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*When should History be written backwards?\**

BY WASSILY LEONTIEF

‘Prédire les gros évènements de l’avenir n’est pas . . . un tour de force plus extraordinaire que celui de deviner le passé . . . Si les évènements accomplis ont laissé des traces, il est vraisemblable d’imaginer que les évènements à venir ont leurs racines.’

Honoré de Balzac, *Le Cousin Pons*.

I

**A**t the time when King Francis the First founded this Collège de France, the growth of National Income and the advance of science and the arts were already favoured subjects of scholarly discourse. Four hundred years went by and essentially the same problems of economic growth seem to be of primary concern to economic theorists, not to mention economic historians and practical politicians.

Under the cold, neutral light of scientific inquiry the phenomena of development and progress – or of decline, as the case may be – present themselves to the investigator as various aspects of the process of change, that is, of a well-ordered sequence of events forming an infinite chain of causes and effects stretching from the past through the present and into the not yet realized future.

The first successful attempts to combine well-articulated theoretical reasoning with systematic, whenever possible, numerical description of the observed fact was undertaken by students of economic change only some thirty years ago. The mathematical theory of dynamic systems supplied, for obvious reasons, the fundamental notions which continue to make up the formal basis of most analysis of this kind. This explains why in the critical appraisal of new models shown – in the United States, at least – by the well-known econometric designers once or even twice a year, the question of dynamic stability plays such an important, not to say decisive, role. The models adjudged as stable pass muster; those which are found to be unstable are, as a rule, rejected out of hand. But why this predilection for stable systems?

\* This is a translation of a lecture given at the Collège de France in March 1962.

# *Two Comments on the Problem of Continuity in Anglo-Norman Feudalism*

I. BY C. WARREN HOLLISTER

**A**n essay appeared recently in this journal dealing with the controversy over Anglo-Norman feudalism and its connexion, if any, with the old English military obligation. The author, Professor J. C. Holt, a distinguished authority on the reign of King John, wrote in support of the widely accepted views set forth by John Horace Round and Sir Frank Stenton, some of which have been questioned recently by certain historians.<sup>1</sup> Three of these revisionists were given particular attention: Miss Marjory Hollings, Mr Eric John, and the present writer. Since Professor Holt focussed his criticism upon my work it seemed fitting that a brief reply be made which would explore further some of his objections.

Professor Holt and I are of one mind in our admiration of Sir Frank Stenton and Marc Bloch, two of the seminal scholars of our age. Professor Holt's tribute to these two men and his analysis of their works is thoughtful and perceptive. Stenton's masterly *First Century of English Feudalism* remains a work of the highest value today, yet the 1961 edition is nearly identical to the original one of 1932. Its revisions, in other words, are admittedly incomplete, and it is natural that three decades of scholarship should result in the work being outdated in certain limited areas. This fact is clearly no reflection on the impressive scholarship of Sir Frank Stenton.

Professor Holt objects that 'Much of the recent criticism has tended to obscure the fundamental distinction, established by Round and accepted by Stenton, between the establishment of the *servitium debitum* . . . and the establishment of knights' fees. . . .' I am not sure that this is a valid criticism of the work of Miss Hollings or Mr John, for both of them distinguish sharply between fee continuity and quota continuity.<sup>2</sup> As for my own work, I have previously called attention to Round's 'radical distinction between two separate processes: the royal assessment of knight quotas or *servitia debita* upon the tenants in chief of the crown on the one hand, and, on the other, the more gradual subinfeudation by which the tenants in chief enfeoffed knights to meet their quotas,'<sup>3</sup> and have based much of my analysis upon that very point. Professor Holt is quite right in stressing this important dichotomy, and it is to be

<sup>1</sup> J. C. Holt, 'Feudalism Revisited,' *Economic History Review*, 2nd. ser. XIV (1961), pp. 333-40.

<sup>2</sup> Marjory Hollings, 'The Survival of the Five-Hide Unit in the Western Midlands,' *English Historical Review*, LXIII (1948), pp. 453-87; *The Red Book of Worcester*, ed. Hollings (London, 1934-50), IV, pp. xx-xxxix; Eric John, *Land Tenure in Early England* (Leicester, 1960), pp. 140-61, especially p. 149.

<sup>3</sup> 'The Norman Conquest and the Genesis of English Feudalism', *American Historical Review*, LXVI (1961), p. 643.

hoped that nobody familiar with Round's work would be so unwise as to ignore it.

In Professor Holt's view the issue of continuity turns largely on the matter of the quotas. Neither Miss Hollings nor Mr John, he believes, made a convincing case for an Anglo-Saxon precedent for the Anglo-Norman *servitia debita*: 'only Professor Hollister, in fact, has produced an apparently workable hypothesis of continuity, not in the *servitium* but in the closely allied matter of scutage.' This observation may be a little misleading in so far as it implies that the three critics are essentially of one mind in opposing the notions of Round and Stenton – that they all adhere to some monolithic theory of continuity. On the issue of quota continuity I have taken exception to the theories of Miss Hollings and Mr John and have defended at some length the views of Round: 'Turning from the individual fees to the quotas of the tenants in chief, the thesis of direct continuity becomes even more difficult to maintain . . . etc.'<sup>1</sup> It was not my intention to suggest an Anglo-Saxon precedent for the feudal quotas, for I do not believe that any such precedent can be found. The controversy cannot, I believe, be reduced to a simple conflict between pro-Round and anti-Round forces without a certain distortion.

Since my ideas on scutage rates<sup>2</sup> are, in Professor Holt's view, the only 'apparently workable hypothesis of continuity,' he devotes a good deal of effort to refuting them. If my conclusions are valid, he writes, 'then Round's arguments would have to be subjected to severe qualifications.' My conclusion is, in brief, that over a considerable period scutage tended to be set at such a rate that each fee paid the crown the approximate sum necessary to hire a mercenary knight for the period that the enfeoffed knight would otherwise have served. This ratio between the length of service, the scutage rate, and the daily wage of a knight, was first set forth by Round himself when he wrote, 'It may fairly be assumed that this normal 'scutage' would be based on the estimated cost of substitutes paid direct,' and called attention to the relationship between the 8*d.* wage under Henry II, the 40 days of feudal service, and the two-mark scutage of 1159: Scutage = wage × term of service, or  $S = WT$ .<sup>3</sup> I suggested that Round's equation was by no means universally valid during Henry II's reign: 'Under Henry II, the two-mark scutage which one would expect was more often than not replaced by an assessment of one mark,' but that it harmonized remarkably with what small evidence we have on scutage rates and the service period in Henry I's reign, and that it fits perfectly our evidence on Anglo-Saxon commutation.<sup>4</sup> Accordingly, the formula  $S = WT$  spans the gulf between pre-Conquest and Angevin England.

Professor Holt's criticism is based on his contention that the elements in the equation are often insecurely or inadequately based. It is perfectly true that our evidence on matters such as scutage rates and service terms is in many

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.* p. 651 *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> 'The Significance of Scutage Rates in Eleventh and Twelfth-Century England,' *Eng. Hist. Rev.* LXXV (1960), pp. 577–88.

<sup>3</sup> *Feudal England* (London, 1895), p. 271. In  $S = WT$  I use the symbols employed by Professor Holt in his criticism of my article on scutage.

<sup>4</sup> 'Scutage Rates,' pp. 585 ff.

instances uncomfortably thin, that our views might well be changed by the discovery of a single new charter, and that consequently the equation cannot be regarded as anything more than an hypothesis. This point was perhaps insufficiently stressed in my original article, and Professor Holt's criticism is valuable in making it clear that the evidence for  $S = WT$  is by no means conclusive. On the other hand, the evidence has not been contrived to fit the hypothesis as Professor Holt seems to imply. Nor is it any thinner than the evidence on which many of our conclusions regarding Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Norman institutions are based; our source materials from this age are by no means abundant.

Professor Holt begins by pointing out that there were several scutage rates under Henry II, and that 'the *prima facie* case for using the equation  $S = WT$  as a general principle for the second half of the twelfth century is not particularly convincing'. He is unquestionably correct in pointing out that the relationship under Henry II was not nearly so neat as Round implied, and I too endeavoured to emphasize its vagueness during the Angevin age. Professor Holt is perhaps on less secure ground in his related statement that 'there is no real evidence for such a principle'. The Dialogue of the Exchequer states explicitly that the scutage revenues were used by the monarchy to hire mercenaries, confirming Round's contention that scutage 'would be based on the estimated cost of substitutes paid direct'.<sup>1</sup> Professor Holt points out that the commutation of castle guard was not invariably related to a daily wage of 6*d.* or 8*d.*, but that 'sometimes it was probably the result of bargaining between lord and tenants'. Perhaps this is so, but we know that in a given scutage the rate was standard throughout England and cannot have been a consequence of bargains between the king and individual lords. Moreover, castle guard commutation was *normally* related to daily wages. As Stenton himself remarks, 'the castle-guard rents of the thirteenth and even later centuries are useful materials for earlier history. They continually illustrate the smallness of the wage - 8*d.* a day in the reign of Henry II - for which knights could once be hired.'<sup>2</sup>

The equation  $S = WT$  is based, during Henry I's reign, on the assumption of a 30*s.* scutage rate being the result of a sixty-day service term and a 6*d.* daily wage. Professor Holt calls my evidence for the service term and the 30*s.* scutage 'threadbare' and asserts that the equation 'loses all sense when applied to the minute amount of evidence which is all that survives for the first half of the century'. The evidence is thin, to be sure, but in the absence of fuller documentation the 30*s.* rate and the two-month term have been widely accepted. My own contribution was to point out that these previously accepted conclusions can be connected under Henry I, as in Anglo-Saxon times and in 1159, by the equation  $S = WT$ . As for the two-month service period, it is based on the one document from Norman England that makes any statement whatever

<sup>1</sup> *Dialogus de Scaccario*, ed. A. Hughes et al. (Oxford, 1902), pp. 98-9.

<sup>2</sup> F. M. Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism* (2nd ed. Oxford, 1961), p. 209. This is the commonly accepted view of A. L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta* (2nd ed., Oxford, 1955), p. 18, and J. H. Round, 'Castle Guard,' *Archaeological Journal*, LIX (1902), pp. 147-52. The contrary view, which Professor Holt seems to support, was taken by Sidney Painter, 'Castle Guard,' *Amer. Hist. Rev.* XL (1935), pp. 450-9.

on the matter. The charter, which stipulates a two-month service period in wartime and 40 days in peacetime, is subject to a variety of interpretations. Since I have discussed it thoroughly elsewhere,<sup>1</sup> I will observe here merely that my own interpretation of it is neither radical nor bizarre. It is regarded as good evidence for the duration of Anglo-Norman military service by virtually every scholar who has had occasion to express himself on the subject, including both Sir Frank and Lady Stenton. Sir Frank regards the FitzGilbert charter as having the weight of an 'official definition' of 'the proper duration of a knight's service'.<sup>2</sup>

It is particularly significant that with one or two isolated exceptions the two-month term is found nowhere on the Continent,<sup>3</sup> nowhere in England from Angevin times onward, but that it is found in the Berkshire customs relating to military service in pre-Conquest England. In other words, prior to the later twelfth century when evidence for a 40-day service term begins to accumulate there are only two references to duration of service: (1) The T.R.E. Berkshire passage, and (2) the FitzGilbert charter. Both report a term of two months. There is no evidence to suggest that the service term of pre-Conquest Berkshire differed from that of other shires. Indeed, passages from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* attest that the fyrd of a number of shires would normally be called to duty as a unit and dismissed as a unit. And Stenton echoes the views of most other specialists in regarding the two-month term of the FitzGilbert charter as typical of the age in which it was written. Perhaps entirely different service terms were in vogue during the reigns of William I, William II, and Henry I, but such a conclusion would have to depend upon evidence as yet undiscovered. At present we can only point to the two examples of two-month terms, separated by some three-quarters of a century of silence, and to the suggestive fact that the Conqueror and his sons frequently summoned and employed the fyrd and the feudal host as a unit. The reasonable hypothesis, which must of course be accepted only with the appropriate reservations, is that two months was the customary service term for both fyrd and feudal host from Edward the Confessor's reign to Stephen's.

Professor Holt objects that the duration of service cannot have declined from two months in the 1130's to 40 days under Henry II because Henry II refused to accept precedents drawn from the previous reign and because he had an urgent need for long-term service in his continental wars. The latter objection neglects the fact that neither 40 nor 60 days were even remotely

<sup>1</sup> 'The Annual Term of Military Service in Medieval England,' *Medievalia et Humanistica*, XIII (1960), pp. 40-47.

<sup>2</sup> Stenton, *English Feudalism*, p. 178; similar views are expressed by Lady Stenton, *English Society in the Early Middle Ages* (2nd ed. Harmondsworth, 1952), pp. 71-2; A. L. Poole, *Obligations of Society* (Oxford, 1946), p. 39; *Domesday Book to Magna Carta*, pp. 15-16; Frank Barlow, *The Feudal Kingdom of England* (London, 1955), p. 117; G. W. S. Barrow, *Feudal Britain* (London, 1956), pp. 84-5.

<sup>3</sup> I know of only one exception that is entirely free of ambiguity: in Normandy where, at least after its conquest by Philip Augustus, the forty-day custom was interpreted in such a way that the holder of a half fee owed 20 days, the holder of a quarter fee owed 10 days, etc., there is at least one instance of the holder of 1½ fees owing 60 days' service: E. Boutaric, *Institutions militaires de la France* (Paris, 1863), p. 127 (Bailliage of Caen). The same figure is found in an apparently corrupt passage relating to military service in *Les Établissements de St. Louis*, ch. lxi (Boutaric, *op. cit.* pp. 189-90).

adequate for one of Henry's normal campaigns on the Continent; he had to turn to other expedients such as scutage. The former objection, that Henry II sought to recover the royal rights enjoyed by Henry I, is certainly true to a point. He tried, but he did not always succeed. The annual revenues disclosed in Henry II's pipe rolls, for example, usually fell below the figure reported in the one surviving pipe roll of Henry I. Henry II tried, but ultimately failed, to assess scutage on surplus fees as Henry I had done. Professor Holt calls attention to royal instructions issued in 1158 to the military tenants of Abingdon and Malmesbury abbeys ordering that they perform their service to their lords as their ancestors had done under Henry I. He regards these writs as conclusive proof that the service term cannot have declined from two months under Henry I to forty days under Henry II as our other evidence would suggest. But when Professor Holt analyses an analogous statement in the FitzGilbert charter – that Hugh de Ralegh is to serve John FitzGilbert for two months in wartime 'ad tale servitium quale milites baronum terre facere debent rationabiliter' – he points out, quite rightly I think, that since the charter refers 'to the knight's service owed to the baron, not to the baron's service owed to the King . . . the words *ad tale . . . rationabiliter* are best interpreted as referring to the nature and quality of the service, not to its duration (p. 335).<sup>1</sup> Nor, by the same token, do the writs of 1158 to Malmesbury and Abingdon refer to duration of service. One must remember that knights served not only by joining the royal host but also by paying scutage, and that this important service declined from a maximum of 30 shillings per fee under Henry I to a maximum of two marks per fee under Henry II. The Malmesbury and Abingdon writs can no more be used to prove a parity in service terms than to prove a parity in scutage rates. The writs have to do with relations between ecclesiastical tenants-in-chief and their vassals, not with issues that are essentially matters of royal policy such as scutage rates and duration of service. There is no evidence that the latter was ever at issue between barons and their vassals in the days of Henry II. What was at issue was the number of knights owed by each vassal to his ecclesiastical lord. Many pages in the feudal records of the twelfth century churches are devoted to this controversy – actually a mass of innumerable individual disputes. It is with this issue above all that the writs of 1158 are undoubtedly concerned. The problem of reviving the former two-month service term was beyond their purview.

The 30-shilling scutage is based on three documents from Henry I's reign, two of them related and the third independent. Two scholars have previously worked on the problem of the scutage rate under Henry I, and both have concluded that it was probably 30s. per fee. One of the two was Sir Frank Stenton.<sup>1</sup> The earliest of the relevant documents, a letter of Bishop Herbert of Norwich written sometime prior to 1120, is unambiguous in its testimony to the 30s. rate,<sup>2</sup> but Professor Holt takes strong exception to the remaining evidence. It consists of the well-known writ of 1127 by which Henry I reduced the

<sup>1</sup> *English Feudalism*, pp. 181–83. The other was J. F. Baldwin, *The Scutage and Knight Service in England* (Chicago, 1897), p. 3.

<sup>2</sup> Printed in Round, *Feudal England*, p. 270.

scutage due from Ely from £100 to £60, taken in connexion with the related entry in the Pipe Roll of 1130 stating that the Bishop of Ely owes £240 for a quitclaim 'de superplus militum'. This Pipe Roll passage demonstrates that the bishopric had been paying scutage on its surplus enfeoffments but was now assessed on the basis of its *servitium debitum* alone. Since the *servitium debitum* of Ely was forty knights, an assessment of £60 would work out at 30s. a fee, a conclusion that is confirmed dramatically by Bishop Herbert's letter disclosing a £60 scutage on 40 fees. This perfect correlation of two unrelated pieces of evidence can, in Stenton's words, hardly be a mere coincidence.<sup>1</sup> In objecting to the Ely evidence, Professor Holt appears to have overlooked the all-important pipe roll entry. Consequently he misses the crucial point that the reduced scutage represents the *servitium debitum* alone whereas the old rate of £100 represents an assessment on all the knights of the abbey including those enfeoffed in excess of the 40-knight quota. Accordingly, he writes, 'if such arithmetical methods are to be used at all, it is best to have the arithmetic correct. The significant sum in the Ely evidence is not the £60 to which Henry I reduced the scutage in 1127 but the £100 which was the *customary* rate prior to that date.' Indeed, both figures are significant, but had Professor Holt considered the pipe roll entry he would perhaps have agreed that the £60 figure is *useful* in determining the scutage rates because we know that the Ely quota was 40 knights, whereas the £100 figure is not useful because we do not know the extent to which Ely was over-enfeoffed in 1127. He points out that a scutage of £100 at 30s. a fee would require a total of  $66\frac{2}{3}$  fees but that 'as Sir Frank Stenton shows', there is no evidence that the church of Ely had enfeoffed such a figure, the old enfeoffment (1135) being  $56\frac{1}{4}$ ; 'it may be that the *servitium* was increased to 80 for a time by Rufus; but the equation fits neither of these figures. At this crucial point, in fact, it fails completely. We are left with nothing to fill the gap between the reign of Henry II and pre-Conquest England.'

This, as we have seen, is not a particularly fruitful line of attack since the relevant figure is the £60 connected with the *servitium debitum* and since we have no way of determining the surplus enfeoffments as of 1127. Let us follow the argument out nevertheless. Professor Holt says, on the authority of Stenton, that there is no evidence of the church of Ely supplying a figure of  $66\frac{2}{3}$  fees. The relevant point here, however, is that there is no evidence that the church had *not* enfeoffed such a figure in 1127. Here are Stenton's words on the subject: '... the fact that only  $56\frac{1}{4}$  of the fees acknowledged by the Bishop of Ely in 1166 had been created by 1135 is no proof that a larger number of fees had not existed on the episcopal lands earlier in the reign of Henry I.' Between 1127 and 1135, he points out, there occurred the accession to the see of Bishop Nigel in 1133 who immediately held a great plea before his tenants in which he recovered a large number of manors that had in the past been wrongfully alienated. 'It is therefore probable that in 1127 the fees existing on the lands of the bishopric may have approached very nearly to the number of  $66\frac{1}{3}$  [sic] which would have brought in to the king the sum of a hundred pounds on a

<sup>1</sup> 'Scutage Rates,' pp. 581-2; Stenton, *English Feudalism*, p. 183.

scutage of thirty shillings.’<sup>1</sup> Let us be perfectly clear on this vital point: the £100 Ely scutage prior to 1127 neither proves nor disproves the 30s. rate; the £60 scutage after 1127, on the forty knight *servitium debitum* alone, is excellent evidence for the 30s. rate and is accepted as such by Sir Frank Stenton. Professor Holt’s contention that my arithmetic is incorrect, that ‘at this crucial point’ the formula ‘fails completely’ should perhaps be modified in the light of the *de superplus militum* entry in the Pipe Roll of 1130 and of Sir Frank Stenton’s own position on the subject. It might be more appropriate to conclude that we cannot be certain of the 30s. scutage under Henry I but that our present limited evidence indicates that scutage was probably levied at such a rate.

Perhaps the most interesting application of the formula  $S = WT$  is to the evidence of military commutation in Anglo-Saxon times. Here again Professor Holt takes strong exception to my theory. His most incisive objection, however, is based upon an incomplete understanding of my argument. ‘It is also important’, he writes, ‘that such a formula should associate like with like. Professor Hollister’s equation  $20s. = 60 \times 4d.$  is derived initially from the Berkshire Domesday which states that one *miles* went from five hides and that 4s. were given him from each hide as food and pay for two months. He reinforces this by evidence drawn from the West Saxon boroughs among which, for example, Malmesbury sent one man or 20s. “pro honore v hidarum”. Now it should be apparent that these are not like but unlike. The five Berkshire hides produce one warrior *and* 20s.; the five Malmesbury hides produce one warrior *or* 20s. The 20s. in Berkshire go to the warrior; the 20s. at Malmesbury go to the king’.<sup>2</sup> It was not my intention, however, to use the borough evidence to *reinforce* the Berkshire passage or to regard them as ‘like’ evidence. The Berkshire entry provides the indispensable information that the service term was two months and that the warrior representative of the five-hide unit was paid 20s. The passage has nothing to do with commutation. Evidence for the latter is found in the borough entries to which Professor Holt refers. The Berkshire and Malmesbury passages are entirely dissimilar, but they arise out of the same military system. The Malmesbury passage, and other similar passages, disclose that certain towns could on occasion commute their fyrd obligation, and that when they did so it was at the rate of 20s. per fighting man. The Berkshire passage, having nothing directly to do with this custom of military commutation, supplies the crucial fact that 20s. was the customary wage of a fyrd soldier. This evidence from Domesday is by no means extensive, but there is none to contradict it so far as I know. From what evidence we have, it would seem that military commutation in late-Saxon times, when it existed at all, was paid at a rate per soldier identical to the rate at which soldiers were paid, i.e., 20s. Oxford, for example, owed the crown £20 or twenty warriors.<sup>3</sup> When it paid the crown £20, the crown could then use that sum to hire 20 warriors of its own, just as Henry I might use the £60 from Ely to replace the Ely 40-knight quota with 40 mercenary knights for 60 days at 6d. per day. Professor Holt

<sup>1</sup> *English Feudalism*, p. 183.

<sup>2</sup> See *Domesday Book*, I, 56b, 64b. Cf. 154, 238 (Oxford and Warwick).

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* I, 154.



objects that 'there is no parallel at all between the borough commutations and scutage. The earlier payments were fixed charges and the option between them and personal service probably lay with the boroughs. Scutage in contrast was permitted as an act of royal grace and the King decreed the rate at which it should be levied.' But even accepting Professor Holt's reservations, the parallel between the two remains strong; in both cases a sum of money is paid to the crown in lieu of military service owed to the crown, and in both cases the amount of money paid as commutation seems to be directly proportional to the number of warriors that would otherwise be sent. Moreover, the references to Anglo-Saxon commutation provide no inkling as to whether the option was with town or crown. If the fact that borough commutation rates are recorded as discrete figures in Domesday is to be taken as proof that they were 'fixed,' then by the same token the 20s. wage for two months' service was equally 'fixed' in the Berkshire entry, and, indeed, the equation  $S = WT$  was 'fixed' in these very passages. And Sir Frank Stenton concludes, as we have seen, that scutage under Henry I was probably 'fixed' at 30s. a fee.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Holt might wish to re-examine the conclusions of the men whom he seeks to defend. On the subject of Anglo-Saxon commutation, for example, Round wrote, 'Indeed, a little consideration will show that payment in lieu of military service, which was the essential principle of scutage, could be no new thing. The two forms which this payment might assume – payment to a substitute, or payment to the crown – both appear in Domesday as applicable to the fyrd.'<sup>2</sup> But it is above all with the new edition of Stenton's *English Feudalism* that Professor Holt is concerned, and in attempting to defend that work against the allegedly corrosive forces of my argument he is obliged to take issue with it on each of the three key points relating to the twelfth-century scutage system: (1) *On the thirty shilling scutage*: After examining both sides of the issue, Stenton returns to his original hypothesis 'that scutage was normally taken under Henry I at a rate of thirty shillings on the knight's fee (pp. 181–2, cf. pp. 182–3)'. (2) *On the use of castle commutation rates to determine twelfth-century knight's wages*: '... the castle-guard rents of the thirteenth and even later centuries ... continually illustrate the smallness of the wage – eight pence a day in the reign of Henry II – for which knights could once be hired ... (p. 209)'. (3) *On the two-month service term of John FitzGilbert's charter*: 'John son of Gilbert had served Henry I and Stephen, and was to serve Henry II, as marshal. No one could speak with more authority about the proper duration of a knight's service. The careful phrases of his charter may fairly be allowed the weight of an official definition (p. 178)'.

One additional point deserves discussion. Professor Holt defends Sir Frank Stenton's view that the *miles* of the Berkshire passage is a *ceorl* rather than a thegn as recent critics have maintained. My own view is that he was not necessarily either – that he was a *miles* – not a mounted knight, obviously, but

<sup>1</sup> *English Feudalism*, pp. 182–83.

<sup>2</sup> *Feudal England*, p. 270, cited in my 'Scutage Rates,' p. 585, n. 5.

merely a soldier.<sup>1</sup> As warrior-representative of a five-hide unit he was, indeed, often a thegn, but thegns were not always available and frequently the responsibility, and the 20s. wage, must have fallen on a member of the upper peasantry. Professor Holt observes that 'while the fyrd survived the Conquest, the thegn did not. Sir Frank's critics cannot have it both ways. If they accept that service to the fyrd was assessed by hides, then they cannot also argue that the characteristic warrior of the force was a thegn.' I agree completely with Professor Holt that the five-hide requirement and its related support system persisted after the Conquest, but I am not convinced that this fact proves that the characteristic warrior in the five-hide force was necessarily a *ceorl*. The territorial units continued to produce, when summoned, the best warrior available be he free peasant or ex-thegn. It should be observed that the thegnhood did not simply vanish in 1066. Many thegns were killed at Fulford, Stamford Bridge, and Hastings; others went into exile. But in all likelihood most of the smaller thegns remained, sinking a step in the tenurial hierarchy as the new fees were created, declining in status, but continuing to exist. Thus, Domesday records numerous holdings of *Anglici tegni*;<sup>2</sup> the process of submersion of English freemen by Norman tenants has been discussed by important scholars from Paul Vinogradoff to Dr H. P. R. Finberg.<sup>3</sup> Here are Sir Frank Stenton's remarks on the subject: 'Infact, there exists a considerable quantity of evidence which would suggest that a portion at least of the Old English land-owning class was not displaced so much as submerged; that the Norman nobility was superimposed upon it as it were. . . .'<sup>4</sup> Professor Holt's position seems to be that the post-Conquest fyrd must have been a throng of common peasants. I find it difficult to believe that the Norman kings could consider transporting such a band as this across the Channel to fight on the Continent as they did in 1073 and 1078 and purported to do in the famous episode of 1094 when the support money was confiscated by Flambard.<sup>5</sup> At Gerberoi in 1078 King William owed his life to one of these English soldiers, Toki son of Wigot, a thegn of Wallingford.<sup>6</sup>

Professor Holt views 'arithmetical methods' with evident distaste, even when they are employed by the men whom he would defend. Accordingly, he dismisses Round's 10-knight *constabularia* theory almost casually as an unfortunate capitulation to this kind of historical aberration. I have myself criticized Round's *constabularia* theory and am in complete accord with Professor

<sup>1</sup> On this, and the related matter of the territorial basis of the thegn's military obligation, see my article, 'The Five-Hide Unit and the Old English Military Obligation,' *Speculum*, XXXVI (1961), pp. 61-74, and my book *Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions* (Oxford, 1962), pp. 64-80.

<sup>2</sup> E.g. IV, 445, 454 ff.

<sup>3</sup> Vinogradoff, *English Society in the Eleventh Century* (Oxford, 1908), p. 410; D. C. Douglas, *Feudal Documents from the Abbey of Bury St Edmunds* (London, 1932), p. lxxxix; Finberg, *Tavistock Abbey* (Cambridge, England, 1951), pp. 62-3.

<sup>4</sup> Stenton, *William the Conqueror* (New York and London, 1908), p. 237.

<sup>5</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, E, 1073, 1094; Florence of Worcester, *Chronicon ex Chronicis*, ed. B. Thorpe (London, 1848-9), II, 10, 35; William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Regum Anglorum*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1889), II, 316; Henry of Huntingdon, *Historia Anglorum*, ed. T. Arnold (R.S., 1879), p. 217.

<sup>6</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, D, 1079; cf. Ordericus Vitalis, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, ed. A. LePrévost (Paris, 1838-55), II, 387. F. M. Stenton points this out in his 'English Families and the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 4th ser. XXVI (1944), 6.

Holt on this matter, but I wonder if he realizes its implications. Round regarded the *constabulariae* as absolutely essential to his theory of knight service: 'I am anxious', he writes, 'to make absolutely clear the point that between the accepted view and the view which I advance no compromise is possible. The two are radically opposed. As against the theory that the military obligation of the Anglo-Norman tenant-in-chief was determined by the assessment of his holding, whether in hidage or in value, I maintain that the extent of that obligation was not determined by his holding, but was fixed in relation to, and expressed in terms of, the *constabularia* of ten knights, the unit of the feudal host.'<sup>1</sup> Round could concede the possibility of Anglo-Saxon scutage, but he could never compromise on the matter of the constabularies. It would seem, therefore, that Round's argument would have to be subjected to severe qualifications after all, and that on this most important point Professor Holt and I are both to be numbered among its critics.

*University of California, Santa Barbara*

<sup>1</sup> *Feudal England*, p. 261.