

THE NORMANS

CHAPTER II

Edward the Confessor, King of England, died on the 5th of January 1066. Years before, probably in 1051, he had promised the succession in England to William, Duke of Normandy. The promise may not have been seriously meant, but when about ten years later Harold Godwinson was wrecked on the coast of Ponthieu, William's ambitions were made clear, for he held Harold in honourable captivity and extracted from him an oath that he would support William's claim to the English crown when Edward died.

The Bayeux Tapestry gives a vivid account of the whole story - Harold's coronation; William's resolve to invade England; the appearance of Halley's comet, a favourable omen; the building of a fleet; the crossing of the Channel and all the momentous events leading to that October day when England was suddenly shocked out of its insularity by the advent of a new aristocracy.

Robert de Beaumont was no more than seventeen years of age when he sailed with the Duke for England, but he was considered able to take command of the many knights he brought with him from the family's manors, and he led the right wing of William's force in the battle. "He came of a mighty race," says the chronicler of the Earls of Leicester, "and they were men who in their own land had raised great and lofty towers, so that it was said by the chroniclers of their time, you may know the might of men by the mightiness of their palaces." Robert de Beaumont was the first to follow the minstrel Taillefer in the assault on the Saxon stockade, only to be thrust back time after time by the stout resistance of Harold's rustic defenders. A feint of flight and a sudden renewed onset tore gaps in the stockade, and in that successful assault Robert was the first to break through, making a valiant contribution to the final victory and the annihilation of the Saxon host. For his bravery he was knighted on the field.

Only the surnames of the six hundred and twenty-nine knights who came over with the Conqueror were given in the Battle Abbey Roll. In 1862, over the west door of the church at Dives-sur-mer in Normandy, from which port the Conqueror's host set sail, their Christian names are cut in the face of the wall, and among them we find that the name of Robert de Beaumont is given as Roger, probably due to an error of the chronicler Wace who confused the father with the son, even referring in his account of the battle to "Roger II Vieux" - Roger the Old. Wace, however, is corrected by many other writers including William of Poitou who praised the distinguished conduct of the youthful warrior.

This exploit was the beginning of a long life of devoted service to the English crown. Robert de Beaumont was evidently as wise and virtuous as he was brave, and was generally known by the sobriquet "Prudhomme", the wife and able man. Henry of Huntingdon described him as "eminent for knowledge, plausible in speech, skillful in art, discreetly provident, a subtle genius, excelling for prudence, profound in counsel, and of great wisdom: his mind was enlightened, his

eloquence persuasive and his shrewdness acute so that he was able to set them at variance and provoke strife between them." In his fidelity to the three masters he served during his lifetime, few statesmen could have equalled this Burleigh of his day.

When the occasion demanded, he did not hesitate to urge moderation on a hot-tempered and headstrong king. In 1078 the Conqueror's eldest son Robert, dissatisfied with his position as ruler of Normandy, rose in revolt, fled, and then returned to harry the Duchy. Open war broke out in which the king himself was wounded. The reconciliation between William and his son, though temporary, was largely effected by Robert and two of his fellow-barons. When in 1087 William died leaving the crown of England to his second son William, known as Rufus, a number of barons took up arms in favour of Robert, the eldest. Throughout the uneasy year which followed, Robert de Beaumont supported William and admitted the king's forces to his border castle at Meulan as a precaution against French interference.

Not long afterwards the king was involved in an open quarrel with the Church. In 1089, Lanfranc, the wise Archbishop of Canterbury died and William Rufus refused to appoint a successor, keeping for himself much church revenue and the profits of many offices. Then, when in 1093 William fell ill, he named Anselm, Abbot of Bec, as Archbishop, and forced him to accept the office. Anselm demanded that the appointment be ratified by Pope Urban II whom William refused to acknowledge. A great Council was held at Rockingham to settle this question but here the quiet remonstrances of Anselm threw the king into a violent rage. Anselm, caring nothing for the king's fury, quietly retired from the council-chamber. Robert de Beaumont, like most of the barons, supported the crown in this controversy, but he opposed Anselm's deposition and when after the Council the Archbishop's life was in danger Robert saved it.

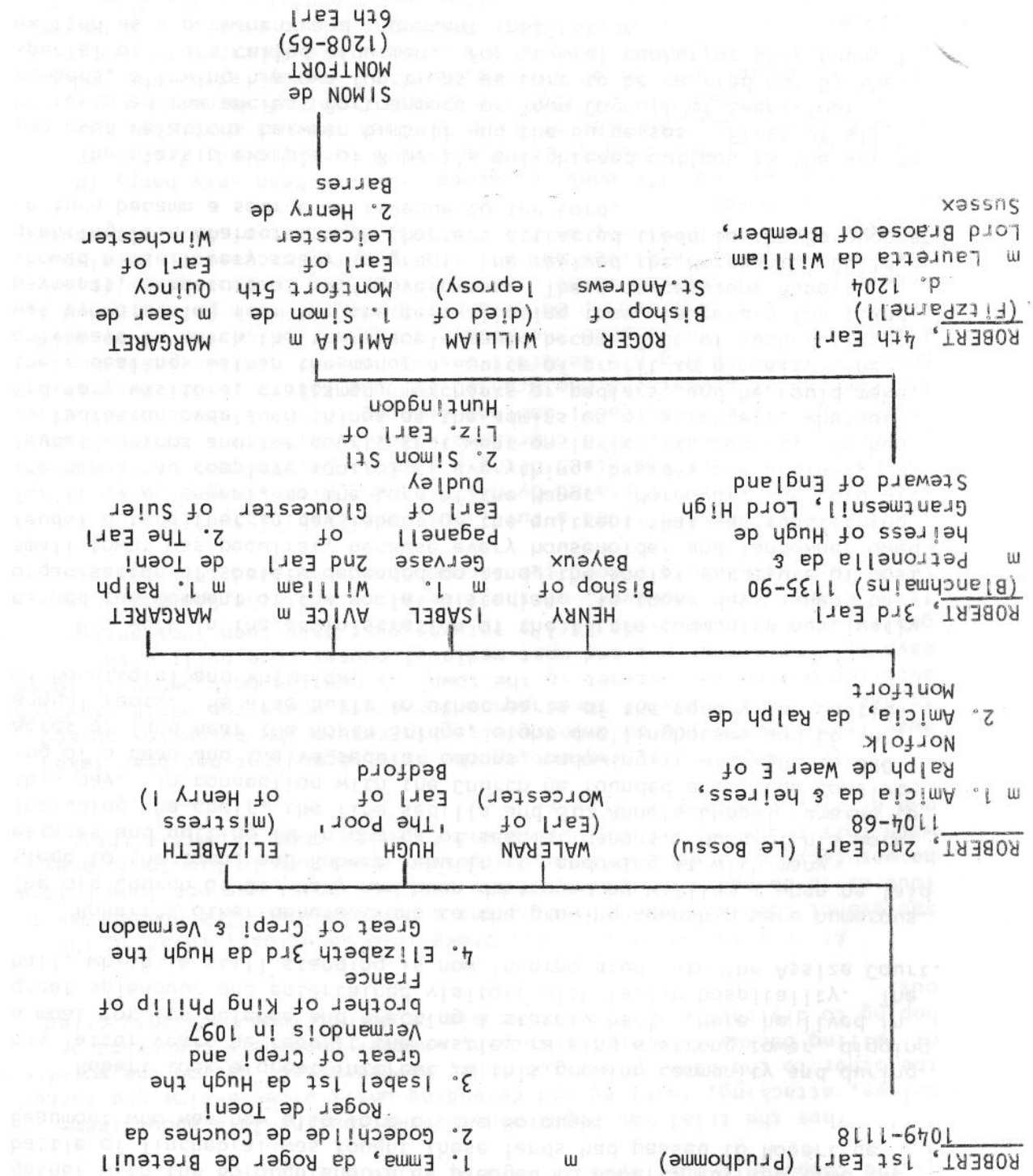
"His advice," wrote William of Malmesbury, "was regarded as though an oracle of God had been consulted, and he could by the sheer power of his eloquence persuade others to take it. His example was an inspiration to the whole nobility of England."

Like other men of his temperament, Robert was abstemious, eating only one meal a day. One of his greatest joys was in listening to music, and in a franchise to the Abbey of Bec, he stipulated that for the remittance of certain dues on imports, the masters of all boats passing his castles at Meulan and Nantes should have the flagolet played as they shot the bridges.

Robert was well rewarded for his services, for we find that he received 64 manors in Warwickshire, sixteen in Leicestershire, seven in Wiltshire and three in Northamptonshire in addition to those which as Domesday tells us, he held in Gloucestershire, Dorset and Devon. On the death of his father Roger in 1096 he succeeded to the family estates in Maine and at Pont Audemer, and thereby became as powerful a baron in Normandy as he had up to that time been in England.

He was already Chancellor to William II, and in the famous hunting-party in which William was accidentally (if it was an accident) killed, Robert and his brother Henry were both present. After the tragedy they accompanied William's younger brother Henry to Winchester and London to claim the crown. In the general rising which followed, Robert adhered to Henry and rapidly became his favourite minister, chief counsellor and trusted friend. He was by that time a member of the Privy Council and a baron of the Exchequer. During this reign he became Earl of Leicester and

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received the manor of Groby in that county. In 1106 the misgovernment of Duke Robert in Normandy forced Henry I to take an army there. Robert de Beaumont crossed the channel with the king and at the battle of Tinchebrai (28th September 1106) he commanded the second line. Duke Robert was taken prisoner and brought to England where he ended his days. Henceforward Normandy was directly dependent on the English crown.

Robert's eventual elevation to the Earldom of Leicester occurred under peculiar circumstances. In 1102 Ivo de Grantmesnil, a Norman potentate, rebelled against Duke Robert in Normandy, but was captured. The Duke pardoned him on condition that his Leicestershire estates together with the Borough should be pledged to Robert. By the time the battle of Tinchebrai was fought these lands had passed to Robert de Beaumont who was now also lord of the Borough.

Robert took a great interest in this growing community and during his latter years he rebuilt the castle, raising a strong tower, digging a moat for its defence and erecting a stately hall. Here he lived in great splendour and entertained visitors with lavish hospitality. The hall, which is still standing is now incorporated into the Assize Court.

Robert's other benefactions to the growing township were numerous. The old church of St. Mary had been destroyed by William I when he laid siege to the town, and Robert rebuilt it, endowing it with many estates and putting it in charge of secular canons. Much of his work, including the choir, the fine sedilia and St. Anne's Chapel remains to this day. In connection with the church he founded a college consisting of a dean and twelve secular canons, endowing it with 500 to 600 acres of land near the North Bridge, eight dwellinghouses and £6 in annual rents. He also built in other parts of the county the castles of Mountsorrel and Whitwick.

His work in the administration of the little community has justly earned the comment of the social historian. In those days, when the organisation of society depended on land, the social structure of most small towns was peculiar, because every householder and landowner owed feudal duty either in day labour or the quitrent that was substituted for it by agreement, to the lord of the manor. Moreover, the lord of the manor had complete control of everything, besides the ordinary feudal customs and the court, that went on inside its bounds. He had jurisdiction over such things as the admission of strangers, whether ordinary visitors, craftsmen, merchants or pedlars, and he could make their dealings within the manor a source of profit to himself. The only ways in which the townspeople could become free of such duties was by obtaining from him charters allowing them, in return for fixed payments, a measure of self-government. These concessions Robert showed himself very ready to grant. He revived the Merchants' Guild, granting it a charter. Such charters attracted trade to the Borough and in turn became a source of revenue to the lord.

The classic example of Robert's enlightened outlook is the way he improved relations between himself and the burgesses. First of all, he restored the ancient Portmanteau or Town Council of twenty-four members, allowing his own functions as lord to be carried out by their special officers called aldermen. For several centuries this Council existed as a permanent and important institution.

His major concession, however, is the subject of an interesting story. Two burgesses who were cousins had quarrelled about the possession of certain lands. It had previously been ordained that such differences should be settled in Leicester by the ordeal of combat, and an understanding of the rules of this kind of ordeal is necessary in

Though Robert de Beaumont did such signal service to the Norman kings, the first of the family to be granted an earldom was his younger brother Henry who, early in the reign of William I was created Earl of Warwick, receiving a grant of wide estates which had belonged to

St. Pierre de Preaux where he died and was buried in June 1118. Elizabeth, Isabel's elder sister. Towards the end of his life he re-borne him five daughters and three sons; and his fourth wife was deserted him for William of Warenne, Earl of Surrey, after she had third, Isabel, daughter of Hugh the Great, Count of Vermandois second, Godchilde, daughter of Roger de Toeni he was divorced; his his first wife Emma, daughter of Roger de Breteuil died; from his His married life does not appear to have been very happy for Warham, in Dorset.

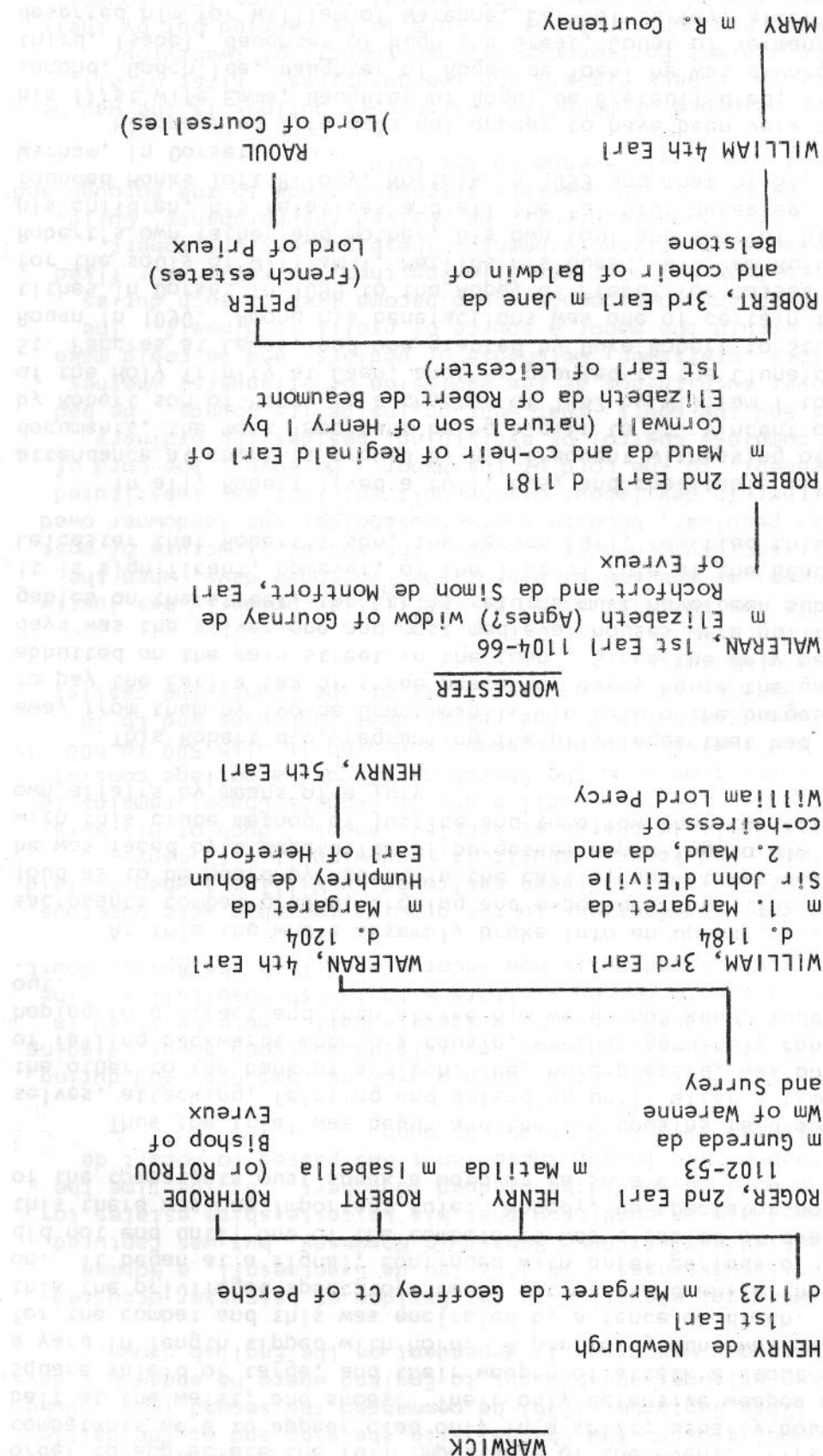
founded Monks Torf Priory, Norfolk in 1099 and that of St. Pettesbury, his children, his relatives and all the faithful deceased. He also Robert's own father and mother, his own soul and that of his wife, for the souls of William I, Matilda his Queen, William Rufus, Henry I, tithes in Dorset in 1099 to the Abbey of Preaux for masses to be said Rouen in 1090. Among his benefactions was one of certain lands and St. Pancras at Lewes, and one granted by Duke Robert to St. Mary of of the Holy Trinity at Caen, another granted to the Cluniac Abbey of by Robert son of Henry I; a charter of 1082 by William I to the Abbey documents, the most important being a gift to St. Vincent of le Mans attendance at court is proved by his frequent witnessing of official in all, Robert lived a full, busy and charitable life. His

Leicester that Robert's son, the second Earl, remitted this tax. It is significant, however, of the liberal rule of the Beaumonts in gables on the street, the Earl's returns must have been substantial. days was the silver one and most medieval houses were built with abutted on the main street in the town. Since the only penny in those to pay the Earl a tax of three pence for every house the gable of which away from them by Ivo de Grantmesnil. In return the burgesses agreed This Robert did, regaining the privileges that had been taken

own affairs by means of a jury. with this crude method of justice and to allow them to settle their he was faced by a deputation of burgesses appealing to him to do away loud as to be heard by Robert in the castle, and it was not long before sacrosanct combat-ground, arguing and expositing. The hubbub was so At this the whole assembly broke into an uproar, invading the

out. hoping to distract and then strike him we do not know, suddenly cried of falling backwards when his cousin, whether genuinely concerned or the other to the bank of a ditch. He, hard-pressed, was on the point selves, attacking, fainting and defending until after a time one forced Thus the trial was begun and the two cousins laid about them-

of the combatants must speak a word or raise a cry. this there was one important rule. Nobody, no spectator nor even one did not end until one of the combatants was disabled or dead. In all on. It began at a signal, continued with brief periods of respite and this the privileged spectators could sit or stand while the trial went for the combat and this was encircled by a fence or ditch. Around a yard in length tipped with horn. A plot of ground was marked out square shield or target, and their weapon of attack a stout stick about belt at the waist, and shoes. Their only defensive weapon was a small combatants were to appear clad only in a shift, usually bound by a order to appreciate the full importance of the event. Firstly the two



the Saxon Thurkill of Arden. He was born at the castle of Neufbourg near Louviers from which he took his name. He is included among the roll of knights who came over with the Conqueror but does not appear to have been present at the Battle of Hastings.

As a character in English history he is overshadowed by his far greater brother, partly because he spent the most of his time in Normandy, and partly because he apparently lacked the finer qualities of statesmanship possessed by Robert. Orderic Vitalis (c.1055-1145) tells us that he was less prominent than Robert but was held in high repute, "for he was prudent, active, upright and law-abiding, of pleasant disposition and holy life." He appears to have been more fond of pleasure than Robert, for he delighted in company, and in the tournaments given in 1069 when Queen Matilda was crowned at Westminster, he won great acclaim. When he became Earl of Warwick he adopted the badge of the Bear and the Ragged Staff, supposed to have been borne by the legendary Guy of Warwick whose fight with the giant Colbrand and the invading Northern kings forms the basis of stories told and retold by generations of minstrels. The badge was to be carried for hundreds of years by the henchmen of Warwick on many an English battlefield.

In politics Henry of Newburgh was closely associated with his elder brother. He was a party to the attempt to reconcile the Conqueror with his wayward son Robert of Normandy and in 1100 actively helped to secure the succession of Henry I. His best known service was in Wales where Robert Fitzhamon Earl of Gloucester had already campaigned, securing all the south and the marches by strong castles such as those of Carmarthen and Pembroke. Henry I did not make much more progress there, though Henry de Newburgh built a castle at Abertowy near Swansea and held the Gower peninsula for the English. In 1120 he built other castles at Penrhys, Llandidan, Swansea, Oystermouth and Aberllychor.

He had many honours conferred on him. In 1068 he was made Constable of Warwick Castle and shortly afterwards King William gave it to him together with the borough and manor. In later years the castle was enlarged and strengthened, and in time it became one of the most renowned of English fortresses. Even today it remains one of the glories of the Midland shires. Henry surrounded his seat at Wedgnock, co. Warwick with a park. These were the first lands ever to be emparked in England.

His benefactions were numerous. He founded the Priory of the Holy Sepulchre for the Austin Canons at Warwick, rebuilt in the 16th century. In 1925 it was removed stone by stone and sent to America where it was rebuilt. He also rebuilt and endowed the church of St. Mary, Warwick, making it a collegiate foundation by incorporating with it All Saints Church which was within the precincts of Warwick Castle. In 1080 he gave the tithes of Sturminster, Dorset, Hill Morton, Norton, Great Harborough and the manors of Warrington and Arlescott in Warwickshire to his grandfather's foundation the Abbey of St. Pierre de Preaux, of which he was patron.

With the deaths of Robert of Leicester in 1118 and Henry of Newburgh in 1123, the history of the Norman Beaumonts in England enters its second phase. Memories of the Conquest were dim, and a new generation, full of vigour and ambition, had grown up. The future was not bright, for King Henry had lost his only son William in the White Ship in 1120, a loss which was within a few years to plunge the country into a civil war to settle the succession.

Robert (nicknamed "Le Bossu", the Hunchback) and Waleran, the two sons of Robert of Leicester, were twins and the inheritance was divided between them, Robert having the English patrimony and Waleran that in

CLAIMANTS TO THE CROWN OF ENGLAND

1087-1216

WILLIAM I m Matilda of Flanders

ROBERT WILLIAM II HENRY I
 1051-1134 (1057-1100) (1068-1135)
 Duke of Normandy 1087-1106
 Stephen of Blois

WILLIAM WILLIAM MATILDA
 "Cito" 1102-20 1102-67
 (died on m 1. 2. Gloucester
 The Emperor Geoffrey d 1147
 White Henry V Plantag- d 1174
 Ship) enet 1113-51
 King of England 1135-1154

HENRY II GEOFFREY WILLIAM EUSTACE of WILLIAM
 (1133-1189) (1135-56) 1136-64 Boulogne 1133-59
 (1154-1189)

WILLIAM HENRY m MATILDA RICHARD I GEOFFREY Eleanor Joanna JOHN

1153-6 Margaret of m Henry 1157-99 1159-86 1168-1216
 France the Lion 1189-99 m Constance m 1.
 1155-83 of Saxony Berengaria of

of Navarre Brittany Isabel of Gloucester 2.
 Isabella of Angoulême

ARTHUR
 of Brittany
 murdered 1203

HENRY III

Normandy. In recognition of their father's services to the king they were brought up in the royal household, and in 1119 they accompanied king Henry on a visit to Pope Calixtus at Gisors where they are said to have astonished the cardinals with their learning, so much so that one of them remarked that the boys knew more about European literature than the cardinals themselves.

Their obligations to King Henry did not, however, prevent their joining in the conspiracy of St. Leufroi in 1123, in which a number of Norman barons plotted to secure the ducal crown of Normandy for William Clito, son of the captive Duke Robert. They were defeated by William de Harcourt at the Battle of Bourgterroude, then shut themselves in Brionne. Meanwhile King Henry had crossed to Normandy and on his approach the two brothers fled to the castle at Beaumont-le-Roger. The king captured the castles at Brionne and Pont Audemar, the latter after a seven week's siege, laid waste to the two towns and deprived Waleran of his title of Count of Meulan. In the spring of 1124 Waleran sallied out with his three brothers-in-law Hugh de Chateaufneuf, Hugh de Montfort and William Lord of Breval to the relief of a tower at Watteville. Early one morning they assaulted the entrenchments the king had thrown up and tried to force a convoy of provisions through to the besieged. In doing so they were captured and held in prison for five years, first at Rouen and afterwards in England. All their castles were reduced except the one at Beaumont-le-Roger, and Waleran, thinking discretion the better part of valour, sent orders for it to be given up. Afterwards both he and his brother were pardoned for their father's sake.

These two were not the only Beaumonts to rise against the king, for Robert of Newburgh, a younger son of Henry Earl of Warwick, even during his father's lifetime had joined in a conspiracy on behalf of William Clito. He had lost his castle at Neufbourg but again probably in consideration for his father's services and his youth had been pardoned by the king.

Some years later, Waleran again rose in support of Clito and again his castles of Brionne and Pont Audemar were captured. Then in 1128 Clito died, and his death was followed in 1134 by the death in prison of King Henry's elder brother Duke Robert. The reign was drawing to an end leaving the ever-present problem, but more serious than ever. Who was to succeed?

It was no time for an ageing king to cherish ill-feeling but rather to gather round him all the support he could in favour of his daughter Matilda. She had previously been married to the Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, but now (although she was still referred to as the Empress) was the wife of Geoffrey of Anjou.

When at the hunting-lodge in the forest of Lyons not far from Rouen, King Henry lay dying, two bishops and five earls were present. The king's choice was well-known, but the barons demurred, for Geoffrey of Anjou was, even at that moment, waging war in Normandy against Henry. Their choice - and Robert and Waleran were two of the five - was for Stephen of Boulogne, son of the Conqueror's daughter Adela, a young man who had riches and wide lands in both England and Normandy besides holding a town which was the key to the English wool trade with Flanders. Of the five barons in Henry's presence that day, only one, Robert Earl of Gloucester, Henry's illegitimate son, favoured his half-sister Matilda. The rest, including Robert and Waleran, though they had formerly sworn allegiance to her, deserted her cause at the earliest possible moment. Stephen took immediate advantage of the confusion, arriving in England, where the Londoners immediately accepted him as king, and the

Archbishop of Canterbury anointed him. This was the prelude to eighteen years of strife. Robert of Gloucester was for the time being outmanoeuvred.

Meanwhile Normandy was in a state of uproar, many of the barons, including the Beaumonts, hereditary foe Roger de Toeni having risen in revolt against Stephen. Robert and Waleran, together with Theobald of Blois to whom they gave a hundred marks, attacked Roger's territory, burning villages, among them Bough-sur-Risle, whose fine church of St. Mary Magdalene was razed to the ground. In the autumn of 1136 they captured Roger and took him to England where the king, after receiving his allegiance, pardoned him. In the following years, Stephen crossed to Normandy and took up the war against Geoffrey of Anjou, but quarrels intervened between his barons and Stephen's Flemish mercenaries. Having managed to patch up the quarrels, Stephen left Normandy to look after itself, a serious mistake in view of its disordered state and the continuing danger from Geoffrey of Anjou.

Another and a more serious mistake Stephen made was probably directly due to the influence of Waleran. The latter was a skilful soldier whose activities in Normandy had largely succeeded in keeping Geoffrey of Anjou at bay. In the winter of 1137-8, while on a short visit to England he took an army north and succeeded in driving a Scottish army out of the castle of Wark. As a reward for his service he was created Earl of Worcester and became the foremost confidential adviser to the king.

This year, 1138-9 was probably the zenith of the power of the Beaumonts in all English history. Waleran as well as being Earl of Worcester was Count of Meulan, Robert was Earl of Leicester, Roger of Newburgh was Earl of Warwick, another brother Hugh was made Earl of Bedford, his half-brother William of Warenne (son of his father's wife Isabel who had deserted him) was Earl of Surrey, his brother-in-law Gilbert de Clare was Earl of Pembroke, his cousin Rothrod was elected Bishop of Evreux in 1139. In that year it looked as if both England and Normandy were destined to be ruled by the Beaumonts.

Stephen believed that one of the obstacles to his absolute power was Roger, Bishop of Salisbury. Originally a poor priest in Caen, Roger had been noticed and eventually made Chancellor by Henry I. He had completely remodelled the financial system of England and had created the Exchequer. Henry I had trusted him completely and in the course of his advancement members of his family had been promoted, one to the office of Chancellor, one to the See of Lincoln and a third to that of Ely and the office of Treasurer. Between them they had numerous stone castles outside their dioceses and many knights. If they threw in their lot with Matilda Stephen's cause would indeed be in peril.

It is believed that Waleran suggested that Count Alan of Brittany should pick a quarrel with the Bishops' men when the Court came to Oxford in June 1139. This was done and a tumult ensued after which the Bishop and his relatives were accused of breaking the peace and ordered to surrender their castles. Robert and Waleran led the barons in a short campaign which ended in the capture of all three castles and to confine themselves to matters purely ecclesiastical. This action was illegal on Stephen's part, for in accusing them he broke the terms of the charter he had granted. In doing so he also antagonised his own brother Henry who was Bishop of Winchester, and he incurred the displeasure of the Pope. Though Stephen's case was

upheld at a Council held at Winchester, his cause received a serious setback, for most of the clergy now acknowledged Matilda as Queen of England.

Civil war followed. In July 1138, David of Scotland, who was Matilda's uncle, invaded England from the north. Waleran was a member of the force which, inspired by Archbishop Thurstan of York defeated the Scottish army at the Battle of the Standard at Northallerton in August. In September 1139, Matilda herself arrived in England and was admitted to Arundel Castle, which was then occupied by Henry I's widow. Stephen laid siege to it, then made an agreement that if Matilda was surrendered to him, he would give her a safe conduct to her brother the Earl of Gloucester, who was then in Bristol. Stephen's brother Henry, Bishop of Winchester and Robert de Beaumont acted as her escort. This agreement was another serious error on Stephen's part, for no sooner had she arrived there than her forces sallied out and attacked Worcester, destroying and plundering much of the city. Waleran, after defeating a force under John FitzHarold, recaptured the city and took away prisoners. Nevertheless, Matilda was now in favour in the south-west, and many barons were eager to take advantage if the balance of power swayed one way or the other.

One of these was Ranulf of Chester, who had been deprived by Henry I of his lordship of Carlisle and Cumberland. In 1140 he seized Stephen's castle at Lincoln. The citizens complained to the king, who gathered a force and arrived there in January 1141, only to find that Ranulf had escaped to Cheshire and was seeking support from Matilda and her brother. Stephen was not aware of their return to Lincoln until they were almost upon him. It was too late. In the battle which followed Stephen was completely defeated and captured. Waleran was in chief command, but when he saw that the battle was lost, he fled, together with other barons, leaving the king to his fate. This was the signal for more barons, including Roger de Newburgh Earl of Warwick, to go over to Matilda, but Robert of Leicester still remained faithful to Stephen.

As the star of Matilda rose, so that of the Beaumonts began to grow dim. Waleran left England and returned to Normandy. His castle at Worcester was taken by Matilda and put into the care of William de Beauchamp. During the next three years Waleran attached himself to Geoffrey of Anjou, then in 1145 he went on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. At that time St. Bernard was preaching the Second Crusade, and Waleran joined the contingent from England and the Low Countries. They took the sea route and on their way captured Lisbon from the Moors, thus helping to found the Kingdom of Portugal. Meanwhile in England, things were going from bad to worse. Robert, who in 1139 had been made Earl of Hereford, was deprived by Matilda of the earldom and it was given to Miles, Constable of Gloucester. Hugh, younger brother of the twins lost the earldom of Bedford in 1141. He, unlike his two brothers, was neither industrious nor ambitious. He was glad to resign the earldom to his father-in-law, and was henceforward content with the status of a simple man-at-arms; for this reason he was known as Hugh the Poor and after two generations his family disappears from the records.

By the year 1150, the state of affairs was rapidly changing. In the first place the young Henry Plantagenet, the son of Matilda and Geoffrey of Anjou had attained the age of seventeen years and was now the obvious choice of many barons in preference to Stephen's son Eustace. Secondly, they were becoming tired of war and thenceforward opposing causes, were by that time making unilateral pacts not to

interfere with each other's interests. Robert of Leicester, for instance, though favouring Stephen, made agreements not to do harm to the persons or property of four other barons including Roger of Hereford and his twin brother Waleran who was now on Matilda's side. So the war went on, each combatant reserving the right to refuse to fight anybody with whom he had made private agreements. In Robert's case one of these agreements almost broke down when Stephen wanted to take Worcester Castle for the crown at a time when it was held by the forces of his brother Waleran. Robert had to act with caution, but, as Henry of Huntingdon tell us, "by the guile of the Earl of Leicester the King's siege works were demolished and the castle of Worcester cunningly saved." The rest of Waleran's life was spent mainly in Normandy, though he retained the Earldom of Worcester. When the Civil War was over he attended Henry II's court, and in 1160 witnessed the Treaty of Peace between Henry and Louis VII of France. He also witnessed a charter granted to the Cistercian Abbey of Coggeshall in Essex founded in 1147 by Stephen and his Queen.

Waleran was both more intelligent and more headstrong than his brother Robert. His position during the troubles was also much more difficult because as a Norman baron on Stephen's side he stood at great risk of losing his estates either to Geoffrey of Anjou or to the French King. This in fact probably accounts for his going over to Matilda's cause after the Battle of Lincoln and for his return to Normandy. Here Waleran had taken possession of some of the lands belonging to his nephew Robert de Montfort (son of his sister Adeline) but Robert captured and imprisoned him in the castle of Orbec until he consented to restore these lands.

This "greatest and best man in Normandy" lived to see peace restored by King Henry II, and died in holy orders at the Abbey of St. Pierre de Preaux in 1166. In conjunction with the Empress Matilda he founded the Abbey of Notre Dame du Voeu in the fulfilment of a vow taken by him when shipwrecked on his return from the Crusade and a vow by Matilda when she escaped from the siege of Oxford during the Civil War. He made grants towards the foundation of Bordesley Abbey, Warwick in 1141, to the Church of St. Nicoise, Melient, where he built a bridge, and to the Abbey of Bec.

The last phase of this long Civil War concerns mainly his brother Robert. To him it was now obvious that, though he had supported Stephen for nearly twenty years, the crown would eventually go to the young Duke Henry, to whom, on his landing in England in 1153, he transferred his allegiance. The thirty castles he held in the midlands were of inestimable value when Henry came north to meet Stephen's forces near Malmesbury. Wisely Stephen retreated, fearing that even his most faithful supporters would not be willing to fight Henry, who then went rapidly through the midlands, taking Evesham, Tutbury, Leicester, Coventry and Warwick. Roger, Earl of Warwick was most unfortunate. After having formally joined Matilda in 1141 he had rejoined Stephen by 1146 and was campaigning with him in this last phase of the war. The Countess of Warwick, on the approach of Henry, gave up the castle. Roger, when he heard the awful news, died of shock.

The main participants were passing one by one. Geoffrey of Anjou had died in 1151, his wife Matilda had left England and never to return. In August 1153, Eustace of Boulogne, Stephen's son was ravaging Cambridgeshire when he was suddenly taken ill and died.

William, his illegitimate half-brother was fitted neither by birth

1. W. Napier Reeve. Chronicles of the Castle and of the Earls of Leicester
2. James Thomson. History of Leicester. 32.
3. Freeman. The Norman Conquest. IV. 645
4. Planche. I. 208
5. Planche I. 209
6. Ord. Vit. I. 11, 8.20
7. The story is told in Bement and St. Jacob. Simon de Montfort
8. Dugdale. Baronage I. 84
9. Genealogist. xxxvii. 64. Jumièges. 307
10. Countess of Warwick. Warwick Castle and its Earls. I
11. Dugdale. Ant. Warw. I. 379
12. D. Chron. 26th September 1925
13. Berks and Bucks Arch. Journ. xix. 92. Oct. 1913
14. William of Malmesbury. Gesta Regum X. par 406
15. Duchess of Cleveland. B.A. Roll I. 147
16. R.A. Davis. King Stephen (1967) 19-20
17. Davis. 8
18. The rise and decline of the Beaumonts during this reign is discussed in Davis. 26-31
19. Davis 43. 49
20. Ramsay. Foundations of England II. 433
21. Davis 113-4
22. Davis. 120

NOTES

nor character for the English throne.

The country was weary of war and the Midlands, especially had suffered terribly from repeated ravaging and slaughter. Robert of Leicester welcomed the Treaty of Winchester which confirmed Henry's succession. Under the new king he continued his great career - as Chief Justiciar of England.