Robert of Beaumont, Count of Meulan and Leicester: His Lands, his Acts, and his Self-Image

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Robert of Beaumont, lord of Beaumont-le-Roger and Pont Audemer, count of Meulan and Leicester, died in 1118. He belonged to a generation of the Anglo-Norman aristocracy which experienced critical changes in what it meant to be an aristocrat, and which enjoyed the enormous opportunities presented by the conquest of England by the Norman dynasty. Unfortunately, his generation was the one which immediately preceded the expansion in the production of written acts by lay people so suggestively explored by Michael Clanchy. The collection of Robert’s acts does not therefore result in much of a harvest, quite unlike the hundreds of acts which survive for his sons. In the case of Count Robert, only thirteen full Latin texts survive, although there are notices of over twice that many. But such as survive are important. Few though they are, they reveal how the Anglo-Norman aristocracy was already changing its attitude to the written act, and how pre-Conquest English influences were having an impact on the aristocracy as much as the royal household.

Robert’s career provides a frame for what we can learn from his written acts. He was a member of the first generation of the Anglo-Norman nobility. He fought on the field of Hastings as a young knight in Duke William’s army, and lived to lead a wing of Henry I’s army at Tinchebray forty years later. In between those two defining events, he was a loyal servant of the Conqueror, raised himself to great power at the court of William Rufus, and was there when Rufus’s reign ended abruptly and unexpectedly in a clearing in the New Forest. It was Robert who was principally responsible for raising Rufus’s brother, Henry, to the throne, and Robert was well known thereafter as the king’s friend, his chief supporter. But Robert’s story is not simply that of a successful courtier. He was at the heart of the rise of a new aristocracy and a new order in northern France. He took advantage of his opportunities, and he adapted and aggrandized himself to a level of power and wealth beyond the imagination of his predecessors.

The biographical material for Robert’s life is not overwhelming. However we can say that he was born into one of the greater lineages of the duchy of Normandy a year or two before 1050. He was the son of Roger fitz Humphrey,
or Roger of Beaumont, one of the principal elder counsellors of Duke William, and he was probably named after his uncle, his father's younger brother, Robert fitz Humphrey. His paternal lineage can be traced back to the Norman aristocracy that emerged during the reign of Duke Richard I (942–996) and his grandfather, Humphrey de Vieilles, was a great man at the court of Duke Richard II (996–1026). Humphrey possessed, and had probably inherited, a great estate in the lower valley of the little river Risle, basing himself at the emerging port of Pont Audemer near the mouth of the Risle. Humphrey’s patrimony was added to by his son Roger, who extended his estates by acquiring by ducal favour a block of estates further upriver, south of the ducal fortress of Brionne, where the family erected a castle at Beaumont, from which Roger proudly took his name.¹

These great Norman estates were the foundation of Robert’s power, but what made him exceptional was the marriage which his father entered into with Adeline, sister and eventual heiress of Count Hugh of Meulan.² On Hugh’s childless death in late in 1080, Robert acquired by right of his mother the county of Meulan, which may not have been particularly extensive, but which made up for it by being a strategic object of desire for both Normans and Capetians. Meulan, with its bridge and island fortress in the Seine between Mantes and Poissy, and its sprawling hillside town on the right bank of the great river, was an independent power which in 1080 had already proved itself dangerous to the Capetians. Duke Richard II had drawn its first known count, Waleran, into a Norman orbit, perhaps as a result of Waleran’s alliance with Dreux, count of the Vexin, the duke’s friend. It was not therefore surprising that Count Hugh, son of Waleran, should have chosen to marry his sister into the Norman aristocracy.³

Robert’s acquisition of Meulan happened long before his father’s death, and it made him an independent force at the court of William the Conqueror. Meulan was a most important place to the Conqueror. The last count of the Vexin, a close associate of the Conqueror, had retired from the world in 1077, leaving King Philip of France to gain a considerable degree of power there by his

¹ For the early Beaumont family, David Bates, Normandy before 1066 (London, 1982), 100–2. Some elements of this paper were given at the conference ‘Records, Bureaucracy and Power in the Anglo-Norman Realm, 1066–1204’, at the National Archives, Kew, Saturday 27 March 2004.
² For Adeline his mother, see OV iii, 240; see also no. 8, and Count Hugh's reference to Henry de Beaumont as his nepos, Cartulary of Préaux, Archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 132v.
acquisition of the count’s former towns of Pontoise and Mantes. The region had been further destabilized by the war between Curthose and his father which had taken place in the Norman Vexin. Robert of Beaumont’s succession to Meulan in 1080 was a godsend to King William, allowing him to claw back some influence in the only region where Norman and Capetian armies confronted each other head to head and at a time when Norman power was in decline.4

The Conqueror’s death in due course added considerably to Count Robert’s domains. Robert and his younger brother, Henry, had plainly grown close to William Rufus throughout the 1080s. They could expect to benefit from his accession, and Henry was indeed one of the first major beneficiaries of Rufus’s generosity. Before the end of 1088 an earldom had been constructed for Henry based on Warwick. Rufus has to have made his arrangements for Henry of Beaumont in consultation with his father and his brother, for it involved the assignment to him of most of the family’s English lands, which were largely noted as belonging to Robert of Meulan in the Domesday Survey. This unusual family arrangement was made while Henry’s father was still alive and active, and involved the transfer of a major landed estate away from his elder brother. It is tempting to suggest that the royal assets which Robert of Meulan had acquired in England before 1100 in Norfolk, Berkshire and Dorset may have been compensation for what he had lost when the earldom of Warwick was created.5

Robert and Henry also seem to have had some ambitions to benefit from the generosity of Robert Curthose, the new duke of Normandy. Robert of Meulan in particular appears as a prominent satellite of the ducal court in 1089, after the fuss over Rufus’s succession had died down. Considering the location of his lands, it was imperative for Count Robert to be in Normandy and the Île de France. But the instability of Duke Robert’s court made it a dangerous place to pursue political advantage. The year 1090 was difficult for Count Robert. As Orderic Vitalis tells the story, his father had been offered the castle and lordship of Brionne on the Risle in central Normandy as an exchange for the castle of Ivry on the Norman frontier. Roger had been given the keeping of Ivry by the Conqueror, and it would have formed a useful outpost for a Norman magnate with interests in the Vexin. On the other hand Brionne was a good exchange, as it lay between the family’s two honors of Pont Audemer and Beaumont. But in 1090, the patrimony was still in his aged father’s hands. So Count Robert contested the exchange vigorously. The result was that the count was arrested, Brionne was confiscated, and he could only be liberated after heavy bribes and delicate negotiations by his father. The duke got his way,


and Ivry was surrendered for Brionne, but not until after a siege dislodged its reluctant garrison.\(^6\)

The result of this difficulty was to align the Beaumonts firmly with Duke Robert’s brothers and enemies. Count Robert and Earl Henry were consistent supporters of William Rufus and Henry I until the forced reunion of England and Normandy in 1106. The culmination of this for Count Robert was the award to him of the earldom of Leicester, constructed on the foundation of the lands of Ivo of Grandmesnil, which he had taken as pledge when Ivo was forced out of England in 1101.\(^7\) In 1107 Count Robert of Meulan was undoubtedly the greatest subject in the Anglo-Norman realm, a man of allegedly incomparable wealth and influence. Around 1100 he had made a proper match for such a man as he was, and married Isabel, daughter of Count Hugh the Great of Vermandois. Isabel was the niece of King Philip I of France, and the granddaughter of Herbert, the last Carolingian count of the Vermandois. But she did not just bring royal and imperial blood into the Beaumont family, she brought also the honor of Elbeuf on the Seine, which had once been the possession of the counts of the Vexin and had apparently come to the counts of Vermandois by marriage. With Isabel, Count Robert had three sons, the twins Waleran and Robert, born in 1104, and another son, Hugh Poer (‘the Young’) born at some time between 1107 and 1110. There were also four daughters, Adelina, Alberada, Elizabeth and Mathilda, some of them deployed by their eldest brother in strategic marriages in the 1120s.\(^8\)

By 1107, Count Robert controlled a remarkable complex of lands which spanned three realms. His possessions ran from the south bank of the Trent in Nottinghamshire to the Seine at La Grève in Paris, where the counts of Meulan had acquired a large part of the right bank from the bishops of Paris at some time in the eleventh century. What I want to spend the rest of this paper doing is explaining how they lived a princely life in three realms in the late eleventh and twelfth century. Key evidence for this is in their charters: the way they were constructed; the purposes for which they were constructed; and the concepts they contain. We can see Robert helping to form and propagate a new and more sophisticated way of being aristocratic. He was not alone in this: other great nobles of the Anglo-French cultural world were doing it too. But the counts of Meulan, being the greatest among their fellow counts, time and again were clearly at the cutting edge of the process of class formation.


\(^7\) For the construction of the earldom of Leicester, Levi Fox, ‘The Honour and Earldom of Leicester’, EHR 54 (1939), 385–93.

\(^8\) For Count Robert’s marriage, children and the honor of Elbeuf, Crouch, Beaumont Twins, 10–12, 15–16. No. 29 reveals he was not married in May 1099.
Robert of Beaumont

The first area Count Robert explored was that of image. The university library of Keele possesses the one and only original charter of Count Robert I of Meulan. It is particularly interesting for us, because it retains a large fragment of its seal. There is an antiquary’s drawing of the seal of around 1795, which is pretty accurate, and gives some fragments of the inscription around the seal’s rim, nowadays almost entirely worn away.\(^9\) The first point to note about it is that the seal is double-sided. At the date that this seal was commissioned in 1107, this was a thoroughly unusual thing for a count to aspire to. The double-sided seal had been in the eleventh century the prerogative of popes, emperors and kings. Edward the Confessor had one, and so did William the Conqueror after 1066. The Confessor’s, copied from the example of the German emperor, had shown him as a king enthroned on both sides of his seal, bearing different items of regalia on each. The Conqueror’s was different: it had a ‘majesty’ side showing William as king, but the reverse showed William as duke, armed, and carrying the gonfanon that was a symbol of his authority. The inscriptions around the rim point this out; on one side we are asked to observe the king, and on the other the ‘patronus’, the lord and father of the Normans.

The prestige and expense of a two-sided seal became an object of conspicuous consumption for those few aristocrats with sufficient pride and money. It took money, because to impress such a seal, a special machine with a sophisticated screw press had to be constructed so that both of the silver seal dies could be applied to the soft wax cakes at once; an example of one of these medieval machines of c.1232 survives at Canterbury Cathedral.\(^10\) The first man in the Anglo-Norman realm that we know had the nerve to commission one was Odo, bishop of Bayeux, the Conqueror’s half-brother, that man of great wealth and even greater pretensions. From 1067, Odo was both bishop and earl of Kent. A drawing of his now-lost seal in the Book of Seals of Sir Christopher Hatton (c.1640) shows him on one side in the vestments of a bishop, and on the other in the military equipment of a Norman baron, just as he had featured on the Bayeux Tapestry.\(^11\) The seal is an obvious echo of his brother’s. Each face demonstrates the attributes of his different offices, rather oddly to our post-Gregorian eyes.

Count Robert’s double-sided seal is not therefore unique nor is it the first of its sort, but it is in the same tradition of self-conscious aggrandizement through imagery as Bishop Odo’s. The faces on it are distinct. One side, the obverse, shows the count armed as knight and proclaims him as count of Meulan. The unusual pose shows him brandishing a spear: by the twelfth century this was an archaic mode of depicting a knight. The reverse side proclaims him as earl of Leicester, his second style. It shows him in civilian dress, but bearing (point down) the symbolic sign of his comital authority, his

\(^9\) For the document, see no. 4. For the drawing, J. Nichols, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire*, 4 vols. in 8 (London, 1795–1815), i, part 1, appendix, 48.


sword. This was clearly an attempt to parallel the ‘majesty’ side of a royal seal using the somewhat scanty repertoire of insignia allotted at that time to counts and earls. It is not unique as an image of comital authority. The effigy placed at some time in the twelfth century on the tomb of Count Fulk Nerra of Anjou at the abbey of Loches was apparently in an identical pose, according to the antiquary Gaignieres, who was a reliable witness to these things. More to the point, the image of Count Robert on his tomb effigy in the chapter house of Saint-Pierre of Préaux shows him in just such a pose, and it is possible that the sculptor of the effigy (which belongs to the years around 1170) copied the design from Robert’s seal.  

Robert’s successors as count of Meulan after 1118 maintained this tradition of obverse and reverse faces on their seals, while his successors as earls of Leicester did not. Robert II of Leicester in fact re-used the antique equestrian image of his father’s seal as count of Meulan, for whatever reason. Whether through filial piety or through a desire to maintain a dynastic link with Meulan and Normandy, the archaic brandishing knight adorned his acts as earl of Leicester and chief justiciar of England until he died in 1168. Although Earl Robert adopted in the 1140s the fashion of using classical intaglio gems as a personal counterseal applied on a ring to the back of his seal, neither he, nor his son or grandson adopted the double-faced seal.  

If we turn from the seal representations to the charters themselves, we find that Count Robert found ways of emphasizing his dignity through his style, or title. Count Hugh, the predecessor of Robert I, has not left many written acts, but one that does survive betrays his belief that it was not just an accident of birth which made him count of Meulan. In the opening arenga of a diploma he issued to the Norman abbey of Jumièges, Count Hugh praised and blessed God for, as he put it, ‘placing me in my father’s county’, and he made his grant in part, he said, because he wanted God to continue maintaining him as count of Meulan. This was not just the deterministic outlook of an Augustinian mind. Count Hugh belonged to a group of men who believed that their authority owed as much if not more to God than to the king or duke who was above them. On occasion – admittedly not frequently – Hugh’s contemporaries as counts of Anjou and counts of Vermandois declared they too were counts ‘by God’s grace’. In doing this they were carrying on a practice which counts of all sorts had indulged in since the tenth century: placing themselves on a level with bishops who had received anointing with holy oil.

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13 English Romanesque Art, 1066–1200, 317.
You might wonder at the presumption of such counts, but they did have some rationale for their presumption. We find it as early as the mid-tenth century, when a clerk of the collegiate church of Compiègne wrote a paean of praise to the dignity of Count Arnulf of Flanders. Arnulf, he said, was worthy of the respect of all men and the mercy of God because he came to the aid of widows and orphans, and was the protector of the Church. The Church had developed a job description for a righteous ruler. In fact its history can be traced back as early as the seventh century when an Irish writer known as the Pseudo-Cyprian developed this ethic in a tract called the ‘Twelve Abuses Current in the World’. Later writers on kingship and aristocracy routinely quote it when justifying the virtue of a particular ruler, or the conduct ideally expected of one. So when an anonymous cleric composed a lament for William Longsword, count of Rouen - murdered in 942, incidentally, by the pious and merciful Count Arnulf - he bewailed a man who was: ‘maker and lover of peace; comforter and defender of the poor; maintainer of widows and orphans’.16 This for a man who had been born overseas as the son of a pagan Viking jarl. The invocation of this ethic speaks generally of God’s view of the legitimate and rightful use of power, which was why its phrases featured in the rituals for blessing swords, royal or princely. When William of Poitiers was looking for ways to eulogize the rule of Normandy by Duke William II in the 1050s he could do no better than to say that: ‘He listened to the cause of widows, orphans and the poor, acting with mercy and judging most justly. Since his fairmindedness restrained other people’s greed, no one, however powerful or close to him, dared to move the boundary of a weaker neighbour’s field or take anything from him.’17

This ethic lay behind the assumption of divine grace in solemn acts or diplomas of the counts of Meulan. Each successive count of Meulan declared at some time or other that he was count ‘by God’s grace’ (see act 31 below). When they did so they were declaring that their dignity and power was independent of the kings to whom they were nominally subject. They needed this belief to justify the power over life and death they possessed, and the rebellious moves they sometimes made against the king who was anointed by God to rule over peoples. In a poem addressed to the monks of Walera’s abbey of Saint-Pierre of Préaux, Stephen of Rouen, monk of Bec, commented significantly on the recently dead Count Walera II of Meulan, who had entered Préaux as a monk in his last months. Stephen noted the many counts and kings who were Walera’s relatives, and said he had been a better man than them all in war, in conduct and in the council chamber. But he also said that Walera’s

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ambitions were uncontrolled and his lack of judgement led him to place himself above the duke of Normandy in the order of things.\textsuperscript{18}

Royal power in France and England was a major fact of political life for the count of Meulan. It might be an obstacle for his ambitions, or it might be a means of opportunity. It might also give him ideas. The great spread of the estates of the counts of Meulan were as much an administrative problem in its way as the multiple domains of the Anglo-Norman king-dukes was for them. Count Robert I was closely involved in the government of William Rufus and Henry I. It is not surprising that he learned some lessons there. As long ago as 1888, John Horace Round noticed a significant clause in the constitution of the collegiate church of St. Mary de Castro in Leicester, whose first foundation had been by Count Robert in 1107. The constitution notes that the church enjoyed a grant of twenty shillings a year from the time of Count Robert I, to fund lamps in the church and to pay for rushes to lay in it in summer and straw in winter. The point is that the grant was to be paid out of the count’s exchequer. Similarly, as Stenton pointed out, there is a note of another and larger annual grant of £8 6s. made by the count, this time to his nuns of Préaux, again payable from his exchequer.\textsuperscript{19}

On one level, we should not make too much of these references. The exchequer of the count of Meulan in England cannot have been anything near as formidable an institution as the royal Exchequer on which it was modelled. It can only have dealt with a relatively small amount of revenue. But it was so useful an institution that it was continued by Robert’s successors as earls of Leicester. Later evidence tells us that the officers of the earldom of Leicester had to meet at it in Leicester castle and present accounts for their areas of responsibility. On another level, however, the references are most important. They show the response of a great nobleman to an unprecedented problem of administration for a man of his class. He had to find ways of exerting control over distant officers he would not see for years at a time, so he promptly borrowed the model of bureaucratic centralization that he saw developing under his own nose at the court of Henry I. He did so for utilitarian reasons. We can suspect that he did so also because, like the double-sided seal, the exchequer gave Robert an avatar of dignity that he could borrow to bolster his own, because it belonged to a superior condition.

The count’s charters demonstrate another such borrowing, which in its way is just as revealing. The pre-Conquest English monarchy developed a neat little written instrument called the writ: abrupt, direct, geared to administration and originally written in the vernacular. As is well known the writ form was adopted by the Normans and had a second Latinized lease of life first in England, and later in Normandy. The defining forms of the writ are its opening address to


\textsuperscript{19} Crouch, \textit{Beaumont Twins}, 163–6.
named officers, its brevity, its authorising witnesses and its form of sealing on a tag cut from the base of the parchment strip. It is a striking thing that of the acts of Robert I of Meulan whose full texts survive (thirteen of them) the proportion which are drafted on the lines of the English writ or writ-charter is quite large. There are five. All relate (unsurprisingly) to England and three of them preserve addresses to named officers: Ralph the butler, Walter de Beaumais and Fromund of Sturminster. Like the count’s exchequer, the adoption of the writ by the count’s clerks was a response to his peculiar situation. Writs were a time-hallowed English way to maintain communication with distant officers. An interesting fact is that the one original charter in writ form that Robert issued which survives, was, from the evidence of the witness list, issued not in England but in Meulan. It was directed to his officers and men, English and French, and although they were writing in France, his clerks used a form adapted for English purposes. When they did so they may have been responding as well to the model of dignity and power represented by the English royal writ in the early twelfth century. They did not quite understand it. They misinterpreted the way that the seal was attached to the royal writ, and instead of cutting it from right to left, they cut it vertically from the middle, so the writ looks like a peculiar letter ‘T’.

Robert I of Meulan was an aristocrat living in times of great change for aristocrats. Within his own lifetime new measures of what it was to be aristocratic were being developed by magnates keen to differentiate themselves from a rising lesser nobility. Robert, it seems, was the first of his line to effect a household boasting officers carrying the full range of titles found in the royal household: stewards, butlers, chamberlains, marshals, constables, chaplains and clerks. He founded collegiate churches within his castles which could provide his clerks with posts and himself with a handsome and princely scale of liturgy suitable for the minor prince that he was. He exhibited an image of himself on his seal which deliberately echoed the vocabulary of power found on royal seals. To deal with the problems his great spread of lands caused, he copied procedures found in the English royal Chancery and Exchequer. From all this it is clear that Count Robert was a man who was determined to differentiate himself from his inferiors, and did so by copying a princely image of power from that of the royal court.

The acts of Count Robert of Meulan

There are texts and notices of a surprising number of Count Robert’s acts, considering that he was a man who had fought at Hastings. An earlier calendar of twenty of his acts was published by Émile Houth. Although he surveyed

French sources industriously, Houth had limited access to English archives and misidentified several acts of Count Robert II (1166–1205) as those of his grandfather. Houth also picked up several ghost acts in inaccurate early publications.

Of the thirty-two acts noticed here, only one original survives (4). But this is a remarkable survival as it still has the count’s seal appended. The seal is double-sided containing a ‘majesty’ and ‘equestrian’ face on respectively the reverse and obverse, in obvious echo of the seals of William the Conqueror and William Rufus. The double-sided seal must have been devised in 1107 on Robert’s acquisition of the earldom of Leicester, as the reverse face carried that title in sketches made of it in the eighteenth century. The obverse (Meulan) face of the seal was probably the count’s original pre-1107 seal, and it has an additional significance in that it can be identified as the model for the seal of the count’s younger son, Earl Robert II of Leicester (1118–68).

The acts whose full texts survive (thirteen of them) have a certain diplomatic interest. The proportion which are drafted on the lines of the English writ or writ-charter is quite large (4, 5, 14, 17, 21) and three of them preserve addresses to named officers: Ralph the butler, Walter de Beaumais and Fromund of Sturminster. Taken together they represent evidence of the early penetration of writ forms into Anglo-Norman clerical households. That the count’s writs were produced by his clerks is very likely. He is known to have retained a large clerical household. In 1118 he had three chaplains: Osbert, Richard of Leicester and Gilbert, who went on to serve his second son. Osbert and Richard were canons of St. Mary de Castro in Leicester, the count’s great collegiate foundation. The count’s collegiate church in his Norman castle of Beaumont-le-Roger provided support for the count’s known clerk, Richard de Beaumont, who seems to have become dean of the foundation before its regularization in 1142.21 Other acts were very likely written by the beneficiaries. This is certainly true of those for Bec, two of which preserve Bec’s characteristic house-style of an opening date of the year of incarnation (6, 9). The narrative opening to the Abingdon act (1) again shows every sign of being a monastic production and the same is likely to be true of the least altered Préaux texts. Other acts show traits more characteristic of northern French household drafting. Two feature the notificatory address (notum sit …) characteristic of eleventh-century Capetian clerks (7, 31); one is a Norman and the other a Meulan act.

No. 1. Abingdon, abbey of St. Mary
Asked by William Guizenboded and advised by his men, the count confirms a hide of land in Dumbleton, Glos, which William had granted to the abbey in his presence. [5 August 1107 x 4 August 1108]
Robert of Beaumont

B = Cartulary of Abingdon Abbey, BL, MS. Cotton Claudius B vi, fol. 144r. s. xiii. C = Cartulary of Abingdon Abbey, Oxford, Bodleian Library MS. Lyell 15, fol. 87r. s. xiv (partial).


BC

Ego Robertus comes de Mellent rogatus fui a Willelmo Guizenboeht et ab amicis suis et baronibus meis ut concederem deo et sancte Marie in Abbendonensi ecclesia quandam hidam terre, que est in uilla Dumbeltona in hundredo de Grestestan quam idem Willelmus ante me et meos barones dederat in heliumosinab perpetuo habendam supradicte ecclesie. Quod libenter annui et voluntarie concessi, quia de feudo meo erat. pro remissione peccatorum meorum et anime mee salute. Hoc denique feci coram subscriptis testibus et me rogantibus, scilicet eodem Willelmo et [R]icardo capellano et Goisfredo medico. et Nigello de Oileio et Roberto filio Ansketilli. et Goisfredo Ridello et Radulfo uicecomite et Roberto filio Ercenbaldi et Roberto filio Rogeri et Rodulfo de Furcis et Ogerro filio Rodulfi nepote Nigelli. Luuello de Peri et Willelmo nigro. homine eiusdem W. Guizenboeth et Rogero Frangelupum et aliis multis, et Warino homine abbatis et Rainaldo et Lamberto. Hec omnia acta sunt coram me et per me scilicet comitem de Mellent[o], et ante omnes suprascriptos fecit Willelmus Goizenboeth donum istud pro se et filio et uxore et omnibus hereditibus suis, et promisit auctoritatem omnium se esse facturum.

\(\text{a Dumbelton' C b elemosina C c omitted in C d Guizenboeth C.}\)

The date of this act is fixed by the text of William’s grant, which is dated between 5 August 1107 and 4 August 1108, see Historia Ecclesie Abbendonensis, ii, 150. William appears in 1086 as the tenant-in-chief of a substantial estate in Gloucestershire, and so it seems that his estate must have been subordinated to the new earldom of Leicester in 1107 (DB i, fol. 167r).

No. 2. Beaumont-le-Roger, collegiate church of Holy Trinity

Record of the grant by the count to the college of the manor of Eddington, Berks, and the church of Bradford near Shapwick, Dorset, as granted by Countess Isabel, along with twenty shillings annually from the tolls of Beaumont-le-Roger to support the lighting of the church. [1100 x 1118]

Regnante Henrico Anglorum rege Robertus comes Mellenti pater meus de terris et honoribus quas in Anglia acquisierat dedit ecclesiae sanctae Trinitatis de Bellomonte manerium quoddam iuxta Hungreford sitam nomine Edenctonam, ita quietum et liberum sicut habebat ipse in dominio suo de rege Angliae Henrico. Et preter hoc ecclesiam de Benefort de donationis uxoris suae Isabellae comitissae de Mellento. Et hoc fecit concedente et per chartam suam corroborante domino suo Henrico rege Anglorum. Eodem tempore praedicta Elisabeth comitissa mater mea dedit praefatae ecclesiae sanctae Trinitatis ad luminandum videlicet ecclesiae viginti solidos in thelonio de Bellomonte, concessu Roberti comitis Mellenti patris mei.

The grants can only be dated between the accession of Henry I and the count’s death. Eddington was ten hides of royal demesne in 1086 (DB i, fol. 57r) and might have come to the count by grant of William Rufus or Henry I. ‘Benefort’ can be identified with the deserted settlement of Bradford Farm near Shapwick, where Robert II of Leicester made a grant of rents to Amesbury Abbey, and which was reckoned in 1275/6 to have been part of the earldom of Leicester (Monasticon Anglicanum, ii, 337; Rot. Hund., i, 97). The grants feature in a pancarte probably manufactured for the new priory of Beaumont soon after its incorporation into the order of Bec. The act may be a compilation, but the grant in Eddington was certainly genuine. The canons of Beaumont received a pardon for 10s. of danegeld owed in Berkshire in 1130, and 10s. would be the amount owed for an estate of ten hides, such as Eddington was in 1086, see Pipe R. 31 H.1, 124.

No. 3. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary

Record of the count’s grant of his collegiate church of Saint-Nicaise of Meulan, with the consent of its canons, to Abbot William and the monks of Bec, the church to be converted to a priory of regular monks. This act was formally concluded before the bishop. [1093 x 1115]


... Erat autem hec ecclesia sancti Nigasii a secularibus clericis per manum laici comitis uidelicet Mellentensis intrantibus inhabitat et possessa, donec placuit domno Rotberto comiti Mellentensi cum beneplacito clericorum in predicta ecclesia intitulatorum. ipsam ecclesiam in meliores usus commutare. et in ibi deo regulariter seruiretur elaborare. Tradidit itaque ipse comes Rotbertus cum consensu et beneplacito predictorum clericorum illam ecclesiam sancte Marie Beccensis monasterii ut ab ipso monasterio secundum quod opportunum sit monachi in predicta ecclesia sancti Nigasii ordinentur. deoque regulariter famulentur. Hanc autem traditionem a prefato Rotberto comite factam frater Guillelmus Beccensis abbas cum quibusdam sui monasterii fratribus ad presentiam nostram detulerunt. humiliter deprecantes ut noster assensus predictam donationem corroborare.

The date of the act must be after the election of Abbot William to succeed Anselm in 1093. The only other firm limit is the death of Bishop Ivo in 1115.
No. 4. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary

Grant of the manor of Little Milborne (Milborne Stileham), Dorset, with an exemption from all attendance on his courts, and the chapel of Compton-in-Enford, Wilts. [1107 x 1118]

A = University of Keele, Robert Richards Collection 72/46/1(1). Endorsed: Meleburne de capella de Contone. s. xiii. 276 x 45mm. approx. Seal on eccentrically cut tag (as on the upright of a ‘T’), large central fragment, double-sided, white wax, no legend visible.

Pd., J. Nichols, The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire, 4 vols. in 8 (London, 1795–1815), i, part I, appendix, p. 48, noted as then in the College of Arms.

A


The identification of the manor of ‘Parva Meleburn’ is not easy, but by a process of elimination it would appear to have been the small estate of two carucates at Milborne Stileham which was held by Swein, a king’s thegn, in 1086 (DB i, fol. 84v). The other estates of that name were church land. Milborne was in the vicinity of another Bec estate at Bovington, Dorset. The large estate at Compton-in-Enford, Wilts, was noted as part of the honor of Leicester in 1242 (Bk. of Fees, ii, 746). The date of this act has to have been after the creation of the earldom of Leicester in 1107, as the seal used to have the title of Leicester on one of its faces, as shown by an eighteenth-century antiquarian drawing.

No. 5. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary

Concession of the church and tithe of Compton-in-Enford as granted to the abbey by Geoffrey de B’ron (?Brionne). [1107 x 1118]

B = Cartulary of Ogbourne Priory, Windsor Dean and Chapter muniments, xi G 11, m. 3. s. xiii.


B

For the identity of Compton see no. 4. The relationship of this confirmation of the church of Compton and its tithes to the count's previous grant of the chapel of Compton is unclear. It is possible that the same church is intended in both, and that in no. 4 the count is arrogating to himself the right of patron as the overlord of the manor. There is no doubt however that in c. 1230 Compton was a chapel of the church of Enford (Chibnall, Select Documents, 57).

No. 6. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary
Notice of the grant of the manor of East Chisenbury, Wilts, on the river Avon for the purposes of the abbey's kitchen, with the confirmation of King Henry I. 1112 [25 March 1112 x 24 March 1113]

B = Cartulary of Ogbourne Priory, Windsor Dean and Chapter muniments, xi
G 11, m. 3. s. xiii. C = Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. latin 13905, p.42. s. xvii.

Pd., (from B), Select Documents of the English Lands of the Abbey of Bec, ed. Chibnall, 9.

B
Anno ab incarnatione domini Mo.TC.XII inspirante diuina gratia Robertus comes Mellenti dedit ecclesie sancte Marie Becci concedente Henrico rege quodam manerium in Anglia super Auram fluuium quod dictur Chisingueberia. nominatim ad coquinam monachorum et dedit illud solidum et quietum sicut ipse illud catenus habuerat. ut scilicet quicquid in eodem manerio in suo habuerat dominio erit iuris ecclesie sancte Marie Becci. Porro hanc donationem fecit pro salute anime Willelmi patris regis. patris prefati Henrici regis et Mathildis regine matris sue. et pro remissione peccatorum suorum et coniugis sue Elisabeth et filiorum suorum et pro salute fratris sui comitis Henrici et coniugis sue Margarite et filiorum suorum. Ego Henricus rex Anglorum gratia dei. concedo et signo. et sigillo meo confirmo hanc elemosinam.

This notification is a common form of Bec record, commencing with the date of incarnation and then giving a record of the grant (see also 9). It is doubtless a conflation of two acts, and the interpolated royal confirmation is probably a quotation from Henry I's charter. The manor of Chisenbury on the Avon mentioned here is probably not the one mentioned in the Domesday Survey, but part of a large multiple estate to the east and south of Chisenbury which was probably based on the settlement of Compton, whose chapel was granted in no. 4.

No. 7. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary
Confirmation of the grant by the count's father, Roger of Beaumont, of exemption from the tolls and charges for wine presses and mills at Pont Audemer (Eure), and all other charges on food, clothing, and foot passage, and all charges relating to his lordship over the town. As the count had already extended this concession to Bonneville-Aptot (Eure) so he now extends it to the abbey in all his other Norman lands. [1107 x 1118]

B = Bibliothèque Nationale, Collection du Vexin xii, fol.28v. s. xviii.
Robert of Beaumont


B


The date of this act has to lie after 1107 when Count Robert made his testament, at which time his younger son Hugh had not apparently been born. The identity of 'Villebonum' as Bonneville-Aptot is suggested as it was a Beaumont manor not more than 4 km. north of the abbey, a place where the monks would value a quittance of toll and passage, especially as it lay on the road from the abbey to Rouen.

No. 8. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary

*Confirmation to the abbey of Bois du Chênay which it had of the grant of Hugh son of Waleran.* [1104 x 1118]


C

Je Robert comte de Meulan concède à l’église de Notre Dame du Bec pour le salut de l’âme de mon père Roger et de l’âme de ma mère Adeline et pour mon salut et celui d’Elizabeth ma femme et de mes enfants, le don que fit Hugues fils de Galeran, du Bois Ganet à la susdite église de Notre Dame dit Bec à savoir tout ce qu’il tenait de moi dans le susdit Bois Ganet.

'Bois Ganet' is identified here as the Bois du Chênay, on the hills overlooking Saint-Martin-la-Garenne to the east. The commemoration of the count’s children would indicate a date after 1104 and the birth of his twin sons.
No. 9. Bec-Hellouin, abbey of St. Mary and the priory of St-Martin de la Garenne

Concession to the abbey of the church and tithe of Saint-Martin-la-Garenne (Yvelines) for the support of the cell of Bec monks living there. 1095 [25 March 1095 x 24 March 1096]

C = Noted as two copies of the same act in a lost cartulary of the priory of La Roche-Guyon, Gatin, Saint-Martin-la-Garenne, 233–4, 243.

L'an d'incarnation 1095 Robert comte de Meulan du fief duquel était l'église et la dîme de Saint-Martin de la Garenne, a concédé la susdite dîme et l'église avec tout ce qui s'y rattachait, à l'église du Bec et aux moines demeurant à Saint-Martin de la Garenne.

L'an d'incarnation 1095 Robert comte de Meulan du fief duquel était l'église et la dîme de Saint-Martin de la Garenne, a concédé la dîme et la susdite église avec toutes ses appartenances. Témoins du côté de Robert comte de Meulan, Gauthier vicomte de Meulan et Cheribardus son frère, Hugues fils de Galeran, Roger de Tibeville, Robert Pipar, Godefroi fils de Gilbert, Hugues fils d'Audoard.

There is a point of comparison here with no. 6 in the opening dating clause. Saint-Martin-la-Garenne was a fee of the viscount of Mantes, who was a dependent of the count of Meulan and who owned most of the land on the right bank of the Seine opposite Mantes and Rosny. The count is confirming here the grant to Bec made originally by Viscount Hilduin of Mantes and his family before 1081 for the foundation of a priory (Gatin, Saint-Martin-la-Garenne, 233, 234–5).

No. 10. Canterbury, cathedral priory of Christ Church

Record of the count's grant of exemptions on tolls on the Seine at Meulan and throughout his lands on wine and goods bought for the monks' own use. [1080 x 1118]


A¹

... apud Mell[en] transitum uini quietum quod ducent ad proprium usum suum. Et preter hec consuetudinem in tota terra mea de omnibus que emerint ad usus ipsorum que poterunt iuste facere assecurari sua propria esse. sicut pater meus eis prius concessit, et sua carta confirmuit.

No other date can be offered than the count's tenure of Meulan.
No. 11. Grestain, abbey of St. Mary

*Notice of the grant to the abbey by Roger of Beaumont and his son of the tithe of a ploughland at Vatteville, and of a farmstead at Martainville (Eure).* [c.1050 x 1082]


Apud Watlevillam decimam unius carrucae, apud Martinivillam decimam unius medietarii concessu Rogerii de Bellomonte et Roberti eius filii.

The likely dates for this grant are dictated by the foundation of the abbey of Grestain (c. 1050) and the issue of the pancarte (1080 x 82).

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No. 12. Leicester, collegiate church of St. Mary de Castro

*Notice of the act founding or refounding the chapter of the college in Leicester castle and the allotting of prebends. Grant of all the churches of the town of Leicester, except that of St. Margaret, with five ploughlands to the north of the town and other possessions, and with the churches of the sokes of Shepshed, Leics, and Halse, Northants.* [1107 x 1108]

C = Register of Leicester Abbey, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Laud misc 625, fol. 89r. s. xv.


This record was abstracted c. 1477 by William Charyte, prior of Leicester, from a copy of the original in a fourteenth-century abbey rental called ‘Geryn’. That there was a genuine act behind it (despite the erroneous account of the Conqueror’s grant of Leicester to the count) can be found by Prior Charyte’s reference elsewhere to the church of Clifton in Warwickshire, with its chapels of Over and Rugby, having formed one of the prebends ‘of the castle of Leicester’ in a digest of a charter of Arnold III du Bois, the founder’s seneschal (Register of Leicester, fol. 43v).
No. 13. Leicester, collegiate church of St. Mary de Castro
Notice of a grant made to the college of twenty shillings drawn from his exchequer for lighting the church and for paying for rushes to lay on its floors in summer and straw in the winter. [1107 x 1118]


\[\ldots\] cum .xx.ti solidis de scacc[ario] predicti comitis. quos pater eius donauit de prouidenda ecclesie luminaria. de sepo omni nocte anni. et sterno ndam ecclesiam. estate, junco hieme, stramine.

The grant cannot be dated in any other way than by the count’s possession of the earldom.

No. 14. Leicester, borough of
Confirmation to the merchants of Leicester of their gild, with the same customs as they had in the reigns of William I and William II and as they hold now in the reign of King Henry. [1107 x 1118]

B = Cartulary of the borough of Leicester (Vellum Book), Leicestershire Record Office, II/3/2, fol. 35v. s. xiv.


B

Datable only to the count’s possession of Leicester.

No. 15. Leicester, borough of
Notice of a grant to the merchants of Leicester of exemption from pleas touching their property outside their own court of jurats in return for the grant of ‘gavelpence’ of 3d. per house gable looking on to the high way. [1107 x 1118]


Datable only to the count’s possession of Leicester.
No. 16. Lenton, priory of St. Mary

Notice of the grant of the church of Wigston, Leics, to the abbey of Cluny and its priory of Lenton. [1107 x 1118]

B = Noticed in an inspeximus of a charter of Henry I, C53/141 (Charter Rolls, 30 Edward III) m. 22. copy of 1356.


... de dono etiam Roberti comitis de Mellent ecclesiam de Wichingest[ona] cum pertinentiis suis.

The act of Henry I is dated to 1109 x 1122, but the grant it records can only be attributed to the tenure by Count Robert of the honor of Leicester.

No. 17. Lincoln, cathedral church of St. Mary

Writ to Walter de Beaumais and the count’s men of Empingham, Rutland, instructing them to pay the tithe owed to the bishop’s church in the village as fully as was done in the days when Gilbert de Gant held it. [1094 x 1118]

B = Lincolnshire Archives Office, Lincoln Dean & Chapter MS. A.1.5 (Registrum Antiquissimum), fol. 36r. s. xiii.


It must date after the consecration of Bishop Robert Bloet in February 1194 and before the count’s death.

No. 18. Meulan, priory of St. Mary and St. Nicaise

Notice of a grant to the priory of an annual rent of forty shillings in the manor of Hungerford, Berks. [1088 x 1118]

B = Notice in a confirmation of Robert II of Leicester, Cartulary of St. Neots, BL, MS. Cotton Faustina A iv, fol. 88r–v. s. xiii.

... quadraginta solidis quos dederat pater meus eidem ecclesia sancti Nigasii in manerio de Hungerfort ...

It probably dates to a time after the accession of William Rufus, for Hungerford (probably then included with Kintbury) was royal demesne in 1086 (DB i, fol. 57r; VCH Berkshire, iv, 187).
No. 19. Meulan, priory of St. Mary and St. Nicaise
Notice of a grant of the tithe of the count’s fishponds at Montjoie (Yvelines, cant. Meulan, comm. Tessancourt-sur-Aubette). [1080 x 1118]

B = Notice in a confirmation of Waleran II of Meulan, Cartulary of St Nicaise, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. latin 13888, fol. 23r. s. xiii.

... concedens eidem ecclesie decimam piscium stanni [de Gaudimont] quod pater meus fecit apud Mellentum. ipsa decima iampridem a patre meo superdicte ecclesie data.

It can only be dated within the count’s tenure of Meulan, as the grant may have been made before the conversion of the church to a regular priory.

No. 20. Meulan, priory of St. Mary and St. Nicaise
Grant to the priory of the collegiate church of Saint-Nicholas within the new castle of Meulan. [1109 x 1118]

B = Notice in a confirmation of Waleran II of Meulan, Cartulary of St. Nicaise, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS. latin 13888, fol. 20v. s. xiii.

... Concedo nichilominus ego Galerannus comes Mellenti et sigilli mei munitione confirmo deo et ecclesie deo et ecclesie beati Nigasii martyris ecclesiam sancti Nicholai in novo castro extra insula Mellenti constitutam, sicut ex dono patris mei prius acceperat in perpetuum possidendam.

The church of Saint-Nicholas, a small collegiate institution, was built within the new castle of Meulan, erected after the sack of the town in 1109 (see no. 31, below).

No. 21. Montacute, priory of St. Peter
Writ to Framund of Sturminster and his other officers informing them that he has exempted the monks from paying toll at Wareham, Dorset. [1088 x 1118]

B = Cartulary of Montacute Priory, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Trinity College MS. 85, fol. 70v. s. xiii.

Calendared, Two Cartularies of the Augustinian Priory of Bruton and the Cluniac Priory of Montacute in the County of Somerset, ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte et al., Somerset Record Soc., 8 (Taunton, 1894), 166.

B


For date see no. 18 above. Wareham was under royal control in 1086 (DB i, fol. 75r).
No. 22. Montacute, priory of St. Peter
Notice of the grant of the houses of Herluin the painter at Wareham, Dorset. [1088 x 1118]

B = Notice in confirmation of Robert II of Leicester, Cartulary of Montacute Priory, Oxford, Bodleian Library, Trinity College MS. 85, f ol. 70v. s. xiii.

Calendared, Two Cartularies of Bruton and Montacute, ed. Maxwell Lyte, 166.

... sicut pater meus concessit et dedit sancto Petro de Monte acuto. domos Herlewini pictoris. apud Waram.

No. 23. Osmund Archer
Notice of the grant of an estate at ‘Torp’. [1080 x 1118]

C = Notice in confirmation of Robert II of Leicester, Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Dugdale 17, p. 60. s. xvii.

... [sicut] pater meus illi dederat illam terram [de Torp]

No. 24. Préaux, abbey of St. Mary and St. Leodegar
Notice of the grant of £8 6s. payable at his exchequer. [1107 x 1118]

C = Notice in a confirmation of Robert II of Leicester, in, A. du Monstier, Neustria Pia (Rouen, 1663), 524, from a lost pancarte of the abbey.

... et ad scaccarium meum octo libras et sex solidos per annum sicut pater meus ei dedit et concessit.

No. 25. Préaux, abbey of St. Peter
Concedes to the monks capital jurisdiction in their lands over homicides and thieves. The count’s officers who apprehend robbers will hand them over to the abbot’s provost or take pledges on the abbot’s behalf. The abbot will take the same penalties in his land as the count in his own. Pledges taken for a tenant of the abbot’s land arrested for an offence in the count’s lands will go to the abbot. The count concedes the abbey’s banlieu in his town of Pont Audemer (Eure) with bounds from Saint-Germain to the leper hospital, from there to Girold’s bridge and along the ‘Foetelcie’. 1106. [25 December 1105 x 24 March 1107]

B = Cartulary of St. Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 115r–v. s. xiii.
David Crouch


B


The dates suggested are those that cover the fullest extent of what might be said to be the year of the incarnation 1106.


Agreement to the settlement between his churches of Préaux and Beaumont by which the monks conceded to the canons the land they had in ‘Mesnil Imbert’ (unidentified) in return for what the dean and canons had in Saint-Pierre-de-Salerne (Eure). Since the monks had more land in ‘Mesnil Isembert’ than the canons possessed in Salerne, the canons made over to the monks all their rights at Salerne, excepting the tithe of garbs and the mill there. The canons were to retain a barn in the enclosure of Saint-Pierre to house their tithes. [1108 x 1118]

B = Cartulary of St Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 127v. s. xiii.
Robert of Beaumont


B

Ricardus abbas monachique sancti Petri de Pratello concesserunt ecclesie sancte Trinitatis canonicalisque de Bellomonte totam terram quam tenebant in Maisnillo Isemberti. Wazo vero decanus et canonicali concesserunt monachi totam terram quam ecclesia eorum possidebat in villa quae dicitur Salerna. Et quia monachi plus possidebant terram in Maisnillo Isemberti quam canonicali in Salerna, iiccirco canonicali dimiserunt monachi quicquid habebant in Salerna in terra videlicet et ceteris rebus, preter solum modo decimam garbarum tocius ville. et nominatim ipsius terre quam cambierunt, necnon et decimam molendini prefate ville. Grancia vero canonicalorum erit sita in curia sancti Petri apud Salernam. in qua decima supradicte terre reponetur, ex qua monachi totam farraginem et alia habebunt. Canonicali vero tantummodo grana ut autem omnis controversia evitetur. evidenter annotamus, quod siquis de decima predicit terre in Salema. et nominatim ipsius terre quam cambierunt, necnon et decimam molendini prefate ville. Grancia vero canonicalorum erit sita in curia sancti Petri apud Salema. in qua decima supradicte terre reponetur, ex qua monachi totam farraginem et alia habebunt. Canonicali vero tantummodo grana ut autem omnis controversia evitetur. evidenter annotamus, quod siquis de decima predicit terre in Salema. et nominatim ipsius terre quam cambierunt, necnon et decimam molendini prefate ville.

For date see no. 7, above.

No. 27. Préaux, abbey of St. Peter

Notice of the grant of the tithe of Le Bosgouet (Eure) both woodland and other land, and also its church with thirty acres of land, with notice also of the consent of Duke Robert II. [1087 x 1105]

B = Cartulary of St Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 136r–v. s. xiii.


B

Regnante Roberto Willelmi regio filio advenit comes Robertus de Mellent Pratello et dedit donationem decime illius terre vel silve que vulgo dicitur Boscus goieth. et ecclesiam cum triginta agris terre ita ut nemo eorum qui de eo habeant aut habituri erant decimas suas retinere vel alias quam Pratello mittere possit. Fecit autem hoc concessu eiusmodem Roberti Normannie principis.

It must date within the period of the reign of Robert Curthose, and before 1105 when Count Robert was actively engaged in his overthrow.
No. 28. Préaux, abbey of St. Peter

Notice of the grant of the tithes of Charlton Marshall and Spettisbury, Dorset, with their churches and the land which belonged to them, and to this he added the grant of a village and church called ‘Sopeland’. [1087 x 1100]

B = Cartulary of St. Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 146r. s. xiii.


B

Regnante secundo Willelmo Anglorum rege magni regis Willelmi filio qui Anglos bellando acquisivit. Robertus comes de Mellent dedit sancto Petro Pratelli in Anglica regione duas decimas. videlicet de Cerlentone et de Poststeberia cum ecclesiis duabus earundem villarum. et cum terra pertinente ad easdem ecclesias. Addidit etiam in alio loco unam villam cum dedicaretur ecclesia nomina Sopelande. et hoc fecit concedente domino suo rege Willelmo.

The dates are those of the reign of William Rufus. Charlton was royal demesne in 1086 (DB i, fol. 75r). The lands of the abbey in Dorset, amounting to ten hides, are mentioned in 1130 (Pipe R. 31 H.1, 15).

No. 29. Préaux, abbey of St. Peter

Record of the grant of the manor of Toft Monks, Norfolk, and the tithes of Charlton and Spettisbury, Dorset, for the souls of King William the Conqueror and Queen Matilda, and for the prosperity of their son, William Rufus; for the souls also of his father Roger of Beaumont, his mother Adeline, and for himself and his brother Henry and all their forbears. c. 27 May 1099. Westminster.

B = Cartulary of St. Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l’Eure, H 711, fol. 146r. s. xiii.


B

Robertus comes de Mellent dedit sancto Petro Pratelli et abbati et monachis manerium de Toftes et decimam de Cerlentone et de Postesberies cum ecclesiis duabus earundem villarum. et cum terra pertinente ad easdem ecclesias pro anima regis scilicet Willelmi et regine Mathildis et pro salute et prosperitate filii sui Willelmi regis Anglorum et pro remedio animarum suorum parentum Rogerii videlicet de Bellomonte et Adeline sue coniugis et pro semiptet ipso et pro fratre suo Henrico et pro omnibus suis predecessoribus. Harum itaque omnium rerum predictarum donationem concessit et confirmavit. Willelmus rex
Pentecost was on 27 May in 1099, when the new great hall of Westminster was dedicated amongst festivities that became legendary.

No. 30. Préaux, abbey of St. Peter
Later version of the grant of the manor of Toft Monks, Norfolk, which the count himself had of the grant of King William Rufus. [1104 x 1118]

B = Cartulary of St Peter of Préaux, archives départementales de l'Eure, H 711, fol. 146r–v. s. xiii.


B

Quisquis suimet curam gerens interioris hominis aure Salomonem conceperit die ante redemptio anime viri propriae divitie potest everso notare. quod si quis eas in moderate cumulando largitor earundem omnium videlicet creatori non reddit. multorum vitiorum maximeque avaritie turpissime immo demoniacae captivitate sese spontaneus tradit. Hec Robertus comes de Mellent perpendens. totaque sollicitudine huiusmodi pestis contagia vitam, ex iis que illi deus ad sibi serviendum multa contulerat dedit sancto Petro de Pratellis manerium Toftes nomine cum suis appenditibus. adiungens sacam et socam. tol et team. similiter et infragenum theofe. exclusa penitus exactione vel angaria cunctarum consuetudinum. Que quidem prefatus comes liberaliter possederat sicut Willelmus rex iunior eadem tenuerat. Dedit inquam hec omnia iam memorato monasterio pro anima Willelmi regis et Mathildis regine. et Willemi filii eiusdem secundi regis. Item pro anima patris sui Rogerii et matris eius Adeline omnium quoque predecessorum suorum. pro salute regis Henrici et uxoris eiusdem suorum quoque liberorum. pro semet ipso et sua conjuge et liberis suis.

This more complete transcript of the grant of Toft Monks dates to a time in the reign of Henry I when the count had several children: a time after his twin sons' birth in 1104 is suggested. Toft Monks was indeed royal demesne in 1086 (DB ii, fol. 141r).

No. 31. Rouen, see of
Notification that he has rebuilt the castle of Meulan in a place called Locenes within the diocese of Rouen, to which the archbishop had rights, and that he has built a new church within the castle, which he declares to be subject to Rouen as to a mother church. [1109 x 1110]

B = Cartulary of see of Rouen, Rouen. Bibliothèque municipale, Y 44, fol. 47v.

(from B).
B

Notum sit omnibus quod ego Rob[ertus] dei gratia comes de Mellent[o]
construxi castellum in archiepiscopatu Roth[omagensis] in parrochia uidelicet
de Locenes que erat subiacta et consuetudinaria Roth[omagensi] ecclesie et
antequam castellum ibi fieret et in eodem castello edificauui nouam ecclesiam
et concedo ut illa ecclesia subiecta sit Roth[omagensi] ecclesie et redolens
iustos redditus sicut mater ecclesia.

The major rebuilding at Meulan after the devastating raid on the county by Louis VI in 1109
involved the building of a new castle on the right bank of the Seine above its old site on a
river island. Within the castle was built a new collegiate church of Saint-Nicholas to take the
place of the old church of Saint-Nicaise, within the former comital residence. For an associated
grant see above, no 20.

No. 32. Wareham, collegiate church of St. Mary

Notice of a lost charter of the count granting thirty-five shillings in tithes from
a fourth part of the town of Wareham, Dorset, to the canons of the minster of
the town. [1087 x 1118]

B = Register of Sheen Priory, BL, MS. Cotton Otho, B xiv, fol. 37r. s. xv.

Item. una antiqua scriptura R[oberti] comitis Damell’ faciens mentionem de .
xxxv. s[olidis] de decime ferdangi soluendis clericis sancte Marie de
Wareham.

The grant of Wareham by the king to the count may have happened at any time after the
accession of William Rufus, see above no. 21.