.Aids, iv. 296; The Honour of Dunster (Som.Rec.Soc.xxxiii), p.47

103 The Honour of Dunster, p.44

104 Cf. app. I

105 Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, pp.234, 248-9

106 Feud.Aids, iv. 273, 289; D.L.29/1/1 rot.14 and d.; D.L.29/1/2 rot 19 and d.

great-grandaughters Maud and Eve. Maud, who died in 1303, was the wife of Roger Mortimer of Wigmore. Eve married William de Cauntelo by whom she had issue George who was succeeded in 1273 by his sisters Joan, wife of John de Hastings, and Millicent de Montalt, wife of Eudes la Zouche<sup>107</sup>. Since their main estates lay in the Welsh Marches and elsewhere they have not been counted as belonging to the Somerset knightly group for the present study.

On the other hand Thomas de Berkeley and Hugh de Courtenay and their successors have been included since they maintained an important position in the life of the county. Thomas de Berkeley, whose main estates were in Gloucestershire, held the hundreds of Portbury and Hartcliffe and Bedminster south-west of Bristol<sup>108</sup>. The Courtenays, who held Okehampton barony in Devon, were lords of the manor and hundred of Crewkerne in the south of Somerset as well as of Hemington manor in the north-east<sup>109</sup>.

It is not easy to ascertain the number of knights in the county at any one time. Over the reign as a whole the number of knights and of the families from which they were drawn probably fluctuated considerably. The problem is rendered more intractable by the lack of firm dates, especially in the charters issued at the beginning of the reign. The first evidence that an individual used the style miles gives no guide to the date on which he took knighthood. Little is known about the occasions at which Somerset men were dubbed.

Since it was common for an eldest son to take his father's forename there are problems of identification when tracing the genealogies of knightly families. From the late 12th. century the head of five successive

107 Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 133 and n.2; Bridgewater Borough Archives (Som. Rec. Soc. xlviii), pp. xvii-xix

108 Flac. de Quo Warr (Rec. Com), 697-8

109 C 133/6 no.1; C 133/62 no.7

generations of the de Columbers family was called Philip. The line was only broken in 1277 when Philip V was succeeded by his brother John. Family tradition was restored in 1306 when he in turn was succeeded by his son Philip<sup>110</sup>. In the later 13th. century the head of the family of de Gorges was for several generations called Ralph. Rather confusingly two brothers called Ralph de Gorges were mentioned in 1254 and 1271<sup>111</sup>. One of them, who died about 1271, married Ellen, daughter and coheir of Ives de Moreville<sup>112</sup>. In her right he presumably held land in Wraxall in north-east Somerset<sup>113</sup>. Ellen was succeeded in 1292 by her son Ralph de Gorges<sup>114</sup> who was succeeded in turn in 1297 by his son Ralph<sup>115</sup>. Matthew de Furneaux, who inherited lands in Somerset and elsewhere from William Avenel in 1253<sup>116</sup>, was dead by 1285 when his widow Amice was holding land in dower in Kilve and Holford<sup>117</sup>. His son Matthew inherited the estates<sup>118</sup> and died in the early summer of 1316<sup>119</sup>. However the precise relationship between succeeding landholders remains uncertain particularly when they were lesser knights. At Newton John de St.Lo was succeeded, apparently by 1295, by John de St.Lo<sup>120</sup> who, it might be speculated, was his own son since the eldest son often took the name of the father. The degree of relationship is often unsolved even when different forenames were involved. Peter de Fauconberge was succeeded at Milton by William<sup>121</sup> and Walter Pauncefoot at Compton Pauncefoot by John<sup>122</sup>.

110 Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 67

111 Close R. 1253-4, 254; 1268-72, 429

112 Ibid. 533-4; Cal.Inq.Misc.i, p.75; Roll of Arms Hen.III(Harl Soc. cxiii-cxiv), 152

113 Cf. J.Collinson, A History of Somerset (Bath, 1791),iii. 156; Feud.Aids,iv. 305

114 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 306

115 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 28, 103, 338

116 Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 71

117 Feud.Aids, iv. 275,290

118 Just. 1/1333 rot.16; Feud.Aids, iv.303

119 Cal.Fine R. 1307-19, 289

120 Feud.Aids, iv. 279, 313; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p.249

121 Feud.Aids, iv. 282; Pedes Finium, 1 Edw.II-20 Edw.III (Som.Rec.Soc. xii), p.11

122 Pedes Finium, Ric.1 - Edw.1, pp. 314, 327; Feud.Aids, iv. 306



In the procedure of the grand assizes summoned in the proceedings held in Somerset before justices itinerant in 1280 fifty-eight men were named <sup>123</sup>. They were all substantial landholders in the county. Participation in the grand assize was theoretically limited to knights and of those men at least fifty became knights. Forty had been dubbed by 1280. In the same eyre at least six more knights sat as members of juries empanelled in connexion with quo warranto inquests <sup>124</sup>. The number of knights in the county in 1280 was thus large, at least forty-six and perhaps as many as fifty-six. One of the complaints listed in the Barons' Petition of 1258 was that there was a shortage of knights for the membership of grand assize juries. Such was not the case in Somerset in the early part of Edward I's reign <sup>125</sup>. Since the wealthier landholders were not involved in the court proceedings, the number of knights in the county in 1280 clearly was in excess of fifty-six and possibly over seventy. With the inclusion of those lesser knights who did not participate in the work of the eyre, the number was probably nearer ninety. The number fell considerably in the early 14th. century as the successors of knights neglected to take knighthood but there was still a large body of men holding the rank <sup>126</sup>.

#### Compulsory knighthood and the county landholders.

Compulsory knighthood was enforced against those landholders who were expected to be able to sustain the costs of knightly rank and service. Although the assumption of knightly rank depended on family tradition and social aspirations, the obligation fell precisely on those landholders who were most likely for those reasons to become knights.

At the close of the 13th. century the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset

123 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 3, 18-19, 32-3, 74-5, 102-3, 105-6, 134-5, 135-6, 148-9, 226-7, 262, 312-3; see app.III for names.

124 See p.33

125 N.Denholm-Young, 'Feudal Society in the Thirteenth Century; the Knights', Collected Papers on Medieval Subjects (Oxford, 1946), 61

126 See chapter III

was twice required to submit a list of landholders in those counties in connexion with proposed military expeditions. The first return was made in 1297. On 5 May the sheriffs were ordered to instruct landholders with twenty librates or more to serve in person in defence of the realm. The muster was later fixed for early July in London. Ecclesiastics and women were directed to send their quotas of feudal service <sup>127</sup>. The return was made in response to a writ dated 24 May by which twenty librate holders were enjoined to muster in London during the preparations for the forthcoming expedition to Flanders. The list comprises the names of reputed twenty librate holders, including ecclesiastics and women <sup>128</sup>. The second return, arising out of the Scottish campaign planned for 1300, was made in compliance with a writ dated 14 January of that year, requiring all forty librate holders to muster in Carlisle at Midsummer <sup>129</sup>. The latter list is probably of more value in assessing the relationship between the obligation to take knighthood and the number of knights. The figure of forty librates had since 1292 been the level of wealth at which the obligation was incurred. The return should therefore include all those landholders who were liable to compulsory knighthood.

A comparison of the lists shows that the earlier return is less reliable. Paradoxically only 176 persons were named as against 223 in 1300 when twice the level of landed wealth was involved. The methods employed in summoning the cavalry for the 1297 campaign provoked much hostility from prominent landholders and adversely affected their relationship with the Crown <sup>130</sup>. The omission of a few of the wealthiest men from the return, but not from that of 1300 <sup>131</sup>, was probably the outcome of their opposition

<sup>127</sup> Parl. Writs, i. 281

<sup>128</sup> Ibid. 292-3

<sup>129</sup> Ibid. 335-7

<sup>130</sup> F.M.Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 678-80

<sup>131</sup> E.g. the Earls of Cornwall, Gloucester, Leicester and Lincoln, and John de Mohun



to royal policy rather than to any administrative problems encountered in compiling it in a short time. Although several lesser men escaped mention from the earlier but not the later return <sup>132</sup>, the county landholders were, as a group, less able to secure exemption in 1297. Nevertheless few of those named in 1297 actually figure in documents relating to the Flanders campaign. The sheriff's return in 1300 on the other hand is remarkable for its length. In 1295 only twenty-five names were included in a list of forty librate holders in Wiltshire <sup>133</sup>.

The list of 1297 named 144 lay landholders while that of 1300 named 166 <sup>134</sup>. Included were those women who held land either in dower, such as Eleanor, widow of Hugh Lovel (d.1291) <sup>135</sup>, Eleanor, widow of Hugh de Courtenay (d.1292) <sup>136</sup>, and Joan, widow of Alan Plugenet (d.1298) <sup>137</sup>, or in their own right, such as Hawise de Pyn <sup>138</sup>, and Joan de Vivonne and Cecily de Beauchamp, two of the daughters of William de Forz (d.1259) <sup>139</sup>. John, the son of Cecily and John de Beauchamp (d.1285), Richard, the son of Hugh Lovel, and Hugh, the son of Hugh de Courtenay <sup>140</sup>, were also named. They had inherited the bulk of their fathers' estates. Cecily de Muscegros, returned in 1300, was the widow of John de Muscegros (d.1275) <sup>141</sup>, whose son and heir Robert de Muscegros <sup>142</sup> had died in 1280 leaving as his heir his daughter Hawise <sup>143</sup>. Hawise's second husband John de Ferrers, who was also named in 1300, acquired Cecily's property after her death in 1301 <sup>144</sup>.

In 1297 134 male landholders were named. The number listed in

132 E.g. Richard of Emborough, Ralph FitzUrse, Adam Ford, William of Greenham, Henry le Waleys.

133 M. Powicke, Military Obligations in Medieval England (Oxford, 1962), 109

134 For the names see app. II

135 Cal. Close, 1288-96, 180

136 Cal. Pat. 1281-92, 497

137 Cal. Fine R. 1272-1307, 408; Cal. Close, 1296-1302, 230

138 See pp. 142-3

139 See pp. 137-8

140 Cf. Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 51, 28, 70

141 Cal. Close, 1272-79, 172

142 C 133/10 no. 1

143 C 133/28 no. 8

144 Complete Peerage, v. 307-8

1300 was 144. Only eighty names occur in both lists. Fifty-four persons included in 1297 were not named in 1300. Some omissions from the later list can be accounted for by death. In 1297 the names of Richard of Kenn, Walter de Loveny and Stephen de la More were distinguished by a cross. They were not returned in 1300 although Richard had been distrained in 1293 as a forty librate holder <sup>145</sup>. Walter was apparently dead by 1298 <sup>146</sup>. It seems probable that all three died while the earlier list was being compiled or soon after. In 1300 the names of James de Multon, Nicholas de Cheyney and Roger de Novaunt, a Devon knight, were similarly marked. As James was alive in 1309 <sup>147</sup> the significance of the distinction is not clear. In some cases the successor of a person recorded in 1297 was mentioned in 1300. By the latter date John of Clevedon and Oliver de Dinham had been succeeded by their sons John and Joyce respectively <sup>148</sup>.

It is possible that at least 34 of the landholders named only in 1297 held property valued at between twenty and forty librates. Several of them or their predecessors figure among the knights recorded in charter witness lists <sup>149</sup>. Peter de Fauconberge was possibly dead by 1300. In 1299 he was relieved of the coronership on the grounds of infirmity <sup>150</sup>, probably due to old age. He had been succeeded by William de Fauconberge by 1309 <sup>151</sup> but William was not included in the forty librate holders. The family holding in Milton may not have been of sufficient value to merit the inclusion of either Peter or William in 1300. Nevertheless William was distrained to take knighthood on account of his holding forty librates of land in 1312 <sup>152</sup>. None of the wealthier landholders returned in 1297 were

145 E 198/3/5

146 Muchelney Cart. pp. 105-6

147 Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xxviii(2), 174

148 App.II; C 133/89 no.3.

149 E.g. Walter Pauncefoot, Walter of Romsey, Nicholas of Walton

150 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 229

151 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, p.277; ibid. 1 Edw.II-20 Edw.III, p.11

152 C 47/1/7

excluded from the 1300 return if they had survived until then.

Nevertheless it seems likely that the list of 1300 was compiled not solely on the basis of a detailed inquest into the value of the property of the county landholders. Social prestige apparently was an important factor in determining whose name was included. Men with less than forty librates may have been included on account of their social standing<sup>153</sup>. Those named were landholders from established families whose position had been secured for several generations. To be an established knight or the head of a long-standing knightly family was an adequate qualification for inclusion.

The landholders recorded in the two returns were all members of knightly families. About 105 Somerset families, represented by some 115 individuals, were named. All of those families included at least one knight during the reign. No distinction was made in the lists between those who were knights and those who were not. Robert of Godmanstone and Walter of Romsey were returned in 1297 together with Peter d'Evercy who was also returned with Richard Lovel in 1300. All four were not dubbed until 1306<sup>154</sup>. Nicholas of Walton, returned in 1297, had still not taken knighthood by 1312<sup>155</sup>.

The exclusion of certain landholders points to a spirit of social exclusiveness prevailing among the established knightly group. Those omitted include a few men, some of whom were knights, who had recently prospered into the knightly group from the free tenantry. Humphrey de Kael, the son of a freeholder, was the first of his family to take knighthood<sup>156</sup>. Humphrey's successor was distrained in 1312 as a forty

<sup>153</sup> E.g. Simon Roges; see p.67

<sup>154</sup> Ashmole, The Institution, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter (1672), 38-9

<sup>155</sup> C 47/1/7

<sup>156</sup> See p. 94

liberate holder <sup>157</sup>. Nicholas de Langelond, who became a knight by 1306 <sup>158</sup>, was not included. His predecessor, Hugh de Langelond, had been a free tenant of Glastonbury Abbey. Nicholas had succeeded Hugh by 1297 but he built up his holdings considerably in the first decade of the 14th. century <sup>159</sup>.

The same spirit of exclusiveness operated against landholders who had recent connexions with towns and urban wealth. One knight absent from the lists was Laurence de Hamelden whose predecessor Thomas de Hamelden had accumulated property in Compton Dando and Ashton Dando. Thomas's consolidation of property resulted from the injection of merchant capital into the rural land market. Thomas was a leading member of the merchant community of Bristol <sup>160</sup>. The omission of Robert de Panes and his son and heir Thomas <sup>161</sup> possibly betrays the same hostile attitude on the part of a landed county society to the urban merchantile group. A family of Bristol merchants bore the name of de Panes <sup>162</sup>. Robert, as it has been shown, acquired property in north-east Somerset near Bath by marriage with the daughter and heir of John of Laverton, a lesser knight. The social position of those named in 1297 and 1300 was based on the ownership of rural estates. Urban wealth was excluded. Nevertheless one Bristol burgess was named. He was Stephen Beaumont but he held land in West Bagborough in the right of his wife Joan, daughter of William de Reigny <sup>163</sup>.

The assumption of knightly rank was clearly not dictated solely by expediency in the face of pressure from the Crown. It arose out of a sense among the landholders of family tradition or out of an individual's

<sup>157</sup> C 47/1/7

<sup>158</sup> Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, ii, p. 582

<sup>159</sup> See pp. 167-8

<sup>160</sup> St.Mark's Cart. (Bristol Rec.Soc.xxi), p.284; Cal.Close, 1279-88, 122

<sup>161</sup> Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 249

<sup>162</sup> Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 20, 102

<sup>163</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 296-7

aspirations to assume that rank which appeared the most fitting mark of a newly secured social position based on the acquisition of rural property and wealth.

### CHAPTER III

#### KNIGHTS AND MEN-AT-ARMS

A study of the extent to which Somerset landholders became knights and the manner in which they interpreted the knightly role at the end of the 13th. century reveals two complementary developments. On the one hand the number of landholders liable to compulsory knighthood who failed to become knights rose considerably while on the other performance of military service became the function of the magnates and of those men who were in their service.

#### The wide acceptance of knighthood early in Edward I's reign.

During the reign of Edward I and his successor landholders became less prepared to be dubbed knight. Under Henry III and Edward respite for compulsory knighthood could be purchased from the Crown but such favour was granted rarely. Respites were usually awarded for a short period and were often associated with the proceedings of a distraint. Matthew de Furneaux, who was named in a distraint on the holders of fifteen librates in 1256, purchased exemption for a period of three years beginning at Michaelmas that year <sup>1</sup>. Only a handful of Somerset landholders were similarly favoured. They included William Belet, Hugh de Neville, Richard of Kenn and Walter of Dinder <sup>2</sup>. In 1280 Thomas of Timworth was presented as being liable for compulsory knighthood but he fined for exemption and was later pardoned half of the fine <sup>3</sup>.

The recipient of a grant of exemption sometimes took knighthood. Brian de Gouiz's exemption, awarded in 1252, was due to last until William

1 C 47/1/1 ; Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 479

2 C 55/2 mm. 1-2d

3 Just. 1/759 rot.6d.; Cal.Close, 1279-88, 37

Longespee, earl of Salisbury, became a knight <sup>4</sup>. In fact William died early in 1257 <sup>5</sup> and Brian was knighted sometime during the civil conflict of the following years <sup>6</sup>. Anselm de Gurney was granted respite for three years in 1256 <sup>7</sup>. In June 1277 he secured a further exemption covering the period up to Michaelmas but he may have been dubbed soon after for by 1279 he was using the style miles <sup>8</sup>. His coat of arms appeared in the Charles' or St. George's Roll of Arms believed to have been compiled between 1279 and 1281 <sup>9</sup>. Anselm's assumption of knighthood at a late stage in his life was by no means peculiar.

The small number of respites issued in the early years of Edward I's reign reflected a situation in which knighthood was widely accepted by those landholders qualified and able to become knights. The rank enjoyed wide currency in Somerset among the leading free landholders in the local communities. They were the dominant element in rural society. Of the fifty-eight men named in the proceedings of the grand assize held in the county court in 1280 at least fifty became knights <sup>10</sup>. Of the other eight landholders, all but two were members of knightly families. Joyce of Bayeux, who held land in Twerton, was the father of the knight Thomas of Bayeux <sup>11</sup>. Thomas of Boulogne was presumably related to the knight Richard of Boulogne of Ash and William de Raleigh to Warin and Simon de Raleigh of Nettlecombe <sup>12</sup>. Thomas of Morton <sup>13</sup>, William of Bickleigh, a landholder in Holwell <sup>14</sup>, and Humphrey of Whaddon, who held Timsbury manor <sup>15</sup>, were apparently qualified to be knights. William of Bickleigh's father had been a knight and Thomas of Morton's son John was to be knighted at the feast of the Swans in 1306 <sup>16</sup>. The two exceptions were William Payn and Henry

4 Ciose R. 1251-3, 434

5 Complete Peerage, xi. 384

6 Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 266

7 Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 523

8 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 397;  
cf. App.I

9 Moor, Knights of Edw.I, ii. 162;  
N.Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry 1254-1310 (Oxford, 1965), 90-2

10 See p. 24

11 See p. 17

12 Cf. App.I.

13 Feud.Aids, iv. 297

14 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 340

15 Ibid. iv, p. 348

16 Moor, Knights of Edw.I, i. 94;  
iii. 221; v. 129



le valets who held land by military tenure in Sandford Orcas and Felton respectively <sup>17</sup>.

Besides the aforesaid fifty knights, at least six more were present in or figured in the proceedings of the county court in 1260. They were Robert of Bath, Richard de Cauntelo, William of Godmanstone, Richard of Heydon, John of Horsey and Robert of Maddington <sup>18</sup>. All fifty-six men were lesser landholders. The wealthier knightly landholders did not take part in the business of the county court but in 1260 they probably numbered at least seventeen <sup>19</sup>. The evidence suggests that in 1260 the minimum number of knights in the county was in the region of at least seventy-three and was probably nearer ninety.

At the beginning of the reign there was a wide acceptance of knightly rank among lesser landholders. In 1256 about eighteen men holding fifteen librates of land in the county were distrained to take knighthood <sup>20</sup>. While the number is only a minimum figure, it may be concluded that by the middle of the century only a small minority, perhaps less than twenty per cent, of the knightly group failed to become knights. Only fourteen landholders were presented before the justices in 1280 in response to the article de valettis. The article required the jurors of each hundred to name those persons liable to compulsory knighthood on account of the tenure of a complete knight's fee or twenty librates of land. Two of those presented, John de Erlegh and John de Mandeville, were minors and therefore not liable <sup>21</sup>. They became knights later. As the heirs to the manors and hundreds of North Retnerton and Coker respectively, they were more powerful and wealthy than most knights <sup>22</sup>.

17 Feud.Aids, iv. 288, 291

18 Luchelney Cart. pp.93-4; Glaston.Cart.i, p.226; Plac.de quo warr. (Rec.Com.), 703

19 E.g. John de Beauchamp, Thomas de Berkeley, Hugh de Courtenay, Ralph Laubeney, Oliver de Cinnam, Hugh Lovel, Nicholas Pointz, John Tregoz.

20 C 47/1/1: the document is illegible in part

21 Just. 1/759 rott. 21, 41

22 See p.70 and n.69.

The other twelve men named were lesser landholders. Presentation on the basis of tenure of a whole knight's fee led to the inclusion of some men who in terms of wealth and social position did not match knights. At least five were members of families which in Edward I's reign did not belong to the knightly group <sup>23</sup>. Of the remaining seven only John of Merriott of Hestercombe, known as John of Merriott le neveu, and Baudry of Nonnington definitely became knights later <sup>24</sup>. John, a member of the Lancastrian retinue, had an active military career <sup>25</sup>, but Baudry, who had taken knighthood by 1280, was not strenuous. Of the others William of Bingham held land in Sutton <sup>26</sup>. Thomas of Timworth held land in the county in his wife's right <sup>27</sup> and was distrained as late as 1293 <sup>28</sup>. Maurice of Membury was a substantial landholder by virtue of his marriage to Joan la Botiler upon whom West Bagborough manor had been settled by William de Reigny <sup>29</sup>. Maurice had not become a knight by 1291 <sup>30</sup>. Robert of Acton was the husband of Joan, the illegitimate daughter of William de Reigny and Joan la Botiler <sup>31</sup>. John le Waleys of Hutton, although he participated in the Scottish campaign of 1304 and possessed a coat of arms, did not become a knight <sup>32</sup>.

Figures given tentatively for the realm as a whole suggest that in the middle of the century of some 3,000 landholders qualified to become knights, about 1,250 had done so. Of those, about 500 were militarily strenuous. The figures were computed from evidence provided by documents

23 Just. 1/759 rott. 6d. (Nicholas le Waleys of Atherstone, John son of Thomas de Hauwey), 16 (Valentine de Flury), 26d. (John de Reigny of North Petherton), 32d. (John de Gerberdeston).

24 Ibid. rott. 16, 32d.

25 Cal. Pat. 1292-1301, 169; Cal. Close, 1296-1302, 7

26 Just. 1/759 rot. 41; Feud. Aids, iv. 287

27 Just. 1/759 rot. 6d; Proc. Som. Arch. Soc. xxviii(2), 174

28 2 198/3/5

29 Just. 1/759 rot. 16; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som. Mans. 295-6

30 Reg. Pontissara (Cant. & York Soc.), ii. 460

31 Just. 1/759 rot. 20; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som. Mans. 105

32 Just. 1/759 rot. 27d.; Cal. Doc. Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436; Parl. Writs, i. 411

essentially of a national provenance <sup>33</sup>. The more detailed information provided by charter witness lists shows that the extent to which knightly rank was held among the lesser members of the dominant landed social group has been underestimated. The evidence provided by heraldic rolls of arms is not suitable for assessing total numbers of knights since it related to those men, who were not necessarily knights but who were armigerous and active warriors <sup>34</sup>.

Effect of knightly rank after 1292.

From the last decade of the 13th. century the proportion of the heads of knightly families who were not knights increased dramatically as one generation of landholders was replaced by another. The rapidity of the rise is revealed by the returns to two distraints made in 1292 and 1312 on the forty librate group of landholders.

The returns to the earlier distraint show that even as late as 1292 the rank of knight was generally adopted by qualified landholders. It also reveals that a few landholders responded to the enforcement of a distraint by seeking knighthood. Of the nine men liable to distraint in Somerset and Dorset, seven held lands in Somerset. John of Clevedon and Richard of Kenn were knighted shortly after 1 January 1293. John de Erleigh was exempted since he had not held his lands in fee during the three year period ending 18 February 1292 <sup>35</sup>. John later became a knight as did Richard d'Amory and Nicholas de Cheyney <sup>36</sup>. Richard, who was named in the sheriff's return of 1300, held lands in Wbley <sup>37</sup>. The device on his coat of arms, described under Oxfordshire in the Parliamentary Roll of Arms, suggests

<sup>33</sup> A. D. N. Young, 'Feudal Society in the Thirteenth Century: The Knights', Collected Papers on Medieval Subjects (Oxford, 1946), 58-60

<sup>34</sup> See below and pp. 258-60

<sup>35</sup> A 198/3/5

<sup>36</sup> Cf. app. I

<sup>37</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 297, 308

that he was related to Roger d'Amory, whose arms were described in the Charles' and Dering rolls <sup>38</sup>. Roger was a member of the retinue of Gilbert de Clare (d. 1314) and was later a knight of the royal household <sup>39</sup>. Richard thus was connected with chivalrous circles. Nicholas de Cheyney held lands in Pointington <sup>40</sup> and was named in the sheriff's returns of 1297 and 1300. He also had property in Devon, Cambridgeshire and Hertfordshire <sup>41</sup>.

Only two of those distrained in 1292 did not become knights. Thomas of Timworth held land in Somerset in his wife's right. His own estates were in west Devon including Bratton St. Mary <sup>42</sup>. Roger le Rous, who was named among the twenty librate holders of 1297, held land in Lamyatt by socage tenure <sup>43</sup>. The distraint on his father John in 1256 had been relaxed because of the nature of the tenure <sup>44</sup>. In 1316 another member of the same family, John le Rous, was liable to compulsory knighthood since his lands were valued at at least fifty pounds a year <sup>45</sup>. Roger le Rous and his relatives clearly did not consider it expedient to identify themselves with the knightly group, despite the social kudos conferred by knightly rank.

The later distraint on forty librate holders to become knights by 2 November 1312 reveals a considerable retreat from the assumption of knightly rank <sup>46</sup>. In his return the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset submitted sixty-seven names, i.e. over seven times the number recorded twenty years earlier. In comparison with the returns which are extant for other counties, in many of which fewer than ten landholders were named,

<sup>38</sup> Parl. Writs, i. 413; Moor, Knights of Edw. I, i. 10-11

<sup>39</sup> J.R. Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322 (Oxford, 1970), 192-4

<sup>40</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 299

<sup>41</sup> Cal. Ing. p. m. vi, pp. 475-6

<sup>42</sup> Proc. Som. Arch. Soc. xxviii(2), 174

<sup>43</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 295

<sup>44</sup> C 55/2 m. 2a.

<sup>45</sup> C 47/1/8

<sup>46</sup> C 47/1/7

the return for Somerset and Dorset is remarkable for its completeness <sup>47</sup>.

In Somerset thirty-four men, including ten tenants in chief of the Crown, failed to take knighthood by the prescribed date. They were mostly the less wealthy landholders, including baronial tenants in chief. It is not known if the issuing of the distraint led to any landholders taking knighthood. Some of those named secured temporary respites. Henry, the son of Walter de Lorty, Philip de Columbers and Richard of Rodney were granted exemption until midsummer 1313 while Baldwin Malet was exempted for two years. Ellis Cotel was not named in the Somerset return but in November he fined for respite for one year <sup>48</sup>.

Later evidence confirms that many landholders failed to become knights. In 1316 eighteen men, ten of whom had been distrained in 1312, were named in a distraint of the holders of fifty librates in the county <sup>49</sup>. The difference in the numbers involved in the two distraints reflects the preponderance of less wealthy landholders in the knightly group and their greater reluctance to become knights. In 1326 twenty-nine landholders, who held either forty librates or a whole knight's fee, were recorded as having failed to become knights <sup>50</sup>. They included Thomas de Panes who had succeeded his father Robert in Laverton over twenty years earlier <sup>51</sup>.

Many of those lesser knights who were active at the beginning of Edward I's reign were succeeded by men who did not become knights. The neglect extended even to some lesser landholders who were at the head of cadet branches of leading county families for whom military activity was important. Walter de Lorty of Swell probably took part in the campaign of 1298 against the Scots <sup>52</sup>. Walter, a knight, was succeeded in 1306 by his son Henry, who was distrained in 1312 <sup>53</sup>. Henry was the cousin of Henry

47 Cf. the returns for Cumb., Leics., Notts. & Derby., Worcs., and Warws.

48 Cal.Fine R. 1307-19, 156-7; E 370/1/13 m.7

49 C 47/1/8

50 Parl.Writs, ii(2), 751

51 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I(Som.Rec.Soc.vi),p.249; Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, 298

52 Parl.Writs, i. 312

53 Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, 252; C 47/1/7



de Lorty, lord of Curry Rivel and of Stoke Trister barony, who was a strenuous knight <sup>54</sup>.

There are many examples showing that the successors of knights who were not strenuous on the field of battle failed to take knightly rank. Many of their knighted predecessors were active in the county court. Among those distrained in 1312 were Roger of Bawdrip, presumably the successor of Adam of Bawdrip, Roger, the son of William of Staunton, and Nicholas, the son of Alan of Walton <sup>55</sup>. Both Adam of Bawdrip and Alan of Walton had held the post of coroner <sup>56</sup> and William of Staunton had had a varied and full career in local government <sup>57</sup>.

The procedure of the distraint in Edward II's reign did not persuade many landholders to become knights. John Pauncefoot, who had succeeded the knight Walter Pauncefoot by 1304 <sup>58</sup>, was distrained in 1312 and again in 1316, yet he had not been dubbed by 1326 <sup>59</sup>. On the other hand Hugh Fichet's son John, who was distrained on the same occasions, had taken knighthood by 1324 <sup>60</sup>.

Neglect due to financial rather than military considerations.

The neglect of knightly rank did not stem from a rejection of the military role of the knight. Edward I made increasing demands upon that role in the last decade of his reign. Not all of those who neglected to take knighthood were unwilling to serve in the army. The careers of John le Waleys <sup>61</sup> and the younger Ellis Cotel are evidence of that <sup>62</sup>. William Malherbe served in Wales in 1294 but was not then a knight <sup>63</sup>. Adam le

<sup>54</sup> See pp. 51, 152

<sup>55</sup> C 47/1/7

<sup>56</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 24; Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 127

<sup>57</sup> See pp. 234-5

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 314, 327

<sup>59</sup> C 47/1/7; C 47/1/8; Parl.Writs, ii(2), 652

<sup>60</sup> Hylle Cart.(Som.Rec.Soc.lxviii), p.xvi; Parl.Writs, ii(2), 652

<sup>61</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 312; H.Gough, Scotland in 1298 (Paisley, 1888), p. 45;

Cal.Doc.Scot. ed.Bain. 1272-1307, p. 436

<sup>62</sup> E 101/6/40; Liber Quotidianus, p. 323

<sup>63</sup> Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 61-2

Bret who succeeded his father William, a knight, in Sampford Brett and Torweston was not a knight in 1304<sup>64</sup>. Two years later he apparently fought in Scotland. A grant of free warren in Torweston and a market and fair in Sampford issued then during a campaign was probably intended as a favour to Adam who was presumably present in the army<sup>65</sup>. Richard of Wigborough succeeded his brother William in 1325<sup>66</sup>. Although he had not been knighted by 1326, Richard had accompanied his brother on service in Scotland as early as 1298<sup>67</sup>.

Landholders were probably deterred from becoming knights by the increasing expense of maintaining knightly equipment. The financial difficulties in which some landholders found themselves dictated if and when they were knighted. William of Fauconberge had evidently succeeded Peter de Fauconberge<sup>68</sup> by 1305 when his property in Somerset was charged with the repayment of his debts<sup>69</sup>. William was distrained in 1312 but by 1324 he had become a knight<sup>70</sup>. His delay in assuming the rank for several years after entering his inheritance may have arisen from an inability to meet the costs of knighthood.

The most expensive item in the knight's equipment was his destrier or charger. Large sums were spent in the purchase and care of horses. Many of the destriers and other horses used by Somerset knights in the campaigns in Flanders and Scotland in the late 1290s were valued from £20 and a large proportion of them from £40<sup>71</sup>. Such figures equalled and in many cases exceeded the annual value of the lands held by lesser members of the knightly group<sup>72</sup>. Armour was another costly item and its cost increased with the introduction of plate-armour. Certain items of Robert FitzPain's armour

<sup>64</sup> See p.60

<sup>65</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 71

<sup>66</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, p. 373

<sup>67</sup> Parl.Writs, ii(2), 751; E 101/6/40

<sup>68</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 282; Pedes Finium, 1Edw.II-20Edw.III (Som.Rec.Soc.xii), p.11

<sup>69</sup> Cal.Close, 1302-7, 320; cf. ibid. 429, 450

<sup>70</sup> C 47/1/7; Parl.Writs, ii(2), 652

<sup>71</sup> Cf. E 101/6/19; E 101/6/37; E 101/6/39; E 101/6/40; E 101/9/23; E 101/9/24

<sup>72</sup> See pp. 66-7



were nominally valued at 100 s. in 1296 <sup>73</sup>. Such a sum would have represented a considerable capital outlay for lesser men if they matched Robert, a prominent military leader, in the quality of their equipment. Armour and horses were among the valuable cargo worth £510 lost by William Martin, lord of Blagdon barony, in 1298 when his ship foundered off the Kent coast during its return from Flanders <sup>74</sup>. The expense of performing knightly service probably led lesser knights and potential knights to avoid service. They may have figured among the able-bodied men who in 1282 bribed the sheriff of Somerset not to include them in the force he was assembling for Wales <sup>75</sup>.

While lesser landholders were discouraged from becoming knights by the financial burden of knighthood, the same consideration determined the attitude of less wealthy tenants per baroniam of the Crown. Some of the latter were in financial straits. John ap Adam, a knight, was an active warrior. He held Beverstone barony (Glos.) and lands in Somerset by marriage to the heiress of the Gurneys and was succeeded in 1310 by his son Thomas, a minor <sup>76</sup>. Thomas later disposed of much of his property, presumably to cover debts, and consequently reduced his social standing. It was his insecure financial position that prevented him from becoming a knight <sup>77</sup>. At the end of Edward I's reign John de Columbers, lord of Nether Stowey barony, was a militarily strenuous knight. It was probably on account of his relative poverty among the baronial tenants in chief that in several campaigns John did not lead his own troop but served under another knight <sup>78</sup>. He fought in Wales in 1295 under William de Valence and in Scotland in 1298 under William's son Aymer de Valence <sup>79</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 193

<sup>74</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 340

<sup>75</sup> Parl.writs, i. 244

<sup>76</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 15; V.C.H.Glos. x. 64

<sup>77</sup> St.Mark's Cart. p.xxiii; Parl.writs, ii(2), 751

<sup>78</sup> See p. 65

<sup>79</sup> C 67/10 m.2; E 101/6/39

John was succeeded in 1306 by his son Philip, who was then aged twenty-four or more <sup>80</sup>. Philip was one of the landholders who failed to be knighted after the distraint of 1316 <sup>81</sup>.

Even for leading county landholders family tradition did not, of itself, provide sufficient motivation to become knights. Nicholas de Moels who was distrained in 1312 <sup>82</sup>, was heir to a long tradition of service to the Crown. His predecessor John (d.1310) was the grandson of Nicholas de Moels, who served Henry III in the field. John's father Roger (d.1295) was a close associate of Edward I and, at the end of his career, acted as marshal of the army in Wales in 1294. Nicholas, born in 1289, had only recently come of age in 1312 and evidently had not had time to prepare himself for taking knighthood <sup>83</sup>.

#### The emerging squirearchy.

The inability of many lesser knights to sustain the costs of knighthood and military service led to the emergence of a group of men, drawn from knightly families, who were styled men-at-arms. For the latter the necessary military equipment was more rudimentary and therefore less costly than that for the fully armed knight. In the early part of Edward I's reign men-at-arms were styled servientes. The term was applied to active warriors qualified for knighthood. Nicholas Branch served as a man-at-arms in Wales in 1277 on behalf of his mother Joan, lady of Frome <sup>84</sup>. The service of two servientes was considered equivalent to that of a single knight. In 1277 Henry of Merland served in Wales as a man-at-arms thereby discharging the service owed for his half knight's fee in Orchardleigh <sup>85</sup>. Henry was one of the landholders liable to provide knightly service at the end of the century <sup>86</sup>.

<sup>80</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, p. 256

<sup>81</sup> C 47/1/8

<sup>82</sup> C 47/1/7

<sup>83</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 68; Complete Peerage, ix. 1-6

<sup>84</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 204, 210, 212.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid. 206, 210, 212

<sup>86</sup> Cf. app.II

In the latter part of the reign more members of knightly families who were not knights themselves served on campaign. They included lesser landholders, like Ellis Cotel, Geoffrey de Hauteville and John le Waleys<sup>87</sup>. Leading county landholders went on campaign before taking knighthood<sup>88</sup>. The latter, who were members of chivalrous families belonging to the court circle, were styled valettus in some documents before they were dubbed<sup>89</sup>.

In Somerset of the eighty men summoned for military service in 1324 only one in three was a knight. The remainder were men-at-arms<sup>90</sup>. The twenty-six knights included a few of the most prominent landholders. Some of them, including John de Beauchamp, Richard Lovel, John de Mohun, were active in the campaigns at the end of the 13th. century<sup>91</sup>. John de Lorty was the son and heir of Henry de Lorty of Curry Rivel who had died in 1321<sup>92</sup>. The lesser knights named were also strenuous. As well as John of Merriott le neveu, Henry of Glastonbury was in the service of Thomas, earl of Lancaster<sup>93</sup>. Geoffrey de Hauteville had served in Wales in 1294, in Flanders in 1297, and in Scotland in 1301 and 1304, although he had not been knighted by the latter date<sup>94</sup>. Ellis Cotel was a member of Edward I's household troop<sup>95</sup>.

Of the fifty-four men-at-arms summoned in 1324, thirty-two were members of families which had earlier provided knights. Simon de Furneaux's father Matthew had been a strenuous knight<sup>96</sup>. John de Columbers, the father of Philip who was another of the men-at-arms, had also been active in the army. Thomas de Fanes, a man-at-arms who was militarily active, was

<sup>87</sup> E 101/6/40; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436

<sup>88</sup> See pp. 48, 265-6

<sup>89</sup> Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 21

<sup>90</sup> Parl. Writs, ii(2), 652

<sup>91</sup> See below

<sup>92</sup> Cal.Inc.p.m. vi, p.184

<sup>93</sup> Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322, 46, 62

<sup>94</sup> Cal.Chanc.Writs. i. 61-2; E 101/6/28; E 101/9/12; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436

<sup>95</sup> E 101/6/40; Liber Quotidianus, p. 323

<sup>96</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Law.I, p. 311; E 101/6/19

the son of Robert de Panes, a knight <sup>97</sup>. The inclusion of the descendants of prominent knights, such as George of Merriott and William de Montagu, among the men-at-arms in 1324 is probably explained by their youth. George of Merriott had only received livery of his inheritance, after proving he was of age, in 1322. His father John <sup>98</sup> had been succeeded in 1308 by another son John, a minor, who evidently predeceased George, his younger brother <sup>99</sup>. William de Montagu, the son and heir of Simon de Montagu, was succeeded in 1319 by his son William, a minor <sup>100</sup>, who was not granted livery until 1323 <sup>101</sup>. The younger William therefore had only recently come of age when he was summoned as a man-at-arms in the following year.

The rank of knight was not held by the precursors of all the men-at-arms. Henry de Merland's father Henry (d. c.1318) <sup>102</sup> had served in Wales in 1277 as a man-at-arms. Maurice of Membury, the father of John of Membury, had not been knighted by 1291 <sup>103</sup>. A few of the men-at-arms were, like Richard Pyk, the descendants of free men who had prospered during Edward I's reign. Such free men did not always achieve knightly rank, the badge of social distinction, in a single generation. They did not all assume knighthood readily. Richard of Rodney, who accumulated much property in the early 14th. century <sup>104</sup>, was distrained in 1312. He secured respite until Midsummer 1313 and was distrained again in 1316 <sup>105</sup>. Only then did he take knighthood and was dubbed in July at Keynsham <sup>106</sup>. Humphrey de Kael's successor, Humphrey, was distrained in 1312 but he had not become a knight by 1326 <sup>107</sup>.

97 Cal.Pat. 1321-4, 66

98 Cal.Close, 1318-23, 469

99 Cal.Inq.p.m. v, pp. 27-8

100 Moor, Knights of Edw.I. iii. 166-9; Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, pp. 140-4

101 Cal.Close, 1318-23, 629

102 Moor, Knights of Edw.I. iii. 150

103 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 296-8; Reg.Pontissara, ii. 480

104 See pp.168-9

105 C 47/1/7; Cal.Fine R. 1307-19, 156; C 47/1/8

106 J.R.S.Phillips, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307-1324 (Oxford, 1972), 261

107 C 47/1/7; Parl.Writs, ii(2), 652



The emergence of the men-at-arms, the forbears of the later squirearchy, marked an important development. They were knightly landholders. The identification of the knights with a particular social group led to the devising of styles to denote those members of that group who were not knights. The function of the distinction was not to separate the men-at-arms from the knightly group but to associate them with the knights as opposed to other social groups.

By the early 14th. century those men-at-arms who were militarily strenuous were like the knights armigerous. A number of the men whose coats of arms were described in the Parliamentary Roll of Arms were not knights at the time it was compiled about 1308. Both knights and non-knights were styled sire<sup>108</sup>. Henry de Lorty of Swell was distrained as late as 1316<sup>109</sup>. Ellis Cotel was exempted from compulsory knighthood for one year in 1312. John le Waleys was not a knight when he fought in Scotland in 1304. Reynold de Montfort, who at the age of about twelve had succeeded his father Henry, lord of Mellow, in 1304<sup>110</sup>, was distrained in 1316 but by 1324 he had been knighted<sup>111</sup>. The possession of a coat of arms at the beginning of the 14th. century depended not on knightly rank but on membership of a dominant social group and the performance of military service. The Parliamentary Roll of Arms included those of Ralph le Tort, who came from an established family of west Somerset<sup>112</sup>. Although he probably saw active military service, there is no evidence that he was a knight<sup>113</sup>.

#### The feast of the Swans.

It has been claimed that the number of knights in the country rose

108 N.Denholm-Young, 'The song of Carlaverock and the Parliamentary Roll of Arms,' Proc.Brit.Acad. xlvii. 251-62; Parl.Writs, i. 411

109 C 47/1/8

110 Cal.Inc.p.m. iv, p. 148

111 C 47/1/8; Parl.Writs, ii(2), 652

112 The Honour of Dunster (Som.Rec.Soc.xxxiii), pp.61-3; Feud.Aids, iv. 302-3

113 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 67

during the reign of Edward I. The rise was seen as a response to that monarch's moves to turn those landholders who could afford the equipment into a competent cavalry, thereby adding to the number of warriors available to implement his expansionist policies. The claim rests on the mass knighting which took place in London on 22 May 1306 in which 259 men were dubbed. The ceremony accompanied the knighting of Prince Edward, which coincided with preparations for a renewal of campaigning against the Scots, and was followed by the feast of the Swans<sup>114</sup>. In summoning all those men who wished to become knights, the king was playing on the social pretensions of leading landholders. It was customary for such important events in the life of the monarch's immediate family to be celebrated in lavish spectacle and many minstrels were rewarded for their services at the feast<sup>115</sup>.

The identity of the Swan knights of Somerset shows that the impact of the mass knighting on the county families was somewhat less than might have been expected. The ceremony appears as one, though by far the most important, in a series of knightings which took place in the royal court in the later 13th. century and beyond. Prominent landholders were dubbed on such occasions. In 1272 George de Cauntelo, a prominent magnate whose estates included property in Barwick and Bridgwater, was one of several important men knighted with Edmund, the son of Richard, earl of Cornwall, on the occasion of Edmund's marriage to Margaret, the sister of the earl of Gloucester<sup>116</sup>.

In the list transcribed by Ashmole at least sixteen Somerset landholders are mentioned. The figure includes John of Morton who held land in Morton and Compton Martin but whose main estates were in

114 N.Denholm-Young, 'Feudal Society in the Thirteenth Century: the Knights', Collected Papers on Medieval Subjects, 65-6; 'The Song of Carlaverock and the Parliamentary Roll of Arms', Proc.Brit.Acad. xlvii, 257; Ashmole, The Institution, Laws and Ceremonies of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, 38-9

115 T.H.Turner, Manners and Household Expenses of England (Roxburghe Club, 1841), 140-5

116 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp.18-19; W.A.Shaw, The Knights of England (1906), ii. 5

Devon<sup>117</sup>. The Swan knights were not representative of the knightly group of the county in which lesser landholders predominated for, besides John of Morton, only four more of them were lesser men. Robert of Godmanstone was probably connected with Richard Lovel, also a Swan knight<sup>118</sup>. Richard, who succeeded his father Hugh in 1291, was a ward of the Crown until he came of age in 1297<sup>119</sup>, when he remained a member of the royal household<sup>120</sup>. Robert of Godmanstone consequently was brought into contact with the court circle. Of the other lesser landholders knighted in 1306 John of Clevedon came from a line of active warriors<sup>121</sup>, Peter d'Evercy held land in Brimpton<sup>122</sup> and William of Weyland was a landholder in the county in the right of his wife Elizabeth, the daughter and heir of Osbert of Bath<sup>123</sup>. Peter and William subsequently followed the army northwards, a fact which prompted their election as knights of the shire for the parliament summoned in November to meet in Carlisle in January 1307<sup>124</sup>.

The other neophytes included members of leading county families. Philip de Courtenay was a younger son of Hugh de Courtenay (d.1292)<sup>125</sup>. Others were related to knights serving in the royal household and were members of the court circle and heirs to a tradition of military service under the Crown. Alan Plugenet's father Alan (d.1298) was by 1259 in the service of Robert Walerand, his uncle and a leading counsellor of Henry III and his son. In that year he was granted a robe by the king<sup>126</sup>. He entered Henry III's service shortly afterwards and was knighted by

117 Moor, Knights of Edw.I, iii. 221

118 For the ties between the Lovels and their neighbours in Discove see p.212

119 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 28; Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 35

120 Cal.Chanc.wts. i. 91; see below

121 See p. 257

122 Feud.Aids, iv. 316

123 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 374

124 Parl.Writs, i, p. xxviii

125 W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 380

126 Close R. 1256-9, 432; Moor, Knights of Edw.I, iv. 81-2; F.W.Fowicke, King Henry III and the Lord Edward (Oxford, 1947), ii. 426



him in 1260<sup>127</sup>. During Henry III's later years he was associated with the Lord Edward, with whom he served during the upheavals of 1263 and 1264. For his loyalty he was granted Haslebury manor in 1265<sup>128</sup>. The elder Alan also served in Wales in 1277 and 1282. During the revolt of Rhys ap Iaredudd in 1287 he was constable of Dryslwyn castle (Carms.). As late as 1296 he led a troop in the Dunbar campaign<sup>129</sup>.

The Swan knight William de Montagu was the son of Simon de Montagu<sup>130</sup>. Simon served in Edward I's campaigns and was involved in the administration of naval affairs during the later wars of that king and his successor<sup>131</sup>. Simon had a close personal relationship with Edward II and when Simon was buried on 26 September 1316 pieces of cloth, purchased by the Crown, were laid on the casket<sup>132</sup>. William was a member of the royal household in 1303<sup>133</sup> and, shortly after he was knighted, was admitted on 26 May 1306 as a household knight<sup>134</sup>. By 1314 William was captain of the household knights and between 1316 and 1318 steward of the household<sup>135</sup>.

Robert FitzPain, another Swan knight, was the son of Robert Fitzrain, a military captain who was in the confidence of Edward I and his successor<sup>136</sup>. The elder Robert was marshal of the army in Scotland in 1303. In the same year he was one of the envoys deputed by Edward to treat for peace with John Comyn<sup>137</sup>. From 1308 to 1310 he was steward of the household<sup>138</sup>. The younger Robert maintained an interest in military service and in 1310

127 Complete Peerage, x. 553; Glose R. 1259-61, 111-12

128 Cal.Pat. 1258-66, 467

129 Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I. 124, 163, 214, 273

130 Moor, Knights of Edw.I., iii. 168

131 See pp. 202-3

132 T.Stapleton, 'Summary of Wardrobe Accounts of 10, 11 and 14 Edward II,' Archaeologia, xxvi. 339

133 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 125

134 E 101/369/11 f.106

135 Complete Peerage, ix. 61; T.F.Tout, Chapters in the Administrative History of Medieval England (Manchester, 1933), vi. 42

136 Moor, Knights of Edw.I., ii. 51

137 Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 120; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 355-6, 393

138 Complete Peerage, v. 450

he served in Scotland of behalf of his father <sup>139</sup>. John la warre, a Swan knight was the son of Roger la warre who in July 1300 led a troop which stayed with the household force for fifty-six days <sup>140</sup>.

The Swan knights were chiefly drawn from families among whom military service was prized. Their own participation in campaigns did not commence with the assumption of knightly rank. The younger Alan Plugenet fought in the household force in Flanders in 1297 <sup>141</sup>. Richard Lovel served in the household force after he came of age in 1297. Shortly after he had received livery of his inheritance, Richard swore to serve the king in France <sup>142</sup>. In 1298 he was a member of the household force in the Scottish campaign where he also served later <sup>143</sup>. John de Knoville served with his father Gilbert among the household troops in Flanders in 1297 <sup>144</sup>. William de Montagu was appointed to supervise the shipping being assembled for a campaign in Scotland in 1303 <sup>145</sup>. In that campaign he performed service on behalf of St. Alban's Abbey <sup>146</sup>. John la warre served in the household troop in 1298 <sup>147</sup>. with Alan Plugenet and Richard Lovel he was present among the household forces in 1300 and 1301 <sup>148</sup>.

#### The court circle and military service.

The Swan knights of Somerset represented that very small number of the county families whose activities centred on the royal court. It was those families, and their associates, that acted out the military role

<sup>139</sup> Earl.writs, ii (2), 406

<sup>140</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, p. 148; Liber Quotidianus, p. 202

<sup>141</sup> E 101/6/37

<sup>142</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 35; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 234

<sup>143</sup> E 101/6/40; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 304-5; Complete Peerage, viii. 205

<sup>144</sup> E 101/6/37

<sup>145</sup> Cal.Fat. 1301-7, 128

<sup>146</sup> Ibid. 125

<sup>147</sup> E 101/6/40

<sup>148</sup> Liber Quotidianus, pp. 171, 187, 321; E 101/9/24

of the knight and participated in chivalric activities. Their attachment to the court circle was a matter of family tradition. Ingram de Fienles, who was a knight in Henry III's household, was requested in 1253 to send his son William to be maintained with Henry's son Edward during the Gascon expedition <sup>149</sup>. The close contact between William and the heir to the throne was retained in the Crusade of 1270 <sup>150</sup>. William, who was lord of Martock, served in the army in Wales in 1282 <sup>151</sup>. In 1286 he was a household knight <sup>152</sup>.

Successive members of the Gorges family were members of the royal household <sup>153</sup>. Ralph de Gorges, the head of the family who died about 1272, served in the household as a knight <sup>154</sup>. His brother, also called Ralph, who was not a knight, was also a member of Henry III's entourage <sup>155</sup>. Ralph (d. c.1272) was succeeded by his son Ralph who in the later 1280s was one of the household knights <sup>156</sup>. In 1277 he had served in Wales as a man-at-arms under Robert FitzPain <sup>157</sup>. Ralph led a troop in Gascony in 1294 in the expedition led by John de St.John <sup>158</sup>. In 1295 he was appointed marshal of the army in Gascony where his harsh disciplinary measures provoked an infantry mutiny <sup>159</sup>. Ralph's own son and heir, Ralph, was a member of the royal household in April 1300 <sup>160</sup>. By July he had taken knighthood and he entered the troop of John de St.John in the Scottish campaign <sup>161</sup>. He served on later campaigns and was present at the Dunstable tournament in 1309 <sup>162</sup>.

149 F.M.Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 545 n.1

150 Close R. 1268-72, 282

151 Feud.Aids, iv. 282; Parl.Writs, i. 229, 237

152 C 47/4/3 f.29

153 For the Gorges family see p. 23

154 Close R. 1259-61, 475

155 Ibid. 1254-6, 236; 1256-9, 42-3; 1261-4, 164

156 C 47/4/3 ff. 28, 29; E 101/4/24 rot.2

157 Parl.Writs, i. 202, 211

158 C 47/2/10

159 M.Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance under Edward I (1972), 107

160 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 548

161 Liber quotidianus, p.200; The Roll of Caerlaverock, ed.T.Wright(1864), 30

162 A.Tomkisson, 'Retinues at the Tournament of Dunstable 1309', E.H.R. lxxiv, 70; Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, iv. 66

A family tradition of service to the Crown was upheld by younger relatives. Roger de Moels, whose father Nicholas had been a member of Henry III's household, was a close associate of Edward I. Roger led troops in Wales in 1277 and 1282 and he was marshal of the army in Wales in 1294<sup>163</sup>. Roger's son and heir John was militarily strenuous<sup>164</sup>, while a younger son Roger fought in Scotland in 1301 when he was a member of the household<sup>165</sup>. Robert de Mohun, a younger brother of John de Mohun, lord of Dunster, was a household knight in 1285<sup>166</sup>. He may have entered royal service after his brother's death in 1279. In 1277 he had served with John<sup>167</sup>. Robert de Beauchamp, a younger brother of John, lord of Hatch barony<sup>168</sup>, was on service in 1301 as a member of the household<sup>169</sup>. His brother had been in the household earlier<sup>170</sup>.

#### The wealthy knights and military service.

It is not easy to assess the extent to which knightly landholders joined the armies recruited for Edward I. Receipt of a writ of summons is no guarantee that military service was performed either in person or by proxy. The writs were usually issued to the leading county landholders who were men of wealth and power. They included John ap Adam, John de Beauchamp, John de Columbers, Hugh de Courtenay, Oliver de Dinham, Robert FitzPain, Henry de Lorty, John de Mohun and Hugh Pointz who held land from the Crown per baroniam and Ellis Daubeney, Simon de Montagu and Roger la Warre who did not. Those summoned also included men who served in the royal household. Simon de Montagu, Robert FitzPain and Alan Plugenet (d.1296)

<sup>163</sup> Complete Peerage, ix. 1-4; Parl.Writs, i. 206, 213; Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I, 124, 159, 161, 250-1.

<sup>164</sup> Complete Peerage, ix. 5-6

<sup>165</sup> Just. 1/1310 rot.6d.; Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 630; E 101/9/24 m.4

<sup>166</sup> E 101/351/17 rot.1; C 47/4/3 f.28v.

<sup>167</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 114; Parl.Writs, i. 202, 211

<sup>168</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, pp. 128-9

<sup>169</sup> E 101/9/24 m.1

<sup>170</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 152

had close ties with the Crown <sup>171</sup>.

All of those summoned individually were experienced on the field of battle. John de Monun fought in Gascony in 1276 <sup>172</sup> and Henry de Lorty in Scotland in 1304 <sup>173</sup>. Many of them led those troops which made up the Edwardian army and were either knights banneret or knights bachelor. For the campaign directed in South Wales in 1282 by the earl of Gloucester, a squadron was assembled by Alan Plugenet. The leaders of the individual troops were, with one exception, magnates from the south-western counties <sup>174</sup>. The exception was Nicholas de Montfort, but he was a more prominent landholder than the great majority of the lesser knights <sup>175</sup>.

The differentiation between the bannerets and bachelors was signified by the payment to bannerets, while in royal service, of wages at 4 s. a day, double the rate paid to bachelors <sup>176</sup>. The bannerets were a small minority of the knightly group. In 1277 six Somerset landholders led troops as bannerets and in 1282 four <sup>177</sup>. The rank implied both military skill and an ability to sustain the cost of maintaining a troop which comprised a varying number of knights and their attendant troopers. Alan Plugenet, who was a banneret by 1277, was a leading member of Edward I's military staff. The other bannerets were more substantial county landholders but they also had close links with the Crown.

John de Beauchamp was a banneret by the Welsh campaign of 1277. His son and heir John, who was a ward of the Crown until 1295 <sup>178</sup>, had ample opportunity for displaying his military capabilities. At the end of the

<sup>171</sup> Parl. writs, i. 225-6, 227, 259-61, 275-6, 310-11, 317-18, 322-4, 327-8, 347, 366-7.

<sup>172</sup> E 101/6/21

<sup>173</sup> Cal.Chanc.wts. i. 210

<sup>174</sup> Morris, Welsh wars of Edw.I, 163; E 101/4/1

<sup>175</sup> See pp. 65-6

<sup>176</sup> Cf. Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 23

<sup>177</sup> Morris, Welsh wars of Edw.I, 124, 163; E 101/2/13; E 101/4/1

<sup>178</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 432





Flanders campaign of 1297 he was created a banneret <sup>179</sup>. The rank of banneret was in some cases held by several members of a family. Ralph Daubeney, whose family had contacts with the royal household in the early 13th. century <sup>180</sup>, led his troop as a banneret in both 1277 and 1282. His son Philip was a banneret by the mid 1280s when he was a member of the household. In 1286 he was in court between 13 May and 5 August <sup>181</sup>. In 1289 he was in attendance for 42 days accompanied by a knight <sup>182</sup>. Philip succeeded Ralph in 1292 and was succeeded in turn by his brother Ellis in 1294 <sup>183</sup>. Although he was militarily strenuous Ellis apparently was not a banneret but his son and heir Ralph, who came of age in 1326, was a banneret in the household in 1327 <sup>184</sup>.

Although several bannerets held land per baroniam, the rank was not necessarily connected with that form of tenure. In 1277 the bannerets included John de Beauchamp, Oliver de Dinham, Roger de Moels and John de Mohun. They were baronial tenants, but Ralph Daubeney, another banneret, held land by knight service. One baronial tenant Hugh Pointz led his troop as a bachelor in 1277 <sup>185</sup>. Henry de Lorty, one of the less wealthy baronial tenants, served in Wales in 1277 before he was knighted <sup>186</sup>. In 1282 he led his troop as a knight bachelor. His relative poverty apparently debarred him from becoming a banneret. Later he was a member of Robert FitzPain's retinue <sup>187</sup>. The lord of a barony was not even obliged to take knighthood. In 1277 John de Cogan, lord of Bampton barony in Devon, served as a man-at-arms <sup>188</sup>.

179 N.B.Lewis, 'The English Forces in Flanders, August-November 1297', Studies presented to F.M.Powicke, ed. R.W.Hunt and others (Oxford, 1948), 318

180 F.M.Powicke, King Henry III and the Lord Edward, i. 9; Complete Peerage, iv. 93

181 C 47/4/3 f. 28; E 101/351/17 m.1.

182 E 101/4/24 rot.1

183 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 303; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, pp. 111-12

184 Complete Peerage, iv. 95-6

185 Cf. Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 39, 51, 68, 110, 114

186 Parl.Writs, i. 206, 211, 213

187 Just. 1/764 rot.2; cf. Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 355-6

188 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 5; Parl.Writs, i. 207, 210, 213

More powerful lords could use the controls they wielded over their dependants to make provision for the performance of military service. One of John de Erlegh's tenants in North Petherton was required to provide a horse and sack for transporting John's armour and equipment to Wales. The tenant acknowledged the obligation in 1296<sup>189</sup>. It presumably applied for service in other areas. Such serjeanty tenures meant that the costs of military service to the lord were reduced. One of John de Beauchamp's tenants, who held a large holding of over 72 acres in Shepton Beauchamp, was bound to carry John's banner before him in battle either in person or by providing a substitute. John was to pay the expenses for any service performed in excess of the customary forty days. The tenant was quit of scutage but was liable to other payments and services both in cash and labour<sup>190</sup>.

Wealthier landholders had the resources in terms of man-power and landed wealth from which they could secure the necessities of life. Consequently they could devote themselves to service under the Crown. In 1282 Roger de Moel's men brought a ship from Bridgwater loaded with provisions for him and his troop, then in Wales<sup>191</sup>. In 1294 Ellis Daubeney, who was lord of Landal in Brittany, sent his servants to Brittany to fetch his horses and armour back to England for his use<sup>192</sup>.

The lesser knights and military service.

Lesser landholders did not possess that degree of wealth and power which formed the basis of the organisation upon which the activities of troop leaders depended. Many lesser men who served on campaigns did so

189 Som.R.O., NP 8, rot.1.

190 Beauchamp Regs. 90

191 Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 221

192 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 81; Complete Peerage, iv. 95



More powerful lords could use the controls they wielded over their vassals to make provision for the performance of military service. One of John de Briegh's tenants in North Petherton was required to provide a horse and sack for transporting John's armour and equipment to Wales. The tenant acknowledged the obligation in 1296<sup>189</sup>. It presumably applied for service in other areas. Such serjeanty tenures meant that the costs of military service to the lord were reduced. One of John de Beauchamp's tenants, who held a large holding of over 72 acres in Chapton Beauchamp, was bound to carry John's banner before him in battle either in person or by providing a substitute. John was to pay the expenses for any service performed in excess of the customary forty days. The tenant was quit of scutage but was liable to other payments and services both in cash and labour<sup>190</sup>.

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<sup>189</sup> Som.R.O., NF 8, rot.1.

<sup>190</sup> Beauchamp Rel. s. 90

<sup>191</sup> Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 221

<sup>192</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 61; Complete Peerage, iv. 95

in the troop or company of a greater landholder. They were probably bound to the latter by contract. Ralph Saunzaver undertook by contract to perform military service in Gascony in 1296 in the company of William de Breuse<sup>193</sup>. The troop leader presumably shouldered all or part of the costs, thereby reducing the financial burdens of military service for lesser men. Aymer de Valence's retinue included John de Columbers who evidently preferred, probably for financial reasons, to serve under another troop leader than to lead his own troop<sup>194</sup>. John was one of the least wealthy baronial tenants in chief.

While the most wealthy landholders were militarily strenuous, it seems that only a minority of the lesser knightly landholders actually participated in Edward I's campaigns. For the lesser knights who were closely related to magnates attendance on the field of battle was a matter of family tradition. Thomas de Gurney was the younger brother of John, who inherited the bulk of the family estates from their father Anselm de Gurney<sup>195</sup>. John went on the Crusade of 1270 and served in Wales in 1277<sup>196</sup>. He was succeeded in 1291 by his daughter whose husband John ap Adam was also an active warrior<sup>197</sup>. Thomas de Gurney saw military action as a member of Thomas de Berkeley's retinue in Edward I's later campaigns<sup>198</sup>.

The lesser knights are assumed to have been closely involved in the military as well as the political events of the early 1260s. Although many Somerset knights espoused the cause of Simon de Montfort their involvement in military activity was probably confined to the pillaging

193 Select Cases before the King's Council 1243-1483 (Selden Soc.xxxv), p.16

194 E 101/6/39; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p.257; Phillips, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307-1324, 256, 296

195 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 14; Just. 1/1310 rot.8

196 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 480, 587; Parl.Writs, i. 201

197 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 15

198 E 101/6/28; E 101/6/39; E 101/9/23; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p.436

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of the estates of those landholders who were identified with the Crown faction<sup>199</sup>. The latter were Robert de Briwes, John de Burgh, John de la Lynde, Nicholas de Moels and Robert Walerand. Lesser knights occupied a prominent position in the raiding parties<sup>200</sup>. Nevertheless some were involved on a wider plane. One baronial partisan, Brian de Gouiz of Kingsdon, was knighted by the earl of Leicester<sup>201</sup>. Brian, as a member of the household of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, an intermittent supporter of Simon de Montfort, was connected with the latter<sup>202</sup>. William of Godmanstone, who figured in the raid on Nicholas de Moels's lands in Blackford, Cadbury, Maperton and elsewhere<sup>203</sup>, fought at Evesham as a supporter of the Lord Edward<sup>204</sup>. Richard of Boulogne also participated in that battle<sup>205</sup>.

In Edward's reign the service of some lesser landholders of Somerset was on several occasions requested by individual writs of summons. During the Welsh campaign of 1282 writs were sent from Rhuddlan to thirty-nine men, seventeen of whom were members of the Somerset knightly group, ordering them to proceed to a muster at Carmarthen. The number included tenants in chief, such as Hugh de Courtenay, Henry de Lorty and Simon de Montagu, who usually received such writs as well as several lesser men. The latter included Nicholas de Montfort, Brian de Gouiz, Walter de la Lynde, Andrew Wake, John de Briwes, William Trivet, Robert Marmion and Philip of Wick<sup>206</sup>.

In 1296 seven lesser men were summoned from the county to serve against the Scots. Matthew de Furneaux, Simon de Raleigh and John le

199 E.F.Jacob, Studies in the Period of Baronial Reform and Rebellion, 1258-67 (Oxford, 1925), 224

200 Cf. K.B. 26/176 rot.12d.; K.B. 26/177 rott.1d., 6, 12; K.B. 26/178 rot.8

201 Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 266

202 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 146

203 K.B. 26/177 rot.6

204 Close R. 1264-8, 220

205 Ibid. 1268-72, 408-9

206 Parl.Writs, i. 244



Waleys were active warriors <sup>207</sup>. They fought in Scotland in 1298 <sup>208</sup>. Matthew and John were among six men summoned in the latter year to muster in York at Whitsuntide to provide reinforcements for the army <sup>209</sup>. It is not certain if the other four attended. Ralph Wake, a knight, may have seen service. He was the brother-in-law of Alan Plugenet, a leading member of the household military staff <sup>210</sup>. John de Beauchamp of Norton, who later was a knight, was, on the other hand, an active administrator and was possibly not militarily strenuous <sup>211</sup>. In any case the six men by no means represented the group of lesser landholders who were militarily strenuous or the group from which the Crown expected knightly service to be performed.

In 1294 and 1301 the service of many more lesser landholders was requested by individual writs. The number of writs issued was small in comparison with the size of the knightly group. In 1294 twenty-eight men from Somerset were summoned to muster in Cardiff for the campaign in Wales <sup>212</sup>. They were all marked as knights except for four. The exceptions were members of knightly families. Richard of Kenn had in fact taken knighthood early in 1293 and Adam of Bitton by 1273 <sup>213</sup>. Since the latter had performed military service as early as 1263 he would have been well advanced in years and past active military service by 1294 <sup>214</sup>. The other two exceptions were Hugh Fichet and John le Sor. The list of Somerset knights summoned in 1294 was headed by Robert FitzPain and Hugh Pointz who were invariably summoned individually. The lesser knights summoned were known to the Crown for various reasons. Walter de la Lynde had been a member of Henry III's household in which he had been knighted. His

<sup>207</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 276

<sup>208</sup> E 101/6/40; Gough, Scotland in 1298, p.45

<sup>209</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 312

<sup>210</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, p. 267; Just. 1/1315 rot.21d.; Cal.Inq.p.m.iii, p. 417.

<sup>211</sup> Cf. Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 613; 1301-7, 201, 456

<sup>212</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 265

<sup>213</sup> Cf.app.I

<sup>214</sup> Longleat MS. 10590, f.80.

father John had been active in that king's service <sup>215</sup>. Other knights held important office in the administration of the county, like John de St.Lo and Thomas of Wellesley, or they were appointed to important commissions, like Gilbert of Beer and William of Staunton <sup>216</sup>. Only about one third of the lesser knights summoned in 1294 can be shown to have had actual military experience at any time. They included Richard Arthur, Adam of Bitton, John of Clevedon, Giles de Fishburn, Matthew de Furneaux, Thomas de Gurney and Simon Roges.

In 1301 forty-three lay landholders from Somerset and Dorset were requested to muster in Berwick in June <sup>217</sup>. Although knights and non-knights were not distinguished, they were all members of lesser knightly families and most were knights. Thirty-two held land in Somerset. They included men such as John de Beauchamp of Norton, Hugh Fichet, Hugh of Popham, Geoffrey of Stawell and John of Wick who were prominent in the affairs of the county. Three knights, Thomas de Gurney, Walter de Lorty and James de Multon, were related by blood to leading landholders. Those known to be militarily active, besides Thomas de Gurney and possibly Walter de Lorty, were Richard Arthur, Geoffrey of Aumale and John of Clevedon.

The 1301 list provides a clue as to the proportion of knightly landholders in Somerset from which the Crown expected to secure military service. In the previous year the sheriff had submitted a list of forty librate holders in Somerset and Dorset and about one hundred male lay landholders in Somerset were named. They included the thirty-two men summoned in 1301. Since the most prominent landholders, whose names were returned in 1300, were not included in the summonses, the thirty-two men summoned represented between a third and a half of the lesser landholders liable to become knights and to provide knight service. The proportion of

<sup>215</sup> Close R. 1264-8, 410; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 284

<sup>216</sup> See chapter VIII

<sup>217</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 350; the figure does not include Gregory of Wellington



lesser landholders who were militarily strenuous was possibly smaller. Those summoned in 1301 included men who were active in the county court rather than on the field of battle but neither the list of 1300 nor that of 1301 included those landholders, few in number, for whom knightly rank and military activity was an affirmation of their recently acquired standing in society <sup>218</sup>.

<sup>218</sup> See pp.215-7

#### CHAPTER IV

##### THE KNIGHTS AND LORDSHIP : (i) The Distribution of Franchisal Powers.

###### Lordship.

As the principal landholders in the local communities the knights possessed a degree of power. By the reign of Edward I their position of social dominance was expressed in the lists of charter witnesses in which the knight was commonly styled dominus Y of Z miles or dominus Y Z miles. The style dominus signified in a general sense the possession of powers of lordship, including those originating from the ownership of land and those arising from the exercise of regalian powers. The varying levels of power exercised by knights were not reflected by any differentiation in style. The term dominus incorporated many gradations of power.

The degree of lordship exercised depended on both the economic and non-economic controls the landholder possessed over men. The right to command, punish and draw on the services and surplus product of dependants released the lords from restraints imposed by manual work. Thus the knightly group was sustained as a caste of warriors. There is no evidence that Somerset knights were engaged in manual toil and agrarian labour in the late 13th. century.

The use of the style dominus by knights without the corresponding miles was very infrequent especially from the reign of Edward I. Such usage in cartulary evidence may be due to omissions by the clerk. At the end of Henry III's reign John de la Lynde, who had taken knighthood by 1254 <sup>1</sup>, was styled solely as dominus in a charter recorded in a cartulary compiled for the preceptory of Buckland <sup>2</sup>. In the record of a

<sup>1</sup> Cf. app.I

<sup>2</sup> Buckland Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.xxv), p. 174

grant made in 1281 of lands in Holton and North Cheriton the witnesses included the lords Simon de Montagu, Walter Pauncefoot and John of Blackford <sup>3</sup>. They were all knights and there is evidence that Walter and John used the style miles before 1280 <sup>4</sup>.

In many parts of north-west Europe the holding of knightly rank had become the chief distinction among freemen by about 1280 <sup>5</sup>. The style dominus was increasingly applied only to those lords who were knights. Eventually knights alone were qualified by the style. It was not applied to those men who, although of similar social standing and with identical powers of lordship, had not taken knighthood. Some of them had inherited their powers and estates from knights. The knight William le Bret was eventually succeeded at Sampford Brett and Torweston by his son Adam <sup>6</sup>. Adam was not a knight. He attested several charters in the early 14th. century. In one dated 1304 he was not styled dominus. That style was reserved to those of his neighbours who were knights, although not specifically styled as such <sup>7</sup>. Adam had not been knighted by 1309 <sup>8</sup>.

Lordship was transmitted by inheritance. Its basis was the possession of land to which was attached a body of dependant tenants. The assimilation of the concepts of lordship and knighthood was not a mere social form. The knights of Somerset were lords in a real sense. Their tenure of the rank of knight rested on a secure economic basis rooted in landholding. From their rural estates and holdings they derived the bulk of their income.

In some cases a knight's power in a community was clearly reflected in his style as Y dominus de Z. Hugh Lovel, lord of Castle Cary, and John

<sup>3</sup> Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius f. 22v.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. app.I

<sup>5</sup> Cf. L.Génicot, L'économie namuroise au bas moyen âge (Louvain, 1960), ii. 121-4, 129

<sup>6</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 275, 304; Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 71; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 145-6

<sup>7</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 52

<sup>8</sup> Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xxviii(2), 174

FitzGeoffrey, lord of Edington, were so described <sup>9</sup>. In the mid 13th. century Henry of Stawell was in one deed styled domino Henrico milite de Stawell <sup>10</sup>. Many lesser knights such as John and Henry were descended from men who from the mid 12th. century either consolidated or secured a position of high social standing <sup>11</sup>. They clearly emerged from the military and free tenants among whom there was a degree of polarisation and mobility as certain landholders prospered at the expense of others. It is often impossible to trace the pedigrees of lesser knights as far back as 1166.

Many lesser knights took as their patronym the name of the settlement in which their chief interests lay. Geoffrey of Stawell, who held a knight's fee in Stawell of Glastonbury Abbey in the late 13th. century <sup>12</sup>, was descended from the Geoffrey of Stawell who performed homage for the fee in 1189 <sup>13</sup>. The fee presumably passed in the early 13th. century to the elder Geoffrey's son Adam of Stawell <sup>14</sup>. Adam also held land in Cothelstone by military tenure from the bishop of Winchester. About 1211 he was styled 'of Cothelstone' when he paid scutage to the bishop. The Cothelstone holding was held in the mid 13th. century by Henry of Stawell <sup>15</sup>. Geoffrey, Henry's son, also held land in Evercreech. Nevertheless by the mid 13th. century the family's principal interests had become associated with Stawell and Henry had taken the name of Henry of Stawell <sup>16</sup>. It appears that the family's residence was in Stawell where Geoffrey maintained a private chapel in his house <sup>17</sup>.

9 Som.R.O., WHh 13/581; Hylle Cart. p.53

10 Longleat MS.10587, f.10v.

11 Cf. R.H.Hilton, A Medieval Society (1967), 49-50

12 Feud.Aids, iv. 289, 306

13 Glaston.Feod. (Som.Rec.Soc.xxvi), 80

14 Cf. Cur.Reg.R. 1207-9, 244, 305

15 N.R.Holt, The Pipe Roll of the Bishopric of Winchester, 1210-11 (Manchester, 1964), 167; Reg.Pontissara, ii. 595; Taunton Customs (Som.Rec.Soc.lxvi), p. xvii

16 Glaston.Feod. 80; G.D.Stawell, A Quantock Family (Taunton, 1910), 22-8

17 Glaston.Cart. i (Som.Rec.Soc.lxx), p. 35



The distribution of wealth.

The distinction between the knights with wide powers of lordship and those whose powers were more limited closely paralleled the distinction between the wealthy and less wealthy knights. Some powers over men originated outside of the tenurial relationship between lord and tenant. They were franchisal since the Crown controlled them as its exclusive right. Other landholders enjoyed regalian liberties only by royal grant.

Most of the Somerset knights who claimed and exercised franchisal powers were the wealthiest lay landholders or magnates. Their lands were valued at between £100 and £200 a year. The latter figure, which was in some cases exceeded <sup>18</sup>, represented a handsome income in comparison with that enjoyed by most knights, but it hardly matched the opulence of the few greatest magnates of the realm whose annual income exceeded £2,000 <sup>19</sup>. Even at the top of the scale the income of nearly all Somerset knights fell short of that of most of the lesser religious houses in the county at the Dissolution some 350 years later. The wealth of the knights was minimal set aside that of the leading county landholder, Glastonbury Abbey, whose possessions were valued at £3,642 in 1535 <sup>20</sup>.

About twenty knightly landholders in Somerset had incomes over £100 a year. Most of them belonged to families which were established in the county by the mid 12th. century. William de Fienles, whose land in Martock was valued at £145 in 1302 <sup>21</sup>, was the descendant of William de Fienles who held the estate in 1212. The elder William inherited it from his mother Sibyl, who was presumably descended from Faramus of Boulogne who

<sup>18</sup> John de Mohun's lands in Somerset and Devon were valued after his death in 1279 at £350; C 133/22 no.1

<sup>19</sup> S.Painter, Studies in the History of the English Feudal Barony (Baltimore, 1943), 170-90

<sup>20</sup> A.Savine, English Monasteries on the Eve of the Dissolution (Oxford Studies in Social and Legal History, 1909), 281-2

<sup>21</sup> C 133/105 no.3

had been granted Martock by Earl William, the son of King Stephen <sup>22</sup>. The wealthy knights or magnates were tenants in chief of the Crown and many held their lands by tenure per baroniam. Hugh Lovel and his son Richard held the barony of Castle Cary which comprised lands in south-east Somerset, near Castle Cary, Bruton and Wincanton. The barony was valued at £150 in 1264 <sup>23</sup>. Some knights held lands by barony outside the county. Hugh de Courtenay (d.1292), lord of the manors of Crewkerne and Hemington, was lord of the Devonshire barony of Okehampton <sup>24</sup>. Oliver de Dinham, lord of Cardinham barony (Cornw.), held Buckland manor in Somerset <sup>25</sup>. John de Cogan, who held the Devon barony of Bampton, had a valuable estate in Somerset at Huntspill <sup>26</sup>. Anselm de Gurney and his successors, who had extensive possessions in north-east Somerset, were lords of Beverstone barony in neighbouring Gloucestershire <sup>27</sup>.

Tenure per baroniam did not of itself confer any peculiar powers of lordship. It was in the interests of the Crown to preserve baronial tenure since such tenants paid a higher level of relief than tenants by knight service. It was a common abuse for Exchequer officials to exact the baronial relief of £100 from prominent tenants by knight service. It was attempted when John de Erlegh came of age in 1292 <sup>28</sup>. Such an abuse was only possible because the social position, wealth and power of the baronial tenants was shared by the leading tenants in chief by knight service and that social position somehow became associated with baronial tenure. John of Merriott, lord of Merriott, held property in Somerset and Lincolnshire which was valued at over £146 at his death in 1285 <sup>29</sup>.

22 Book of Fees, i. 84-5; Rot.Litt.Claus.(Rec.Com.), i. 68; Cal.Chart.R 1257-1300, 34

23 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 27-8; C 132/31 no.6.

24 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 70; C 133/62 no.7.

25 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 110; C 133/89 no.3.

26 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 5; C 133/104 no.20

27 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 14-15; Feud.Aids, iv. 276, 279, 291, 297-8.

28 Select Cases before the King's Council 1243-1482 (Selden Soc.xxxv), 14

29 C 133/42 no.6.



His lands in Somerset were held by knight service yet in the 1285 survey of knights' fees his widow Ela was recorded as holding in dower lands in Stratton and Lopen belonging to the barony of Merriott <sup>30</sup>. Simon de Montagu's lands in south-east and central Somerset were valued in 1278 at £195 <sup>31</sup>. There is no evidence that Simon held his lands by baronial tenure but in 1285 his property at Donyatt was said to be held from the Crown as a member of the barony of Shepton. Furthermore his lands at Chedzoy were said to belong to his barony. Shepton itself was held from the Crown by knight service and was assessed at a knight's fee <sup>32</sup>.

The property of the wealthier knights was often spread over a wide area and included lands outside the county. John de Mautravers (d.1297) was lord of Hendford near Yeovil but his lands were located mainly in Dorset <sup>33</sup>. Hugh Pointz II, who was lord of half of Curry Mallet barony, had estates as far afield as Kent and Cambridgeshire, as well as Dorset and Gloucestershire <sup>34</sup>. John Tregoz, lord of the Herefordshire barony of Ewyas Harold, had property in Wiltshire, Shropshire and Northamptonshire, as well as Somerset, where he held the manors of Burnham and Chelwood. Those two manors were peripheral to his main interests but they were kept in demesne, the corn being either sold or shipped through Burnham across the Bristol Channel to his estates on the Welsh marches <sup>35</sup>.

The income of the wealthy knights was derived principally from estates comprising several manors and other holdings. As in the cases of Simon de Montagu and John de Mohun they usually had at least four manors <sup>36</sup>. The property of John de Beauchamp (d.1283) lay in Hatch, Shepton Beauchamp, Stoke sub Hamdon and Marston Magna <sup>37</sup>. In the right of his wife, Cecily,

<sup>30</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 283

<sup>31</sup> B.L.Add. Ch. 26,754

<sup>32</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 272, 278, 287

<sup>33</sup> C 133/79 no.4; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 383

<sup>34</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 39; C 134/2 no.19

<sup>35</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 43; C 133/94 no.9

<sup>36</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 272, 278, 287, 294; C 133/22 no.1

<sup>37</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 272, 283, 286, 288

he held land in Dundon and Welton <sup>38</sup>. Landed wealth was not invariably the result of the possession of a number of holdings. The value of property depended on its size, the fertility of its land and the relationship between landholder and tenants. William de Fienles had lands in Surrey and Somerset. Those in the former county were leased out at the end of the 13th. century <sup>39</sup>. In Somerset he held only one estate. That was at Martock which was farmed in demesne and was worth £145 in 1302 <sup>40</sup>.

Most knights held lands worth less than £100 a year. The property of the majority was valued at less than half that figure. Between the mass of lesser knights and the few wealthy knights there was a small but important intermediate group. John de Columbers, lord of Nether Stowey barony, had property in Somerset and Berkshire which was valued at £54 in 1306. His Somerset holdings were in Nether Stowey, Puriton, Woolavington and Honibere <sup>41</sup>. John's relative poverty in comparison with his tenurial peers resulted in his exclusion from those summoned individually to parliament <sup>42</sup>. Nevertheless it will be shown that John and other members of the knightly group with lands valued between £50 and £100 had extensive powers of lordship such as the wealthiest knights enjoyed.

The intermediate group also included John de Erlegh, Nicholas de Montfort and Nicholas Branch who were all lords of hundreds. John de Erlegh's lands were valued in 1324 at over £57. His main interests were in Somerset where he held land in North Petherton and Durston, on the edge of the moors south of Bridwater, and in Somerton and Babcary in the south-east of the county and in Beckington in the east <sup>43</sup>. The lands held by Nicholas de Montfort's son Henry in Wellow, Radstock, Pedlinch and Woodborough were

38 C 133/40 no.3.

39 Surrey Manorial Accounts (Surrey Rec.Soc.xv), p.xxii

40 C 133/105 no.3; cf. E 372/146

41 C 133/123 no.9.

42 See p. 13

43 C 134/81 no.20.

valued in 1304 at £54<sup>44</sup>. Nicholas Branch inherited lands in Frome and a couple of small holdings in Great Elm and Rodden from his mother Joan in 1279, when they were valued at £50<sup>45</sup>.

The intermediate group also included knightly landholders who did not hold hundreds but who were more powerful than the lesser knights. Robert de Briwes, who pursued a career as a royal justice, died in 1276 when his lands were said to be worth over £54. They included Staple manor, valued at £45<sup>46</sup>. Robert was succeeded by his son John who in 1280 claimed a number of regalian powers<sup>47</sup>. Matthew de Furneaux and his son Matthew who had widespread landed interests in Somerset and Devon are probably to be included in the same group<sup>48</sup>.

The lands of most knights were valued at less than £40 although many of them were included by the sheriff in his list of forty librate holders drawn up in 1300. The large number of persons listed in the 1297 return of twenty librate holders but omitted from the 1300 return adds weight to the view that the less wealthy landholders predominated among the wealthy group<sup>49</sup>. Walter of Shapwick's property was said to be worth £15 in 1285 when it was sold to Glastonbury Abbey<sup>50</sup>.

The main source for ascertaining the value of a knight's estate is the figures given in inquisitions post mortem in which there is a great possibility of under valuation. Thomas de St.Vigore's manor in Stratton was valued at only £6.1s.8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. at his death in 1295. He apparently had no other lands in either Somerset and Dorset yet his son Thomas was returned as holding twenty librates or more in those counties in 1297. The younger Thomas had apparently not gained an accession of lands in the intervening two years. The extent of Stratton in 1295 can only represent its minimum

44 C 133/113 no.7.

45 C 133/24 no.6

46 C 133/15 no.1; E.Foss, The Judges of England, ii (1848), 269-72 :

Robert de Briwes has been confused with Robert Bruce, lord of Annandale.

47 Cf. Just. 1/759 rot. 13d.

48 Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 273-5, 278, 290-1, 293, 295-6 ; i. 329, 368.

49 See app.II

50 C 143/8 no.17.



value. It was a medium sized estate with a demesne arable of about 240 acres, lands devoted to meadow and pasture and land held by free and unfree tenants. The low valuation in part reflected the infertility of the soil in an area where there was much scrubland <sup>51</sup>. However such factors apart, Thomas de St.Vigore was one of many knights with property in Somerset worth less than £40. Another of the knights included in the 1300 return was Simon Roges. His property in Somerset and Dorset probably consisted solely of lands in Porlock which were valued at about £17 in 1306 <sup>52</sup>.

In the cases of Thomas de St.Vigore and Simon Roges, the lands they held outside the two counties may have been considered when the sheriff was compiling his lists. The elder Thomas de St.Vigore had held property in Wiltshire and possibly in Oxfordshire, which may have raised the nominal value of his lands to over £20 <sup>53</sup>. That might account for the inclusion of his son in the 1297 list but since the younger Thomas did not appear in the full list of forty librate holders it seems probable that his lands were worth less than that value at which it became obligatory to take knighthood or to provide knight service. Simon Roges had holdings in Devon and Cornwall which may have brought the value of his lands somewhere near £40 <sup>54</sup>.

A comparison of the values given in inquisitions post mortem clearly reveals that there was considerable variation in the wealth of individual knights. Many lesser knights held estates which were considerably fragmented <sup>55</sup> and although no valuations of such holdings survive, it would not be suprising if they were worth considerably less than £40. The variation in the value of the lands held by knights was reflected in the

51 C 133/70 no.10.

52 C 133/121 no.27.

53 C 133/70 no.10.; cf. Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 100

54 C 133/121 no.27.

55 See pp. 94-9

scale of personal wealth. The assessments made for the 1327 subsidy show that the knights or their successors were generally the wealthiest members of the community in which they had a residence. The few great landed knights, such as Richard Lovel in Castle Cary, Hugh de Courtenay in Crewkerne and Ralph Daubeney in South Petherton, were far richer in personal terms than most knights <sup>56</sup>. The latter included Thomas de Gurney in Englishcombe, Ellis Cotel in Camerton, Henry of Glastonbury in Heathfield and Alexander Luttrell in East Quantockshead <sup>57</sup>. John de Flury, a prominent freeholder, was barely distinguishable in personal wealth from other members of the community in Cloford <sup>58</sup>.

The right of waif and stray.

The powers of the less wealthy knights were not buttressed by other powers dependant on royal sanction. The only regalian right generally claimed by the knights throughout the county in 1274 was the liberty of waif and stray. The liberty was evidently enjoyed by most leading freeholders who dominated the local communities. In Frome hundred twenty-two landholders asserted their right to appropriate stray animals <sup>59</sup>. Apart from Cirencester Abbey, which had property in Langley near Frome <sup>60</sup>, and Maiden Bradley Priory (Wilts.), which held land in Beckington <sup>61</sup>, the claimants were local knights or prominent freeholders. With the exceptions of Alan Plugenet and Laurence de St.Maur, their names figure prominently among witnesses to deeds concerning land in that part of the county <sup>62</sup>. Alan and Laurence were non-resident. Alan was a member of the royal

<sup>56</sup> Exchequer Lay Subsidy, 1327 (Som.Rec.Soc.iii), 206, 155, 200

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. 87, 86, 145, 165

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. 125; cf. Feud.Aids. iv. 277; app.I

<sup>59</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 124, 137

<sup>60</sup> Cirencester Cart. i, p.xxxiii.

<sup>61</sup> Feud.Aids. iv. 310

<sup>62</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 330; Glaston.Rent. (Som.Rec.Soc.v), 226-8; Longleat MSS. 4946, 5003.

household and Laurence served in the retinue of the earl of Lancaster <sup>63</sup>.

The liberty of waif and stray was widespread since the most prominent landholders were well placed, subject always to local custom, to regulate the exploitation of the open fields and common pastures when used for grazing. The pasturing livestock was periodically checked and stray animals seized. In the fenlands livestock was rounded up during the drifts. John de Erlegh's officials held one or more drifts in the summer months in Northmoor in North Peterserton. The chief benefit was to John's table since many wildfowl were captured but a few extraneous beasts were taken <sup>64</sup>. The impounding of livestock added to the lord's revenues since their redemption was achieved through payment. Profits of the fold formed part of a manorial lord's rights. John of Exeter, who leased half of Chedzoy manor from Simon de Montagu, was entitled to half of the impounded livestock and of the profits of the fold <sup>65</sup>.

Not all knights claimed the liberty of waif and stray. In Somerton hundred both Humphrey de Kael and William of Staunton expressly denied any right to the liberty <sup>66</sup>. Nevertheless the confiscation of stray beasts epitomized in a general way the powers exercised by the dominant landed interest in the local communities. That group included magnates, lesser knights and leading freeholders. In areas bordering the coast, as in Portbury hundred, the same group claimed wreck of sea <sup>67</sup>.

#### Hundredal jurisdiction.

Claims to greater powers were restricted to a socially exclusive group comprising the wealthiest knights or magnates and several landholders whose property was worth over £50. The knights with the widest powers were

<sup>63</sup> See pp. 46-7, 209-10

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Som.R.C., NPl, rott. 1, 3-5d.; Exeter City R.C., 1280

<sup>65</sup> K.B.27/108 rot. 10d.

<sup>66</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 21d.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid. rot. 19.



those who were the lords of a hundred. Their lordship of the hundred was generally associated with possession of the chief manor of the hundred, as in North Petherton, South Petherton and Chewton, and consequently formed part of their inheritance <sup>68</sup>. The hundredal lords enjoyed extra power over men by virtue of the view of frankpledge which involved the policing of the hundred. The view was held during the two principal sessions of the hundred court each year when the sheriff or his official was present. The tithings were then inspected, their membership maintained and misdemeanours presented.

In 1274 sixteen hundreds in Somerset were held by members of knightly families <sup>69</sup>. Thirteen of them were owned by twelve landholders whose property was worth over £100. The adjacent hundreds of Hartcliffe and Bedminster and of Portbury were held by Maurice de Berkeley. Kilmersdon hundred was claimed in 1280 by Amaury de Rochechouart and his wife Maud <sup>70</sup>, but was recovered by Philip Daubeney in a suit he brought against Robert de Boyton and his wife Mary. They claimed the hundred by the grant of Geoffrey de Suleny in the early 1260s <sup>71</sup>. Philip Daubeney inherited South Petherton hundred from his father Ralph in 1292 <sup>72</sup>. Other wealthy knights holding hundreds in 1274 included John de Mandeville of Coker and Hugh de Courtenay of Crewkerne <sup>73</sup>. The remaining three hundreds in private lay lordship were later held by men whose lands were worth less than £100 but who were wealthier than most knights. John de Erlegh, Nicholas Branch

68 Feud.Aids, iv. 277, 297; C 133/61 no.23; C 133/68 no.5

69 H.Cam, The Hundred and the Hundred Rolls (1930), 277-9: the hundreds and their holders were Carhampton (John de Mohun), Crewkerne (Hugh de Courtenay), Abdick and Bulston (Henry de Lorty), South Petherton (Ralph Daubeney), Hartcliffe and Bedminster, Portbury (Maurice de Berkeley), Huntspill (John de Cogan), Coker (John de Mandeville), Cannington (Robert Walerand), Chewton (the heirs of Hugh de Vivonne), Kilmersdon (Amaury de Rochechouart), Milverton (the heirs of George de Cauntelo), Norton (John de Muscegros), North Petherton (Philip de Erlegh), Frome (Joan Branch), Wellow (Henry de Montfort from the Earl of Gloucester).

70 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 695, 698, 700

71 Cal.Close, 1279-88, 304; Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 198

72 C 133/61 no.23; C 133/68 no.5

73 Cf. C 133/12 no.1; C 133/62 no.7

and Nicholas de Montfort were the lords of the hundreds of North Petherton, Frome and Wellow respectively.

The hundreds were held from the Crown by fee farm. John de Erlegh owed 105s. to the Exchequer each year for the manor and hundred of North Petherton <sup>74</sup>. Wellow hundred was exceptional for it was held from the earls of Gloucester. Nevertheless Nicholas de Montfort was answerable to the Crown for his exercise of hundredal jurisdiction. In 1280 when landholders were called upon to justify their claims to exercise regalian rights Nicholas carried a rod, the symbol of his authority, before the justices in the county court and his bailiff took an oath to execute decisions of the Crown <sup>75</sup>.

The Crown did not through the quo warranto proceedings recover permanent lordship over any Somerset hundreds. South Petherton hundred was seized for the Crown in 1280 because the hundred had not been specifically mentioned as an appurtenance of the manor in an earlier grant <sup>76</sup>. The hundred however was immediately restored to Ralph Daubeney to hold as custodian during royal pleasure <sup>77</sup> and in 1290 he was granted the hundred <sup>78</sup>. The joint hundreds of Abdick and Bulston were taken from Henry de Lorty since his claim to hold them by virtue of a grant by Richard I to Richard Revel, his ancestor, was considered insufficient <sup>79</sup>. Henry subsequently recovered the hundreds. In 1281 the sheriff was directed to let Henry hold them until the question of his right had been settled in parliament <sup>80</sup>. The matter had not been settled by 1304 when Henry was allowed all the profits which he had derived from the hundreds since the Crown had resumed nominal lordship <sup>81</sup>. Henry's possession of

<sup>74</sup> Som.R.O., NPl, rott. 3, 8, 9; cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 277

<sup>75</sup> C 133/113 no.7.

<sup>76</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 701-2.

<sup>77</sup> Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 401

<sup>78</sup> Ibid. 1281-92, 376

<sup>79</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 694

<sup>80</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 149

<sup>81</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 243

the hundreds was confirmed in 1309 by Edward II on account of his long tenure and service to the Crown <sup>82</sup>.

The authority of the hundredal lords varied. In Carhampton hundred John de Mohun (d.1279) enjoyed the liberty of return of writs <sup>83</sup>. By that privilege the sheriff and his officials were excluded. The authority of Thomas and Maurice de Berkeley, lords of Bedminster hundred, over the Bristol suburb of Redcliffe was challenged by the Bristol burgesses. The latter sought to free the suburb and its inhabitants from the jurisdiction of the Berkeleys and to bring them under their own jurisdiction. The Berkeleys were not defeated until 1331 <sup>84</sup>.

Hundredal jurisdiction was a source of revenue as well as of authority. Financial advantage arose not only from the administration of justice but also from customary payments owed by suitors to the hundred courts. In Robert de Muscegros's hundred of Norton a rent of 5s. was paid to the lord on Hockday <sup>85</sup>. The value of Cannington hundred to its lord John Walerand was assessed in 1301 at £4. Of that sum about half was derived through the administration of justice. The remainder comprised rents of assize paid on 2 February and Hockday and a rent at Michaelmas <sup>86</sup>.

Such payments were partly offset by the expenses entailed by hundredal lordship. North Petherton hundred court was usually held six or more times a year. In the accounts of the intrinsic hundred the profits from the hundred and manor courts were not always distinguished probably since the hundred court occasionally dealt with matters more properly belonging to the lord's manor court. The courts were held by the lord's steward who with his staff, which included a clerk, had to be entertained during his visit <sup>87</sup>. More expense was incurred in the guarding of prisoners

<sup>82</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 133-4

<sup>83</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 125

<sup>84</sup> Hilton, A Medieval Society, 44-5, 222-3

<sup>85</sup> C 133/28 no.8.

<sup>86</sup> B 142/8 rot.8.

<sup>87</sup> Com.R.O., NPI,rott. 1-12; Exeter City R.O., 1280

and their removal, under the charge of local officials, to the county gaol in Somerton<sup>88</sup>. Maintenance of instruments of punishment was probably a minor item of expenditure. Local materials were used in the upkeep of the pillory and tumbril at North Petherton<sup>89</sup>. A more costly project there was the complete rebuilding of the manorial hall, in which the courts were held, at the end of Edward I's reign<sup>90</sup>.

In some cases the lords reduced their costs by making certain duties part of the tenurial obligation of their dependant tenants. One duty so delegated was the guarding of prisoners as at Crewkerne, where Hugh de Courtenay was lord of the hundred<sup>91</sup>. On the manor of Stoke it was recorded in 1251 that the tenant who had the stocks in his house was not required to perform his labour services while the stocks were in use<sup>92</sup>. A rudimentary form of imprisonment enabled the sharing of the duty to guard prisoners.

Those knights who were lords of hundreds had jurisdiction in a number of spheres over both neighbouring landholders and their tenants. The administration of the view of frankpledge and the assizes of bread and ale gave the hundredal lord controls over communities or parts of communities under the immediate lordship of other knights and landholders. The latter owed suit to the hundred court. In 1251 William Branch and his wife Joan exacted suit to their hundred of Frome from several of their neighbours, including Henry de Montfort of Nunney<sup>93</sup>. Nicholas de Langelond owed suit to the abbot of Glastonbury's hundred of Brent<sup>94</sup>.

Wealthy landholders incurred the same obligation. John de Beauchamp owed suit to Abdick hundred for his holding in Merryfield as well as to

88 Som.R.O., NPI, rott. 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 12.

89 Ibid. rot. 7; Exeter City R.O., 1280

90 Som.R.O., NPI, rott. 9-12.

91 B.L.Add.MS. 49359, f. 74v.

92 Beauchamp Regs. 10

93 K.B.26/145 rot.2d.

94 B.L.Egerton MS. 3321/F, f.197v.



the courts of the various lords from whom his lands there were held <sup>95</sup>. In 1297 the lord of Bulston hundred, Henry de Lorty, was ordered to cease demanding suit of court from John de Mohun, lord of Dunster, who held land in Isle Brewers and who was then under royal protection while on service in Gascony <sup>96</sup>. The obligation of suit of court could be acquitted by proxy but many prominent suitors probably made no provision for attendance. About 1312 amercements were levied in the Glastonbury Abbey hundred of Whitley upon Cecily de Beauchamp, Philip de Columbers and Matthew de Furneaux <sup>97</sup>. The reason was possibly their non-attendance in the court.

The jurisdictional interests of hundredal lords and prominent landholders often conflicted. The latter might secure concessions from the former. In a number of cases the lord of a hundred relinquished amercements levied on the men of influential landholders during the view of frankpledge and the administration of the assizes of bread and ale. Glastonbury Abbey granted Cecily de Beauchamp the amercements imposed on her men of Compton and Dundon in the administration of the assizes <sup>98</sup>. Such concessions were accorded to prominent landholders and not to lesser knights. In 1286 the abbot of Keynsham, lord of Keynsham hundred, claimed the amercements from the tithing of Saltford, over which the knights Thomas of Bayeux and John Basset were lords, and from half of the tithing of Farmborough where land was held from Thomas <sup>99</sup>.

Concessions were made to religious houses. Lay lords of hundreds thereby diminished their own powers and revenues. In 1275 Philip de Erlegh undertook not to distrain the preceptory of Buckland, its men and tenants in North Petherton manor against their will in the administration of the assizes of bread, ale and victuals <sup>100</sup>. There was a long and close

<sup>95</sup> C 133/40 no.3.

<sup>96</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 22; cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 291

<sup>97</sup> Longleat MS. 11216, rot.78

<sup>98</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 525

<sup>99</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 253; Feud.Aids, iv. 311

<sup>100</sup> Buckland Cart. p. 31

relationship between the lords of North Petherton, Philip's ancestors, and the Hospitallers' preceptory and associated nunnery in neighbouring Durston. About 1186 the Crown had endowed the Hospitallers with property there seized after the suppression of the Augustinian house founded in the mid 12th. century by William de Erleigh<sup>101</sup>. Agreements might limit or fix the amount to be taken by way of amercement. Henry de Lorty agreed to amerce men of Muchelney Abbey from Fivenead, Isle Abbot and Drayton at only 4d. in his hundreds of Abdick and Bulston<sup>102</sup>.

Similar arrangements were made by knights with wide powers over a settlement rather than a hundred. John de Erleigh held the view of frankpledge for Beckington where he held an estate. In 1298 he came to an agreement with the prior of Maiden Bradley, the other principal landholder there. The prior's men were to attend John's view but any amercements levied on them were to be released to the prior, provided John was paid 3s. a year for the pecuniary rights. The amount to be paid by the prior was to be reduced if he was prevented by the Crown from receiving the amercements<sup>103</sup>. At the end of the reign John de Beauchamp relinquished the demands he made of the men of Polsloe Priory, Exeter, by his right to hold the assizes of bread and ale and to exact a toll on brewing in Marston Magna where he was lord<sup>104</sup>.

The hundredal lord exercised jurisdiction in more important pleas which were denied to most knights. By an agreement of 1263 John of Aller's right to hold his court in Stathe in North Curry hundred was protected but cases arising from the raising of the hue and the spilling of blood were expressly reserved to the dean and chapter of Wells, lord of the hundred. John, who was a substantial landholder, was to receive the amercements levied on his men. To secure those amercements and those arising from the

101 V.C.H.Som. ii. 148; cf. T.Hugo, Medieval Nunneries of Somerset (1867).

102 Muchelney Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc. xiv), p. 73

103 Longleat MS. 38A.

104 Beauchamp Regs. 62-4.



assizes of bread and ale, 12d. was to be paid on the lawday <sup>105</sup>. John of Aller's successors later claimed that by virtue of the payment they were entitled to hold assizes of bread and ale by the grant of the dean and chapter <sup>106</sup>.

Lords of hundreds required a full attendance at the biannual courts leet and other important sessions of the court. The men of Montacute Priory in Closworth were obliged to attend Geoffrey de Mandeville's hundred of Coker when royal writs were being pleaded and judgement was being passed on robbers captured anywhere in the hundred, Closworth excepted <sup>107</sup>. The priory presumably had the right to pass judgement on thieves taken in its manor.

For the holding of a court leet it was essential for those over whom the view of frankpledge was exercised to attend in person or through their tithingmen. Lands in Twerton purchased by William Snel carried the obligation of suit twice a year to Wellow hundred <sup>108</sup>. By the agreement of 1263 the tithingman for Stathe was to attend North Curry hundred court for the biannual view <sup>109</sup>. In making grants of freeholdings in North Fetherston, Henry de Erlegh generally reserved the biannual suit to his hundred there <sup>110</sup>. In the case of the men of Athelney Abbey in Ham, Henry remitted his claim to suit of court but, although those men were to be justiciable in the abbot's court, their tithingman was to attend the hundred <sup>111</sup>. In 1286 Nicholas de Montfort reimposed the obligation of attendance at Wellow hundred upon several tithings including Newton and Camerton, over which John de St.Lo and Ellis Cotel were the respective lords. Nicholas's action followed a period during which the obligation

<sup>105</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 189-91

<sup>106</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 694

<sup>107</sup> Montacute Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.viii), pp. 138-9; cf. H.Cam, The Hundred and the Hundred Rolls, 176

<sup>108</sup> Som.R.O., WHb 11/535, 549

<sup>109</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 191

<sup>110</sup> Buckland Cart. pp. 20-1, 22

<sup>111</sup> Athelney Reg. (Som.Rec.Soc.xiv), pp. 148-9

had been commuted. From 1286 the tithingman was to appear with the tithing on the two lawdays of Michaelmas and Easter <sup>112</sup>.

The powers of the lesser knights were considerably more limited than those of their more wealthy neighbours. The former, unlike the latter, rarely withdrew their men from the jurisdiction of the hundred court thereby enhancing their power. Walter de la Lynde was withholding the suit due from Broomfield to the king's hundred of Andersfield in 1280 but it had been subtracted earlier in the century when Margery de Newburgh held the estate <sup>113</sup>. The magnates subtracted their men from suit of hundred court more readily. Nicholas Pointz (d.1273) withdrew the suit due from Curry Mallet to Abdick hundred <sup>114</sup> and William de Montagu (d.1270) the suit due from Shepton to Norton hundred <sup>115</sup>. The withholding of suit was important for the men of the communities involved. It placed them under greater pressure since they became answerable for matters of hundredal jurisdiction in the local court and not in the more distant hundred court where authority might be less strong.

The greatest withholder of hundred suit in Somerset was the earl of Gloucester. In the early 1260s Richard de Clare had withdrawn from several hundreds in the north-east of the county the suit due from many tithings, which were held from him by other landholders. Richard appropriated the customary payment of sheriff's aid and for those tithings the view of frankpledge was supervised by his steward <sup>116</sup>. In the bishop of Bath and Wells' hundred of Winterstoke the tenants of several knightly landholders became answerable to the earl, the overlord. The landholders were Anselm of Gurney of East Harptree, Adam le Waleys of Hutton, William Arthur of Weston Super Mare and Thomas of Bayeux and Henry de Montfort of Stoke

112 Som.R.O., H/348, f.213 and v.

113 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 692

114 Just. 1/759 rot.13; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 39

115 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 693; B.L.Add.Ch. 26,754

116 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 774-5; Just. 1/759 rott. 19, 25d.

Giffard <sup>117</sup>.

Private views of frankpledge.

The holding of private views of frankpledge outside the hundred court was restricted to a few wealthy landholders. In 1280 John de Columbers and John de Cogan were called upon to justify their claims to the view and other liberties of a hundredal nature on their neighbouring manors of Puriton and Huntspill respectively. The men from Puriton apparently attended the tourn held in either Whitley hundred or Bemstone hundred but the sheriff may have held a tourn at Huntspill itself which was assigned the status of a hundred in 1280 <sup>118</sup> and again in 1303. There was some uncertainty over the attribution of hundredal status to Puriton in the latter year <sup>119</sup>.

Another wealthy knight John of Merriott claimed a private view at Merriott in Crewkerne hundred in 1280. Although John's claim to hold the view was denied he apparently continued to exercise it <sup>120</sup>. After his death in 1285 part of his manor there was assigned in dower to his widow Ela who later married Roger Basset <sup>121</sup>. Roger and Ela subsequently were found to have appropriated the view thereby separating it from the lordship of the manor, then held by the Crown since John's heir was a minor. The Crown claimed that a licence was necessary for such a division <sup>122</sup>.

Some hundredal lords held a private view for those of their estates which were subject to the hundredal jurisdiction of another landholder. John de Erlegh, lord of North Petherton hundred, held a private view at Beckington in Frome hundred. All men of the vill, including the dependants of the other principal landholder, the prior of Maiden Bradley, were

<sup>117</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 774; Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 130

<sup>118</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 690-1

<sup>119</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 310

<sup>120</sup> Just. 1/759 rot.17d.

<sup>121</sup> Cal.Close, 1279-88, 321

<sup>122</sup> K.B.27/121 rot.17

justiciable for the view in John's court. In 1298 John acknowledged certain concessions to the prior. The prior's tenants, both free and customary, were to attend the court leet to be judged with John's men as one tithing. They were to be summoned by John's steward or bailiff appearing in the prior's halmote there. The tithingman was to be recruited in alternate years from John's men and the prior's men. The prior was to receive any amercements levied on his men and he was to share with John any payments exacted from the tithing in the course of the view, for such trespasses as concealment. While John's jurisdictional powers were not impaired, the financial benefit of the view to him was reduced. Further concessions to the prior reduced John's revenues from the administration of the assizes of bread and ale. The prior's men were not to undergo the judgment of the pillory or tumbril, instruments for enforcing the assizes, since their use would have meant denying the prior the amercements exacted. The prior, furthermore, was to enjoy the liberty of waif and stray free from the claims of John and his heirs <sup>123</sup>.

Regalian liberties and the wealthy knights.

The knights who held hundreds or claimed the view of frankpledge invariably claimed the whole gamut of regalian rights thereby entertaining the most extensive claims to lordship. In 1280 Reynold FitzPeter claimed the view of frankpledge in Chewton manor together with the important pleas dealing with the spilling of blood and the raising of the hue and cry. In the manor he also held the assizes of bread and ale, and with his wife Joan he possessed a gallows, tumbril and pillory <sup>124</sup>. In fact Reynold was lord of Chewton hundred in the right of Joan who was the daughter and coheir of William de Forz <sup>125</sup>. Reynold's claims in Chewton manor in fact applied to the hundred of which it was the head manor. Similar liberties

<sup>123</sup> Longleat MS.38A.

<sup>124</sup> Just.1/759 rot.25 and d.

<sup>125</sup> See pp. 137-8



were claimed within the hundred at Midsomer Norton by Amaury de Rochechouart in the right of his wife Maud, the widow of William de Forz<sup>126</sup>. Apart from the earl of Gloucester no other landholders in 1280 claimed regalian liberties in the hundred where several lesser knights held land.

Possession of gallows, a visible symbol of power, was restricted to a narrow social group of wealthy landholders. Knights who were lords of a hundred by necessity had gallows as part of their equipment<sup>127</sup>. They were used in implementing the liberty of infangthief, the right to execute thieves caught red-handed. On the manors of Huntspill and Puriton the ancestors of John de Cogan and John de Columbers, who exercised powers associated with hundredal jurisdiction, had possessed gallows from time immemorial<sup>128</sup>. A prominent landholder might secure a share in the gallows of the hundred lord. In Portbury hundred Maurice de Berkeley apparently shared his gallows there with the earl of Gloucester. The gallows were situated on the boundary of the lands<sup>129</sup>. The gallows possessed by Reynold FitzPeter and his wife Joan in Chewton in 1280<sup>130</sup> were presumably those on the Mendips shared in 1296 by Joan and the bishop of Bath and Wells. They were set up where their lands met<sup>131</sup>.

The erection of gallows was controlled by the Crown. A lesser knight might be granted them as a mark of favour. In 1270 Thomas de St.Vigore purchased a licence to have gallows on his manor of Stratton<sup>132</sup>. As a royal justice Thomas was presumably well versed in using the power over life and death<sup>133</sup>. John de Briwes, lord of Staple, possessed gallows and a pillory together with the liberty of infangthief and the assizes of bread

126 Just. 1/759 rot. 25 and d.; Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 39

127 Cf. Just. 1/759 rott. 8d., 9d., 10d., 17d.

128 Plac. de Quo Warr. (Rec. Com.), 690-1

129 Just. 1/759 rot. 19d.

130 Ibid. rot. 25d.

131 Hist. MSS. Com. 12, Wells, i, p. 158

132 Close R. 1268-72, 185-6; Plac. de Quo Warr. (Rec. Com.), 697-8

133 Foss, Judges of England, iii (1851), 148-9



and ale <sup>134</sup>. He presumably had inherited those rights from his father Robert, another royal justice <sup>135</sup>.

As with the view of frankpledge, some hundredal lords extended their right to gallows to their property in other hundreds. John de Courtenay, lord of Crewkerne hundred, erected a set on his land in Hernington for which the gallows of the lord of Kilmersdon hundred had been used previously <sup>136</sup>. John de Erlegh possessed gallows in Beckington in Frome hundred. A few wealthy knights, who did not hold hundreds, were the possessors of gallows. Anselm de Gurney maintained sets on his estates in Harptree, Farrington, Englishcombe, Weare and Corton <sup>137</sup>.

The exercise of regalian rights did not result from any particular form of tenure. The wide power claimed by those knights who were tenants per baroniam were also claimed by knights who held their lands by knight service. The knights enjoyed wide powers as the heirs to large estates which had been consolidated probably by the mid 12th. century. Lesser men came to enjoy high regalian rights through the division of such estates. In 1280 the right to gallows in Wanstrow was advanced by John of Acton, his wife Margaret and her sister Elizabeth of Clevedon <sup>138</sup>. The two sisters had inherited Wanstrow from their mother Agnes, the daughter of Otes of Wanstrow, who had been a prominent county landholder in the early 13th. century <sup>139</sup>.

While the liberty of infangthief was exercised by a few wealthy knights a couple of lesser knights were entitled to have thieves caught red-handed executed by decapitation. The right of hevedschop was held by Adam of Bawdrip, together with the assizes of bread and ale in Bawdrip <sup>140</sup>,

<sup>134</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 13d.

<sup>135</sup> Foss, Judges of England, ii. 269-72; cf. C 133/15 no.1.

<sup>136</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 695.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid. 700

<sup>138</sup> Ibid. 694

<sup>139</sup> See pp. 139-40

<sup>140</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 8d.

and by William of Staunton, together with the assize of ale and a tumbril in Staunton <sup>141</sup>.

Through the exercise of hundredal jurisdiction wealthy knights had powers over communities where other landholders exercised seignorial powers or manorial jurisdiction. In 1280 Nicholas Branch claimed to hold the assizes of bread and ale in Frome hundred by virtue of his lordship of that hundred. Nicholas accordingly came into dispute with some of his neighbours, including Henry de Montfort who claimed the assizes in Nunney <sup>142</sup>. As has been shown, wealthy and prominent landholders sometimes secured from the hundredal lord a pecuniary advantage from the latter's exercise of hundredal powers. John of Merriott's rights to the liberty of infangthief and the assizes of bread and ale in Merriott were acknowledged in 1280. His powers however were limited for although he could pass sentence on thieves caught red-handed they were to be executed on the gallows of the lord of the hundred, Hugh de Courtenay. John was to receive any amercements levied on his men in the administration of the assizes but their enforcement was apparently the responsibility and right of Hugh as hundredal lord <sup>143</sup>.

In the majority of cases it is probable that the lord of the hundred enjoyed the proceeds arising from the holding of the assizes of bread and ale. An exception was Wellow hundred where the amercements apparently did not pass to the lord, Nicholas de Montfort. According to the sheriff in 1283 the recipient was Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester <sup>144</sup>. Consequently the enforcing of the assizes in the tithings of Englishcombe, Newton and Twerton, did not benefit those knights, namely Anselm de Gurney, John de St.Lo and Thomas of Bayeux, who were the respective lords, but the earl from whom they held their lands. Nicholas de Montfort exercised power in

<sup>141</sup> Just. 1/759 rot.10d.

<sup>142</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 321-2; Plac.de Quo Warr.(Rec.Com.), 688

<sup>143</sup> Just. 1/759, rot. 17d.

<sup>144</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 101

the hundred but the earl continued to reap considerable financial benefit from his overlordship of the hundred <sup>145</sup>.

The peculiar case of west Somerset.

The examples used to illustrate the thesis that higher powers of jurisdiction were restricted to a few wealthy landholders and knights are drawn chiefly from the east and south of the county. The situation was different in west Somerset where the higher justiciary powers were shared by a wider social group. The probable explanation possibly lies in the tenuous nature of hundredal lordship in that area. Settlements there tended to be small and dispersed <sup>146</sup>. In the extensive hundred of Williton the problems of administration were enhanced since the hundredal lord, the Crown, was non-resident.

In Williton hundred several landholders exercised hundredal jurisdiction on their individual manors. The manors were called free manors, presumably since they were outside the hundredal jurisdiction of the Crown <sup>147</sup>. In Dulverton Hawise de Pyn held courts which were called hundreds <sup>148</sup>. These courts probably dealt with such matters as the view of frankpledge. In 1280 Dulverton was one of several townships in the hundred which made separate presentments before the justices in eyre <sup>149</sup>.

Several landholders in the hundred claimed the liberties of infangthief and gallows. Private views of frankpledge were less frequently claimed but were still held by a wider cross-section of landholders than elsewhere in the county. Richard de Plessis, a knight and the eldest coheir of Richard of Wrotham, held with the other coheirs a private view in Exton where they also enforced the assizes of bread and ale, and

<sup>145</sup> Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 279

<sup>146</sup> B.M.Swainson, 'Dispersion and agglomeration of rural settlements in Somerset,' Geography, xxix. 1-8

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii, 119

<sup>148</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1327-41, 317

<sup>149</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 5d.



possessed gallows and a tumbril <sup>150</sup>. Alexander Luttrell possibly had a view at East Quantockshead. When he quit-claimed to certain tenants on his manors of Hewish and Bagborough suit of court at Quantockshead, he reserved the suits performed just after Easter and Michaelmas <sup>151</sup>. Those were the sessions when the view was most usually held.

In the neighbouring hundred of Carhampton several lesser landholders also had wide powers. Matthew de Bezilles, an Oxfordshire knight <sup>152</sup>, held a private view of frankpledge for the manor of Bromland in Brompton Regis. He also claimed the liberties of infangthief, gallows and tumbril, and the assizes of bread and ale <sup>153</sup>. Edmund Everard, the son of the knight William Everard <sup>154</sup>, had a private view at Blackford <sup>155</sup>. The existence of such liberties in the hundred were the outcome of the difficulty of enforcing firm hundredal jurisdiction over an area of scattered settlement. Like Williton, Carhampton hundred covered a large area and a terrain in which travel was difficult. Hundredal powers were consequently appropriated by the leading landholders. The relative weakness of the hundred lord explains why John de Mohun (d.1279), although he enjoyed the liberty of return of writs in Carhampton hundred, was compelled on at least one occasion to call for the sheriff's assistance in collecting the king's debts in the free manor of Winford <sup>156</sup>.

The wider distribution of franchisal powers in west Somerset shows that the lordship of knights was not differentiated from that of other prominent freeholders who happened not to be knights. In Williton hundred gallows and the assizes of bread and ale were claimed by several landholders. They included knights, such as Simon de Raleigh, who also was entitled

<sup>150</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 7.

<sup>151</sup> Som.R.O., L 22/1.

<sup>152</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I, i. 91.

<sup>153</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 6d.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 168; app.I

<sup>155</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 2.

<sup>156</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 125

to pass judgement by the ordeal by water in Nettlecombe, and free landholders. The latter were Roger of Arundel in Clatworthy, Reynold Inweux in Brushford, Nicholas le Waleys in Hewish Champflower and Isabel FitzUrse in Brompton Ralph<sup>157</sup>. Nicholas was liable to compulsory knight-hood in 1280 but neither Roger nor Reynold was apparently qualified to become a knight<sup>158</sup>. Their claims in 1280 were recorded by the hundred jury but in the enquiries of 1274 and 1276 the presentments from many of the settlements were made as free manors<sup>159</sup>. Those for Nettlecombe and Clatworthy were made with the hundred in 1276 but their status as free manors was recognised<sup>160</sup>. The jurisdiction of the hundred lord was nominally acknowledged. Roger of Arundel, although he had a private view of frankpledge and other liberties in Clatworthy, was bound to be one of the four men from the vill accompanying the reeve to the hundred court for the biannual tourn<sup>161</sup>.

#### Markets and fairs.

The pillory and tumbril used in the punishment of offenders against the assizes of bread and ale were regalian rights. A tumbril constructed by Simon de Montagu's men in Chedzoy without due authority was quickly dismantled<sup>162</sup>. The assizes were enforced in markets and fairs among other places. Indeed Anselm de Gurney claimed the assizes together with a pillory and tumbril as the general liberties belonging to the free market in Weare granted to his father Robert by Henry III<sup>163</sup>.

By the mid 13th. century the Crown maintained that markets and fairs could only be held upon royal authority as they involved regalian rights<sup>164</sup>.

157 Just. 1/759 rot. 4.

158 Ibid. rot. 6d.

159 Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 119, 138

160 Ibid. 125

161 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 691

162 Just. 1/759 rot. 8d.

163 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 700

164 L.F.Salzman, 'The Legal Status of Markets,' Camb.Hist.Jnl. ii(3), 205-12.



A royal grant conferred sufficient authority. When questioned in 1280 as to the grounds on which they held markets and fairs, Henry de Montfort, Nicholas de Montfort and Thomas de St.Vigore displayed charters of Henry III concerning Nunney, Wellow and Stratton respectively <sup>165</sup>. Tenure from time immemorial was not considered adequate. Hugh de Courtenay and Isabel de Forz had jointly held a market and fair in Crewkerne on the grounds of long tenure <sup>166</sup>. John of Merriott failed to put in a claim in 1280 for a fair in Lopen and it was confiscated. He thereupon claimed to hold the fair by royal grant but his assertion was not corroborated by the jurors <sup>167</sup>.

Royal grants did not establish new centres for exchange and trade but conferred upon certain landholders the right to control rural trading assemblies. The grant of a charter was an acknowledgement of the de facto lordship of the landholder over the trading life of the local community. Such economic activity usually centred on a weekly market and annual fair. The fairs had probably been established for a long time. They took place on the feast days of the local patron saints <sup>168</sup>. By the grant the landholder's right to take the tolls and to augment his revenues through the administration of the assizes of bread and ale was recognised.

The royal sanction provided by a charter was used by lords to quash neighbouring assemblies which jeopardized their own interests. An unchartered market or fair was at a distinct disadvantage. At Whitelackington peasants and pilgrims were accustomed to make offerings on the feastday of St. Petroc at a chapel dedicated to that saint. Merchants and traders were attracted there and over a period the lords of Whitelackington came to exercise a degree of control over the trade that sprang up. In 1268 Ralph de Montsorell, the lord, challenged the right of

<sup>165</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 688, 696-7

<sup>166</sup> Ibid. 693.

<sup>167</sup> Just. 1/759 rot.10d.

<sup>168</sup> E.g. the feast of St.Bartholomew at Crewkerne (24 Aug.): C 133/62 no.7.

John de Beauchamp to hold a fair in near-by Shepton on the morrow of St. Petroc. Ralph presumably brought the action after his revenues had been depleted through the operations of a rival fair. John claimed that the Whitelackington assembly could not be considered a fair while his own had been duly authorized by royal charter. Ralph's challenge came to nothing and the interests of his more powerful neighbour, backed by royal authority, were upheld <sup>169</sup>. John's predecessor Robert had been granted two fairs a year in Shepton in 1260 <sup>170</sup>.

The protection of duly established markets and fairs was considered before others were authorized. Nevertheless in 1280 Nicholas Branch claimed that his Saturday market in Frome was harmed by the Thursday market held in Nunney by Henry de Montfort <sup>171</sup>. The harm was presumably a diminution of revenue as sometime trade was diverted to Nunney.

Royal charters were abused or misinterpreted by landholders. In 1270 Ela la Sor was granted a market and fair in Backwell <sup>172</sup>. However as the result of an earlier division between coheirs, Backwell was shared by two lords. In the 1280s they were John le Sor, son and heir of Ela, and Thomas of Bayeux <sup>173</sup>. John paid half of the profits of the market and fair to Thomas. At some point before 1288 John defaulted but his argument that, by virtue of the 1270 grant, he was entitled to all the profits was not allowed <sup>174</sup>.

Between 1260 and 1307 at least twenty-eight fairs were the subject of awards to lay landholders in Somerset <sup>175</sup>. The awards chiefly benefitted those landholders who possessed wealth or influence. Most of the fairs were in the eastern part of the county but that was as much an indication of the influence of the landholders in that area as of commercial development

<sup>169</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 41-57 Hen. III (Som. Rec. Soc. xxxvi), 88-90

<sup>170</sup> Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 26

<sup>171</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw. I, 97-8

<sup>172</sup> Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 151

<sup>173</sup> Feud. Aids, iv. 291 ; see p.

<sup>174</sup> Just. 1/1280 rot. 11d. ; Just. 1/1284 rot. 4.

<sup>175</sup> Most of the grants are mentioned in N. F. Hulbert, 'A Survey of the Somerset Fairs,' Proc. Som. Arch. Soc. lxxxii, 83-159

there. Coupled with many of the awards were grants of markets and free warren, the privilege of hunting smaller animals on demesne land.

Most of the grantees were wealthy landholders who were knights from established county families. Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, in 1294 was granted a market and fair in Charlton Horethorne<sup>176</sup>. He held land there in the right of his wife, the daughter of William Longespee<sup>177</sup>, who had been awarded a market and fair there in 1252<sup>178</sup>. William Branch and his wife Joan were granted a fair in Frome in 1270<sup>179</sup>. Joan was the daughter of Ralph FitzBernard who acquired the Frome estate by his marriage to Eleanor. Eleanor's father, Wandregisilius de Courcellis, held the estate in the mid 12th. century<sup>180</sup>. Of the lesser recipients some were connected with the court circle or had a career of service to the Crown. Henry de Montfort who received a grant for Nunney in 1260<sup>181</sup> was probably related to Henry de Montfort of Wellow and Farleigh, a royal justice<sup>182</sup>. Thomas de St. Vigore was granted a fair and Friday market in Stratton in 1267. In the following year he received a grant of a fair and free warren in Shipton (Oxon.)<sup>183</sup>. Thomas was to serve as sheriff of Oxfordshire and Berkshire in 1268 and of Somerset and Dorset in 1269. Under Edward I he was a royal justice<sup>184</sup>.

In the later 13th. century Crown grants of fairs were limited. In 1290 Edward I awarded a market and fair in Wraxall to Ellen de Gorges<sup>185</sup>. She was the widow of Ralph de Gorges who had been a member of Henry III's household<sup>186</sup>. Laurence de St. Maur probably secured his grant for Rode in

176 Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 436

177 Complete Peerage, vii, 682; cf. ibid. xi. 384

178 Cal. Chart. R. 1226-57, 413

179 Ibid. 1257-1300, 151

180 Proc. Som. Arch. Soc. lxxviii, 15-16

181 Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 39

182 Foss, Judges of England, iii, 133-4; V.C.H. Wilts. v. 12; see p.

183 Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 75, 100

184 P.R.O. List of Sheriffs (List and Index, ix), 107, 122; Foss, Judges of England, iii. 148-9

185 Cal. Chart. R. 1341-1417, 173

186 Close R. 1268-72, 533-4; see p. 49



1283 through his connection with the king's brother, Edmund <sup>187</sup>. Connection was also an important factor behind grants of free warren which were ordinarily restricted to prominent landholders. In 1285 John Tregoz was granted free warren on his demesne in Burnham and Chelwood <sup>188</sup>. One lesser knight who received a grant was Ralph Wake. The award made in 1290 applied to his lands in East and West Dowlish and Compton Martin <sup>189</sup>. Ralph was the brother-in-law of Alan Plugenet <sup>190</sup>. Alan, a long-standing member of Edward's entourage presumably provided the channel through which Ralph secured the favour.

At the end of Edward I's reign a number of grants were issued in favour of men active in the Scottish campaigns. The grant of a fair in Weare to John ap Adam in 1298 was made while he was on service in Scotland <sup>191</sup>. Recipients of grants of fairs in the early 14th. century included John de Beauchamp, John de Columbers and Henry de Lorty who were all active warriors <sup>192</sup>. Adam le Bret and William of Loughborough, both lesser landholders, received grants. The award of a market, fair and free warren in Torweston to Adam, who was not a knight, was made in October 1306. The grant was issued at Lanercost, the winter quarters of the army <sup>193</sup>. Two days later William was granted a market and fair in Dulverton during the lifetime of his wife Hawise <sup>194</sup>. Their marriage had been permitted by the Crown in 1300 on account of William's service to the Crown in Gascony, Wales and Scotland, all scenes of military activity in the 1290s <sup>195</sup>. The two grants of 1306 were evidently rewards to lesser men for military service. Similarly the grant to Matthew de Furneaux of a

187 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 269; see pp. 209-10

188 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 324.

189 Ibid. 349.

190 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 267; Just. 1/1315 rot. 21d. ;  
Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 417.

191 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 471.

192 Ibid. 1300-26, 22, 31, 45, 47, 44.

193 Ibid. 71.

194 Ibid. 68.

195 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 485.

market and two fairs in 1296 was probably the monarch's reward to a strenuous knight. It was issued in August at Berwick <sup>196</sup> and Matthew had earlier been summoned to the muster at Newcastle on 1 March <sup>197</sup>.

The great store set upon the exercise of lordship over the trading life of local communities frequently engendered conflict between landholders. In 1296 Matthew de Furneaux was favoured with a grant of a market and a fair in Kilve and a fair in Perry <sup>198</sup>. In 1300 his fair at Perry was disrupted and the tolls seized by men sent by John de Erlegh, lord of the hundred <sup>199</sup>. The attack probably signifies the jealous reaction of John who saw his position and influence as hundredal lord being undermined by a favoured neighbour. John was not authorized to hold a fair in North Petherton until 1318 <sup>200</sup>.

#### Towns and trade.

The fairs granted were held in rural settlements. Many of the more important trading centres, such as Crewkerne, under lay controls retained essentially rural characteristics <sup>201</sup>. They were dominated by the wealthier knights. The longest fair awarded, that at Langport Westover on 8 February and the following eight days, was granted to Henry de Lorty <sup>202</sup>. Henry's borough of Langport occupied an important position in the commercial life of the county. Situated by the river Parrett on the edge of the moors, the borough served a wide hinterland. There was much traffic along the river between Langport and the port of Bridgwater <sup>203</sup>. Goods purchased at Bridgwater for John de Erlegh were sent to Langport and from there were transported by land to his estate at Beckington. Produce and

196 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 465

197 Parl.Writs, i. 276

198 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 465

199 K.B. 27/163 rot. 46d.

200 Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 395

201 B.L.Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74-78v.

202 Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 44.

203 Cf. Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 119-20



stock from his manor of North Petherton sent to Beckington and Somerton presumably passed through Langport <sup>204</sup>. Langport was one of the destinations specified in the carrying services of the tenants on the bishop of Winchester's estate at Taunton, twelve miles away <sup>205</sup>, and of the tenants on Cecily de Beauchamp's manor of Dundon, four miles distant <sup>206</sup>.

Wealthy landholders were well placed to tap the flow of trade for their own benefit. They were not averse to overlooking the privileges exempting local religious houses from the payment of toll. In 1288 the abbot of Glastonbury claimed that Henry de Lorty was harrassing the abbey's men from Zoy, Othery and Ham in Langport. The abbot made the same allegation against Hugh Lovel in respect of the abbey's men from Ditchet, Doultong and Pilton <sup>207</sup>. It is clear that the latter traded in near-by Castle Cary which was another important centre for local trade. The tenants of the bishop of Winchester in Rimpton were obliged to carry goods there <sup>208</sup>.

The wealthy knights benefitted financially by encouraging trade since increased tolls would provide a great return. Their interests also led them to interfere in the life of the trading communities under their lordship. In Dunster, Langport and Nether Stowey the lords' officials intervened actively. The lords in question were John de Mohun, Henry de Lorty <sup>209</sup> and John de Columbers <sup>210</sup>, all powerful and wealthy landholders.

In itself the presence of the residence of a prominent lord with a large household acted as a stimulus on trade. The trading life of Dunster was in large part geared to meet the requirements of Dunster

204 Som.R.O., NP 1, rott. 5, 6, 8.

205 Taunton Customs, 32

206 Beauchamp Regs. 34

207 K.B. 27/110 rot.19.

208 Taunton Customs, 80

209 Cf. Just. 1/765 rott. 4d. - 5.

210 Cf. Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 127

castle, the residence of Reynold de Mohun (d.1258) and his successors. The Mohuns retained a privileged position in the local market and fair. Reynold granted his burgesses preference in their dealings over the men of the countryside but his own men were allowed to make the first transactions. He also conceded that the burgesses need not farm the port and borough tolls against their will but they were to pay toll on their dealings involving more than 12d. Traders in fish and corn were exempted altogether <sup>211</sup>. It was necessary to encourage traders in essential foodstuffs which were required in large quantities for the men staffing the castle.

Prominent landholders were sometimes accorded favoured status in a neighbour's market or fair. In 1275 Hugh de Courtenay secured the right for his men from Faulkland in Hemington to trade free of toll in the fairs held in Norton St.Philip and Hemington by the prior of Hinton. The concession applied only to dealings undertaken to supply the needs of Hugh, his household and tenants and did not cover wider commercial transactions. Hugh's tenants who were not from Hemington were to pay toll at the customary rate <sup>212</sup>.

Trade was also promoted by conferring burghal status on settlements and by creating new towns. As far as the knights were concerned experimentation in such matters in Somerset in the 13th. century was confined to the most wealthy <sup>213</sup>. The few settlements created did not prosper as commercial centres. The settlement at Lower Weare which may have been granted burghal liberties by Anselm de Gurney (d. 1286) <sup>214</sup> sent representatives to the last three parliaments of Edward I <sup>215</sup> but its eventual failure is suggested by the taxation return of 1327 <sup>216</sup>.

<sup>211</sup> Som.R.O., L8/1

<sup>212</sup> Devon R.O., TD 51, ff. 104-5

<sup>213</sup> M.Beresford, New Towns of the Middle Ages (1967), 483-6

<sup>214</sup> M.Bateson, 'The Laws of Breteuil', E.H.R. xv. 308

<sup>215</sup> Parl.Writs, i, p. xci

<sup>216</sup> Exchequer Lay Subsidy, 1327, 281

Lesser knights did not control important centres of trade but many of them had property in the towns and principal centres of the county. Such holdings usually provided the knights with interests in the town nearest their estates. They reflected the localized interests of most knights. William de Fauconberge, a landholder in Milton, derived rent from property in Ilchester to the east in 1304<sup>217</sup>. Richard of Emborough, presumably lord of Emborough at the eastern end of the Mendips, held a tenement in Wells<sup>218</sup>. Knights and other landholders in north-east Somerset, including Richard Arthur, John de St. Lo, John le Sor, John la Warre and John le Waleys, had property in Bristol or its suburb of Redcliffe<sup>219</sup>. The function of the burgage property was probably to provide town houses from which landholders and their officials could transact business. The property also provided revenue when it was rented out. In Bridgwater, the most prosperous borough in the county in the early 14th. century<sup>220</sup>, Hugh of Popham, whose estates lay in Huntworth to the south, held no less than five burgage tenements in the third part of the borough held by Maud Mortimer<sup>221</sup>. Clearly he was deriving some income from burgage property. Nevertheless the greatest part of the knights' incomes was derived from rural estates, which provided the basis for lordship of all knights. Franchisal powers were enjoyed by a minority of the knights.

217 A 179/239/249 ; cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 262.

218 Wells City Charters (Jcm.Rec.Soc.xlvi), pp. 13, 34

219 The Great Red Book of Bristol, i (Bristol Rec.Soc.iv), pp. 100, 104, 107.

220 Exchequer Lay Subsidy, 1327, 278-9

221 C 133/101 no.6 ; cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 300

## CHAPTER V

### THE KNIGHTS AND LORDSHIP : (ii) The Knights and Their Lands.

Powers derived from regalian rights enhanced a landholder's authority but lordship itself was ultimately based on the holding of land to which dependant tenants were attached. The powers of the knights necessarily reflected the nature and composition of their estates.

#### Manorial and fragmented estates.

Manorial estates were held by many knights, both magnates and lesser landholders. The term manerium was applied to established estates and it incorporated the rights of the landholder over his land, his tenants and the economic resources <sup>1</sup>. Such estates were characterised by an area of land held by the lord in demesne and an area held by the tenantry. The tenants held their land under a variety of tenures and their rent varied accordingly. Cash payments, labour services and payments in kind could all form part of a tenant's rent. Many lesser knights however held estates which were fragmentary and comprised many holdings, often small, which clearly were not manorial in type.

The estates of knights who had recently emerged from the free tenantry were characterised by a miscellany of small holdings. Humphrey de Kael was the first of his family to become a knight. He inherited land in Compton Durville near South Petherton from his father Thomas, who had been granted it by Robert le Beth <sup>2</sup>. Humphrey's property also included a holding of 6 acres in near-by Whitelackington <sup>3</sup>. Moreover he was jointly enfeoffed

1 Cf. F. Pollock and F. M. Maitland, The History of English Law (2nd. edn. Cambridge, 1968), i. 594-605.

2 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw. I, 184-5

3 Ibid. 27.



with a certain Amy in a single acre of meadow in Hinton, possibly Hinton St.George in the south of the county <sup>4</sup>. In 1285 he had lands in Charlton Adam and Charlton Mackrell. In Charlton Adam his land, held from John de Mandeville, was assessed at a quarter of a fee. In Charlton Mackrell he held a tenth of a fee from Robert FitzPain who with John of Horsey shared the only manorial estate there <sup>5</sup>. By 1303 Humphrey, or his successor, had acquired land in Knowle St.Giles and Cudworth near Hinton St.George <sup>6</sup>. Humphrey's powers were not buttressed by any regalian powers. He did not even lay claim to the liberty of waif and stray <sup>7</sup>.

The tenurial status of the lands which made up the estates of lesser knights was often varied. Walter of Shapwick held a yardland in Shapwick from Glastonbury Abbey by military tenure. Another three yardlands he purchased there were held in socage tenure. In addition to those relatively small holdings he held in neighbouring Withies from the abbey a plough-land by knight service and a rent of 24s. <sup>8</sup>.

Some knights with manorial holdings acquired small holdings in a piecemeal fashion. Walter de Lorty inherited Swell manor and in 1294 he acquired North Perrot manor from his brother John <sup>9</sup>. With his wife Maud he purchased several tenements including in 1304 a yardland and 32 acres of arable and 4 of meadow in North Perrot. In East and West Earnshill they bought a large holding which comprised 3 messuages, 170 acres of arable and 10 of meadow. They conceivably made their purchases in North Perrot to round off their estate there <sup>10</sup>. Walter moreover held a free tenement in Barrington manor of which Ellis Daubeney was lord. Walter's holding, which comprised 10 acres of meadow, was clearly too small to be worked as

4 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 264-5

5 Feud.Aids, iv. 286; cf. K.B. 27/49 rot. 38 and d.

6 Feud.Aids, iv. 315

7 Just.1/759 rot. 21d.

8 Glaston.Feod. (Som.Rec.Soc.xxvi), 73; Glaston.Rent. 229

9 See p. 152

10 C 133/123 no.5; cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 328



a self-contained unit. It lacked an accompanying body of tenants <sup>11</sup>.

Many lesser knights occupied freeholds on the large manors of magnates and prominent ecclesiastical lords. William of Weyland held in his wife's right a small freehold in Hassockmoor from Ellis Daubeney's manor of South Petherton <sup>12</sup>. Magnates also held lands from other manors. John de Beauchamp's holding at Merryfield was composed of several tenements belonging to different manors <sup>13</sup>. Some freeholds formed manorial units in themselves. Herbert Marsh held a tenement described as a plough-land from John de Cogan's manor of Huntspill in 1302 <sup>14</sup>. According to an earlier extent the holding was a small manor with demesne land, comprising 99 acres of arable and 20 of meadow, and land held by dependant tenants <sup>15</sup>. The free tenants on South Petherton manor included William of Wigborough, a knight, who held a plough-land in South Petherton and a yardland in Stratton <sup>16</sup>. The former tenement was in fact his manor of Wigborough which, together with the yardland and 2 acres of meadow, was settled on him and his heirs in 1305 <sup>17</sup>.

Some knights had small holdings spread over a wide area. The lands of John of Wick, who in 1303 held land in Milton, Wick, Kingston Seymour and Clewer by military tenure, were widely distributed in the region north-west of Wells <sup>18</sup>. His property, which in 1285 was said to comprise 3 messuages, 6 plough-lands, 58 acres of meadow, 50 of pasture, 29 of wood and rents valued at over £17, was located in Clewer, Turnok in Badgworth, Biddisham, Alfrington, Axbridge, Easton, Polsham, Wells, Wookey Hole, Backwell, Wick, Milton, Walcombe and Ebbor <sup>19</sup>. His estate was thus made up of a large number of holdings, some probably very small.

11 C 133/123 no.5; cf. C 133/120 no.2

12 C 133/120 no.2

13 C 133/40 no.3

14 C 133/104 no.20

15 C 133/39 no.7

16 C 133/120 no.2

17 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 346

18 Feud.Aids, iv. 307-8, 312

19 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 263 ; see Fig. IV.

The high level of rents suggests that much of John's scattered property was not kept in demesne but was exploited by farmers, who may have been the tenants. John's powers of lordship were relatively limited. His father Philip did not in 1280 lay claim to the wider jurisdictional powers exercised by wealthier knights. He held a court at Milton every three weeks for his tenants. Separate courts were evidently not held for each individual holding for the Milton court dealt with cases concerning lands John held elsewhere <sup>20</sup>.

Between lesser knights and leading free tenants there was no rigid dividing line. Prosperous free men could and did take knighthood. Some lesser knights did not exercise manorial powers of lordship. Those powers, although important, were not an essential qualification for knighthood. Such knights however had some powers insofar as their tenants were justiciable to them for their tenures. In a few cases nothing is known about the lands held by a knight. Philip of Greenham, one of the knights chosen in 1279 to perambulate the Somerset forests <sup>21</sup>, was apparently a freeholder near Frome. At the beginning of Edward I's reign he claimed the liberty of waif and stray <sup>22</sup>. The location of Philip's property is not known. He was not named among the holders of military tenures in 1285. He sat on juries holding inquisitions near Frome in 1279 and 1284 <sup>23</sup> and he was elected to grand assizes concerning Norton St. Philip and Orchardleigh in 1280 <sup>24</sup>. In 1288 his son Walter witnessed a quit-claim of rents in Frome to Cirencester Abbey <sup>25</sup>.

For their small freeholdings lesser knights owed rents of a customary nature. Nicholas de Langelond, the successor of Hugh de Langelond, a free tenant in South Brent of Glastonbury Abbey <sup>26</sup>, inherited lands near

20 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 155

21 C 47/12/2

22 Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 124

23 C 133/24 no.6; C 143/6 no.17

24 Somersetshire Pleas, 8Edw.I, 226, 312-13

25 Longleat MSS. 4962, 4963.

26 Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 540

Burnham and East and South Brent <sup>27</sup>. Nicholas was one of twenty-nine free tenants owing cash rents recorded on John Tregoz's manor of Burnham in 1300 <sup>28</sup>. In 1313 Nicholas's holding there was said to comprise a plough-land and a half-yardland. In Brent he held three plough-lands from the abbey <sup>29</sup>.

More detailed information about his holdings in Brent is provided in a survey made c.1308 of the abbey's manors of East and South Brent. Nicholas's property was made up of several small holdings. In South Brent he had acquired three quarter-yardlands, for which his rent was 5s.6d. with 13d. larder payment at Martinmas. Another quarter-yardland was held for 15d. rent, 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. larder payment and payment, called Honyssilver, of 15d. at Easter or two gallons of honey on 1 August. For another holding his rent was 2s. and 3lbs. of cummin at Michaelmas. For those lands he owed homage and suit to the hundred court of Brent. From the same manor he held for life a half-yardland for 2s.6d. rent, 13d. larder payment and 15d. at Easter or two gallons of honey on 1 August. For another holding of 5 acres he owed 2s. rent at Michaelmas <sup>30</sup>.

In East Brent Nicholas held a yardland, which he had purchased in 1299, for a rent of 7s. For 5 acres of meadow he owed four gallons of honey. On Brent Knoll he held a half-yardland which was cultivated every other year when the rent was increased from 3s. to 3s.4d. For that tenement he also owed 18d. larder payment and suit twice a year to the abbot's hundred court for delivery of the gaol and execution of royal writs <sup>31</sup>. There is no evidence that Nicholas leased any of his property to tenants and it is possible that the land was exploited to meet his own needs. He lived in Brent <sup>32</sup>.

27 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 299, 300

28 C 133/94 no.9

29 C 134/31 no.12

30 B.L.Egerton MS.3321/F, f.177

31 Ibid. f.197v.; Glaston.Feod. 104

32 Longleat MS. 11216, rot. 20d.



There is no evidence that the position of such knights as Nicholas de Langelond and Humphrey de Kael, whose fragmented holdings were probably built up in the later 13th. century, was differentiated from that of other free landholders by the exercise of any special social controls. Many knights however held manorial estates to which a body of dependant tenants was attached. Such estates had probably been created by the period from 1180 to 1220 when the status of the majority of the peasantry had been depressed to the advantage of the lords <sup>33</sup>. The wealthy knights usually had several manors and their powers were strengthened by the exercise of franchisal rights. The interests of the lesser knights were more localized. Although their powers were not buttressed by wider regalian powers they possibly bore more directly upon their dependants.

The economic regime on manorial estates.

From inquisitions post mortem held during the reign of Edward I and the first decade of his successor, it appears that demesne land was the most important item on the manorial estates of Somerset knights. The land was given over to arable husbandry and was exploited for the lord <sup>34</sup>. On the large estates surplus crops were probably sold. On John Tregoz's manor of Burnham, the customary tenants were obliged to carry corn to the market when it was for sale <sup>35</sup>.

The leasing of demesne lands was not a general practice. It was adopted in particular circumstances, notably for raising loans. About 1270 Ralph Pipard pledged West Chinnock manor as security for a debt of 29 marks to Ralph Bakepuze <sup>36</sup>. Such leases were in fact mortgages and the mortgagor retained control of the demesne and its exploitation. In the

<sup>33</sup> R.H.Hilton, The Decline of Serfdom in Medieval England (1969), 16

<sup>34</sup> Cf. C 133/2 no.7; C 133/6 no.1; C 133/11 no.11; C 133/15 no.1; C 133/28 no.8; C 133/39 no.2; C 133/61 no.23; C 133/70 no.10; C 133/113 no.7; C 134/2 no.19; C 134/16 no.3; C 134/36 no.6

<sup>35</sup> C 133/94 no.9

<sup>36</sup> K.B. 27/20A rot.12

late 1280s Osbert Giffard mortgaged a free tenement in Hardington manor for a term of three years to Ralph Wyneman, a Bristol citizen from whom he had borrowed £32 <sup>37</sup>. The sum mentioned probably represented both principal and interest. In 1285 Simon de Montagu acquired land worth £20 in Wonford near Exeter (Devon) from John of Exeter. In exchange Simon leased to John half of Chedzoy manor for ten years <sup>38</sup>. It seems that Simon continued to exploit the manor, from which half the profits were paid to John. When John was imprisoned Simon withheld payment <sup>39</sup>.

While the exploitation of demesne was important the greatest part of the value of the knights' estate was derived from the rents and other payments and services of the tenantry. The level and nature of the tenant rent varied considerably. It was determined both by the requirements of the estate and by the controls exercised by the knights over the tenants. The tenantry usually fell into three categories : the free tenants, the customary tenants and the cottars.

Free tenants generally met their obligations in cash. The rent bore no obvious relationship to the size of the tenement <sup>40</sup>. Unfixed by custom the level of rent was more likely to be determined by market conditions. On a few manors, held by magnates or wealthier knights, some free tenants were required to perform specialist services. The duty of one tenant in Stoke was said in 1287 to comprise making distrains and enforcing summonses in the levying of scutage from fees in Dorset forming part of Cecily de Beauchamp's dower <sup>41</sup>. Such services were exceptional as was any obligation on the part of freemen to perform labour services. The lord of a manor with a large demesne in supplementing his labour force at critical points in the agrarian calendar might require free tenants to work. On Joyce de Dinham's large

<sup>37</sup> Just. 1/1295 rot.8

<sup>38</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 169; K.B. 27/108 rot.10d.

<sup>39</sup> K.B. 27/103 rot.6

<sup>40</sup> Cf. C 133/94 no.9; Beauchamp Regs. 12-15, 31-3.

<sup>41</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 12



demesne manor of Buckland two free tenants owed light ploughing and reaping services. Their holdings were life tenancies and it is possible that the labour services were the vestiges of burdens once attached to servile lands. The works exacted from the customary tenants there were much harsher <sup>42</sup>.

Customary tenants and cottars were unfree. The cottars paid rent mainly in cash. Demands for their labour were usually confined to harvest boon-works for which they often received allowances of food <sup>43</sup>. The heaviest burdens fell on the customary tenants. They paid rent in the form of cash and works. The rent of assize, a customary cash payment, was fixed in proportion to the size of the tenement. On large manors comprising over 500 acres the basic unit was the half-yardland, which probably represented between 12 and 15 acres. That unit was found in Cecily de Beauchamp's manors in 1287 <sup>44</sup>, Buckland in 1301 <sup>45</sup> and Crewkerne in 1318 <sup>46</sup>. On John Tregoz's manor of Burnham in 1300 there were six tenants holding half-yardlands, but most customary tenants occupied smaller holdings. Thirty-seven held quarter-yardlands and fifteen had tenements half that size <sup>47</sup>.

The large manorial estates with over 500 acres in lay hands were held by magnates and wealthy knights. John de Mohun had a large estate at Carhampton. The estate, which included over 540 acres of demesne land in 1279, was a member of Dunster manor <sup>48</sup>. Hugh de Courtenay's extensive manor at Crewkerne was extended in 1318 <sup>49</sup>, while Cecily de Beauchamp's large manors of Stoke, Dundon, Welton and Withycombe were surveyed in 1287 <sup>50</sup>.

The cash rents of unfree tenants were important and sometimes

42 C 133/102 no.2

43 C 133/94 no.9; C 133/102 no.2; C 133/121 no.27.

44 Beauchamp Regs. 10-56

45 C 133/102 no.2.

46 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74v.-78v.

47 C 133/94 no.9.

48 C 133/22 no.1 : the estate was incorrectly called Cutcombe.

49 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74 - 78v.

50 Beauchamp Regs. 10-56

exceeded in value their works. Nevertheless the economic regime on large estates, especially those with extensive demesnes, was characterised by the tenants' obligation to perform labour services. The customary tenants generally owed week-work for all or part of the year. The Christmas, Easter and Whitsun weeks were excepted. Extra services were required at busy periods, notably for ploughing, haymaking and harvesting. In Burnham the tenants owed three week-works throughout the year in addition to extra services at haymaking and harvesting. For the additional work they received allowances of hay and corn <sup>51</sup>.

To meet the extra demand for labour in the summer months between Easter and 29 September the incidence of week-work rose. The customary tenants of Buckland manor owed three week-works between 24 June and 1 August. During the harvest they were obliged to work when required by the lord until 29 September. If the harvest had been completed by that date the lord could not expect services from them on Saturdays or feast days. The tenants also had to work at the winter and spring ploughings and at haymaking <sup>52</sup>. Cecily de Beauchamp's customary tenants had to be prepared to work six days a week from 24 June to 29 September, feast days excluded <sup>53</sup>. Hugh de Courtenay's customary tenants holding half-yardlands in Crewkerne owed five week-works in August and September. They had an additional obligation to reap half an acre during the harvest <sup>54</sup>.

Lesser landholders also required labour services from their tenants at busy periods. They might even exact such services from free tenants. Ralph FitzUrse reserved to himself autumn works and services during haymaking when he granted Maud, the widow of Richard the smith, three houses in Withycombe. For them she owed a rent of 4 s. and suit of court

51 C 133/94 no.9.

52 C 133/102 no.2.

53 Beauchamp Regs. 16, 36, 47.

54 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 77v.-78

twice a year <sup>55</sup>. In the exploitation of their demesnes some lesser knightly landholders increased and exacted more diligently their tenants' labour services. In the mid 14th. century the customary tenants of Bradford manor near Taunton recalled that Thomas of Timworth had demanded from them ploughing and fallowing services for which they claimed they should have been paid. Thomas had evidently expected them to perform compulsory unpaid work in place of paid labour. He also demanded extra carting services for which they received payment <sup>56</sup>.

When week-work coincided with religious feasts, the tenants were often exempted from work on every other feast day as on John Walerand's estate in Radway <sup>57</sup>. On John's Stogursey estate they were freed from work every feast day <sup>58</sup>. On some estates however such allowances were not made. The regime on Cecily de Beauchamp's estates was harsher than on those of John Walerand. In Welton the customary tenants owed week-work on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays between 29 September and 24 June. If a feast fell on any of those days, the work was to be performed at another time <sup>59</sup>. It was customary not to exact labour services during the three principal religious feasts but her villein tenants in Dundon owed services, albeit at a reduced level, during Christmas and Easter. Between 6 January and 25 March the same tenants were to provide two week-works on days chosen by the lady or her officials <sup>60</sup>.

Some allowance was made to tenants during sickness. Hugh de Courtenay's customary tenants in Crewkerne were allowed forty days sick leave <sup>61</sup>. According to the customs of Stoke manor recorded in 1251 sick tenants were allowed four weeks sick leave. If they were still ill after that time it was at the lord's discretion whether they worked or not <sup>62</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Som.R.O., L 32/1

<sup>56</sup> Taunton Customs, 87

<sup>57</sup> E 142/8 rot.9

<sup>58</sup> Ibid. rot.7

<sup>59</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 47

<sup>60</sup> Ibid. 34-5

<sup>61</sup> B.L. Add.MS. 49359, f. 77v.

<sup>62</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 9



In extents of manorial estates labour services were ascribed a nominal value, sometimes for the purpose of commutation. When manors were overprovided with labour surplus works could be sold back to the tenants. That occurred at Stogursey and Martock when the lands were being administered by custodians appointed by the Crown<sup>63</sup>. There is no firm evidence that it was general practice for estates kept in demesne by knights.

On some estates services were commuted. In Stoke the process of commutation advanced between 1251 and 1287. In the custumal of the earlier date it was noted that if the unfree tenants did not perform works they were to pay 7 s. a year if they held a half-yardland, 4 s. if a ferling or quarter-yardland and 2 s. if a half-ferling<sup>64</sup>. In 1287 those sums were recorded as the cash rents for some holdings. Clearly services of a general nature had been commuted although services at important periods were retained. The tenants still owed five or six week-works in the autumn, as well as ploughing and haymaking boon-works<sup>65</sup>. Services may have been commuted on Reynold FitzPeter's manor of Chewton by 1286 when the villeins owed rents worth over £9. No labour services for working the moderately sized demesne of 289 acres of arable and 36 of meadow were detailed<sup>66</sup>. A knight might commute services at will. On Walter de Lorty's manor of Swell six tenants holding half-yardlands performed general works or gave 3 s. 4 d. in compensation at his discretion<sup>67</sup>.

A more flexible approach to demesne exploitation was provided by the hiring of labour in place of using forced labour service. There are signs that on some large estates labour services were commuted and the work performed by hired labourers but the evidence relates to property being

63 S. C. 6/1090/4; E 372/146

64 Beauchamp Regs. 8.

65 Ibid. 15, 18, 20.

66 C 133/45 no.2.

67 C 133/123 no.5.

farmed by royal custodians. At Crewkerne and Misterton in the mid 1290s the works owed by the customary tenants were remitted and hired labour was used for ploughing, fallowing, harrowing, harvesting and storing grain<sup>68</sup>. Wage labour might be used at peak seasons. In 1266 the labourers who performed the reaping, threshing and winnowing in Dunster were paid by piece work<sup>69</sup>. Customary tenants performing extra services were sometimes paid, as during haymaking at Radway<sup>70</sup>.

The nature of labour services exacted depended on the economy of the estate. Arable farming generally provided the basis of economic activity. When ploughing services were demanded the tenant was expected to provide the necessary equipment and livestock. On Buckland manor the ploughing service of those tenants who did not possess oxen was commuted<sup>71</sup>. On estates where pastoral farming was important, the services owed by tenants were more varied. The customary tenants at Crewkerne, where large flocks of sheep were kept, were required to assist in the Midsummer washing and shearing and in the moving of the sheepfold<sup>72</sup>.

On the estates of magnates and lesser knights week-work was usually of a general character. Carrying services, which were sometimes exacted separately from week-work, were accorded a prominent place. They included carrying both within the manor and without. Cecily de Beauchamp's tenants in Stoke had to collect wood from the Beauchamp properties in Marston Magna, Hatch or Merryfield provided that she sent her carts. Seed and corn were to be obtained from Shepton and Marston Magna and the tenants were also required to take corn to markets within three leagues of Stoke. Once a year they were expected to travel to Lyme Regis, on the southern coast, for fish and salt<sup>73</sup>. At Radway John Walerand required his tenants

68 E 372/146.

69 Som.R.O., L 17/2

70 E 142/8 rot.9.

71 C 133/102 no.2.

72 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74v.-75.

73 Beauchamp Regs. 15-16.



to carry corn to Stogursey and Bridgwater, or to places of a similar distance from Stogursey, where they were to find victuals for him when he was resident at Radway <sup>74</sup>. The tenants of Simon Roges had to travel from Porlock to Exeter to collect salt <sup>75</sup>.

Customary tenants occasionally received allowances or payments as rewards and incentives for their work. In 1251 the half-yardland tenants at Stoke were said to be quit of their customary payment at Christmas if they had performed their labour services in full <sup>76</sup>. At Buckland most of the customary tenants were apparently paid 6 d. if they performed all their works <sup>77</sup>. Allowances were often in keeping with the work performed and were made in kind. The customary tenants at Crewkerne who were obliged to assist in making cider received twenty apples <sup>78</sup>. At haymaking tenants were often granted quantities of hay, assessed by customary measures <sup>79</sup>. At harvesting they might take a sheaf of corn <sup>80</sup>. Boon-works and extra services were generally rewarded. The lord often provided food for the workers. According to the 1251 customal the tenants mowing in Stoke received allowances of both grass and food. The latter comprised half a quarter of wheat, two sheep and two cheeses <sup>81</sup>. At Dunster tenants were permitted to graze a beast in the lord's meadow while they took part in mowing <sup>82</sup>.

The greater importance of cash payments on smaller estates.

Cash rents and other payments by free and unfree tenants were an important constituent of the seignorial income. The revenues of the

74 E 142/8 rot.9.

75 C 133/121 no.27.

76 Beauchamp Regs. 3.

77 C 133/102 no.2.

78 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74v., 76.

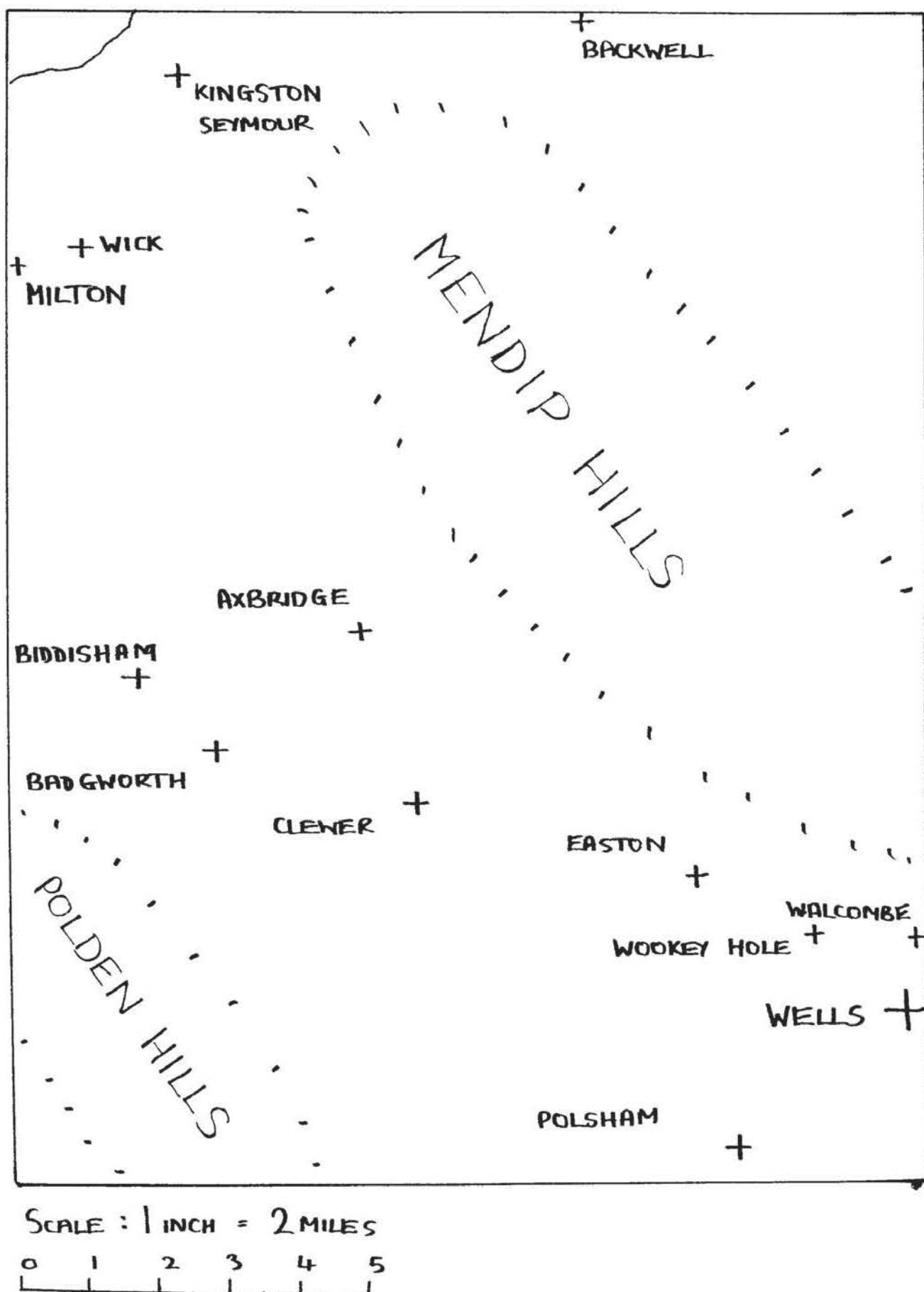
79 C 133/102 no.2; B.L. Add.MS. 49359, f. 78; K.B. 27/44 rot.3.

80 C 133/94 no.9.

81 Beauchamp Regs. 3-4

82 B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p.61.

FIGURE 4: THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE PROPERTY OF JOHN OF WICK



magnates and wealthier knights who were lords of boroughs were swelled by burgage rent. John de Mohun's property in Dunster in 1279 was valued at nearly £18. The largest single item was the rent of the free burgesses which was worth £8.8s.5d.<sup>83</sup>. Assessed at the customary rate of 12d. that figure represents 168½ burgage holdings. In 1266 the borough contained 176½ burgages<sup>84</sup>. On John de Columbers's principal manor of Stogursey the rent of sixteen tenants holding 26 burgages was worth 26s. in 1306. Six customary tenants paid a total of 20s.10d. for all their service. The borough court was similarly worth more than that held for the customary tenants. The manor had a small demesne and consequently did not depend on a large unfree labour force. John also had burgage tenants in Puriton where a borough had been planted earlier. Eight burgesses, each with two holdings, owed 16s. rent. There was also one free tenant, as well as ten customary tenants, who paid aid, and two cottars<sup>85</sup>.

The proportion of rent paid in cash or labour varied between larger and smaller manorial estates held by knights. The customary tenants of estates comprising over 500 acres had overall a heavier rent obligation. The estates were held by those knights who had a wide range of powers with which to apply pressure on tenants. The estates were usually compact units over which lordship had been exercised continuously for several generations. Stoke manor had been in the possession of John de Beauchamp's ancestors since the mid 12th. century<sup>86</sup>. The estates held in demesne by John de Mohun in the late 13th. century had been held by his family since the Conquest when they had been granted to William de Mohun<sup>87</sup>. Carhampton manor was valued at about £55 in 1279. It was a large manor. The demesne arable alone comprised over 480 acres. The works and customs of the villeins

83 C 133/22 no.1

84 B.L.Egerton MS. 3724, pp. 56-8

85 C 133/123 no.9; Beresford, New Towns of the Middle Ages, 483-4

86 Red Bk.Exch. (Rolls Ser.), i. 233; Beauchamp Regs. 2-24

87 The Honour of Dunster, pp. i-ii

were worth £11.11s.5<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d., slightly more than their rents of assize, valued at £11.6s.9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. The former sum included payments of a customary nature so it is possible that the villeins' cash payments were worth more than their works <sup>88</sup>.

On many estates held by wealthier knights the high level of cash rents from tenants was coupled with the obligation to perform labour services upon which the management of large demesnes depended. In addition to labour services the tenants owed a variety of customary payments which also symbolised their dependence. William de Fienles's manor at Martock was large. The demesne arable alone covered 447 acres and there were many tenants. In 1302 76 customary tenants were recorded. Forty-two held half-yardlands and owed a cash rent of 5s. each and general week-work between Easter and 29 September. The burden of service was increased in August and September. Extra services were required for threshing and for ploughing. The manor also included 41 cottars whose rents totalled 92s. The cash rents of the customary tenants amounted to £18.19s.3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d., slightly more than the value of their works. The importance of cash payments was even greater since they farmed meadow and pastureland for £9.15s.7<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. They also owed £6.10s. by way of aid or tallage, a mark of their personal subjection, and 48s. for churchscot. A further mark of their servility was the payment of 67 lambs at Midsummer <sup>89</sup>. In the accounts rendered in the late 1290s by the royal keeper these were styled as graslombes and were evidently a customary payment made when sheep were sheared and washed at Midsummer <sup>90</sup>.

On smaller manorial estates, under 500 acres in total area, the provision of labour services was a relatively less important part of the tenants' obligations. Although a smaller demesne did not require as much

88 C 133/22 no.1.

89 C 133/105 no.3.

90 E 372/146.



labour to work it, the reserves on which the lord of a manor with a few customary tenants could draw for forced labour were limited. Cash payments accordingly assumed a greater value in proportion to the total tenant rent. Small manors were held by wealthy and by lesser knights. John Tregoz's manor of Chelwood included only 70 acres of demesne arable in 1300 when only two villeins and two cottars were listed. To supplement their labour services, one of the three free tenants and his wife were required to provide some reaping and hoeing services <sup>91</sup>.

On some small estates labour services were evidently non-existent. e/ Small demesnes could provide at the most only a small surplus for marketing and the lords' interests were consequently not served by an intensification of labour services. John de Bretasch held three small estates in Carhampton, Butcombe and Thrubwell. The tenants paid cash rents. In Carhampton his demesne comprised 202 acres while seven free tenants held 91 acres for 14s. rent and seven villeins held 78 acres. The latter paid 34s. for all services and works. Their labour services had presumably been commuted and the demesne worked by hired labour. Similarly John's estates in Butcombe and Thrubwell comprised much smaller demesnes of 140 acres and 125 acres respectively and a handful of villein tenants, the value of whose rent included payments for services, presumably commuted <sup>92</sup>.

The property held by Baudry of Nonnington was fragmented in nature. He had a quarter-yardland in Manworth and 20 acres of pasture in Horygge. He also had small estates in Lillsdon, where he had inherited half of the manor, and Nonnington Upcote, which were organised on a manorial basis with a demesne and tenants for whom courts were held. The demesnes were small and the tenants apparently did not perform labour services. At Lillsdon 92 acres were in demesne. In addition to three free tenants, six customary half-yardlanders and seven quarter-yardlanders, whose rents

91 C 133/94 no.9.

92 C 133/47 no.10.



were worth 27s.6d., were listed in 1310. The demesne at Nonnington comprised 149 acres. The tenantry recorded included one free tenant who owed 4s. and two customary tenants whose rents were valued at 4s.1d.<sup>93</sup>.

The figures quoted above have been taken from inquisitions post mortem. It cannot be claimed that they are accurate. Nevertheless in the inquisitions on small manorial holdings, mostly held by lesser knights, labour services were valued as part of the general cash rent obligation but on large estates they were detailed separately. That suggests they had been commuted on the former. The lesser knights did not possess wide powers of lordship which may have been instrumental for wealthier knights in placing pressure on their tenants to perform forced service.

In some cases tenants on a small estate were required by their lords to perform services elsewhere. Cecily de Beauchamp's holding in Withycombe, a hamlet of Welton, did not include any demesne land. Boon-works demanded from her customary tenants there were used in her adjoining estate in Welton to supplement the heavy labour obligation of the Welton customary tenants during the winter ploughing and the harvest. The Withycombe tenants owed light labour services but their rents were often more than double those in Welton for holdings of a similar size<sup>94</sup>.

The importance of free tenures and cash payments in fenland estates.

A prominent feature on fenland estates, including both large and small manors, was the high level of cash rents. During the 13th. century arable cultivation was undertaken in the fens<sup>95</sup>. A large proportion of the free tenants paying rents were probably former customary tenants who had secured for themselves some alleviation of their personal status when they had brought land into cultivation. The lord benefitted from his

93 C 134/16 no.5

94 Beauchamp Regs. 53-4; cf. ibid. 46-51.

95 M.Williams, The Draining of the Somerset Levels (Cambridge,1970), 38-40

increased rent roll. At Martock in 1302 76 free tenants owing rents worth £29.15s.10<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>d. were recorded. They held their tenements for the term of their lives <sup>96</sup>. That form of tenure was characteristic of areas recently reclaimed from waste and common land. It was advantageous to the lord for conditions of tenure could be renegotiated when the holding changed hands.

Other large fenland manors where free tenant rent was important were Huntspill and Burnham. John de Cogan's manor at Huntspill had a demesne which included 531 acres and a pasture held in severalty. The chief item in an extent of the manor compiled in 1302 was tenant rent. About 47 customary tenants owed just over £20 and 40 free tenants just under £20. No labour services were recorded <sup>97</sup>. The free tenants on John Tregoz's manor in near-by Burnham owed about £11 in rent. The manor itself was valued at £46 of which £12 was accounted for by the demesne <sup>98</sup>.

Free tenant rent was also important on small fenland estates. According to an extent in 1284 William Marsh's small manor in Huntspill had a demesne, comprising 99 acres of arable and 20 of meadow, and land held by tenants. The unfree tenants owed cash rents valued at 65s.8d. and services and works assessed at 66s.4d. The rent of the free tenants yielded over £4 <sup>99</sup>. The free tenants may have originated from customary and servile tenants who were emancipated during the earlier extension of cultivation. In 1313 free tenants for life were recorded on the fenland estates of John of Acton in Stathe and Aller. Their rent was the most valuable individual item on both estates <sup>100</sup>.

The personal subjection of the unfree tenantry.

The controls exercised by manorial lords over the unfree tenants were

96 C 133/105 no.3.  
97 C 133/104 no.20.  
98 C 133/94 no.9.  
99 C 133/39 no.7.  
100 C 134/30 no.11.

derived both from the tenurial relationship and from the personal subjection of the tenants. Customary tenants were normally obliged to fill a number of offices on the manorial estate. Tenure of any of the offices constituted a proof of servile status.

The large manors were served by a large number of officials with specialized duties. The customary tenants at Crewkerne were expected to serve as reeve, beadle, tithingman, hayward, ploughman and berebriter. The latter official was responsible for the grain after the harvest. Some tenants were expected to serve as shepherd. That official had to wattle the fold at the lord's expense and for that he received a bushel of corn. Besides guarding the sheep and caring for sick animals, he was to sleep in the fold for which he was allowed one fleece. The lord provided barley for his dog <sup>101</sup>. In Dunster the beadle, carpenter, ploughman, reeve and hayward were elected from the customary tenants. Part of the hayward's duties was to reside with the beadle in a lodge by the haystack to ensure that no hay was stolen. The hayward was to take the staddle of the stack <sup>102</sup>. In the fenlands the duties of the hayward were complemented by those of the moorward. In North Petherton that official supervised the drift, looked after the folds and superintended the harvesting and threshing of corn <sup>103</sup>. In heavily wooded areas, such as Withycombe near Welton, complementary duties were undertaken by the woodward <sup>104</sup>.

It seems unlikely that tenants on smaller manors were required to fill as many varied and specialist posts. According to a mid 14th. century customal, the only office for which the customary tenants of Bradford were liable to be chosen was that of reeve. There was a manorial bailiff but he presumably was the lord's nominee. The compiler of the customs alleged their antiquity and references to Thomas of Timworth suggest that

101 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74v.-75.

102 Ibid. Egerton MS. 3724, p.61.

103 Som.R.O., NPI, rott. 3, 12; Exeter City R.O., 1280.

104 Beauchamp Regs. 54



the customs were applicable early in Edward I's reign <sup>105</sup>.

Manorial officials were often exempt from the whole or part of their rents. At Radway the reeve and hayward were quit of rent but not of the annual tallage. In Stogursey the reeve and hayward were acquitted from labour services apart from ploughing and carrying works <sup>106</sup>. In some cases the officials received allowances of food. The reeve of Dunster was to receive food in the castle whenever the lord and lady were in residence <sup>107</sup>. Food was often provided when the officer's duties were most burdensome. On Cecily de Beauchamp's manors the reeves were provided with meals during the harvest and when the steward was present to hold courts. The berebriter at Stoke was to have his food provided when he was working for her outside the manor <sup>108</sup>. Some allowances were intended to aid the officer in his work. The keeper of the Dunster water-leet was allowed iron for repairs to his spade <sup>109</sup>. Concessions favoured the tenants. The customary tenant who was chosen in Burnham to be ploughman was permitted to use the lord's plough and oxen on his own land <sup>110</sup>. On other estates officers, such as the reeves on the Beauchamp manors, were allowed to put some of their livestock with the lord's beasts or in his pastures <sup>111</sup>.

Both payments by and concessions to tenants were directly related to their subjection. Apparent concessions directly benefitted the lord. According to the Stoke custumal of 1251 the quarter-yardlanders were required when the lord demanded to put their cattle in his fold between Hockday and 1 August. Their sheep were similarly to go with the lord's flocks in his pasture or fold throughout the year <sup>112</sup>. Furthermore the livestock of all the villeins, apart from their pigs, were to graze in the

<sup>105</sup> Taunton Customs, 86-7.

<sup>106</sup> E 142/8 rott. 7, 9d.

<sup>107</sup> B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p.61.

<sup>108</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 23, 41, 15.

<sup>109</sup> B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p.61.

<sup>110</sup> C 133/94 no.9.

<sup>111</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 23, 41, 52-3.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid. 9.

lord's meadows and pastures over the Easter period <sup>113</sup>. A consequence of such concessions was that the benefit of the manure, an important fertilizer, accrued to the lord. Privately owned folds represented a diminution in the amount of fertilizer which the lord could secure for his own use. Their existence was probably countenanced rarely and then only upon payment. At Stoke where sheep farming was important the lord was entitled to take 12d. from each of his tenants who possessed a fold in the mid 13th. century <sup>114</sup>.

As suit of fold directed valuable supplies of manure away from tenant holdings, suit of mill syphoned part of the tenants' grain, taken by way of toll, into the lord's granary. Simon de Montagu granted the lessee of his manor in Chedzoy permission to build a new mill to which all the men of the manor, both free and unfree, were to owe suit. If they took their corn elsewhere they were to pay double toll in Chedzoy <sup>115</sup>.

In the eastern part of the county there were several fulling-mills which served the important rural cloth industry. Many of those in lay hands were situated near the Mendips upon which there were extensive sheep runs. Many of the mills were owned by wealthy knights. By the early 13th. century there were fulling-mills on the Gurney estates in East and West Harptree <sup>116</sup>. Ellis Daubeney owned two such mills in Kilmersdon at his death in 1305. They were held from him by free tenants for life <sup>117</sup>. If those mills operated for long periods, their existence suggests that the local cloth industry was of some magnitude. Not all lay owners of fulling-mills were wealthy knights. In the mid 13th. century Edmund Hoese, lord of Swainswick, had two mills in Langridge near Bath <sup>118</sup>. The cost of establishing fulling-mills would be compensated for by a seignorial monopoly.

113 Beauchamp Regs. 6.

114 Ibid. 8.

115 K.B. 27/108 rot. 10d.

116 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p.77

117 C 133/120 no.2.

118 Som.R.O., WHb 10/495.



Attempts were made in the 13th. century to foster the native textile industry. In 1271 Flemish weavers were encouraged to settle in England, a policy which bore greater results under Edward III<sup>119</sup>. Hugh Lovel of Castle Cary (d.1291) evidently promoted the cloth industry. He granted John of Ghent, of Bruton, a small holding in near-by Cole on the north bank of the river Brue. John was to develop the holding by inclosing it and constructing a bridge, possibly a weir or dam. By the time John granted the holding to his brother Walter he had erected both a water-mill and a fulling-mill<sup>120</sup>.

A number of payments owed by tenants on both large and small manorial estates symbolized their dependence on the lord. Such payments, often fixed by local custom, depended on the economic and social controls exercised by the lord. No evidence has been found of those knights whose estates comprised small fragmented holdings receiving such payments. Their property did not constitute a solid and established base for the extension of controls over any tenants.

On some estates scutage was attached to tenant holdings as were the customary feudal aids for the knighting of the lord's son or for the marriage of his daughter<sup>121</sup>. Tallage or aid, a clear sign of loss of personal freedom, was exacted from tenants on many knights' estates<sup>122</sup>. On Bradford manor it took the form of hundred penny, a poll tax levied on adult males, as on the bishop of Winchester's neighbouring manor of Taunton<sup>123</sup>. Tallage however was a fixed payment assessed as a lump sum. Entry fines owed by customary tenants for their holdings were paid on the estates of landholders as widely differing in standing as John de

119 E.Lipson, The Economic History of England (1937), i. 449

120 Som.R.O., WHh 13/581, 582

121 See pp. 183-4

122 Cf. C 133/62 no.7; C 133/68 no.5; C 133/91 no.1; C 133/123 no.9

123 Taunton Customs, 90; cf. *ibid.* pp. xxxix-xl

Erlegh of North Petherton <sup>124</sup> and John de Pavely of Bickenhall <sup>125</sup>. Chevage, paid by tenants living outside a manor, was recorded on many estates <sup>126</sup>. A wide cross section of knightly landholders who were manorial lords benefitted from the payment of larder silver. The payment, the remnant of an ancient food rent, was made on 11 November <sup>127</sup> or, less frequently, 29 September <sup>128</sup>. Some knights with small holdings, such as Nicholas de Langelond, were obliged to pay it themselves.

The actions, movements and choices of unfree tenants were restricted. At Stoke, and probably in many other places, a tenant had to obtain the lord's permission before his son or daughter could marry and before he could sell a foal or ox <sup>129</sup>. Payments were made in kind or cash for the right to keep livestock. In Martock the tenants paid graslombes for the right to keep sheep <sup>130</sup>. In Burnham a payment called edichfranny was owed by the cottars if they possessed oxen <sup>131</sup>. Lords entering their inheritance customarily exacted from their tenants a payment by way of recognition of their lordship. Amabilia, the daughter and heir of the knight John of Laverton, took a lamb from her tenants <sup>132</sup>.

On the estates of the more powerful knights, monopoly rights weighed heavily on the tenants. They might be compelled to make purchases from their lord. The Stoke tenants were liable to pay scotale, a forced payment for the compulsory consumption of ale. In 1251 they were also said to be obliged to buy straw from the lord at a price above that current in the local markets. If they made no purchase they still had to pay the price <sup>133</sup>. At Crewkerne some of the tenants' labour services were used in the making

124 Som.R.O., NP8.

125 C 133/28 no.5.

126 C 133/28 no.5; C 133/40 no.3.

127 C 133/42 no.6; C 133/39 no.2.

128 C 133/102 no.2.

129 Beauchamp Regs. 17

130 See above

131 C 133/94 no.9.

132 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I. 112-13.

133 Beauchamp Regs. 6-7.

of cider which was then sold back to the tenants. The amount to be purchased was determined by the size of their holdings <sup>134</sup>.

The payment of gifts was another sign of the tenants' dependence. In or before 1278 Isabel, the wife of John of Laverton, a lesser knight, took two cocks from her tenants in Laverton as a New Year's gift <sup>135</sup>. Tenants provided or fetched wood at Christmas both for magnates like John de Mohun of Dunster <sup>136</sup> and lesser knights like Simon Roges of Porlock <sup>137</sup>. Joyce de Dinham's tenants at Buckland rendered nuts on Ash Wednesday <sup>138</sup>.

The extension by knights of their estates.

At the beginning of the period of the cultivation of demesne land from the late 12th. century, the area under cultivation expanded. By the reign of Edward I the extension of the cultivated area had slowed down considerably. In the Somerset fenlands, where the initiative both of the great ecclesiastical landholders and the small peasant farmers had been paramount, the main advance had occurred by the mid 13th. century <sup>139</sup>.

Knights had encouraged the inclosing of moorland and its cultivation before 1272. Henry de Erlegh, lord of North Petherton, made several encroachments on the fenland pastures. He appropriated more than 100 acres in neighbouring Northmoor <sup>140</sup>. There he also inclosed 15 acres of demesne land lying north of East Lyng <sup>141</sup>. Expansion tailed off in the later 13th. century although some knights promoted moorland inclosures. In the early 14th. century Aller moor was inclosed by Matthew of Clevedon and John of Acton <sup>142</sup>. A list submitted in 1302 of encroachments in Sedgemoor mentions

134 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, ff. 74v.-77v.

135 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 156

136 B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p.59.

137 C 133/121 no.27.

138 C 133/102 no.2.

139 Williams, The Draining of the Somerset Levels, 38-40.

140 Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 126

141 Cal.Chart.R. 1327-41, 313-14.

142 Glaston.Cart. ii, p.522.



that John of Aller (d.1272) had appropriated 20 acres of meadow and pasture. More recently a similar area had been taken by Henry de Lorty, lord of Langport. Other encroachments had been made by lesser knights in the later 13th. century. Adam Ford had taken 30 acres in South Mark. Gilbert of Beer had appropriated only 3 acres <sup>143</sup>. Assarting in the late 13th. century was probably largely a matter of peasant enterprise on a small scale. In North Petherton John de Erlegh apparently took no initiative in expanding cultivation. He exacted payments from tenants who had or were about to bring small areas of land into cultivation <sup>144</sup>.

Land had been reclaimed from waste and woodland. In Porlock, which lies between the coast and the northern fringes of Exmoor, Simon Roges held many small inclosures as well as strips in the open fields <sup>145</sup>. The small fields were probably encroachments on the previously uncultivated margin of the moor. They were a characteristic feature of the field system in west Somerset and the neighbouring part of Devon <sup>146</sup>.

There was some expansion of cultivation in parts of the county covered by forest law. That law theoretically provided a break on expansion in large parts of the county but during Edward I's reign at least two knightly landholders secured permission to assart and bring land into cultivation. In 1283 Giles de Flury was permitted to inclose 30 acres in Cloford, which was part of Selwood forest <sup>147</sup>. By a grant of 1294 Henry de Lorty was allowed to assart and inclose 60 acres in Broadway in Neroche forest. The rights of the commoners there were not jeopardized since his woodland in the manor comprised about 2,000 acres <sup>148</sup>.

Many knights added to their possessions although the process was not necessarily connected with the extension of cultivation. Magnates and lesser

<sup>143</sup> Glaston.Cart. i, p.230.

<sup>144</sup> Som.R.O., NPl, rott. 4, 7, 9.

<sup>145</sup> C 133/121 no.27.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. H.C.Darby, 'The Economic Geography of England, 1100-1250.' An Historical Geography of England before 1800 (Cambridge, 1969), 124

<sup>147</sup> C 143/6 no.17.

<sup>148</sup> C 143/21 no.10.



knights may have enlarged their demesne by buying out free-holders. The evidence of cartularies suggests that some magnates consolidated their holdings by purchasing other lands. John de Courtenay and his son Hugh acquired more property in Hemington and Crewkerne <sup>149</sup>. Roger de Moels accumulated land in North Cheriton, Holton and Maperton close to his estate at North Cadbury <sup>150</sup>. The purchase he made in 1281 from Thomas of Lattiford in Holton and North Cheriton was apparently of a holding which was manorial in type. It included several dependant tenants and the advowson of Holton church <sup>151</sup>. John de Beauchamp increased his property in 1278 by acquiring Stocklinch manor from Adam of Lisieux who, with his wife, retained a life-interest in a part of the property <sup>152</sup>. John's son John purchased lands in West Capland in 1304 <sup>153</sup>.

Many lesser knights added to their estates in a piecemeal fashion. They dispossessed or bought out local small freeholders. Ralph FitzUrse, a knightly landholder, consolidated his property in Williton at the end of the century by purchasing three small holdings, all under 3 acres, from Richard, the son of Ralph Perpasey. Later in 1297 Richard sold him rents totalling 3d. in Withycombe manor near Dunster <sup>154</sup>. Walter Pauncefoot acquired property in Compton Pauncefoot in 1301. It comprised about 33 acres of arable and 2 of meadow, and a rent of 2s. <sup>155</sup>. In 1289 Peter de Fauconberge, lord of Milton in Martock, purchased a small holding in near-by Ash <sup>156</sup>. John Basset in 1295 acquired three-quarters of a yardland in Winford and in 1297 he bought 48 acres in Timsbury and Wick <sup>157</sup>.

It was in the interests of knights whose holdings were fragmented

149 Devon R.O., TD 51, ff. 92v., 103, 104v.-105.

150 Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, ff. 22v., 25, 26v.

151 Ibid. f. 27v.

152 Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, p. 244

153 Ibid. p.332.

154 Som.R.O., L 32/1, 33/1.

155 Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, p. 314.

156 Ibid. p. 277.

157 Ibid. pp. 294, 307-8.

to round off their estates to form more viable economic units. By an agreement dated 29 August 1312 Nicholas de Langelond was granted permission by the abbot of Glastonbury to consolidate his scattered holdings in South Brent by exchanging them for others held there by servile tenants of the abbey. The exchange involved forty-two peasant holdings comprising 92 acres. In most cases holdings of equal size were exchanged. The largest was  $12\frac{1}{2}$  acres but most were 2 acres or less <sup>158</sup>. Nicholas, as the abbey's steward, was well placed to secure the acquiescence of the abbey in his scheme <sup>159</sup>.

#### Lordship over economic resources.

Another aspect of lordship was the control of manorial lords over economic resources on or near their property. The common lands and pastures occupied an important position in the agrarian economy. They were essential for the support of livestock. The expansion of arable cultivation in the 13th. century was in large part at the expense of the commons. The use of the common lands was regulated by the Statute of Merton in 1326. Lords were empowered to bring waste land into cultivation provided that the common rights of freeholders were not impaired <sup>160</sup>. Many knights made use of the provisions of the statute. In 1292 Philip Daubeney, lord of Kilmersdon, claimed that Thomas de St.Vigore, lord of Stratton, had unjustly deprived him of common right in among other places 100 acres of pasture in Stratton and Wullecumb. Thomas, a royal justice, asserted in his defence that although he had brought 20 acres into cultivation sufficient pastureland remained there for the commoners <sup>161</sup>. In 1278 Laurence Talbot claimed that as a free man he was entitled to inclose heath and moorland in Heathfield by the custom of the countryside. The custom was presumably based on the

<sup>158</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 541-4.

<sup>159</sup> See p. 241

<sup>160</sup> T.F.T.Plucknett, Legislation of Edward I (Oxford, 1949), 84-5

<sup>161</sup> Just. 1/1296 rot.8.

Statute of Merton <sup>162</sup>.

The increased pressure on common lands led many knightly landholders to exclude their tenants and commoners. In several instances such exclusion followed from inclosure. At the end of Henry III's reign Robert de Brives inclosed a park in Staple from which he had removed the beasts of one of his tenants <sup>163</sup>. At the end of Edward I's reign John ap Adam excluded the commoners from 6 acres in East Harptree <sup>164</sup>. Many lesser knights, including Thomas de Pyn, Hugh of Luccombe, Walter de la Lynde and Simon Roges were accused of preventing commoners from exercising their commoning rights <sup>165</sup>. As well as harrassing commoners knights also abused their rights by overstocking common land. In 1280 Hugh Sanzaver was impleaded for overburdening the common pasture in Spargrove <sup>166</sup>.

In conflicts over common rights it often happened that both parties to a dispute were knights <sup>167</sup>. Such tension resulted from competition for limited economic resources and did not betray any fundamental social conflict within the knightly group. Many knights saw their interests jeopardized by the assertion of lordship by neighbouring landholders. Hugh Lovel of Castle Cary and William of Godmanstone of Discove were often in dispute over common rights. In 1286 William claimed that Hugh had deprived him of pastuage in Pitcombe and Honeywick while Hugh asserted that William had unjustly disseised him of pasturage in 15 acres of arable and 2 of meadow in Discove. William maintained that sufficient pasturage remained. He had inclosed the 2 acres to enlarge his home farm as he was entitled by the Statute of Winchester II of 1285 <sup>168</sup>. Despite the tension between the two

<sup>162</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 135

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. 87.

<sup>164</sup> Just. 1/1330 rot. 40d.

<sup>165</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 50-2; Just. 1/1249 rot.8; Just. 1/1284 rot. 4d; Just. 1/1296 rot. 7d.

<sup>166</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 283.

<sup>167</sup> Cf. ibid. 1-7 Edw.I, 53-4.

<sup>168</sup> Just. 1/1273 rott. 20d., 23.



men close personal relationships between members of their families persisted for the rest of the reign <sup>169</sup>.

Knights and leading landholders suffered when intercommoning arrangements broke down. After the men of Maud de Multon had inclosed 200 acres of wood in Ashill, Nicholas Pointz, lord of Curry Mallet, was unable to pasture his beasts there <sup>170</sup>. At the beginning of the reign Henry de Montfort prevented Giles de Flury of Cloford from exercising common rights in Nunney <sup>171</sup>. Oliver de Dinham likewise prevented Simon de Torny, a landholder in Hardington, from exercising commoning rights in neighbouring Buckland <sup>172</sup>. In some cases knights took direct action to protect their rights. Thomas of Bayeux, who held land in Catcott, breached a dyke at Andredsye the existence of which he asserted was preventing him and other free tenants from the exercise of their rights as commoners <sup>173</sup>.

When vague intercommoning rights were replaced by more precise arrangements, it was the more prominent landholders who gained greater advantage. In the fens lesser knights were induced to renounce their claims in return for narrower but more precise rights. In 1295 Robert of Brent relinquished his claim to commoning rights in Glastonbury Abbey's manors of Street, Walton, Shapwick and Ashcott in return for a grant of 4 acres of meadow-land by the abbot <sup>174</sup>.

Knights, who were manorial lords, derived revenue from their controls over pastureland and other resources. The exploitation of the fenland turbaries was controlled to a degree by the leading members of the communities. The main turbaries were located in the valleys of the Brue, notably in Edington and Chilton, and of the Axe. At Edington the use of the peat beds by the free tenants was regulated by customary arrangements and

<sup>169</sup> See p. 212

<sup>170</sup> Just. 1/1273 rot.20.

<sup>171</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 168-9

<sup>172</sup> Ibid. 36-7.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid. 78-80.

<sup>174</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 294-5.



not by the lord, the knight John FitzGeoffrey. The free tenants could sell peat in commercial dealings<sup>175</sup>. John FitzGeoffrey's power was more evident in respect of the cutting of peat by those who were not subject to custom. About 1280 John granted Geoffrey of Stawell and his wife a limited right to dig turves. Five men could dig on two days only each year. The concession that the men could decide the place and time was important since the return of a turbary varies both with the conditions of drainage and the weather<sup>176</sup>. John permitted Gilbert le Waleys of Woolavington to take eight waggon-loads there annually. The amount was increased later and Gilbert was granted land in Edington with common of turbary to cut enough turves to sustain his household and to sell up to the value of 6s.6d. Gilbert's tenants were each allowed to sell a similar amount<sup>177</sup>. The cutting of peat by outsiders was also controlled at Tickenham in the Axe valley. In the middle of the century Nicholas FitzRoger allowed St. Mark's Hospital, Bristol, to have three men each day digging peat and collecting sedges<sup>178</sup>.

The controls implicit in manorial lordship extended to the woodlands. From their tenants knights exacted pannage. John de Pavely's revenues in Bickenhall were increased by pannage payments<sup>179</sup>. Pannage was paid for the right to turn pigs loose in woodland at certain times. In North Petherton the term 'pannage' was applied to payments for grazing sheep in the fens<sup>180</sup>. The amount of pannage owed by a tenant depended on the number of pigs he possessed. On Bradford manor in the mid 14th. century by paying pannage on each pig owned between 29 September and 11 November tenants were entitled during that period to turn them out into the woods, fields and demesne lands. Pannage was not owed for piglets<sup>181</sup>.

175 Hylle Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc. lxviii), p.58.

176 Ibid. p. 53.

177 Ibid. pp. 57-8.

178 St.Mark's Cart. (Bristol Rec.Soc. xxi), p. 263.

179 C 133/28 no.5.

180 Som.R.O., NPl, rot.11.

181 Taunton Customs, 85-6.

The amount of pannage depended on the pig's age. At Welton and Witnycombe the payments were 1d. for yearlings and ½d. for younger pigs <sup>182</sup>. The same rates applied on Chelwood manor but the customary tenants were allowed to have one sow free of payment <sup>183</sup>. Pannage might be paid in kind. Some of the customary tenants at Crewkerne owed one piglet for each sow that farrowed, provided that her litter was at least two <sup>184</sup>. Some lesser knightly landholders exempted prominent landholders from paying pannage. The prior of Taunton, who received several grants of land on the fringes of Exmoor, was in some cases exempted from pannage on a specified number of pigs. Geoffrey of Luccombe allowed him to have thirty pigs free in his woods in Luccombe and Reynold le Tort permitted him to have ten pigs quit of the payment in his lands in Wynemeresham <sup>185</sup>.

The controls of the manorial lords over woodland included the use made of timber. Such controls were to their financial benefit. In Pitney Alan Plugenet's customary tenants paid on Hockday a rent called wodeschop for the right to cut timber <sup>186</sup>. Concessions and favours to religious houses by knights reflected their control over the prime source of fuel and building material. John de la Lynde allowed Glastonbury Abbey's men of Monkton access to the southern part of his woods in Broomfield every year to take an oak for the abbot's use at Christmas <sup>187</sup>. Henry de Erlegh granted Athelney Abbey 40 acres of moorland near Lyng to provide them with much needed fuel <sup>188</sup>. Henry allowed the Hospitallers of the Buckland preceptory to take under the supervision of his bailiff thirty cart-loads of brushwood each year in the fenlands near North Petherton, thus giving them access to a source of fuel <sup>189</sup>.

182 Beauchamp Regs. 48, 54

183 C 133/94 no.9

184 B.L.Add.MS. 49359, ff. 77v.-78

185 Cal.Chart.R. 1327-41, 315

186 C 133/91 no.1

187 Longleat MS. 10592, ff. 25v.-26

188 Athelney Reg. p. 158

189 Buckland Cart. p. 23

The powers of magnates and lesser knights were limited by the operation of custom. Their tenants were customarily allowed to take small wood for the repair and maintenance of buildings and hedges. The right, known as husbote and heybote, was evidently claimed by Simon Roges's tenants in Forlock <sup>190</sup>. Customary rights were guaranteed by payments to the lords. Payments for husbote and heybote in Northmoor are recorded on John de Arlegh's manor in North Petherton <sup>191</sup>. The men there presumably used the wood they took for the upkeep of the weirs controlling the flow of water in the fenlands for the right of werebote was mentioned in the middle of the century <sup>192</sup>.

Certain types of timber notably saplings and younger trees were more rigorously protected as at Dunster <sup>193</sup>. In Bradford the customary tenants could use oak and ash from their own holdings for husbote and heybote but for other uses the permission of the lord or his bailiff had to be obtained <sup>194</sup>. In 1260 in a dispute with the knight Hugh of Luccombe over her right of husbote and heybote in Luccombe, Margery of Holt was obliged to give up her claim to four cart-loads of oak a year. She was compensated by being allowed two extra cart-loads of alder in addition to the four she claimed <sup>195</sup>.

In large areas of the county the controls of knightly landholders over waste and woodland were limited by forest law. At Dulverton in Exmoor Nicholas de Bonville was not allowed to make profits from the pasture and woodland <sup>196</sup>. The application of forest law could interfere with a landholder's management of his lands. The Dulverton estate was temporarily confiscated about 1291 by the Crown when it was found that no woodward had

<sup>190</sup> Just. 1/1296 rot. 7d.

<sup>191</sup> Som.R.C., NF1, rott. 4,6.

<sup>192</sup> Buckland Cart. pp. 20-1.

<sup>193</sup> B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p. 59.

<sup>194</sup> Taunton Customs, 86

<sup>195</sup> Somerset Fleas, 6 Ldw.I. 262; Fedes Finium, Ric.I - Ldw.I, pp. 257-6.

<sup>196</sup> C 135/71 no. 13.

been appointed to supervise the exploitation of the woodland there <sup>197</sup>.

Landholders attempted to remove restraints imposed by forest law. In 1290 the officials of Selwood forest complained that certain unnamed men were claiming liberties in their manors there to the prejudice of the Crown's rights <sup>198</sup>. The main landholders in Selwood were ecclesiastics but there were many lesser proprietors, including lesser knights, who may have been referred to in the official's petition. As a result of the perambulations held in 1298 of the forests of Exmoor, Mendip, Neroche, North Petherton and Selwood, large areas of the county were declared to be disafforested. Much of the land was held by knights <sup>199</sup>. For the extensive disafforestations granted by Edward I in 1301 the holders of released land were obliged to forego common rights within the forest and in 1305 Edward I ordered his foresters to remove extraneous livestock commoning on forest land <sup>200</sup>. The order was made to reduce the benefits accruing to landholders from disafforestations to which the Crown had reluctantly consented. In Somerset John ap Adam, lord of Farrington, was consequently affected <sup>201</sup>.

Another area in which the leading landholders exercised control was in the quarrying of stone. In Newton near Durston Richard of Newton, who was not a knight, regulated activity in a quarry at Cheryngburgh. His grant of common right there to the Buckland preceptory indicates that his tenants may have had limited access thereto <sup>202</sup>.

The holders of established manorial estates dominated the economic life of the rural communities belonging to those estates. Many of the holders were knights. When several lords possessed manorial rights over a settlement it was often necessary for them to reach some agreement over

197 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 181

198 Rot.Parl. i. 46

199 J.Collinson, A History of Somerset (Bath, 1791), iii. 56-60.

200 M.Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance under Edward I (1972), 266-7;

F.M.Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 703.

201 Just. 1/1330 rot. 40.

202 Buckland Cart. p. 79.



the control and use of economic resources for their mutual benefit. As the result of a division between coheirs Winford manor was held by two knightly families <sup>203</sup>. In the middle of the century Isabel Basset granted Joyce of Bayeux access to her marlpit there <sup>204</sup>. In 1316 seven lords were recorded at Wembdon in North Petherton. They included Matthew de Furneaux and John Fichet who held land in Perry <sup>205</sup>. Perry was a small settlement with its own open fields which had developed apart from the parent settlement <sup>206</sup>. Matthew's importance and lordship was recognised by the grant of a fair in 1296 but the economic life of the settlement was presumably directed according to the interests of both of its lords <sup>207</sup>.

#### Lordship and the Church.

Many knights who were manorial lords were entitled to further powers and payments by virtue of their holding the patronage of the local church. Patronage was an adjunct of the wider manorial lordship. The living had often, but not always, been endowed by an earlier lord of the manor who thereby had become entitled to the patronage which passed with the manor <sup>208</sup>. The lords jealously protected their rights as patrons. In 1273 Ellis Cotel, a landholder in Camerton, brought an action against the bishop to allow him to present to the vacant church of Camerton which was in Ellis's gift <sup>209</sup>. In 1294 Eudes of Acton impleaded Roger de Moels concerning the church of Wanstrow where Eudes held land from Roger. The dispute arose out of the earlier division of Wanstrow between the heirs of Agnes Avenel. Roger claimed the advowsons as the guardian of Idony, the daughter of William Lisle who was the great-grandson of Agnes. Eudes was the son of Margaret, a daughter of Agnes <sup>210</sup>.

<sup>203</sup> See p. 17

<sup>204</sup> Glos.R.O., D 340A/T 203/1.

<sup>205</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 332.

<sup>206</sup> Cf. Hylle Cart. pp. 24-5

<sup>207</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 465.

<sup>208</sup> Pollock and Maitland, The History of English Law, ii. 136

<sup>209</sup> C.P. 40/1A rot. 4d.

<sup>210</sup> C.P. 40/106 rott. 79, 269; Feud.Aids, iv. 309; See pp.

The lord who was patron of a living was entitled to exact churchscot for the use of the church from his tenants. Churchscot swelled the revenues of Thomas de St.Vigore at Stratton and of Osbert of Bath at Loxton and Radwell <sup>211</sup>. Peter's Pence, sometimes called Herthpenny, a payment for the Church at large, was paid to the lords. Robert de Muscegros received Peter's Pence and churchscot at Stawell and Norton Ferris. At Charlton Musgrove churchscot was paid in kind <sup>212</sup>. At Spargrove Hugh Sanzaver was entitled to Peter's Pence and churchscot, the latter taking the form of a rendering of eggs at Easter <sup>213</sup>.

The knights often used their right of patronage to prefer relatives. In the late 13th. century, Robert Russell, the rector of Horsington, was clearly related to the lords of Horsington <sup>214</sup>. In 1265 William de Cheyney presented a clerk also called William de Cheyney to Pointington rectory <sup>215</sup>.

The advowson could be granted away but alienation from a manor was rare. The division of an estate often led to division of the patronage. In such cases the right of presentation was exercised alternately. When in 1286 Brice le Denneys settled half of Sock Dennis manor on Grimbald Pauncefot the advowson was to be shared, with Brice having the presentation at the first vacancy <sup>216</sup>. Such arrangements inevitably led to disputes. In 1279 Robert FitzPain, a magnate, and John of Horsey, a lesser knight, were in dispute over the advowson of the church of Charlton Mackrell where they each held half of the manor. As the result of a lawsuit it was decided that John was to present at the first vacancy since he had lost his right of presentation at every other vacancy through Robert's action <sup>217</sup>.

Patronage of religious houses was not widely distributed. Among

211 C 133/70 no.10; C 133/75 no.17.

212 C 133/28 no.8.

213 C 133/39 no.2.

214 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 263; Just. 1/1295 rot. 8d.; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 68; Feud.Aids, iv. 289; 298.

215 Reg.Giffard (Som.Rec.Soc.xiii), 2.

216 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 268.

217 K.B. 27/49 rot. 38 and d.

knights it was mainly reserved to a small and socially exclusive group represented by the magnates. One exception was John FitzGeoffrey, lord of Edington. He was patron of the small priory of Sprawlesmede in Moorlinch. In 1199 John's ancestor William had endowed a cell occupied by a hermit called Walter. A small foundation, including Walter and his successors with two brethren, who were described as Sancte Trinitatis cultores, was established. The patron had the right to present the head of the house. Later John FitzGeoffrey allowed the canons, who had adopted the Augustinian Rule, a measure of freedom in the election of a prior and the admission of new members <sup>218</sup>. The freedom was shortlived for in 1286 John granted the patronage to Master Anthony of Bradney, who subsequently conveyed it to Glastonbury Abbey <sup>219</sup>. The knight Matthew de Bezilles, who held Bromland manor in Brompton Regis in his wife's right, was patron of Barlinch Priory there. Matthew did not hold the patronage of the church of Brompton Regis which had been appropriated by the priory <sup>220</sup>.

The leading religious houses in the county, the Benedictine abbeys of central Somerset, were not under the patronage of knights. Nevertheless some magnates were patrons of important houses outside the county. The Courtenays were patrons of Forde Abbey in Devon <sup>221</sup>. Disputes between a religious foundation and its patron were not infrequent. The Gurneys held the patronage of St.Mark's Hospital in Bristol. The hospital held lands in Somerset at Pawlett and elsewhere. Robert de Gurney, to whom the hospital owed its existence as an independent foundation <sup>222</sup>, renounced his right of custody during vacancies and limited his rights at elections of the prior to granting the licence and assenting to the election. The

218 Hylle Cart. pp. 55-7.

219 W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, i. 35; Glaston.Cart. i, pp. 119-20.

220 V.C.H.Som. ii, 132; cf. K.B. 27/18 rot. 20d.

221 W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 376.

222 St.Mark's Cart. pp. xii-xiii.

hospital was to entertain the patron and his household during his visits. From Robert (d.1269) the patronage eventually passed through his great-granddaughter Elizabeth to John ap Adam<sup>223</sup> who about 1291 came into conflict with the brethren. John and Elizabeth claimed Pawlett manor and property in Weare on the grounds that the hospital was not discharging the charitable services by which that property was held. In 1299 on the resignation of the master John claimed that the brethren had no right to elect their own master against his wishes and he took possession of the hospital's estates. John apparently also expelled the brethren, entered the hospital, and despoiled their manors. The rights of election and custody were eventually acknowledged to belong to the hospital but not before it had suffered financial loss through the patron's action<sup>224</sup>.

The ties between a religious house and its patron were strong. The links were consolidated by patrons installing relatives or friends as the heads of houses. Several prioresses of Minchin Barrow were related to the patrons, the Gurneys<sup>225</sup>. The head of a religious house might be expected to uphold the patron's interest both inside and outside the house. Bruton Priory was under the patronage of the Mohuns of Dunster<sup>226</sup>. In 1274 the house presented its newly elected prior to John de Mohun for his approval and consent<sup>227</sup>. John (d.1279) appointed the prior as one of his executors, thereby signifying the trust he placed in his nominee<sup>228</sup>.

A number of magnates and their close relatives were buried in establishments under their patronage. The body of John de Mohun who died c. 1254 was interred at Bruton<sup>229</sup>. His heart was buried in Newenham

223 Cf. Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 14-15.

224 St. Mark's Cart. pp. xx-xxii.

225 V.C.H. Som. ii. 107-9; Hugo, Medieval Nunneries of Somerset, 4-10.

226 Bruton Cart. (Som. Rec. Soc. viii), p. xviii.

227 Som. R.O., L 37/3.

228 Somersetshire Pleas, 8Edw. I, 322.

229 Salisbury Charters (Rolls Ser.), ed. W.D. Macray, pp. 225-6.



Abbey near Axminster where his father, uncle and brother were interred. The Mohuns attached greater importance to that house, a Cistercian foundation, which had been established by John's father Reynold <sup>230</sup>. The Courtenays were usually buried in Forde Abbey. John de Courtenay was laid to rest alongside his father Robert. John's son and heir Hugh became embroiled in several bitter disputes with the monks. After his death in 1292 the abbot apparently did not want the abbey to be Hugh's final resting place for the latter was buried in Cowick priory near Exeter <sup>231</sup>. Leading county landholders had close ties with local religious houses. Simon de Montagu, the most prominent landholder near Bruton, was buried in the priory there in 1316 <sup>232</sup>.

The late foundation of Newenham Abbey was untypical. The main period for monastic endowments had passed by the beginning of Henry III's reign. In Somerset later grants to religious houses by knights were small in scale and few in number <sup>233</sup>. Lay piety increasingly was expressed in the endowment of chantry-chapels for the provision of private masses. The necessary endowment was small. Such grants were made in the 13th. century but at the end of Edward I's reign several lesser knights were permitted to set aside land to maintain chaplains.

The chaplains served either in the local parish church or in a chapel of ease. Peter d'Evercy had leave in 1306 to endow a chaplain officiating in the church of St. Andrew in Brimpton <sup>234</sup>. About 1273 a grant by Mabel establishing a chaplain in Swell church was confirmed by her grandson Walter de Lorty who added to the endowment <sup>235</sup>. Private masses in chapels of ease were provided for magnates and lesser knights. William

<sup>230</sup> Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 690, 693

<sup>231</sup> Ibid. 379-80

<sup>232</sup> T. Stapleton, 'Summary of Wardrobe Accounts 10, 11 and 14 Edward II', Archaeologia, xxvi. 339

<sup>233</sup> C 143/4 no. 14; C 143/6 no. 9

<sup>234</sup> Cal. Pat. 1301-7, 431

<sup>235</sup> Reg. Shrewsbury (Som. Rec. Soc. ix), i, pp. 383-5

de Fienles had a chapel at Martock <sup>236</sup>. At Kingston near Yeovil Roger Mortimer of Richard's Castle had a chapel in his courtyard <sup>237</sup>. In 1306 Adam Ford was granted permission to endow a chaplain to celebrate daily in a chapel at la Forde near Stawell <sup>238</sup>.

When chapels of ease were established the rights of the mother church to tithes and other offerings were safeguarded. Thomas of Perham was granted a chapel in his home farm at Wick in 1250. Parochial rights over Wick were apparently enjoyed by both the rector of Curry Rivel and Muchelney Abbey, which had appropriated Drayton rectory. In 1271 it was agreed between them that Thomas, his family and household, and any other freemen in Wick and the priest of the chapel, were to pay their tithes to the abbey but the rector of Curry Rivel was to have parochial rights over most of the unfree men. The abbot was to pay him and his successor half a mark each year <sup>239</sup>. When in 1262 William Everard was allowed to have a chapel at Stawley for his household the rights of the parish church of Isle Abbots were protected <sup>240</sup>. Geoffrey of Stawell who had a chapel in his house at Stawell in Moorlinch parish, had to secure the permission of the rector, Glastonbury Abbey, in order to have his grandson christened in the chapel in 1270 <sup>241</sup>.

Magnates and wealthier knights were able to endow more illustrious and prestigious establishments. John la Warre of Brislington endowed St. Bartholomew's Hospital, Bristol, with property near Frome bridge and lands in Clifton, Rowberrow and Brislington. He also devised a legacy of 100 marks for the right to present two chaplains to the house <sup>242</sup>.

In 1303 John de Beauchamp had leave to convert his free chapel of

236 E 372/146.

237 C 133/49 no.2.

238 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 413.

239 Muchelney Cart. pp. 58-9.

240 Ibid. pp. 57-8.

241 Glaston.Cart. i, p. 35

242 Glos.R.O., D 340A/T 143/2.

St.Nicholas in the parish church of Stoke sub Hamdon into a collegiate chapel of five secular canons, one of whom was to be warden. The endowment specifically included, besides a messuage and four yardlands in Stoke, the advowson of Stoke church and half the demesne tithes of Shepton Beauchamp<sup>243</sup>. The conversion signified the importance that John and his mother Cecily attached to Stoke, their principal manor. In 1304 the first warden of the college and four priests were admitted by the bishop who granted Cecily power to induct them<sup>244</sup>. Another prominent knight, Gilbert de Knoville, was in 1301 given permission to endow a chantry-chapel of four priests in Puckington with land in Puckington and Barrington and the advowson of Puckington church<sup>245</sup>. A collegiate foundation was evidently intended. Later only two priests served the chapel but one was styled archpresbyter<sup>246</sup>. The endowment and patronage of chantry-chapels and parish churches were symbolic of the knights' leading position in rural society and their powers of lordship.

Conclusion : the varying powers of knights.

The powers of lordship exercised by individual knights varied. The widest and most extensive powers were exercised by the wealthiest landholders. They came from established county families which had consolidated their controls over their extensive estates and dependent tenants by the reign of Edward I. They had also inherited regalian powers which their ancestors had exercised in the late 12th. century. Such powers and controls were not enjoyed by the far more numerous lesser knights. Most of the latter had powers of manorial lordship but for a few, whose estates were fragmented and of recent creation, their powers were ill defined.

243 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 161; V.C.H.Som. ii.161.

244 Beauchamp Regs. 68-9.

245 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 3.

246 Cf. T.Gerard, Description of Somerset (Som.Rec.Soc.xv), 142.

The powers of a knight might be sharply contrasted between his various holdings. Alan Plugenet held a small manor in Mudford. The customary tenants owed cash rents and light labour services. Their cash rents were relatively more important than their works. Their servile condition was apparent in the obligation to pay aid and larder silver. The cottars there owed cash rents. On Alan's larger estates in Haslebury and Pitney the customary tenants' labour services were proportionally of greater value than at Mudford. At Haslebury the cottars owed light mowing and reaping services in addition to cash rents <sup>247</sup>. Alan's power to impose burdens on his tenants in Pitney was strengthened since the land formed part of the ancient Crown demesne. The holders of such land were entitled to tallage their tenants when the Crown demesne was tallaged. Alan's son Alan claimed that right in Pitney and Wearne <sup>248</sup>. In 1304 he was discharged from the duty of paying the proceeds of a tallage in those places to the Crown <sup>249</sup>.

The exercise of manorial lordship distinguished a minority of landholders among free men. It enhanced their social standing. By the late 13th. century knightly rank was the badge of that position. Very few landholders held the rank on the basis of landed wealth alone. They had accumulated holdings without securing controls over a subject population and economic resources. It was those controls, rather than the exercise of regalian liberties, which were the basis of the lordship implied in the style dominus as used by the knights.

247 C 133/90 no.1.

248 Memoranda de Parlamento (Rolls Ser.), p. 30.

249 Cal.Close, 1302-7, 203.



## CHAPTER VI

### MEMBERSHIP OF THE KNIGHTLY GROUP

During the reign of Edward I the composition of the group comprising the knights changed markedly. The change in personnel was determined principally by inheritance as a younger generation succeeded to the family estates and property. However changes in the pattern of landholding led to the disappearance of some families from the knightly group and the entry of new landholders.

#### Inheritance

The extinction of a knightly line through the failure of a landholder to leave heirs was not common. The knight Walter of Downhead died without issue. In default of any heirs his land in Downhead and Stoke escheated by 1296 to John ap Adam and his wife Elizabeth from whom it was held by military tenure <sup>1</sup>.

The estates of most knights in fact passed to heirs. Whenever possible the line of succession followed the rule of primogeniture. The patrimony was thereby kept intact and the social standing of the family maintained. In the case of feudal tenures primogeniture had been accepted by the middle of the twelfth century <sup>2</sup>, but even in the late 13th. century it was not automatic. Lands often passed to younger sons. In a few cases the right of the eldest son to inherit was protected during his father's lifetime by settlement. Giles de Flury, a substantial landholder in Cloford, went to the extent of awarding his property, which he held there in socage tenure, about six months before his death to his son John. The grant which had been made by 1289 was probably intended to ensure the son's

1 Just.1/1310 rot. 8d.

2 R.H.C.Davis, 'What happened in Stephen's reign', History, xlix, 11

succession <sup>3</sup>.

The age at which a male heir could technically enter into full possession of land held by military tenure was twenty-one <sup>4</sup>. John de Beauchamp died in 1283 leaving as his heir his son John, a minor, who accordingly became a ward of the Crown. The younger John was not granted livery of his inheritance until 1295 after his mother had testified that he had come of age and after he had performed homage to the king <sup>5</sup>. Since knightly rank was closely bound up with the holding of land, minors were not liable to compulsory knighthood. The criteria adopted in the Statutum de militibus for determining who ought to be a knight did not apply to those under age <sup>6</sup>.

Some knightly landholders were in possession of their estates before they came of age but their tenure was not considered to be full until they attained their majority. John de Erlegh held his lands by lease for a couple of years before coming of age. At the death of his father Philip, lord of North Petherton, in 1275 John was an infant <sup>7</sup>. In 1277 the Crown granted the wardship of John and his lands to the bishop of Hereford <sup>8</sup>. North Petherton manor was leased from the bishop by the preceptory of Buckland which had been granted custody of it in 1275 <sup>9</sup>. The master of the preceptory released the manor at Midsummer in 1290 to John <sup>10</sup> who subsequently leased it together with the other lands of his inheritance from William de Montfort. William had been assigned the wardship by the bishop <sup>11</sup>. John apparently came of age early in 1292. From 13 January, when he performed homage to the king, he was answerable at the Exchequer for the fee farm of North Petherton hundred <sup>12</sup>.

<sup>3</sup> Just. 1/1284 rot. 6.

<sup>4</sup> Tractatus de legibus et consuetudinibus regni Anglie qui Glanvilla vocatur, ed. G.D.Hall (Nelson's Medieval Texts, 1965), p. 82

<sup>5</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 51; Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 326; Cal.Close, 1288-96, 432

<sup>6</sup> M.Powicke, Military Obligation in Medieval England, (Oxford, 1962), 106

<sup>7</sup> Cf. Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 100

<sup>8</sup> Reg.Cantilupe (Cant.& York Soc.), 166

<sup>9</sup> Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 100; Cal.Close, 1272-9, 462

<sup>10</sup> Buckland Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.xxv), p.24

<sup>11</sup> E 198/3/5

<sup>12</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 353

The division of estates

In the event of failure to produce a male heir, the inheritance passed to any daughters among whom the rule of partible inheritance was observed. If daughters were lacking the line of descent passed to collaterals. The division of an estate between coheirs and their descendants and the consequent transfer of property had a complex effect on the membership of the knightly group.

The holdings created on the break up of large estates could sustain landholders in knightly rank. In 1216 after the death of James of Neufmarché the barony of North Cadbury was divided between his two daughters, Isabel and Hawise. Isabel married Ralph Russell and Hawise's second husband was Nicholas de Moels. At the beginning of Edward I's reign the barony was shared by their descendants, Ralph Russell and Roger de Moels, both of whom took knighthood <sup>13</sup>.

The division of large estates did not enhance the standing of lesser county landholders. Marriage ties within the knightly group reflected the wide disparity in social position between individual knights and few alliances were contracted between knightly families differing widely in standing. William de Forz died in 1259 leaving his four daughters as his coheirs. In Somerset William had inherited from his mother Mabel, daughter of William Malet, half of the barony of Curry Mallet, the honor of London and land in Shepton Mallet <sup>14</sup>. William was also lord of the manor and hundred of Chewton which had been granted his father Hugh de Vivonne in 1235 <sup>15</sup>. William's Somerset property passed to his daughters, Joan and Cecily. Through their marriages the land consolidated the position of two men, who were already substantial landholders. Joan received Chewton manor which was

<sup>13</sup> Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 68

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 38-9

<sup>15</sup> Cal. Chart. R. 1226-57, 211

held in her right by her husband Reynold FitzPeter. Reynold, who died in 1286, was a prominent landholder with estates in several parts of England and Wales<sup>16</sup>. Cecily married John de Beauchamp, lord of the barony of Hatch. John was already one of the wealthiest lay landholders in Somerset where his family had been established since at least the mid 12th. century<sup>17</sup>. His property included land in Hatch, Marston Magna, Merryfield, Shepton Beauchamp and Stoke. It was considerably augmented by Cecily's share of her father's inheritance, comprising Welton manor, which was a member of Chewton, with Withycombe hamlet and the honor of Dundon<sup>18</sup>.

At a lower social level the division of the estates of modest country landholders benefited lesser knights and their peers. William de Reigny who held lands in Aisholt, Aley and Donniford in the west of the county died in 1275. He also had property in Newton in Cumberlandshire<sup>19</sup> which was granted in dower to his widow Akina<sup>20</sup>. William, who had inherited those lands from his grandfather John de Reigny about 1246<sup>21</sup>, left as his heirs his paternal aunts, their husbands and descendants. The heirs were Joan, widow of Robert Crubbe, William le Pruz and his wife Alice, Hugh of Luccombe and his wife Joan, William le Border and his wife Elizabeth, also known as Elizabeth of Horsey, and Nicholas of Walton<sup>22</sup>. The property in Aisholt and Aley was divided between them<sup>23</sup>. Part of William's land consequently passed to members of county families. Hugh of Luccombe, one of William's neighbours, was a knight<sup>24</sup>. Nicholas of Walton was the son of John de Reigny's daughter Juliana, by the knight Alan of Walton<sup>25</sup>. Elizabeth's husband William was evidently William of

16 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 364-6

17 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 51

18 Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 272, 283, 286, 288; Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 326-7; Cal.Chart.R. 1226-57, 308

19 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 94-5

20 Ibid. pp. 141-2

21 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 308

22 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 94-5; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 64; W.Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees (1923), i, 133

23 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 266-7

24 Feud.Aids, iv. 295

25 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 581; Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees, i. 133



Horseley who presumably held land not far from Aisholt in Horseley near Bridgwater. William's son John, a knight, was a landholder there in 1285<sup>26</sup>. John's son and heir William held land in Aisholt and West Postridge with the other heirs of William de Reigny in 1303<sup>27</sup>.

The division of estates occasioned much litigation over proprietary rights in which knights and landholders became enmeshed. One complicated set of disputes concerned the inheritance of the knight John of Aller and his wife Agnes. John inherited land in Aller from his predecessor Ralph<sup>28</sup>, while Agnes inherited property in Blackford, Wanstrow, Wilkin Throop and Stathe from her father Otes of Wanstrow. After Agnes's death John held her lands by courtesy and was succeeded about 1272 by his daughters by Agnes, Elizabeth and Margaret. They were married respectively to the knights Raymond of Clevedon and John of Acton<sup>29</sup>. Raymond held land in Clevedon in north-east Somerset and in Milton near Bruton<sup>30</sup>. John of Acton's estates lay principally in Gloucestershire and Herefordshire<sup>31</sup>.

The division of John of Aller's own lands led to a dispute between the coheirs. Soon after his death, Elizabeth and Raymond petitioned the Crown because John of Acton, the husband of the elder coheir, was preventing a partition from being made<sup>32</sup>. Aller was eventually divided but the details were still in dispute in 1280<sup>33</sup>.

The relationship between John of Aller's coheirs was coloured by their claims to a share in the inheritance of their mother. The division of Agnes's property was more complicated since there were other descendants of hers with claims to be considered. Before she married John, Agnes had been wife to

26 K.B. 27/49 rot. 38 and d.; Feud.Aids, iv. 278

27 Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 142; Feud.Aids, iv. 308

28 Adam of Domesham, Historia de rebus gestis Glastoniensibus, ed. T.Hearne (Oxford, 1727), 486

29 Glaston.Rent.(Som.Rec.Soc.v),178; Glaston.Feod.(Som.Rec.Soc.xxvi), 53; Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 693

30 Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xli(2), 5-6; cf.Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.),ii. 130-1, 133

31 Moor, Knights of Edw.I., i.4

32 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 693

33 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 108-9, 296

Oliver Avenel, a landholder in Lillsdon and Chaffcombe. By Oliver Agnes had two daughters, Emme, the wife of Jordan Lisle, and Margery, who was married in turn to the knights Warin of Nonnington and Philip de Cauntelo of West Quantockshead <sup>34</sup>. Early in Edward I's reign Emme's grandson, William Lisle, and Margery's son, Baudry of Nonnington, lay claims to a share in Agnes's inheritance <sup>35</sup>. William and Baudry had no claim to John of Aller's lands but a great deal of argument arose since it was not always clear which lands in Stathe and North Curry had belonged to Agnes and which to John <sup>36</sup>. John had acquired lands in the moors near North Curry from the dean and chapter of Wells <sup>37</sup>. The situation was even more confused since Oliver Avenel had held land in the same area in Lillsdon <sup>38</sup>.

In the record of the division of the lands Agnes had held in Kentlesworth (Dors.) it was stated that her daughters by Oliver Avenel and their heirs were excluded <sup>39</sup>. Nevertheless both William Lisle and Baudry of Nonnington were not completely denied a share in her inheritance. William held lands in Wilkin Throop, Blackford and Wanstrow, the wardship of which was granted in 1294 after his death to Elizabeth of Clevedon <sup>40</sup>. By 1285 Baudry had secured lands in Stathe apparently of Agnes's inheritance <sup>41</sup>. He still held property there in 1303 <sup>42</sup> but it was not recorded in the inquisition post mortem of his property made in 1310 <sup>43</sup>.

#### The role of females in the transfer of property

The pattern of landholding in medieval England was constantly changing. In the formation of new estates females had an important function for

34 Close R. 1251-3, 118 ; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 125-6

35 Cf. Just. 1/1269 rot. 1; Just. 1/1275A rot. 6.

36 Just. 1/1273 rot. 21d.

37 Pedes Finium, Ric. I-Edw. I., pp. 78, 189-91

38 Close R. 1251-3, 118

39 Glaston. Rent. 178

40 Hook Manor, Donhead St. Andrew, Arundell MSS. G/1883 no. 346; cf. C 133/67 no. 16

41 Just. 1/1269 rot. 3

42 Feud. Aids, iv. 313

43 C 134/16 no. 5.

through them property was transferred between families. Most knights at the end of the thirteenth century held some land inherited through the female line. Henry de Lorty, who died in 1321, succeeded to the manors of Curry Rivel and Langport on the death of his grandmother Sabina in 1254. She was the daughter of Richard Revel<sup>44</sup> who had held the manors in 1212<sup>45</sup>.

Marriage alliances provided an important way for building up estates. The lands of the knight John de Bretasch in Carhampton, Butcombe and Thrubwell passed to Roger Perceval, the husband of John's daughter and heir Joan<sup>46</sup>. The lands of a female heir were held during her lifetime by her husband. The latter enjoyed a life-interest in them only if there was common issue. The lands of Laurence Talbot in Bossington and Heathfield<sup>47</sup> passed to Henry of Glastonbury, the husband of Laurence's only child Alice. Henry was lord of Bossington and Heathfield for life. He survived both Alice and their only son<sup>48</sup>.

Landholders, when faced with the probability of succession by a daughter, took steps to ensure that her right of inheritance was secure. In 1286 Osbert of Bath came to an agreement with the bishop of Bath and Wells, his tenurial lord, whereby Osbert's daughter Elizabeth was granted a reversionary right in the manor of Radwell and in lands in Compton Durville and Hassockmoor<sup>49</sup>. Osbert's property in Loxton was evidently subject to a similar reversion<sup>50</sup>.

Lands held in the right of a wife passed to her descendants and not to those of her husband if there was no common issue. John de Gurney was succeeded in 1291 in Harptree, Farrington, Barrow and elsewhere in

44 Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 84; Rot. Hund. (Rec. Com.), ii. 120, 122-3

45 Book of Fees, i. 78

46 C 133/47 no. 10; Cal. Close, 1279-88, 448

47 Cf. Feud. Aids, iv. 284, 296

48 Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 473; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som. Mans. 256-7

49 Pedes Finium, Ric. I - Edw. I, p. 266

50 Cal. Ing. p. m. iii, p. 49

north-east Somerset by his daughter Elizabeth, the wife of John ap Adam <sup>51</sup>. John, who was a landholder in Beachley in Tidenham (Glos.), held her estates until his death in 1310 when they passed to their son Thomas <sup>52</sup>. Until the inheritance of husband and wife were united on the succession of a mutual heir, the separate identity of each was preserved. Settlements were made to protect the rights of a wife's heirs against any future claims advanced by her husband's heirs. In 1296 John ap Adam and Elizabeth obtained permission from the Crown to entail Elizabeth's lands on her own heirs <sup>53</sup>. It was common for younger sons to inherit their mother's property since the eldest son was provided for by the father's inheritance <sup>54</sup>.

Landholders were able to enhance their standing or that of their successors by an advantageous match. Nevertheless the high level of intermarriage within the knightly group meant that redistribution of land was largely confined within that group. Through marriage established landholders in other parts of the country entered the knightly group of Somerset. The knight Gilbert de Knoville, a prominent landholder in Devon <sup>55</sup>, came to hold an estate in Somerset at Puckington through his marriage by 1277 with Hawise, the daughter and heir of William Lisle, a landholder there <sup>56</sup>. The estates passed in 1314 to Gilbert's son John <sup>57</sup>. Osbert of Bath's lands in Compton Durville, Radwell and Loxton passed to his daughter Elizabeth who in 1296 was granted livery with her husband William of Weyland <sup>58</sup>. William apparently inherited property in Suffolk in 1313 from the knight Nicholas of Weyland <sup>59</sup>.

Marriage with an heiress did not always lead to the entry of a family into the knightly group. The landholder Robert of Shute was succeeded by his

<sup>51</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 288

<sup>52</sup> V.C.H.Glos. x.64; Cf. Glaston.Feod. 23

<sup>53</sup> Cal.rat. 1292-1301, 187

<sup>54</sup> See below

<sup>55</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 246

<sup>56</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 122-4

<sup>57</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 246

<sup>58</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 217; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 374

<sup>59</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I, v. 186-7



daughter Hawise who during Edward I's reign held property in Somerset at Lydiard Punchardon and Dulverton and in Devon at Shute and Combe <sup>60</sup>.

Hawise's first husband Thomas de Fyn, a Devon knight, was dead by 1291 <sup>61</sup> and apparently left no issue by her. Hawise was eventually succeeded in 1331 by Nicholas de Bonville, her son by her second marriage <sup>62</sup>.

Lesser landholders did not benefit from the division of large estates but they could through marriage add to their possessions. Through his marriage with Hawise, the daughter of Robert of Shute, Nicholas de Bonville laid the foundations for the importance of the Bonvilles of Shute in the affairs of the South-west in the later Middle Ages. At his death in 1294 Nicholas's principal property was the small manor of Dock Dennis near Ilchester which he had acquired from Brice le Denneys between the years 1292 and 1294 in a series of transactions in both halves of the manor <sup>63</sup>.

The accumulation of land through marriage in some cases brought a few men into the knightly group. Maurice of Membury was probably a freeholder in Stogumber where William de Reigny, lord of Aley, had earlier granted William of Membury land <sup>64</sup>. Maurice added to his property by his marriage with Joan la Botiler, upon whom William de Reigny (d.1275) had settled West Bagborough manor <sup>65</sup>. Maurice also acquired thirty acres of land in Somerset from Henry de Erlegh (d.c.1272) <sup>66</sup>. In 1280 Maurice was presented from Taunton hundred as being liable to compulsory knighthood on account of the knight's fee he held in West Bagborough <sup>67</sup>. Maurice apparently did not become a knight although many lesser landholders of equal standing held the rank. After Joan's death Maurice's right to hold West Bagborough was challenged by her daughter Joan de Reigny. Joan clearly claimed the

<sup>60</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 269

<sup>61</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 188

<sup>62</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. vii, p. 209; cf. ibid. iii, pp. 165-6

<sup>63</sup> V.C.H.Som. iii. 232

<sup>64</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 260-1

<sup>65</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 295-6

<sup>66</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 140; cf. Moor, Knights of Edward I, i. 311

<sup>67</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 16

reversionary right on her mother's death granted to her by William de Reigny in 1268. Nevertheless Maurice's right to continue in possession was upheld, apparently by virtue of an undated settlement made by William upon Joan la Botiler and the heirs of her body <sup>68</sup>.

Marriage also provided a means by which wealthy townspeople could secure rural estates and thereby establish knightly dynasties. The property of the knight John of Laverton in north-east Somerset passed through his daughter Amabilia by 1278 to Robert de Paines <sup>69</sup>. Robert, the first of his family to use the style miles, may have sprung from a merchant family of near-by Bristol <sup>70</sup>. The Laverton estate eventually passed to Thomas, his son by Amabilia <sup>71</sup>.

The widows of Somerset knights frequently remarried. Their second husbands were usually, but not invariably, equal in standing to the first. Widows brought to their later husbands a temporary interest in those lands, forming part of the inheritance of their first husband, which had been settled on them in jointure or in dower. The portion to be held in dower was assigned after the death of the husband but it was more usual for a jointure to be settled at the time of marriage. John FitzUrse settled property in Williton on Eleanor, the daughter of Alexander Luttrell, who married his son Ralph <sup>72</sup>. In 1304 John of Merriott le neveu settled his manors of Hestercombe and Leigh Flory on his second wife Elizabeth, the widow of Philip Paynel <sup>73</sup>. An even more lavish jointure was assigned by the magnate William Martin on Eleanor, the widow of John de Mohun, in 1282. It comprised West Lydford manor as well as three of his Devon Manors <sup>74</sup>.

The prospects offered to landholders through marriage with a widow

68 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 297; cf. Just. 1/1335 rot. 11

69 Cf. Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I. 112-3, 155-7

70 Cf. Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 102

71 Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, p. 298; Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I. p. 249

72 Som.R.O., L 33/1

73 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I. p. 345; Moor, Knights of Edw.I. iii. 148-9  
Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 140

74 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 264

were readily seized. Such marriages consolidated the family relationships between the leading landholders of particular areas. Rose, the widow of Philip de Erlegh who had died in 1275, was assigned dower in 1276 <sup>75</sup>. By 1282 she had married the knight Geoffrey of Wraxall <sup>76</sup>. Geoffrey held land by the grant of Richard of Aston in Steart <sup>77</sup>, less than a mile north of Babcary, where Philip's son John later held land <sup>78</sup>.

The marriages of widows of tenants in chief, as well as those of their daughters, were regulated by the Crown. The control amounted to a fiscal device : knights were amerced if they neglected to purchase the licence necessary for such a marriage. Geoffrey of Wraxall was almost penalized for that reason <sup>79</sup>. Isabel, the widow of John de Courtenay (d.1274) <sup>80</sup>, had by 1277 married Oliver de Dinham <sup>81</sup>. As late as 1280 the Crown was demanding the sum of £100 from Oliver for the marriage <sup>82</sup>. The Crown also attempted to amerce Giles de Fishburn, a Devon knight <sup>83</sup>, who married Margery, the widow of Alexander Luttrell, without licence. Giles was liable because, although Alexander had not been a tenant of the Crown, the latter's tenorial lord, Robert Luttrell, had been a minor in the king's wardship <sup>84</sup>. Giles was pardoned the amercement in 1280 <sup>85</sup>. After the death of Nicholas de Bonville in 1294, his widow Hawise, a substantial landholder in her own right, had to swear that she would not remarry without the Crown's permission <sup>86</sup>. Ellis Daubeney's widow Joan paid £100 in 1306 for the right to marry whom she chose <sup>87</sup>. The king often awarded the marriage of widows to leading

<sup>75</sup> Cal.Close, 1272-9, 165, 410

<sup>76</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 160

<sup>77</sup> Bruton Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.viii), pp. 50-1

<sup>78</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 305

<sup>79</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 160

<sup>80</sup> Ibid. 23, 24

<sup>81</sup> Cal.Close, 1272-9, 368

<sup>82</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 125

<sup>83</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I, ii. 26-7

<sup>84</sup> Rot.Parl. i. 5; Sanders, Eng.Barones, 55.

<sup>85</sup> Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 384

<sup>86</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p.166

<sup>87</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 429

landholders and members of the household. In 1302 Robert de Beauchamp, a younger brother of John de Beauchamp of Hatch and a member of the royal household, was granted the marriage of Joyce de Dinham's widow Margaret<sup>88</sup>.

### Intermarriage

The prime factor in the selection of a marriage partner was equivalence in social standing. Such a consideration served to reinforce the social hierarchy within the knightly group. A grant of the marriage of a minor was not expected to be used to the disparagement of the child<sup>89</sup>. The local groupings of lesser knights and landholders of equal status were consolidated by a close network of family ties. It has already been shown that lesser knights and prominent freeholders were often related. Maud de Wengham, who held property in Kingston Seymour and Weston in Gordano, had several daughters. Their husbands included a local knight, Richard of Kenn, and Philip of Wick who was possibly related to the knight John of Wick. John of Bouden and Richard Tilly, the husbands of two other daughters, were probably local freeholders<sup>90</sup>.

Wealthier and more powerful knights similarly allied themselves with families of equal standing. John de St.Lo, lord of Newton and Rublow, was the son-in-law of Alexander Cheverell<sup>91</sup>, a knight of Dorset and Wiltshire<sup>92</sup>. The magnates took to wife the close relatives of their peers. John de Gurney, lord of Beverstone barony, married Olive, the daughter of Henry Lovel, lord of Castle Cary barony<sup>93</sup>. Wealthier landholders were more likely to be allied with families holding property some distance from Somerset

88 Cal. Pat. 1301-7, 46

89 Cal. Inq. p.m. iv, p. 37

90 Just. 1/1336 rot.6; Just. 1/1330 rot. 40

91 Cal. Fine R. 1307-19, 79

92 Moor, Knights of Edw.I, i. 203-4

93 Cf. Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 283-4



unlike lesser knights. The marriage ties of prominent tenants in chief who were minors were moreover influenced by Crown control over wardships and marriages. Hugh Lovel's son Richard married Muriel, the daughter of John de Soules, a prominent landholder in the Scottish border lands, to whom Edward I had initially granted the wardship of Richard's lands and person <sup>94</sup>.

In the context of intermarriage social position did not rest solely on wealth. It also depended on lineage and power. Philip de Columbers V was one of the least wealthy of the tenants by barony but he came from a family which had held Nether Stowey for about a century. Philip (d.1277) was the son of Philip IV (d.1262) by Egelina, the daughter of Robert de Courtenay <sup>95</sup>. The lords Columbers exercised powers of lordship, especially in Puriton, which were typical of those held by the wealthiest lay county landholders and which matched those of the Courtenays <sup>96</sup>. Robert de Courtenay (d.1242) was a prominent landholder in Devon where he held the barony of Okehampton <sup>97</sup>. His descendants rose to national prominence after 1293 when his great grandson Hugh succeeded Isabel de Forz in the earldom of Devon <sup>98</sup>.

The few examples of marriages contracted between parties differing widely in social position concern matches in which widows were involved. They may have been affairs of the heart similar to the famous case of Edward I's daughter Joan, who, after the death of her husband Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, married Ralph de Monthermer, one of Gilbert's household knights <sup>99</sup>. A similar alliance was made between Joan, widow of John Tregoz, and the knight Laurence de Hamelden. Laurence presumably held land in Compton Dando where property had earlier been acquired by Thomas de

<sup>94</sup> Complete Peerage, viii, 205-6; cf. Memoranda de Parlamento (Rolls Ser.), pp. 179-80

<sup>95</sup> Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees, i. 139

<sup>96</sup> See pp. 78, 80-2

<sup>97</sup> Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 70

<sup>98</sup> Complete Peerage, iv. 323

<sup>99</sup> Ibid. v. 710

Hamelden <sup>100</sup>. Compton was close to Chelwood where John, a prominent baronial tenant in chief, held a small manor at his death in 1300 <sup>101</sup>. Laurence was attracted to John's service and was a member of his troop in Scotland in 1298 <sup>102</sup>. By marrying Joan, Laurence greatly enhanced his standing and extended his interests <sup>103</sup>. He held land in Chelwood which formed part of her dower <sup>104</sup>. After the death of Ellis Daubeney in 1305 his widow Joan married Roland de Combar <sup>105</sup>. Roland was the retainer of Ellis who nominated him in 1304 as his attorney <sup>106</sup>. Such examples however are limited and do not invalidate the rule that most marriages, including those to which widows were a party, were between social equals.

The establishment of younger relatives as members of the knightly group.

The network of family ties between knightly landholders effectively limited the group within which their property changed hands through marriage and inheritance. Nevertheless certain aspirations and obligations of landholders were a potential threat to the integrity of patrimonies. By the later 13th. century pious endowments were not an important factor in the break-up of knights' estates. Grants to religious houses were few in number and many were small in scale <sup>107</sup>. The absorption of a number of estates by ecclesiastical lords was the result not of benefactions but of dealings in lands encumbered with debts. The religious aspirations of knights and others were expressed in the foundation and endowment of private chantry-chapels for which settlements were relatively small <sup>108</sup>.

A more important consideration for the future of a knight's estate

100 See below

101 C 135/94 no. 9

102 E 101/6/40

103 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 4-9

104 Feud.Aids, iv. 311

105 Cal.Fat. 1301-7, 516

106 Ibid. 290; cf. Just. 1/76 rot. 3 : Ellis apparently died in captivity under Roland.

107 Cf. C 143/6 no.9; C 143/13 no.3; C 143/18 no.5; C 143/33 no.12

108 See pp. 131-2

was the extent to which provision was made out of it for relatives other than the heir. The assignment of dower resulted only in temporary alienation of part of the patrimony. The inconvenience was naturally increased when two or more widows entitled to dower from the same estate were living simultaneously. After Hugh Lovel's death in 1291 his widow Eleanor did not receive her dower until 1296<sup>109</sup> two years after the death of Eve<sup>110</sup>, the widow of Henry Lovel (d.1263). Eve had received her dower in 1264. Henry's son and heir Richard died in 1264 leaving as his widow Cecily<sup>111</sup> who was holding land in dower as late as 1287<sup>112</sup>.

The possibility of alienation to relatives prompted some landholders to protect the future unity of their estate by means of the entail. In 1290 Simon de Montagu surrendered his lands to the Crown and they were settled, subject to his life-interest, on his son and heir apparent, William and his heirs with remainder to Simon, another son, and his heirs<sup>113</sup>. Many knights conveyed or settled their freehold estates by means of the fine. The fine or final concord was an agreement made by leave of a court of law between the parties to a suit and was intended to lead to a transference of property. The passage of land to an heir apparent and after him to his heirs or to any specified line of descent was guaranteed through a fine by a grant of a reversionary right<sup>114</sup>. The landholder retained a life-interest<sup>115</sup>. Some settlements made by landholders on their heirs apparent involved the latter granting the former a life-interest. The knight Roger la Warre ensured that his son John would succeed him in Brislington manor by conveying the property to John in 1304. John immediately granted his father a life-interest therein<sup>116</sup>.

109 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 487

110 Cf. Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 102

111 Complete Peerage, viii. 204: Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 27-8

112 Just. 1/1249 rot. 4; Just.1/1273 rot. 20

113 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 346

114 See above

115 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 266

116 Glos.R.O., D 340A/T144/5; Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, p. 148

Some landholders alienated part of their patrimony during their lifetime to the heir apparent. Large awards were confined to the wealthier knights whose estates could withstand temporary alienations on such a scale. Such grants were sometimes connected with the establishment of a separate household by the heir apparent, a step which probably coincided with marriage. Anselm de Gurney had granted land in Barrow Gurney to his son John by 1277 when John and his wife were entitled to common rights there<sup>117</sup>. The grant may have been made about 1274 on John's marriage<sup>118</sup>. The award may have enabled John to sustain himself in the rank of knight before his father died in 1286<sup>119</sup>. Among lesser knights the holding of knightly rank was often confined to the head of the family. Its assumption was delayed until after the full inheritance had been secured. Baudry of Nonnington may have taken knighthood only after he had succeeded his father warin in about 1280<sup>120</sup>. For a lesser knight the awarding of a sizeable part of his estate to his heir apparent would have jeopardised his own standing.

The size of portions granted to or settled on younger relatives not in the direct line of descent varied considerably between the wealthier and the lesser knightly families. The property allotted to younger sons of lesser knights was not sufficient to confer knightly status on the recipient. The latter was often barely distinguishable from the free tenantry. In 1305 Robert de St.Clare of Stapleton in Martock settled a messuage, two yardlands, seventeen acres of land and six of pasture in Long Sutton and Wearne on Reynold de St.Clare and the heirs of his body<sup>121</sup>. Reynold may have been a younger son or grandson of Robert. Robert was succeeded in 1308 by his grandson Robert, the son of his son Robert who was dead

117 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 90-1; cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 291

118 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 283-4

119 App.I; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 14

120 App.I

121 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 336-7



by then <sup>122</sup>. The youngest Robert was presumably the eldest son of the eldest son.

Some lesser knights granted relatives a life-interest only in part of the family estates. In 1297 Geoffrey of Stawell and his wife settled a messuage and three acres of land in Stawell on Nicholas of Stawell and his wife for their lives. In return Nicholas acknowledged Geoffrey's right to hold the same messuage and four bovates there from the chief lord <sup>123</sup>. Nicholas was apparently a younger son of Geoffrey with whom he was associated in several disputes over property in Stawell and Moorlinch. Geoffrey's eldest son Matthew succeeded him about 1303 <sup>124</sup>.

The younger sons of wealthier landholders were better able to become knights since the settlements they received often comprised substantial holdings including whole manors. The senior branch of the family retained rights of feudal lordship in the case of military tenures. In 1275 a knight's fee in Keinton Mandeville was held from John de Mandeville, lord of Coker hundred, by his brother William <sup>125</sup>. George de Cauntelo, a prominent Marcher landholder, was lord of property in Chilton Cantelo which at his death in 1273 was held from him by Richard de Cauntelo, evidently a relative <sup>126</sup>. Richard was a knight but there is no evidence that William de Mandeville took the rank.

Hugh de Courtenay, the lord of Okehampton barony who died in 1292, had a younger son Philip. Philip, who held land in Moretonhamstead in Devon <sup>127</sup> and Wootton in west Somerset, was knighted in 1306 <sup>128</sup>. The knight Thomas de Gurney was a younger son of Anselm de Gurney <sup>129</sup> who settled some of his Somerset estates on Thomas. In 1285 Thomas was holding

<sup>122</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. v. p.66

<sup>123</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 304-5

<sup>124</sup> Just 1/1313 rot.12; Just.1/1330 rott.9A, 40d; G.D.Stawell, A Quantock Family (Taunton, 1910), 28

<sup>125</sup> C 133/12 no.1

<sup>126</sup> C 133/2 no.7

<sup>127</sup> W.Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 380

<sup>128</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 302; see pp. 45-6

<sup>129</sup> Just. 1/1310 rot. 8

half of west Harptree from his father <sup>130</sup> who granted him Farrington manor in 1285 and Englishcombe manor in 1286 <sup>131</sup>. Thomas later extended his possessions. In 1308 he purchased Stratton manor from Thomas de St.Vigore <sup>132</sup>.

Lands inherited through the female line frequently passed to younger sons. Younger sons of wealthy knights were consequently able to take knighthood. Sabina, the wife of Henry de Lorty, was succeeded in the lands she inherited from her father Richard Revel by her grandson Henry, the son of Richard de Lorty, in 1254 <sup>133</sup>. Sabina also inherited property in Swell and North Perrot from her mother Mabel who was the sister and heir of Walter of Ashley, lord of Stoke Trister barony in the early 13th. century <sup>134</sup>. The latter property passed eventually to Sabina's younger sons Walter and John de Lorty <sup>135</sup>. Walter, who inherited Swell manor <sup>136</sup>, later became a knight and in 1294 he acquired North Perrot manor from John <sup>137</sup>.

In some families several sons became knights on the basis of such settlements. Joan de Vivonne, the coheir of William de Forz, had a number of sons by Reynold Fitzreter. The eldest was presumably John who succeeded Reynold in 1286 <sup>138</sup>. Joan's own lands passed at her death in 1314 to several of her other sons <sup>139</sup>. Peter, upon whom Chewton manor and hundred had been settled in 1302 <sup>140</sup>, became a knight. Reynold, upon whom Joan had settled her share of Shepton Mallet manor in 1303 and lands in Midsomer Norton in 1304 <sup>141</sup>, also became a knight. Similar settlements were made at a lower social level. Elizabeth of Clevedon, the coheir of John of

<sup>130</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 297

<sup>131</sup> J.Collinson, A History of Somerset (Bath, 1791), ii. 138

<sup>132</sup> Pedes Finium, 1 Edw.II - 20 Edw.III, p.5

<sup>133</sup> Sanders, Eng.Barones, 84; Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.); ii. 120, 122-3; Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 84

<sup>134</sup> C 132/13 no.12; Sanders, Eng.Barones, 84

<sup>135</sup> Proc.Som.arch.Soc. xlii(2), 34-5

<sup>136</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 292; cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 191-2

<sup>137</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, p.293; Feud.Aids, iv. 288

<sup>138</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 364

<sup>139</sup> Ibid. v, pp. 274-5

<sup>140</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I-Edw.I, pp. 318-19

<sup>141</sup> Ibid. pp. 322-3, 394

Aller, evidently settled her lands in Aller on her younger son Matthew<sup>142</sup> who was a knight in the early 14th. century. In 1288 Elizabeth's sister Margaret of Acton settled her land there on her younger son John to whom she had already conveyed property in Wanstrow and Blackford<sup>143</sup>. By 1294 John had been succeeded in Wanstrow by his elder brother Eudes<sup>144</sup>.

Those landholders whose main estates lay some distance from Somerset used their lands in the county to provide for younger children. Maud de Multon inherited Irthington (Gilsland) barony in Cumberland from her father Hubert de Vaux. She was succeeded in 1293 by her grandson Thomas<sup>145</sup>. Her detached Somerset estates in Seavington and Ashill passed to her younger son James, upon whom she had settled them in 1283<sup>146</sup>. Thomas disputed the two estates with James but eventually agreed to James's continuing in possession<sup>147</sup>. James had become a knight by 1309<sup>148</sup>. The Luttrells of East Quantockshead were a cadet branch of the Luttrell family which held half of the Yorkshire barony of Hooton Pagnell<sup>149</sup>. Andrew Luttrell inherited land in East Quantockshead and Huish in Nettlecombe from Maurice of Ghent in 1230 together with Stockland Bristol manor<sup>150</sup>. Andrew granted Stockland manor in 1232 to St.Mark's Hospital, Bristol<sup>151</sup>. He later settled East Quantockshead on his younger son Alexander and the arrangement was confirmed by his eldest son and heir Geoffrey Luttrell. Alexander was succeeded about 1273 by his son Andrew who later became a knight<sup>152</sup>.

The generous settlements made by wealthy landholders on younger relatives enabled the latter not only to be knights but also to pursue

142 Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xli(2), 8

143 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 273-4; cf. ibid. p. 265

144 Cf. C.F. 40/106 rot. 269; Feud.Aids, iv. 309

145 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 124; cf. ibid. 24

146 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 259-60; cf. C 133/64 no. 20

147 Rot.Parl. i. 100

148 Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xxviii(2), 174

149 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 55-6

150 Close R. 1227-31, 437

151 St.Mark's Cart. (Bristol Rec.Soc. xxi), p.xxviii

152 Som.R.O., L 22/1; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 5

active military careers. The performance of military service was an important aspect of the lives of prominent landholders. The continuation of such service was natural for their offspring and relatives, reared in a milieu in which deeds of arms were commonplace. Philip de Courtenay and Thomas de Gurney, both younger sons, were militarily strenuous <sup>153</sup>. Alexander Luttrell apparently met his death during the Crusade of the early 1270s <sup>154</sup>. In the first two Welsh wars of Edward I's reign John Tregoz, lord of Ewyas Harold barony (Herefs.), was accompanied on service by his relative John Tregoz, a knight <sup>155</sup>. The latter was possibly that John Tregoz who in 1285 held land from him in Brean, north of Burnham where he was lord <sup>156</sup>.

Cadet branches of prominent county families did not always provide knights, especially when the family was not among the most wealthy. In the later 13th. century two branches of the Montfort family of Somerset belonged to the knightly group. The emergence of the two lines probably dates from the middle of the century. Then Alexander de Montfort, who held Wellow in 1253, was the head of the family <sup>157</sup>. Alexander may have been the predecessor of later landholders in Nunney. The senior line at Wellow was represented later by his successor Henry. Henry was succeeded in 1276 by his brother Nicholas <sup>158</sup> whose property passed to his son Henry who was succeeded in 1304 by his son Reynold <sup>159</sup>. The head of the junior branch at Nunney in 1285 was Henry de Montfort <sup>160</sup> who witnessed charters at that time <sup>161</sup>. His successor was possibly Alexander de Montfort who was among the landholders listed by the sheriff in 1297 and 1300. The Nunney estate

153 See pp. 54, 259

154 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 440, 447; cf. Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 5

155 Parl.Writs, i. 203, 229, 241.

156 Feud.Aids, iv. 276

157 Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 362

158 Plac.de Quo Warr.(Rec.Com.), 696-7; Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 75; ibid. 8 Edw.I, 83-4; Feud.Aids, iv. 279

159 C 133/113 no.7

160 Feud.Aids, iv. 277

161 Longleat MS. 5004



was held in 1303 by Geoffrey de Montfort<sup>162</sup>. None of the Montforts of Nunney in the late 13th. century apparently took knighthood.

In exceptional cases landholders provided not only for their legitimate offspring. William de Reigny died in 1275. His paternal inheritance passed to his father's sisters and their descendants<sup>163</sup>. William however had a daughter Joan by his mistress Joan la Botiler. He provided for both of them out of the lands in West Bagborough which he had inherited from his mother. The manor there was settled on the two Joans in 1268. Another settlement, which was not dated, preferred Joan la Botiler's lawful issue over the daughter Joan and her heirs<sup>164</sup>.

The composition of the group from which knights were drawn was not solely determined by inheritance or family settlement. It was possible for free tenants to prosper into the knightly group through the accumulation of property. The assumption of knightly rank was postponed until the family was established among the leaders of county society. On the other hand some families ceased to belong to the group as their estates disintegrated under the pressure of debt and impoverishment. In the reign of Edward I the redistribution of land brought about by such factors was of importance in determining the composition of the knightly group.

#### Indebtedness

Indebtedness was common among knights and landholders. The debts recorded sprang from a variety of obligations. Some arose through default in payment of feudal dues and other rents to the Crown, feudal lords and others. In 1288 John de Columbers acknowledged a debt of fifty marks to John Walerand, from whom he held land in Honibere<sup>165</sup>. Exchequer officials

<sup>162</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 309

<sup>163</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 94-5

<sup>164</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 295

<sup>165</sup> Cal.Close, 1279-88, 538; Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees, i. 139

and it increasingly difficult to collect the scutage owed by tenants in chief <sup>166</sup>. Some debts accumulated over a period. Nicholas de Montfort built up a debt of £20 as arrears of an annuity of 100 s. which his brother Henry had acknowledged owing Alexander of Combe <sup>167</sup>. The sum of £10 owed by Hugh of Topham to the bishop of Hereford in 1280 <sup>168</sup> possibly derived from some obligation on Hugh's part in respect of North Metherton manor which was then in the bishop's custody. Hugh held land in near-by Huntworth <sup>169</sup>.

Knights also incurred financial liabilities through the exercise of administrative duties. Holders of office were personally responsible for such debts. Sheriffs were charged with any arrears on their accounts long after they left office <sup>170</sup>. Robert of Raddington, who acted as subescheator in Somerset at the beginning of Edward I's reign, still owed over £56 to the Exchequer in about 1305 <sup>171</sup>.

A landholder's financial liabilities passed to his executors and heirs. The executors of Henry de Montfort (d. 1276) were temporarily reprieved from a distraint which had been ordered on account of Henry's outstanding debts to the Crown <sup>172</sup>. Hugh Lovel succeeded his brother Richard in 1264 <sup>173</sup> and was obliged to acquit the latter's executors of the debts outstanding to many creditors <sup>174</sup>. At the end of Edward I's reign and long after his death in 1291 Hugh's own debts were still being recorded <sup>175</sup>.

Some knights built up debts through dealings with merchants and traders. In 1280 Hugh Lovel acknowledged owing nearly £38 to Richard of

166 E 372/118 rot. Som.& Dors.; E 372/134 rot. Som.& Dors.

167 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 162

168 Ibid. 358

169 Feud.Aids, iv. 278; see p.

170 Cf. E 372/118 rot. Som.& Dors.

171 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 120, 209; E 372/150 rot.Som.& Dors.

172 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 365-6

173 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 28

174 K.B.26/194 rott. 8d., 15d.

175 Cf. E 372/150 rot. Som.& Dors. resid.

Merewell, who lived in Winchester<sup>176</sup>. Hugh also owed £3 to William Spicer, a citizen of Winchester<sup>177</sup>. Earlier in 1271 he owed Roger Marshal, a London citizen, the large sum of £32<sup>178</sup>. Brian de Gouiz of Kingsdon was a debtor of the Winchester merchant Alexander of Merewell<sup>179</sup>. The nature and occasion of these debts are not known but they probably arose from the provision of goods and services rather than from loans.

Foreign merchants, notably Flemings and Italians, provided credit for knights closely associated with the royal household. Crown finance depended heavily on the facilities offered by the Italian bankers. Their clients included leading members of Edward's military establishment who probably ran into debt while on royal service, particularly on campaign. William de Fienles, a member of the household in 1266<sup>180</sup>, owed some Florentine merchants just under 360 marks in 1294<sup>181</sup>. In 1301 Robert Fitzrain and Ingelram Beringer owed a merchant of Lucca £40<sup>182</sup>. Robert was an active military leader like Simon de Montagu who also contracted debts with merchants of Lucca<sup>183</sup>. Another magnate who was militarily strenuous was William Martin. In 1290 he owed 60 marks to some Florentine merchants<sup>184</sup>.

Jewish money-lenders provided credit but their role was diminishing in the two decades before their expulsion in 1290. Their activities were increasingly regulated. In 1275 they were forbidden to lend money at interest<sup>185</sup>. John de Gurney who had taken out bonds for £30, £40 and £50 between 1274 and 1276 later claimed that no interest was payable from 1275<sup>186</sup>.

There were Jews living in such places as Bridgwater, Martock and

176 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 raw.1, 35-6

177 Ibid. 59

178 Close R. 1268-72, 408

179 K.B.27/112 rot.12

180 C 47/4/3 f. 29

181 Cal.Close, 1268-96, 362

182 Ibid. 1296-1302, 477

183 K.B.27/188 rot.11; Cal.Close, 1302-7, 348, 426

184 Cal.Close, 1268-96, 120

185 F.M.Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 322

186 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, iii. 167-8

Ilchester<sup>187</sup> but it is impossible to gauge the extent to which they provided credit to local knights and landholders at the beginning of the reign. Lists compiled of the bonds found in the archives of the Jews of Bristol, Exeter and Devizes after the expulsion show that some Somerset landholders borrowed at those centres. They included few knights<sup>188</sup>. Other records however suggest that many Somerset knights had borrowed from Jews in the middle of the century. Nicholas Pointz, Philip de Columbers V and his mother Egelina availed themselves of the facilities offered by London Jews<sup>189</sup>. Other prominent knights who borrowed from Jews were Roger de Moels<sup>190</sup>, John de Mohun and his brother Robert<sup>191</sup> and members of the Lovel family<sup>192</sup>. Among the lesser knights Simon of Greenham<sup>193</sup> and John de Bretasch were indebted to Jews. The latter acknowledged the huge debt of £80 in 1275<sup>194</sup>.

The wealthier knights apparently had more numerous debts. Nevertheless the consequences of their debts to the Crown might be somewhat mitigated by favoured treatment in repayment. In 1306 Simon de Montagu was pardoned over £120 which both he and his father William had owed the Crown<sup>195</sup>. Simon's own debts, both to the Crown and to other creditors, were considerable. At his request their repayment was suspended in 1305 while the details were checked<sup>196</sup>. Such knights as Simon probably secured preferential treatment as part of the price for supporting the monarch in his military campaigns. In 1303 Alan Plugenet was temporarily reprieved from the payment of his debts just as he was about to depart for Scotland on service<sup>197</sup>.

187 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 197; ii. 56

188 E 101/250/2; E 101/250/4; E 101/250/11.

189 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 488-9

190 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, ii. 190

191 Ibid. iii. 59, 124.

192 Ibid. 258, 314.

193 Ibid. ii. 137, 227; iii. 177

194 Ibid. 64.

195 Cal.Pat. 1302-7, 437

196 Rot.Parl. i. 166; Cal.Close, 1302-7, 248

197 Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 95.



Influential debtors of the Crown were allowed to pay off their debts over a period. Henry de Lorty was to repay his at the rate of 10 marks a year from 1298<sup>198</sup>. John of Merriott failed to observe the terms assigned to him but they were renewed in 1284 when he was ordered to pay off his debts at £20 a year<sup>199</sup>. Since the Crown controlled the Jews' dealings the monarch could favour leading landholders and members of the royal entourage in the repayment of Jewish debts. In 1271 John de Mandeville was reprieved for two years<sup>200</sup> while in 1275 Ralph de Gorges, a member of the household, was pardoned 40 marks he had borrowed from Jews<sup>201</sup>.

The disintegration of estates under the pressure of debt.

Debts provided a mechanism for the transfer of land. In some cases a third party undertook to repay a debt in return for a grant of property from the debtor. In 1303 Richard Lovel secured land held by the knight John of Blackford in Blackford and Wheathill<sup>202</sup> in a transaction connected with his assumption of responsibility for a debt of John to the Crown<sup>203</sup>. In 1280 Roger de Moels undertook to pay the vicar of Wincanton £11.6s.11d. owed by Thomas of Lattiford<sup>204</sup>. Shortly afterwards Thomas dropped his claim to a tenement in Holton<sup>205</sup> and in 1281 he quitclaimed property in Cheriton and Holton to Roger<sup>206</sup>.

In the two cases cited above prominent landholders took advantage of the financial difficulties of their lesser neighbours. In other cases however the break-up of an estate under the pressure of debt benefited lesser men, merchants and estate officials. Alexander de Auno inherited

198 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 235

199 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 206

200 Close R. 1268-72, 358

201 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 187

202 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 335

203 See p. 211

204 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 247-8

205 Ibid. 254

206 Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, f. 27d.

lands in Compton Dando and Ashton Dando in 1259<sup>207</sup>. Later he was heavily in debt. His creditors included Jewish money-lenders, one of whom was named in 1270 as Lombard, son of Solomon<sup>208</sup>. In the same year Alexander was permitted to pay off a debt of 180 marks to Solomon of Marlborough in instalments<sup>209</sup>, the terms of which repayment were later spread over a period of more than eight years<sup>210</sup>. By 1277 £80 was still unpaid<sup>211</sup>. In that year Alexander challenged the record made by the sheriff of Wiltshire that he owed Jopin son of Solomon over £25<sup>212</sup>.

By 1277 Alexander had disposed of much of his property in Somerset and Gloucestershire. Since the land had been alienated without the permission of the Crown, from whom it was held, it was seized<sup>213</sup>. In March 1278 the sheriff of Somerset was ordered to replevy the property to Alexander who was to hold it until the matter was considered in the next parliament. The order was amended in May so that the property would be restored to those who held it by Alexander's grant<sup>214</sup>. According to an order of 1281 the chief beneficiaries of Alexander's sales in Compton were Thomas de Hamelden and Nicholas of Apperlegh<sup>215</sup>. A list compiled in 1285 of Alexander's alienations in Ashton details no fewer than twenty-eight holdings. They were mostly small parcels. All but two were a half-yardland or less and most were under half that size again. The grantees included two religious foundations in Bristol, St. Mark's Hospital and the house of Blessed Katherine. The principal beneficiary of Alexander's sales in Ashton however was Nicholas of Apperlegh. He held 50 acres and had been assigned two rents totalling 22 shillings<sup>216</sup>.

207 Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 117

208 Cal.Flea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 261

209 Close R. 1268-72, 314

210 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 505

211 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, iii. 316

212 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 2.

213 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 83

214 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 450, 456.

215 Ibid. 1279-88, 105

216 Feud.Aids, iv. 290-1

Jewish mortgages provided a means whereby property passed from lesser to greater landholders. William of Milton was a substantial landholder at the beginning of the reign. He held lands in Podimore Milton, Othery and Pedwell. He was probably qualified to be a knight but among the knightly group he was one of the lesser men. In 1272 William sold half his land in Podimore Milton to John of Bitton, an office holder in Wells Cathedral <sup>217</sup>. The Glastonbury chronicler described William as being generous to the extent of being improvident <sup>218</sup>. As a consequence he became impoverished and his lands were encumbered with debts. He pledged half of his lands as security for a loan of £180 to Aaron son of Vives of London. In 1276 the sheriff was ordered to deliver the land to Aaron <sup>219</sup>. Such a step was presumably unnecessary since William reached an agreement with the abbot of Glastonbury. The abbot assumed William's debts and undertook to maintain him <sup>220</sup>. In return in 1277 William conveyed to the abbot his remaining land in Milton together with his property in Othery and Pedwell <sup>221</sup>. As the holder of William's lands, the abbot later acknowledged several Jewish debts including sums of 100 marks to Aaron son of Benedict and £40 to Sweteman son of David of Exeter <sup>222</sup>.

Ignatius of Clifton, a lesser knight, was also heavily in debt to Jewish money-lenders. Sums of £10 and £16 which he undertook to pay Cresse of Wilton in 1262 remained unpaid in 1268 <sup>223</sup>. So also did the principal and interest on six bonds he had contracted between c.1257 and 1259 with an Exeter Jew and on one contracted in 1263 with a Gloucester Jew <sup>224</sup>. Ignatius's estates lay in Easton in Gordano and Radstock in

<sup>217</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 480-2

<sup>218</sup> Adam of Domesham, Historia de rebus gestis Glastoniensibus, 568

<sup>219</sup> Cal.Close, 1272-9, 306, 346-7

<sup>220</sup> Domesham, Historia, 568

<sup>221</sup> Glaston.Feod. 82-3; Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 478-9

<sup>222</sup> Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, iii.273; cf.Glaston.Cart. ii, p.492

<sup>223</sup> Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 177

<sup>224</sup> Ibid. 182

Somerset and Clifton in Gloucestershire. They were held from the earl of Gloucester for three knights' fees in 1262 <sup>225</sup>. Ignatius later divested himself of some of his property, a step probably forced upon him by his embarrassing financial position. By 1270 he had released to Henry de Montfort land in Radstock <sup>226</sup> where later Henry's successors were tenants of the earl <sup>227</sup>. The transaction was evidently associated with a transfer of the burden of debt and Henry brought an action of account against several Jews in 1270 <sup>228</sup>. That Ignatius's debts were charged on his lands is also shown in the request made to Roger of Clifton in 1270 to pay £6 owed in respect of land which Ignatius had earlier pledged, as security for a loan of 12 marks, to <sup>Ellis</sup> ~~the~~ bishop of ~~London~~ <sup>Hereford</sup> <sup>229</sup>. Ignatius's release of Easton manor to Gilbert de Clare in 1278 may have been made under the pressure of debt <sup>230</sup>.

Lesser landholders also purchased land burdened with Jewish debts. The Fichet family property in the middle of the thirteenth century comprised land in Spaxton, Harnham and Perry <sup>231</sup>. Land at Littleton in Compton Dando was purchased from Philip de Columbers, the son of William de Columbers of Stockland. Philip was indebted to Exeter Jews to whom he owed £340 in 1253 <sup>232</sup>. To raise capital he leased all his land in Littleton in 1262 to Hugh Fichet for a term of fifteen years <sup>233</sup>. Philip eventually quit-claimed his rights there to Hugh's son Robert <sup>234</sup>, who consequently became liable for Philip's Jewish debts. In 1266 Robert disputed with Philip a debt of 100 shillings to Aaron of Caerleon <sup>235</sup>.

225 Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 157

226 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 219

227 Cf. C 133/113 no.7

228 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 219

229 Ibid. 221

230 B.L. Add. MS. 6041, f. 84

231 Hylle Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.lxviii), pp. xv -xvi

232 Select Pleas, Starrs and other records of the Exchequer of the Jews (Selden Soc.xv), 15-16; cf. E 101/250/2

233 Hylle Cart. p. 18

234 Ibid. p. 19

235 Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 134



Robert was still defaulting in repayment of the debt shortly before his death in 1272 <sup>236</sup>. Robert's son Hugh was also unwilling to accept responsibility for Philip's debts. In 1274 he claimed that the document recording his father's acknowledgement in 1272 of a debt of £80 had been forged by the officials in charge of the Exeter Jewry <sup>237</sup>.

#### Mercantile involvement in the land market

The injection of merchant capital into the land market had limited repercussions on the composition of the knightly group. Few merchants or their immediate descendants established themselves among the leading members of rural society. The knight Osbert Giffard acknowledged many debts in the 1280s and early 1290s <sup>238</sup>. As early as 1270 he had pledged two gold spoons to Jewish money-lenders <sup>239</sup>. Concern over his debts and the mortgaging of his lands probably underlay the pressure exerted on him in 1290 not to alienate his lands which would have meant disinheriting his heirs <sup>240</sup>. Nevertheless in 1291 Osbert pledged a freehold in his manor of Hardington in north-east Somerset to Ralph Wyneman for a loan of £32 <sup>241</sup>. Ralph, a merchant active in the wine and cloth trades, was of some consequence in Bristol where he held the office of bailiff at the end of Henry III's reign <sup>242</sup>. Since the loan remained unpaid at the expiry of the stated three-year term, Ralph was granted the land in fee simple. The transfer of the holding however did not lead to the establishment of a new knightly family in the county.

There is evidence that certain merchants and townspeople were buying up small amounts of property in a piecemeal fashion from impoverished

<sup>236</sup> Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 277

<sup>237</sup> Ibid. ii. 139-40

<sup>238</sup> Cal.Close, 1279-88, 185, 461; 1268-96, 140, 315.

<sup>239</sup> Cal.Plea Rolls Exch.of Jews, i. 258

<sup>240</sup> Rot.Parl. i. 30

<sup>241</sup> Just. 1/1295 rot. 8

<sup>242</sup> Trans.B.G.A.S.xxii, 175-6; St.Mark's Cart. (Bristol Rec.Soc.xxi), p.102

knights and landholders. With the exception of Thomas de Hamelden they did not found knightly dynasties. William Snel, a prominent citizen of Bath, where he held the office of mayor for at least three separate periods between 1294 and 1305<sup>243</sup>, bought up property in neighbouring Twerton. In 1298 he acquired a small property there from Thomas Swain of Bath<sup>244</sup> but more interesting are the purchases he made from the knight Thomas of Bayeux, the lord of Twerton. The property bought was small in scale. It included in 1289 a yardland over which Thomas retained lordship<sup>245</sup>. Thomas later renounced his rights over that holding and over a half-yardland<sup>246</sup> which William had purchased in 1292<sup>247</sup>. In 1301 William bought holdings of thirteen and eight acres in Twerton<sup>248</sup>. By selling that land Thomas raised considerable sums which were probably needed to cover his debts. In 1297 he was granted respite during royal pleasure for his debts owed at the Exchequer<sup>249</sup>. It was probably under the continuing pressure of debt that Thomas later sold his estates including Twerton. The dismemberment of his patrimony however did not benefit merchants or townspeople but a prospering freeholder and administrator, Richard of Rodney<sup>250</sup>.

Thomas de Hamelden was one merchant who did establish a knightly dynasty. He was a prominent citizen of Bristol where he was mayor in 1274 and 1275<sup>251</sup>. In 1281 he was one of the leading burgesses who witnessed the agreement between the city and merchants from Amiens, Corbie and other continental cities<sup>252</sup>. He owned property in the city where in

243 Ancient Deeds belonging to the Corporation of Bath (Bath Rec.Soc.,1921), pp. 5, 9, 10, 25, 28, 31, 42, 55, 87, 102, 117, 132

244 Som.R.O., WHb 11/540

245 Ibid. 535, 544

246 Ibid. 545

247 Ibid. 536

248 Ibid. 542, 543

249 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 127

250 See below

251 St.Mark's Cart. p. 284

252 Cal.Close, 1279-88, 122

1285 he was said to be withholding rents due to the Crown <sup>253</sup>. His wife Margaret also owned several tenements there <sup>254</sup>. She played an important part in Thomas's accumulation of land in north-east Somerset. In 1276 William of Geurich granted her a reversionary right in a yardland in Midsomer Norton <sup>255</sup>. In Compton Dando a small holding of two acres which she had held for life by the grant of Alexander de Auno was settled on her and her heirs <sup>256</sup>. She may well have been a daughter of Alexander, who also held property in Bristol <sup>257</sup>. Alexander, who was an impoverished knight, sold some of his rural property in Compton and Ashton Dando to Thomas de Hamelden <sup>258</sup>. The piecemeal sales show that Alexander turned to a leading burgess to alleviate his acute financial position. Thomas's purchases in Compton included a large number of small holdings <sup>259</sup>. Other purchases made by Thomas and his wife from Alexander were in Ashton. They included a tenement formerly held by Adam Nichol and holdings in Ashton moor and elsewhere <sup>260</sup>. In 1285 Thomas was said to have purchased a yardland in Ashton from Alexander <sup>261</sup>. Thomas also acquired property in the same part of Somerset from other landholders. In 1269 he bought two plough-lands and a mill in Midsomer Norton from William de Gouiz <sup>262</sup>.

#### The accumulation of land by administrators

Several freeholders who prospered into the knightly group apparently accumulated property as a result of the opportunities offered by administrative service in the county court or in the entourage of a great lord. Nicholas of Apperlegh to whom Alexander de Auno conveyed

253 Great Red Bk. of Bristol, i (Bristol Rec. Soc. iv), p. 106

254 Ibid. pp. 79, 83

255 Pedes Finium, Ric. I - Edw. I, p. 240

256 B.L. Harl. MS. 316, f. 66 and v.

257 Great Red Bk. of Bristol, i, p. 100

258 Cal. Close, 1272-9, 456 ; 1279-86, 105

259 B.L. Harl. MS. 316, ff. 66v - 67

260 Ibid. ff. 65 - 66

261 Feud. Aids, iv. 290

262 Pedes Finium, Ric. I - Edw. I, pp. 225 - 6

part of his crumbling estate was typical of several such men who purchased land in the county during the reign. He was active in the county court from at least 1269 when he offered essoins and acted on behalf of several people <sup>263</sup>. He was evidently a lawyer conversant with legal procedure. In 1279 and 1286 he was nominated to act as attorney for Gilbert de Clare who was going abroad <sup>264</sup>. In 1287 Nicholas acted as a pledge before the royal justices in Bristol for the suitors to Thomas de Berkeley's court of Redcliffe, a suburb of the city <sup>265</sup>. Two years later Nicholas held the important office of steward of Glastonbury Abbey <sup>266</sup>. He was subsequently appointed by the Crown to commissions of oyer and terminer in Devon <sup>267</sup> and in 1293 John of Havering, Steward of Gascony, nominated him to act as his attorney for two years <sup>268</sup>.

Another prospering freeholder and administrator was Richard of Rodney. He was a free tenant of the dean and chapter of Wells in Mark and Rodney <sup>269</sup>. Richard made his first acquisitions of land in that neighbourhood. In 1297 he evidently purchased a holding in Congresbury which was settled on his heirs <sup>270</sup>. In 1301 his right to a messuage and two plough-lands there was recognised <sup>271</sup>. Richard's subsequent rise from freeholder to important landholder was clearly related to his service to bishops of Bath and Wells. In 1301 he was described as the bishop's bailiff <sup>272</sup> and he remained in the service of the new bishop, Walter of Haselshaw, after 1302 <sup>273</sup>. In 1304 the bishop nominated Richard to act as his attorney while he went on pilgrimage <sup>274</sup> and shortly afterwards he

<sup>263</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 41-57 Hen.III, 83-4, 150

<sup>264</sup> Cal.pat. 1272 - 81, 333; 1281-92, 247.

<sup>265</sup> Trans.B.G.A.S. xxii. 170

<sup>266</sup> Just. 1/1284 rot.5; Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 426-7

<sup>267</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 406, 450.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid. 1292-1301, 27.

<sup>269</sup> Hist.MSS.Com. 12, Wells, i, p.160

<sup>270</sup> Peles Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 302

<sup>271</sup> Ibid. pp. 315-16

<sup>272</sup> E 372/146 rot. Som. & Dors.

<sup>273</sup> Handbook of British Chronology, ed. F.M.Powicke and E.B.Fryde(1961), 206.

<sup>274</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 217



secured permission to grant Richard and his wife property in Cheddar <sup>275</sup>. The grant was evidently intended by the bishop as a reward for his official. About 1308 Richard became bailiff of Winterstoke hundred by the bishop's award. The office was the bishop's reward to Richard for his services <sup>276</sup>. Richard was at that period probably in constant attendance on the bishop when the latter was in the neighbourhood of Wells. In 1306 a charter recording Richard's grant of a tenement in Wells was dated at Priddy, an episcopal estate <sup>277</sup>.

Lay officers of the great ecclesiastical landholders of the county were prominent among those landholders who extended their possessions. Nicholas de Langelond was the successor of Hugh, a free tenant of Glastonbury Abbey in South Brent <sup>278</sup>. Nicholas had succeeded Hugh by 1297 and he inherited lands in Dunwear and Slape near Bridgwater <sup>279</sup>. The extension of his property through grant and purchases was rapid. Many of his acquisitions were near Axbridge, Wedmore and Brent. The principal landholders in that area were Glastonbury Abbey, the bishop of Bath and Wells and the dean and chapter of Wells, with all of whom Nicholas had ties of service. In 1303 the bishop granted him and his wife land in Compton Bishop and Cheddar, together with moorland near Compton and Axbridge <sup>280</sup>. In the following year the bishop nominated Nicholas as one of his attorneys <sup>281</sup>. Nicholas was apparently acting for the bishop in courts of law as late as 1307 <sup>282</sup>. Nicholas later held the office of bailiff in the dean and chapter's hundred of Bemstone <sup>283</sup>. Nicholas ended his career as steward between 1311 and 1313 of Glastonbury Abbey, a post he may have held in 1309 <sup>284</sup>.

275 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 224

276 Hist.MSS.Com. 12, Wells, i, p. 160

277 Wells City Charters (Som.Rec.Soc.xlvi), p. 26

278 Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 540; Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 299

279 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 230

280 Hist.MSS.Com. 2, 3rd Rep., Axbridge, p. 301

281 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 217      282 Just.1/1330 rot.40; A.B. 27/133 rot. 45d

283 Hist.MSS.Com. 12, 10th Rep.III, Wells, p. 135

284 Longleat MSS. 11216, rot.75; 10655, rot.14; cf. Glaston.Cart. ii, pp.350-1

Nicholas's initial purchases were made near the property he inherited in South Brent. In 1299 he acquired a yardland in East Brent <sup>285</sup>. He prospered at the expense of his neighbours, some of whom, including members of once-prominent families, had probably fallen on hard times. In 1297 he acquired a messuage and 24 acres of land in Alborough near Hutton from William Marsh and his wife <sup>286</sup>. In 1305 a messuage, 58 acres of land and 10 of meadow in Burnham, Brean and Berrow were sold to Nicholas by John de Gouiz <sup>287</sup>. John was the grandson of Henry de Gouiz III of Kingsdon <sup>288</sup>. In 1306 John Marsh sold Nicholas a messuage and a yardland in Burnham <sup>289</sup>. An important freeholder from whom Nicholas acquired property was William de Conteville, who, in 1304, sold him land in Compton Bishop and Axbridge as well as the bailiwick of Bemstone hundred <sup>290</sup>.

Nicholas's acquisitions included sizeable holdings and he continued to make purchases later. In 1310 he bought a messuage, 40 acres of land, 12 of meadow and 9 s.rent in Ashton and Allerton in Bemstone hundred <sup>291</sup> and in 1312 he added to his property in Compton Bishop 8 messuages, 58 acres of land, 20 of meadow and a rent of 2 shillings <sup>292</sup>. His later purchases involved land over a wider area and in some dealings there was an element of speculation. In 1306 he purchased a plough-land and 18 acres of land in Street and Butleigh from John of Mere but in the following year he sold it to the abbot of Glastonbury. The latter feared that the property might be sold to a more powerful landholder <sup>293</sup>. Nicholas also acquired land in Zoy, over which the abbot was lord, in 1309 when he was possibly the Abbey steward <sup>294</sup>.

Through the gradual accumulation of property such administrators

<sup>285</sup> Glaston.Feod. 104

<sup>286</sup> Fedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 302-3

<sup>287</sup> Ibid. p. 335.

<sup>288</sup> Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. ciii. 41 - 2.

<sup>289</sup> Fedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 340

<sup>290</sup> Ibid. p. 327

<sup>291</sup> Ibid. 1 Edw.II - 20 Edw.III, p. 16

<sup>292</sup> Ibid. p. 30

<sup>293</sup> Longleat MS. 10591, ff. 8 - 9v ; Glaston.Feod. 64 - 5

<sup>294</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 506-7

created the basis on which they entered the knightly group. After his time in the service of the bishops of Bath and Wells Richard of Rodney purchased a number of estates thereby becoming qualified to take knighthood. He acquired several estates from Thomas of Bayeux. Thomas sold him a reversionary right in Twerton manor in 1306<sup>295</sup>. Richard had succeeded to the estate by 1314 when he also held Thomas's former lands in Saltford and Backwell<sup>296</sup>. With land in Rodney Stoke, the property in Saltford and Backwell had been inherited by Thomas from his mother Mary<sup>297</sup>. Richard of Rodney acquired the Rodney Stoke property in 1300 from William of Bourne, a canon of Wells<sup>298</sup>, who frequently acted as an intermediary in the conveyance of land<sup>299</sup>. Richard purchased Thomas's half of Saltford in 1306<sup>300</sup> and made further acquisitions there in 1309<sup>301</sup>. Thomas sold his half of Backwell manor to Richard in 1309<sup>302</sup>. Earlier in 1306 Richard had purchased a reversionary right in the other half of the manor, as well as in part of Claverham manor and fifteen knights' fees all held in dower by Ismannia, the widow of John le Sor<sup>303</sup>. Richard was in possession of the whole of Backwell manor by 1318 when he was granted permission to hold a market and fair there<sup>304</sup>.

The sale of property and the disappearance of knightly lines.

Landholders at all levels of society expanded their holdings. That process often took place at the expense of knights. Glastonbury Abbey, which had extended its demesne lands in the middle of the 13th. century, continued to buy up property early in Edward I's reign. Two knights, Richard of Chilton and Walter of Shapwick, sold out to the abbey then.

295 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 344

296 Cal.Close, 1313 - 18, 136

297 Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 158

298 Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 312.

299 Cf. Ibid. p. 310

300 Ibid. p. 345

301 Ibid. I Edw.II - 20 Edw.III, p.9

302 Ibid. p. 11

303 Ibid. Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 341 - 2

304 Cal.Chart.R. 1300 - 26, 384

Their descendants subsequently disappeared from the knightly group.

Richard held land in Chilton and Ashcott. According to the abbey chronicler he lacked good counsel. It was presumably on account of his prodigality that he was compelled to promise the abbot half of his land together with the capital messuage in Chilton. The abbot took advantage of the promise and the land was eventually transferred to the abbey <sup>305</sup>. In Ashcott Richard's tenant, Geoffrey Langley, granted part of the holding to Peter Fayrdeyn and his wife, from whom it eventually passed to the abbey. Richard recovered the rest of the land on Geoffrey's death and in 1291 it was incorporated in the abbey demesne <sup>306</sup>.

Walter of Shapwick sold most of his land in Shapwick and Withies to the abbey in 1285. The property there had been acquired by his father Reynold and was held by the family for only a short time. In Shapwick Reynold le Gentil had granted one yardland to Reynold. Walter purchased another three yardlands there <sup>307</sup>. Later in 1295 Walter divested himself of the mesne lordship of a messuage and yardland in Chilton by conveying his rights to Richard Pyk <sup>308</sup>.

#### Membership of the knightly group and royal patronage

Outright grants of land by the Crown had a limited influence on the overall composition of the knightly group. They were usually made to prominent and favoured knights. In 1265 the estate in Haslebury, forfeited by William Marshal, an opponent of the Crown, was granted to Alan Flugenet in recognition of his service to Henry III and the Lord Edward <sup>309</sup>. William Marshal's son John tried to redeem the estate under the terms of the Dictum of Kenilworth, but Alan's right of

<sup>305</sup> Adam of Domesham, Historia de rebus gestis Glastoniensibus, 571

<sup>306</sup> Glaston.Feod. 70 - 1

<sup>307</sup> Domesham, Historia, 568; Glaston.Cart.ii, pp. 376, 380; Glaston.Feod. 72 - 3, 75 - 6

<sup>308</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 380 ; Glaston.Feod. 76

<sup>309</sup> Cal.Pat. 1258-66, 467



possession was confirmed in 1282<sup>310</sup>. Alan increased his ties with Somerset by exchanging in 1270 his manor of Lyndhurst and the office of steward in the New Forest (Hants.) for the manors of Fitney and Wearne with Eleanor, wife of the Lord Edward<sup>311</sup>. Alan further consolidated his position in the county by marrying Joan, the daughter of Andrew Wake<sup>312</sup>. Andrew was a prominent lesser knight who was sheriff of the county in 1267<sup>313</sup>. His estates lay in East Dowlish (now Dowlish Lake) and West Dowlish where he was succeeded by his son Ralph<sup>314</sup>. Alan Plugenet's main estates however lay outside Somerset. By the grant of his uncle Robert Walerand in 1273 he acquired important holdings in Wiltshire and Herefordshire, including the lordship of Kilpeck<sup>315</sup>.

The success of the royalist forces in 1264 did not lead to the wholesale dispossession of those knights who had espoused the baronial cause. After the initial dislocation due to the redistribution of the lands of a few baronial partisans there was no general reallocation of the property of the many lesser knights who had opposed the Crown. After the battle of Evesham Alan Plugenet was also granted the lands of John la Warre in Brislington. They were subsequently restored to John<sup>316</sup>. Robert Walerand, a trusted associate of the Lord Edward, was granted the honor of Stogursey, forfeited by Hugh de Neville. After Hugh was received back into royal favour in 1265 the honor was divided. Robert retained the manor and castle of Stogursey, the manors of Radway and West Barnham, the hundred of Cannington and several knights' fees for which he owed a third of the original service<sup>317</sup>.

The Crown usually awarded wardship of lands and heirs and the marriages

310 Cal. rat. 1272-81, 374; Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 262-3

311 Cal. Pat. 1266-72, 404; Cal. Chart. R. 1257-1300, 150

312 Cal. Inq. c.m. iii, p. 417.

313 F.R.C. List of Sheriffs (List and Index ix), 122

314 Feud. Aids, iv. 284, 292; Just. 1/1313 rot. 21d.; K.B. 27/121 rot. 48

315 Cal. Inq. p.m. ii, p. 7

316 Cf. Somersetshire Fees, 1 - 7 Edw. I. 26 - 7

317 Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees, i. 109 - 10

of minors to well-established landholders. The latter included magnates, such as Simon de Montagu, John de Beauchamp (d.1283) and Ralph Daubeney<sup>318</sup>, and men connected with the household, such as Philip Daubeney<sup>319</sup>. The grants were made good use of by the recipients. Roger Mortimer of Wigmore purchased the marriage of Hawise, the daughter and heir of Robert de Muscegros, in 1281<sup>320</sup>. The marriage was used for Roger's younger son William who died in 1297<sup>321</sup>. Humphrey de Beauchamp used the marriage of Idony, the daughter and heir of William Lisle, which he purchased in 1299<sup>322</sup>, for his son Hugh. Hugh and Idony were married by 1308 and in 1316 Hugh held land in North Curry hundred<sup>323</sup>, certainly in Lillsdon where William's great-grandfather Oliver Avenel had held property<sup>324</sup>.

One lesser knight who owed his membership of the Somerset knightly group to a royal grant was Henry of Glastonbury. Henry's father Robert was one of Henry III's household knights. On account of Robert's service, Henry III granted the son an annuity of £20 in 1268<sup>325</sup>. The grant was later cancelled when Henry was promised the first marriage of an heiress with lands worth £30 a year falling to the Crown<sup>326</sup>. The marriage used by the Crown was probably that of Alice Talbot in whose right Henry later held land in Heathfield and Bossington<sup>327</sup>. Alice's father Laurence was apparently alive in 1285<sup>328</sup> but if he had died before 1290 control over Alice's marriage would have passed to the Crown since John de Mohun, from whom Heathfield was held, was himself a ward of the Crown until then<sup>329</sup>. Edward would consequently have been entitled to use to his own advantage rights of feudal lordship falling to John de Mohun to

318 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 78, 88, 107, 181, 485

319 Ibid. 181

320 Ibid. 1272-81, 441

321 Complete Peerage, v. 308

322 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 413

323 Cal.Close, 1307-13, 73; Feud.Aids, iv. 325

324 Close R. 1251-3, 118

327 See p. 141

325 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 209

328 Feud.Aids, iv. 284, 296

326 Ibid. 1272-81, 273

329 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 114

fulfill his promise to Henry. Henry and Alice were married by 1298 at the latest <sup>330</sup>.

Prospering freeholders and knightly rank.

The attitude displayed by new members of the knightly group towards knightly rank varied. Nicholas de Langelond became a knight by 1306 <sup>331</sup>. Nicholas, who was then extending his lands, was the first of his family to hold the rank. It was his achievement that provided the basis of the election of his son and heir Hugh as knight of the shire in 1326 <sup>332</sup>. Some prospering freeholders delayed taking knighthood. Richard of Rodney was one of several fifty librate holders who had not been knighted by 1316 <sup>333</sup>. Soon after in July that year Richard, or possibly his son of the same name, was knighted at Keynsham, close to Saltford where the elder Richard had acquired land <sup>334</sup>.

The willingness of some freeholders to become knights was not shared by their successors. Humphrey de Kael, an active administrator, whose property comprised an assortment of small holdings, had taken knighthood early in Edward I's reign <sup>335</sup>. His successor Humphrey was among the forty librate holders distrained in 1312 <sup>336</sup>. Social prejudice may have prevented prosperous townspeople like Thomas de Hamelden from becoming knights. It was easier for their successors to overcome that prejudice. The failure of some knights to establish dynasties was probably due to the lack of male heirs. That was probably the case for Nicholas of Apperlegh, recorded as a knight in the early 1290s.

Where families combined the material resources to sustain the rank

<sup>330</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1256-1300, 473

<sup>331</sup> Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, ii, p. 562

<sup>332</sup> Parl.Polls, ii(1), p. cxii.

<sup>333</sup> C 47/1/8

<sup>334</sup> J.R.S.Phillips, Aymer de Valence, Earl Of Pembroke, 1307-1324  
(Oxford, 1972), 261 ; see above

<sup>335</sup> See pp. 94-5 ; app.I

<sup>336</sup> C 47/1/7

of knight with a will to join the knightly group, they succeeded in one or two generations. John de Perham, although temporarily reprieved from compulsory knighthood in 1260 <sup>337</sup>, was not dubbed until 1272 <sup>338</sup>. John, who was the first of his family to become a knight, owed his standing in society to the work of his predecessor Thomas de Perham. Thomas, who held land at Wick in Curry Rivel, built up an estate in Charlton Adam. By 1249 he had purchased several holdings there from William son of Adam, the principal landholder, and his sons William and Adam. The property comprised 135 acres <sup>339</sup>. In 1254 Thomas exchanged a plough-land in Charlton Adam for a plough-land in Charlton Mackrell with Thomas, son of John de Perham, possibly his nephew <sup>340</sup>. The latter Thomas had been succeeded by 1285 by John de Perham <sup>341</sup>, the knight, who was returned as a twenty librate holder in 1297.

Many more lesser knights were probably descended from free tenants but it is not often possible to trace the pedigrees of such knights. They emerge as knights among charter witnesses. Adam Foru, who in 1300 held forty librates in Somerset and Dorset, was witnessing charters concerning lands on the northern edge of the Golden hills at the end of the reign <sup>342</sup>. He held land there in Stawell, Bawdrip and Sutton, where in 1307 he acquired two messuages and two plough-lands from Baldwin Malet <sup>343</sup>. One of the earliest references to Adam is his receipt of the wardship of the lands of his neighbour John of Horsey in 1294 <sup>344</sup>. Adam's use of the style miles signified his standing as a leading member of a rural community. Such a position was reflected in the permission he secured in 1306 to endow with land in Stawell a chaplain serving

<sup>337</sup> Close R. 1259-61, 217

<sup>338</sup> Close R. 1268-72, 529

<sup>339</sup> Devon R.O., 123 M/TB 119-123

<sup>340</sup> V.C.H.Som. iii. 85

<sup>341</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 286

<sup>342</sup> Cf. Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 381, 538

<sup>343</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 359

<sup>344</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 360

daily in his new chapel at la Forde <sup>345</sup>. Adam's position was similar to that held by Humphrey de Kael who held the advowson of a chantry near the Charlton Adam manor-house <sup>346</sup>.

The concept of gentility was probably formulated in direct response to the rise of certain free tenants. Gentility served to justify and protect the standing of longer-established lineages. The jealous regard of county landholders for their social position was revealed by the reaction of Richard Revel in the county court in 1204 to an outsider <sup>347</sup>. Newer members of the knightly group felt a need to give a visible expression of their new social position. For some the assumption of knightly rank was sufficient but for others a more concrete affirmation of their standing was needed. A number of prospering freeholders not only became knights but were also active warriors. Humphrey de Kael served in Wales in 1232 <sup>348</sup>. Laurence de Hamelden, whose membership of the knightly group represented an incursion of merchant wealth, consciously adopted those forms of behaviour associated with the chivalrous knights. He attached himself to John Tregoz's troop in 1298 <sup>349</sup>. He also possessed a coat of arms which in the Parliamentary Roll of Arms was ascribed under Suffolk <sup>350</sup> where he was overlord in Milden in his wife's right <sup>351</sup>. Coats of arms were owned by men who were militarily strenuous and who were connected with the chivalrous landholders attendant on the king <sup>352</sup>. Laurence's need to secure social acceptance is underlined by the omission of his name from the lists of leading county landholders compiled in 1297 and 1300. Robert de Panes, who was also probably related to Bristol burgesses, and his son Thomas were both unnamed <sup>353</sup>.

<sup>345</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 413

<sup>346</sup> V.C.H.Som. iii. 85

<sup>347</sup> Introduction to the Curia Regis Rolls (Selden Soc.lxii), 72-3

<sup>348</sup> Parl.Writs, i, 228, 239.

<sup>349</sup> E 101/6/40.

<sup>350</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 414

<sup>351</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I, ii. 175

<sup>352</sup> See pp. 256-60

<sup>353</sup> See p. 29



Conclusion.

In the relatively short period encompassed by the reign of Edward I there was a considerable turnover in the identity of the knights. The change was determined mainly by inheritance as the patrimony changed hands within the family. Wealthy landholders were able to provide for younger relatives out of their lands thereby establishing new knightly lines. Changes of identity of knightly families accounted to a lesser extent for changes in the membership of the knightly group. Such changes reflect the redistribution of property either through inheritance or through sale and purchase. Evidence surviving in cartularies suggests that during the 13th. century land was gradually passing into the hands of fewer and greater men. It shows lesser men, including knights, relinquishing property to more wealthy and powerful neighbours. While the group of knightly families was replenished by the rise of prospering freeholders, a juxtaposition of declining and rising landholders does not however provide a satisfactory solution to account for changes in the composition of the group. Property did not always move up the social scale. Indeed the disintegration of a holding might and did in many cases benefit lesser men.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE KNIGHTS AND THE TERRITORIAL MAGNATES

The various ties between members of the knightly group resulted principally from regional and family relationships. Tenurial bonds were much less important. The same three forms of solidarity also tied lesser knights to the lay and ecclesiastical magnates, the more prominent landholders. The lay magnates corresponded to that small group of wealthy knights with wide powers of lordship. The main ecclesiastical landholders in the county were Glastonbury Abbey, the bishopric of Bath and Wells and the dean and chapter of Wells. They had great influence on the social and economic life of large areas of the county, particularly in the central fenlands. Further west the bishops of Winchester held the extensive manor and hundred of Taunton.

#### The feudal tenurial bond.

By the reign of Edward I knighthood was not synonymous with vassalage. The knights were not simply intermediaries between the tenants in chief of the Crown and the rural communities. Many lesser tenants by military service did not become knights. The military tenants of Hugh of Luccombe were all smallholders, none of whom were dubbed <sup>1</sup>. The lay magnates of Somerset, who were tenants in chief and lords of military tenants, were invariably knights <sup>2</sup>.

The fragmentation of knights' fees and the multiplication of feudal lordship reduced the importance of the feudal tenurial bond in cementing

1 Feud.Aids, iv. 295; Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, pp. 397-8.

2 E.g. John de Beauchamp, Robert FitzPain, Hugh Lovel, Roger de Moels, John de Mohun and Simon de Montagu.

ties between knights and territorial magnates. Nevertheless the rites and formulae associated with the bond of vassalage remained. The bond was originally enshrined in the act of homage by the tenant to his lord. In the later 13th. century homage was proffered by many grades of tenant for land held under various forms of tenure. when Nicholas FitzMartin performed homage to the abbot of Glastonbury in 1261, the form of words used (ego devenio homo vester de feodis et tenementis que de vobis tenere debeo)<sup>3</sup> presumably also applied to other lands held from the abbey besides those assessed at five knights' fees<sup>4</sup>. Tenurial ties between the knights and the magnates were not restricted to military tenures and homage was performed for other tenures. Walter of Shapwick performed homage to the abbot for a yardland held by military tenure he inherited in Shapwick but not for three yardlands in socage tenure he purchased there<sup>5</sup>. On the other hand Nicholas de Langelond performed homage to the abbot in 1299 for a yardland in socage tenure that he had acquired in East Brent<sup>6</sup>.

Incoming tenants received livery of their inheritance only after homage had been rendered. Ralph Daubeney, who held South Petherton from the Crown by knight service, was succeeded by his son Philip. The writ authorizing the holding of an inquisition post mortem of Ralph's lands was issued on 25 January 1292. After the inquisition had been held at South Petherton<sup>7</sup>, Philip performed homage to the king on 3 February and two days later he was granted livery<sup>8</sup>. Homage was also owed on the entry of a new lord. John de Moels, lord of the barony of North Cadbury, was succeeded in 1310 by his son Nicholas<sup>9</sup>. Early in 1311 John Pauncefoot performed homage to Nicholas for his tenements in Compton

3 Glaston.Rent. 234

4 Ibid. 230

5 Ibid. 229; Glaston.Feod. 72-3

6 Glaston.Feod. 104

7 C 133/61 no. 23

8 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 217

9 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 68

Pauncefoot and South Cadbury assessed at one and a half knight's fees <sup>10</sup>.

It has been stated that in the 14th. century the recording of the performances of homage to the archbishops of Canterbury was replaced by the noting of contracts, grants of fees and pensions, around which the relationships between the archbishop and his followers were consolidated<sup>11</sup>. Nevertheless prominent landholders preserved their rights of feudal lordship for the benefits they conferred. The exaction of reliefs and to a lesser extent feudal aids, and the rights of wardship added to a feudal lord's revenues. When feudal rights were in danger of becoming obsolete, lists of knights' fees were compiled or copies made of earlier lists. A late 14th. century register compiled for the Courtenay earls of Devon includes a list of fees dating from the later 13th. century. Maud de Multon, the principal military tenant named in it, died about 1293 <sup>12</sup>.

In the reign of Edward I the protection of the rights of feudal lords was the motivation for the enactment of the statute Quia emptores in 1290. Through the statute it was intended to safe-guard feudal incidents by restraining tenant right in the alienation of land held by military tenure <sup>13</sup>. An earlier restraint on such alienations had been included in the re-issuing of the Great Charter in 1217 <sup>14</sup>. Tenants were often obliged to guarantee the full performance of the services owed. Robert of Brent, a knight who held lands in Mells and Doultong from Glastonbury Abbey in the middle of the century, bound himself to pay the abbot 20 marks for any alienation <sup>15</sup>.

Tenants in chief jealously guarded their rights of feudal lordship against encroachments by the Crown. In the early 14th. century part of the honor of Stogursey was held by John Walerand. John was an imbecile

10 Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, f. 28v.

11 Du Boulay, The Lordship of Canterbury, 112.

12 B.L. Add.MS. 49359, f. 79; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 64.

13 F.M.Powicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 379.

14 W.Stubbs, Select Charters (Oxford, 1890), 346.

15 Glaston.Cart. ii, p.456.

and his property passed to the custody of Edward I for whom a survey was made in 1301. Among the tenants of the honor was the knight William Trivet, who held Chilton Trivet and Idson for three knights' fees<sup>16</sup>. Those fees were in fact held in mesne by John Walerand not from the Crown but from Hugh Pointz<sup>17</sup>. Since John was also a tenant in chief the fees had been taken into royal custody thereby curtailing Hugh's feudal rights. Accordingly in 1307 Hugh petitioned for the recovery of the three fees and also for the payment of scutage from the fees to him and not to the Crown<sup>18</sup>.

#### Tenants by military service.

Tenants by military service in Somerset represented a far larger group than the knights. Since some knight's fees were divided into minute fractions and since some knights held more than a single fee, the number of knights bore no relationship to the number of fees. While there was in the region of ninety landholders in the county qualified to become knights at any one time during the reign there were many more fees. On the basis of the scutage levied for the first Welsh war of 1277 it has been calculated that there were about 320 fees in Somerset. The figure may include fees in other counties belonging to Somerset honours<sup>19</sup>. For the feudal aid levied by the Crown in 1303 the surviving returns for the county include holdings assessed at about 277 fees<sup>20</sup>. Not all of the returns made by the hundred juries are extant but the addition of the 13 fees recorded in 1285 in three of the missing hundreds brings the total to about 290, which is close to the suggested figure of 320<sup>21</sup>.

The holders of the fees were a diverse body of men drawn from a

16 Farrer, Honors and Knights' Fees, i. 110; E 142/8 rot.7.

17 Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 281; Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 196.

18 Rot.Parl. i. 196.

19 Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I, 36.

20 Feud.Aids, iv. 298-317.

21 Ibid. 284, 286-7; the hundreds were Taunton, Tintinhull and Norton Ferris.



wider social group than that represented by the knights. Even between the military tenants of an individual feudal lord there were wide differences in wealth, power and social position. Such variations distinguished the military tenants of the honor of Dunster<sup>22</sup>. John de Beauchamp, who held two fees in Stocklinch and Street, was one of the wealthier knights of the county where he was lord of the barony of Hatch. Most of John de Mohun's military tenants were lesser men and included some who were neither knights nor qualified to be knights. The lesser knights included William le Bret who held half a fee in Torweston. William also held land in neighbouring Sampford Brett from Roger of Kingston<sup>23</sup>. The military tenants of the honor of Dundon were a varied collection of landholders. A few were prominent knights. John de Columbers, lord of Nether Stowey barony, held a knight's fee in North Petherton, Stogursey and Littleton. Matthew de Furneaux, who was said in 1287 to hold  $7\frac{3}{4}$  fees from the honor, had other property both in Somerset and elsewhere, held from other lords. Walter de Lorty, a lesser knight, was a tenant of the honor for land in Earnshill<sup>24</sup>.

The military tenants of Glastonbury Abbey in Somerset were a distinguished body of men. Most of them were knights. In 1303 twenty-four and a half fees were recorded as being held from the abbey in the county<sup>25</sup>. The tenants included several eminent landholders whose position in society did not originate from the property they held from the abbey. William Martin, who held in mesne three fees in Pylle, Hornblotton, Ham and Monkton, was lord of Blagdon barony and had extensive estates in Devon and South Wales<sup>26</sup>. John de Moels, who inherited the barony of North Cadbury, was the abbey's tenant for one fee which comprised land in

22 Cf. The Honour of Dunster (Som.Rec.Soc.xxxiii), pp. 47-51, 52-5, 59-63.

23 Feud.Aids, iv. 275.

24 Beauchamp Regs. 28-31.

25 Glaston.Cart. i, pp. 154-5.

26 Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 15; cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, pp. 446-53.

Blackford and Holton as well as property in Lattiford. The Lattiford lands had been acquired about 1271 by his predecessor Roger without any apparent increase in his feudal obligation <sup>27</sup>. Apart from John ap Adam and John de Columbers, the abbey's other military tenants were lesser landholders, including John Basset, Geoffrey of Stawell and Robert of Brent, who were knights. An exception was William Cotel who held a fee in Croscombe and elsewhere. William was however both the son and the father of a knight <sup>28</sup>.

The rights of feudal lordship.

By the late 13th. century the bond of feudal tenure retained its significance chiefly for the cash payments owed by the tenants to the lord. Rents, aids and scutage payments were owed both by knights and non-knights. While tenants in chief defaulted in the payment of scutage to the Crown, they probably exerted pressure on their own tenants for payment <sup>29</sup>.

Scutage was levied at the rate of 40s. a fee. John de Erlegh paid at that rate in 1295 or 1296 for the quarter-fee he held in Michaelschurch from the earl of Lincoln. The scutage was exacted for the Welsh war of 1282 <sup>30</sup>.

Scutage was also an incident of non-military tenures, both free and unfree. Military tenants passed on the burden to their own tenants. Free tenants on Cecily de Beauchamp's manors of Stoke and Dundon owed scutage as part of their tenurial obligation <sup>31</sup>. The scutage collected in Williton in 1306 for the Scottish campaigns of 1300 and 1303 for John de Hastings was paid both by his tenant, Ralph FitzUrse, and by Ralph's men <sup>32</sup>.

<sup>27</sup> Glaston.Feod. 58-9.

<sup>28</sup> See p.15 and app.I.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. The Honour of Dunster, p.30.

<sup>30</sup> D.L. 29/1/1 rot.14.

<sup>31</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 12-14, 31-3.

<sup>32</sup> Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. vi(2), 48.

A large number of tenants of Muchelney Abbey was assessed for the scutages levied for the same two campaigns. Although the abbey owed the service of one knight the amount, assessed at the customary rate, represented over six fees. It was exacted from many tenements, including free tenures in Ilminster, Isle Abbots, Drayton, West Camel and Muchelney. Most of the tenants liable were smallholders. In Ilminster several half-yardland holdings were assessed. Only two of the tenants named, John de Lorty and Philip de Courtenay, were members of knightly families. John de Lorty was assessed for two-fifths of a fee for land in Downhead near West Camel <sup>33</sup>. At the beginning of the 13th. century the obligation of providing the service due from that holding had been settled on Richard Revel <sup>34</sup>. Richard was the predecessor of Sabina, wife of Henry de Lorty and mother of John <sup>35</sup>. The other three-fifths of the fee had been settled on Christine of Wick but a century later the obligation did not fall on a knight but on several tenants in Wick in Curry Rivel, who were assessed for a half fee. The scutage levied on Philip de Courtenay's tenants in Illegh in Ilminster covered more land than the land he held by military tenure from the abbey in Sea and South Illegh. In those places in 1303 Philip was one of seven persons returned as holding together an eighth of a fee <sup>36</sup>.

Lords were also entitled to exact aids from their military tenants on the occasions of the knighting of the lord's eldest son and the marriage of his eldest daughter. They were intended to help the lord defray his costs. Ecclesiastical lords had no cause to exact such aids which originally were an expression of the deference of military tenant to lord. Nevertheless the exaction of aids was extended to land held by other forms of tenure. In 1275 the aid was fixed at 20s. for each fee or for

<sup>33</sup> Muchelney Memoranda (Som.Rec.Soc.xlii), pp. 92-6.

<sup>34</sup> A.L.Poole, Obligations of Society in the 12th. and 13th. Centuries (Oxford, 1946), 43-5.

<sup>35</sup> See p. 152

<sup>36</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 314.

each twenty librates of land held in socage <sup>37</sup>. On some estates the levying of an aid became the occasion for further impositions on customary tenants. In Stoke Cecily de Beauchamp's villein tenants were liable to be tallaged at will when she wished to have her son knighted or her daughter married <sup>38</sup>.

By the late 13th. century feudal institutions were no longer sufficient to ensure the payment of aids from military tenants. Tenants in chief were obliged to turn to an additional source of authority, that of the Crown embodied in the royal writ, in order to expedite the exploitation of the rights of feudal lordship. John de Mohun resorted to that expedient <sup>39</sup>.

On entry to lands held by military tenure, relief was paid at the rate of £5 a knight's fee. In 1292 Hugh de Neville paid 50s. to John de Mohun as relief for a half fee in Holford <sup>40</sup>. Thomas de St.Vigore was granted livery of his inheritance by the Crown in 1295 <sup>41</sup>. Shortly afterwards he paid relief to Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, for the fee he held in Stratton from the earl's honor of Trowbridge. At the same time John de Erlegh paid relief for the quarter fee he held in Michaelschurch <sup>42</sup>. Military tenants of the bishop of Winchester also paid relief at the same rate. Valentine de Flury, the descendant of Ralph who held three fees in Combe Flory, Ninehead and Withiel Flory, was succeeded by his two daughters. Joan, the elder, paid £7.10s. relief for her share of the inheritance in 1291 <sup>43</sup>.

When the heir of a military tenant was under age the wardship of the land passed to the tenurial lord. In 1303 the custody of the half

<sup>37</sup> Stubbs, Select Charters, 450.

<sup>38</sup> Beauchamp Regs. 15.

<sup>39</sup> The Honour of Dunster, p. 30.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid. p. 67.

<sup>41</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 361.

<sup>42</sup> D.L. 29/1/1 rot. 14; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 148.

<sup>43</sup> Reg.Pontissara (Cant. & York Soc.), ii. 595; Taunton Customs (Som.Rec. Soc.lxvi), pp. xv, xx.

fee which had been held in Milton from the Lovels by John of Clevedon formed part of the dower of Eleanor, the widow of Hugh Lovel<sup>44</sup>. Where there was no heir the land escheated to the lord. John ap Adam and his wife Elizabeth resumed property in Downhead and Stoke St. Michael after the death of Walter of Downhead without issue<sup>45</sup>.

Since relief was a fixed payment its value gradually decreased. To offset its declining value feudal lords exploited to the full their rights of wardship which might be sold to the highest bidder. The wardship and marriage of Valentine de Flury's younger daughter and coheir Petronilla was sold by the bishop of Winchester in 1291 to William of Wellington. Knights profited from sales of such valuable perquisites of feudal lordship. In 1273 Simon of Greenham, who held land in Greenham and Kittisford near Ninehead, purchased from the bishop the wardship of the heir of his neighbour, Ralph de Flury<sup>46</sup>. In 1295 Roger de Moels granted the wardship of land held from him in Wanstrow, Wilkin Throop and Blackford by William Lisle to Elizabeth of Clevedon, who had once contested with William the land which had formed part of the inheritance of Agnel Avenel<sup>47</sup>.

The heriot to which a lord was entitled on the death of a military tenant took the form of military equipment or its cash equivalent. In the same year as Oliver Michel paid relief for a fifth of a fee in Charlton to the earl of Lincoln, a heriot of a rouncey with its gear, worth £7, due at the death of his predecessor, Robert, was exacted<sup>48</sup>. The heriot of the military tenants of Glastonbury Abbey comprised a horse and shield<sup>49</sup>. According to an extent of the abbey's manor of Mells, compiled in 1308 or 1309, the knight Alan Plugenet, who held a fee in

44 Feud. Aids, iv. 301.

45 Just. 1/1310 rot. 8d.

46 Reg. Pontissara, ii. 480: Taunton Customs, p. xx.

47 Hook Manor, Donhead St. Andrew, Arundel MS. G/1883, no. 346; see. p.

48 D.L. 29/1/2 rot. 20.

49 Glaston. Rent. 7.



Whatley, owed a heriot of a horse with its harness and armour <sup>50</sup>.

Military tenants whose holdings were attached to an honor owed suit to the honor court as was the case for the tenants of Stogursey honor <sup>51</sup>. The jurisdiction of the honorial lords over their military tenants was probably only a matter of form by the late 13th century. Suit of court was principally the occasion for exacting rents and other payments from military tenants. The main value to Cecily de Beauchamp of the court of her honor of Dundon came from the rents owed by the suitors <sup>52</sup>.

#### Complexity of feudal tenures.

Although most knights were military tenants of magnates and the latter were leading tenants in chief of the Crown, the feudal ladder was not a gradation of men according to social rank. That had been destroyed by the multiplication of homage. Several prominent knights were military tenants of their peers. Simon de Montagu held land in Shepton, Yarlinton and Chedzoy from the Crown <sup>53</sup>, and was the overlord of a knight's fee in Broomfield which he held from the lords Mohun of Dunster <sup>54</sup>. Simon was also the tenant of Henry de Lorty, lord of Stoke Trister barony, from whom he held Knowle in Norton Ferris hundred <sup>55</sup>. Anselm de Gurney, lord of Beverstone barony, was the military tenant of the earl of Gloucester in the north-east of the county where he held land in Farrington, Barrow and Harptree <sup>56</sup>. He also held a knight's fee in Sandford and Corton in Horethorne hundred from Oliver de Dinham, lord of Cardinham barony (Cornw.) <sup>57</sup>.

Many lesser landholders also held land from several lords. Adam of

50 B.L. Egerton MS. 3321/F, f. 128.

51 E 142/8 rot.7.

52 Beauchamp Regs. 28-31.

53 Feud.Aids. iv. 278, 287, 294.

54 Ibid. 301; see below.

55 Feud.Aids. iv. 287; Sanders, Eng.Baronies. 84.

56 Sanders, Eng.Baronies. 14; Feud.Aids. iv. 291, 297-8.

57 Feud.Aids. iv. 288-9; Sanders, Eng.Baronies. 110.

Bawdrip, a lesser knight, was the military tenant of Hugh Lovel, lord of Castle Cary barony, for a half fee in Bawdrip<sup>58</sup>. By 1278 Adam had acquired property in Brompton Ralph which was held from the barony of Dunster. As the result of an earlier division between three coheirs there was much litigation concerning Brompton Ralph at the beginning of Edward I's reign and Adam evidently obtained the land claimed by Christina of Washford in order to pursue her claims against Thomas of Timworth. Thomas in the right of his wife, Lucy of Merriott, held a third of Brompton Ralph manor and had feudal rights over the other two thirds<sup>59</sup>. Adam of Bawdrip moreover held land in North Petherton from John de Erlegh. Such complexity occasionally led to confusion in the exploitation of feudal rights. After Adam's death about 1297 the wardship of his heir, a minor, passed to the Crown since Hugh Lovel's heir, a tenant in chief, was also a minor. Although the Crown was only entitled to the custody of Adam's lands held from Lovel, the escheator seized Adam's other lands. In 1299 John de Erlegh complained and later received the custody of the lands held from him<sup>60</sup>.

The complexity of feudal tenurial relationships was increased by the proliferation of mesne tenancies. Some were created on the division of estates between coheirs. The younger heirs held their portions from the eldest who assumed responsibility for the whole holding to the feudal lord. Such elaboration in the pattern of tenure sometimes went unrecorded. Eve, the widow of John de Pavely, lord of Bickenhall, was the eldest coheir of Philip de Cauntelo<sup>61</sup>. In the 1285 inquest of knights' fees she was returned as holding Philip's land in West Quantockshead from Dunster honor<sup>62</sup>. However in a list of the fees held from the honor compiled in 1285 it was recorded that two thirds of the knight's fee there were held

58 Feud.Aids, iv. 278; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 27-8.

59 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 191-3 ; The Honour of Dunster, pp. 53, 59; Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, pp. 244-5.

60 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 24, 353; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p.434.

61 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 126-7.

62 Feud.Aids, iv. 275.

from her by William de Pavely and William de Ramesy, who were possibly the other coheirs of Philip <sup>63</sup>.

The growth of mesne tenancies led to an intermixing of interests in the exploitation of feudal lordship. In most cases feudal custom dictated that custody of a minor's lands should pass to the tenurial lord and the wardship of his person to the senior lord. Robert du Boys, a member of a knightly family, held land in South Cadbury by military tenure from Ralph Russell <sup>64</sup>, lord of half of North Cadbury barony. The other half of the barony was held by the lords Moels <sup>65</sup>. Robert evidently had succeeded Peter du Boys <sup>66</sup> and also occupied land ultimately held from the lords Moels. Robert died leaving as his heir his son John, a minor. The custody of some of his lands was the subject of an agreement in 1298 between John de Moels and Walter Pauncefoot. Walter had a mesne tenancy in the land Robert held from John de Moels. In acknowledging Walter's right to the custody and to the marriage, which had apparently been enjoyed by Walter's predecessors, John de Moels was accepting the established rights of a mesne lord <sup>67</sup>. John may have attempted to override Walter's rights in order to secure the custody for himself. It is possible that Robert du Boys held land directly from John de Moels since John du Boys later held two plough-lands in Hatherleigh by knight service from John de Moels <sup>68</sup>.

The chain of feudal tenure was occasionally shortened when mesne lords renounced their rights. In 1271 Henry de Newburgh renounced his right to three fees he held in mesne in Shurton, Broomfield and West Quantockshead to his lord, John de Mohun. For the Broomfield fee Henry instructed the heirs of William Belet, his tenants, to be answerable to John de Mohun but by another deed Simon de Montagu was ordered to answer for the same

<sup>63</sup> The Honour of Dunster, p. 61 ; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 126

<sup>64</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 83-4.

<sup>65</sup> Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 68.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Just. 1/1285 rot. 6d.

<sup>67</sup> Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, f. 27v.

<sup>68</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 109.

fee <sup>69</sup>. The Broomfield estate had come to the Belet family in the late 12th. century through the marriage of Margery, daughter of Robert de Newburgh, to William Belet. It passed to Margery's son Robert Belet, whose son William conveyed it to John de la Lynde and his heirs about 1256. It was at that time that William de Montagu, the father of Simon, secured from William Belet the mesne lordship under Henry de Newburgh. John de la Lynde acknowledged holding Broomfield manor for one fee from William de Montagu and his wife Bertha. By Henry de Newburgh's renunciation of his mesne rights the feudal ladder was curtailed. The mesne lordship of Simon de Montagu, recorded in the inquisition post mortem of John de la Lynde's lands in 1272, was omitted in a record of 1280 when Walter de la Lynde was said to hold the fee from John de Mohun but it was included in the list of fees held from John compiled in 1285 <sup>70</sup>.

#### Feudal assessments.

It was to the advantage of tenants in chief to ensure that the assessments of military service owed by their tenants were maintained at the highest possible level. It was also in the interests of all military tenants, including tenants in chief, to have their assessments reduced. Such a conflict of interest accounts for discrepancies in the amount of knight service attached to particular holdings. Tenants in chief were better placed than the Crown to maintain the full assessment from their military tenants. According to a list of fees compiled for Hugh de Courtenay (d.1292), Maud de Multon held from him ten fees in Ashill and Seavington and their members <sup>71</sup>. In an earlier inquisition made for the Crown in 1274 after the death of John de Courtenay, she was said to hold seven fees in those places <sup>72</sup>. The assessment was reduced considerably in

<sup>69</sup> The Honour of Dunster, pp. 42-4; Som.R.O., L 35/1.

<sup>70</sup> Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 281-5.

<sup>71</sup> B.L. Add.MS. 49359, f.79.

<sup>72</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii. p.52.

the 1285 survey, compiled as an Exchequer record. Ashill was said to be held for one small fee <sup>73</sup>. No assessment was given for Seavington but according to the inquisition of 1303, drawn up in connection with the collection of a feudal aid by the Crown, Maud's son James held a half fee there. The assessment for Ashill had been further reduced to a half fee <sup>74</sup>.

One landholder who pressed for a reduction in her feudal assessment was Cecily de Beauchamp, daughter of William de Forz. The amount of knight service attached to the honor of Dundon had long been disputed with Glastonbury Abbey from whom it was held. The honor had formed part of the inheritance of William Briwer who had held twelve fees in Shepton and Dundon <sup>75</sup>. William's successors did not accept liability for two of the fees <sup>76</sup>. In 1255 William de Forz offered to perform homage to the abbot in respect of ten fees while the abbot claimed that homage was owed for twelve fees <sup>77</sup>. The dispute was settled in 1286 when the abbot accepted the lower figure. Cecily was to hold Dundon honor for eight fees and the lands in Shepton were charged with the service of two knights. In return the half fee held in Ashcott by the knight Richard of Chilton from the honor was transferred to the abbot <sup>78</sup>. The agreement apparently accorded with conditions of tenure in force since at least 1283. Then it was recorded that Cecily's husband, John de Beauchamp, had held Dundon for eight and a half fees <sup>79</sup>. In 1303 Dundon and its members was assessed at eight fees and Shepton Mallet at two <sup>80</sup>.

<sup>73</sup> Feud.Aids. iv. 272.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 314-15.

<sup>75</sup> Glaston.Rent. 228

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid. 233-4.

<sup>78</sup> Glaston.Feod. 59-61.

<sup>79</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 327.

<sup>80</sup> Feud.Aids. iv. 306 ; Glaston.Cart. i, p. 154.



The significance of the feudal tenurial bond.

The feudal tenurial link was by the reign of Edward I prized solely by feudal lords for the rights of lordship it conferred. For some lords the rights were considerable. In 1279 it was recorded that over 55 knights' fees were held from the honor of Dunster. Not all of the fees were in Somerset<sup>81</sup>. The original servicium debitum of the honor had apparently been 40 fees but in about 1168 41 fees created before 1135 were recorded as well as  $5\frac{1}{2}$  created since that date<sup>82</sup>. In the mid 13th. century the barony was generally assessed for feudal aids at 41 fees<sup>83</sup>. From his numerous military tenants John de Mohun (d.1279) was entitled to relief, suit of court, scutage and wardship of minors, their marriages and holdings. The officers in Dunster included a ballivus de feodo whose duties presumably comprised supervising the exploitation of the lord's rights over his military tenants<sup>84</sup>.

The financial importance of feudal lordship meant that great care was taken in the division of estates or in the assigning of dower. The fees were an integral part of the estate. The honor of Stogursey was divided in 1266 after Hugh de Neville, a baronial partisan, had been received back into royal favour. The honor had been assigned to Robert Walerand who after 1266 retained Stogursey manor and castle, Radway manor, Cannington and several fees including those held by Philip de Columbers and Simon of Greenham. Robert was charged with a third of the original feudal service. The other two thirds were assigned to Hugh de Neville who was awarded several fees including those held by Philip Basset and William de Reigny<sup>85</sup>. An unsatisfactory assignment might be followed by a re-allocation of fees. John de Mohun's widow Eleanor was allotted as part

<sup>81</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 174-9.

<sup>82</sup> The Honour of Dunster, pp. viii-ix.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid. pp. xvi, 30-1.

<sup>84</sup> C 133/22 no.1.

<sup>85</sup> Farrer, Honours and Knights' Fees, i. 109-110.

of her dower 27 $\frac{1}{4}$  fees in Somerset, Dorset and Devon in 1279<sup>86</sup>. It was later considered that she had been assigned too many fees and a new award to her was made in 1285<sup>87</sup>.

By the late 13th. century feudal tenurial obligation had become almost exclusively financial. Social and other relationships between knights and magnates developed on the basis of family and territorial solidarities. In the latter tenurial bonds, both feudal and non-feudal, might be present but were not essential.

Provision of feudal military service by tenants in chief.

In Edward I's reign the Somerset tenants in chief did not depend to any great extent on their knightly tenants for the performance of military service or castle-guard. One of the tenurial obligations of the knight Ralph FitzNicholas for his land in Tickenham was the performance for his lord, Roger Bigod, of castle-guard at Chepstow for forty days during hostilities<sup>88</sup>. There is however no evidence that Somerset knights performed service of that sort. The military tenants of Stogursey honor were responsible for providing and maintaining at their own expense a small force, a horseman, a balistarius and six armed footsoldiers, to guard the castle during hostilities. As the castle was in an advanced state of decay by 1301 it seems probable that the tenants' obligation was commuted in the late 13th. century<sup>89</sup>.

The military tenants of the Mohuns were apparently not required to perform castle-guard service at Dunster. The castle had been enlarged by Reynold de Mohun (d.1258) who extended the lower ward. To finance the work he commuted the service owed by several of his military tenants of

86 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 177-8.

87 Ibid. pp. 351-4.

88 C 143/54 no. 13.

89 E 142/8 rot. 7.

maintaining the castle walls <sup>90</sup>. Castle-guard was presumably performed by hired warriors for whom accommodation was provided in the castle. A chamber for knights in the upper ward was recorded in 1266 <sup>91</sup> and after the death of John de Mohun in 1279 repairs affected a couple of rooms set aside for knights. An armoury was attached to one of the rooms <sup>92</sup>. The accommodation may have housed local knights who attended the lord when he was in residence but it is more likely to have been the quarters of the warriors hired to defend the castle. For them the lord maintained a store of arms and armour which, during the minority of John de Mohun's son and heir John, was deposited for safe keeping in both Dunster Priory and Cleeve Abbey <sup>93</sup>.

By the mid 13th. century the exaction of military service on the basis of the knight's fee was impossible. Consequently the quota of service owed by some tenants in chief was reduced. The reductions favoured those whose original assessments were the largest. Glastonbury Abbey and the bishopric of Bath and Wells, whose servicia debita had been forty and twenty knights respectively, were held responsible for three and two knights <sup>94</sup>. For military purposes the service owed by the Mohuns for Dunster was reduced from forty-one to three knights <sup>95</sup>.

The method by which the ecclesiastical tenants in chief, who also included Muchelney Abbey, discharged their obligation to provide military service varied from campaign to campaign. On some occasions they did not send their service but fined with the Crown by way of composition. The abbot of Glastonbury fined for his service of three knights in the first

90 B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p. 94; The Honour of Dunster, pp. 37-8; T. Gerard, Description of Somerset (Som.Rec.Soc. xv), 27-8.

91 B.L. Egerton MS. 3724, p. 58.

92 C 47/3/21

93 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 24.

94 Chew, The English Ecclesiastical Tenants in Chief and Knight Service, 32-3.

95 The Honour of Dunster, p. xvii.

two Welsh wars of the reign and many of the later Scottish campaigns <sup>96</sup>. The abbot of Muchelney fined for his service of one knight in 1306 <sup>97</sup>.

When military service was performed, the ecclesiastical magnates depended to a large extent on relatives, members of their household staff and hired warriors. They also relied on men-at-arms rather than knights. The service of two men-at-arms was considered equivalent to that provided by one knight <sup>98</sup>. Such warriors were supported by ecclesiastical tenants in chief. The household of the abbot of Glastonbury included armigeri for whom robes were provided <sup>99</sup>. Archbishop Pecham had the same group in mind when he advised the abbot for the sake of economy to distribute cloth for robes to the scutiferi in the household only once a year <sup>100</sup>. The scutiferi included among their number sons of local landholders. Philip of Wellesley who was in the abbot's household in 1299 <sup>101</sup> was the son of Thomas of Wellesley. Thomas, a knight, held land from the bishop of Bath and Wells <sup>102</sup>. He had presumably sent his son to receive some form of training in the abbot's entourage. Under Edward I the abbot did not require military service from either such members of his entourage or from his military tenants. Nevertheless in 1263 the abbot had made use of the services of a strenuous military tenant. The knight Geoffrey Foliot, who led four men-at-arms on behalf of the abbey in that year <sup>103</sup>, held land in mesne from the abbey in Ashbury (Berks.) <sup>104</sup>.

The bishop of Bath and Wells sent four men-at-arms in 1263. The names of Reynold Marshal and John Cook suggest that they were household retainers or servants <sup>105</sup>. The other two William and Adam of Bitton were

<sup>96</sup> Glaston.Cart. i, pp. 163-5; Longleat MS. 10593, ff. 11-12.

<sup>97</sup> E 370/1/13 m. 4.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Feud.Aids, iv. 290, 295.

<sup>99</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 279.

<sup>100</sup> Reg. Peckham (Rolls Ser.), i. 261.

<sup>101</sup> Glaston.Rent. 230-1.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Cal.Pat. 1307-13, 338; Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 436.

<sup>103</sup> Longleat MS. 10590, ff. 76-80.

<sup>104</sup> Glaston.Feod. 3.

<sup>105</sup> Longleat MS. 10590, ff. 76-80.

probably related to the former bishop, William Bitton I <sup>106</sup>. Adam, who later became a knight, held land in Chilcompton, where he was succeeded by John of Bitton, also a knight <sup>107</sup>. Neither Adam nor John served for the bishop in Edward's reign. In the Welsh war of 1282 the bishop's service was performed by William Burnell, a relative of the bishop, Robert Burnell, and H. de Tyeys. They were not members of county families and apparently neither were Richard of Aston and William Chabenor who served for the bishop in Scotland in 1300 <sup>108</sup>.

The arrangement made in the early 13th. century by Muchelney Abbey for the provision of the service of one knight no longer applied by the reign of Edward I. The abbot acquitted his service in various ways. In 1300 he sent two men-at-arms, apparently recruited locally <sup>109</sup>. The provision of equipment for such warriors evidently fell on the abbey's tenants. William, the son and heir of the knight Walter de Loveny, was obliged to provide a horse to carry one man-at-arms in the king's army <sup>110</sup>.

The arrangements made by ecclesiastical tenants in chief for discharging their feudal obligations were of an ad hoc nature. Some religious houses occasionally contracted with strenuous knights for the performance of military service <sup>111</sup>. In 1264 the abbot of Glastonbury, when on reports of an invasion he was requested to send his service, came to an agreement with William of Yeovilton, a local knight. William was to serve in person with four men-at-arms for the customary 40 days. He was to receive a palfrey, worth 5 marks, and 50 marks, of which 35 were to be paid at the outset. Of the rest, half was to be paid on the day that the abbot's service was proffered, and the remainder halfway through the period of service. The abbot was to pay travelling expenses <sup>112</sup>. A similar contract

106 Handbook of British Chronology, ed. F.M.Powicke and E.B.Fryde(1961),205.

107 Feud.Aids, iv. 298, 309.

108 Drokensford's Reg. (Som.Rec.Soc. i), p. 62.

109 C 47/5/6 m. 1.

110 Muchelney Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc. xiv), p. 105.

111 M.Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance under Edward I (1972), 81.

112 Longleat MS. 10590, ff. 80v. - 81.



possibly provided the basis for Humphrey de Kael's performance of military service for Muchelney Abbey in 1282<sup>113</sup>. Humphrey was not a military tenant of the abbey and apparently did not hold any land from the abbey. As a landholder in Compton Durville and Whitelackington<sup>114</sup>, close to Ilminster, he was a neighbour of the abbey. The abbot took advantage of service offered by Humphrey for one campaign only.

Relationships between the lesser knights and the territorial magnates in the performance of military service were principally determined by regional and personal ties. In the few instances when a tenurial link was present the relationship can be explained by other factors. For the Scottish campaign of 1298 John ap Adam secured letters of protection for John le Waleys<sup>115</sup>, who was his tenant for two fees in Hu ton and Elborough in north Somerset<sup>116</sup>. The association of the two men probably depended as much on geographical as on tenurial ties. In 1304 John le Waleys was a member of the troop led in Scotland by Maurice de Berkeley who, like John ap Adam, was a prominent landholder in north-east Somerset. It is possible however that John le Waleys was present in the Berkeley retinue as one of the men-at-arms accompanying the knight Thomas de Gurney<sup>117</sup>, from whom he held land in Langridge by military tenure<sup>118</sup>.

Lay tenants in chief when discharging feudal service to the Crown relied on relatives and also on neighbours. The service of three knights proffered in 1277 by John de Mohun was performed by himself, his brother Robert and Thomas de Pyn<sup>119</sup>. Thomas, as lord of Dulverton in his wife's right, was a neighbour of John<sup>120</sup>. For the same campaign Nicholas

113 Parl.Writs, i. 228, 235.

114 See p.94

115 Gough, Scotland in 1298, p. 45.

116 Feud.Aids, iv. 312.

117 Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436.

118 Feud.Aids, iv. 311.

119 Parl.Writs, i. 202, 211.

120 Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 119.

FitzMartin, lord of Blagdon barony <sup>121</sup>, proffered the service of three knights performed by himself, Robert FitzMartin, probably his brother, and John Peverel <sup>122</sup>. John, the son of Hugh Peverel, was probably Nicholas's stepson. After Hugh's death in 1259 his widow Isabel married Nicholas <sup>123</sup>. In 1277 and 1282 John Tregoz was accompanied by his blood relative John Tregoz, a knight, in performing feudal military service <sup>124</sup>. In 1277 John Cogan was assisted by his brother William in discharging the service of one knight for Bampton barony <sup>125</sup>.

The service owed by aged or female tenants in chief was often acquitted by relatives. In 1277 James Russell acted for his father Ralph Russell whom he succeeded in the following year as lord of North Cadbury barony <sup>126</sup>. Again in 1277 Nicholas Branch served on behalf of his mother Joan <sup>127</sup>. In some cases a tenant in chief relied on a relative to discharge his feudal obligation in order to free himself for other duties. In 1277 William Daubeney performed feudal service for his father Ralph <sup>128</sup> who in the same campaign led a troop of warriors, presumably raised by contract <sup>129</sup>.

Troop leaders recruit from local landholders.

The troop leaders in the Edwardian army, who were established landholders in Somerset, recruited some of their lesser neighbours who were knights to serve under them. The knights probably contracted to serve with a couple of men-at-arms or troopers. The troop led in Scotland in 1298 by Simon de Montagu included three knights, John of Blackford, Robert of Brent and Geoffrey of Aumale <sup>130</sup>. They all held land in Somerset and

121 Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 15.

122 Parl. Writs, i. 207, 213.

123 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som. Mans. 51, 62.

124 Parl. Writs, i. 203, 229, 241.

125 Ibid. 207, 210.

126 Ibid. 204, 212; Sanders, Eng. Baronies, 68.

127 Parl. Writs, i. 212.

128 Ibid. 207; cf. Cal. Fine R. 1272-1307, 217, 303.

129 Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw. I., 124.

130 E 101/6/39.

were neighbours, but not military tenants, of Simon. John's lands in Blackford were close to Simon's property in Shepton Montagu and Yarlington in the south-east of the county <sup>131</sup>. Robert's holdings in South Brent and Cossington, where he was a tenant of Glastonbury Abbey, lay next to Chedzoy where Simon's most valuable estate was located <sup>132</sup>. Although Geoffrey of Aumale held land in Middle Chinnoek <sup>133</sup>, his service under Simon reflected a territorial solidarity in Devon. Geoffrey was lord of Woodbury and Lympstone, south-east of Exeter <sup>134</sup>. Simon, as lord of the manor and hundred of Wonford on the outskirts of Exeter, about four miles from Woodbury, was the principal landholder in that area <sup>135</sup>. Simon may have recruited John and Robert in the county while preparing for the campaign. They were granted letters of protection for the forthcoming campaign as members of Simon's troop <sup>136</sup>. Geoffrey, on the other hand, was a member of the royal household when he received letters of protection in August <sup>137</sup>. It seems that he attached himself to Simon's troop, which was not among the household forces, when it appeared in the army.

Troops led by some other prominent Somerset landholders in 1297 and 1298 included local knights. In the latter campaign Laurence de Hamelden, who probably held land in Compton Dando, served under his neighbour John Tregoz, lord of Chelwood manor <sup>138</sup>. The troops led by Robert FitzPain both in Flanders in 1297 and Scotland in 1298 included knights from Somerset and Dorset where his main estates lay. Those serving under him in 1297 included Alexander Cheverell, Simon de Raleigh, Matthew de Furneaux and Simon Roges <sup>139</sup>. Alexander Cheverell held land in Dorset in Maiden Newton

131 Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 335; Feud.Aids, iv. 287, 294.

132 Feud.Aids, iv. 289, 306; B.L. Add.Ch. 26, 754.

133 Feud.Aids, iv. 288, 317.

134 Ibid. i. 364.

135 Ibid. 311, 315.

136 Gough, Scotland in 1298, p. 40.

137 Ibid. p. 247.

138 E 101/6/40; see p. 17.

139 E 101/6/19.

close to Powerstock where Robert held half of the barony <sup>140</sup>.

The other three knights were landholders in west Somerset where Robert held several mesne tenancies. Their membership of the same local grouping probably added to the cohesion of the troop. That cohesion was reinforced since Simon de Raleigh and Matthew de Furneaux were related by marriage <sup>141</sup>. Moreover Simon Roges, lord of Porlock, held land from Matthew at Meshaw in Devon <sup>142</sup>. Robert FitzPain had interests in Kittisford and Stawley (Som.) <sup>143</sup> close to Holcombe (Devon) which was held by a senior branch of the Roges family <sup>144</sup>. Robert also had interests in Skilgate and Quarm in Winford and in Timberscombe <sup>145</sup> which were near both Porlock and Nettlecombe where Simon de Raleigh held land <sup>146</sup>. Matthew de Furneaux was overlord of Ludhuish in Nettlecombe. He also held land in Kilve and Holford and in near-by Fiddington he held a half fee from Robert <sup>147</sup>. Matthew was also a neighbour of Robert in south-east Somerset where his land in Ashington was near Robert's estates in Bridgehampton and Speckington <sup>148</sup>. In the same part of the county Simon de Raleigh held land in Alford near Robert's property in Charlton Mackrell and interests in Cary Fitzpaine <sup>149</sup>.

Although the bulk of his estates lay in Gloucestershire, Thomas de Berkeley as lord of the hundreds of Bedminster and Portbury and Hartcliffe was an influential landholder in north-east Somerset <sup>150</sup>. Thomas is reputed to have maintained a household of over two hundred persons <sup>151</sup>. Thomas and his son Maurice attracted several lesser landholders, including the knight Thomas de Gurney, into their service. The men-at-arms in Maurice's retinue

140 Feud.Aids, ii. 35; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 72.

141 See p. 18.

142 Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, pp. 238-9.

143 Feud.Aids, iv. 28.

144 Canonsleigh Cart. (Devon & Cornw. Rec.Soc. N.S.viii), p. xxi.

145 Feud.Aids, iv. 275, 296, 302.

146 Ibid. 303.

147 Cf. ibid. 275, 290, 308.

148 Ibid. 274, 285; Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 389.

149 Feud.Aids, iv. 306, 285.

150 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 697-8.

151 Berkeley MSS. i. 166.

in 1304 included in addition to John le Waleys, Geoffrey de Hauteville, another local landholder<sup>152</sup>. Geoffrey held land in Norton Hauteville from the bishop of Bath and Wells<sup>153</sup>. While his predecessor Thomas performed military service for the bishop in the Welsh campaign of 1245<sup>154</sup>, Geoffrey was attached to the troop of a prominent neighbour.

In the Welsh campaign of 1294 several landholders from north-east Somerset served with John Giffard of Brimpsfield (Glos.) who held several mesne tenancies in that part of the county. The landholders were military tenants of Gilbert de Clare with whom John was closely associated. They included the knights Richard of Emborough, John of Clevedon and John and Edmund Basset. John of Clevedon's brother Matthew served as a man-at-arms as did William of Ashton and William Malherbe<sup>155</sup>.

While territorial solidarities were important in determining the composition of retinues they were not the only factor. Personal contacts were important. Simon of Ashton held land near Bristol in Weston in Gordano<sup>156</sup>. In the campaigns of 1297 and 1298 he served under John de Beauchamp of Hatch<sup>157</sup>. Simon was attached to John's retinue in 1303 when he witnessed one of John's deeds<sup>158</sup>. Simon and John may have become acquainted in the royal household. John was a ward of the Crown until 1295<sup>159</sup> and Simon was recorded as a member of the household in the following year<sup>160</sup>.

#### Change and continuity in the composition of troops.

The composition of troops and retinues was far from static. It varied considerably from campaign to campaign. Of the four knights serving under

152 Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436.

153 Feud.Aids. iv. 307.

154 Drokensford's Reg. p. 62.

155 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 61-2; Feud.Aids. iv. 304-5, 309-12.

156 Feud.Aids. iv. 305.

157 E 101/6/19; E 101/6/40

158 Beauchamp Regs. 64-5.

159 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 432.

160 Ibid. 487.



Robert FitzPain in 1297 only Simon de Raleigh was in his troop in Scotland in 1298. The other knight in the later troop was William of Wigborough<sup>161</sup>. William was a neighbour of Robert for his land near South Petherton was close to Robert's property in Allowenshay<sup>162</sup>. Many lesser knights and landholders did not perform service regularly under any particular lord. John of Blackford, who served under Simon de Montagu in 1298, had seen service in Flanders the previous year under William de Munchensy<sup>163</sup>. John le Waleys, who saw active service in Scotland, attended John ap Adam in 1298 and John de Broke in 1300<sup>164</sup>. In 1304 he was present in Maurice de Berkeley's retinue, in which he possibly accompanied Thomas de Gurney<sup>165</sup>.

Humphrey de Beauchamp, a member of a chivalrous family, served under or on behalf of several lords. During the 1297 Flanders campaign he was in the troop of his relative John de Beauchamp under whom he served in Scotland in 1298<sup>166</sup>. In the summer of 1300 he was serving in the troop of Simon de Montagu for the Scottish campaign<sup>167</sup>. Humphrey held land in Knowle St. Giles about two miles from Donyatt where Simon was lord of the manor<sup>168</sup>. Later in 1303 Humphrey performed feudal military service on behalf of Ellis Daubeney<sup>169</sup>, lord of near-by South Petherton<sup>170</sup>.

Some lesser knights belonged to the retinue of a local magnate over a period of years. Matthew de Furneaux served with Robert FitzPain's troop in 1297 but not in 1298<sup>171</sup>. In March 1300 Matthew appeared in the royal household to receive Robert's winter fee<sup>172</sup>. Matthew was further named

161 E 101/6/40.

162 Feud.Aids, iv. 284; cf. Hook Manor, Donhead St.Andrew, Arundell MS. G/589 no. 324; Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 388.

163 E 101/6/28.

164 Gough, Scotland in 1298, p. 45; Liber Quotidianus, p. 178.

165 Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436.

166 E 101/6/19; E 101/6/40.

167 Liber Quotidianus, p. 199.

168 Feud.Aids, iv. 313, 315.

169 C 47/5/6

170 Feud.Aids, iv. 315.

171 E 101/6/19; cf. E 101/6/40.

172 Liber Quotidianus, p. 189.

as a member of Robert's household in 1305 when he was involved in the ejection of Maurice of Membury from West Bagborough<sup>173</sup>. Geoffrey of Aumale besides fighting in Simon de Montagu's troop in 1298 served in that lord's retinue in Gascony in 1303<sup>174</sup>. Geoffrey de Hauteville was a member of the Berkeley retinue in the campaigns in Flanders in 1297<sup>175</sup> and in Scotland in 1301 and 1304<sup>176</sup>. Richard of Emborough was a member of John Giffard's household during the civil disturbances of the early 1260s<sup>177</sup>. He served under John in Wales as late as 1294. Continuity in allegiance might span several generations. John and Edmund Basset in serving with John Giffard in 1294<sup>178</sup> were continuing a family tradition. Their father Anselm had performed service on behalf of Giffard in Wales in 1277<sup>179</sup>. In 1280 he had been pardoned for an offence committed while hunting in John's entourage<sup>180</sup>.

The strenuous knights and the military captains.

The troop leaders whose troops included those lesser knights and landholders who were military strenuous were the heads of established and prominent county families. A few of them were important military captains. Both Simon de Montagu and Robert FitzPain were promoted to important posts. The military career of Simon had begun by 1277 when he served in Wales as a man-at-arms<sup>181</sup>. Five years later he led a troop there as a knight<sup>182</sup>. He served on many later campaigns and came to occupy an important position in the organisation of naval affairs. The latter by their nature did not preclude him from participating in military activity. In 1296 he broke the

173 Just. 1/764 rot. 2.

174 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 109.

175 E 101/6/28.

176 E 101/9/12; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p. 436.

177 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 315.

178 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 61-2.

179 Parl.Writs, i. 206.

180 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 362-3.

181 Parl.Writs, i. 208.

182 Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I, 163.

naval blockade of Bourg-sur-Mer<sup>183</sup>. In 1299 he was appointed constable of Corfe castle, which commanded a strategic position in the defence of the south coast<sup>184</sup>. In 1300 a number of his own vessels left Bridgwater, close to his manor of Chedzoy, to join the ships which were supplying the army moving along the west coast against the Scots. In July two of his galleys with an auxiliary boat and a complement of almost one hundred men were retained at the king's wages at Caerlaverock<sup>185</sup>. Simon took part in the siege of Caerlaverock castle where his troop brought up the rear of the third division<sup>186</sup>. In 1307 he was appointed captain and governor of the fleet against the Scots<sup>187</sup>. In 1309 Edward II made him constable of Beaumaris castle<sup>188</sup>.

Robert FitzPain fought in Wales in both 1277 and 1282<sup>189</sup>. He took part in many later campaigns. In the Scottish expedition of 1296 he led a troop which included one knight and six troopers<sup>190</sup>. He served in Scotland on later campaigns<sup>191</sup> and was marshal of the army in 1303<sup>192</sup>. He wintered with the king in Dunfermline Abbey in 1304<sup>193</sup>. Robert participated in such chivalrous activities as the tournament and his retinue provided a fitting milieu for those of his neighbours who were active warriors<sup>194</sup>.

Not all Somerset magnates went into battle with troops recruited from among local landholders. Richard Lovel participated in Edward I's later Scottish campaigns. He did not surround himself with men drawn from the county. His companions were presumably drawn from the royal household of

183 Complete Peerage, ix. 78.

184 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 436.

185 Liber Quotidianus, pp. 272-3; V.C.H.Som. ii. 247.

186 The Roll of Caerlaverock, ed. T. Wright (1864), 17.

187 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 490.

188 Ibid. 1307-13, 102.

189 Parl.Writs, i. 202, 229.

190 Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I, 273.

191 Complete Peerage, v. 449.

192 Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 355-6.

193 cf. Ibid. p. 393.

194 Ibid. pp. 362-3 ; see pp. 261-3.

which he was a member <sup>195</sup>. Richard was not knighted until 1306 <sup>196</sup>. Similarly prominent household knights, such as the younger Alan Plugenet, did not recruit troops from among landholders but probably from among members of the household staff <sup>197</sup>. Unlike Simon de Montagu and Robert FitzPain, the influence of Alan in Somerset was not backed by extensive powers of lordship, widespread estates and a long association with the county.

#### Personal and family ties.

Personal relationships were important in structuring ties between magnates and lesser knights and landholders. Since marriage alliances within the knightly group were determined by social considerations, alliances between families of widely differing standing were exceptional. Some lesser knights and landholders were however related to wealthier landholders as the descendants or heads of cadet branches of prominent families. Such a connection was significant. Many of those lesser knights who were militarily strenuous were junior members of prominent chivalrous families for whom military service was a central activity <sup>198</sup>.

Several knights and other landholders of north-east Somerset were related to the Berkeleys. Nicholas FitzRalph, lord of Tickenham (d.1312), was a descendant of Robert FitzHarding (d.1170), the father of Maurice I de Berkeley (d.1189). Maurice's nephew Roger (d.1230) was the great-grandfather of Nicholas <sup>199</sup>. In 1289 Nicholas was one of several local landholders who witnessed the settlement made by Thomas II de Berkeley on the marriage of his son Maurice III of the manor and hundred of Bedminster <sup>200</sup>. Nicholas later witnessed a grant by Maurice to Kingswood Abbey (Wilts.).

195 E 101/6/40; E 101/9/24.

196 See p. 46.

197 E 101/6/24; E 101/6/37; E 101/6/40.

198 See pp. 54, 259.

199 Berkeley MSS. i. 45-7.

200 K.B. 27/120 rot. 6.

Nicholas evidently was periodically associated with the Berkeley retinue. One of the witnesses, William of Walton <sup>201</sup>, a Gloucestershire knight, served in the Berkeley retinue in several Scottish campaigns <sup>202</sup>.

Thomas II de Berkeley was also related to the Bassets. His aunt Margaret had married the knight Anselm Basset (d.1280) and they had issue John and Edmund <sup>203</sup>. Both sons were strenuous knights as was their more illustrious cousin Thomas II and his son.

The Gurneys, lords of Beverstone barony (Glos.), were also related to the Berkeleys. Robert FitzHarding's third son, Robert of Ghent, was succeeded in 1194 by his son Maurice. On the latter's death in 1230 part of his land passed to Robert de Gurney, the son of his sister Eve <sup>204</sup>. Robert's grandson Thomas de Gurney was a member of the Berkeley retinue in the later campaigns of Edward I's reign. Thomas de Gurney, who held land in Englishcombe and Farrington <sup>205</sup>, was already connected with Thomas II by 1286 when the latter named him as his attorney <sup>206</sup>. The tie between Thomas de Gurney and the Berkeleys continued well into the following reign <sup>207</sup>.

#### Territorial ties as a basis for service.

Territorial solidarities between lesser landholders and magnates were present in spheres other than military service. The leading landholders were increasingly dependent on the expertise of knights and local landholders for the administration of their estates and the holding of their courts. Many lesser men worked for more powerful neighbours. At the beginning of Edward I's reign the knight Walter de Loveny was holding

<sup>201</sup> Trans.B.G.A.S. xxii. 224-5.

<sup>202</sup> E 101/6/28; E 101/6/39; E 101/9/23; Moor, Knights of Edw.I., v. 151-2.

<sup>203</sup> Berkeley MSS. iii. 184.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid. i. 50-2.

<sup>205</sup> J.Collinson, A History of Somerset (Bath, 1791), ii. 138.

<sup>206</sup> Cal.Close. 1279-88, 416.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. E 101/6/28; E 101/6/39; E 101/9/23; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, p.436; Phillips, Aymer de Valence, Earl of Pembroke, 1307-1324, 256, 265-6.



courts for Ralph Daubeney <sup>208</sup>. Walter's relative Richard de Loveny was nominated by Ralph's son Ellis as his attorney in 1304 <sup>209</sup>. Earlier in 1294 Richard had essoined in the county court on behalf of Simon de Montagu <sup>210</sup> and in 1307 he was in the service of Muchelney Abbey <sup>211</sup>. Such ties had a basis in the proximity of Richard's lands to property owned by those magnates.

Lesser men entered the entourage of their greater neighbours. Gilbert of Beer held lands in North Curry hundred of which the dean and chapter of Wells held the lordship <sup>212</sup>. In 1290 Gilbert was said to be a member of the dean's household <sup>213</sup>. Henry de Montfort was bailiff to Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, early in the reign. He was active in the earl's honor of Trowbridge, about twelve miles from Nunney. The earl's property in south-east Somerset was apparently administered from Trowbridge <sup>214</sup>. Henry de Montfort's tie with the earl was facilitated since his relative Nicholas de Montfort had interests in Lullington, between Nunney and Trowbridge, where he held a mesne tenancy from the earl <sup>215</sup>.

Religious houses, especially Glastonbury Abbey and Muchelney Abbey, recruited many of their officials from local landholders <sup>216</sup>. On the bishop of Winchester's estate at Taunton the leading administrative officer was the constable of Taunton castle. The constable's chief duty did not entail garrisoning the fortress but rather supervising the bishop's estate and liberty in Taunton <sup>217</sup>. In the bishop's hundred of Taunton the constable performed the duties of the coroners, who were excluded <sup>218</sup>. In

208 Just. 1/759 rot. 10.

209 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 290.

210 Just. 1/1302B rot. 29.

211 Muchelney Memo. pp. 78-9.

212 Cf. Just. 1/1273 rot. 23; Pedes Finium, 1 Edw.II-20 Edw.III, p. 42.

213 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 87.

214 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 9; Just. 1/759 rot. 47; Just. 1/1295 rot. 7d., K.B. 27/64 rot. 35d.

215 Feud.Aids, iv. 277.

216 See pp. 239-43.

217 Taunton Customs, p. xxiii.

218 Just. 1/759 rot. 14 and d.; C 145/45 no. 19.

the late 13th. century the constable was recruited not from the bishop's military tenants but from a group which included local landholders and members of knightly families. Nicholas de Bonville, who held land in Dulverton, was apparently constable in 1294 <sup>219</sup>. Thomas of Timworth, constable between 1270 and 1285, was a landholder in west Devon. In his wife's right he held in Somerset the manor of Bradford immediately west of Taunton and other lands in the west of the county <sup>220</sup>. He probably came to the notice of the bishop after his marriage. William Mortimer, who became constable in 1285, was related to the Mortimers of Wigmore, who were lords of part of near-by Bridgwater <sup>221</sup>.

Thomas de Cauntelo, bishop of Hereford, relied on a local landholder, Maurice of Membury, to safeguard his interests in North Petherton. The manor there, which lay some distance from his own property, was acquired by the bishop in July 1277 when he was granted wardship of the lands formerly of Philip de Erlegh <sup>222</sup>. Maurice, who held land in West Bagborough <sup>223</sup> about eight miles west of North Petherton, was apparently retained by the bishop in May 1279. The bishop, who was at Tottenham (Essex), entrusted Maurice, who was about to leave for Somerset, with the letters patent announcing the grant of the wardship <sup>224</sup>. Maurice presumably was responsible thereafter for looking after the estate and in September he was instructed to comply with directives from the bishop's auditor <sup>225</sup>. At the end of December the bishop appointed Maurice as his steward in which capacity he was to receive the farm of the manor which was leased by the preceptory of Buckland <sup>226</sup>. In June 1280 the bishop nominated Maurice as his attorney <sup>227</sup>.

219 W.G.Willis Watson, A Chronological History of Somerset (Som.Folk Series, xxi(1), 46; see p.

220 Taunton Customs, p.xx; Proc.Som.Arch.Soc.xxviii(2), 174; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 191-3.

221 Reg.Pontissara, ii. 458; Complete Peerage, v. 308.

222 Reg.Cantilupe (Cant.& York Soc.), 166.

223 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 296.

224 Reg.Cantilupe, 205.

225 Ibid. 261.

226 Ibid. 228.

227 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 383.

Maurice was later sued for dower by a tenant in Babcary, one of the Erlegh estates which presumably was in the custody of the bishop <sup>228</sup>.

Maurice's services were evidently retained by John de Erlegh who entered his inheritance in 1290. As late as 1299 Maurice was holding hundred courts at North Petherton <sup>229</sup>.

Fees and annuities.

Membership of a lord's retinue was not without benefits for landholders. Their service as administrators was secured by the payment of fees or annuities. Richard of Rodney on his appointment as steward of Glastonbury Abbey in 1315 was awarded a pension of £20 and two robes a year while in office. The pension was to be reduced if he was unable to perform his duties through infirmity <sup>230</sup>. Members of a lord's retinue were expected to wear his livery and robes were frequently included in allowances to retainers. Lay magnates also granted their knightly retainers annuities <sup>231</sup>. Henry of Glastonbury received fees in the early 14th. century as a member of the retinue of Thomas, earl of Lancaster, and his successor <sup>232</sup>. By 1280 Richard of Heydon had been awarded a pension of 100s. by Simon de Montagu <sup>233</sup>. Richard was probably serving Simon in an administrative capacity. In 1285 he headed the list of witnesses to a lease by Simon of half of Chedzoy manor <sup>234</sup>. Unlike the other witnesses Richard did not hold land near Chedzoy. Richard had previously been the steward of Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester <sup>235</sup>. Later he held the same post for John de Warenne <sup>236</sup>.

228 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 336; Feud.Aids, iv. 305.

229 Som.R.O., NPl, rott. 3-4.

230 Longleat MS. 10593, f. 21.

231 Cf. C 134/48 no. 1.

232 Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322, 46, 62.

233 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 120-1.

234 K.B. 27/108 rot. 10d.

235 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 298; Just. 1/759 rott. 19., 25d.

236 E 372/146 rot. Som.& Dors.

Grants of land cemented ties between magnates and retainers.

Laurence de St.Maur was granted lands in Sussex and rents in Northumberland by Edmund, earl of Lancaster, of whose retinue he was a member <sup>237</sup>. As has been suggested elsewhere service to a lord provided an opportunity for prospering into the knightly group. Richard of Rodney was nominated by Walter, bishop of Bath and Wells, as his attorney in 1304 <sup>238</sup>. To attract Richard into his service Walter secured a dispensation to grant Richard land in Cheddar and the office of bailiff in Winterstoke hundred <sup>239</sup>.

#### The benefits of patronage.

Men in close contact with the source of royal patronage were expected to secure favours for their dependants. Many favours were awarded to relatives of members of the courtly circle. In 1304 Robert FitzPain secured a grant of free warren for his relative Roger FitzPain <sup>240</sup>. A similar grant to Ralph Wake in 1290 <sup>241</sup> was probably secured through the influence of Alan Plugenet, his brother-in-law and a member of the royal household <sup>242</sup>. Alan was granted free warren later that year <sup>243</sup>. Such grants of free warren, a privilege more usually accorded to men of higher social standing, signified the obligation felt by the Crown to loyal servants and military captains such as Alan Plugenet and Robert FitzPain.

As the member of the retinue of a prominent magnate, a knight had in his lord an influential patron. One such retinue was that of Edmund, earl of Lancaster and brother of Edward I. Laurence de St.Maur served under Edmund from the end of Henry III's reign. In 1270 he attested a deed of the earl whom he attended constantly <sup>244</sup>. A close bond developed between them.

<sup>237</sup> Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 546; Cal.Close, 1288-96, 488.

<sup>238</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 217.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid. 224.

<sup>240</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 41.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid. 1257-1300, 349.

<sup>242</sup> Cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p.267; Just. 1/1315 rot. 21d.; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 417.

<sup>243</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 373.

<sup>244</sup> Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 162, 227-8, 245, 264; Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 156, 436, 440, 441; ibid. 1281-92, 325.

Laurence served as steward for the earl, after whose death in 1296 he acted as executor <sup>245</sup>. Edmund secured royal favours for his retainer. In 1281 Laurence was granted limited hunting rights in Selwood forest <sup>246</sup>. A similar grant in 1283 was specifically issued at Edmund's request <sup>247</sup>. Later in the same year much wider privileges which concerned hunting in Selwood and Exmoor were granted to Laurence <sup>248</sup>. A few days earlier Laurence had been granted permission to hold a market and fair in Rode <sup>249</sup>.

Other Lancastrian retainers included John of Merriott le neveu and Henry of Glastonbury. John of Merriott was in the service of Edmund and of his son Thomas for nearly three decades. In 1295 Edmund secured for John custody of Ash manor, valued at over £14 <sup>250</sup>. In 1319 Thomas used his influence to obtain for John a grant of free warren in Hestercombe, Combe Flory, Leigh Flory, East Capland and Ashton near Bristol <sup>251</sup>. As a member of Thomas's retinue John was arrested in 1322 and his property seized. However he was later released and his property restored since he had not supported Thomas during his rebellion <sup>252</sup>. The grant of free warren in Heathfield to Henry of Glastonbury in 1298 may have been secured through the offices of Thomas <sup>253</sup>. Henry was in Earl Edmund's retinue in 1286 and 1294 <sup>254</sup> and he served under Thomas in 1297 and 1298 <sup>255</sup>. In all he served successive earls of Lancaster for thirty-four years, twenty-five of which were spent in Thomas's retinue <sup>256</sup>.

Knights also used the influence of powerful neighbours to secure

245 J. R. Maddicott, 'Thomas of Lancaster and Sir Robert Holland', E.H.R. lxxxvi. 458.

246 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 428.

247 Ibid. 1281-92, 59.

248 Ibid. 80.

249 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 269.

250 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 169.

251 Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 412.

252 Cal.Close. 1318-23, 448.

253 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 473.

254 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 239; 1292-1301, 62.

255 E 101/6/19; E 101/6/40.

256 Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster 1307-1322, 62.



favours. A magnate's good offices were only purchased at a price. John of Blackford and William of Staunton were appointed in 1294 to collect a tax in Somerset<sup>257</sup>. They fell under royal displeasure when they were found to have concealed part of the money collected<sup>258</sup>. John secured a royal pardon in 1302 with the help of Richard Lovel<sup>259</sup>, his neighbour at Castle Cary, about four miles from Blackford. Richard had become the ward of the Crown in 1291 and had remained a member of the royal household after he came of age in 1297<sup>260</sup>. He was thus in close personal contact with the monarch. Richard agreed to assume liability for John's outstanding debts to the Crown in return for land in Blackford and Wheathill which John conveyed to him. Edward I pardoned Richard the debts on account of his service to the Crown<sup>261</sup>.

Knighted retainers as a symbol of prestige.

The inclusion of knights and landholders either in the retinue or among the associates of a magnate added to that lord's prestige and influence. A lord's interests were extended and promoted through his associates. In 1301 Gilbert de Knoville was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer concerning an attack on a park in Chipstead (Surrey) belonging to his neighbour and colleague in arms John de Beauchamp<sup>262</sup>. Gilbert was likely to safeguard John's interests during the latter's absence in Scotland. In 1291 Thomas de St.Vigore, a royal justice, was appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer dealing with a trespass in the chace belonging to Henry de Lacy, earl of Lincoln, in Trowbridge (Wilts)<sup>263</sup>. Thomas was closely associated with the earl from whose honor

257 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 104.

258 Select Cases in the Exchequer of Pleas (Selden Soc. xlviii), p. lxxxiii.

259 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 531.

260 Ibid. 35; Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 91; E 101/6/40; Cal.Doc.Scot. ed. Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 304-5.

261 Cal.Close, 1302-7, 138; Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 335.

262 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 79.

263 Ibid. 1281-92, 458.

of Trowbridge he held land in Stratton (Som.) <sup>264</sup>. In 1292 Thomas witnessed a charter of the earl concerning Henstridge church <sup>265</sup>.

The presence of knights among their followers enhanced the military and political power of the chivalrous lay magnates. It also increased the impact of the retinue as an instrument of social advertisement. Where appropriate lords encouraged members of their entourages to become knights. Between the Lovels of Castle Cary and the principal landholders in neighbouring Discove near Bruton, there was a close association. In Edward's reign Discove was held by William of Godmanstone by military tenure from Hugh Lovel (d.1291) <sup>266</sup>. Although in 1230 another William of Godmanstone performed military service on behalf of Richard Lovel (d.1254) <sup>267</sup> there is no evidence that his successor served for Hugh. The younger William had close ties with Cecily, the widow of Richard Lovel (d.1264). William was her steward and appeared in a lawsuit on her behalf against her brother-in-law Hugh in 1280 <sup>268</sup>. After Cecily's death William's relative Robert of Godmanstone acted with Stephen of Godmanstone as her executor <sup>269</sup>. Robert was associated later with Hugh's son Richard Lovel. Both Richard and Robert were knighted in 1306 at the feast of Swans. Since most of the neophytes belonged to chivalrous families, it seems likely that Robert was present in the company of Richard <sup>270</sup>. As an active warrior Richard Lovel's attitude towards knightly rank may have prompted him to ensure that Robert of Godmanstone became a knight, thereby adding to his prestige.

<sup>264</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 273; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 148.

<sup>265</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 481.

<sup>266</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 489; Feud.Aids, iv. 301.

<sup>267</sup> Close R. 1227-31, 448.

<sup>268</sup> Just. 1/1249 rot. 4; cf. Just. 1/1273 rot. 20d.

<sup>269</sup> C.P. 40/105 rot. 144.

<sup>270</sup> See p. 46.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE KNIGHTS IN SERVICE

The service originally provided by the miles had largely been a matter of activity on the field of battle or in the military retinue of a lord. By the late 13th. century the assumption of knightly rank was a socially defined obligation. When taking knighthood the candidates received those arms which distinguished the knight as a warrior. Many knights did not use those arms but the military aspects of the knight's role as enshrined in the cult of knighthood provided a set of values for integrating the wide social group which comprised the knights. The cult also achieved a synthesis of the knight as a lord and as the dependant of a lord to whom the knight lent support both in word and deed. The duality of lordship and service was one which impinged directly on the lives of the county knights.

Many Somerset knights served magnates either as warriors or administrators. As the mainstay of local government and as the backbone of the Edwardian cavalry, knights served the Crown. There was no firm distinction between military and administrative service but the careers of Somerset knights reveal that the two aspects of service were becoming mutually exclusive. Nevertheless the simple juxtaposition of warrior and administrative types does not provide a wholly satisfactory framework in which to analyse the knights' careers.

#### The combination of military and administrative service.

During his active life a knight might encompass military and administrative service. John la Warre, who died about 1277, was lord of Brislington east of Bristol. In 1261 he was steward to the earl of Warenne. Between 1268 and 1274 he held the same post for Isabel de Forz for whom he acted as chief auditor and exercised overall financial control. While Isabel was resident on the Isle of Wight, John represented her in the king's court. After he left her service, he became sheriff of

Hereford. John was also militarily strenuous. In 1265 he held Bristol castle for the baronial faction and he also supported Simon de Montfort's wife in Dover castle. After taking part in the battle of Evesham, he held Kenilworth castle against the victorious royalist forces <sup>1</sup>.

John la Warre's career covered the conflicts of the early 1260s when many knights participated in military and political events. Later, during Edward's reign, most of the knights who were busy in administration were not militarily strenuous. Such administrator-knights were lesser men than John. In the later 13th. century the wealthier landholders moved away from participation in administration and routine matters of government as they became involved in the monarch's military ventures. John la Warre's son Roger <sup>2</sup> was not involved in administrative service. He received individual summonses to perform military service from 1297. His career centred on military expeditions <sup>3</sup> as did that of his son John who was a member of the royal household <sup>4</sup>.

The field of public and private administration remained open to lesser men. Nevertheless some lesser landholders combined military activity with an involvement in matters of government and administration. The knight John of Blackford fought in Flanders in 1297 and in Scotland in the following year <sup>5</sup>. He had been active in the county court as early as 1280 when he was elected to four grand assize juries <sup>6</sup>. At the same time he was chosen to adjudicate on the claims of the borough community of Ilchester to common rights <sup>7</sup>. In 1294 John was appointed to collect a tax in the county <sup>8</sup>. Another active warrior was the knight Thomas

1 N.Denholm-Young, Seignorial Administration in England (1937), 75-6

2 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 58

3 Parl.Writs, i. 893; cf. E 101/6/19

4 Cal.Inq.p.m. vi, p. 149; E 101/6/40; E 101/9/24

5 E 101/6/28; E 101/6/39

6 See app. III

7 Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 701

8 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 104

de Gurney<sup>9</sup>. He was chosen to collect taxes early in Edward II's reign<sup>10</sup>.

The combination of military campaigning and tenure of administrative office was rare but among lesser landholders it was not restricted to those who were knights. Ralph le Tort was a member of an established landed family with extensive interests in west Somerset<sup>11</sup>. In 1303 Ralph held property in Timberscombe and in Langham in Luxborough<sup>12</sup>. Ralph was not named in the sheriffs' returns of 1297 and 1300 and apparently was not a knight. Nevertheless he took part in the campaign in Gascony in 1296<sup>13</sup> and in 1302 he was granted letters of protection before setting out for the duchy<sup>14</sup>. Earlier, in 1280, he had held the post of bailiff of Carhampton hundred<sup>15</sup>. He may have discharged his duties through a deputy. Ralph was not active in the county court probably on account of the distance of his estates from the county town.

Military service as an affirmation of social position.

The most striking example of the warrior-administrator knights is provided by the career of Humphrey de Kael. In the Welsh campaign of 1282 Humphrey discharged the service of one knight owed by Muchelney Abbey, his neighbour<sup>16</sup>. His administrative career was full and varied. His ability to attend the county court regularly depended on the proximity of his property in Charlton Adam<sup>17</sup> to the county town of Ilchester and later near-by Somerton. During the eyre of 1280 he participated in the proceedings of the grand assize and in one case he was one of the electors of the jury<sup>18</sup>. In 1285 Humphrey was one of four knights nominated to carry the record of the county court in a disputed case to the central court<sup>19</sup>. Through his presence in county court he exercised influence and

9 Cal.Doc.Scot. ed.Bain, 1272-1307, p.436

10 Cal.Pat. 1307-13, 23, 185

11 Cf. The Honour of Dunster, pp.61-3

12 Feud.Aids, iv. 302-3

13 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 67

14 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 67

15 Plac.de Quo Warr.(Rec.Com.),695

16 Parl.Writs, i. 228, 235

17 V.C.H.Som. iii. 84-5

18 See app.III

19 K.B. 27/90 rot.13; K.B.  
27/92 rot.14d.



secured his appointment to important commissions. In 1283 he was chosen to collect a tax in the county <sup>20</sup>. About 1279 he sat as a justice of gaol delivery in Ilchester and he later delivered the gaols at Somerton and Sherborne (Dorset), the principal castle under the charge of the sheriff <sup>21</sup>. In 1286 Humphrey was associated with the sheriff in holding an inquest at Bridgwater into the death of a suicide <sup>22</sup>. Among the varied commissions to which he was appointed was an investigation in 1285 of the claims of a merchant that he had been defrauded by the importer of his wines from France <sup>23</sup>.

Concurrent with service to the Crown, Humphrey was active on behalf of the heads of several local religious houses. In 1280 the prior of Montacute nominated him to act as his attorney until Christmas <sup>24</sup> but as late as 1283 Humphrey was representing the same prior in courts of law <sup>25</sup>. By 1282 in addition to being associated with Muchelney Abbey and Montacute Priory, Humphrey had connexions with Glastonbury Abbey. In 1281 he witnessed an agreement between the abbey and Gilbert de Clare, earl of Gloucester, over the use of woodland in Damerham (Wilts) <sup>26</sup>. Since Humphrey had no landed interest in that area, it is possible that his inclusion among the witnesses arose from an attachment to the abbot's household. In 1286 he was one of the abbot's justices who determined cases falling to the abbey liberty of the Twelve Hides <sup>27</sup>. Humphrey ended his career in public service. His election to represent the county in parliament in 1290 <sup>28</sup> was a mark of the influence he exercised in the

20 Parl.Writs, i. 13

21 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 325; 1281-92, 303, 309, 317, 365, 399, 454.

22 C 145/45 no.19

23 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 201

24 Ibid. 1272-81, 372

25 Just. 1/1262 rot. 6

26 B.L.Harl.MS. 1240, f.90

27 K.B. 27/106 rot. 24; Glaston.Cart. ii, p.357

28 Parl.Writs, i, p. xxviii

county court. In the following year he acted as sheriff of Cornwall under Edmund, earl of Cornwall <sup>29</sup>. The earl, as lord of the borough of Ilchester <sup>30</sup>, the former county town, which was about three miles from Charlton Adam, was certainly aware of Humphrey's administrative capabilities.

Humphrey's involvement in the Welsh war of 1282 set his career apart from those of the other lesser knights active in the county court and the affairs of local religious houses. His career is also interesting since he was the head of a family which had only recently entered the knightly group <sup>31</sup>. Several other lesser landholders with a similar background participated in military ventures. The undertaking of that activity, which seemed to them to be the hall-mark of knightly rank, was undoubtedly their response to the social milieu in which they sought to establish themselves. Laurence de Hamelden, who fought in Scotland in 1298 <sup>32</sup>, was also the first member of his family to become a knight. His position as a county landholder rested on the acquisitions of his predecessor Thomas, a prominent Bristol burgess <sup>33</sup>. The eagerness of the new members of the knightly group was not shared by their successors who, like the other lesser landholders in the early 14th. century, showed a reluctance to become knights. Humphrey de Kael's successor Humphrey was distrained in 1312 <sup>34</sup>.

The limited involvement of warrior-knights in public administration.

In the late 13th. century the magnates were fully absorbed in the military expeditions organised by Edward I against the Scots and others. Their contacts with the monarch and his immediate circle were close. Early

<sup>29</sup> P.R.O. List of Sheriffs, 21; cf. E 372/146 rot. Som. & Dors.

<sup>30</sup> Plac. de quo Warr. (Rec. Com.), 690

<sup>31</sup> See p. 94

<sup>32</sup> E 101/6/40

<sup>33</sup> St. Mark's Cart. (Bristol Rec. Soc. xxi), p. 284; Cal. Close, 1279-88, 122

<sup>34</sup> C 47/1/7

in February 1304, while the king was at the army's winter quarters in Dunfermline, John de Mohun and Hugh de Courtenay, as well as Robert FitzPain, dined with Prince Edward in Perth <sup>35</sup>. The wealthiest knights received individual summonses to perform service <sup>36</sup>. Many of them were troop leaders and a few held the rank of knight banneret. Some, including Robert FitzPain and Simon de Montagu, were promoted to important positions in the army command structure <sup>37</sup>. For the campaign in South Wales in 1294 Roger de Moels was appointed marshal of the army in place of Roger Bigod, the hereditary marshal. Bigod was commanding the army. The fees customarily paid to the marshal went to the Crown for that campaign until Bigod protested <sup>38</sup>. Roger de Moels, who was a banneret, had fought in Wales in 1277 and 1282 <sup>39</sup>. He had close contact with the royal household. His father Nicholas de Moels had been active on the field of battle and in diplomacy under both John and Henry III <sup>40</sup>. One of the most spectacular events of Henry III's Welsh wars, the march in 1246 of a force from South Wales to Deganwy in the north, was performed under the command of Nicholas <sup>41</sup>.

Important commissions dealing with the government of the realm were entrusted to magnates rather than the lesser knights. Such commissions often covered a wide area for which the lesser knights, with their relatively limited influence, were unsuited. In 1289 Ralph Daubeney and Roger de Moels were chosen to investigate trespasses of venison in the south-west <sup>42</sup>. Roger de Moels was appointed to deal with offences against the forest laws in the western counties in 1292 and to enquire into

<sup>35</sup> Cal.Doc.Scot. ed.Bain, 1272-1307, p.393

<sup>36</sup> John Ap Adam, John de Beauchamp, William Martin, Hugh Pointz: Parl. Writs. i, 421, 458, 729, 788-9

<sup>37</sup> See pp. 202-3

<sup>38</sup> Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I. 250-1 ; M.Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance under Edw.I (1972), 249

<sup>39</sup> Parl.Writs. i. 206, 213; Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I. 124, 159, 161

<sup>40</sup> Complete Peerage, ix, 1-4

<sup>41</sup> Prestwich, War, Politics and Finance, 17

<sup>42</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 333

vagabonds in 1293<sup>43</sup>. The justices of trailbaston appointed for 1305 for the south-western counties included William Martin, lord of Blagdon barony, and Gilbert de Knoville, a prominent landholder in Devon and Somerset<sup>44</sup>.

Many lesser knights who participated in the later campaigns did not pursue careers in administration. The career of William of Wigborough focussed on the performance of military service. He served in the Welsh campaign of 1277<sup>45</sup> and in that of 1282<sup>46</sup>. In 1288 he was a member of the garrison under Alan Plugenet in Dryslwyn castle (Carms.)<sup>47</sup>. Later in 1298 he fought in Scotland<sup>48</sup>. Simon Roges, who was granted respite from pleas late in 1292 before setting out for Wales<sup>49</sup>, fought in Flanders in 1297<sup>50</sup>. Simon was not involved in the business of the county court and in 1277 he had been removed from the post of coroner on the ground of insufficient qualification<sup>51</sup>. Since he was named in the sheriff's lists of prominent landholders compiled in 1297 and 1300, it is likely that the reason given for his disqualification was merely a fiction devised to enable him to escape the burdens of an unpopular post to which he had been elected.

The warrior-knights who did become involved in administration either held the more important and prestigious offices or were appointed to commissions concerned with military matters. Several filled the office of sheriff. Matthew de Furneaux, who fought in Flanders in 1297<sup>52</sup>, was sheriff of Somerset and Dorset in 1304 and of Devon in 1311<sup>53</sup>. In

43 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 522; 1292-1301, 108

44 Ibid. 1301-7, 352; Sanders, Eng.Baronies, 15; Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 246

45 Parl.Writs, i. 206

46 Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 372

47 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 293

48 E 101/6/40

49 Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 351

50 E 101/6/19

51 Cal.Close, 1272-9, 434

52 E 101/6/19

53 P.R.O. List of Sheriffs, 122, 34

those counties he was nominated to important commissions. In 1306 he was directed to oversee the activity of the sheriff in purveying supplies in Somerset for the Scottish war <sup>54</sup>. Gilbert de Knoville, who served in the household troop in 1297 <sup>55</sup>, was sheriff of Devon, where he held lands, between 1294 and 1300 <sup>56</sup>. Alexander Cheverell, who served alongside Matthew de Furneaux in 1297 <sup>57</sup>, was sheriff of Wiltshire between 1308 and 1310 <sup>58</sup>. Less typical was Thomas de Pyn of Dulverton, a Devonshire landholder, who was sheriff there in 1273, 1278 and 1280 <sup>59</sup>. In the early 1270s he acted as subescheator in Somerset <sup>60</sup> and saw active service in Wales in 1277 <sup>61</sup>.

In Edward I's reign the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset was rarely a militarily active knight of the county. Although many of the sheriff's tasks were being superseded by a variety of commissions, the duties of the office still required the expertise of skilled administrators. The knight Nicholas de Langelond, elected sheriff in 1306 <sup>62</sup>, had already gained some administrative experience in the service of Walter de Haselshaw <sup>63</sup>. There was a growing professional element among the sheriffs which in Somerset and Dorset was represented by such men as John Gerberd and John Lee. The latter, sheriff in 1301, had previously been sheriff of Essex and Hertfordshire and was to hold the same post in Hampshire in 1302 <sup>64</sup>. The sheriff was however at the head of a staff and bureaucracy. It is probable that those warrior-knights who were sheriffs were relieved of some of their duties by subordinate officials. During Gilbert de

<sup>54</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 419

<sup>55</sup> E 101/6/37; C 67/12 m.8

<sup>56</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 34

<sup>57</sup> E 101/6/19

<sup>58</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 152

<sup>59</sup> Ibid. 34

<sup>60</sup> B.L.Add.Ch. 26,754 ; Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii, 128

<sup>61</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 202, 211

<sup>62</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 123

<sup>63</sup> See below

<sup>64</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122, 43, 54



Knoville's long tenure of the sheriffdom of Devon the annual account was frequently rendered by his under-sheriffs <sup>65</sup>.

When warrior-knights were appointed to commissions concerned with military and other matters they were often associated with knights who were active in the county court. The latter presumably possessed a certain professionalism which the warriors lacked. In 1297 John of Merriott and Hugh of Popham were chosen to array a force from Somerset and Dorset <sup>66</sup>. The John of Merriott concerned was more likely to have been the lord of Hestercombe, a member of the Lancastrian retinue who served in Gascony in 1296 <sup>67</sup>, than his more prominent relative and namesake, the lord of Merriott, who received livery of his inheritance in 1297 <sup>68</sup>. Hugh of Popham was one of that small number of lesser knights who monopolized administrative work in the county. He held land in Huntworth near North Petherton <sup>69</sup>. In 1298 he was one of the supervisors of the forest perambulations <sup>70</sup>. John of Merriott was chosen in 1303 to purvey corn in Somerset and Dorset for the army stores in Berwick. His associate was the knight John de Beauchamp <sup>71</sup> who inherited lands in Worle, Norton and Edingworth from his father Thomas de Beauchamp <sup>72</sup>. The last John was appointed to a variety of commissions including the collection of taxes in Somerset at the end of the reign <sup>73</sup>. Militarily strenuous knights had an important role to play in the administrative machinery upon which the recruitment and maintenance of the army depended. Robert FitzPain was ordered in 1295 to select a force of archers in Hampshire, Dorset and Wiltshire for a projected campaign on the continent <sup>74</sup>. Commissions of array were also entrusted to knights with a purely administrative

<sup>65</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 34

<sup>66</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 309

<sup>67</sup> Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xxviii(2), 179-85; Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 71; see p.<sup>210</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 387-8

<sup>69</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 278

<sup>70</sup> J.Collinson, A History of Somerset(Bath, 1791), iii. 56-9

<sup>71</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 201

<sup>72</sup> Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.),ii. 130; Glaston.Feod. 98-100; Pedes Finium,

1 Edw.II - 20 Edw.III, pp. 31, 45-6

<sup>73</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 613; 1301-7, 456

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 1292-1301, 151

background. Nicholas de Langelond and John de Beauchamp were appointed to supervise a commission in Somerset and Dorset in 1311 together with two strenuous knights, Ralph de Gorges and Nicholas Poyntz <sup>75</sup>.

Warrior-knights were among those men returned to represent the county in the parliaments of Edward I. All fourteen men known to have been elected were knights or the heirs of knights. The writs issued to authorize the payment of their expenses show that most of them attended the parliaments <sup>76</sup>. With one exception they were lesser landholders who were not tenants of the Crown. John de Erlegh, the exception, was a leading county landholder. Nevertheless in wealth he did not rank with the county magnates and he did not receive the individual writs of summons usually directed to the latter. Consequently he was led to secure his election by the county in 1302.

Of those elected about half were warriors. It is not certain if John de Erlegh was a regular warrior. He apparently served in Wales in 1294 <sup>77</sup> but in 1297 he sent a substitute knight to perform service in Gascony <sup>78</sup>. In 1300 and 1303 he provided his feudal service in Scotland but did not serve in person <sup>79</sup>. Some of the warriors elected had seen service earlier. Humphrey de Kael, elected in 1290, had fought in Wales in 1282. His election came towards the end of an active and varied administrative career, presumably at a time when his days as a warrior were over. Edmund Everard, elected in 1306, had received letters of protection preparatory to setting out for Gascony in 1294 <sup>80</sup>. A few of the knights elected to parliaments between 1307 and 1327 <sup>81</sup> had also served on campaigns. Laurence de Hamelden who fought in Scotland in 1298 <sup>82</sup> attended the first

<sup>75</sup> Parl.Writs, ii(2,i), 409

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. i, p.xxviii : Edmund Everard and John of Wick were not knights.

<sup>77</sup> C 67/10 m.1d.

<sup>78</sup> Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 32

<sup>79</sup> Ibid. 1302-7, 360 ; Cal.Chanc.R.Var. 380

<sup>80</sup> C.P. 40/106 rot. 26

<sup>81</sup> Cf. Parl.Writs, ii (1), pp. cix-cxii

<sup>82</sup> E 101/6/40

parliament of the new reign. Henry of Glastonbury was active in the field as a member of the Lancastrian retinue from Edward I's reign<sup>83</sup> long before he represented the county in 1318. Simon de Montagu (d.1316) was elected in 1314. Earlier he had been an important military captain and had been summoned individually to parliaments and to military campaigns<sup>84</sup>. By 1314 he had probably relinquished his duties in the royal household and had possibly retired to Yarlington where in 1313 he was awarded a licence to fortify his house<sup>85</sup>.

For the lesser knights administrative service came to assume greater importance after they had passed the summit of their physical powers. Both Matthew de Furneaux and Alexander Cheverell were sheriffs some time after they had been active in the army. For most warriors there were not many chances for promotion within the military hierarchy. Key posts of command were entrusted to older warriors from prominent established families like Robert FitzPain, Simon de Montagu and Roger de Moels. Nevertheless there was no clear-cut path whereby lesser knights moved from military to administrative service. Some of the knights representing the county under Edward I went on campaign later. Simon de Raleigh, elected in 1295, served in Flanders in 1297 and in Scotland in 1298<sup>86</sup>. One of the knights taking part in the latter campaign was Robert of Brent<sup>87</sup> who had been returned from the county to the parliament which immediately preceded the expedition.

Knights who were longstanding members of baronial retinues took no part in local government. A lord's retinue provided a source on which he drew for his troops, officials and advisers. Laurence de St.Maur, who held land in Rode, and his son Nicholas were members of the retinue of Edmund, earl of Lancaster. They took no part in the affairs of the county. Their

83 Maddicott, Thomas of Lancaster, 62

84 See p. 202; Parl. Writs, i. 742.

85 Cal. Pat. 1313-17, 31

86 E 101/6/19 ; E 101/6/40

87 E 101/6/39

main landed interests lay elsewhere. Under Earl Edmund, Laurence combined both a military and an administrative role for, besides being a companion in arms of the earl, Laurence was also his steward. After Edmund's death in 1296, Laurence was one of his executors <sup>88</sup>, a task which implied a firm bond of mutual trust between the two men. Henry of Glastonbury served with Thomas, earl of Lancaster, in campaigns at the end of the reign <sup>89</sup>. He saw service in Scotland in 1304 <sup>90</sup>. Henry was not involved in the routine of local government. His election as knight of the shire in 1318 may have been secured by pressure applied on the county court by Earl Thomas.

Membership of a household or retinue was on several occasions used as a justification for excusing men from the unpopular office of coroner. A person with other commitments would have been unable to supervise the Crown's rights, a duty which involved much work and travel. John of Domer was exempted in 1289 since he was in the household of John de St. John, a military captain attendant on the king <sup>91</sup>. Gilbert of Beer was excused in 1290 since he was in the household of the dean of Wells <sup>92</sup> and Hugh of Popham was relieved of the office in 1291 because he was a member of the household of the abbot of Hyde (Hants.) <sup>93</sup>. A branch of Hugh's family held land in Popham (Hants.) <sup>94</sup> and a later abbot of Hyde, R. of Popham (1282-92) <sup>95</sup> was certainly related to Hugh. The later careers of Gilbert and Hugh suggest however that membership of a household was an excuse to secure exemption from the coronership alone. They both occupied important administrative posts.

88 J.R. Maddicott, 'Thomas of Lancaster and Sir Robert Holland: a study in noble patronage', E.H.R. lxxxvi. 458; Feud.Aids, iv. 276

89 Cf. E 101/6/40

90 Cal.Chanc.Wts., 229

91 Cal.Close, 1288-96, 25

92 Ibid. 87

93 Ibid. 177

94 Moor, Knights of Edw.I, iv. 95

95 V.C.H.Hants, ii. 121

The lesser landholder as the administrator-knight.

The lesser knights were active on the fringes of central government and had no direct contact with the royal household. While their individual powers were not great, collectively they dominated the life of the county. They provided the mainstay of local government. As the controllers of the local rural communities they were the obvious choice as agents for the maintenance of royal justice. They attended the county court as suitors and judges where they received and deliberated royal orders and made elections to offices and juries. They were also appointed to commissions dealing with matters general and particular and provided a link between local and central government <sup>96</sup>. Among the Somerset knights there was a marked division between a small number, drawn from about twenty families, upon whose shoulders rested the heavy burden of the administration of the county and a much larger number of knights whose interests were highly localized. The latter sat on juries which dealt with matters in the immediate vicinity of their property. Such juries were dominated in terms of numbers by freemen who were not knights <sup>97</sup>.

Most of the knights who dominated the business of the county court were placed at an advantage by the proximity of their lands to the county town. At the beginning of Edward I's reign the administrative centre of the county was Ilchester in the south-east but in 1278 the county court was transferred to Somerton <sup>98</sup>, four miles to the north-west. Justices appointed to deliver Ilchester gaol held a session as late as 1282 <sup>99</sup> but in 1283 the fabric of the prison was being used as building material by the Dominican friars <sup>100</sup>. The county gaol was then at Somerton <sup>101</sup>. Many

<sup>96</sup> R.F.Treharne, 'The knights in the period of Reform and Rebellion 1258-67', Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research, xxi. 2-4

<sup>97</sup> Cf. C 143/6 no. 9; C 143/8 no. 17; C 143/12 no. 2; C 143/32 no. 18; C 143/33 no. 19.

<sup>98</sup> Cal.Close, 1272-9, 460

<sup>99</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 9

<sup>100</sup> C 143/6 no. 16

<sup>101</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 53-4



knights with lands in the south-east of the county were prominent in local government. They included John of Blackford, Peter du Boys, Richard de Cauntelo, Peter de Fauconberge, Roger FitzPain, Humphrey de Kael, Baudry of Nonnington, Walter Pauncefot, Robert de St.Clare and William of Staunton. The landholders most active in the county court in 1280 were Richard of Boulogne and Peter de Fauconberge<sup>102</sup>, who both held lands in Milton next to the countytown<sup>103</sup>.

Knights whose lands lay in the west of the county were precluded by distance and difficulty of communication from attending all but the most important sessions of the county court. Some were active in the neighbouring county of Devon. Simon of Greenham, who held land in Kittisford near the county boundary<sup>104</sup>, was sheriff of Devon in 1270<sup>105</sup>. He figured in the proceedings of the Somerset county court in 1280<sup>106</sup> as did Robert of Raddington<sup>107</sup> whose lands also lay near the boundary with Devon<sup>108</sup>. Robert was appointed as a justice to deliver Exeter gaol in about 1286 and 1287<sup>109</sup> and in 1290 and 1291 to commissions of oyer and terminer in Devon<sup>110</sup>.

The knights who monopolized the business of the county court were able to secure their election as the county's representatives in parliaments. Their activity and experience made them the obvious choice. Thomas of Bellesley, elected in 1297, held a prominent and influential position in the court. As bailiff east of the Parrett he was the executive officer of the sheriff in that part of the county<sup>111</sup>. Election for some came as the climax of a career in local government as in the case

<sup>102</sup> See App.III

<sup>103</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 282

<sup>104</sup> Ibid. 280

<sup>105</sup> P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 34

<sup>106</sup> See App.III

<sup>107</sup> Muchelney Cart.(Som.Rec.Soc.xiv), pp. 93-4

<sup>108</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 275

<sup>109</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 254, 285

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. 406, 445.

<sup>111</sup> See Below

of Humphrey de Kael. Several of those elected performed important duties, including gaol delivery and tax collecting. Nevertheless they did not become sheriffs. John de St.Lo, sheriff in the mid 1280s <sup>112</sup>, was the predecessor of the knight of the same name elected in 1297. Humphrey de Kael elected in 1290, who became sheriff of Cornwall under the earl of Cornwall in the following year, was an exception.

Those knights who were the more active members of the county court secured their election on several occasions. Gilbert de Beer and Hugh of Popham were elected twice before 1307 and William of Staunton and John of Wick thrice. John de Beauchamp of Gordano, elected in 1307, was the lord of Norton who was chosen to collect taxes in 1301 and 1306 <sup>113</sup>. He was later returned in 1313 and 1314. Gilbert of Beer was elected three times between 1300 and 1311. In 1295 he was appointed to collect a tax in the county <sup>114</sup> and in 1304 was nominated to investigate the sea defences and drains where the fenlands bordered the Bristol Channel <sup>115</sup>.

Such lesser knights served as non-professional justices. By the reign of Edward I they had been cast in that role for over a century. For the duties undertaken by knights on commissions of gaol delivery and oyer and terminer a professional training was apparently not essential. They were probably assisted by legal experts and were themselves experienced in administration. At the beginning of the reign the knights appointed to deliver gaols included men who served as coroners. Richard de Cauntelo, who in 1279 was a member of a panel delivering Ilchester gaol <sup>116</sup>, was one of the coroners answerable to the justices itinerant in the county court in 1280 <sup>117</sup>.

112 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122; Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 57, 186

113 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 613; 1301-7, 456

114 Ibid. 1292-1301, 171

115 Ibid. 1301-7, 279

116 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 325

117 Just. 1/759 rot. 1

At the beginning of the reign a few lesser knights who participated in local government were professional justices. Thomas de St. Vigore was a justice of assize in 1281<sup>118</sup>. He was sheriff in 1269<sup>119</sup> and in 1279 he was selected to investigate another sheriff of Somerset and Dorset's distraint of knighthood on twenty librate holders<sup>120</sup>. In the latter year he had returned from Rome where he had been the king's envoy<sup>121</sup>. Thomas was appointed to commissions of oyer and terminer and of gaol delivery mainly between 1279 and 1284<sup>122</sup>. Thomas Trivet, the putative father of the chronicler Nicholas Trivet<sup>123</sup>, was a justice of assize under Henry III<sup>124</sup>. Earlier his career had included periods as steward for the abbeys of Athelney and Glastonbury<sup>125</sup>. Henry de Montfort of Wellow, having served as escheator south of the Trent, was appointed to the judicial bench in 1266. At the beginning of Edward I's reign he served as a justice of assize. Such men were trained jurists. Henry de Montford was evidently in minor clerical orders since he was styled 'clerk'<sup>126</sup>. Thomas de St. Vigore was styled 'master' in 1281<sup>127</sup>.

It was more common for lesser knights to sit on juries empanelled to declare facts in given matters. Membership of the grand assizes was theoretically confined to knights. In the eyre of 1280 the procedure was invoked in eleven actions, mostly for land<sup>128</sup>. In each case the sheriff nominated four knights who elected a jury to decide the question of right. The four knights were important landholders near the land in dispute. The frequent inclusion among their number of Peter de Fauconberge reflected his influence and activity in the county court. The jurors

118 E.Foss, The Judges of England, iii (1851), 148-9

119 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122

120 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 342.

121 Ibid. 303.

122 Ibid. 308, 349, 406; 1281-92, 9, 53-4, 61, 91, 100, 102, 142, 458.

123 Dictionary of National Biography

124 E.Foss, Judges of England, ii (1848), 485-6

125 See below

126 Foss, Judges of England, iii. 133-4

127 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 473

128 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 3, 18-19, 32-3, 74-5, 102-3, 105-6, 134-5, 135-6, 148-9, 226-7, 262, 312-13.

elected were also landholders in the part of the county concerned. Thomas of Morton, who held land in Morton in Chewton hundred <sup>129</sup>, was elected to juries concerned with property in Norton Malreward and Ston Easton in Chew and Chewton hundreds respectively <sup>130</sup>. Thomas de Pyn, lord of Dulverton <sup>131</sup>, was elected to the jury for a case concerning property in Lexworthy in Andersfield hundred. With him was Hugh of Luccombe <sup>132</sup> who held land in near-by Aisholt <sup>133</sup>. Not all those elected served. In three actions their services were not required since the disputes were settled by agreement. In the case concerning right of estovers in Luccombe and Holt agreement was reached before the jury had been selected <sup>134</sup>. In one case concerning Ilchester a second jury was elected to supersede another jury with a slightly different composition <sup>135</sup>.

The number of men concerned in the grand assizes reveals the extent to which the business of the county court had become the preserve of the lesser knights. In 1258 the baronial reformers had complained that the holding of the grand assize was hampered by a shortage of knights. No knights attended the Kent county court in 1274 <sup>136</sup> but it was a very different matter in Somerset in 1280. Then fifty-eight men were named, as either elector or juror, in the grand assizes <sup>137</sup>. They were not necessarily present in court. In the case of one juror, Anselm Basset, the fact of his death was noted against his name in the record of the court proceedings <sup>138</sup>. The thirty men nominated to make the elections may have been in court. Save for Thomas of Boulogne and Thomas de Beauchamp they were all elected to the juries together with another

<sup>129</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 297

<sup>130</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 18-19, 102-3

<sup>131</sup> Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 119

<sup>132</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 105-6

<sup>133</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 281.

<sup>134</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 262

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. 3, 74-5.

<sup>136</sup> N.Denholm-Young, 'Feudal Society in the Thirteenth Century: the Knights', Collected Papers on Medieval Subjects (Oxford, 1946), 61-2

<sup>137</sup> See App.III for their names.

<sup>138</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 226-7

twenty-eight persons.

The fifty-eight men were all landholders of substance. With two possible exceptions they were drawn from lesser knightly families. The two exceptions, William Payn and Henry le Waleys, who held land in Sandford Orcas and Felton respectively <sup>139</sup>, were evidently prominent free landholders. Henry was named in the sheriff's list of forty librate holders compiled in 1300 <sup>140</sup>. Thomas of Huntley, a knight, held land near Yeovil in Kingston and Yeovil Marsh <sup>141</sup>. The knight Thomas de Beauchamp had property in Worle and Edingworth <sup>142</sup>. Two families were represented by more than one member. Joyce of Bayeux and his son Thomas were successive lords of Twerton <sup>143</sup>. Thomas of Boulogne was presumably related to Richard of Boulogne who had property in Ash, Witcombe and Milton near Somerton <sup>144</sup>. The magnates were noticeable by their absence. Nicholas de Montfort, lord of Wellow, was the most prominent knight named. While he did not rank in wealth with the greatest lay landholders, his power and wealth placed him above the other knights named. He participated in the Welsh war of 1282 <sup>145</sup> but neither he nor his son Henry apparently took part in the later campaigns. Nicholas was clearly associated with the business of the county court like the lesser knights.

The fifty-eight included relatives of magnates. As the heads of cadet branches of leading county families they were landholders in their own right. Their participation in the affairs of the county court arose from their interests as landholders. John Tregoz the younger was presumably the landholder of that name in Brean who was a tenant of his relative, another John Tregoz, lord of Burnham manor <sup>146</sup>. Roger FitzPain

<sup>139</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 288-291

<sup>140</sup> See App.II

<sup>141</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 274

<sup>142</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 130; Glaston.Feod. 98-100

<sup>143</sup> See pp. 16-17

<sup>144</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 282

<sup>145</sup> Morris, Welsh Wars of Edw.I. 163

<sup>146</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 276; Parl.Writs, i. 229



was clearly related to Robert FitzPain of whom he was a subtenant for land in Cary FitzPaine near Somerton<sup>147</sup>. Roger was particularly active in 1280 for he was elected to eight of the grand assize juries. Roger also held land in Alhampton for which he performed homage to Robert of Petherton, abbot of Glastonbury between 1261 and 1274<sup>148</sup>. Roger's career was typical of those lesser knights with lands near the county town. In 1279 he was chosen to perambulate the Somerset forests<sup>149</sup>.

Besides the fifty-eight men named in the grand assizes, several other landholders figured in the business of the court. Osbert of Bath, Richard de Cauntelo, William of Godmanstone, Richard of Heydon, John of Horsey, Robert of Raddington, Giles de Flury, Nicholas de la Mare and Henry de Merland sat on various juries empanelled during the proceedings<sup>150</sup>. They were all members of the knightly group and the first six became knights<sup>151</sup>. Another substantial landholder John de Pavely of Bickenhall, who apparently was not a knight, lodged in Somerton during the eyre<sup>152</sup>. Richard de Cauntelo was related to George de Cauntelo (d.1273) from whom he had held land in Chilton (Chilton Cantelo) near Ilchester<sup>153</sup>. Richard was active in local government both as coroner and as justice of gaol delivery.

The minimum number of landholders from knightly families connected with the proceedings of 1280 was sixty-six. At least fifty-six of them became knights and forty-six had been dubbed by 1280<sup>154</sup>. As in the case of Nicholas de Montfort there is no evidence to suggest that military service occupied such a prominent place in their careers as it did in the careers of magnates. Richard Arthur, Adam of Bitton, John of Blackford,

147 Feud.Aids, iv. 285

148 Glaston.Feod. 112-3

149 C 47/12/2

150 Muchelney Cart. pp. 93-4; Glaston.Cart.i, p.226; Plac. de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 703

151 Cf.App.I

152 C 133/103 no.11

153 C 133/2 no.7

154 See p. 24

Richard of Boulogne, William of Godmanstone, Humphrey de Kael, Henry de Merland, Thomas de Pyn and John Tregoz all saw military service <sup>155</sup> but it does not seem that military activity was ever a continuous feature of their lives.

The proceedings of 1280 attracted to the county court most of the knights who were involved in county affairs and in private administration. Several had held or were to hold the post of sheriff of Somerset and Dorset. Andrew Wake had been sheriff in 1267 and Thomas de St.Vigore in 1269. John de St.Lo was appointed to the office in 1283 and continued to exercise the duties of sheriff after 1285, when the post was granted to Queen Eleanor, until 1289. Walter de Loveny became sheriff in 1291 <sup>156</sup>. Simon of Greenham had been in 1270 sheriff of Devon which office Thomas de Pyn had held on three occasions by 1280 <sup>157</sup>. Of the knights involved in private administration John FitzGeoffrey and Humphrey de Kael were appointed as justices by the abbot of Glastonbury in 1286 <sup>158</sup>.

Other knights named in 1280 held less distinguished but no less important posts. Adam of Bawdrip, William le Bret, Richard de Cauntelo, Peter de Fauconberge and Robert Malherbe were all coroners at some time. The coroner, who was responsible for maintaining and protecting the pleas of the Crown, was elected in the county court. The qualifications for the office were knightly rank and residence in the county concerned <sup>159</sup>. In Somerset the holding of knightly rank was not a necessary prerequisite for election but all the coroners in the later 13th century were free men of substance. William de Oville held land in Knowle near Bristol and was the son-in-law of Jordan la Warre of Brislington <sup>160</sup>. The work of the

155 See above and pp.41, 55, 194-5, 197, 233

156 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122; for John de St.Lo cf. Cal.Pat.1281-92, 186

157 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 34

158 Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 357

159 R.F.Hunnisett, The Medieval Coroner, 172-5

160 Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, p. 192

coroner, who was expected to travel widely in the course of his duties, drew heavily on his time and energy. In Somerset, which covered a large area and a difficult terrain, there were several coroners in office simultaneously <sup>161</sup>. The sphere of their activity was probably defined territorially.

The post was not popular. The removal of several coroners on the ground of lack of qualification was probably a fiction used to release certain landholders from the office. Hugh Fichet was removed in 1291 <sup>162</sup> yet in 1297 and 1300 he was listed among the wealthier landholders of the county. His grandfather, Hugh, had been coroner in 1253 and his son, John, was to be elected knight of the shire in 1320 <sup>163</sup>. Simon Roges was disqualified in 1277 <sup>164</sup> yet he was named as one of the twenty librate holders of Somerset and Dorset in 1297 and one of the forty librate holders in 1300. The senior branch of his family held land in Holcombe in Devon where Simon was living in 1280 <sup>165</sup>. That may have been a factor for his disqualification. As has already been suggested dismissal on the ground of lack of qualification may have been employed by the Crown to ensure that warriors were not troubled by burdensome commitments. Richard Arthur was removed from office in 1301. In that year he had been summoned to perform military service against the Scots and the letters noting his dismissal were issued at Dunfermline, as were those concerning Robert de Panes <sup>166</sup>. Militarily active men were clearly unable to serve as coroners.

For the Crown it was undesirable that sick and infirm men should continue in office. Richard of Chilton and Robert Malherbe were dismissed as coroners in 1289 and 1291 respectively on the ground of infirmity <sup>167</sup>.

<sup>161</sup> Just. 1/759 rot.1

<sup>162</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 209

<sup>163</sup> Hylle Cart.(Som.Rec.Soc.lxviii) p.xvi; Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p.58; Parl.Writs, ii(1), p.cxi.

<sup>164</sup> Cal.Close, 1272-9, 434

<sup>165</sup> Canonsleigh Cart.(Devon & Cornw.Rec.Soc.N.S.viii), p.xxi; Just. 1/759 rot.6

<sup>166</sup> Cal.Close, 1302-7, 112; Parl.Writs, i. 351

<sup>167</sup> Cal.Close, 1288-96, 21, 160

For lesser knights, the coronership was the climax of a career in public office. They were not promoted to other posts. Adam of Bawdrip died in office about 1297<sup>168</sup> and Peter de Fauconberge probably died shortly after being dismissed in 1299 because of infirmity<sup>169</sup>.

The social standing of the coroners was not particularly high. They were recruited from the lesser knights and prominent free men. The same group provided the forest verderers named in 1298<sup>170</sup>. Nicholas de la Mare alone of the four verderers in Selwood forest came from a knightly family and the verderers in Neroche and Exmoor were drawn from the freeholders. Philip le Yreys, who held land in Badgworth<sup>171</sup>, was a verderer in Mendip forest. Like his fellow verderer there in 1300, John de Beauchamp of Norton, Philip became a knight<sup>172</sup>.

The lesser knights who held the office of subescheator often held more important posts later. John of Aller was promoted from subescheator to sheriff of Somerset and Dorset in 1255. He was replaced as subescheator by Geoffrey of Laverton<sup>173</sup> who held the post about 1260 with Robert de St. Clare<sup>174</sup>. Their duties were probably divided territorially within the county. Robert of Raadington was active as subescheator in the west of the county early in Edward I's reign<sup>175</sup>. Thomas de Pyn, sheriff of Devon in 1273, acted as subescheator in Somerset about 1274<sup>176</sup>. He was sheriff of Devon for further periods in 1278 and 1280. The knight William of Staunton who, as subescheator, held an inquisition post mortem at South Petherton in 1293 subsequently had a varied career in local government<sup>177</sup>.

168 Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 24

169 Ibid. 229; cf. ibid. 1302-7, 320

170 Collinson, A History of Somerset, iii, 56-9

171 Feud.Aids, iv, 323

172 Mendip Mining Laws and Forest Bounds, (Som.Rec.Soc. xlv), 190

173 Close R. 1254-6, 110

174 Glaston.Cart. i, p. 234

175 Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 126, 128; Cal.Close, 1272-9, 410; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 120, 209

176 Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 125-8

177 See below

Two Case Histories.

It is probably in order to illustrate the variety of duties a knight might undertake by reference to the careers of two knights, William of Staunton and Robert de St.Clare, in some detail. William of Staunton held lands in North Bradon and Wick near Langport and also in Charlton Mackrell close to Somerton<sup>178</sup>. In his involvement in local administration William was continuing a family tradition. His predecessor William was one of the four knights elected in 1258, after the enactment of the Provisions of Oxford, to investigate trespasses in Somerset and was sheriff in 1264<sup>179</sup>. In 1280 the younger William was elected to four juries empanelled for the grand assize<sup>180</sup> and to the juries convened to adjudicate in the claims of Muchelney Abbey to extensive liberties and to hold certain land in free alms<sup>181</sup>. In 1285 he was one of four knights deputed to bring the record of a case held in the county court before the central court<sup>182</sup>. In the following year he served on the jury elected to settle a dispute over Tintinhull manor<sup>183</sup>. In the 1290s William performed several important duties. He held the post of subescheator in 1293<sup>184</sup> and in the next year he was appointed to collect a tax in the county<sup>185</sup>. In the early 14th. century he was appointed as a justice of gaol delivery for Somerton on several occasions<sup>186</sup>. His election as knight of the shire in 1290, 1295 and 1304-5 represented culminating points in his career.<sup>187</sup>

Robert de St.Clare, the lord of Stapleton in Martock who died in 1308<sup>188</sup>, or his predecessor of the same name was subescheator in the early

178 Feud.Aids, iv. 314-15; Cal.Inq.p.m. iv, p. 164

179 Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 648; P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122

180 See App.III

181 Muchelney Cart. pp. 93-4

182 K.B. 27/90 rot. 13

183 K.B. 27/98 rot. 24

184 C 133/64 no. 20

185 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 104

186 Ibid. 583; 1301-7, 158, 231.

187 Parl.Writs, i, p. xxviii

188 Cal.Inq.p.m. v, p. 66



1260s<sup>189</sup>. There is no evidence that Robert was militarily strenuous. He participated in the business of the county court in 1280<sup>190</sup> and was on many occasions a justice of gaol delivery in Ilchester and Somerton<sup>191</sup>. In 1288 and 1291 he was appointed to deliver Sherborne gaol<sup>192</sup>. In 1304 he was a member of the first known commission of sewers in the county<sup>193</sup>. Several times Robert was chosen to collect taxes both in Somerset<sup>194</sup> and Essex where he also held lands<sup>195</sup>. In 1297 Robert and Baudry of Nonnington were the two Somerset knights appointed to collect in Dorset the tax which had been granted to the king in return for his confirmation of the Charters<sup>196</sup>. In 1302 Robert, together with the sheriff, was appointed to assess and collect in Somerset the feudal aid granted to Edward I for the marriage of his daughter<sup>197</sup>. The assessment of the fees held in Somerset was made in a session of the county court presided over by Robert and the sheriff<sup>198</sup>.

Lesser knights occasionally performed duties which brought them onto the stage of national affairs. Under the Articuli super cartas of 1300 three knights were elected in each county to note any trespasses against the Charters and to ensure that the statute of Winchester of 1285 was observed<sup>199</sup>. The prominent place occupied by Robert de St.Clare in local government led to his being appointed in Somerset and, as the senior member of the panel, he was authorized to take the oaths of the other members<sup>200</sup>. They were Richard of Heydon, a knight, and Richard Pyk, a

189 Glaston.Cart. i, p.234; C 132/27 no. 27

190 See App.III

191 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 325; 1281-92, 345, 365; Cal.Close, 1288-96, 25

192 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 299, 454

193 Ibid. 1301-7, 276

194 Ibid. 1292-1301, 613; 1301-7, 16, 457

195 Ibid. 1292-1301, 104

196 Ibid. 298

197 Ibid. 1301-7, 76

198 Cf. Glaston.Cart. i, pp. 154-5

199 F.M.Fowicke, The Thirteenth Century (Oxford, 1962), 697-701

200 Parl.Writs, i. 399-400; Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 516

free tenant, both of whom had considerable administrative experience which had in part been gained in the service of private landholders <sup>201</sup>.

### Hereditary Office

Several lesser knights occupied administrative posts through inheritance. One office that was frequently held by inheritance was that of hundred bailiff. In Somerset that post was in several cases attached to the tenure of certain lands <sup>202</sup>. Some other offices were held in fee and thereby inherited. The royal forests of the county were in the charge of a forester in fee who at the beginning of the reign was the knight Richard de Flessis <sup>203</sup>. He inherited the office with lands in Exton and Newton from his father William, the senior coheir of Richard of Wrotham <sup>204</sup>. Richard de Flessis was succeeded about 1282 by his three sisters <sup>205</sup>. The eldest, Sabina, wife of Nicholas Pecche, was awarded the office of forester in 1289 <sup>206</sup>. In the perambulations of 1300 she was represented by her son Nicholas <sup>207</sup>, who apparently did not become a knight although he was a substantial landholder <sup>208</sup>.

The offices of bailiff east and west of the river Parrett were held in fee. The two bailiwicks were held from the Crown and formed part of the inheritance of two knightly families. Although held in fee the posts did not form part of any obligations belonging to their lands <sup>209</sup>. The line of the river divided the county into two parts in each of which a bailiff acted as the executive officer of the sheriff, enforcing judgements of the courts and making distrains and attachments on the authority of the sheriff. The bailiff in the western part of the county also appointed bailiffs for those

<sup>201</sup> See below.

<sup>202</sup> H.Cam, The Hundred and the Hundred Rolls (1930), 145

<sup>203</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 702

<sup>204</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 54; *ibid.* ii, p. 61

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.* ii, pp. 442-3

<sup>206</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 262

<sup>207</sup> Mendip Mining Laws and Forest Bounds, 190; cf. Just. 1/1330 rot. 40

<sup>208</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I. iv. 27

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 436

hundreds held by the Crown, namely Williton and Andersfield <sup>210</sup>, and possibly had a say in the appointment of the other hundred bailiffs. The eastern bailiff, who was styled ballivus itinerans de feodo <sup>211</sup>, was in de facto possession of the liberty of return of writs. The sheriff delivered writs to him for execution and in dealing with liberties in his part of the county the bailiff, in his turn, handed over the writs to the officials of the particular liberty <sup>212</sup>.

In the reign of Edward I the two bailiffs, Thomas of Wellesley (and, after him, his son Thomas) and Walter de la Lynde, made markedly different use of their official position. The western bailiwick had been granted to Walter's father, John de la Lynde of Broomfield, in 1267 <sup>213</sup>. John, a loyal servant of the Crown, was a king's knight in 1260 and until his death in 1272 was active in administrative, judicial and diplomatic work for the Crown <sup>214</sup>. Walter however did not have widespread interests. Unlike Thomas of Wellesley he did not act as bailiff in person. His duties were performed by deputies. In 1276 William of Rumborough, the acting official, was described as head bailiff west of the Parrett <sup>215</sup>. In the same year it was recorded that the post had been occupied by William le Bret, the son of the knight William le Bret <sup>216</sup>. The family of le Bret was closely involved in the office and by 1286 Adam le Bret, the son of the elder William, had been granted a life-interest in it by Walter de la Lynde <sup>217</sup>. Adam had presumably purchased his interest in the potentially lucrative office for, in the same year, he was named as a debtor of Walter <sup>218</sup>. The post was later awarded to Simon de Montagu from whom

210 Just. 1/759 rot. 3d

211 Select Cases in the Exchequer of Pleas (Selden Soc. xlviii), pp.163-4

212 K.B. 27/86 rot. 2d.

213 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 111

214 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 284

215 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I. 48

216 Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 128

217 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 223

218 Cal.Close, 1279-88, 426

Walter held Broomfield Manor <sup>219</sup>.

Thomas of Wellesley acted in person as bailiff in the eastern part of the county <sup>220</sup>. He was succeeded in the office in 1289 by his son Thomas <sup>221</sup>, who retained the post until 1311 when he was granted permission to transfer the bailiwick to his son Philip <sup>222</sup>. By then Thomas was advanced in years and the grant opened up the way for him to pass the burden of office to a younger and more active man.

The knights in the service of the great landholders.

Those landholders with extensive estates and wide powers of lordship depended for their administration on the expertise of lesser knights and other skilled officials <sup>223</sup>. The importance of the county court in regulating the life of the local communities was diminished by the existence of the extensive judicial liberty of Glastonbury Abbey. Besides holding wide tracts of land in the county, the abbot was lord of the hundreds of Whitley, Whitstone and Brent with Wrington <sup>224</sup>. By the abbot's privilege of return of writs Crown officials were excluded but the dispensing of royal justice remained in the king's hands. In the immediate neighbourhood of Glastonbury, known as the liberty of Twelve Hides, the abbey had a wide franchise. There it could hear pleas of the Crown by its own justices. The abbot's nominees were styled justices itinerant in imitation of the practice in royal courts but they presided in Glastonbury <sup>225</sup>. Local landholders, both knights and free men, were appointed to the abbatial

219 Cal.Pat. 1313-17, 627; Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 284-5

220 See below

221 Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 436

222 Cal.Pat. 1307-13, 338

223 See pp. 205-8

224 Plac.de Quo Warr.(Rec.Com.), 700; Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 130-2

225 M.D.Lobel, 'The Ecclesiastical Banleuca in England,' Oxford Essays in Medieval History presented to H.E.Salter (Oxford, 1934), 137-8



bench which usually comprised four members <sup>226</sup>. The abbot also appointed justices to deliver Glastonbury gaol. Two justices were selected in 1321 <sup>227</sup>. They were recruited from the same group as the justices itinerant and stewards.

The steward was responsible for ensuring that the abbey's liberty was respected and its powers of jurisdiction enforced. He appeared in royal courts to claim cases belonging to the abbey's liberty <sup>228</sup>. He attended sessions of the gaol delivery justices in Somerton and Dorchester for the same purpose <sup>229</sup>. With the external cellarer, the steward perambulated the abbey estates in Somerset, Dorset, Wiltshire and Berkshire to dispense justice, audit accounts and collect rents. The courts in which he participated were generally the biannual courts leet, particularly those held at Michaelmas <sup>230</sup>. Other duties of the steward included supervising sales and purchases on behalf of the abbey for which he attended such important fairs as those held at Winchester and Salisbury. He also supervised the disposal of the abbey's valuable wool crop <sup>231</sup>.

The stewards, even those who were knights, did not undertake duties connected with the performance of the military service owed by the abbey. The steward's duties were primarily administrative and judicial. He was at the head of a complex but flexible machine which included bailiffs in charge of groups of manors, and manorial reeves. The abbey chronicler's tribute to the four abbots from Michael of Amesbury to John of Taunton, between 1235 and 1291, who increased revenues and reduced debts, reflects the abilities and achievements of the abbey's officers at all

226 Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 354-61

227 Longleat MSS. 10562; 10593, f. 22v.

228 Just. 1/1280 rot. 11d.; Just. 1/1284 rot. 5; K.B. 27/106 rot. 24

229 Longleat MSS. 11273, rot. 6; 11216, rot. 69

230 For the administration of the Glastonbury Abbey estates see

I.J.E. Keil, The Estates of Glastonbury Abbey in the Later Middle Ages (unpublished Bristol Ph.D. thesis, 1964)

231 Longleat MSS. 11216, rot. 31; 11272, rot. 74



levels of the administration, but particularly those of its stewards <sup>232</sup>.

The position of the abbey in the economic and social life of the county was a factor in attracting prominent men into its service. The abbey also occupied an important position in the cult of knighthood. Since 1191, when the remains reputedly of Arthur and Guinevere were unearthed, the abbey had been established as a centre of the Arthurian court <sup>233</sup>. Several knights held the post of steward but they were neither chivalrous nor involved in military ventures. They were local men with solid careers as administrators. Nicholas de Langelond, when he was steward between 1311 and 1313, resided on his land in South Brent and was ferried to Glastonbury at the abbey's expense for business <sup>234</sup>. The knight Geoffrey Foliot who proffered military service for the abbey in 1263 <sup>235</sup> and who was styled steward in June 1272 <sup>236</sup> was an exception. Geoffrey continued to administer the affairs of the abbey after the death of Robert of Petherton for he was appointed custodian by the Crown in April 1274 <sup>237</sup>. Geoffrey, who held land from the abbey in Ashbury (Berks.), presumably had a residence in Glastonbury where his heirs later held a messuage <sup>238</sup>.

The abbot of Glastonbury apparently made his chief appointments from a small group of men who were well versed in legal matters. They acted as the abbey's legal officers in controversies in which it was involved. About 1301 they attended a dies amoris convened to settle a dispute with the Dorset abbey of Milton <sup>239</sup>. Several of them were promoted within the abbey's service. The knight Nicholas of Apperlegh had been active as a lawyer in the county court at the end of Henry III's

232 D.Knowles, The Religious Orders in England, i (Cambridge, 1962), 44-6

233 R.F.Treharne, The Glastonbury Legends (1967), 93-8

234 Longleat MSS.11216,rott.10d.,13, 20d., 75,78; 10655, rott.6,14.

235 Ibid. 10590, ff. 76-80

236 Glaston.Cart. iii, p.688

237 Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 20

238 Glaston.Feod. 3; Glaston.Rent. 232

239 Longleat MS. 11272, rot.80

reign <sup>240</sup>. He was appointed by the abbot as a justice in 1286 <sup>241</sup> and he became the abbey's steward by 1289 <sup>242</sup>. Richard Pyk, another of the justices appointed in 1286 <sup>243</sup>, had been granted ten acres of land in Zoy by the abbey in 1281 <sup>244</sup>. Richard was probably the Richard Pyk who was described in 1278 as custodian of the abbot's liberties <sup>245</sup> and in 1279 as the abbot's bailiff <sup>246</sup>. The latter post was evidently that of the bailiff in charge of the Twelve Hides liberty <sup>247</sup>. Richard appeared as abbey steward several times in the period 1297-1304 <sup>248</sup> during which time he served as an abbey justice <sup>249</sup>. The precise details of Richard's career are somewhat uncertain because there was another Richard Pyk in the abbey's service. The latter was steward in 1278 <sup>250</sup> and in the same year the abbot nominated him as his attorney <sup>251</sup>.

The notion that there was an informal panel from which the abbot drew his officers is reinforced by the appointments made in 1286-7 during a dispute between the abbot and the Crown over the delivery of a prisoner from Glastonbury gaol. Edward I established a commission but the abbot defied him and nominated three knights, Nicholas of Apperlegh, Geoffrey of Stawell and Humphrey de Kael, and Richard Pyk. They all had close ties with the abbey. Nicholas, Humphrey and Richard served as justices and Richard and Nicholas later became stewards. In the 1286-7 dispute the Crown had selected Humphrey and Richard but had also appointed Nicholas de Montfort and John de St.Lo <sup>252</sup> who were directed to ensure that the abbot's officials correctly discharged their duties <sup>253</sup>.

240 Somersetshire Pleas, 41-57 Hen.III, 83-4, 150

241 Glaston.Cart. ii, p.357

242 Ibid. pp. 426-7

243 Ibid. p. 357

244 Ibid. p. 503

245 Ibid. i, pp. 110-11

246 Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 217

247 Cf. C 143/54 no.15

248 Glaston.Cart. ii, pp.277-8; ibid. iii, pp.632-3; Glaston.Rent. 231, 233

249 Longleat MS. 11272, rot.28

250 Glaston.Cart. i, p.110

251 Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 265

252 K.B. 27/106 rot. 24

253 Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 255

The lesser knights and the professional administrators.

Administrative posts were open to skilled men irrespective of rank. Knights and free tenants were on an equal footing with professional administrators. The factor common to all groups on which the great landholders depended was expertise in legal matters. One professional administrator, John Gerberd, was the Glastonbury Abbey steward in 1302 and 1303<sup>254</sup>. He was then also sheriff of Somerset and Dorset. He had earlier been sheriff in 1297 and in the interval he had held the same post in Hampshire in 1301. Between 1305 and 1307 he was sheriff of Wiltshire<sup>255</sup>. He was appointed to the first known commission of sewers in Somerset in 1304<sup>256</sup>.

The same relationship between landholders and professionals is found among the men appointed to the stewardship of Muchelney Abbey in the early 14th. century. The abbey enjoyed considerable judicial liberties in the island of Muchelney, from which the sheriff, royal justices and other officers were excluded<sup>257</sup>. The steward in 1307 was Richard de Loveny<sup>258</sup>. Richard was probably a younger brother of the knight Walter de Loveny. Walter was succeeded about 1298 in Hillcombe near Ilminster by his son William<sup>259</sup> but by 1312 the land was held by Richard<sup>260</sup>. While Richard was steward the abbot's household included John of Fosse, who was to be steward in 1318<sup>261</sup>. John, a clerk, was active in south-east Somerset where about 1305 he acted as narrator in the drawing up of the accounts of the earl of Lincoln's manors<sup>262</sup>. In 1305 John was returned to parliament as burgess for Wells<sup>263</sup>. Early in the following reign he was summoned by

254 Longleat MSS. 11246, rot.9d.; 11271, rot.5d.; 11215, rot.6

255 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 122, 54, 152

256 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 276

257 Muchelney Cart. p.93

258 Muchelney Memoranda (Som.Rec.Soc. xlii), pp. 78-9

259 Muchelney Cart. 105-6

260 Pedes Finium, 1 Edw.II - 20 Edw.III, p.29

261 Muchelney Memoranda, pp. 78-9, 84

262 D. L. 29/1/2 m.19d.

263 Parl.Writs, i. p. xc.



John de Erlegh to a dies amoris held to settle a dispute concerning Babcary in which John de Erlegh was involved <sup>264</sup>. John of Fosse was later in the service of the abbot of Glastonbury. He received a corrody in the abbey <sup>265</sup> and in 1321 was twice appointed by the abbot to deliver Glastonbury gaol <sup>266</sup>.

It is with the activities of men such as John of Fosse that those of the lesser knights should be compared. The knights were not merely honorary officers retained to enhance the prestige of a religious house or lord but were experts in their own right. The bishop of Winchester did not confine himself to selecting knights for the post of constable of Taunton <sup>267</sup>. The constable accounted for the revenues of the extensive manor in which the castle was situated <sup>268</sup>. According to a 14th. century document his duties comprised safeguarding the bishop's estates, and judicial rights and franchises in Taunton where the bishop was lord of the hundred <sup>269</sup>. The constable collected rents and held courts. Within the hundred he performed the duties of the coroner who was excluded from the liberty <sup>270</sup>. No military duties pertained to the office. The services of administrators and not warriors were required.

#### Hundred bailiffs

Lords of private hundreds recruited their bailiffs from the same group as their estate officials. Several hundred bailiffs were substantial landholders in accordance with the wishes of the baronial reformers. The bailiff's duties included preparing information before the courts leet

264 Som.R.O., NP 1, rot.13

265 Collectanea, i (Som.Rec.Soc. xxxix), 24-5

266 Longleat MSS. 10562; 10593, f. 22v.

267 See pp. 206-7

268 Cf. The Pipe Roll of the Bishop of Winchester, 1210-11 ed.N.R.Holt (1964), p. xxxviii; the accounts are deposited in the Hants R.O.

269 Taunton Customs (Som.Rec.Soc. lxvi), p.xxiii

270 Just. 1/759 rot. 14 and d.

held by the sheriff or the lord's officials, making attachments and distrainments and levying debts owed to the king. In many hundreds the office was attached to the tenure of a certain piece of land. Thomas of Wellesley was bailiff of the bishop of Bath and Wells's hundred of Wells by virtue of his tenure of property in Wellesley <sup>271</sup>. Nicholas de Langelond became bailiff of Bemstone hundred, held by the dean and chapter of Wells, by the grant of William de Conteville <sup>272</sup>.

The duties of the hundred bailiff provided valuable experience. Nicholas de Langelond later held the important Glastonbury stewardship as did Richard of Rodney <sup>273</sup>, who became bailiff of Winterstoke hundred by the award of Walter de Haselshaw, bishop of Bath and Wells, made sometime between 1304 and 1308 <sup>274</sup>. The role of both knights was probably supervisory. The terms of the bishop's grant to Richard suggest that executive duties were to be undertaken by subordinate officials. Tenure of a post did not oblige the occupant to discharge his duties in person. The knight John de Briwes was not an active administrator but he was bailiff of Abdick hundred <sup>275</sup>. He delegated the task of levying the king's debts to one of his tenants in Broadway. Broadway was however in Bulston hundred. John held land there from Henry de Lorty <sup>276</sup> who was lord of Abdick hundred which was held jointly with Bulston hundred <sup>277</sup>. It is likely that John's office covered both hundreds.

Other lay lords recruited their hundred bailiffs from local landholders. Reynold de Mohun (d.1258) granted the office in Carhampton hundred to Ralph le Tort of Cutcombe. Ralph's grandson Ralph held the same post in

<sup>271</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 436; cf. ibid. i, p. 67

<sup>272</sup> Hist.MSS.Com.12, 10th Rep.III, Wells, p.135

<sup>273</sup> See below

<sup>274</sup> Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 224; Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p.160

<sup>275</sup> Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 695

<sup>276</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 292

<sup>277</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 128; Plac.de Quo Warr. (Rec.Com.), 694



1280<sup>278</sup> but it was later granted by John de Mohun to John Arundel for life. The award was made during the lifetime of Roger Arundel<sup>279</sup> who in 1303 held land in Clatworthy<sup>280</sup> to which John succeeded<sup>281</sup>. Ralph Daubeney, lord of South Petherton hundred, also relied on the services of his lesser neighbours. The knight Walter de Loveny who held land in Hillcombe near Ilminster<sup>282</sup> presided in Ralph's courts early in Edward I's reign<sup>283</sup>. In 1291 Ralph of Pleybury, presumably a local freeholder, was Ralph's hundred bailiff<sup>284</sup>.

The variety of service.

The duration of a knight's service to particular lords varied considerably. In some cases the tie of service lasted a long time. The association between Laurence de St. Maur and Edmund, earl of Lancaster, extended over more than two decades and included both military and administrative work by the former for the latter. Laurence's son Nicholas was also a member of Edmund's retinue and later served Edmund's successor Thomas<sup>285</sup>. A family tradition of service underlay several other associations which probably had a greater impact in the county. Whereas Walter de Loveny was in the service of his neighbour Ralph Daubeney at the beginning of the reign his relative Richard de Loveny was nominated as an attorney by Ralph's son Ellis in 1304<sup>286</sup>. Two men called Richard Pyk were in the service of Glastonbury Abbey during the reign. Hugh de Langelond a free

278 Plac.de Quo Warr.(Rec.Com.), 698

279 Som.R.O., L 26/1

280 Feud.Aids, iv. 304

281 Maxwell-Lyte, Some Som.Mans. 207

282 Cf. Much.Cart. p.105

283 Just. 1/759 rot.10

284 K.B. 27/126 rot.15; cf. Bruton Cart. (Som.Rec.Soc.viii), pp.45,51,52

285 Maddicott, 'Thomas of Lancaster and Sir Robert Holland', E.H.R. lxxxvi, 458

286 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 290

tenant of the abbey in Brent <sup>287</sup> was about 1282 the bailiff in charge of the abbey's Wiltshire manors <sup>288</sup>. Hugh was succeeded at Brent by Nicholas de Langelond who later held a more important post as steward of the abbey <sup>289</sup>.

Most knights who were administrators served several lords in the course of their careers. Even knights with a tradition of service to a particular lord to uphold found time to hold office under other lords. There was much movement between local government and private service and within the sphere of private service. The careers of John la Warre and Humphrey de Kael are good illustrations. Most knights served individual lords for only short periods. The Glastonbury Abbey stewards did not hold the office for any great length of time. In many cases however private service provided knights with their first opportunity to acquire administrative experience which was then used by the Crown.

Richard of Heydon who held lands in Henstridge <sup>290</sup> probably started his career sometime before he was in the service of the earl of Gloucester as steward in 1279 <sup>291</sup>. Richard may have held office under Simon de Montagu in the early 1280s <sup>292</sup>. Later he was in the service of John, earl of Warenne, whom he accompanied to Scotland in 1295 <sup>293</sup>. About 1294 Richard was amerced for a trespass he committed in Yorkshire as that earl's steward <sup>294</sup>. In the 1290s Richard was constable of St. Briavells castle, the administrative centre of the Forest of Dean <sup>295</sup>. He was appointed to numerous commissions of oyer and terminer during his career <sup>296</sup>.

<sup>287</sup> Glaston.Cart. ii, p.540

<sup>288</sup> Longleat MS. 11273, rott. 34, 35, 37

<sup>289</sup> Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, 299 ; See below

<sup>290</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 41 - 57 HenIII, 50-1; Just. 1/1295 rot. 7d.

<sup>291</sup> Cal.Pat. 1272-81, 306

<sup>292</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 120-1; K.B. 27/108 rot. 10d.

<sup>293</sup> Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 156

<sup>294</sup> E 372/146 rot. Som. & Dors.

<sup>295</sup> E 101/6/4; cf. Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 621

<sup>296</sup> Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 104, 139, 142, 200, 201, 203; 1292-1301, 621.

In 1300 he was chosen to enquire in Somerset into trespasses against the Charters <sup>297</sup>.

The religious houses provided the knights scope for developing their talents which might then be put at the disposal of the Crown. Thomas Trivet (d.1281) was active as the steward of Glastonbury Abbey in the 1250s. In 1252 he supervised the leasing of a mill <sup>298</sup>. On several occasions in 1259 he attended the royal court as steward on legal affairs <sup>299</sup>. His period as steward probably followed his stewardship for the neighbouring but less important Benedictine abbey of Athelney <sup>300</sup>. His tenure of the Glastonbury stewardship, which he had vacated by 1265 <sup>301</sup>, was by way of promotion. Thomas was engaged in the service of the Crown by 1255 when he was chosen to sell wood for the relief of the king's debts. He was appointed to many commissions in the 1260s and was involved in levying tallages on Crown property. As a royal justice he visited many parts of the realm <sup>302</sup>. At the beginning of the new reign he sat on a variety of commissions. In 1276 he was a justice of gaol delivery in Ilchester <sup>303</sup> and in the same year he was appointed to hold an enquiry into the circumstances surrounding the burial of persons executed there <sup>304</sup>. He ceased to hold office soon afterwards.

#### Service and prospering freeholders.

Some free landholders accumulated property and prospered into the knightly group through service <sup>305</sup>. Nicholas de Langelond and Richard of

297 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 516

298 Glaston.Rent. 130-1

299 Longleat MS. 10762, rot. 2.

300 Athelney Reg. (Som.Rec.Soc.xiv), p. 137

301 Cf. Longleat MS. 10590, f. 82v.

302 Foss, Judges of England, ii (1848), 485-6

303 Cal.Pat. 1278-81, 160; cf. ibid. 120, 123, 181, 267, 294.

304 Ibid. 174-5

305 See pp.173-5



Rodney served a number of lords and moved between private and public duties. Nicholas began his service under Walter de Haselshaw, dean of Wells between 1295 and 1302<sup>306</sup>. In 1299 Nicholas, through his connection with the dean, came into conflict with the abbot of Glastonbury, his tenurial lord. The dean's men, including Nicholas, had raided the abbot's property at Mere<sup>307</sup>. Nicholas remained in Walter's service after the latter was elevated to the bishopric of Bath and Wells in 1302<sup>308</sup>. He was rewarded by the bishop with a grant of lands in Compton Bishop and Cheddar<sup>309</sup>. Nicholas was nominated by the bishop as his attorney in 1304 and appeared on his behalf in courts of law<sup>310</sup>. The first evidence that Nicholas became a knight is his use of the style miles when attesting a deed of the bishop dated 21 March 1306<sup>311</sup>.

From the end of Edward I's reign Nicholas applied his skill in local government. He became sheriff in 1306<sup>312</sup> and in 1306 and 1309 he was chosen to collect taxes in the county<sup>313</sup>. In the latter year he was appointed to investigate the process by which prises had been taken in Dorset<sup>314</sup>. Nicholas managed to combine service under the Crown with service to other landholders. By about 1301 Nicholas had been reconciled to the abbot of Glastonbury and belonged to the circle of administrators upon whom the abbot depended<sup>315</sup>. Although he later served the bishop, Nicholas held high office under the abbot, Geoffrey Fromond. He may have been steward in 1309 when with the external cellarer he presided at the proof of age of an abbey tenant<sup>316</sup>. In the following year Nicholas acted as an arbiter in a dispute over tithes between the abbot and dean and

306 Cf. V.C.H.Som. ii. 165

307 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 472

308 Handbook of British Chronology, ed.F.M.Powicke and E.B.Fryde(1961),206

309 Hist.MSS Com. 2, 3rd Rep., Axbridge, p. 301

310 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 217; Just. 1/1330 rot. 40

311 Hist.MSS Com. 12, Wells, ii, p. 582

312 P.R.O.List of Sheriffs, 123

313 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 452; 1307-13, 185

314 Ibid. 1307-13, 250

315 Longleat MS. 11272, rot. 80.

316 Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 350-1

chapter <sup>317</sup>. In 1311 he was the abbey's steward, a post he held until his death in 1313 <sup>318</sup>.

Richard of Rodney was in the service of the bishop of Bath and Wells by about 1300 when he was named as bailiff of the bishop's liberty <sup>319</sup>. In 1304 Richard was to be found in the service of the next bishop, Walter de Haselshaw, who appointed him as his attorney <sup>320</sup>. Richard was later active in local government. In 1307 he was appointed to collect a tax in Somerset <sup>321</sup> and in 1309 he was chosen to enquire into the taking of prises in Somerset <sup>322</sup>. In 1315 he became steward of Glastonbury Abbey <sup>323</sup>, an office he probably held in 1316 when he was a member of the abbot's judicial bench <sup>324</sup>. In 1321 the abbot appointed him to deliver Glastonbury gaol <sup>325</sup>. Both Nicholas de Langelond and Richard of Rodney acquired much property in the early 14th. century in the period in which they were most actively engaged in administrative work <sup>326</sup>. While there is little evidence of a direct relationship it seems probable that through service they acquired the means and influence to accumulate land.

#### Power and corruption

In addition to the scope it offered for the amassing of property, service and tenure of office augmented the powers of a landholder. Such increased powers might be brought to bear on tenants and neighbours. In the mid 14th. century the men of Bradford manor near Taunton remembered that Thomas of Timworth, their lord at the beginning of Edward I's reign, had

<sup>317</sup> Glaston. Cart. ii, pp. 337-8

<sup>318</sup> Longleat MSS. 11216, rot. 75; 10655, rott. 6, 18.

<sup>319</sup> E 372/146 rot. Som. & Dors.

<sup>320</sup> Cal. Pat. 1301-7, 217

<sup>321</sup> Ibid. 1307-13, 23

<sup>322</sup> Ibid. 249

<sup>323</sup> Longleat MS. 10593, f.21.

<sup>324</sup> Glaston. Cart. ii, p. 361

<sup>325</sup> Longleat MS. 10562.

<sup>326</sup> See pp. 166-9



made increased demands on them for labour services <sup>327</sup>. It was probably no mere consequence that Thomas was then constable of Taunton castle <sup>328</sup>. At his instigation the men of the bishop of Winchester's liberty of Taunton trespassed in the bishop of Bath and Wells's park in Lydiard before Easter 1274 <sup>329</sup>.

Abuse of office and official position was an accusation frequently levelled at office-holders, including knights. In view of the earl of Gloucester's wide-ranging claims to enjoy regalian rights <sup>330</sup>, it is not surprising that his officers were called to account for their activities. In 1280 his steward Richard of Heydon was required to answer for holding the view of frank pledge without royal licence and also for determining, in Bristol, pleas of distraint which should have been held in Somerset <sup>331</sup>. As the steward of John, earl of Warenne, Richard was amerced for a trespass about 1294 <sup>332</sup>. On another occasion it was Richard himself who felt he had cause for complaint. The officer concerned was Henry de Montfort, the bailiff of the earl of Lincoln. In 1270 de Montfort apparently raided Richard's house near Henstridge and seized three of his men whom he incarcerated in Trowbridge. When the sheriff of Wiltshire was ordered to deliver them from the earl's gaol, de Montfort transferred them to Lincoln from where they were released only at great expense to Richard <sup>333</sup>.

Abuse of position in local government was common. Corruption was in part due to lack of remuneration. Officials, compelled to cover their expenses and to make office pay by relying on their own means, were frequently led to peculation and bribery. Part of the proceeds of a royal tax invariably found its way into the pockets of the collectors. John of

<sup>327</sup> Taunton Customs, 87

<sup>328</sup> See p. 207

<sup>329</sup> K.B. 27/9 rot. 3d.

<sup>330</sup> Rot.Hund.(Rec.Com.), ii. 122, 133, 136, 141

<sup>331</sup> Just. 1/759 rott. 19, 25d.

<sup>332</sup> E 372/146 rot. Som. & Dors.

<sup>333</sup> Just. 1/759 rot. 47

Blackford and William of Staunton turned their appointments as tax collectors in Somerset in 1294 to their financial advantage <sup>334</sup>. Given the onerous nature of the duties of the coroner, a post which was unpopular and unpaid, it is not surprising that coroners were noted for their rapacity. They often exacted fees before they would perform their duties. William le Bret and Alan of Walton were guilty of that offence <sup>335</sup>. Forest officials were also renowned for using their position for their own ends. In 1279 the men of Somerset laid a long list of complaints against them <sup>336</sup>.

Officers were answerable for malpractices even if they were marginal. In March 1285 John de St.Lo, the sheriff of Somerset, was arrested for failing to pay into the Exchequer two marks for which Maiden Bradley Priory had been amerced. The sum had not been paid since the prior claimed the liberty of amerciamenta propria, the right to receive all amercements laid upon the house. The liberty was abolished in Spring 1285 just before John's arrest. The Barons of the Exchequer were ordered to allow him the two marks in his account if the amercement had been imposed before Easter <sup>337</sup>.

The officers most frequently impleaded for abusing their official position were Thomas of Wellesley and his son Thomas, a knight, hereditary bailiffs east of the Parrett. For their work they were unpaid and in 1253 it was recorded that 4s. a year was paid for the office <sup>338</sup>. The elder Thomas was sometimes appealed for implementing decisions arising out of contentious matters. In 1286 he was impleaded with the sheriff by one of parties to the disputed property of Agnes Avenel <sup>339</sup>. More seriously the

<sup>334</sup> Select Cases in the Exchequer of Pleas (Selden Soc. xlviii), p.lxxxiii

<sup>335</sup> Rot.Hund. (Rec.Com.), ii. 127

<sup>336</sup> Select Pleas of the Forest (Selden Soc. xiii), 125-8

<sup>337</sup> D.W.Sutherland, Quo Warranto Proceedings in the reign of Edw.I 1278-1294 (Oxford, 1963), 208

<sup>338</sup> Cal.Inq.p.m. i, p. 78

<sup>339</sup> Just. 1/1273 rot. 24

the nature of his duties provided him with many openings for unscrupulous behaviour. In 1279 he was amerced for contempt <sup>340</sup>. On one occasion at least he apparently exceeded his brief. In 1281 Henry de Montfort of Nunney impleaded the sheriff and his under-sheriff for levying twice the amount of damages that had been assessed against him in his dispute with Richard of Heydon. Thomas, as the sheriff's bailiff, was responsible for levying the damages <sup>341</sup>. The younger Thomas was accused in 1304 of failing to implement decisions of the county court <sup>342</sup>. On other occasions he was accused of using force in making distrains <sup>343</sup> and of seizing property without authority and on his own initiative, relying on the prestige of his office <sup>344</sup>. Another claim against the elder Thomas was that he entered liberties to make attachments and distrains <sup>345</sup>. The bishop of Bath and Wells brought an action against him and the bailiff of Keynsham hundred for entering the liberty of Bath where the bishop's own bailiffs were accustomed to execute any writs <sup>346</sup>.

Holders of public office were liable for debts incurred in the carrying out of official duties. Robert of Raddington was pursued for the debts he had made in performing his duties as subescheator after he had relinquished the post <sup>347</sup>. While some posts were distinctly unpopular, some knights were nevertheless more than willing to shoulder the responsibilities of office. Nicholas de Cheyney, who between 1294 and 1298 was custodian of the Channel Islands <sup>348</sup>, was appointed sheriff of Somerset and Dorset in 1298. He became sheriff again in 1307 and, although after his second term he was liable for a debt of ten marks in 1308, he

<sup>340</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 1-7 Edw.I, 212

<sup>341</sup> K.B. 27/64 rot. 35d.

<sup>342</sup> K.B. 27/177 rot. 41d.

<sup>343</sup> K.B. 27/92 rot. 9.

<sup>344</sup> Select Cases in the Exchequer of Pleas (Selden Soc.xlviii), pp. 163-4

<sup>345</sup> K.B. 27/86 rot. 2d.; K.B. 27/94 rot. 28d.

<sup>346</sup> K.B. 27/33 rot. 13d.

<sup>347</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 209

<sup>348</sup> Moor, Knights of Edw.I, i. 205



was appointed sheriff again in 1318<sup>349</sup>. Despite the liabilities and hazards, office was clearly an attractive proposition.

There are few signs that knights avoided prestigious posts like that of sheriff or knight of the shire. Tenure of public office was theoretically obligatory upon appointment. Under Henry III several lesser knights were exempted from office and from membership of juries. The favour was granted for specific periods, including life. Most of those so exempted continued to hold office. John de la Lynde, exempted in 1254<sup>350</sup>, was an active member of the royal household until his death in 1272. Humphrey de Kael, Robert de St.Clare and Walter de Loveny received grants of exemption<sup>351</sup>, but later were among the most active knights involved in the administration of the county under Edward I. Such awards were probably made to ensure that active knights were not overburdened by official duties. The grants did not preclude recipients from holding posts and sitting on juries if they chose. On some occasions the grant of exemption was used. In May 1280 at the beginning of the proceedings of the county court, Walter de Lorty produced his grant of exemption<sup>352</sup>. It had originally been awarded to him in 1268 but in April 1280 he took the precaution of securing another writ<sup>353</sup>. He apparently took no further part in the work of the county court.

#### Conclusion

While the distinction between military and administrative service was not rigidly drawn, within the knightly group of Somerset there was, by the end of the 13th. century, a basic division in emphasis. On the one

349 P.R.O.List Of Sheriffs, 122-3 ; Cal.Close, 1307-13, 27

350 Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 387

351 Ibid. 1266-72, 226, 500, 216

352 Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 2

353 Cal.Pat. 1266-72, 302 ; 1272-81, 368.

hand military service was performed by magnates and the lesser knights in their service. They were not active in the routine local government although they might occupy certain important public offices. Those lesser knights who were militarily active might perform administrative duties for their lords. On the other hand the county court was the forum of the lesser knights, the most active of whom monopolized the more important administrative posts. Such duties enhanced their influence and could be used for their enrichment. They also entered the service of local religious houses as administrators.



## CHAPTER IX

### CONCLUSION : THE KNIGHTS AND CHIVALRY

The paraphernalia of chivalry was indulged in only by a minority of landholders. They were the men who were most active in the field of battle. Behind the display of coats of arms and banners lay a strong sense of family pride. The maintenance of a family tradition of participation in military and chivalric events was important both for the magnates and the few lesser knights concerned.

#### Heraldry.

Heraldry was an integral part of the climate of chivalry in which militarily strenuous landholders lived. Their coats of arms were recorded in rolls of arms, several of which were compiled to commemorate particular military events <sup>1</sup>. The Falkirk Roll of Arms and the Song of Caerlaverock celebrate engagements in Scotland in 1298 and 1300 respectively <sup>2</sup>. Such rolls are principally records of the Edwardian aristocracy at play. The coats of arms described belonged to the magnates and the few lesser landholders who were militarily strenuous. For the warrior his coat of arms was a symbol of the military tradition to which he was heir. At Caerlaverock the sense of lineage led to a dispute between Hugh Pointz, lord of Curry Mallet barony, and Brian FitzAlan who carried similar devices <sup>3</sup>. An armorial device could be changed. John de Mohun (d.1330) took that step <sup>4</sup>.

Of the Somerset landholders whose arms were recorded most were magnates and members of the royal household. The Heralds' Roll of Arms was

1 Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 3.

2 Cf. Gough, Scotland in 1298, pp. 139-57; The Roll of Caerlaverock, ed. T.Wright (1864), 1-35.

3 The Roll of Caerlaverock, 9, 15-16.

4 Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 692.

probably compiled during the Crusade of 1270-4<sup>5</sup>. It includes the armorial devices of John de Gurney and John of Aller, both prominent county landholders. William de Fienles had been brought up in the royal household in which he served later<sup>6</sup>. In the same roll several lesser landholders who were related to magnates are mentioned. Anselm Basset was by marriage the uncle of Thomas II de Berkeley<sup>7</sup>. Other lesser men whose arms are described in the roll were Thomas de Pyn, who was militarily strenuous<sup>8</sup>, and Alexander Cheyney. They were evidently connected with chivalric circles. The roll also includes a few coats of arms which were attributed to characters from chivalric literature.

The lesser landholders whose coats of arms are listed in the rolls of arms came from established county families with a tradition of military service. Anselm Basset served in Wales in 1277<sup>9</sup>. His sons Edmund and John were among the warriors present at the siege of Caerlaverock whose armorial bearings were described in the Song of Caerlaverock<sup>10</sup>. Raymond of Clevedon's ancestor William held land in Somerset at Milton and Clevedon in 1166<sup>11</sup>. Raymond's arms were described in the Charles' Roll of Arms compiled between 1279 and 1281<sup>12</sup>. His son John served in Wales in 1294 and in Flanders in 1297<sup>13</sup>. John's son John attended the Dunstable tournament in 1309<sup>14</sup>.

At the beginning of Edward I's reign the Arthurian cult, an

5 Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 45-52; the roll is printed in The Genealogist (New Ser.), iii. 148-55, 240-44; iv. 17-22, 197-203; v. 173-9.

6 Powicke, The Thirteenth Century, 545 n.1 ; C 47/4/3 f. 29.

7 Berkeley MSS. iii. 184.

8 Parl.Writs, i. 202, 211.

9 Ibid.206.

10 The Roll of Caerlaverock, 33.

11 Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xli(2), 2.

12 Charles Roll, ed. G.J.Armytage (1869); Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 91-2.

13 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 61-2 ; C 67/12 m.7.

14 A.Tomkisson, 'Retinues at the Tournament of Dunstable 1309', E.H.R. lxxiv. 70; Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, iv. 72.

integral part of the cult of knighthood, enjoyed considerable popularity. Miscellanies of events held in imitation of Arthurian practice were called 'Round Tables' <sup>15</sup>. Glastonbury Abbey was closely identified with the legendary Avalon but the association did not have any special significance for the knights and landholders of central Somerset <sup>16</sup>. The knights who entered the administrative service of the abbey were not involved in the profession of arms.

Edward I promoted the Arthurian cult. As monarch he associated his role with that accorded by tradition to Arthur. In 1278 he visited Glastonbury for the translation of the supposed remains of Arthur. The ceremony was attended by many people, some of whom belonged to the royal entourage <sup>17</sup>. It seems likely that many local landholders were present, attracted by the presence of the monarch. Local landholders, especially those in the service of the abbot, would have had an awareness of the Arthurian cult in which they participated as spectators.

In the Parliamentary Roll of Arms which was compiled c.1308, twenty-one coats of arms are described under the entry from Somerset and Dorset <sup>18</sup>. At least thirteen of their owners were Somerset landholders. The armorial devices carried by other county landholders figure elsewhere in the roll. The arms of the magnates and leading warriors are listed at the head of the roll with those of the bannerets <sup>19</sup>. The entries for other counties include coats of Somerset men. Thomas de Hamelden and William of Weyland appear under Suffolk where they held land <sup>20</sup>. John of Merriott, John of Merriott le neveu and John de Mandeville are named in the list for Wiltshire and Hampshire <sup>21</sup>.

15 R.S.Loomis, 'Arthurian Influence on Sport and Spectacle', Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages, ed. R.S.Loomis (Oxford, 1959), 553-5.

16 Cf. R.F.Treharne, The Glastonbury Legends (1967), 93-101.

17 Glastonbury Cart. i. pp.109-11; R.S.Loomis, 'Edward I, Arthurian Enthusiast', Speculum, xxviii, 114-27.

18 Parl.Writs, i. 411

19 Ibid. 410-11.

20 Ibid. 414

21 Ibid. 411.



The men listed under the counties were principally lesser landholders. They took part in military activity. John of Bitton was a knight who held land in Chilcompton <sup>22</sup>. In 1301 he was summoned to serve against the Scots <sup>23</sup>. Not all of those named were knights <sup>24</sup>. The roll makes no mention of the majority of knights. Such landholders as Hugh of Popham, William of Staunton and Thomas of Wellesley were not militarily strenuous.

In connection with the performance of military service and the participation in chivalric pursuits by lesser landholders, a study of the Somerset men mentioned in the roll adds weight to the view that such activity was confined to those men who attached themselves to a magnate's retinue or who were related by blood to magnates. Henry of Glastonbury and John of Merriott le neveu were members of the retinue of Thomas, earl of Lancaster. John le Waleys, who had served in Scotland in 1298 with John ap Adam, served there in 1304 with Maurice de Berkeley <sup>25</sup>. Robert of Brent, Geoffrey of Aumale and Thomas de Hamelden served in troops led by local magnates in the 1298 campaign <sup>26</sup>. Ellis Cotel, a member of the royal household in 1295 <sup>27</sup>, served with the household forces in 1298 <sup>28</sup>. In 1300 he was one of the men-at-arms attached to the household <sup>29</sup>. Two of the men named in the roll, Thomas de Gurney and Humphrey de Beauchamp, had long military careers and came from families with a tradition of service in the field <sup>30</sup>. Philip de Courtenay, a younger brother of Hugh de Courtenay, lord of Okehampton barony, was fatally wounded at Stirling in 1314 <sup>31</sup>. William de Montagu, like his father Simon, was a member of the royal household and military staff in

22 Feud.Aids, iv. 309.

23 Parl.Writs, i. 350.

24 See p. 44

25 See pp. 201, 210

26 See pp. 197-8

27 Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 51.

28 E 101/6/40.

29 Liber Quotidianus, p. 323.

30 See pp. 54, 201

31 Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 380.

the early 14th. century <sup>32</sup>.

Chivalry and the brotherhood of arms.

By the late 13th. century the trappings of chivalry were reserved to that small circle of magnates and military captains and their followers which was associated with the royal court. A brotherhood of arms between these men was projected in the cult of knighthood. The esprit de corps it fostered underlay the speech credited to Ralph Basset during the battle of Falkirk by the chronicler Hemingburgh <sup>33</sup>. According to the Augustinian canon Ralph admonished Anthony Bek, bishop of Durham, who had been urging forward the line of battle in which his troop was deployed, and reminded him that the duty of a priest lay in the celebration of the Mass while deeds of chivalry were the preserve of knights. The distinction between the priestly and the knightly roles and the implied exclusiveness of each was presumably shared by the lay aristocracy.

The brotherhood of arms between militarily strenuous knights was consolidated in a close network of personal relationships including intermarriage between their families. Simon de Raleigh and Matthew de Furneaux who served together in Flanders in 1297 were brothers-in-law <sup>34</sup>. There was a close personal bond between Simon de Montagu and Humphrey de Beauchamp. In 1287 Humphrey appeared as a witness to one of Simon's charters <sup>35</sup>. Much later in the summer of 1300 Humphrey campaigned in Simon's troop <sup>36</sup> and in 1301 he accompanied Simon to a feast held by Robert FitzPain, another chivalrous landholder, at his residence in Okeford Fitzpaine (Dors.) <sup>37</sup>. In 1304 Humphrey was a member of the band led by Simon in an attack on property of Glastonbury Abbey in Zoy <sup>38</sup>.

<sup>32</sup> Complete Peerage, ix. 78-82.

<sup>33</sup> Gough, Scotland in 1298, p.xxix.

<sup>34</sup> See pp. 18, 198

<sup>35</sup> Cal.Chart.R.1300-26, 228-9.

<sup>36</sup> Liber Quotidianus, p.199.

<sup>37</sup> Longleat MS. 11272, rot. 77; Feud.Aids, ii. 37.

<sup>38</sup> Just. 1/764 rot. 9d.



Close ties were forged between chivalrous knights who were neighbours. Gilbert de Knoville, who was an active warrior in the court circle <sup>39</sup>, held land in Puckington. His neighbour in Shepton Beauchamp was the banneret John de Beauchamp <sup>40</sup>. In 1282 they both attested a deed of William Martin, a magnate <sup>41</sup>. Gilbert maintained close ties with John's widow Cecily and son John. In 1303 he witnessed their quitclaim of common rights in the near-by manor of Ilton to Athelney Abbey <sup>42</sup>. He also attested an agreement between the younger John and Polsloe Priory <sup>43</sup>. Earlier in 1301 Gilbert had been appointed to a commission of oyer and terminer in connection with an attack on John's park in Chipstead (Surrey) <sup>44</sup>. In 1306 Cecily's grant of Knapp manor in North Curry was witnessed by Gilbert, his son John, and John of Merriott <sup>45</sup>. John of Merriott, a neighbour of both Gilbert and the Beauchamps, was Gilbert's godson <sup>46</sup>.

#### Chivalric entertainment.

The wealthiest knights could afford to provide chivalric entertainment. They retained minstrels who, by reciting chivalric legends and romances, acted as the mouthpiece for the propagation and elaboration of chivalric ideals. The minstrel found a ready audience including warriors in the households of the militarily strenuous magnates. The formulation of the knightly ideal was borne out of his response to that milieu <sup>47</sup>.

Robert FitzPain had in his service in 1306 a minstrel and a trumpeter who both performed before the king at Wimborne (Dors.) on the feast of Epiphany <sup>48</sup>. The trumpeter was in Robert's service when he played

39 E 101/6/37.

40 Feud.Aids, iv. 314-15.

41 Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 264.

42 Beauchamp Regs. 65.

43 Ibid. 62-4.

44 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 79.

45 Beauchamp Regs. 80-1.

46 K.B. 27/151 rot.4.

47 G.Duby, 'The Diffusion of Cultural Patterns in Feudal Society', Past and Present, xxxix. 3-10.

48 E 101/369/11 f.99.

at the feast of the Swans the following Whitsuntide. Many of the minstrels playing at the feast were attached to baronial retinues <sup>49</sup>. Among minstrels the harpist was accorded greatest esteem. He was the chief agent for the narration of chivalric stories. John Mautravers retained a harpist who played before the king at Wimborne early in 1306. His performance was evidently appreciated by the monarch for he was rewarded with a gift of 40s. <sup>50</sup>. He may have been the instrumentalist who a few years earlier while in John's service had entertained the king while he was being bled <sup>51</sup>. John Tregoz, a landholder in the Welsh Marches, retained a harpist who played before Richard of Swinfield, bishop of Hereford, in his palace at Sugwas in 1288 <sup>52</sup>. Many of the lesser knights from Somerset who were active campaigners were associated with magnates such as Robert FitzPain and John Tregoz. Those warriors presumably listened to the recitals of their leaders' minstrels.

#### Tournaments.

The art of the minstrel was closely associated with the science of the herald <sup>53</sup>. They came together in the tournament in which the roles of minstrel and herald might be combined. The tournament was an important event, both politically and socially as well as militarily, for the aristocracy and their followers. Thomas de Berkeley attended many in the course of his career <sup>54</sup>. Robert FitzPain evidently participated in them frequently. In November 1303 he contracted to attend Aymer de Valence at a tournament scheduled for the following Christmas and at others to be held during the period until Easter 1305. Aymer undertook to provide for Robert's retinue

49 T.H.Turner, Manners and Households Expenses of England (Roxburghe Club, 1841), 140-5.

50 E 101/369/11 f.99.

51 T.Wright, History of Domestic Manners and Sentiments (1862), 182.

52 Household Roll of Bp.Swinfield (Camd.Soc.[1st ser.], lix), 154.

53 N.Denholm-Young, 'The Song of Carlaverock and the Parliamentary Roll of Arms', Proc.Brit.Acad. xlvii, 256.

54 Berkeley MSS. i. 188.

which might be enlarged to include four instead of two knights during a tournament <sup>55</sup>.

Several warriors with lands in Somerset were present at the Dunstable tournament held in March 1309 <sup>56</sup>. Richard Lovel, John Mautravers, William de Montagu, John la Warre and Ralph de Gorges were all members of the court circle. Nicholas Pointz was lord of the barony of Curry Mallet. Henry of Glastonbury was a Lancastrian retainer. Other lesser county landholders present included Laurence de Hamelden, who had seen action in Scotland in 1298. Both John le Waleys and Thomas de Gurney had fought earlier in Scotland in the Berkeley retinue. John of Clevedon was the son of John of Clevedon, a knight who had campaigned in the mid 1290s.

Tournaments offered landholders an opportunity not only to display their skills in jousting but also to advertise their social worth. The tourney was in fact often little more than a *mêlée* although certain controls were introduced by the Statuta armorum of 1267 <sup>57</sup>. Thomas de Berkeley's elder brother Maurice died from injuries sustained at the Round Table held at Kenilworth in 1279 <sup>58</sup>. Nevertheless tournaments had a lustre which was lacking in the campaigns on the inhospitable northern border where the spoils of war were probably not lucrative. Some knights consequently preferred the excitement of the tournament to actual warfare. In 1306 after the feast of the Swans, twenty-two knights, members of the court circle associated with Prince Edward, left the army without leave to attend tournaments on the Continent <sup>59</sup>. Among them was John la Warre, a Swan knight, who by his action forfeited his lands in Somerset <sup>60</sup>.

<sup>55</sup> Cal.Doc.Scot. ed.Bain, 1272-1307, pp. 362-3

<sup>56</sup> Tomkisson, 'Retinues at the Tournament of Dunstable 1309', E.H.R. lxxiv. 70; Collectanea Topographica et Genealogica, iv. 63-72

<sup>57</sup> N.Denholm-Young, 'The Tournament in the Thirteenth Century', Studies presented to F.M.Powicke, 240-68

<sup>58</sup> Berkeley MSS. i. 147-8

<sup>59</sup> H.Johnstone, Edward of Carnarvon (1946), 115-17

<sup>60</sup> Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 544



The training of the knight.

While the military art of the knight was in the final analysis learnt on the field of battle, prospective knights served an apprenticeship to gain experience and become proficient in the use of arms. Some sons of prominent landholders and Crown servants were trained in the royal household. William de Fienles was brought up in the household of Henry III in which his father Ingram was a knight <sup>61</sup>. Edward I encouraged young men from leading families to develop their military skills. At his expense equestrian equipment was provided for John de Mohun, a ward of the Crown between 1279 and 1290. John's training was entrusted to a tutor, John Launcelewe <sup>62</sup> who, although not a knight, saw action in Scotland in 1300 under Richard de Borhunte <sup>63</sup>. During his period of tutorship John Launcelewe was evidently maintained from land held from his tutee in Leigh in Milverton hundred <sup>64</sup>.

Trainee knights, who came from chivalrous and armigerous families, were as members of the royal household styled in some documents valetti. The term, which replaced that of scutiferi, might be translated as men-at-arms. The style, which was also applied to menial servants within the royal household, was merited since it implied subservience to a lord <sup>65</sup>.

While the royal household provided the setting for the initiation of some landholders in the arts of knightly service, some men acquired their skills in the households of magnates. Nicholas de St.Maur was presumably brought up in the household of Thomas, earl of Lancaster, in which his father Laurence served. Nicholas remained in the service of Thomas and his successor <sup>66</sup>. Responsibility for cultivating the aggressive and warlike

<sup>61</sup> Powicke, The Thirteenth Century, 545 n.l.

<sup>62</sup> H.C.Maxwell-Lyte, A History of Dunster (1909), i. 37.

<sup>63</sup> Liber Quotidianus, p. 187.

<sup>64</sup> Feud.Aids, iv. 280.

<sup>65</sup> Denholm-Young, History and Heraldry, 21; cf. E 101/351/17 rot.2.

<sup>66</sup> Maddicott, 'Thomas of Lancaster and Sir Robert Holland', E.H.R. lxxxvi.458.

spirit of the future warrior fell principally on his father or an elder relative or guardian, especially in the earliest stages. William de Montagu assigned a rent of 100s. to provide his son Simon with harness for his horse <sup>67</sup>. Simon can have been at the most fifteen years old when the arrangement was made. William died in 1270 and Simon came of age about 1276 <sup>68</sup>. Thomas II de Berkeley gave his third son, John, a horse. John and his elder brothers, Maurice and Thomas, apparently lived on the family estates and were not sent to serve other magnates. Maurice and Thomas both indulged in equestrian pursuits and spear play at a tender age. They also attended tournaments. Their skills were put to the test on hunting expeditions <sup>69</sup>.

Some sons of strenuous knights served with their fathers on campaign when they were fully fledged as warriors but had not yet taken knighthood. Gilbert de Knoville was accompanied by his son John in Flanders in 1297 <sup>70</sup>. In that campaign and in Scotland in the following year Hugh Pointz's troop included his son Nicholas <sup>71</sup>. It seems clear that many lesser landholders often learnt their military skills from elder relatives. During the Falkirk campaign of 1298 the knight Robert of Brent was attended by his son Robert and the knight William of Wigborough by his younger brother Richard. Both younger men were men-at-arms <sup>72</sup>.

#### The dubbing of the knight.

Although landholders were liable to compulsory knighthood after they had attained the age of majority, the rank of knighthood was not automatically assumed by landholders when they came of age or by their heirs when they entered their inheritance. Several leading county landholders who

<sup>67</sup> Somersetshire Pleas, 8 Edw.I, 21-2.

<sup>68</sup> B.L. Add.Ch. 26,754.

<sup>69</sup> Berkeley MSS. i. 208, 215, 225.

<sup>70</sup> E 101/6/37.

<sup>71</sup> E 101/6/19; E 101/6/39.

<sup>72</sup> E 101/6/39; E 101/6/40.



served in Wales in 1277 as men-at-arms were in their mid twenties. They included John de Columbers who had taken knighthood by 1279 <sup>73</sup>. On the other hand some prominent men had taken knighthood in their early twenties. Hugh Pointz was a knight by 1277 when he was twenty-five <sup>74</sup> and Hugh de Courtenay by 1300 when he was at the most twenty-four <sup>75</sup>. The younger John de Beauchamp became a banneret at the age of twenty-three <sup>76</sup>.

For members of chivalrous families, the taking of knighthood depended on the conjunction of a suitable occasion for being dubbed with the preparedness of the candidate. They postponed becoming knights until an appropriate chivalric event, in which knighthood was conferred, took place. The relatively advanced age of most of the Somerset Swan knights was probably due to a delay in being knighted in anticipation of the eventual knighting of the monarch's eldest son. On the evidence provided in inquisitions post mortem and in records of their coming of age, it seems that several of the candidates were about thirty years old, well past the first flower of youth. They included Richard Lovel, Alan Plugenet, John la Warre and John of Merriott as well as Peter d'Evercy and William of Weyland <sup>77</sup>. Philip de Courtenay was twenty-nine at the most <sup>78</sup>. A few Swan knights were not so old. Robert FitzPain was about twenty-one and possibly slightly younger <sup>79</sup>. John Mautravers was only sixteen. His father John, who was created a banneret, was about forty <sup>80</sup>.

Some warriors were dubbed while on campaign. It was customary for knighthood to be conferred by military captains at the outset of an

<sup>73</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 209; cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 133.

<sup>74</sup> Parl.Writs, i. 204, 212; cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, pp. 21-2.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 23; App.I.

<sup>76</sup> N.B.Lewis, 'The English Forces in Flanders', Studies presented to F.M.Powicke, 318; Cal.Close, 1288-96, 432.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 35; Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 416; *ibid.* vi, p.148; K.B. 27/151 rot.4; Parl.Writs, i. 292 (cf.App.II); Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 374.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Cal.Inq.p.m. iii, p. 23; Dugdale, Monasticon Anglicanum, v. 380.

<sup>79</sup> Complete Peerage, v. 451.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.* viii, 579-81.

engagement. Ralph de Gorges had not been knighted by April 1300<sup>81</sup>. At the siege of Caerlaverock three months later he was described by the herald-poet of the Song of Caerlaverock as having been dubbed recently. His actions there were coloured by that enthusiasm and impetuosity associated with the youthful warrior<sup>82</sup>. Ralph had evidently been knighted in the early stages of the campaign. Against that example may be set that of John de Beauchamp who was created a banneret in Flanders on 1 November 1297 after hostilities had ceased<sup>83</sup>. He had presumably shown his worth as a warrior.

The social ethic of the cult of knighthood<sup>84</sup>.

By the end of the reign of Edward I up to about a third of the Somerset knights were militarily strenuous in so far as they took part in campaigns at some point of their careers<sup>85</sup>. They included the wealthiest and most powerful landholders and those lesser men who were connected to them by blood and service. Most lesser knights devoted their time to the business of the county court and the administrative affairs of the greatest landholders. Somerset was not an area in which warfare or the threat of hostilities was part of the everyday life of its inhabitants. For most Somerset knights and landholders the concept of knighthood as a brotherhood of arms was not related directly to their own experience. Nevertheless the cult of knighthood, presented in military terms, represented a social ethic. By portraying the knights as belonging to an order set apart from the rest of society, the cult legitimised their position of social dominance and served to integrate the knightly group with its great variation in wealth

81 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 548.

82 The Roll of Caerlaverock, 30.

83 Lewis, 'The English Forces in Flanders', Studies presented to F.M. Powicke, 318.

84 The following section is developed from ideas in A.Borst, 'Knighthood in the High Middle Ages: Ideal and Reality', Lordship and Community in Medieval Europe, ed. F.L.Cheyette (New York, 1968), 180-91.

85 See pp. 57-8

and power. The glorification of the knight in arms provided an ideal which might have satisfied the aspirations of landholders.

The cult of knighthood was applicable to the social experience of most knights. In chivalry were reconciled lordship and service, two poles around which the lives of the Somerset knights revolved. As landholders they were lords over men to varying degrees and as administrators and to a lesser extent as warriors they were the servants of more powerful men. Service was construed as something natural for leading members of society for whom it assumed an ennobling function.

The cult and its propagation was also directly related to the need of élite groups to foster a community to lend to their internal social cohesion. There were ties of blood and many personal contacts between knightly landholders. Their power, which bore directly on the local communities, depended rather on those relationships than on prowess in war. Relationships within local groupings of knightly landholders were coloured by conflict. The interests of knights and others, which lay in the maintenance and extension of their controls over economic resources, clashed in areas where those controls were uncertain or undefined<sup>86</sup>. By underlining the shared social basis of knightly status, such tension served as a factor for integration within the group.

Disputes between knightly landholders were usually settled by lawsuits or by compromises but conflicts frequently resulted in and were resolved in open violence. The cult of knighthood provided a mental discipline in which the knights devoted their energies to more altruistic ends than mere self interest. The portrayal of the knight as the defender of the poor and weak removed from scrutiny the knight as the defender of his own interests. Lesser knights in their relationships with the greater landholders did not merely fulfill a subordinate role but actively sought

<sup>86</sup> See pp. 121-2



to secure their own advantage <sup>87</sup>.

The county landholders through whom the law and order of the Crown was enforced showed an overbearing attitude in their administration of that law. Pressure was applied on juries to pervert the course of justice. The compiler of a Glastonbury Abbey cartulary was moved on one occasion to complain of the activity of Hugh of Popham and others in bribing the justices of trailbaston <sup>88</sup>. In 1280 several lesser knights, including Richard of Chilton, Humphrey de Kael, Walter de Loveny and Robert de Panes, were suspected of conspiracy in the administration of justice <sup>89</sup>. The enforcement of law was occasionally entrusted to men who were foremost among the transgressors against that law. In 1289 Ralph Daubeney was chosen to hold pleas concerning trespasses of venison in the south-western counties <sup>90</sup>. Earlier in 1280 he was pardoned for trespasses he had committed in the Hampshire forests <sup>91</sup>. In the same year Simon de Montagu and Henry de Lorty were imprisoned for similar offences <sup>92</sup>.

Members of chivalrous county families belonging to the court circle maintained and supported those bands against whom the trailbaston writs were directed at the beginning of the 14th. century. In 1305 Robert FitzPain and members of his household were indicted on several accounts. They were responsible for ejecting Maurice of Membury from West Bagborough in favour of his rival Stephen Beaumont who had bribed Robert. Among those indicted were Henry de Lorty and Matthew de Furneaux, both strenuous knights <sup>93</sup>. At the same time Simon de Montagu was indicted for harbouring malefactors who had been active for many years. In 1298 a commission was

87 See the relationship between John of Blackford and Richard Lovel on p. 211

88 Longleat MS. 10591, f. 7v.

89 Just. 1/759 rot. 4d.

90 Cal. Pat. 1281-92, 333

91 Ibid. 1272-81, 362-3.

92 Cal. Close, 1279-88, 9.

93 Just. 1/764 rott. 1, 2, 3d.

set up to investigate the activities of his dependants <sup>94</sup>. The indictments brought against Simon and his men in 1305 included disruption in various places, including Chard market. Simon had pursued a vendetta against Humphrey de Kael and Matthew of Ash who had incurred his displeasure as jurors in an assize which went against him <sup>95</sup>. Simon was also responsible for a forcible entry in Philip Maubank's park at Clifton Maybank (Dors.) <sup>96</sup>. In June 1304 Simon led a raid on Glastonbury Abbey's property in Zoy and his accomplices included another chivalrous knight, Humphrey de Beauchamp <sup>97</sup>.

Adherence to chivalric ideals was evidently in everyday terms nominal. Knights belonging to the court circle and heavily involved in military activity did not conduct their affairs according to a set of values different from those directing the knights who monopolized the administration of the county. The ideals illustrated in tales of knightly deeds encompassed that social framework of which the diverse group of landholders to which the knights belonged was part. The portrayal of the knight's role in ideal terms legitimised the knights' social position.

94 Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 383.

95 Just. 1/764 rott. 1-4.

96 Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 438.

97 Just. 1/764 rott. 2, 9d.



Appendix I

A list of Somerset landholders during the reign of Edward I who were knights. The dates given refer to selected documents in which the style miles was applied to them <sup>1</sup>.

Acton,

John of Acton, 1279 (d. by 1285)  
(C 47/12/2)

Ap Adam,

See Gurney

Apperlegh,

Nicholas of Apperlegh, 1289-c.95  
(K.B. 27/118 rot. 25d.; Glaston Cart. ii, p. 392)

Arthur,

Roger Arthur, 1289  
(K.B. 27/120 rot. 6)  
Richard Arthur, 1294-8\* <sup>2</sup>  
(Parl.Writs, i. 265; Longleat MS. 5577)

Ashton,

Simon of Ashton, 1298-c.1302  
(E 101/6/40; Beauchamp Regs. 65)

?Aston,

Richard of Aston, c.1276\*  
(Bruton Cart. pp. 50-1)

Audeham,

Thomas de Audeham, 1265 (d.1275)  
(Reg.Giffard, 8)

Aumale,

Geoffrey of Aumale, 1298-1312\*  
(E 101/6/39; Devon R.O., TD 51, f. 131v.)

Auno,

Alexander de Auno, c.1265/75 (d.1292)  
(B.L. Harl.MS. 316, ff. 67-8)

Bayeux,

Thomas of Bayeux, 1273-1305\*  
(Bath Carts.(2), p. 77; Som.R.O., WHb 10/474)

<sup>1</sup> For further details see Moor, Knights of Edward I

<sup>2</sup> Names in this appendix marked \* are to be found in appendix II

Basset,

Anselm Basset, 1265? (d.1280)  
(Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 213)

Sons of Anselm,

John, 1294-8\*  
(Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 62; Longleat MS. 5577)

Edmund, 1294 (d. c.1311)  
(Cal.Chanc.Wts. i. 62)

Bath )  
Weyland )

Osbert of Bath, 1280 (d.1296)  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93)

Son-in-law of Osbert,

William of Weyland, knighted 22 May, 1306.

Bawdrip,

Adam of Bawdrip, 1279 (d. c.1297)  
(Athelney Reg. p. 178)

Beauchamp, of Hatch,

John de Beauchamp, 1270 (d.1283)  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 228)

Son of John,

John, created a knight banneret in 1297\*  
(see p. 267)

Humphrey de Beauchamp, 1287-1305\*  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 229; Montacute Cart. p. 141)

Beauchamp, of Norton,

Thomas de Beauchamp, 1270  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 535)

Son of Thomas,

John, no date \*  
(B.L. Harl.MS. 316, f. 29v.)

Beer,

William of Beer, 1280  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93)

Son of William,

Gilbert, 1290-1314\*  
(K.B. 27/182 rot. 46; Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p. 184)

Berkeley,

Thomas de Berkeley, 1297 (d.1321)\*  
(E 101/6/28)

Son of Thomas,

Maurice, 1297 (d.1326)\*  
(E 101/6/28)

Bitton,

Adam of Bitton, 1272-3

(Longleat MS. 5571; Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 482)

John of Bitton, 1309\*

(Ancient Deeds belonging to the Corporation of Bath, p. 111)

Blackford,

John of Blackford, 1280-95\*

(Muchelney Cart. p. 93; Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 394)

?Bluet,

Ralph Bluet, 1265? - 76?

(Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 265; Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 66)

John Bluet, 1293

(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 11)

Botreaus,

William de Botreaus, 1324\* <sup>3</sup>

(Parl.Writs, ii(2), 655)

Boulogne,

Richard of Boulogne, c.1272

(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 404)

Boys,

Peter du Boys, c.1270-c.93

(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402; ibid. p. 392)

Branch,

Nicholas Branch, 1310 (d. c.1327)\*

(Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p. 416)

Brent,

Robert of Brent, 1301\*

(Glaston.Cart. i, p. 204)

Bret,

William le Bret, ?1254/8 - 75.

(Som.R.O., L8/1; Glaston.Cart. i, p. 219)

Bretasch,

John de Bretasch, c.1245? (d. c.1287)

(Beauchamp Regs. 61)

Briwes,

John de Briwes, 1276

(Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 119)

Burnell,

Philip Burnell, 1279 (d. c.1294)

(Cal.Close, 1272-9, 581)

- Cauntelo, of Chilton,  
Richard de Cauntelo, 1264  
(Longleat MS. 10590, ff. 80v.-81)
- Cauntelo, of West Quantockshead,  
Philip de Cauntelo, 1275  
(Glaston.Cart. i, p. 219)
- Charlcombe,  
Adam of Charlcombe, 1279  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 219)
- Cheyney,  
Nicholas de Cheyney, 1295/1307 (d. c.1326)\*  
(Beauchamp Regs. 64)
- Chilton,  
Richard of Chilton, c.1280-c.1300  
(Hylle Cart. p. 54; Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 394)
- Clevedon,  
John of Clevedon, knighted 1293 (d. by 1300)\*  
(E 198/3/5)  
Brother of John,  
Matthew, 1312  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 508)  
Son of John,  
John, knighted 22 May, 1306\*
- Clifton,  
Ignatius of Clifton, no date  
(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 287)
- Cogan,  
John de Cogan, 1281 (d.1302)\*  
(Canonsleigh Cart. p. 97)
- Columbers,  
John de Columbers, 1279 (d.1306)\*  
(Cal.Close. 1272-9, 580)
- Cotel,  
Ellis Cotel, 1269-81 (d. by 1297)  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 448; ibid. p. 435)  
Grandson of Ellis,  
Ellis, 1313  
(Canonsleigh Cart. p. 104)
- Courtenay,  
Hugh de Courtenay, 1280 (d.1292)  
(Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 53)  
Sons of Hugh,  
Hugh, 1298 (d.1340)\*  
(E 101/6/39)  
Philip, knighted 22 May, 1306

Daubeney,

Ralph Daubeney, 1279 (d.1292)  
(Somersetshire Pleas, 8Edw.I, 118)

Sons of Ralph,

Philip, 1284 (d.1294)  
(E 101/351/17 m.1)

Ellis, c.1289 (d.1305)\*  
(Bruton Cart. p. 38)

Dinham,

Oliver de Dinham, 1275 (d.1299)\*  
(Devon R.O., TD 51, f. 104 and v.)

Domer,

John of Domer, c.1270-1305\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402; Montacute Cart. p. 141)

Downhead,

Walter of Downhead, 1271 (d. c.1296)  
(The Honour of Dunster, p. 44)

Emborough,

Richard of Emborough, c.1286\*  
(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 288)

Erlegh,

John de Erlegh, 1301 (d.1324)\*  
(K.B. 27/182 rot. 46)

Everard,

William Everard, 1262 (d.1279)  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 57)

Evercy,

Thomas d'Evercy, 1280 (d. c.1293)  
(Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 53)

Peter d'Evercy, knighted 22 May, 1306 (d. c.1324)\*

Fauconberge,

Peter de Fauconberge, c.1270-98\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402; Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, f. 27v.)

Fienles,

William de Fienles, 1294 (d.1302)\*  
(Cal.Close, 1288-96, 382)

Son of William,

John, 1306  
(Cal.Close, 1302-7, 427)

FitzGeoffrey,

John FitzGeoffrey, 1272-c.88  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 501; ibid. p. 407)



FitzMartin (Martin),

Nicholas FitzMartin, 1269 (d.1282)  
(Close R. 1268-72, 135)

Grandson of Nicholas,

William Martin, 1290 (d.1324)\*  
(Cal.Close, 1288-96, 120)

FitzPain,

Robert FitzPain, 1287 (d.1315)\*  
(Cal.Close, 1279-88, 478)

Son of Robert,

Robert, knighted 22 May, 1306

Roger FitzPain, 1269-98\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 448; Longleat MS. 5577)

FitzPeter,

Reynold FitzPeter, 1277 (d.1286)  
(Parl.Writs, i. 202)

FitzRalph,

Nicholas FitzRalph, 1291/1312? (d.1312)\*  
(St.Mark's Cart. p. 263)

Ford,

Adam Ford, c.1300-1312\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 506; *ibid.* p. 508)

Furneaux,

Matthew de Furneaux, c.1270 (d. by 1285)  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402)

Son of Matthew,

Matthew, 1287? (d.1316)\*  
(Beauchamp Regs. 28)

Glastonbury,

Henry of Glastonbury, ?1307\*  
(Som.R.O., L 8/1)

Godmanstone,

Robert of Godmanstone, knighted 22 May, 1306\*

Gorges,

Ralph de Gorges, 1261 (d. c.1272)  
(Close R. 1259-61, 475)

Son of Ralph,

Ralph, ? no date (d. c.1296)  
(Hook Manor, Donhead St.Andrew, Arundell MS. G/835, no. 96)

Son of Ralph, the younger,

Ralph, 1300 (d.1323)\*  
(The Roll of Caerlaverock, 30)

Gouiz,

Brian de Gouiz, c.1262 (d.1283)  
(Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 266)

Greenham,

Philip of Greenham, 1279-83  
(C 133/24 no. 6; C 143/6 no. 17)

Greenham,

Simon of Greenham, 1264 - c.76  
(Canonsleigh Cart. p. 46; ibid. p. 36)

Grenville,

William de Grenville, 1286  
(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 213)

Gurney )  
Ap Adam )

Anselm de Gurney, 1279 (d.1286)  
(E.H.R. xv. 308)

Son of Anselm,

Thomas, 1298-1310\*  
(Collinson, A History of Somerset, iii. 58; Glaston.Cart.ii, p.555)

Son-in-law of John de Gurney(d.1291), son and heir of Anselm,

John ap Adam, 1305 (d.1310)\*  
(Cal.Pat. 1301-7, 382)

Hamelden,

Laurence de Hamelden, 1298-1310  
(E 101/6/40; Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 555)

?Hauteville,

Thomas de Hauteville, no date  
(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 287)

Heydon,

Richard of Heydon, 1280-92  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93; Cal.Pat. 1281-92, 481)

Hoese,

Alexander Hoese, 1279  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 219)

Hubert Hoese, 1279  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 219)

Horsey,

John of Horsey, no date (d.1294)  
(Devon R.O., 123 M/TB 133)

Huntley,

Thomas of Huntley, no date (d.1302)  
(Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 599)

Kael,

Humphrey de Kael, c.1270 - c.95  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402; ibid. p. 392)

Kelly,

John de Kelly, 1290?\*

(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 524)

Kenn,

Richard of Kenn, knighted 1293\*  
(E 198/3/5)

Knoville,

Gilbert de Knoville, c.1277 (d. c.1314)\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 525)

Son of Gilbert,

John, knighted 22 May, 1306.

Langelond,

Nicholas de Langelond, 1306 (d.1313)  
(Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, ii, p. 582)

Laverton)

Panes

John of Laverton, 1271  
(Close R. 1268-72, 539)

Son-in-law of John,

Robert de Panes, 1291-1301  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 404; K.B. 27/182 rot. 46)

Leigh,

Martin of Leigh, 1275  
(Glaston.Cart. i, p. 219)

Lockington,

Roger of Lockington, c.1285  
(Glaston.Cart. iii, p. 647)

Lorty,

Henry de Lorty, 1282 (d.1321)\*  
(E 101/4/1)

Uncle of Henry,

Walter de Lorty, 1289 (d.1305)\*  
(Bruton Cart. p. 35)

Lovel,

Hugh Lovel, c.1276 (d.1291)  
(Bruton Cart. p. 51)

Son of Hugh,

Richard, knighted 22 May, 1306\*

Robert Lovel, knighted 22 May, 1306\*

Loveny,

Walter de Loveny, 1280-98\*  
(Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 53; Collinson, A History of Somerset, iii. 57)

Luccombe,

Hugh of Luccombe, 1282  
(Cal.Close, 1279-88, 156)

Luttrell,

Alexander Luttrell, no date (d. c.1273)  
(Som.R.O., L 37/1)

Son of Alexander,

Andrew, 1298-1314  
(Som.R.O., L 32/1; Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p. 184)

Lynde,

John de la Lynde, 1254 (d.1272)  
(Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 387)

Son of John,

Walter, 1272\*  
(Cal.Inq.p.m. ii, p. 1)

Malherbe,

Robert Malherbe, 1280-6\*  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93; Som.R.O., H/348, f. 213)

Mandeville,

John de Mandeville, 1305 (d.1313)\*  
(Montacute Cart. p. 141)

? de la Mare,

Ellis de la Mare, ante. 1272  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 413)

Marmion,

Robert Marmion, 1265/75 - 79  
(B.L. Harl.MS. 316, ff. 66-7; Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 219)

Martin,

see FitzMartin.

Mautravers,

John Mautravers, 1270 (d.1297)  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 228)

Son of John,

John, created a knight banneret 22 May, 1306\*

Son of John, the younger,

John, knighted 22 May, 1306

Merriott,

John of Merriott, 1280 (d.1285)  
(Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 53)

Son of John,

John, knighted 22 May, 1306

John of Merriott le neveu, 1314\*  
(Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p. 184)

Moels,

Roger de Moels, 1271 (d.1295)  
(Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 174)



Mohun,

John de Mohun, 1277 (d.1279)  
(Parl.Writs., i. 202)

Brother of John,

Robert, 1277 (d.1288)  
(Parl.Writs., i. 202)

Son of John,

John, 1314\*  
(Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells, i, p. 184)

Montagu,

Simon de Montagu, 1282 (d.1316)\*  
(E 101/4/1)

Son of Simon,

William, knighted 22 May, 1306

Montfort, of Wellow,

Henry de Montfort, 1273 (d.1276)  
(Bath Carts. (2), p. 77)

Brother of Henry,

Nicholas, 1273-85  
(Hist.MSS.Com.55, Money-Kyrle, p.102; Cal.Chart.R. 1257-1300, 330)

Multon,

James de Multon, 1309\*  
(Proc.Som.Arch.Soc. xxviii(2), 174)

Muscegroes,

John de Muscegroes, 1261 (d.1275)  
(Close R. 1259-61, 475)

Son of John,

Robert, 1276? (d.1280)  
(Cal.Fine R. 1272-1307, 66)

Newburgh,

John de Newburgh, knighted 22 May. 1306

Nonnington,

?Warin of Nonnington, c.1273/4  
(Canonsleigh Cart. pp. 35-6)

Son of Warin,

Baudry, c.1280 (d.1310)\*  
(Cal.Close, 1279-88, 350)

Paulton,

Roger of Paulton, 1263 - c.65/75  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 454; B.L. Harl.MS.316, f. 59 and v.)

William of Paulton, 1280  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93)

Panes,

see Laverton.



Pauncefot,

Walter Pauncefot, 1274-87\*

(Canonsleigh Cart. p. 72; Duchy of Cornw.O., Chartularius, f.25v.)

Perham,

John de Perham, 1272\*

(Close R. 1268-72, 529)

Peytevin,

Bartholomew le Peytevin, ?1266-1301\* <sup>4</sup>

(Cal.Chart.R. 1300-26, 89; K.B. 27/182 rot. 46)

Plessis,

Richard de Plessis, 1282 (d.1289)

(Longleat MS. 10586, p. 117)

Plugenet,

Alan Plugenet, 1260 (d.1298)\*

(Close R. 1259-61, 111-12)

Son of Alan,

Alan, knighted 22 May, 1306\*

Pointz,

Nicholas Pointz, 1269 (d.1273)

(Close R. 1268-72, 135)

Son of Nicholas,

Hugh, 1277 (d. c.1308)\*

(E 101/3/13)

Popham,

Hugh of Popham, 1298-1314\*

(Collinson, A History of Somerset, iii. 56; Hist.MSS.Com.12, Wells,  
i, p. 184)

Pyn,

Thomas de Pyn, 1285

(Cal.Close, 1279-88, 408)

Raddington,

Robert of Raddington, 1280 - c.91 <sup>5</sup>

(Muchelney Cart. p. 93; Canonsleigh Cart. p. 11)

Raleigh,

Warin de Raleigh, 1262-71

(Glaston.Cart. ii, pp. 429, 467; The Honour of Dunster, p. 44)

Son of Warin,

Simon, c.1293-8\*

(Som.R.O., L 33/1; E 101/6/40)

Roges,

Simon Roges, 1293 (d.1306)\*

(Canonsleigh Cart. p. 98)

<sup>4</sup> Several members of the family may have been called Bartholomew.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Longleat MS.10586, p. 117 in which Robert was not styled miles in 1282.

- Romsey,  
Walter of Romsey, knighted 22 May, 1306\*
- Russell,  
Ralph Russell, ?1253 (d.1278)  
(St.Mark's Cart. p. 157)  
Son of Ralph,  
James, 1277 (d. c.1280)  
(Parl.Writs, i. 204)
- St.Clare,  
Robert de St.Clare, 1280 (d. c.1308)\*  
(Muchelney Cart. p. 93)
- St.Lo,  
John de St.Lo, 1272-90  
(Close R. 1268-72, 562; K.B. 27/182 rot. 46)  
John de St.Lo, c.1300 - c.1304\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 558; *ibid.* p. 559)
- St.Maur,  
Laurence de St.Maur, 1270 (d. c.1297)  
(Close R. 1268-72, 265)  
Son of Laurence,  
Nicholas, 1297\*  
(E 101/6/19)
- St.Vigore,  
Thomas de St.Vigore, ?1265 (d.1296)  
(Som.R.O., H/348, f. 287)
- Sanzaver,  
Ralph Sanzaver, 1297 (d.1314)\*  
(Cal.Close, 1296-1302, 107)
- Shapwick,  
Walter of Shapwick, 1281  
(Hylle Cart. p.53)
- Staunton,  
William of Staunton, 1280-1310\*  
(Muchelney Cart. p.93; Canonsleigh Cart. pp.45-6)
- Stawell,  
Geoffrey of Stawell, 1270 (d. c.1303)\*  
(Glaston.Cart. i, p. 35)
- Torny,  
Simon de Torny, c.1277 - c.96\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 525; *ibid.* iii, p. 679)
- Tregoz,  
John Tregoz, 1277 (d.1300)\*  
(Parl.Writs, i. 203)  
John Tregoz, of Brean, 1277-82  
(Parl.Writs, i. 203; *ibid.* 229)

Trivet,

Thomas Trivet, 1255 (d.1281)  
(Cal.Pat. 1247-58, 433)

Son of Thomas,

William, 1285 (d.1315)\*  
(K.B. 27/108 rot. 10d.)

Veel,

Robert le Veel, 1295\*  
(Cal.Pat. 1292-1301, 140)

Wake,

Andrew Wake, 1262-80  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 430; Muchelney Cart. p. 93)

Son of Andrew,

Ralph, 1294\*  
(Parl.Writs. i. 265)

Walton,

Alan of Walton, 1262 - c.72  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 430; ibid. p. 413)

Warre,

John la Warre, ? c.1265 (d. c. 1277)  
(Cal.Inq.Misc. i, p. 263)

Son of John,

Roger, 1296 (d.1321)\*  
(Parl.Writs. i. 275)

Son of Roger,

John, knighted 22 May, 1306

Wellesley,

Thomas of Wellesley, 1296-1306  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 294; Hist.MSS.Com. 12, Wells, ii, p. 582)

Weston,

John of Weston, 1266-84  
(Som.R.O., WHb 9/366; Cal.Close, 1279-88, 304)

Weyland,

see Bath

Wick,

Philip of Wick, 1263-80  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 416; Muchelney Cart. p. 93)

Wigborough,

William of Wigborough, 1289 (d.1325)\*  
(Bruton Cart. pp. 35-6)

Wootton,

Robert of Woottan, c.1270-93\*  
(Glaston.Cart. ii, p. 402; Canonsleigh Cart. p. 98)

Wraxall,

Geoffrey of Wraxall, c.1276-98\*

(Bruton Cart. p. 51; Collinson, A History of Somerset, iii. 56)

Yeovilton,

William of Yeovilton, 1275

(Glaston.Cart. i, p. 219)

Yreys,

Philip le Yreys, 1301\*

(B.L. Harl.Ch. 58 D. 35)

Appendix II

Names of those lay landholders <sup>1</sup>, arranged alphabetically, returned by the sheriff of Somerset and Dorset as holding (a) twenty librates or more of land in 1297 <sup>2</sup> and (b) forty librates or more in 1300 <sup>3</sup>.

	(a)	(b)
The earl of Cornwall	-	1+ <sup>4</sup>
The earl of Gloucester	-	1+
The earl of Leicester	-	1+
The earl of Lincoln	-	1+
John of Acton <sup>5</sup>	1	1
Richard d'Amory	-	1+
John ap Adam* <sup>6</sup>	1	1
Richard Arthur*	1	1
John of Ashby <sup>7</sup>	-	1+
Richard of Aston*	1	-
Geoffrey of Aumale*	1	1
John de Auno	-	1
Thomas of Bayeux*	1	1
Luke of Barry <sup>8</sup>	1	-
John of Basing <sup>†9</sup>	-	1
John Basset*	1	-
Roger Basset	1	1
Cecily de Beauchamp	1	1+
Humphrey de Beauchamp*	1	1
John de Beauchamp*	1	1+
John, son of Thomas de Beauchamp*	-	1
Stephen Beaumont	-	1
Gilbert of Beer*	1	-

1 For biographical details see Moor, Knights of Edward I.

2 Return made in response to writ issued 24 May, 1297: Parl. Writs, i. 292-3

3 Return made in response to writ issued 14 January, 1300: Parl. Writs, i. 335-7

4 Those landholders marked + in this appendix were listed as tenants in chief of the Crown

5 A landholder in Gloucestershire, Hampshire and Herefordshire

6 Names marked \* in this appendix are to be found in appendix I

7 A landholder in Berkshire

8 He held land in Lufton near Yeovil in 1303: Feud. Aids, iv. 316

9 The mark † in this appendix signifies a landholder in Dorset. John of Basing also had land in Somerset.



	(a)	(b)
Maurice de Berkeley*	1	1+
Thomas de Berkeley*	1	1+
William of Bingham	-	1
John of Bitton*	-	1
John of Blackford*	1	-
Henry of Blunsdon <sup>10</sup>	-	1+
Henry de Bohun †	1	1
John le Botiller †	1	1+
William de Botreaus*	-	1
Richard du Boys †	-	1
Robert du Boys	1	-
Nicholas Branch*	1	1+
Robert of Brent*	1	-
Giles de Brewes †	1	1
Robert de Briwes	1	-
Henry of Brook † <sup>11</sup>	1	-
Thomas of Brompton <sup>12</sup>	1	-
John le Brun <sup>13</sup>	1	1
William le Brun †	-	1+
Maud Burnell	-	1
Robert Burnell	1	1
Gerard de Camville <sup>14</sup>	-	1
Alexander Cheverell †	1	1
Nicholas de Cheyney*	1	1
John of Clanville <sup>15</sup>	-	1
Elizabeth of Clevedon	1	-
John of Clevedon*	1	-
John, son of John of Clevedon*	-	1
John de Cogan*	1	1+
Egelina de Columbers	1	-
John de Columbers*	1	1+

<sup>10</sup> Archdeacon of Dorset.

<sup>11</sup> He also held land in Montacute.

<sup>12</sup> A landholder in Herefordshire.

<sup>13</sup> He held land in Hill Farence and Stowey in Taunton hundred.

<sup>14</sup> A landholder in Warwickshire.

<sup>15</sup> A landholder in Devonshire.

	(a)	(b)
Joan of Compton Haweye	-	1
William Cotel	1	1
Eleanor de Courtenay	1	1+
Hugh de Courtenay*	1	1+
Thomas Danvers <sup>16</sup>	-	1
Ellis Daubeney*	1	1+
John Daundelyn <sup>17</sup>	-	1
Joyce de Dinham	-	1+
Oliver de Dinham*	1	-
John of Domer*	1	-
William de Echingham <sup>†18</sup>	1	1+
Richard of Emborough*	-	1
Henry of Erdington <sup>†</sup>	1	1
John de Erlegh*	1	1+
Reynold of Easton	1	1
Edmund Everard	1	1+
Peter d'Evercy*	1	1 <sup>19</sup>
Peter de Fauconberge	1	-
John de Ferrers	-	1+
Hugh Fichet	1	1
William de Fienles*	-	1+
Robert FitzPain*	1	1+
Roger FitzPain*	1	1
Nicholas FitzRalph*	1	1+
Ralph FitzUrse	-	1
Adam Ford*	-	1
Matthew de Furneaux*	1	1+
John Giffard	-	1
Osbert Giffard	1	1+
Henry of Glastonbury*	-	1
Robert of Godmanstone*	1	-

16 A landholder in Berkshire.

17 A landholder in Hampshire.

18 He also held land in Sussex.

19 ?..... de Evercy.

	(a)	(b)
Ralph de Gorges*	-	1+
William de Gouiz	1	-
John de Grenville <sup>20</sup>	1	1
William of Greenham	-	1
Thomas de Gurney*	1	1
Sibyl de Gurney	-	1
Eustace of Hatch <sup>21</sup>	-	1+
John de Hastings	1	1+
Geoffrey de Hauteville	1	-
Richard of Havering †	1	1
Edmund Hyde	1	-
Hawise de Keynes †	-	1
Robert de Keynes †	1	1+
John de Kelly* <sup>22</sup>	1	1
Richard of Kenn*	1	-
Gilbert de Knoville*	1	1
Maud de Kyme	1	-
Roger of Langford } <sup>23</sup>	-	1
Roger of Langford }	-	1
John le Latimer †	-	1
Thomas Lisle	-	1
William Lisle	1	1
William de Lorkeburgh	-	1
Henry de Lorty*	1	1+
Walter de Lorty*	1	1
Eleanor Lovel	1	1
Richard Lovel*	-	1+
Robert Lovel*	1	-
Walter de Loveny*	1	-
Alexander de la Lynde	1	1
Walter de la Lynde*	1	1+

20 He held land in Farmborough and Clutton: Just. 1/1325A rot.31.

21 A landholder in Wiltshire.

22 A landholder in Devon and Somerset.

23 Name entered twice. He held land in Hampshire, Devon and Wiltshire.

	(a)	(b)
Robert Malherbe*	1	1
Peter Malore †	-	1+
John de Mandeville*	-	1+
Richard of Manston <sup>24</sup>	1	-
Reynold of Mangerton <sup>25</sup>	1	-
Nicholas de la Mare	1	-
Ralph Marshal	1	-
Hebert Marsh	-	1+
Robert Martin	1	1
William Martin*	1	1+
Philip Maubank †	1	-
John Mautravers*	1	1
John of Melplash †	1	-
Henry of Merland	1	1+
John of Merriott*	-	1+
Lucy of Merriott	1	1
John de Moels	1	1+
John de Mohun*	-	1+
Agnes de Monceaux	-	1
Simon de Montagu*	1 <sup>26</sup>	1
Alexander de Montfort	1	1
Henry de Montfort	1	1
Stephen de la More <sup>27</sup>	1	-
Agatha Mortimer	-	1+
Maud Mortimer	-	1+
Henry le Moyne †	1	1
James de Multon*	-	1
Cecily de Muscegros	-	1
Baudry of Nonnington*	1	1
James of Norton †	-	1
Roger Novant † <sup>28</sup>	-	1

24 He held land in Wiltshire and probably in Dorset.

25 Probably a landholder in Dorset.

26 ?Simon de Montalt.

27 A landholder in Gloucestershire.

28 His main estates were in Devon.

	(a)	(b)
Walter Pauncefot*	1	-
Philip Paynel †	1	-
Roger Perceval	1	-
John de Percy † <sup>29</sup>	1	1
John de Perham*	1	-
John Peverel †	-	1+
Thomas Peverel †	-	1
Bartholomew le Peytevin*	1	-
Ralph Pipard	-	1+
Robert de Plessis †	-	1
Alan Plugenet*	1	-
Alan Plugenet*	-	1
Joan Plugenet	-	1+
Hugh Pointz*	1	1+
Hugh of Popham*	1	1
Hawise de Pyn	-	1
Henry de Raleigh <sup>30</sup>	-	1
Simon de Raleigh*	1	1
Richard de Rivers	-	1
Simon Roges*	1	1 <sup>31</sup>
Walter of Romsey*	1	-
Roger le Rous	1	-
Eleanor Russell	-	1+
William Russell	1	1
Thomas of Rushall	-	1+
Robert de St. Clare*	1	1+
Hugh de St. John	-	1
John de St. Lo*	1	1
Reynold de St. Martin †	1	1+
Nicholas de St. Maur*	1	1
Herbert de St. Quintin †	1	1

<sup>29</sup> He also had property in Shapwick until 1284.

<sup>30</sup> A landholder in Devon.

<sup>31</sup> Simon son of Hugh of Porlock.



	(a)	(b)
Thomas de St. Vigore	1	-
Thomas de Salleghe <sup>32</sup>	1	-
Hawise of Sandford	1	-
Ralph Sanzaver*	1	1
Walter Scamel	1	1
Ismannia la Sor	-	1
Audona of Stanford	-	1
William of Staunton*	1	1
Geoffrey of Stawell*	1	1
Roger de Stotescumbe	-	1
Robert of Strode	1	-
John Syfrewast †	1	-
Henry Tonere †	1	1
Simon de Torny*	1	1
John Tregoz*	1	1
James de Trewe †	1	-
William Trivet	1	1+
Oliver of Tuddenham <sup>33</sup>	-	1
Brian de Turberville †	1	-
Roger Tyrel <sup>34</sup>	-	1
John de Ulsefeld	-	1
Aymer de Valence	-	1+
Gunnore de Valognes	-	1
Hugh de Vautort <sup>35</sup>	-	1
John de Vautort † <sup>36</sup>	1	-
Hawise de Veel	-	1
Robert le Veel*	1	-
The widow of John Vescy the younger	-	1+
Joan de Vivonne	1	1+
Joan Wake	1	1
Ralph Wake*	1	-

<sup>32</sup> Possibly a landholder in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire.

<sup>33</sup> He held land in Limington : Feud.Aids, iv. 316.

<sup>34</sup> He also held lands in Herefordshire and Shropshire.

<sup>35</sup> A landholder in Devon.

<sup>36</sup> He also held land in Devon.

	(a)	(b)
Henry le Waleys	-	1
Ingram le Waleys †	1	1
John le Waleys	1	-
Nicholas of Walton	1	-
Roger la Warre*	-	1
William Wason	1	-
William of Wellington	-	1
Michael of Whaddon	1	-
John of Wick	1	1
William of Wigborough*	1	1+
Robert of Wootton* † <sup>37</sup>	1	-
Geoffrey of Wraxall*	1 <sup>38</sup>	-
Philip le Yreys*	1	-
?John de .....	1	-
?Peter de .....	1	-
Totals	144	166

37 He held land in Somerset in Keinton Mandeville and Tatworth :  
cf. Pedes Finium, Ric.I - Edw.I, p. 393.

38 ?Ga... de ...hale.

Appendix III

Participants in the grand assizes invoked during the eyre of 1280.

	Elector	Elected
John of Acton the elder	-	1
Richard Arthur	-	2
Joyce of Bayeux	2	2
Thomas of Bayeux	1	3
Anselm Basset	-	3
Adam of Bawdrip	1	1
Thomas de Beauchamp	1	-
William of Bickleigh	-	1
Adam of Bitton	1	3
John of Blackford	1	4
Richard of Boulogne	1	6
Thomas of Boulogne	1	-
Peter du Boys	1	5
William le Bret	1	2
Ellis Cotel	2	6
John of Domer	-	1
Walter of Downhead	1	6
Richard of Emborough	-	2
Thomas d'Evercy	3	3
Peter de Fauconberge	6	7
John FitzGeoffrey	1	4
Roger FitzPain	-	8 <sup>1</sup>
Brian de Gouiz	-	1
Philip of Greenham	-	2
Simon of Greenham	2	6
Hubert Hoese	-	1
Thomas of Huntley	-	4
Humphrey de Kael	1	3
Roger of Lockington	1	4
Walter de Loveny	1	2
Hugh of Luccombe <sup>2</sup>	-	1

1 A ninth panel included a juror called Reynold FitzPain.

2 Recorded as Hugh de Buckumbe (Somersetshire Pleas, 8Edw.I, 106)

	Elector	Elected
Walter de la Lynde	-	2
Robert Malherbe	4	7
Robert Marmion	1	2
Nicholas de Montfort	-	2
Thomas of Morton	-	2
William of Paulton	-	3
Walter Pauncefot	} 3	6
Walter Launval		-
William Payn	-	1
Richard de Plessis	-	1
Thomas de Pyn <sup>4</sup>	-	3
William de Raleigh	-	1
Walter of Romsey	-	4
Robert de St.Clare	1	4
John de St.Lo	3	6
Thomas de St.Vigore	-	4
Walter of Shapwick	-	2
William of Staunton	1	4
Geoffrey of Stawell	-	2
Simon de Torny	2	3
John Tregoz the younger	-	1
William Trivet	1	1
John de Vautort	1	1
Andrew Wake	-	2
Henry le Waleys	-	5
Humphrey of Whaddon	-	1
Philip of Wick	-	2
Robert of Wootton	1	3

3 Probably the same person.

4 Recorded as Thomas de Piri (Somersetshire Pleas, 8Edw.I, 106)

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Court of Commom Pleas

C.P. 40	De Banco Rolls
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D.L. 29	Ministers' Accounts
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E 142	Ancient Extents
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