

Thesis submitted for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty of History, University of Oxford

Winning the West: The Creation of Lower Normandy, c. 889–c. 1087

Kerrith Davies

Christ Church

Trinity Term 2016

ASLIB Abstract:

Winning the West: The Creation of Lower Normandy, c. 889-c. 1087

Kerrith Davies, Christ Church

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Michaelmas Term 2015

This thesis re-evaluates the chronology of Lower Normandy's integration into the duchy growing around Rouen from the tenth century onwards. The **introduction** argues that modern accounts of Normandy's development remain dependent on the works of Dudo of Saint-Quentin and Flodoard of Rheims. Difficulties with these authors and alternative approaches to Normandy's early history are identified. It is argued that regional distinctions throughout the later duchy hindered efforts to bring about political cohesion. **Chapters One** and **Two** identify the ninth-century Breton occupation and early tenth-century Scandinavian settlement of Lower Normandy as the twin sources of ongoing regional divisions. The early dukes' interest in and influence over the west are also called into question. **Chapters Three** and **Four** instead posit that ducal interest in Lower Normandy was a product of the late tenth century, with direct intervention following in the favourable circumstances of the early eleventh century. Ducal success in this period depended upon the co-operation of regional aristocrats and ecclesiastical institutions and continuing constraints on Rouen's influence and authority are emphasised. **Chapter Five** argues that Robert the Magnificent was a more assertive ruler, who actively strengthened ducal authority in Lower Normandy in spite of renewed opposition. **Chapter Six** considers how rebellion against William the Conqueror in 1047 reveals growing local interest in the conduct of ducal government. Victory allowed William to consolidate ducal authority in Lower Normandy, encouraging further expansion beyond its borders. Local landholders, however, resultantly received little direct ducal patronage, including scant reward in the post-Conquest settlement of England. In **conclusion**, while Lower Normandy had been brought firmly under ducal control by 1087, it is argued that it was only under William's son, Henry I, that the region's aristocrats acquired any major influence over ducal policy and secured an equal position within the wider Anglo-Norman nobility.

Historical Abstract:

This thesis is concerned with both the means by and the timeframe in which Lower Normandy, especially the western dioceses of Coutances, Avranches and Bayeux, came to be ruled by the ducal dynasty based in Rouen. The **introduction** posits that such a regional study should form part of a broader reinterpretation of early Norman history, arguing that the traditional historical narrative of Normandy's foundation and settlement in the tenth century is not fit for purpose. That account remains heavily-based on Dudo of Saint-Quentin and Flodoard of Rheims, both in their own way problematic sources. Dudo's credibility has long been questioned, yet the eleventh-century context of his work continues to influence the study of tenth-century Scandinavian settlement in northern France. Indeed, even the use of the word 'Normandy' to describe the tenth-century territories that eventually became the duchy represents the employment of an eleventh-century neologism by modern historians. Flodoard's description of a succession of Frankish royal grants similarly underpins current accounts of Normandy's foundation. Despite Flodoard's general reliability, it is argued that his description of royal grants has hardly been taken on its own merits by later historians. A survey of modern historiography, including work on ecclesiastical, numismatic and social developments in the region, also reveals that many of the academic conclusions based on this traditional narrative framework of the duchy's origins have increasingly come into question over the course of the last twenty years.

The remainder of the introduction provides a framework for reappraising this narrative of the duchy's emergence and westward expansion. It is argued that any updated approach must engage with a wide selection of materials in the hope

of balancing the conflicting approaches to early Norman history current today. Broadly speaking, those historians who look primarily to chronicle and charter evidence have tended to see the nascent duchy as strongly influenced by Carolingian traditions. Conversely, recent archaeological and linguistic studies offer more scope for powerful Scandinavian influences on Normandy's early development. Such an approach will reveal that the balance between these and other influences was not homogenous throughout the future Norman territories. Rather, it will be argued that Lower Normandy had markedly different social, cultural and administrative traditions to those prevalent in the vicinity of the Seine valley and Pays de Caux – the heartlands of ducal power. Such traditions had an ongoing impact upon the region's development into the eleventh century. They shaped interactions with Rollo's dynasty, helping and hindering the expansion of ducal power, while also providing an important insight into how Lower Norman aristocrats viewed their own position in the wider world of eleventh-century Normandy and northern France.

The opening chapters seek to illustrate the diversity of conditions existing in tenth-century Lower Normandy by providing a historical background to Scandinavian settlement. **Chapter One** focuses on pre-existing divisions arising from the region's Breton past. Breton involvement in Lower Normandy is traced over a hundred year period, beginning with the military raids of the early ninth century, via the establishment of administrative control over the Cotentin and Avranchin fifty years later, to the collapse of Breton rule in the wake of Scandinavian assault at the turn of the tenth century. The breadth of Breton influence during this period, especially on the Lower Norman church, is illustrated through study of saint's dedications, personnel, donations, veneration customs and

the exchange of manuscripts. The probable significance of maritime connections – a recurrent theme in Lower Norman history – in spreading Breton influence throughout the region is also discussed. This Breton heritage is shown to have played a significant role in Lower Normandy's development during the eleventh century. It is argued that Lower Norman aristocrats enjoyed close links with their Breton counterparts, through marriage alliances and practices of ecclesiastical patronage, with some local families even recognising their Breton origins. Possible Breton elements in Lower Norman toponyms and anthroponyms are also discussed, with recent challenges to the existence of such influences from Gillian Fellows-Jenson and Éric van Torhout being considered and questioned. Importantly, the gradual decline of Breton influence over local traditions is shown to have coincided with the strengthening of Norman ducal authority in the region, providing a further means of charting Lower Normandy's integration into the wider duchy. **Chapter Two** turns to the equally diverse character of the early Scandinavian settlers themselves. The ethnic heterogeneity of the settlers and the intensity of and prolonged period over which settlement took place throughout Normandy are used to challenge the notion that any sort of political cohesion was quick to emerge within the territories that would become Normandy. Rather, early tenth-century Normandy is characterised as an area dominated by an indeterminate number of conflicting warbands and settler communities. The particular political significance of Rollo and William Longsword is questioned by contrasting them with the contemporary leaders of the Loire Norse. Similarly, the apparent evidence for the ducal dynasty's early involvement in Lower Normandy is challenged at length; while continuing divisions amongst the tenth-century settlers are demonstrated to have contributed to the varied Norman reaction to

Longsword's death and the resulting minority of Richard I. Furthermore, eleventh-century descriptions of this early period by later Norman authors suggest that regional tensions within Norman society still remained at that point.

As the first Norman ruler to use the title of 'duke', Richard I's reign (942-996), discussed in **Chapter Three**, has traditionally been seen as an important period of consolidation. The comparative paucity of late tenth century source material makes understanding this era extremely difficult. Given the apparent lack of evidence for Norman ducal involvement in Lower Normandy before c. 960, however, it is argued that Richard's rule needs to be considered in a fresh light. The duke's marriage to a Lower Norman aristocrat, Gunnor and his efforts to restore the episcopal hierarchy in Rouen's archdiocese stand as testament to Richard's western ambitions. The duke's reach, however, is shown to have exceeded his grasp. Richard's marriage won him no immediate friends amongst the Lower Norman aristocracy; his efforts at episcopal restoration in the western dioceses were largely unsuccessful. His supposed alliance with the counts of Rennes and re-foundation of Mont Saint-Michel are also put under the spotlight. While Richard's possible involvement at the latter cannot be entirely discounted, the limited evidence for ducal possessions in the three westernmost Norman dioceses suggests that the region remained at the limits of effective ducal control until the close of the tenth century. Lower Normandy is shown to have continued to develop in its own way during this period. Upper Norman authors' claims that ecclesiastical life had broken down in Lower Normandy are dismissed, with archaeological finds instead suggesting that, while there is evidence for paganism in the region into the early eleventh century, the local church continued to flourish away from the duke's faltering efforts towards episcopal restoration.

Chapter Four argues that it was not until Richard II's reign (996-1026) that his father's aspirations began to be transformed into reality, partly due to fortuitous circumstances. The death of his ally and major regional player, Count Geoffrey of Rennes in 1008 presented Richard II with an opportunity to enforce his authority throughout Lower Normandy – a changing scene evident in Dudo's contemporaneous reconstruction of the Norman past. Richard was directly involved at Mont Saint-Michel, where his interventions were not always kindly met by the monastic community. Local families, such as the dynasty of Neil I de Saint-Sauveur, appear in ducal service for the first time. This process, however, is shown still to be in its early stages. Ducal possessions, as recorded in Richard's dowry for his wife and his monastic donations, remained confined to coastal districts, easily accessible from Rouen by sea. The rise of vicecomital families in the Bessin and Cotentin reveals Richard's reliance on local co-operation for political control; his problematic relationship with his kinsmen, the counts of Avranches/Mortain, the difficulties embedding his own family in Lower Normandy entailed. Much of this evidence points to the partial breakdown of Carolingian administrative structures in Lower Normandy over the course of the tenth century, again emphasising the differing conditions that existed in the east and west of the duchy throughout this period.

These themes are revisited at the start of **Chapter Five**, which follows the efforts of Richard II's sons to further strengthen their hold over Lower Normandy. In particular, while Richard III's dowry for Adela is used to demonstrate the spread of ducal property into the southern Cotentin by the late 1020s, it also serves to re-emphasise the probable breakdown of pre-existing administrative structures and the continuing importance of maritime communication in the

region. The majority of the chapter provides a reappraisal of the reign of Robert the Magnificent (1027-1035). Modern accounts of Robert's reign have characterised it as one in which ducal authority was undermined both externally by Normandy's neighbours and internally by the rise of an increasingly powerful and independent aristocracy. Analysis of Robert's activities in Lower Normandy, however, supports a more positive interpretation of his reign. Perhaps benefitting from the inheritance of further Lower Norman property on the death of his grandmother, Gunnor, Robert built on his father's legacy in the region. Rather than simply reacting to external threats, Robert is depicted as actively strengthening ducal authority on Normandy's frontiers. His war against Alan III of Brittany in the 1030s, whether planned or unprovoked, allowed Robert to tighten his hold over the Avranchin and Channel Islands and bring Mont Saint-Michel's independent monks to heel. Robert continued to develop ties with local aristocrats, such as Alfred the Giant, while simultaneously employing the burgeoning Upper Norman aristocracy in the west of the duchy to further increase his influence there. Given its status as the first ducal monastery established outside of Upper Normandy, the foundation of Cerisy-la-Forêt in 1032 could be considered the high-point of Robert's reign. The abbey's slow acceptance by local patrons and the concerns of the author of the *Vita Vigoris*, produced at Cerisy soon after the abbey's foundation, are used to reveal once again the continuing limits of ducal authority, despite Robert's considerable achievements.

The anarchy that accompanied the minority of Robert's illegitimate son, William the Conqueror, threatened to undo these accomplishments. **Chapter Six** opens by investigating the rebellion of 1047 against the young duke, which culminated in the battle of Val-ès-Dunes. It is argued that the western focus of the

revolt illustrates the evolution of ducal authority in Lower Normandy. Local lords sought greater influence at court and/or redress for previous ducal actions. While this demonstrates that Lower Norman aristocrats continued to have more distant relations with the duke than their eastern counterparts, their decision to rebel suggests they recognised that their future prosperity depended upon greater co-operation with the ruling dynasty in Rouen. The rebels' defeat at Val-ès-Dunes unintentionally provided Duke William with an opportunity to transform the nature of ducal rule in Lower Normandy. Through the careful treatment of the defeated rebels, the establishment of relationships with new local allies, the appointment of relatives and Upper Norman allies to positions in the west, and the development of a new ducal capital at Caen, allowed William to enforce his authority in Lower Normandy to an unprecedented extent. This transformation is shown to have underpinned William's projection of ducal power across the Norman frontier into Maine and Brittany in the decade preceding the battle of Hastings. William's actions also reshaped local administration and society, with observable alterations in vicecomital organisation and patterns of ecclesiastical patronage and foundation which brought Lower Normandy more into line with the wider duchy. Turning to the Conquest itself, it is argued that while a significant number of Lower Normans settled in England after 1066, the majority did so as tenants of ducal family members and Upper Norman aristocrats established in the region in the wake of Val-ès-Dunes. Despite the more extensive links William had cultivated with the Lower Norman aristocracy, for the most part they are shown to have remained outside of the duke's inner circle, receiving smaller shares of England's landed wealth accordingly. Study of the continental origins of Lower Norman vassals and tenants-in-chief is further used to illustrate the continuing

limits of ducal authority in the Avranchin and significance of familial links across the border with Brittany.

The **conclusion** argues that the eleventh, not the tenth was the crucial century for the establishment of ducal rule throughout Lower Normandy. While Richard I may have laid the initial groundwork, it was his successors' reaction to a series of events and opportunities (the death of Count Geoffrey of Rennes, war with Count Alan III, and the rebellion of 1047) that stimulated the development of ducal authority in the region. The political circumstances of the eleventh century similarly shaped the image of the tenth-century past put forward by Dudo of Saint-Quentin, among others. Their works served to justify ducal authority, while at the same time revealing the continuing prejudices and divisions within Norman society. Ducal rule spread steadily westward and inland from an initially tenuous hold on the coastline that mirrored the infiltration of the first Scandinavian settlers. That this was a slow process even in the eleventh century, however, is revealed by the limitations on ducal authority evident in Robert and William's reigns. By William's death in 1087, the social divisions between Upper and Lower Normandy outlined over the course of the thesis had largely been smoothed over. The duke's kinsmen and Upper Norman supporters, however, had reaped the richest part of the post-Conquest harvest. This thesis closes by considering how William's transformation of the west of the duchy, whether by accident or design, laid the foundations for a final levelling of Upper and Lower Norman interests under the aegis of his son, Henry I.

Acknowledgements:

Works of this nature always incur substantial debts of gratitude. Such debts are only compounded as the time taken to complete one's work grows ever longer. Given that I began my doctorate way back in October 2007, just as the Great Recession was starting to take hold, there can be few who owe more people more thanks than I do.

Foremost thanks are due to the AHRC and Christ Church for funding this research in the first place. The Haskins Society and Battle Conference also kindly supported my attendance at various valuable academic gatherings. My work has been informed immensely by listening to the many excellent papers prepared for the Norman Edge project at Lancaster University between 2008 and 2011. Through such conferences I was fortunate to make contact with several colleagues whose advice and insights have proven invaluable – Chris Lewis, Katharine Keats-Rohan, Richard Allen, Mark Hagger, Wendy Davies to name but a few. They have also helped me stay in touch with David Bates, with whom I discussed the outlines of this thesis in distant 2007 and who has kindly provided me with numerous materials to which I would not otherwise have had easy access on these shores. In Oxford itself, I am blessed in having had Richard Sowerby and George Molyneaux as near-contemporaries off whom to bounce ideas. Ultimately, however, independent research would have been impossible without the tireless efforts of the staff in the many libraries I have frequented over the course of the last ten years, including those of the Bodleian, British, Sackler, Taylorian and Maison Française. Special mention must go to Christ Church's own library and the late senior assistant librarian, Janet McMullin, who was always ready with help and a kind word – she is greatly missed.

More generally, I must thank my friends and fellow students in Christ Church's GCR. Although my Common Room commitments proved more of a hindrance than a help when it came to completing this thesis, the days I spent there were amongst the happiest of my life. If they didn't make me a better historian, they did make me a better person. Special mention must go to the Cripsey Road crew for putting up with me all those years and seeing me through some tough times and to my old friend Kiterie Faller, who once stayed up into the small hours with me baking chocolate cake and translating sixteenth-century French. What an evening that was! Once the money (inevitably) ran out, I could not possibly have completed my research without the support and understanding of my current employers at Eton College. Through a combination of persistent mockery, occasional ego-massaging awe, intellectual enthusiasm and inspirational work ethic the beaks and boys of Eton (readers must decide for themselves which group was responsible for what in that list...) have encouraged/goaded me towards submission over the course of these last five years. Special thanks must go to my former Head of Department, Ben Horan. Not only did Ben take the considerable risk of employing a man with limited teaching experience, he also arranged (with the consent and support of his successor, James Fulton) my Leave of Absence from Eton in the second half of 2014, during which I was finally able to complete work on Chapter Six.

My greatest debts of gratitude are reserved for those who have had the trying responsibility of guiding me through this protracted process. My college advisor, Rowena Archer was always there when I needed her, providing sage support and counsel. For that, I cannot thank her enough. Most important of all has been my long-suffering supervisor,

George Garnett. Relentlessly rigorous in his criticism of my academic output, George is undoubtedly a difficult man to impress. I hope I have finally done so. Finally, I could not possibly have made it to the end without the love and support of my family and my beloved Alice, who foolishly agreed to proof-read the final manuscript. Inevitably in a project of this length, there are days when one feels like throwing in the towel. The only reason I never did was because they had more faith in me than I ever had in myself.

Table of Contents:

Abbreviations	i
Introduction	1
0.1) The Problem of 'Normandy'	1
0.2) Frames of Reference	13
Chapter 1) The Breton East: Lower Normandy Before the Normans	22
1.1) Introduction: Winter on the Vire	22
1.2) First Conquest: Bretons in Lower Normandy (c. 846-c. 933)	26
1.3) Legacy: Social Identities and Networks after c. 933	39
1.4) Conclusion	62
Chapter 2) Les Premières Normandies: Normans East & West to c. 960	64
2.1) Introduction: Death on the Somme	64
2.2) The First Settlements	67
2.3) Taken for granted?: The Counts of Rouen and Lower Normandy, c. 911- c. 960	74
2.4) Conclusion	92
Chapter 3) The Beginning of Winning?: Richard I and Lower Normandy	94
3.1) Introduction: Falls The Shadow	94
3.2) Interpretative Problems (c. 960-996)	96
3.3) Conclusion	113
Chapter 4) Opportunity Knocks: Co-operation and Coercion in the Reign of Richard II	115
4.1) Introduction: A Wedding by the Sea	115
4.2) Family Matters: Judith, Emma & Gunnor in Lower Normandy	118
4.3) Ecclesiastical Reform: Richard II and the Church in Lower Normandy	130
4.4) Administrative Reform: <i>Comites</i> and <i>Vicecomites</i> in Lower Normandy	145

4.5)	Conclusion	159
Chapter 5)	War in the West: The Triumph of Robert the Magnificent	163
5.1)	Family Matters Revisited: Richard III, Adela and Lower Normandy	163
5.2)	War & Influence: Duke Robert, Brittany and Mont Saint-Michel	169
5.3)	Changing Circumstances: Gunnor, Cerisy and the Norman Aristocracy	181
5.4)	Conclusion	192
Chapter 6)	The West Won: William the Conqueror and Lower Normandy, 1035-1087	194
6.1)	Introduction: From the Orne to the Couesnon	194
6.2)	Val-ès-Dunes: Context and Character	199
6.3)	Val-ès-Dunes: Consequences	209
6.4)	After the Fall: Lower Normans in England	250
	Conclusion	276
	Bibliography	287

Abbreviations:

AASS	=	<i>Acta Sanctorum quotuot toto orbe coluntur</i> , ed. J. Bollandus <i>et al.</i> (Antwerp, Paris and Brussels, 67 vols., 1643-)
AASS OSB	=	<i>Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti</i> , ed. J. Mabillon <i>et al</i> (Paris, 9 vols., 1668-1707)
AB	=	<i>Annales de Bretagne</i>
Actes de Bretagne	=	H. Guillotel, <i>Les actes des ducs de Bretagne (944-1144)</i> , ed. P. Charon, P. Guigon, C. Henry, M. Jones, K.S.B. Keats-Rohan & J.-C. Meuret (Rennes, 2014)
AM	=	<i>Archéologie médiévale</i>
AN	=	<i>Annales de Normandie</i>
ANS	=	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i>
ASC	=	<i>Two of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles Parallel</i> , ed. C. Plummer and J. Earle (Oxford, 2 vols., 1892-9)
BSAN	=	<i>Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de Normandie</i>
CDF	=	<i>Calendar of Documents Preserved in France</i> , ed. J.H. Round (London, 1899)
Chroniques latines	=	<i>Chroniques latines du Mont Saint-Michel (IX^e-XII^e siècle)</i> , ed. P. Bouet and O. Desbordes (Caen, 2009)
DB, LDB, & Exon	=	<i>Domesday Book seu Liber Censualis Wilhelmi Primi Regis Angliae</i> , ed. A. Farley and H. Ellis (London, 4 vols., 1783-1816)
DD/DP	=	K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, <i>Domesday People/Descendants: a prosopography of persons occurring in English documents, 1066-1166</i> (Woodbridge, 2 vols., 1999-2002)
De moribus	=	<i>De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum, auctore Dudone Sancti Quintini decano</i> , ed. J. Lair (Caen, 1865)
EHR	=	<i>English Historical Review</i>

Flodoard	=	<i>Les annales de Flodoard</i> , ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1905)
GC	=	<i>Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributa</i> , ed. D. de Sainte-Marthe et al (Paris, 16 vols., 1715-1865)
GG	=	<i>The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers</i> , ed. and trans. H.W.C. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998)
GND	=	<i>The gesta Normannorum ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni</i> , ed. and trans. E.M.C. van Houts (Oxford, 2 vols., 1992-95)
HSJ	=	<i>Haskins Society Journal</i>
JMH	=	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
MGH	=	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
SS	=	<i>Scriptores</i>
SSRG	=	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum</i>
MSAN	=	<i>Mémoires de la société des antiquaires de Normandie</i>
MSHAB	=	<i>Memoires de la Societe d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne</i>
MSM	=	<i>The Cartulary of the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel</i> , ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Donnington, 2006)
OV	=	<i>The Ecclesiastical history of Orderic Vitalis</i> , ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 6 vols., 1969-80)
PL	=	<i>Patrologia cursus completus: Series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 221 vols., 1844-64)
RBE	=	<i>The Red Book of the Exchequer</i> , ed. Hubert Hall (London, 3 vols., 1896)
Recueil	=	<i>Recueil des actes des ducs de Normandie de 911 à 1066</i> , ed. M. Fauroux (Caen, 1961)
Regesta	=	<i>Regesta regum Anglo-Normannorum: the Acta of William I (1066-1087)</i> , ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998)

<i>RHDFE</i>	=	<i>Revue historique du droit français et étranger</i>
<i>RHF</i>	=	<i>Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France</i> , ed. L. Delisle et al (Paris, 24 vols., 1869-1904)
<i>RR</i>	=	Wace, <i>Le Roman de Rou de Wace</i> , ed. A.J. Holden (Paris, 3 vols., 1970-73)

Introduction

0.1) The Problem of 'Normandy'

In the opening decades of the eleventh century, Dudo of Saint Quentin, a French cleric in the service of the ruling dynasty at Rouen, produced the first overarching history of the duchy of Normandy.¹ The seminal moment in this narrative was the treaty agreed at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in the autumn of 911 and the events surrounding it. Having arranged to meet the West Frankish leader, Charles III the Simple, at the appointed spot, Rollo, the leader of the Viking warbands then pillaging the Seine valley, presented his foe with an ultimatum. In return for peace between them and Rollo's conversion to Christianity the French king would make Rollo a duke and give him all the land between the Epte and the sea with the addition of Brittany, 'on the frontier of the promised land', so that 'he might live off it'.² With a marriage to the king's daughter thrown in for good measure, a peaceful settlement was achieved, only for Charles to be ignominiously dumped onto his back in a brutish and begrudged display of Norman obeisance.

While the existence of an agreement between Charles and Rollo is confirmed by an extant royal charter of 14 March 918,³ the details Dudo provides were fabrications for his own era.⁴ Writing under ducal instruction and with input from ducal family members, Dudo's history mirrored, perhaps deliberately, the

¹ *Dudo of St Quentin, History of the Normans*, trans. E. Christiansen (Woodbridge, 1998), pp. ix-xiii, for an introduction to Dudo and dating his work.

² *De moribus*, pp. 168-9, p. 168 – *in confinio promissae terrae* and *ex ea viveret*, respectively. Unless stated, all translations from *History*, trans. Christiansen.

³ *Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple, roi de France*, ed. F. Lot and P. Lauer (Paris, 1940), no. 92. Charles gave the remaining estates of the old abbey of La Croix-Saint-Leufroi in the Méresais to the monastery of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, save those *quam annuimus Normannis Sequanensibus, videlicet Rolloni suisque comitibus, pro tutela regni* – 'which he had granted to the Normans of the Seine, namely to Rollo and his companions, for the defence of the kingdom'. Translation from *The Normans in Europe*, ed. and trans. E.M.C. van Houts (Manchester, 2000), p. 25.

⁴ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 195 nn. 199, 201, for the invention of Rollo's marriage to Charles' daughter and possible explanations for Dudo's placement of the meeting at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte.

political ideology of Richard II's court.⁵ It was only under Richard II (996-1026) that Norman rulers began to style themselves duke regularly, having used a host of alternative titles throughout the tenth century, including *comes*, *consul*, *princeps* and *marchio*.⁶ Norman interest in Brittany had been buoyed by a double marriage between the ducal dynasty of Rouen and the comital house of Rennes that, with Count Geoffrey I of Rennes' premature death in 1008, left Richard as guardian of his brother-in-law's young heirs.⁷ The dual marriage ceremony took place at the abbey of Mont Saint-Michel, the re-foundation of which Dudo assigned to Richard I (942-996), but where ducal influence only waxed strong from Richard II's reign.⁸ Even the idea that a land called 'Normandy' existed – named after its tenth-century Scandinavian settlers, now Christian converts, united under a single ruler and broadly conterminous with Rouen's archdiocesan boundaries – only finds its first contemporary expression at the turn of the eleventh century, in both diplomatic sources and the works of Norman and French chroniclers.⁹ The restoration, if only in name, of Normandy's episcopal hierarchy by 990, which represented the first year since the mid-ninth century in which all Norman dioceses had a bishop, and the appearance of recent Christian converts as

⁵ *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. xix-xxi, xxiii-xxix; L. Shopkow, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, 1997), pp. 173-89; E. Albu, *The Normans in their Histories* (Woodbridge, 2001), pp. 7-8; E. Johnson, 'Origin myths and the construction of medieval identities: Norman chronicles 1000-1100', in *Texts and Identities in the early Middle Ages*, ed. R. Corradini (Vienna, 2006), pp. 154-5, for Dudo's patrons and purposes.

⁶ *Recueil*, nos. 2, for the earliest use of the ducal title and 9, for its first use by Richard II. K.F. Werner, 'Quelques observations au sujet des débuts du "duché" de Normandie', in *Droit privé et institutions régionales: études historiques offertes à Jean Yver*, ed. R. Aubreton et al (Paris, 1976), pp. 691-709, for early Norman uses of Carolingian titles; R. Helmerichs, 'Princeps, Comes, Dux Normannorum: Early Rollonid Designators and their Significance', *HSJ* 9 (2001), pp. 57-77, esp. pp. 61-3, for an important reappraisal of Werner's work.

⁷ *GND*, ii, p. 28.

⁸ *De moribus*, p. 290. Below, pp. 108-13, 130-39, 171-6, for the dukes and Mont Saint-Michel.

⁹ *De moribus*, p. 125; *Recueil*, no. 15 (1014); 'Libellus de revelatione, edificatione et auctoritate Fiscanensis monasterii', *PL* 151, col. 713; Adémar de Chabannes, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. R. Landes and G. Pon (Turnhout, 1999), p. 148. D. Bates, *Normandy Before 1066* (London and New York, 1982), pp. 56-64; Shopkow, *History and Community*, pp. 8-16, for the emergence of the idea of 'Normandy'.

late as the 1040s demonstrates how insecure the religious elements of Normandy's identity were at Dudo's time of writing.¹⁰ Despite these limitations, historians have continued to use Dudo's account of 911 as the basis for modern narratives of Normandy's creation. Dudo himself implies that the treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte established a single political unit called Normandy in one fell swoop in 911, most notably through his reference to Brittany lying 'on the frontier' of Rollo's new polity.¹¹ Historians, however, have recast Saint-Clair-sur-Epte as the grant only of a portion of Upper Normandy, primarily the old Carolingian *pagi* of Talou, Caux, Roumois and parts of the Vexin and Évrechin.¹²

With the unreliable Dudo squared away, modern commentators wishing to trace Normandy's creation have turned to the Frankish chronicler, Flodoard of Rheims to continue the story. Born in the late ninth century, Flodoard served as a priest, later canon at Rheims from the 910s until retiring from the latter post in 963 and dying three years later, having spent his final days working in the cathedral archives. Flodoard continued writing his annals of the Frankish kingdoms, begun in c. 919, right up until his death.¹³ Contemporary accounts from this period are extremely rare – the only other surviving source being Flodoard's *fin de siècle* continuator, Richer.¹⁴ Though Flodoard's description of events is thus

¹⁰ *Recueil*, no. 4 (1990). M. Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum* and beyond Dudo: Some Evidence on Early Norman Historiography', *ANS* 22 (2000), pp. 38-41, for the significance of this period to religious reform in Normandy. Below, pp. 50, 105, 214, for Christian conversion in eleventh-century Norman society.

¹¹ Richard II's need to legitimate and magnify his family's origins meant that the 'westward expansion of [ducal] jurisdiction, to Bayeux and the Côtentin, could not be acknowledged in Dudo's story, because it had to be taken for granted, as an inheritance from Rollo' (*History*, trans. Christiansen, p. xvi).

¹² Bates, *Normandy*, p. 8; J. Le Patourel, *The Norman Empire* (Oxford, 1976), pp. 8-9; L. Musset, 'Considérations sur la genèse et le tracé des frontières de la Normandie', in his *Nordica et Normannica: recueil d'études sur la Scandinavie ancienne et médiévale, les expéditions des Vikings et la fondation de la Normandie* (Paris, 1997), pp. 404-405.

¹³ M. Sot, *Un historien et son église au X^e siècle: Flodoard de Reims* (Paris, 1993), pp. 43-55, for an overview of Flodoard's life.

¹⁴ J. Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century: The Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge, 2004), for the most recent English-language study.

hard to verify,¹⁵ there are strong grounds for accepting the overall accuracy of his work, at least in so far as Normandy is concerned. Despite writing at some geographical distance from Normandy, in Rheims Flodoard was at the political heart of Francia and well-placed to hear news from more remote regions and even take a direct hand in events himself.¹⁶ Aside from when discussing Rheims' ecclesiastical claims, Flodoard's style is matter-of-fact and dispassionate, demonstrating 'a lack of any particular favouritism'.¹⁷ His lengthier chronology of Frankish royal grants and Norse campaigns thus provides a more believable, complex and protracted picture of the establishment and westward expansion of Rollo's dynasty than that of Dudo. Having acknowledged Charles the Simple's initial grant, Flodoard had Norman territory expand incrementally.¹⁸ Charles' rival and eventual successor as king, Ralph of Burgundy granted Rollo the Bessin and Maine in 924, while in 933 Rollo's son, William Longsword received 'the land of the Bretons situated on the sea coast'.¹⁹ These grants are not without difficulties. Maine never became a permanent part of Normandy, while the terminology of the 933 grant is extremely vague. Nevertheless, historians, perhaps correctly, have largely been happy to identify teleologically 'Maine' with the Hiémois and the Breton territory of 933 with the *pagi* of the Cotentin and Avranchin.²⁰ By such

¹⁵ *Normans in Europe*, ed. and trans. van Houts, p. 42.

¹⁶ In 925, in the company of Archbishop Seulfus of Rheims, Flodoard accompanied the Frankish king Ralph of Burgundy to an important meeting with William of Aquitaine near Autun; in 936, he travelled to Rome; while in 940, he was briefly imprisoned during a long-running dispute over the succession to the archbishopric (Flodoard, s.a. 924, 940; *The Annals of Flodoard of Reims, 919-966*, ed. and trans. S. Fanning and B.S. Bachrach (Plymouth and Peterborough, Ont., 2004), pp. ix-x).

¹⁷ N. Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity* (Woodbridge, 2005), p. 15 (cited here); *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, pp. xii-xiii.

¹⁸ Flodoard of Rheims, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, ed. M. Stratmann (Hannover, MGH SS 36, 1998), p. 407.

¹⁹ Flodoard, s.a. 924, 933 (cited here) – *Willelmus, princeps Nordmannorum, eidem regi se committit; cui etiam rex dat terram Brittonum in ora maritima sitam*. Unless stated, all translations from *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach.

²⁰ H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin et son Histoire des premiers ducs normands* (Caen, 1915), pp. 202, 291; J.-F. Lemarignier, *Recherches sur l'hommage en marche et*

estimations, the later medieval bounds of Normandy had to some extent been established ahead of Longsword's assassination in 942.²¹ This basic narrative framework, cherry-picked from Dudo and Flodoard, continues to underpin many modern studies of the duchy's creation and expansion.²²

Broadly helpful though such a framework may be, it is known to be deeply flawed, marred not only by internal inconsistencies (as well as the aforementioned ambiguities), but also by a questionable contextual understanding of the nature of both royal grants specifically and the wider political world of tenth-century northern France. In terms of the former, it is notable that in 925 – a year after the region had allegedly been transferred to Rollo – the inhabitants of the Bessin took matters into their own hands, raiding Rollo's estates 'on the other side of the Seine' instead of accepting his rule.²³ Similarly, though William Longsword had been granted Breton territory in 933 by Ralph of Burgundy, by 940 he was negotiating with Ralph's Carolingian successor, Louis IV d'Outremer. Louis confirmed William only in those lands that his father, Charles the Simple had conceded to the Norse in 911, so ignoring the procession of grants made by his

les frontières féodales (Lille, 1945), p. 10 n. 2; D.C. Douglas, 'Rollo of Normandy', *EHR* 57 (1942), pp. 430-32; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 9; F. Neveux, 'La foundation de la Normandie et les Bretons (911-933)', in *Mondes de l'Ouest et villes du monde: Regards sur les sociétés médiévales: Mélanges en l'honneur d'Andre Chédeville*, ed. C. Laurent, B. Merdrignac and D. Pichot (Rennes, 1998), p. 305. Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, pp. 6-8, for the potential limitations of these identifications. L. Musset and H. Chanteux, 'Essai sur les invasions Bretonnes et Normandes dans le Maine aux IX^e et X^e siècles', *Bulletin de la Commission Historique et Archéologique de la Mayenne*, New Series, 29 (1973), pp. 54-5; below, pp. 78-9, for reasons why the original reading of 'Maine' should be accepted.

²¹ Bates, *Normandy*, Map 2.

²² Neveux, 'La foundation de la Normandie', pp. 297-309; *Chroniques latines*, pp. 79-82; É. van Torhout, 'La résistance franco-bretonne à l'expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954): une marche de Normandie?', in *Le pouvoir et la foi au Moyen Âge, en Bretagne et dans l'Europe de l'ouest: Mélanges à la mémoire du Professeur Hubert Guillotel*, ed. J. Quaghebeur and S. Soleil (Rennes, 2010), pp. 601-617, for some recent examples.

²³ Flodoard, s.a. 925 – *ultra Sequanam depraedantur*.

father's usurper.²⁴ There is no obvious sign that William was particularly unhappy with these arrangements. He appears alongside both Louis and the king's enemies in the following years,²⁵ finally hosting Louis royally at Rouen in 942.²⁶ This all suggests little real interest in westward expansion and limited progress to date – a view supported by the fact that all of Rollo and Longsword's verifiable military campaigns were directed eastward against Flanders and Picardy.²⁷

Given the inconsistencies and limitations thus revealed, the nature of these royal grants is worth considering. The Norman grants of the early tenth century were part of a tradition of royal acts that were often 'vague and ill-defined...involving lands no longer under royal control'.²⁸ In the ninth century, Frankish kings conceded extensive territories to a string of Breton rulers, including land in what would subsequently become Lower Normandy – many of which had fallen under Breton influence before the point of their official handover.²⁹ When Brittany itself fell to Viking raiders in the early tenth century, the Frankish margraves of Neustria, Robert of Neustria and Hugh the Great similarly conceded control of the region to the Loire Norse in grants made in 921 and 927.³⁰ In fact, the Norse had been in effective command of Brittany since their cataclysmic raid of 919.³¹ While Richer of Rheims could claim that Brittany

²⁴ Flodoard, s.a. 940 – *rex Ludowicus abiit obviam Willelmo, principi Nordmannorum, qui venit ad eum in pago Ambianensi et se illi commisit. At ille dedit ei terram quam pater eius Karolus Nordmannis concesserat* (my highlighting).

²⁵ *ibid.*, s.a. 940, 941 – William appears alongside Louis' foes, Hugh the Great and Herbert of Vermandois at the sieges of Rheims and Laon later in 940. In 941, he advised both men on whether to renew the siege of the latter city and attended their conference with Arnulf of Flanders.

²⁶ *ibid.*, s.a. 942.

²⁷ E. Searle, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power 840-1066* (Berkeley, 1988), pp. 54, 56; C. Potts, 'Normandy, 911-1144', in *Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Harper-Bill and van Houts, pp. 24-6.

²⁸ C. Potts, *Monastic Revival and Regional Identity in Early Normandy* (Woodbridge, 1997), p. 84.

²⁹ Below, pp. 26-39, for these grants and Breton interests in Lower Normandy more generally.

³⁰ Flodoard, s.a. 921, 927.

³¹ *ibid.*, s.a. 919.

was ‘held for military service from Gaul’,³² the reality was that Breton rulers had acted increasingly independently of the Frankish monarchy since the days of Charles the Bald.³³ Such grants thus recognised the established *status quo* in return for peace and a reduction in raiding, framed in a manner that reveals more about the pretensions than the reality of Frankish authority. Given the evidence of Norse settlement, accommodations with local communities and early treaties in the lower Seine valley in the late ninth century,³⁴ Charles the Simple’s grant of 911 might best be considered in a similar light. Political expedience (in this case the conflict between the Robertian and Carolingian families over the Frankish throne) was also paramount in the subsequent treaties made with the Seine Norse. These treaties were designed either to gain Norse military support or ‘direct...Norse aggression away from the Ile de France’.³⁵ Charles the Simple’s charter of 918 reveals that he saw Rollo’s Vikings as military allies after Saint-Clair-sur-Epte.³⁶ Rollo and Ragnvald, the leader of the Loire Norse, rallied to Charles’ cause in 923 in return for further promises of land.³⁷ Ralph of Burgundy’s grant the following year was thus designed to divide this dangerous coalition and undermine Charles’ powerbase, a strategy repeated in 933 when Ralph sought to retain William Longsword’s support during a long-running war against Count Herbert II of Vermandois.³⁸ While Ralph could offer the Norse a

³² Richer of Reims, *Histoire de France (888-995)*, ed. R. Latouche (Paris, 2 vols., 1930-7), i, p. 14 – *quae est Galliae...atque militans*.

³³ J.M.H. Smith, *Province and Empire: Brittany and the Carolingians* (Cambridge, 1992), pp. 189-95.

³⁴ J. Le Maho, ‘The Fate of the Ports of the Lower Seine Valley at the End of the Ninth Century’, in *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and ‘Productive’ Sites, 650-850*, ed. T. Pestell and K. Ulmschneider (Macclesfield, 2003), pp. 241-7; idem, ‘Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IX^e siècle’, in *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident et les débuts du duché de Normandie*, ed. P. Bauduin (Caen, 2005), pp. 173-9.

³⁵ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 84.

³⁶ Above, p. 1 n. 3.

³⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 923 – *qui eis latitudinem terrae pollicitus fuerat*.

³⁸ *ibid.*, s.a. 931, 932, 933.

free hand, in both cases the lands concerned were beyond effective royal control, hence the resistance of the men of the Bessin, who may have been ‘Franks resisting Norse settlers, or a Norse warband disputing attempts by the Rouen Norse to make good their “grant” of Bayeux’.³⁹ There is no reason to think that a treaty concluded with one Norse leader would have held any meaning for rival Viking groups, whether already active or only arriving later in northern France – Flodoard tacitly admits that not all Norsemen were bound by the treaty of 924.⁴⁰ While some grants may have transferred royal prerogatives and properties,⁴¹ for the most part they represented temporising replies to the difficult circumstances posed by Norse invaders – their lasting significance dependent ‘upon what could be made to stick, and for how long’.⁴² There was no guarantee of political permanence or security⁴³ – as Rollo was probably only too aware.⁴⁴ This has left modern commentators in a position where we do not ‘know how or when lands changed hands, especially in those regions far removed from Rouen’.⁴⁵

As the preceding comment suggests, the problem such an argument presents for modern analyses of Normandy’s expansion westward has not passed unnoticed. John Le Patourel and Eleanor Searle both questioned the historical

³⁹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 50.

⁴⁰ Flodoard, s.a. 925; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 87; M. Hagger, ‘How the west was won: the Norman dukes and the Cotentin, c. 987–1087’, *JMH* 38 (2012), p. 21; L. Musset, ‘Participation de Vikings venus des pays celtes à la colonisation scandinave de la Normandie’, in his *Nordica et normannica*, p. 291.

⁴¹ L. Musset, ‘Les domaines de l’époque franque et les destinées du régime domanial du IX^e au XI^e siècle’, *BSAN* 49 (1946), pp. 49-51; idem, ‘Origines et nature du pouvoir ducal en Normandie jusqu’au milieu de XI^e siècle’, in his *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 266-8.

⁴² Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 44.

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 49, for Brittany, where Frankish ‘grants’ proved empty letters. The newly-established Norse rulers received no support when the Breton aristocracy returned from exile to win Brittany’s freedom in the 930s.

⁴⁴ F.M. Stenton, ‘The Scandinavian Colonies in England and Normandy’, in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 344-5.

⁴⁵ L. Abrams, ‘Early Normandy’, *ANS* 35 (2013), p. 58.

significance of Carolingian and Robertian royal grants.⁴⁶ Both suggested that the advance of ducal rule throughout what would become Lower Normandy was a slow affair, which – Le Patourel thought – left a legacy of regional divisions lasting into the mid-eleventh century.⁴⁷ While David Bates acknowledges academic disagreement ‘about the extent and nature of power exercised in the west of what became the duchy’, he nevertheless emphasises that ‘Normandy was unquestionably by the early eleventh century shaping into a well-organized and territorial principality’.⁴⁸ This begs the question. As noted above, the use of the words ‘Normandy’ (*Normannia*, *Northmannia*) or ‘land of the Normans’ (*terra Normannorum*) to identify the territory of the duchy only emerged at the turn of the eleventh century. As Leah Shopkow notes, however, this simply reveals that ‘a Norman community was in ideological existence’, which, though suggestive, does not answer whether Normandy concurrently ‘had a physical existence, what kind of existence that was, and when it came into being’.⁴⁹ Furthermore, implicit in the notion of Normandy’s ‘ideological existence’ is the question of to whose ideology we are referring. As we have seen, Dudo’s use of the phrase ‘Normandy’ and what he took it to mean were surely influenced by the political culture of the ducal court, though this need not imply that *De moribus* was intended as a work of propaganda – not for a Norman audience at any rate.⁵⁰ The aforementioned use of ‘Normandy’ in contemporary ducal *acta* and the work of the Fécamp Anonymous, himself a member of a ducal foundation that would play a crucial role in the

⁴⁶ Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, pp. 3-12; Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 44-5, 49-50, 53-4, 57. Searle, however, does not consider the implications of Louis’ grant of 940 avoiding mention of those territories supposedly conceded in 924 and 933.

⁴⁷ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 103-104; Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 284.

⁴⁸ D. Bates, *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford, 2013), p. 11.

⁴⁹ Shopkow, *History and Community*, p. 9.

⁵⁰ Compare F. Lifshitz, ‘Dudo’s historical narrative and the Norman succession of 996’, *JMH* 20 (1994), pp. 106-7, *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. xix-xx, xxiii-xxv and E. Johnson, ‘Origin myths’, p. 155 with Prentout, *Étude critique*, pp. 127-38 and Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 122-3.

establishment of its patron's rule in Lower Normandy,⁵¹ stem from the same source. Whether the use of the phrase 'Normandy' by contemporary Frankish commentators, such as Adémar de Chabannes, carried the same precise political connotations evident in Dudo and the Fécamp Anonymous is hard to ascertain. Certainly, these authors were coming to see the ducal dynasty and the Norman people in a more respectful light in the early eleventh century, but this need not imply that they believed all Normans fell under the control of Rouen.⁵² It is hardly surprising that the ducal dynasty, closely allied to the regional ecclesiastical hierarchy,⁵³ should have chosen to legitimise and maximise their power using the terms evidenced by Dudo and the Fécamp Anonymous. Crucially, however, it reveals nothing about how this idea was received by the inhabitants of those territories claimed by the duke. While the unusual level of territorial cohesion evident in late eleventh-century Normandy attests how astonishingly successful the ruling dynasty ultimately was in its creation of a united, well-defined duchy, there is a world of difference between staking a claim to and having already established political control over the archdiocese of Rouen in c. 1000.

Understanding the nature of ducal power in Lower Normandy and estimating a timeframe for its establishment are thus integral to addressing the broader question of what 'Normandy' meant not only at the turn of the eleventh century, but afterwards as well. Did the dukes' ideological reach exceed their practical grasp or did emergent descriptions of their territorial claims derive from

⁵¹ L. Musset, 'La Contribution de Fécamp à la reconquête monastique de la Basse-Normandie (990-1066)', in *L'Abbaye bénédictine de Fécamp: ouvrage scientifique du XIIIe centenaire* (Fécamp, 3 vols., 1959-63), i, pp. 57-66, 341-3.

⁵² Webber, *Norman Identity*, pp. 40-52, for external approaches to the Normans. Writing in the 1020s, Adémar usually referred to Rollonid rulers by the territorially-imprecise title 'count of Rouen' (Adémar, *Chronicon*, ed. Landes and Pon, pp. 155, 173, 184). Rodulf Glaber similarly wrote of the 'duke of Rouen' or 'duke of the Normans' in the 1030s (*Rodulfus Glaber, Opera*, ed. and trans. J. France, N. Bulst and P. Reynolds (Oxford, 1989), pp. 36, 54-6, 76, 162).

⁵³ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 30-33, 193-6, for this relationship.

facts on the ground? Various forms of evidence have been employed to assess the pace and progress of Normandy's unification under the ducal banner, but these have produced 'necessarily different timelines', with 'no consensus about how things stood in the tenth century, before the change of gear that followed the accession of Richard II'.⁵⁴ Nevertheless, these studies strongly suggest that between the idea and the reality of Normandy falls a shadow. Ethnic divisions between successive waves of settlers cannot have helped political unification.⁵⁵ Janet Nelson has dismissed efforts to tie Rollo to the noble dynasties of north-western Neustria;⁵⁶ while Jens Moesgaard's numismatic survey emphasises ongoing differences in regional patterns of production and circulation throughout Normandy during the era of Frankish royal grants.⁵⁷ While these points are merely suggestive, others go further. On Normandy's extreme western frontier, Cassandra Potts has questioned the significance of ducal involvement at Mont Saint-Michel during the late tenth century;⁵⁸ while Katharine Keats-Rohan, inspired by Hubert Guillotel,⁵⁹ has even challenged the existence of such contacts in the first place.⁶⁰

⁵⁴ Abrams, 'Early Normandy', pp. 62, 46, respectively.

⁵⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 21; Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 72; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 86-7.

⁵⁶ J.L. Nelson, 'Normandy's Early History since *Normandy Before 1066*', in *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250: Essays for David Bates*, ed. D. Crouch and K. Thompson (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 11-12. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Poppa "de Bayeux" et sa famille', in *Onomastique et Parenté dans l'Occident médiéval*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan and C. Settiani (Oxford, 2000), pp. 140-53; H. Guillotel, 'Une autre marche de Neustrie', in *Onomastique*, ed. Keats-Rohan and Settiani, pp. 7-13, for these theories.

⁵⁷ J.C. Moesgaard, 'A Survey of Coin Production and Currency in Normandy, 864-945', in *Silver Economy in the Viking Age*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell and G. Williams (Walnut Creek, Calif., 2007), pp. 99-121.

⁵⁸ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 81-104.

⁵⁹ H. Guillotel, 'Les temps des rois VIIIe-Xe siècle', in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois Ve-Xe siècle* (Rennes, 1984), pp. 336-7.

⁶⁰ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Bibliothèque municipale d'Avranches, 210: Cartulary of Mont-Saint-Michel', *ANS* 21 (1999), pp. 103-104; idem, 'L'histoire secrète d'un sanctuaire célèbre: la reformation du Mont-Saint-Michel d'après l'analyse de son cartulaire et de ses nécrologes', in *Culte et pèlerinages à Saint Michel en Occident: les trois monts dédiés à l'archange*, ed. P. Bouet and A. Vauchez (Rome, 2003), pp. 139-59; idem, 'Francs, Scandinaves ou Normands? Aperçus sur les premiers moines des monastères normands', in *Fondations scandinaves*, ed. Bauduin, pp. 195-208, esp. pp. 197-9, 203-4; idem, 'The Identification of Abbots in the Necrologies of Mont-

Such concerns chime with wider reassessments of church life in Lower Normandy. Despite a mass exodus of both relics and ecclesiastical leaders during the era of Viking raiding,⁶¹ local church infrastructure below the diocesan level increasingly appears to have survived largely intact.⁶² It was not until the eleventh century, however, that the ecclesiastical hierarchy of Upper Normandy established control over the church in the west, using histories and hagiographies to justify their takeover by depicting the region as a pagan wasteland in need of external reform.⁶³ Mark Hagger tacitly acknowledged the difficulty of establishing a start date for ducal rule in the west by beginning his study of the Cotentin in c. 987 – a mere two years before the construction of the first ducal castle in Bayeux.⁶⁴ For the most part, we are left with a murky scene – one of alliances and rivalries between independent Viking groups, whose precise relations to the ducal dynasty of Rouen, as Pierre Bauduin concludes when writing of ‘Normandy’ in c. 960, are impossible to determine with precision.⁶⁵

This is a problematic, fragmented narrative. A modern, overarching reappraisal is thus required if the processes by which the territory that would become Lower Normandy was absorbed into the duchy growing around Rouen are to be understood more fully. The difficulties so far encountered shape the questions that such a study must address. It is not enough to track the pace and

Saint-Michel’, in *Le pouvoir et la foi*, ed. Quaghebeur and Soleil, pp. 89-108, esp. pp. 106-8; *MSM*, pp. 18-21.

⁶¹ Le Maho, ‘Fate of the Ports’, pp. 237-8, 241; idem, ‘Les Normands de la Seine’, pp. 169-172.

⁶² C. Potts, ‘When the Saints Go Marching: Religious Connections and the Political Culture of Early Normandy’, in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, ed. C. Warren Hollister (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 21-3, 26-7; D. Petts, ‘Churches and Lordship in Western Normandy AD800-1200’, in *Churches and Social Power in Early Medieval Europe: Integrating Archaeological and Historical Approaches*, ed. M. Shapland and J.C. Sánchez- Pardo (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 297-328.

⁶³ Potts, ‘Saints go marching’, pp. 24, 26-8; Arnoux, ‘Before the *Gesta Normannorum*’, pp. 29-48; S.K. Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007), pp. 38-44, 74-93.

⁶⁴ Hagger, ‘How the west was won’, pp. 20-21.

⁶⁵ P. Bauduin, *La Première Normandie (X^e–XI^e siècles)* (Caen, 2004), p. 82.

geographical spread of ducal rule. The methods employed by the ducal dynasty in its pursuit of power in the west must also be assessed. This will in turn reveal much about the region's contemporary character and the nature of ducal relations with its inhabitants. Crucially, Lower Normandy must not be seen as an empty vessel into which ducal power gradually poured. Such an approach implicitly casts ducal expansion as inevitable and renders the region a periphery to an Upper Norman core. While the ducal dynasty were in a uniquely powerful position in Normandy due to their possession of the great city of Rouen ('a goose that could lay golden eggs') in the wealthy Seine valley,⁶⁶ we have already seen that their involvement in the west was far from assured and their own survival often threatened. It also unnecessarily downplays the local viewpoint. The population of Lower Normandy were active participants, not casual bystanders, in the processes that led to the region's assimilation into the greater Norman duchy. Despite the comparative lack of chronicle and diplomatic sources dealing with Lower Normandy in the tenth and eleventh centuries, it will be argued that the existing evidence still supports new interpretations of how the local population reacted and adapted to the westward expansion of ducal power. These are all central interests in the attempt to unravel the problem of Normandy that follows. We must now consider how the present work will proceed to address them.

0.2) Frames of Reference

Before a study of the westward expansion of ducal authority can be attempted, it is first necessary to define the territories that constitute Lower Normandy and how best they can be considered herein. In terms of modern boundaries, the administrative region of Lower Normandy created in 1956 comprises the entire

⁶⁶ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 68-78, for Rouen's early role, p. 70, for this citation. Nelson, 'Normandy's Early History', pp. 12-15, for ongoing debates over the character of Norse settlement in Rouen.

medieval duchy lying west of the Risle. This is a substantial area (some 5,000 square kilometres larger than modern Upper Normandy) and one that, as the inclusion of a small portion of the French Perche immediately demonstrates, does not necessarily reflect the historical developments with which the current work is concerned. Our focus must be sharper. Though it will contribute some significant examples to discussion of the tenth and early eleventh centuries, the ancient *pagus* and diocese of the Lieuvin, lying between the Risle and Dives, will not feature heavily. The region's proximity to Rouen had, it will be argued, drawn it into the Upper Norman orbit of the ducal dynasty and its associated families by the time Dudo and his contemporaries began to write of 'Normandy' in c. 1000. The same cannot be said of the Hiémois and Séeois, which together form the bulk of Normandy's long southern frontier. The mercurial character of ducal influence and authority in these regions throughout our period chimes with the wider themes of this work. Nevertheless, both regions have been the subject of extensive scholarship, focused on the powerful Montgomery-Bellême clan and their neighbours and enemies,⁶⁷ the vast, detailed local knowledge of Orderic Vitalis,⁶⁸ and the region's central role in relations with Normandy's southern neighbours,

⁶⁷ J. Boussard, 'La Seigneurie de Bellême aux X^e et XI^e siècles', in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen*, ed. C.-E. Perrin (Paris, 1951), pp. 43-54; J.-M. Maillefer, 'Une famille aristocratique aux confins de la Normandie: les Géré au XI^e siècle', *Cahiers des Annales de Normandie* 17 (1985), pp. 175-206; K. Thompson, 'Family and influence to the south of Normandy in the eleventh century: the lordship of Bellême', *JMH* 11 (1985), pp. 215-26; G. Louise, *La Seigneurie de Bellême X^e-XII^e siècles: évolution des pouvoirs territoriaux et construction d'une seigneurie de frontière aux confins de la Normandie et du Maine à la charnière de l'an mil* (Flers, 2 vols., 1990-1); P. Bauduin, 'Une famille châtelaine sur les confins normanno-manceaux: les Géré (X^e-XIII^e siècles)', *AM* 22 (1992), pp. 309-56; E.Z. Tabuteau, 'The family of Moulins-la-Marche in the eleventh century', *Medieval Prosopography* 13 (1992), pp. 29-65; K. Thompson, 'The lords of Laigle: ambition and insecurity on the borders of Normandy', *ANS* 18 (1995), pp. 177-99; idem, *Power and Border Lordship in Medieval France: The County of the Perche, 1000-1226* (Woodbridge, 2002).

⁶⁸ M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984); J. Bickford-Smith, 'Orderic Vitalis and Norman society: c. 1035-1087' (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2006); T. Roche, 'The way vengeance comes: rancorous deeds and words in the world of Orderic Vitalis', in *Vengeance in the Middle Ages: Emotion, Religion and Feud*, ed. S.A. Throop and P.R. Hyams (Farnham, 2010), pp. 115-36.

Maine and Anjou.⁶⁹ As a result, like the Lieuvin, they shall inform, but not form the core of this work. Furthermore, while the Hiémois and Séeois offer valuable points of comparison, we must remember that their frontier nature engendered a different relationship with the ducal dynasty than existed in other localities.

Frontier concerns did admittedly play a role in the Avranchin and southern Bessin, where the county of Mortain and its neighbours formed the duchy's western and southern border with Brittany and, to a lesser extent, Maine. This point illustrates that the Bessin, Cotentin and Avranchin – the three westernmost *pagi* of Lower Normandy, as the crow might fly from Rouen – represent a far from homogenous unit. While the Avranchin was a frontier county, the Cotentin and Bessin were shielded to landward by other Norman *pagi*. Historical interests and maritime contacts, however, meant they were far from immune to external influences, though such interactions were, by their very nature, markedly different to those which occurred in the Avranchin. There are important geographical distinctions too. The eastern and northern Bessin is dominated by the chalky soils of the coastal littoral and plain of Caen, watered by the Orne and perfect for horse-breeding and cereal production.⁷⁰ Travelling westward and south-westward, however, the flatlands rise into the rolling hills and mixed woodland and pasture of the Norman Bocage, crisscrossed by thick hedgerows and winding, sunken lanes – doubtless more heavily-wooded in the medieval period.⁷¹ Here the combination of poor, acidic soils and the prevailing damp weather from the

⁶⁹ D. Power, *The Norman Frontier in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 2004), esp. pp. 72-4, 273-7, 299, 317-22, 360-65.

⁷⁰ 'Miraculi sancti Wulfranni episcopi', in AASS Mar., iii, p. 151, for Saint-Wandrille's grain shipments from the Bessin to the Seine valley via Caen.

⁷¹ F. Delacampgne, 'Seigneurs, fiefs et mottes du Cotentin (X^e-XII^e siècles): Étude historique et topographique', *AM* 12 (1982), pp. 175-6; below, p. 17 n. 78, for more detailed descriptions of the Lower Norman landscape.

Atlantic contributed to the growing of rye and oats, rather than wheat.⁷² Such conditions had a considerable impact on regional life. Bread, which was a staple and, in terms of its quality, status symbol of aristocratic life, was customarily made from wheat, other crops being frowned upon.⁷³ The early twelfth-century Coutances chronicler complained bitterly that poverty had forced the cathedral canons to subsist on black (*i.e.* rye) bread in the years following Geoffrey de Montbray's accession to the episcopate in 1048.⁷⁴ Local religious institutions often received donations of wheat or white bread in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.⁷⁵ In 1064/5, Duke William unwillingly abandoned his Breton campaign because he could find no wheat to feed his army. William of Poitiers, aping Caesar, noted that the Bretons 'live on plentiful milk and very little bread', a sign of the greater role played by pastoralism in the regional economy.⁷⁶ Such economic difficulties may even have contributed to the region's eventual subjugation by the ducal dynasty, with Bates remarking that 'the nobles of Lower Normandy can be shown to have held poorer and smaller estates than their counterparts in upper and central Normandy. This made domination from Rouen a relatively easy task'.⁷⁷ As events following the D-Day landings attest, however, the patchwork nature of the *bocage* country also rendered the region largely inaccessible to outsiders. Control of major rivers and roads was thus a matter of key economic and strategic importance, as revealed by numerous studies of the

⁷² W.E. Kappelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North: The Region and its Transformation, 1000-1135* (London and Chapel Hill, NC, 1979), pp. 228-9.

⁷³ *ibid.*, pp. 219-21.

⁷⁴ 'De statu huius ecclesiae ab anno 836 ad 1093', in *GC*, xi, instrumenta, col. 220.

⁷⁵ *MSM*, no. 16; appendix ii, no. 10; 'Extracts from the Cartulary of Mont-Saint-Michel', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett (London, 4 vols., 1884-9), iv, appendix, nos. 7, 14, 19, 31-2, 36, 38, 48; *CDF*, nos. 726, 780-81 (Holy Trinity, La Luzerne), 836, 838 (Savigny), 912 (Coutances), 926-7 (Lessay), 980 (Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte).

⁷⁶ *GG*, pp. 74-5 – *uberrimo lacte, parcissimo pane, sese transigunt*.

⁷⁷ D. Bates, 'Review: Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840-1066', *Speculum* 65 (1990), p. 1046.

county of Mortain.⁷⁸ To the north, the Cotentin peninsula itself was practically an island, surrounded on three sides by the sea and divided from the rest of Lower Normandy by a belt of thick marshland. To the south-west, the hills of the *bocage* give way once more, with the western Avranchin consisting of the low, coastal plain between the valleys of the Sélune and Couesnon. Considering the impact that these local differences had on wider developments in the region during the tenth and eleventh centuries will be an important aim of this work.

The timeframe (c. 889-1087) of this study also requires explanation. Having dismissed the few fixed dates in Normandy's tenth-century history as largely irrelevant, we must not erect straw men in their place. The earliest recorded Norse activity in Lower Normandy (the sack of Saint-Lô in the Cotentin) dates to c. 889,⁷⁹ but this unashamedly represents a 'best guess' – there were undoubtedly earlier attacks and contacts. This period of raiding and settlement can only be understood in light of Lower Normandy's earlier ninth-century history, in particular Breton interests in these *pagi* from c. 846 onward.⁸⁰ The decision to draw this work to a close in 1087, with the death of William I, involves outlining the central argument of this thesis and the academic debate from which it derives. The character of tenth- and eleventh-century Norman society and ducal government has been as great a source of scholarly debate as the chronology of Normandy's establishment. For Jean Yver and David Bates, ducal government

⁷⁸ Boussard, 'Le comté de Mortain', pp. 273-9; B. Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 120-21; J. Pouëssel, 'Les structures militaires du comté de Mortain (Manche, XI^e et XII^e siècles)', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du pays de Granville* 58 (1981), pp. 11-74, 81-146, esp. pp. 13-15; C. Groud-Cordray, 'Le Val de Mortain. Morphologie et rôles d'un espace frontière entre Normandie, Bretagne et Main, X^e siècle-début XIII^e siècle', in *Tinchebray 1106-2006*, ed. V. Gazeau and J.A. Green (Flers, 2009), pp. 189-206.

⁷⁹ Below, pp. 22-3, for this raid.

⁸⁰ Below, p. 26ff.

was fundamentally modelled upon pre-existing Carolingian lines.⁸¹ The widespread adoption of Frankish forms was so successful that Normandy experienced far less fragmentation of public authority than many neighbouring principalities during this period, creating what was, in the context of northern France, an unusually centralized, cohesive polity.⁸² By contrast, Searle argued that the initial period of Norse settlement in the tenth century was so chaotic and violent that there was little continuity of Carolingian governmental and social structures.⁸³ Rather than gradually moving away from their Scandinavian heritage,⁸⁴ Normandy's strength lay with its inhabitants' continued dependence upon 'older forms of social organization, older and less effective methods of social control than the Franks were evolving', by which Searle meant a reliance on kinship.⁸⁵ This formed 'the very basis of ducal power and...a difficult problem for the dukes within their own family'.⁸⁶ Both approaches have much to commend them, though Searle's dismissal of Carolingian influences is demonstrably overstated. Neither, however, tackles the thorny issue of Normandy's geographic and demographic diversity, laid out in the preceding discussion. Put simply, what was true of one part of the duchy need not have been so throughout the rest of it at any one time. Here it will be argued that the establishment of a post-Carolingian governmental system in Lower Normandy, sustained familial, tenurial and seigneurial relationships between the Upper and Lower Norman aristocracies, and more homogenous cultural traditions throughout the length and breadth of the

⁸¹ J. Yver, 'Les premières institutions du duché de Normandie', in *I Normanni e la loro Espansione in Europa Nell'Alto Medioevo*, Settimane di Studio del Centro Italiano di studi sull'alto Medioevo 16 (Spoleto, 1969), pp. 299-366; Bates, *Normandy*, esp. pp. 26-30, 179-82, 237, 247.

⁸² Bates, *Normandy*, esp. pp. 38, 106-111, 121-2, 132-4, 237.

⁸³ E. Searle, 'Frankish Rivalries and Norse Warriors', *ANS* 8 (1986), pp. 198-213; idem, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 1-11, for an introduction to this argument.

⁸⁴ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 36-8.

⁸⁵ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 8.

⁸⁶ *ibid.*, p. 9.

duchy were the result of processes that only came close to fruition in the reign of William I. That William's reign represented a turning point for ducal involvement in Lower Normandy is further confirmed by the impact the region subsequently had upon the life and career of his youngest son, Henry I.⁸⁷

This, then, is fundamentally a study in power and the means by which the ducal dynasty established and cemented its rule in the farthest reaches of Normandy. Power, however, takes different forms and some discussion of terminology is thus required.⁸⁸ For Searle, power meant 'coercion...the capability (not the right, but the ability) to produce a desired effect, to bring about an intended response'.⁸⁹ The dukes had various means at their disposal to force others to obey their will. We have seen how numismatic and archaeological evidence points to the economic advantages enjoyed by Rouen's rulers, but ducal wealth, military resources and social status are equally evident in chroniclers' accounts of extensive campaigning, the construction of palaces, castles and monasteries in newly-mastered lands, and the establishment of marriage alliances. As the evolving definitions of 'Normandy' attest, however, the employers of coercive force often seek to legitimise their position – the civilizing mission as justification for imperialism being just one example. Such validation seeks to remove the need for continued coercion and instead establish a different sort of power, what I shall refer to as authority. By this I mean, to paraphrase Searle, the recognised right, as well as the ability, to exercise overarching executive power, legal and governmental, within a region. The shift from coercion to authority

⁸⁷ K. Davies, 'The Count of the Côtentin: Western Normandy, William of Mortain and the Career of Henry I', *HSJ* 22 (2012), pp. 123-40.

⁸⁸ The following paragraphs draw heavily on Bates' discussion of the character of Norman power post-1066 (Bates, *Normans and Empire*, pp. 1-27, for an introduction). Many of his comments are equally applicable to the pre-Conquest duchy.

⁸⁹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 2.

represents the process by which recently-acquired possessions become integrated parts of the ruling polity and resistance is recast as rebellion, with all the difficulties of individual perspectives that this entails. Here, diplomatic evidence is central to tracing the day-to-day character of ducal rule in Lower Normandy, through references to possession and conveyance of property, terms of tenure, financial privileges, and the exercise of legal prerogatives.

The successful establishment of ducal rule in Lower Normandy, however, owed as much to the more informal exercise of power as it did to the use of coercive force and its subsequent legitimisation. To borrow the terms of modern political science, the ducal dynasty enjoyed a degree of ‘soft power’ in Lower Normandy – the ability to get what they wanted through others’ attraction to their ‘culture, values and foreign policies’.⁹⁰ These ideas of co-operation and cultural influence are writ large in Searle and Bauduin’s accounts of the hegemonic origins of ducal rule.⁹¹ The evolving impact of Upper Norman soft power on the west will be traced in a number of different ways, including studies in prosopography, patterns of onomastic and toponymic use, and changing ecclesiastical traditions. Understanding the shifting social networks and cultural influences prevalent in Lower Normandy is a key objective of the current work for three reasons. Firstly, the new approaches to Norman history that have emerged over the course of the last twenty years provide grounds for addressing various inaccuracies in earlier accounts and a different perspective on the level of change and continuity in the pre-Conquest duchy. Secondly, such a study reveals that Lower Normandy was the scene of a dynamic interplay of different socio-

⁹⁰ J.S. Nye Jr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004), pp. x, 11, for this quotation.

⁹¹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, esp. pp. 8-10, 68-78; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 25-141.

cultural influences. Lucien Musset, Jean-Michel Picard and Éric van Torhoudt,⁹² amongst others, all considered the important role neighbouring Brittany and, to a lesser extent, Maine played in shaping the character of tenth- and eleventh-century Lower Normandy. Tracing the ebb and flow of such alternative influences thus provides a further means of charting the region's gradual domination by Rouen's rulers. This thesis will begin by investigating these influences. Finally, by analysing changes in Lower Norman society and culture we can come closer to understanding that most complicated of historical constructs – identity. Modern social scientists, anthropologists and historians have evolved numerous approaches to the issue of ethnic identity,⁹³ with limited degrees of success and recognition.⁹⁴ Language, law and other cultural values all play a role in these formulations. Like Nick Webber, this work will for the most part follow the lines laid down in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries*, edited by Fredrik Barth, which sees ethnic identity as 'a subjective phenomenon...something that was claimed by those within a group, and attributed to those outside it'.⁹⁵ In other words, we must seek to determine how the inhabitants of Lower Normandy were seen by outsiders, how they viewed themselves and how these differing perspectives interacted and changed over time. To do this, we must first assess the state of play in the region upon the Scandinavians' arrival in the latter half of the ninth century.

⁹² L. Musset, 'Essai sur le peuplement de la Normandie (VI^e-XII^e siècle)', in *Les mondes normands, VIII^e-XII^e siècles*, ed. H. Galinié (Caen, 1989), pp. 97-102; J.-M. Picard, 'Early Contacts between Ireland and Normandy: the cult of Irish Saints in Normandy before the conquest', in *Ogma: Essays in Celtic Studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Chatáin*, ed. M. Richter and J.-M. Picard (Dublin, 2002), pp. 85-93; É. van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons dans les diocèses d'Avranches et de Coutances (950-1200 environ): une approche onomastique de la question de l'identité', in *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge: Rivalités, malentendus, convergences*, ed. J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (Rennes, 2008), pp. 113-44.

⁹³ Webber, *Norman Identity*, pp. 2-9, for the use of these approaches in relation to the Normans.

⁹⁴ P.J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton, 2002), p. 40 – 'after almost two centuries of attempts to map ethnicity linguistically, archaeologically, and historically, one must conclude that all of these programs have failed'.

⁹⁵ *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference*, ed. F. Barth (London, 1969), esp. pp. 13-15; Webber, *Norman Identity*, p. 3, for this quotation.

Chapter 1) The Breton East: Lower Normandy before the Normans

1.1) Introduction: Winter on the Vire

In 889/90, the town of Saint-Lô, at the base of the Cotentin peninsula in western Normandy, and the surrounding countryside witnessed, not for the last time in their history, widespread scenes of carnage and devastation.¹ In the autumn of 889, Norse raiders based in the Seine estuary travelled west, sailed up the Vire and settled in for the winter, laying siege to the town's extensive Carolingian fortifications and killing the local bishop,² before being driven off in the new year by a Breton relief force under the command of Alan I the Great, duke of Brittany. One of a series of Breton victories against Viking invaders during this period, Alan's triumph at Saint-Lô was joyously recorded in a number of contemporary annals from across north-western Europe.³ Though the Breton defeat of the Scandinavian invaders was itself unusual, representing a rare success in what were dark days for the rest of northern France, these events were otherwise typical of the period and would have been of little significance to the Norsemen themselves. For the Seine Vikings, the assault on Saint-Lô was just one of a series of raids against lucrative targets in the wider northern French locale conducted during these years.⁴

From an historical perspective, however, the attack on Saint-Lô takes on a wider significance for three reasons. First, though it seems improbable that this section of the northern French coast had been spared from Viking visitations in

¹ Below, pp. 144, 152 n. 168, for the bombing of Saint-Lô in 1944 and the destruction of the *archives départementales*. Le Maho, 'Les Normands de la Seine', pp. 165, 169-73, for the exodus eastward of clerics and relics from the Cotentin and western Bessin that this attack precipitated.

² J. Le Maho, 'Châteaux d'époque franque en Normandie', *AM* 10 (1980), pp. 154-5, 163 – the Frankish walls enclosed an area of around 5 hectares.

³ 'Annales Vedastini', in *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, ed. B. de Simson (Hannover, *MGH SSRG* 12, 1909), s.a. 889, 890, hereafter *AV*; *Regionis abbatis Prumensis Chronicon: cum continuatione treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, *MGH SSRG* 50, 1890), s.a. 890, 891, hereafter *Regino*; *ASC*, s.a. 890; N.S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany* (London, 1989), pp. 36-7.

⁴ Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, pp. 21-37, for an overview.

previous years, the events of 889/90 represent the earliest recorded appearance of Norsemen in the region that would eventually become Lower Normandy. 889 thus represents the most plausible starting date for any study of Lower Normandy's creation and one suitably removed from the Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte in 911, which, as we have seen, so dominates medieval and modern accounts of Normandy's emergence. Second, the Breton victory at Saint-Lô, alongside their other contemporary successes, belies the view that the Breton occupation of the Cotentin peninsula during the latter half of the ninth century was ineffectual, too brief in duration and limited in scope to have been of any real short- or long-term significance. Rather, the Bretons' ability to react swiftly and successfully to an attack on the furthest and most recently acquired edge of their territory demonstrates considerable control over and interest in the region.⁵ Contemporary chroniclers too felt that the Breton position in the western *pagi* of the Cotentin and Avranchin was secure. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle identified Saint-Lô, on the easternmost edge of the Cotentin, as lying 'between the Bretons and the Franks'; while modern historians have readily interpreted Ralph of Burgundy's grant as evidence of a Breton presence in these *pagi* in 933.⁶

Third, the apparent strength of the Breton position in the Cotentin peninsula actually emphasises arguably the most overlooked point raised by the Norse assault upon Saint-Lô. The lands that, over the course of the next two hundred years, would become Normandy were not a politically homogenous unit at the close of the ninth century. The raiders of 889 had only recently returned to

⁵ *Annales de Saint-Bertin*, ed. F. Grat, J. Viellard and S.V. Clémencet (Paris, 1964), s.a. 867, hereafter ASB, for the Breton acquisition of the Cotentin.

⁶ ASC, s.a. 890 – *betueoh Brettum and Francum*. C.E. Hohler, 'Some Service-Books of the Later Anglo-Saxon Church', in *Tenth-Century Studies: essays in commemoration of the millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, ed. D. Parsons (London, 1975), pp. 64-9; Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 196-8, for ninth- and tenth-century Anglo-Breton links. Above, pp. 7-8, for Ralph's grant.

the Seine before heading west, having ravaged extensively throughout Burgundy, Neustria and parts of Aquitaine. Their temporary withdrawal from the Seine estuary over the winter of 889/90 had come about only as a result of negotiations with the current Robertian king of France, Odo.⁷ This approach emphasises how fragmented the political situation in northern France had become by this period. Alan I's ancestors had enjoyed close, if not always cordial, relations with the Frankish monarchy. By Alan's reign, however, contact had become limited and irregular. The latest evidence for direct communication between Alan and a west Frankish monarch comes from the reign of Odo's Carolingian predecessor, Charles the Fat (884-887).⁸ Even this late contact was arguably of little significance – Charles' possible recognition of Alan as a sub-king merely added further legitimacy to the paramount position the latter had already secured in Brittany through both force and fortune. Rather than offering a united response to the Norse threat or even the suggestion of one, Odo clearly had no qualms about palming off his Viking problem onto one of his closest neighbours.⁹

Odo was perhaps equally unconcerned about protecting the outlying parts of his own kingdom. The Norse campaign of 889/90 almost certainly included attacks upon Frankish territory east of the Vire as well.¹⁰ These lands formed the northernmost reaches of the Frankish province of Neustria – the heartland of the Robertian family. Julia Smith has argued that Odo's accession to the throne and the provisions he made for his younger brother, Robert, initially strengthened

⁷ AV, s.a. 888, 889.

⁸ Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 191-3.

⁹ AV, s.a. 897, for further attempts to redirect the Norse away from the Seine.

¹⁰ AV, s.a. 889 notes that the Vikings travelled west both *per mare navale iter atque per terram pedestre et equestre agentes*, so passing overland through the Lieuvin, Pays d'Auge and Bessin. René Merlet identified the campaign of 889/90 with Dudo's account of Rollo's assault on Bayeux, during which he carried off Poppa, his bride-to-be (*De moribus*, p. 157; R. Merlet, 'Origine de la famille des Bérenger, comtes de Rennes et ducs de Bretagne', in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Âge offerts à M. Ferdinand Lot par ses amis et ses élèves* (Paris, 1925), pp. 551-2).

Frankish power in this region. As the Robertians became increasingly involved in royal politics, however, their focus shifted east towards Paris and their authority throughout western Neustria devolved to a plethora of local counts and viscounts.¹¹ Closest to the exposed Channel coastline, Neustria's northernmost reaches seem to have been an early casualty in this process of fragmentation, though we know little for certain about regional rulers of the period. In 885, one Ragnold, described as *ducem Cinomannicum* and *princeps totius Franciae* by the *Annales Vedastini* and Dudo respectively, died defending the Seine from Viking attack.¹² Ragnold was soon replaced by one Berengar, first recorded in a grant by Robert of Neustria to Saint-Martin-de-Tours in 892.¹³ Described therein as Robert's *amicus*, this Berengar has regularly, though not necessarily convincingly, been identified as both the father of Rollo's bride, Poppa, mentioned by Dudo and a possible ancestor of the Breton comital house of Rennes.¹⁴

Writing in the early eleventh century, Dudo already understood that Normandy represented a diverse union of peoples. Describing a dream Rollo had before coming to France, Dudo wrote that Rollo found himself atop a mountain and 'saw about the base of it many thousands of birds of different kinds and various colours'. The birds washed themselves in a spring upon the mountain top and afterwards 'ate together in a suitable place, without being separated into genera or species, and without any disagreement or dispute'.¹⁵ Soon other authors took up the theme. The hagiographer of St. Wulfran wrote that Rollo 'united in a

¹¹ Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 193-5.

¹² AV, s.a. 885; *De moribus*, p. 154 – the latter exaggerating for effect.

¹³ *Recueil des actes de Robert I^{er} et de Raoul, rois de France (922-936)*, ed. J. Dufour (Paris, 1978), appendix i, no. 37.

¹⁴ Merlet, 'Origine de la famille', pp. 549-61; above, p. 11 n. 56.

¹⁵ *De moribus*, p. 146 – *circa basim illius hinc inde et altrinsecus, multa millia avium diversorum generum, varii coloris* and *congrua eas statione sine discretione generum et specierum, sine ullo contentionis jurgio...comedere*, respectively.

short time men of all origins and different occupations...and from the different races he made one people'.¹⁶ The preceding analysis of the assault on Saint-Lô has shown that, by the close of the ninth century, far from living harmoniously with each other, the inhabitants of what would one day become Normandy were at one another's throats. The region was fiercely divided, fought over by incoming Norse raiders, Breton settlers, claimants to the Frankish throne and local potentates, its future political union surely beyond the dreams of even the wildest imagination. This brief examination of events at Saint-Lô has also shown, however, that within this broad milieu there was at least one major dividing line in 889. In understanding how Lower Normandy came to be created and brought under the control of Rollo's descendants, then, it is first necessary to consider more closely the legacy of the victors of Saint-Lô – the Breton rulers of the Cotentin and Avranchin.

1.2) First Conquest: Bretons in Lower Normandy (c. 846-c. 933)

Breton authority over the western *pagi* of the future Normandy was first recognised by France's Carolingian monarchs in 867, when, in a bid to buy peace, Charles the Bald ceded control of the Cotentin to king Salomon of Brittany in return for aid against Viking raiders.¹⁷ By this point, however, Breton influence over and interest in the region had been evident for at least twenty years. Christmas 846 had seen a Breton raiding party ravage the countryside around Bayeux before wintering there.¹⁸ The identity of the raiders' leader is unknown. The principal Breton ruler in this period, Nominoë (c. 831-851), had made peace

¹⁶ *Inventio et miracula sancti Vulfranni*, ed. J. Laporte, Mélanges publiés par la Société de l'Histoire de Normandie, 14^e série (Rouen, 1938), p. 27 – *omnis generis diversarumque artium homines brevi tempore sibi conciliavit, atque unum ex diversis gentibus populum effecit*. Translation from Potts, 'Normandy, 911-1144', p. 22.

¹⁷ ASB, s.a. 867.

¹⁸ 'Translatio Corporum Bajocis ad ecclesias S. Victoris et S. Salvatoris', in AASS Mai., iii, cols. 620-21; F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le règne de Charles le Chauve (840-877)* (Paris, 1907), p. 174 n. I.

with Charles earlier in the year, following his defeat of the west Frankish king in battle at Ballon, just north of Redon, on 22 November 845,¹⁹ but either he or one of the more minor Breton rulers who disliked his overlordship apparently broke this treaty almost immediately.²⁰ Either way, Lower Normandy had been marked as a target for Breton expansion and there were probably further, unrecorded attacks upon the region during this same period – contemporary sources tending rather to focus upon Breton raids along the prosperous and heavily-populated Loire valley.²¹

The hundred years that followed the attack on Bayeux saw Brittany stabilise in the form it would retain for the rest of the medieval period – one that initially looked as though it might permanently encompass the *pagi* of western Normandy. In 846, however, the area under autonomous Breton rule was small. It was only with the Breton conquest of the Frankish border counties of the Nantais and Ille-et-Vilaine in 850 that Brittany filled its modern boundaries – the northern reaches of the frontier with France resting on the banks of the Couesnon for the first time.²² Nevertheless, the border country around Rennes and Mont Saint-Michel had, despite Frankish political control, long been considered part of *Britannia* by contemporary writers – a zone on the easternmost limits of the spoken Breton vernacular, where interpreters were to be found and Brittany and France ‘shaded off’ into one another.²³ There were already ecclesiastical links and influences – Mont Saint-Michel had a Breton leader (Phinimontius) by c. 865,

¹⁹ *ASB*, s.a. 845, 846; *Annales Fuldenses*, ed. G.H. Pertz and F. Kurze (Hannover, *MGH SSRG* 7, 1891), s.a. 845; ‘Fragmentum Chronici Fontanellensis’, ed. G.H. Pertz, in *MGH SS* 2 (Hannover, 1829), s.a. 846 (*recte* 845), hereafter *AFont*. H. Guillotel, ‘L’action de Charles le Chauvre vis-à-vis de la Bretagne de 843 à 851’, *MSHAB* 53 (1975-6), pp. 16-17, for the site of the battle.

²⁰ Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 120.

²¹ *ibid.*, pp. 98-108, for an overview of this period.

²² *AFont*, s.a. 850; *ASB*, s.a. 851; Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 98-101.

²³ Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 35-6, esp. p. 35 n. 5 and p. 36 n. 7, for exempla.

chose to record the death (in 868) of abbot Conwoion of Redon in its necrologies, and shared manuscripts with that monastery into at least the early tenth century.²⁴ To the north, the Channel Islands had lain in Breton hands since Charlemagne's day – their impact on local society and culture attested by frequent dedications to Celtic saints in the archipelago's churches and, perhaps, the mid-eleventh-century presence of a canon bearing the Breton name of Judicael, who administered the Guernsey prebend of the ducal chapel founded at Cherbourg by the Conqueror.²⁵ Breton influence had also probably touched the Cotentin by the mid-ninth century. A series of early dates have been proposed for Breton ecclesiastical involvement here and one ninth-century account places a Breton duke, Anowareth, in command of the Cotentin in c. 800.²⁶ While the political re-alignment of the 850s arguably changed little in the former Frankish border counties, it further exposed the Cotentin peninsula to destabilising influences, the effects of which were already being felt by the time Charles the Bald ceded control of the region to the Bretons in 867. The *Revelatio*, written by a clerk of either Avranches or Mont Saint-Michel, may have been produced during this period (851-867), in order to protect the bishop of Avranches' rights against Breton expansion.²⁷ Indeed, Edward James suggests that the abandonment of the bishopric in c. 862 was the result of 'Breton and not Viking attacks' and the absence of any specific reference

²⁴ *Chroniques latines*, p. 373; *MSM*, p. 17; Keats-Rohan, 'Identification of Abbots', pp. 104, 106; H. Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle du pouvoir ducal breton (936-1040)', in *Actes du 103e Congrès national des Sociétés Savantes, Nancy-Metz, 1978* (Paris, 1979), pp. 63-4; below, p. 133 n. 86.

²⁵ Smith, *Province and Empire*, p. 35; *Recueil*, no. 224; van Torhout, 'Les Bretons', p. 132. H.G. Keene, 'The Channel Islands', *EHR* 2 (1887), pp. 22-6; G.F.B. de Gruchy, 'The People of the Channel Islands', *EHR* 2 (1887), pp. 736-7, for one of the earliest debates in the *English Historical Review* on the Islands' Breton heritage.

²⁶ Below, pp. 34-6, for dating Breton ecclesiastical influences; 'Miraculi Sancti Wandregisili', in *AASS 22 Julii*, v, cols. 282-3.

²⁷ N. Simmonet, 'La fondation du Mont Saint-Michel d'après la *Revelatio ecclesiae sancti Michaelis*', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest* 106, no. 4 (1999), pp. 18-19; *Chroniques latines*, pp. 33-9. The latter challenges this dating on the grounds that the dioceses of Avranches and Coutances were never officially surrendered to Breton control. Breton political control, however, did have a negative impact on these Frankish prelates, about which they might have been justifiably concerned (below, p. 30).

to the *pagus* or diocese in the agreement of 867 may represent Charles' tacit acknowledgement that the Bretons had already wrested effective authority over the Avranchin from the Franks by that date.²⁸ Breton influence probably spread as much through co-operation as through conflict with the Franks. Henry Chanteux and Guy Souillet attributed the appearance of Breton toponyms, saints' dedications and religious institutions in the western *pagi* (and even unusual features of land mensuration in the Bessin) to peaceful Breton settlement under licence from Charles the Bald. Such settlement formed part of a combined Franco-Breton effort to resist growing Viking aggression, sanctified by the betrothal of Charles' son, Louis the Stammerer, to the daughter of Erispoë, Nominoë's son and successor, agreed in the Treaty of Louviers (February 856).²⁹

The treaty of 867 thus saw the Carolingian monarchy succumbing still further to Breton expansionist pressure, both peaceful and violent. It represented the culmination of a process that, further to the south, had seen the Pays de Retz and western Anjou fall into Breton hands earlier in the 850s and 860s and typified the relationship between Breton and Frankish rulers in the ninth century.³⁰ While Nominoë, Erispoë and Salomon used the resources and prestige gained through raiding and conquering Frankish territory to enforce their sole authority over their fellow Bretons, their role as mediators with the faltering, but still comparatively mighty Frankish monarchy to the east was equally important in overawing their own subjects.³¹ Unlike later royal treaties with Norse invaders, the provisions of Charles' grant of 867 were clearly laid out – a sign of their greater worth – and

²⁸ E. James, *The Origins of France: from Clovis to the Capetians, 500-1000* (London, 1982), p. 182; *Chroniques latines*, p. 76.

²⁹ ASB, s.a. 856; H. Chanteux, 'Le Toponyme 'Bretteville' en Normandie et son origine', in *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel* (Paris, 2 vols., 1955), i, pp. 248-54; G. Souillet, 'Les Brette et Bretteville de Normandie sont-ils des établissements bretons?', *AB* 62 (1955), pp. 408-12.

³⁰ ASB, s.a. 851, 863.

³¹ Smith, *Province and Empire*, esp. pp. 138-46, for this interpretation.

secured a firm foothold for Erispoë's cousin and successor, Salomon in the western *pagi*. The Breton leader received 'the county of Coutances with all the fiscal rights, royal *villae* and abbeys...and properties wheresoever pertaining to it, except the bishopric',³² which perhaps suffered as a result of its continuing independence from Breton control.³³ Military intervention, peaceful co-operation and cultural influence had hardened into the wholesale appropriation of administrative structures, territorial holdings and, perhaps, *de facto* ecclesiastical overlordship. Salomon and his successors soon began to exploit these extensive rights. Salomon granted estates in the Avranchin to a supporter named Gurhamius, while Alan I donated land at *Canabiacum*, tentatively identified with either Canisy or Cavigny, both in the vicinity of Saint-Lô, to Nantes cathedral, probably around the time of his great victory in 890.³⁴ These years may have seen more extensive Breton settlement in the region. Jean-Michel Picard suggests that abbot Uurdisten of Landévennec's comments in the *Life of St. Guénolé* on the strength of the cult of Patrick among the Bretons in c. 880 refers to Breton colonists in western Normandy, where the saint's cult left extensive marks upon regional toponymy, dedications and veneration practices, rather than to Brittany proper, where it left few identifiable traces.³⁵ It should come as no surprise, then, that Alan I contested the Norse landing at Saint-Lô so vigorously or that

³² ASB, s.a. 867 – *comitatum Constantini cum omnibus fiscis et villis regiis et abbatiis in eodem comitatu consistentibus ac rebus ubicumque ad se pertinentibus, excepto episcopatu*. Unless stated, all translations from *The Annals of St-Bertin*, ed. and trans. J.L. Nelson, (Manchester, 1991). The precise language used here is perhaps indicative of the annalist's possession of a lost charter. Earlier grants to Breton rulers also excluded control over ecclesiastical officials (J.L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (Harlow, 1992), p. 166).

³³ AV, s.a. 890; *Regino*, s.a. 890 – Norse raiders killed the bishop of Coutances at Saint-Lô in 890, perhaps suggesting that the see had been relocated to the Franco-Breton frontier town on the Vire by that date, having been driven from the central Cotentin by the region's new Breton masters.

³⁴ 'Historia Translationis Sancti Launomari Abbatis Corbionensis in Oppidum Blesas', in AASS OSB, iv, part ii, p. 246; *La Chronique de Nantes (570 environ-1049)*, ed. and trans. R. Merlet (Paris, 1896), pp. 68-72, hereafter CN; Guillotel, 'Les temps', pp. 365-6; van Torhoutd, 'Les Bretons', p. 122.

³⁵ Picard, 'Early Contacts', p. 92.

contemporaries associated the region with Brittany into the tenth century. Nevertheless, Alan's victory in 890 probably marked the high-water mark of Breton authority in what would become Lower Normandy. With Alan's death in 907, Viking attacks intensified rapidly. 'No king, no warleader, no defender arose' to resist.³⁶ Indeed, by 919, the year of Flodoard's first annal, all of Brittany had been laid waste by Norse invaders – the chronicler's use of language conveying the dreadful devastation.³⁷ Mass exodus ensued. Breton aristocrats and ecclesiastics took refuge throughout France and even across the Channel in England.³⁸ Brittany and, we must assume, the western *pagi* were left under the Viking yoke, the Frankish rulers of the Loire recognising Norse authority there – Robert of Neustria in 921; his son, Hugh the Great in 927.³⁹ The Norse occupation of Brittany remained unchallenged until the late 930s. There appears to have been no major attempt to retake the western *pagi* in the subsequent restoration of Breton independence.

How much of a mark did these years of Breton contact and subsequent occupation leave on Lower Normandy? The wide variety of evidence available for Breton influence serves as testament to the indelible nature of their impact upon the region over a prolonged timeframe. Breton ecclesiastical influence, for instance, can be traced through sources as diverse as saints' dedications, toponyms, veneration practices, textual transmission and property grants. Parish churches throughout western Normandy, most notably in the Cotentin, bore

³⁶ CN, pp. 80-81, 81 for this citation – *nullus rex, nullus dux nullusque defensor surrexit*.

³⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 919 – *Nordmanni omnem Britanniam in Cornu Galliae, in ora scilicet maritima sitam depopulantur, proterunt atque delent, abductis, venditis, ceterisque cunctis ejectis Brittonibus*.

³⁸ Above, p. 23 n. 6; below, p. 37; H. Guillotel, 'L'exode du clergé Breton devant les invasions scandinaves', *MSHAB* 59 (1982), pp. 269-315, esp. pp. 289-300. The Juaye-Mondaye coin hoard should perhaps be linked to this exodus (Moesgaard, 'Coin Production', p. 115); while the removal of relics eastward may explain the popularity of certain Celtic saints in Upper Normandy (G.H. Doble, 'Dedications to Celtic Saints in Normandy', *Old Cornwall* 3 (1940), p. 280).

³⁹ Flodoard, s.a. 921, 927.

dedications to Breton and other Celtic saints, including Samson, Malo, Méen and Patrick, while many villages were also named after them, e.g. Saint-Malo-de-la-Lande and Saint-Patrice-de-Claids, again in the Cotentin.⁴⁰ The Norman transmission of the *Navigatio Brendani* can be traced back to Brittany; in pre-tenth-century Avranches the cathedral's practices mirrored Breton confusion over St. Patrick's title (abbot, not bishop and confessor) and saint's day (16 May, not 17 March).⁴¹ Breton religious institutions acquired rights and estates in western Normandy – aside from Nantes cathedral's aforementioned possessions, the abbeys of Redon, Saint-Magloire at Léhon and Saint-Georges in Rennes all gained estates in the Avranchin.⁴² The uninterrupted survival of an ecclesiastical community at Mont Saint-Michel throughout the ninth and tenth centuries, seemingly alone in Lower Normandy, may also have owed something to Breton sponsorship during this turbulent period.⁴³ Ecclesiastical sources are by no means the only evidence of widespread cultural contact. Dedications to Celtic saints were often, though by no means always, associated with secular toponyms denoting Breton settlement. The prevalence of *Bretteville*-type placenames in Normandy has been remarked upon regularly and the region 'est particulièrement riche en toponyms bretons autres que celui de type Bretteville', such as the *Canivet*-type.⁴⁴ An abundance of micro-toponyms, largely consisting of hamlet names, also display Breton influence in the region.⁴⁵ The widespread use of Breton

⁴⁰ Doble, 'Celtic Saints', pp. 276-82; L. Fleuriot, *Les Origines de la Bretagne* (Paris, 1980), pp. 149-54 and map 7; Picard, 'Early Contacts', map 1 on p. 87.

⁴¹ Picard, 'Early Contacts', pp. 90-92.

⁴² *Recueil*, no. 209; *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Redon en Bretagne*, ed. A. de Courson (Paris, 1863), no. 326 (1062x1075); van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 122.

⁴³ The precise nature of this community – be it clerical, monastic or some combination of the two – remains hotly contested (*MSM*, pp. 14-18; *Chroniques latines*, pp. 77-9; G.N. Gandy, 'Retour sur la fondation de l'abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel et le rôle du duc Richard I^{er} de Normandie', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest* 123 (2016), pp. 12-16).

⁴⁴ Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, pp. 102-103.

⁴⁵ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 128-9, Carte 3, for their geographical distribution.

anthroponyms in western Normandy has been similarly remarked upon.⁴⁶ These included the *Brito*-type surname, which became common in England after the Conquest, but also a wealth of personal names, reflecting the Breton ducal dynasty and Biblical preferences, as well as more common types.⁴⁷

This evidence is surprisingly geographically widespread in origin. Examples of Breton influence do not stop at the west bank of the Vire, the frontier implied both by the grant of 867 and contemporary assessments of the late ninth- and early tenth-century political situation. Breton placenames and saint dedications make prominent appearances in both the Bessin and Hiémois, even cropping up as far east as Upper Normandy.⁴⁸ *Bretteville*-type placenames are particularly abundant in the countryside around Caen, where the unusual features of land mensuration noted by Chanteux are also concentrated.⁴⁹ The cults of the Breton saints Samson and Malo were widespread throughout Normandy.⁵⁰ The bishopric of Dol enjoyed episcopal rights in the lower Risle valley, where Samson had founded the monastery of *Pental*; while the ‘exemption’ of five parishes Sainte-Mère-Église held in the diocese of Bayeux stemmed from its time as a monastery dedicated to the Breton saint, Méen.⁵¹ Though probably a conflation of earlier, unreliable sources, Pierre le Baud’s later account of Count Judicael Berengar of Rennes battling Vikings as far east as Caen in 931 seems, in such a context, not implausible.⁵²

⁴⁶ Musset, ‘Le peuplement’, p. 100.

⁴⁷ van Torhout, ‘Les Bretons’, pp. 117-18.

⁴⁸ Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, pp. 102-103, 150-58, Map 7, for an overview.

⁴⁹ Above, p. 29.

⁵⁰ Doble, ‘Celtic Saints’, pp. 276-82; Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, p. 150.

⁵¹ J. Le Maho, ‘Ermitages et monastères bretons dans la province de Rouen au haut Moyen Âge (VIe -IXe siècle)’, in *Bretons et Normands*, pp. 87-91.

⁵² Pierre le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne, avec les chroniques des maisons de Vitré et de Laval*, ed. P. Hozier, (Paris, 1638), p. 132. Le Baud may have conflated *De moribus*, p. 185 (for a Breton attack on Bayeux during Longsword’s reign) with Hugh of Fleury, ‘Hugonis liber qui modernorum regum Francorum continent actus’, ed. G. Waitz, in *MGH SS 9* (Hannover, 1851), p. 382 – the

The geographical spread of Breton influence has solicited considerable discussion, not least regarding the dating of Breton activity in northern France. While scholars have readily assigned both dedications and the greater density of *Bretteville*-type toponyms throughout the Cotentin to the fifty-year period following the grant of 867, the terms of the treaty offer ‘n’a aucune raison de supposer à la fin du 9^e siècle une colonisation bretonne entre Bayeux et la Seine’.⁵³ As a result, scholars have attempted to tie different aspects of the evidence to specific alternative periods, with varying degrees of success. Léon Fleuriot suggested that Breton church dedications and placenames beyond the Vire might stem from fourth- to sixth-century British settlement in northern France, contemporary with, but separate from, the migrations that transformed Armorica into Brittany.⁵⁴ The development of religious centres, such as Samson’s establishment of *Pental*, and the spread of saintly venerations certainly bears witness to the migratory nature of Breton holy men, if not settlers more generally, in the Merovingian period. As noted above, Chanteux and Souillet attributed these phenomena and land mensuration in the Bessin to Breton settlement after the Treaty of Louviers in 856 – one of the less convincing suggestions, given Erispoë’s assassination and subsequent return to Franco-Breton hostility the following year. Growing Norse pressure on the Seine during the later ninth century may have drawn Frankish attention away from Lower Normandy, providing further opportunities for Breton expansion throughout the region.⁵⁵

only medieval source which dates Judicael’s rebellion against William to 931. Hugh’s account itself represented a conflation of Dudo’s account with Flodoard, s.a. 931. Neveux, ‘La foundation de la Normandie’, p. 306 accepts that early Viking settlers may have contested control of the Bessin and Hiémois with their Breton neighbours.

⁵³ Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, p. 103.

⁵⁴ Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, p. 103. G. Souillet, ‘Un mirage toponymique: les établissements bretons du Nord de la France’, *AB* 60 (1953), pp. 191-9, for the dangers of this approach.

⁵⁵ *Chroniques latines*, p. 77.

Others have argued that these eastern exempla, whether Breton or more generally Celtic, emerged from the Viking era of the early tenth century, as a result of Breton emigration and relic transmission eastward.⁵⁶ Again, this argument is far from convincing. Though Breton relics and clerics evidently did pass through Normandy during this period, it is hard to believe that they remained long enough to leave a lasting mark on a region whose own clergy and sacred possessions were also fleeing before the Viking onslaught.⁵⁷ Van Torhoudt's explanation for the greater preponderance of Breton dedications in the Cotentin, rather than the Avranchin – that the Bretons were at the forefront of evangelism in the former region after the Scandinavian settlement – is more compelling, particularly given the association of such dedications with communities sporting Scandinavian toponyms.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, Breton ecclesiastical influence in the Avranchin should not be underestimated. While the limited number of Breton names listed amongst the monastic community at Mont Saint-Michel may support van Torhoudt's notion that Breton missionaries would have found an already-established church structure in the Avranchin, this view must be set alongside the abandonment of the bishopric of Avranches in c. 862, the existence of a Breton leader at Mont Saint-Michel in c. 865, local connections with Breton abbeys, the prevalence of Breton and Manceaux ecclesiastics as witnesses in the Mont's earliest charters and grants of property in the Avranchin to Breton religious institutions throughout the ninth and tenth centuries.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Smith, *Province and Empire*, pp. 196-201; Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, pp. 40-42; Souillet, 'Un mirage toponymique', pp. 198-9.

⁵⁷ Guillotel, 'L'exode', pp. 293-5, 310-12, for Hugh the Great's resettlement of those fleeing Dol and Bayeux; above, p. 31.

⁵⁸ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 121, 127.

⁵⁹ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 130; Keats-Rohan, 'Francs, Scandinaves ou Normands?', p. 201; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 87-8.

No matter the persuasiveness of these individual suggestions, combined they emphasise just how vast the prospects for cross-cultural contact and exchanges were over an extended chronological period. Breton influences in Lower Normandy can be identified before the grant of 867 and remained important even after the collapse of Breton power in the wake of Norse attacks at the turn of the tenth century. Such interactions continued to evolve. Onomastic analysis suggests a varied origin date for Breton toponyms in Normandy – while some are probably very early, others perhaps hail from as late as the eleventh century, e.g. those of the *Canivet*- and *Harcouët*-type.⁶⁰ Changing patterns of dedicatory and toponym association may indicate different stages of involvement with the western church. Ecclesiastical property grants certainly date from the ninth-century Breton occupation through to the Norman rule of the eleventh century.⁶¹ Discontinuity between areas of Breton dedication and anthroponym use also suggests shifting patterns of cross-cultural contact.⁶²

Scholars have not always been keen to attribute these various exempla to Breton influence, but alternative explanations and objections are not entirely satisfactory. While Picard attributed the veneration of Irish saints, especially SS. Brendan and Patrick, in western Normandy to Breton influence, many scholars unsurprisingly turn to the Hiberno-Norse origins of Lower Normandy's Scandinavian settlers for an explanation, despite the fact that this suggestion has itself sparked debate in relation to the date of Norse conversion in Ireland.⁶³

⁶⁰ Souillet, 'Les Brette et Bretteville', pp. 411-12; Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, p. 103.

⁶¹ Above, pp. 29, 32.

⁶² van Torhout, 'Les Bretons', pp. 121, 127-8.

⁶³ Picard, 'Early Contacts', pp. 90-92; Musset, 'Participation', p. 294; F. de Beaurepaire, 'Les noms d'Anglo-Saxons contenus dans la toponymie normande', *AN* 10 (1960), p. 312 n. 6. Coinage circulation suggests direct contact with Ireland throughout the tenth century (F. Dumas and J. Pilet-Lemière, 'La monnaie normande – X^e-XII^e siècle: Le point de la recherche en 1987', in *Les mondes normands*, p. 128).

Similarly, it has been suggested that *Bretteville*-type toponyms might originate with Insular Briton immigration from the western British seaboard to the Cotentin in the tenth century, alongside Norse settlers from Ireland and the Hebrides.⁶⁴ Again, while certainly an interesting interpretation, this hypothesis is not as inherently probable as the more clearly attested Breton model it seeks to replace.

Why did Lower Normandy prove so permeable to Breton influences during this period? The Norse raiders of 889/90 had gained access to Lower Normandy by sea, sailing from the Seine estuary and up the river Vire. Maritime activity encouraged swift, long-distance contact – the significance of which is perfectly captured by Searle’s description of early tenth-century Normandy as more ‘a coastline and a series of rivers, being penetrated by independent bands under their warchiefs, than a territory’.⁶⁵ The Vikings did not have a monopoly on such contacts. Lower Normandy was equally accessible by sea to Bretons approaching from the west. The evidence for such contact in this period is slight, but not non-existent. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle’s account of the events of 889/90 illustrates cross-Channel ties, as does the flight of many Breton nobles across the sea to England, as well as overland into France, in the wake of the subsequent Norse onslaught.⁶⁶ In 936, Alan II Barbetorte, the son of one such émigré, returned to Brittany with English support to challenge the Norse forces that had dominated the region since 919.⁶⁷ Breton interest in Irish saints and ecclesiastical texts demonstrates their integration into an even broader maritime world. Breton involvement in the Channel Islands shows that this world embraced the Lower Norman coastline; while the possession of estates in these islands by

⁶⁴ G. Fellows-Jensen, ‘Scandinavian place-names and Viking settlement in Normandy: a review’, *Namn och Bygd* 76 (1988), p. 116; Musset, ‘Participation’, pp. 291-4.

⁶⁵ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 71.

⁶⁶ Above, pp. 23, 31.

⁶⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 936.

aristocrats and monasteries from Lower Normandy and beyond reveals that the sea was no barrier to land-holding.⁶⁸ Though many Bretons must have travelled overland to the great market of Montmartin-sur-Mer in the southern Cotentin (established before the late eleventh century, when it was in the hands of the counts of Mortain), its position on the estuary of the river Sienne would have encouraged a more direct passage by ship from right along the northern Breton coast.⁶⁹ By the early thirteenth century, this one solitary market was held at farm for the considerable sum of £300 – a testament to the economic value of long-distance maritime trade.⁷⁰ Ease of movement by sea between Normandy and Brittany remained a major issue in this later period. When defending western Normandy from Breton attack in 1204, King John stationed a fleet in the bay of Mont Saint-Michel to prevent invasion by sea.⁷¹

The fifty years that followed Charles the Bald's grant of the Cotentin to Salomon in 867 thus represented the zenith, rather than the entirety of Breton influence in Lower Normandy. Maritime activity encouraged the development of more intense, extensive socio-cultural contacts than the short land frontier between Brittany and Lower Normandy might suggest. This heritage set Lower Normandy apart from the adopted homeland of the region's eventual ducal rulers. In Upper Normandy, Rollo and his followers were near the heart of Frankish power and, as we shall see, quickly drawn into the political struggle between the

⁶⁸ Above, p. 28, for the Channel Islands. *MSM*, nos. 2, 5, 7-9, 33, 79-81, 109 (Mont Saint-Michel); *Recueil*, nos. 99 (Cerisy), 141 (Marmoutier), 198 (Montivilliers), 214 (Coutances), 224 (Cherbourg), 231 (La Trinité, Caen), for aristocratic and monastic possessions. Exiled to the Channel Islands in 1054, the former archbishop of Rouen, Mauger was able to move easily by sea between both them and the mainland Cotentin (*RR*, ii, lines 4583-4590).

⁶⁹ *Regesta*, no. 215; *Rotuli chartarum in Turri londinensi asservati*, ed. T.D. Hardy (London, 1837), p. 97; *Magni rotuli scaccarii Normanniæ sub regibus Angliæ*, ed. T. Stapleton (London, 2 vols., 1840-44), i, p. lxxx.

⁷⁰ *Rotuli Scaccarii*, ed. Stapleton, i, p. 30; F.M. Powicke, *The Loss of Normandy, 1189-1204: Studies in the History of the Angevin Empire* (Manchester, 2nd edn., 1960), pp. 75, 179.

⁷¹ Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 258.

rival Carolingian and Robertian dynasties. In Lower Normandy, however, Scandinavian settlers found a land already subject to political and social disjuncture and open to an array of alternative interests and influences. That such disparate territories would come to be united under a ducal dynasty based in Rouen was far from a foregone conclusion. Academic appreciation of the scale of that achievement is heightened by emphasising, not underestimating regional differences throughout Normandy at the turn of the tenth century. That Lower Normandy's Breton heritage should prove to be of lasting significance is suggested not only by the sheer variety, both in form and date, of the contacts outlined above, but by the extensive merging and mixing that accompanied them. The blending of diverse cultural influences is demonstrated by both the existence of churches bearing Breton dedications in Norse villages and Breton involvement in the worship of Irish saints in areas of Hiberno-Norse settlement. The frequent appearance of Breton toponyms in the region, for settlements both large and small, points not only towards 'la régularité des échanges de population avec la Bretagne sur la longue durée', but also to the high level of permeability achieved by such population movements.⁷² These themes of fusion and suffusion will resurface as we turn to the role such cultural contacts continued to play in shaping local social networks and identities through into the eleventh century.

1.3) Legacy: Social Identities and Networks after c. 933

In 933, William Longsword received 'the land of the Bretons situated on the sea coast' – commonly identified as the Cotentin and Avranchin.⁷³ While the significance of this grant is questionable, from this period onwards the destiny of Lower Normandy was increasingly bound to that of the ducal dynasty of Rouen,

⁷² van Torhout, 'Les Bretons', p. 128.

⁷³ Above, p. 4.

as opposed to that of its former Breton rulers. This process did not occur overnight. Flodoard's terminology presupposes the continuing relevance of the region's heritage. Whoever really controlled the western *pagi* in 933, contemporaries still associated these lands not with the Franks or Norman newcomers, but with the Bretons. Nor, as we have seen, did the maritime world of economic and cultural contacts collapse with the gradual realignment of political authority from Breton to Norman hands. What legacy, then, did these earlier Breton contacts leave in the changing world of the tenth and eleventh centuries? Lower Normandy remained a region dotted with Breton toponyms and churches dedicated to Celtic saints, whose population continued to use Breton names. To return to Barth's comments on identity, is it possible that the region's tenth- and eleventh-century inhabitants consciously identified with their Breton heritage or that this heritage affected how local society was viewed by outsiders? Complex and psychological though they may be, these questions must be answered if we are to attain a fuller understanding of the changing nature of Lower Norman society throughout this period.

Some aspects of such an investigation are harder to analyse than others. Medieval prosopography is built upon extrapolating the characteristics of a social group from charter and chronicle accounts of marriage alliances, ecclesiastical donations and political ties. Assessing how different individuals or groups presented, let alone perceived their own or others' identity, however, is fraught with difficulties. In the absence of personal accounts revealing how individuals regarded their own identity and place amongst their peers (and, as will be shown, such biographical statements serve only to present one perception of the wider picture), scholars are left straining for concrete conclusions where only the

shakiest suppositions are possible. Inhabitants of Lower Normandy possessing a Breton firstname, for example, may have thought of themselves as being Breton, of Breton extraction or a member of a family with important links to Brittany, but none of these possibilities need necessarily have been the case and this is without considering how such individuals might have been regarded by local society or their counterparts in Upper Normandy. Nevertheless, eleventh-century Lower Norman society does provide several examples of individuals and families for whom Breton heritage was a demonstrably important part of their identity.

The most striking and well-documented example of a Lower Norman family claiming Breton antecedents is provided by Orderic Vitalis in his description of his own monastery of Saint-Évroult's patrons – the Giroie. Vassals of both the lords of Bellême and Mayenne, the Giroie were key players on Normandy's long southern frontier, yet Orderic traced their origins further afield – his genealogy listing one Abbo the Breton as the Giroie's earliest known ancestor.⁷⁴ It is difficult to discount that such a tradition existed. Orderic and his fellow monks must have been well-versed in the familial traditions of their foremost patrons.⁷⁵ The position of the Giroie *caput* at Saint-Céneri, just outside Alençon, on the long-disputed border of Normandy, Maine and Brittany, certainly seems to fit with familial tradition and other Breton families, like the Gorrans, demonstrably did move into this troubled region.⁷⁶ Given the lack of any obviously Breton names in the Giroie genealogy, however, Jean-Marie Maillefer discounts this origin myth, suggesting instead that the family's roots lay in the

⁷⁴ OV, ii, p. 22.

⁷⁵ Bickford Smith, 'Orderic Vitalis and Norman society', pp. 99-204, for Orderic's account of Saint-Évroult's Giroie and Grandmesnil founders.

⁷⁶ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'William I and the Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest 1060-1087', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 168-9; Power, *Norman Frontier*, pp. 502-503.

Chartrain.⁷⁷ Keats-Rohan subsequently suggested that the Giroie were descendants of Rorgo I, a ninth-century Carolingian count of Maine and Rennes, from whom several other major Chartrain families traced their descent.⁷⁸ Discussion of the veracity of Orderic's statement, however, ultimately misses the point. In terms of the Giroie's own sense of identity, whether or not they were really descended from Breton stock is immaterial. What matters is that by the time Orderic composed his account of the family's origins in the early twelfth century they clearly believed themselves to be of Breton descent and were happy to present themselves as such – a reading reinforced by Orderic's description of Abbo's grandson as 'a member of one of the best families in France and Brittany'.⁷⁹ Quite when or why such a tradition emerged in a family of Frankish descent is unknown, but it may have been encouraged by intermarriage with other families of Breton extraction⁸⁰ and is perhaps identifiable in other families of Rorgonid descent.⁸¹ Conversely, families were just as capable of forgetting their origins – probable descendants of Geoffrey fitzRivallon of Dol, by the mid-twelfth century the Gorrans, mentioned above, were remembered for their Norman and Manceaux roots at St. Albans, where both Geoffrey and Robert de Gorron served as abbot.⁸²

The Giroie and Gorron families provide a valuable insight into the fluidity, flexibility, and, in terms of their relationship to reality, fallibility of concepts of

⁷⁷ Maillefer, 'Les Géré', pp. 176-8, 194 n. 77.

⁷⁸ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Two studies in North French Prosopography', *JMH* 20 (1994), p. 26.

⁷⁹ OV, ii, p. 22 – *ex magna nobilitate Francorum et Brittonum*.

⁸⁰ OV, ii, p. 30; Keats-Rohan, 'Two Studies', p. 26 n. 122 – Giroie's daughter, Adela married Salomon of Sablé, lord of Mareil-en-Champagne in western Maine and bearer of a popular Breton Biblical/ducal name.

⁸¹ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Vincent du Mans*, ed. R. Charles et le vte Menjot d'Elbenne (Mamers, 1886-1913), nos. 587, 589; Keats-Rohan, 'Two Studies', p. 26 n. 122 – Rotrou II of Perche had a son named Warin Brito, perhaps evidence of similar misunderstandings.

⁸² *Gesta Abbatum monasterii Sancti Albani*, ed. H.T. Riley (London, 3 vols., 1867-9), i, pp. 72-3, 110-11; Power, *Norman Frontier*, p. 503.

identity – a lesson well worth remembering when turning to less secure markers of individual and group identities. Of these, surname and soubriquet forms represent perhaps the most plausible indicators of wider social awareness of ethnic dimensions to personal identity, even for sceptical commentators.⁸³ In post-Conquest England, *Brito*-type surnames soon became a common sign of Breton ancestry amongst the immigrant land-holding elite, appearing in both charters and the pages of Domesday Book.⁸⁴ These surnames were also common in Lower Normandy. In the immediate pre-Conquest period, Hugh Brito, a genuine Breton immigrant who had followed Archbishop Juhel of Dol into exile in Normandy, witnessed a series of ducal charters involving Marmoutier in the 1050s and 60s, before donating property at Etouvy and Feugères in the southern Cotentin to Roger of Montgomery's new foundation at Troarn in c. 1068.⁸⁵ Hugh's son, Robert retained his father's ethnic sobriquet.⁸⁶ More famous was Geoffrey Brito, appointed archbishop of Rouen by Henry I, probably because of his extensive knowledge of northern French politics. Geoffrey's brother, Judicael, was bishop of St. Malo in Brittany, but his own ecclesiastical career began further east in Maine, where he became dean of Le Mans in c. 1093, narrowly missing out on the Manceaux bishopric in 1096, before moving to Rouen in 1111.⁸⁷ At the end of the eleventh century, one Ralph Brito witnessed a grant to Mont Saint-Michel of church property in Hamelin, which lies to the south of the river Sélune on the

⁸³ van Torhout, 'Les Bretons', p. 144.

⁸⁴ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Les rôle des Bretons dans la politique de colonisation normande de l'Angleterre', *MSHAB* 74 (1996), pp. 181-215, for an overview.

⁸⁵ *Recueil*, nos. 157, 160-62; *Regesta*, nos. 280-81.

⁸⁶ J.-M. Bouvris, 'Une version inédite de la confirmation par le duc Robert Courteheuse d'une donation faite en 1087 par Guillaume le Conquérant à l'abbaye de Saint-Étienne de Caen', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du Pays de Granville* 64 (1987), p. 73.

⁸⁷ OV, iii, p. 94; D.S. Spear, 'Geoffrey Brito, Archbishop of Rouen (1111-1128)', *HSJ* 2 (1990), pp. 124-8.

Norman-Breton frontier, perhaps also indicative of his ethnic origins.⁸⁸ Similar examples appear in Lower Norman cartularies throughout the twelfth century, but *Brito*-type surnames were not confined to western Normandy.⁸⁹ Examples from nearby Maine, which both shared a border and had long enjoyed close connections with Brittany, suggest similar practices of ethnic identification.⁹⁰ Further east in Normandy, Robert fitzWymarc's mother possessed a Breton name, while a Magnus Brito attests a ducal grant to Saint-Ouen in the mid-eleventh century. More interestingly, a Walo Brito is found holding Crémanville, a village near the old Breton monastic outpost at the mouth of the Risle, from William Crispin in 1077.⁹¹ Similarly, Orderic mentions both a tenant of Saint-Évroult called Rualon Brito and Geoffrey Brito, a robber baron operating in the Corbonnais.⁹² He also records the names of several Bretons who sought service in the Conqueror's household as military commanders,⁹³ messengers⁹⁴ or clerks.⁹⁵

What, if anything, do such surnames reveal about how Lower Normandy's Breton heritage and continuing contacts shaped social identities in the region? Keats-Rohan has written of the strong sense of *patria* and *gens* amongst the Breton aristocracy, maintained, importantly, even by those, such as Rivallon of Dol and Haimo of Sougèal, who held estates from the Norman duke.⁹⁶ Similarly, Noël-Yves Tonnerre sees the Bretons of this period as heirs to a sense of 'Breton

⁸⁸ *MSM*, no. 50 (1085x1094).

⁸⁹ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 118, for exempla.

⁹⁰ *Regesta*, no. 173 – Gautzelin and Tanguy *Brito* appear as witnesses to a complex charter confirming several grants made to the abbey of Saint-Vincent, Le Mans over the course of the eleventh century, probably compiled in the mid-1070s.

⁹¹ *DD*, p. 977; *Recueil*, nos. 204, 204 bis; *Regesta*, no. 166.

⁹² *OV*, ii, p. 120; iii, pp. 342-5; iv, pp. 259-61.

⁹³ *ibid.*, iv, p. 53 – Hervey the Breton commanded William's forces at Bengy.

⁹⁴ *OV*, iii, p. 104 – Samson the Breton, one of Queen Matilda's messengers, escaped capital punishment by entering Saint-Évroult.

⁹⁵ *OV*, ii, pp. 300-302 – Hoël the Breton, appointed bishop of Le Mans by William in 1081/2, had previously been a clerk in the king's household.

⁹⁶ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 159.

nationhood from the very early Middle Ages', recalled in a rich, vibrant vernacular (or, at the very least, vernacular-influenced) cultural tradition, independently recognised in Normandy and supported by an educated aristocracy, whether they themselves were fluent Breton speakers or not.⁹⁷ Such comments may seem like hangovers from nineteenth-century Breton nationalism,⁹⁸ but, if correct, the appearance of these surnames in Lower Normandy and elsewhere might represent a proud assertion of familial origins by those living in a land that was not their own or, in the case of the western reaches of the Avranchin, where ownership was debatable. Many of those listed above, such as Hugh Brito and Archbishop Geoffrey, were first-generation immigrants. It is difficult to believe, however, that surnames held the same connotations for descendants of earlier settlers, such as Hugh's son, Robert, who was perhaps born and certainly raised in Normandy. Interestingly, individuals who used *Brito*-type surnames did not usually bear obviously Breton firstnames, e.g. Hugh, Ralph, Robert or William *Brito*.⁹⁹ This might suggest that these individuals were eager to emphasise their otherwise understated origins or ancestry. As with other sobriquets, such as Alfred 'the Giant', Neil 'the Younger' or Hugh 'the Small', *Brito*-type surnames may also have acted as useful social discriminators for individuals who bore common names, but it is again noteworthy that a reference to foreign origin or ancestry was deemed appropriate for such a purpose. Given that *Brito*-type surnames were still being assumed by first-generation immigrants in the twelfth century, it seems impossible to argue that the descendants of earlier arrivals who retained this

⁹⁷ N.-Y. Tonnerre, 'Celtic literary tradition and the development of a feudal principality in Brittany', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. H. Pryce (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 168-72.

⁹⁸ W. Davies, 'Franks and Bretons: the impact of political climate and historiographical tradition on writing their ninth-century history', in *Frankland: the Franks and the world of the early Middle Ages – essays in honour of Dame Jinty Nelson*, ed. P. Fouracre and D. Ganz (Manchester, 2008), pp. 304-21.

⁹⁹ van Torhout, 'Les Bretons', p. 117.

surname were not in some sense aware of their foreign ancestry, even if such families had operated solely in Normandy for several generations.

Brito-type forms also appear as Lower Norman firstnames in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.¹⁰⁰ Such personal names represent a tiny fraction of a larger body of Breton-derived and -influenced anthroponyms in use in late tenth- and eleventh-century Lower Normandy. These names reflected Breton ducal dynastic influences (Alan, Juhel/Judicael, Hoël, Conan), Biblical preferences (Samson, Salomon, Daniel) and common Celtic types (Harscouët/Hasculf, Rualon/c, Rivallon, Main/o, Brian). As well as being used as firstnames, these could also be employed as surnames or in ‘son of-’ type designations, e.g. Hugh Salomon or Ralph, son of Salomon – a practice mirrored by some Breton families in post-Conquest England.¹⁰¹ The establishment of a corpus of identifiably Breton names has been a matter of ongoing onomastic investigation.¹⁰² André Chédeville’s survey of the anthroponymy of Brittany itself from c. 1000 onwards formed the basis for van Torhoudt’s study of Breton personal name use in the western *pagi* of the Avranchin and Cotentin from the late tenth to twelfth centuries.¹⁰³ The role that these personal names played in the construction of Lower Norman social identities has been a subject of considerable debate. Musset felt that the continuing use of Breton anthroponyms in Lower Normandy into the thirteenth century suggested that Bretons and those of Breton descent represented ‘une

¹⁰⁰ *CDF*, nos. 461 (late twelfth-century example from Saint-Étienne, Caen), 1166 (c. 1060 – Richard, son of Briteson witnessed Neil I de Saint-Sauveur’s grant of six churches on Guernsey to Marmoutier); *MSM*, no. 94 (pre-1139 – Brito the Cleric witnessed a grant to the Mont’s priory at Gohory in the Chartrain).

¹⁰¹ *Regesta*, nos. 164, 173; T. Taylor, ‘Blohin: his descendants and lands’, *The Ancestor* 9 (1904), p. 22. van Torhoudt, ‘Les Bretons’, p. 118, for further exempla.

¹⁰² J. Loth, *Chrestomathie Bretonne (Armoricaïn, Gallois, Cornique)* (Paris, 1890), for an early effort.

¹⁰³ A. Chédeville, ‘Anthroponymie bretonne’, in *Genèse médiévale de l’anthroponymie moderne: Tome II - Persistances du nom unique*, ed. M. Bourin and P. Chareille (Tours, 2 vols., 1992), i, pp. 9-40; van Torhoudt, ‘Les Bretons’, pp. 116-17.

minorité non négligeable de la classe dirigeante' of the western provinces.¹⁰⁴ Van Torhoudt, however, dismissed Musset's view, concluding that Breton personal names represented a very small percentage (a mere 2%, trailing off further from c. 1150 onwards) of those anthroponyms recorded from Normandy's westernmost *pagi*, geographically confined largely to the immediate border region, used mainly by 'les petits seigneurs locaux et les vavasseurs', rather than the great families of the Norman west and ultimately being of limited use as social markers of an ethnic dimension to individual identity.¹⁰⁵

The apparent infrequency of Breton anthroponym use in Lower Norman charters might suggest that these names should be discounted as an insignificant anomaly. Van Torhoudt's regional analysis, however, must be set in a broader context. The character of the Norman evidence requires further consideration and van Torhoudt's findings must be compared to those of Chédeville for Brittany itself. Van Torhoudt admits that early to mid-eleventh-century Lower Normandy provides little documentary evidence, drawn from a limited selection of sources.¹⁰⁶ As shall be shown, this was precisely the period during which Lower Normandy was being drawn into ever closer contact with and, resultantly, under increasingly intensive control by the ducal dynasty in Rouen. Accurately gauging the extent of Breton anthroponym use in this crucial period is thus extremely difficult and, as will be illustrated shortly, the political realignment that took place during these years transformed regional patterns of anthroponym use. Comparison with the situation in Brittany also suggests that expectations of a vastly higher incidence of Breton anthroponym use in Lower Normandy than that recorded by van Torhoudt would be ill-founded. In the eleventh century, the border counties of

¹⁰⁴ Musset, 'Le peuplement', p. 100.

¹⁰⁵ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 124-6, 128, 134, 143-4.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 124-5, 130.

the Rennais and Nantais were themselves not centres of Breton anthroponym use. In the Nantais, the more susceptible of the two provinces to outside political and cultural influences, Breton names represented 35% of all firstnames – a sizeable, but not overwhelming figure. Even here, Breton anthroponym use declined rapidly, dropping below 10% of all recorded names by c. 1200.¹⁰⁷ By that time, French names had achieved parity with Breton ones across the whole of Brittany, including the more Celtic west.¹⁰⁸ If Breton anthroponymy was coming under Frankish cultural and political pressure in Brittany itself during the eleventh century, it should come as no surprise that it did so, probably both at an earlier date and more extensively, in Normandy's western *pagi*, which, despite the catalogue of Breton influences outlined above, were ever on the periphery of this world. The continuing decline of Breton anthroponyms in late twelfth-century Lower Normandy was thus part of an evolutionary process, mirrored in Brittany itself during the same time-frame.

While the limited representation of Breton anthroponyms in Lower Normandy was probably not as significant as it first appears, the claim that such names possessed little, if any, value as markers of an ethnic dimension to personal identity is harder to assess. Van Torhoudt's discovery that Breton anthroponyms were most widely used by the lower ranks of the Lower Norman nobility, the vassals of greater families, such as the d'Aubignys and counts of Mortain, who had either never used Breton personal names themselves or had slowly abandoned them, is particularly important in this regard.¹⁰⁹ While the prevalence of these anthroponyms among the lower ranks demonstrates the pervasiveness of Breton cultural influences, it simultaneously undermines their ethnic connotations – if

¹⁰⁷ Tonnerre, 'Celtic literary tradition', p. 178.

¹⁰⁸ Chédeville, 'Anthroponymie bretonne', p. 15.

¹⁰⁹ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 133-7.

Breton personal names were commonly circulated in local society then their use by individuals may have seemed perfectly natural, rather than providing a marker of foreign ancestry or social contacts.¹¹⁰ An inhabitant of the Cotentin bearing a Breton firstname, for example, need not have thought of himself as Breton, nor been thought of as such by others. That these anthroponyms had a regional cultural significance divorced from their Breton origins is indicated by the uptake of local naming customs by migrants to the area from eastern and central Normandy. The Dastin family, originally from the valley of the river Dives in the Pays d'Auge, took up the name Johel after their installation on the banks of the Sélune in c. 1050. Similarly, the family of Rannulf the moneyer, whose sons bore the names Waleran and Conan, may also have come to the region from elsewhere in Normandy.¹¹¹ On the other hand, the aforementioned adoption of *Brito*-type surnames by individuals with common personal names suggests that anthroponyms could still have had some ethnic significance. Van Torhoudt rationalises this fact by suggesting that a surname would have proven largely superfluous to a first-generation Breton immigrant, because the rarity of his name would have sufficed to distinguish his origins.¹¹² This explanation, however, somewhat undermines his own argument about the absence of an ethnic dimension to personal names. While it seems reasonable to assume that some Lower Normans possessed Breton anthroponyms simply because they had become a standard feature of regional culture or family tradition, it seems equally reasonable to argue that others might have thought of themselves as in some sense

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, p. 134 n. 120, rightly remarks that it is impossible to know how far down the social ranks Breton anthroponym use may have reached. It is, of course, easier to identify these anthroponyms among the lower ranks of the Lower Norman aristocracy in the twelfth century than in the more sparsely-documented eleventh century.

¹¹¹ L. Musset, 'A-t-il existé en Normandie une aristocratie d'argent', *AN* 9 (1959), pp. 292-4; van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 128-9.

¹¹² van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 117.

Breton and that neither they, nor others felt it necessary to label this fact through the adoption or attribution of ethnic-, toponymic- or patronymic-based sobriquets.

Changing patterns of anthroponym use in the eleventh century also suggest that name choices had a wider social significance. The intensification of ducal influence from the early eleventh century onward saw a marked increase in the appearance of ancillary baptismal names in Lower Normandy. In these instances, the bearers of typically Scandinavian names replaced or added to their original name, often substituting a common Frankish anthroponym, such as ‘Odo’ Stigand¹¹³ or one derived from the Norman ducal dynasty, for example ‘Richard’ Thurstan Haldup, whose baptismal name is rarely recorded.¹¹⁴ Most famously, Richard I’s Lower Norman bride, Gunnor, favoured her Scandinavian name above her baptismal name of Albreda, though her sisters are known only by their (presumably baptismal) Frankish names.¹¹⁵ That Upper Norman influences might have similarly affected Breton anthroponym use in Lower Normandy is suggested by van Torhoudt’s discovery that Breton personal names were more popular among the lower levels of local society. Whether or not a Lower Norman aristocrat bearing a Breton name thought of himself as in some sense Breton, even van Torhoudt admits that members of wider Norman society, including the duke, might have found such names highly unusual and perhaps suggestive of other

¹¹³ *Recueil*, nos. 137, 222 – Odo Stigand has been identified with Stigand de Mézidon (*Recueil*, nos. 96, 231; *Regesta*, nos. 59, 61, 140, 238 (I and II), 243, 251) and may have passed on his baptismal name to a son who predeceased him (*Regesta*, no. 158).

¹¹⁴ *Regesta*, no. 175, for ‘Richard otherwise called Thurstan Haldup’. He is referred to simply as Thurstan Haldup in his own attestations (*Recueil*, nos. 99, 167) and by his children (*Recueil*, no. 231; *Regesta*, nos. 59, 206).

¹¹⁵ E.M.C. van Houts, ‘Countess Gunnor of Normandy (c. 950-1031)’, *Collegium Medievale* 12 (1999), p. 9 – she also suggests that Gunnor’s sisters may have been the result of a second marriage and so never bore Scandinavian names. Some name changes involved two Scandinavian names, e.g. the (probably Lower Norman) William fitzTurstin, called Donecan, who attested a grant to Saint-Ouen in the decade before 1066 (*Recueil*, no. 205; *DP*, p. 178).

origins and loyalties.¹¹⁶ As a result, the adoption of personal names more typical to the rest of Normandy by members of the Lower Norman aristocracy reflected not only changing social connections and cultural contacts, but also political expediency in the rapidly evolving world of the early eleventh century. The greatest local families, who formed the initial point of contact between the west and the rest of the duchy, would have been the first affected by such pressures. The example of the d'Aubigny family is particularly instructive. A relatively minor local dynasty who made extensive use of Breton anthroponyms, such as Rualoc, Rivallon and Oliver throughout the eleventh century, the family rose to prominence on both sides of the Channel under Henry I, with William II d'Aubigny even marrying Henry's widow, Adeliza – an upsurge in fortune that saw a shift away from these earlier naming practices in the twelfth century, with only the Lower Norman Neil remaining popular for younger sons.¹¹⁷ While the naming fashions of the greater local families most probably began to alter during the poorly-evidenced early eleventh century, outside pressures were of less concern to the lower ranks of regional society – knights, vavasors and honorial barons. Their naming traditions thus shifted more slowly, as they gradually adopted the new monikers favoured by their social superiors.

Other challenges to Breton influence on Lower Norman anthroponym use have focused on particular names. The popularity of Judicael and its variant forms in the Avranchin and southern Bessin, for instance, has been ascribed to the proximity of the lords of Mayenne, who used the name, rather than to direct Breton influence.¹¹⁸ Such examples, however, often only demonstrate the

¹¹⁶ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 144.

¹¹⁷ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 137-8. Below, p. 70 n. 25, for further potential evidence of a gradual shift in Norman naming patterns from pre-Conquest England.

¹¹⁸ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 117 n. 21.

complexity, rather than the absence of Breton cultural influences – the house of Mayenne grew up on the disputed edges of Normandy, Brittany and Maine and enjoyed dynastic links with several Breton families.¹¹⁹ Conversely, Chédeville's list of common Breton anthroponyms is far from exhaustive and there are other names that though not of distinctly Breton origin may also indicate Breton cultural influence. J.H. Round long ago noted the regular appearance of the name Alfred in Breton sources from the mid-ninth century onwards. In post-Conquest England, Alfred Brito, a Devonian tenant-in-chief, specifically ties the name to a Breton context; while Round focused on Alfred of Lincoln, whose heir bore the more typically Breton name Alan and who may have been descended from a Johol of Lincoln, who died in 1051 – perhaps one of Edward the Confessor's French favourites.¹²⁰ The name Alfred is sparsely attested in eleventh-century Normandy, occasionally in a western context.¹²¹ Though the appearance of Alfred is too infrequent for generalisations to be drawn, specific instances present interesting possibilities. The most notable eleventh-century Norman 'Alfred' was the Lower Norman lord Alfred the Giant, who, according to Orderic, was father to one Joel –

¹¹⁹ Power, *Norman Frontier*, p. 508, for the Mayenne family tree and references.

¹²⁰ J.H. Round, *Feudal England* (London, 1895), pp. 254-5; Loth, *Chrestomathie*, p. 105. *DP*, pp. 141-2 dismisses the connection between Johol and Alfred. Given that Alfred held land in Lincolnshire from Ralph de Gaël, whose ancestors were active in England before 1066, this identification still seems plausible (*DB*, fol. 377r). A number of other Bretons (or, perhaps, Lower Normans) certainly settled in pre-Conquest England, including Alfred the Marshal, Maino, Winemar, Alan and Judicael the Huntsman. Like Alfred of Lincoln, the latter two may have been associated in East Anglia with Edward's staller and Ralph de Gaël's father, the half-Breton Ralph 'the Englishman' (C.P. Lewis, 'The French in England before the Norman Conquest', *ANS* 17 (1995), pp. 126-9, 135-6, 140, 142-3). Although Edward the Confessor had ample opportunity to garner support from the frontier between Brittany and Normandy (below, pp. 139, 181 n. 94), the potential role played by the already-established Gaël family suggests that Edward had no special relationship with this region. The Gaël family were no friends to William either, with the younger Ralph possibly joining the Angevin-Breton alliance against the duke in 1053/4 (J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Geoffroy Martel, Conan II et les comtes bretons Eude et Hoël de 1055 à 1060', in *Mondes de l'Ouest*, ed. Laurent, Merdrignac and Pichot, p. 314).

¹²¹ *Recueil*, no. 94; another Alfred, butler to and major English tenant of Robert of Mortain, may also have hailed from Lower Normandy.

almost certainly a variation on the Breton Judicael.¹²² Alfred's own possession of a Scandinavian-style sobriquet, the similarities with the naming traditions of the aforementioned Lincolnshire Bretons and Alfred's siring of at least two more children, who bore the typically Frankish names of William and Ascelina,¹²³ emphasises the diverse cultural and political elements at play in early eleventh-century Lower Norman society. Another name that may owe its origins to Breton influence is Hamelin, possibly derived either directly from the Old Breton *Helmelin* or from a connection with the frontier settlement of that name in the southern Avranchin.¹²⁴ It certainly appears among families from that area and the English estates of the counts of Mortain.¹²⁵

Other possible indicators of Breton influence in this field can be found by looking beyond 'l'anthroponymie bretonne' – with its linguistic implications – to the wider 'anthroponymie propre à la Bretagne'. Certain French names may have owed their popularity in Lower Normandy to Breton influence. Both Eudo and Geoffrey, the former of which was among the top ten most popular names in Brittany in the first three decades of the twelfth century, had been introduced to Brittany by the comital dynasty of Rennes in the tenth century, through its marriages with the houses of Blois and Anjou.¹²⁶ Both names were also popular in Lower Normandy and, while it is impossible to verify that this was always a result of Breton influence, in cases where these names were used by families that also employed identifiably Breton anthroponyms, such influence is not unlikely.

¹²² OV, iii, p. 100 – Joel is named as one of Robert Curthose's companions in a list that includes at least one other western lord, Robert de Montbray. Below, pp. 225-6, for Joel's identity.

¹²³ *Regesta*, no. 59.

¹²⁴ E.M.R. Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers in Cornwall after the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1977), p. 20; Loth, *Chrestomathie*, p. 135.

¹²⁵ Pouëssel, 'Les structures militaires', pp. 89-90.

¹²⁶ Chédeville, 'Anthroponymie bretonne', tableau 2, on p. 18. van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 118, dismisses these names after little discussion.

Amongst these latter might be counted one of the most eminent families of the Cotentin, that of Geoffrey de Montbray, bishop of Coutances, whom van Torhoutd suggests hailed from Souilles, a prebend of the cathedral church, whose own toponymically-denoted family favoured both the name Mauger (given as the name of Geoffrey's brother by the twelfth-century Coutances chronicler) and the Breton Salomon.¹²⁷ Even the choice of Latin spelling for the name Eudo may denote Breton influence – the form 'Odo' being more typical elsewhere in Normandy.¹²⁸ Conversely, Orderic's descriptions of 'a certain Breton of Montfort called Fulk' and Hugh d'Avranches' household chaplains, Arnulf of Dol and his son, Odo, clearly demonstrate that Breton migration may have resulted in the reinforcement of standard anthroponymic practices, rather than the importation of unusual ones.¹²⁹ The cases of Aubrey de Vere and Ralph d'Avranches exemplify the difficulty of identifying Breton origins from familial anthroponyms or soubriquets. Long thought to be a Lower Norman hailing from Ver in the southern Cotentin with links to Geoffrey of Coutances, Aubrey de Vere, an important tenant-in-chief in post-Conquest East Anglia, is now thought to have originated in the Nantais and been more closely associated with the Breton, rather than Norman ducal dynasty, although his wife hailed from Lower Normandy.¹³⁰ In contrast, Ralph d'Avranches, bishop of Bayeux at the end of the tenth century and

¹²⁷ van Torhoutd, 'Les Bretons', pp. 139-40.

¹²⁸ Eudo Haldup, sometime *vicomte* of the Cotentin and Eudo Dapifer, from the Bessin, both appear solely as Eudo or Heudo, rather than Odo (*Recueil, passim; Regesta, passim*). Mont Saint-Michel's cartulary supports a regional distinction in spelling that goes beyond scribal convention – MSM, nos. 17, 20, 118, app. ii, no. 12, all use 'Eudo' in a Breton context; nos. 29, 39, 45, 47, 95, 96, 100, 103, for Maine and the Chartrain, prefer 'Odo'. MSM, no. 109, however, for Odo, chaplain of Bray (arr. Coutances, cant. Quetteville-sur-Sienne), although he may have been appointed externally.

¹²⁹ OV, iii, pp. 118, 200 – *cuidam Britoni de Monteforti nomine Fucloni*, 226.

¹³⁰ L.C. Loyd, *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families* (Baltimore, 1980), p. 110; DP, pp. 131-2, 440 – Aubrey's wife was a tenant of the bishops of Coutances and Bayeux; F.J. des Longrais, 'Les Moines de l'abbaye Saint-Melaine de Rennes en Angleterre: Les Chartres du Prieuré d'Hatfield Regis', in *Recueil de travaux*, ii, pp. 31-54. *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 54 suggests a potential Angevin origin.

possessed of an apparently Norman name, was ordained in Dol, suggesting a Breton origin.¹³¹

While it is difficult to formulate any concrete conclusions on the precise connotations that such personal and surnames had in Lower Norman society, the region's Breton heritage clearly continued to have some effect on into the eleventh century. Contemporary charters and chronicles also demonstrate the survival of social contacts stretching across the increasingly demarcated political frontier of the later tenth and eleventh centuries. They reveal a society that offered Bretons and Lower Normans multiple possibilities of advancement – a world of cross-border landholding, intermarriage, divided loyalties and foreign patronage. Of these, the migration of individuals represents the clearest example of continuingly close links and ease of movement between the two regions. We have already seen that there were plentiful opportunities for Breton families to move east and pursue careers in Normandy. Movement was not all one way. Scandinavian names appear in the Ille-et-Vilaine, e.g. the Ansketil identified as ancestor to the lords of Châteaugiron.¹³² These names may be hangovers from the Viking occupation of Brittany in the early tenth century, though they might more probably reflect later migration from Normandy, perhaps by families associated with Richard II's sister, Hawise, who married Count Geoffrey I of Rennes at the turn of the eleventh century.¹³³

While many families traded Brittany for Normandy or vice versa, others became actively involved on both sides of the frontier simultaneously. During

¹³¹ GC, xi, col. 352. Above, p. 52 n. 120, for other Breton Ralphs.

¹³² *Actes de Bretagne*, nos. 45, 54, 56; K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Le problème de la suzeraineté et la lutte pour le pouvoir: la rivalité bretonne et l'état Anglo-Normand 1066-1154', *MSHAB* 68 (1991), p. 52, for Ansketil's son, Giro.

¹³³ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 161-2. Ascelin the monk and his son, Roger witnessed two mid-eleventh-century Breton charters (*MSM*, no. 23 (1032); *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Georges de Rennes*, ed. M.P. de La Bigne Villeneuve (Rennes, 1876), no. 29 (c. 1050)).

William's Breton war of 1064/5, the duke was able to exploit the Norman holdings of various Breton frontier lords to ensure their support for his campaign. William's most powerful Breton supporter was Rivallon, lord of Combour and guardian of the temporalities of the archiepiscopal see of Dol. Despite the rest of his powerful family supporting William's enemy, Conan II of Brittany, Rivallon was probably swayed by his possessions at Céaux in the disputed territory between the rivers Couesnon and Sélune, held of the Norman duke.¹³⁴ Similarly, in the 1050s Main of Fougères, lord of an important fief on the three-way border between Brittany, Maine and Lower Normandy, recognised William's ultimate overlordship of several estates held of the counts of Mortain in the Avranchin and Maine.¹³⁵ The family's possession of contiguous Breton and Norman estates perhaps accounts for the curious jurisdictional status of the abbey founded at Savigny in 1112 by Ralph of Fougères. The brainchild of Vitalis, former chaplain to the counts of Mortain, Savigny was built in Normandy on land held from the counts of Mortain, but the abbey regularly turned to the seigneurial court of Fougères, rather than that of their overlords in Mortain, in cases involving the Fougères fief in Normandy.¹³⁶ The Fougères family's continued possession of these estates and acquisition of English property after the Conquest suggests that they too sided with William in 1064.¹³⁷ The development of such cross-border lordships continued after the Conquest. The lords of Vitré gained considerable estates in both England and Normandy, which they retained into the twelfth

¹³⁴ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 164-6. This Norman property was the subject of a long-running dispute, involving Rivallon's descendant, John of Dol, Ralph I of Fougères and the abbeys of Saint-Florent and Mont Saint-Michel (*MSM*, no. 115 and pp. 219-20; *Regesta*, no. 269; *CDF* no. 1117).

¹³⁵ *Recueil*, no. 162; Pouëssel, 'Les structures militaires', pp. 86-94.

¹³⁶ Power, *Norman Frontier*, pp. 51-3.

¹³⁷ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 167.

century, as a result of a marriage alliance with the counts of Mortain at the close of the eleventh century.¹³⁸

The preceding examples might give the impression that social contacts across the eleventh-century frontier were limited to the immediate vicinity of the border itself, namely the southern Avranchin. As with the higher incidence of Breton anthroponym use in this same area, however, this did not preclude important, if less frequent contacts elsewhere in Lower Normandy. Great frontier honours, such as the county of Mortain, and the far-flung estates of major monastic houses from the border region, such as Marmoutier in Tours or Mont Saint-Michel more locally, often stretched into the Cotentin and Bessin, facilitating the wider geographical circulation of Bretons who had found service with these lords and institutions.¹³⁹ Van Torhoudt's analysis of the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur emphasises the significance of such contacts. Dismissing Searle's depiction of the Nigellides as an ancient dynasty dating back to the start of Scandinavian settlement in the west,¹⁴⁰ van Torhoudt instead identified Neil's first appearance in the Cotentin with the death of Richard II's wife, Judith, sister of Geoffrey I of Rennes, when Richard transferred some of his wife's former dower properties to Marmoutier.¹⁴¹ Judith's dowry had also included the *vicaria Helgenes*, with which the Nigellides were later associated.¹⁴² Holding Colombe in the southern Cotentin from Mont Saint-Michel, Neil may have enjoyed a close relationship with the counts of Rennes, who, at the turn of

¹³⁸ K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'The Prosopography of Post-Conquest England: Four Case Studies', *Medieval Prosopography* 14.1 (1993), pp. 32-3; 'Les Chroniques de Vitre', in Le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne, avec les chroniques*, ed. Hozier, p. 16; *RBE*, ii, p. 644.

¹³⁹ van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 136.

¹⁴⁰ É. van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges du pouvoir des Néel, vicomtes dans le Cotentin', in *Les lieux du pouvoir au Moyen Age en Normandie et sur ses marges*, ed. A.-M. Flambard Héricher (Caen, 2006), pp. 7-34.

¹⁴¹ *Recueil*, no. 23; van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 140.

¹⁴² *Recueil*, no. 11.

the eleventh century, were the abbey's most prominent patrons.¹⁴³ Though the vicecomital dynasty was not afraid to take arms against their Breton friends, as Neil I did during Alan III's attacks on the Avranchin in c. 1030, these connections remained.¹⁴⁴ Neil I appeared alongside Eudo, brother of Alan III, governing Lower Normandy following Duke Robert I's death in 1035.¹⁴⁵ Neil's son, Neil II the Younger fled to Brittany in exile and Wace depicts either him or his son, another Neil fighting alongside the Breton Ralph de Gaël at Hastings.¹⁴⁶ Links to Rennes might also be discernible in the adoption of Eudo – again with the Breton spelling favoured – as a familial name.¹⁴⁷

Marriage alliances and the tenurial transfers that accompanied them were particularly important in spreading social contacts beyond the Avranchin. William d'Aubigny Brito, who found favour with Henry I at the turn of the twelfth century, was the product of a union between Main of Saint-Aubin-d'Aubigné in the Ille-et-Vilaine and Adelaide de Bohon, daughter of Humphrey de Bohon, whose honour lay in the northern Cotentin.¹⁴⁸ Further east in the Hiémois, Rualon the Breton probably inherited his tenancy of the abbey of Saint-Évroult through his marriage into the Vitot family.¹⁴⁹ Incoming families particularly relied upon marriage alliances to secure their position not only in Lower Normandy, but also beyond the duchy's western frontier. Both of the comital dynasties of Mortain, inserted into the Avranchin by ducal intervention in the eleventh century, married into local families. Robert d'Avranches, an early Norman patron/despoiler of

¹⁴³ van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 15-24.

¹⁴⁴ *GND*, ii, p. 58.

¹⁴⁵ *Antiquus cartularius ecclesiae Baiocensis (Livre Noir)*, ed. V. Bourrienne (Rouen, 2 vols., 1902-3), i, no. 21, pp. 27-9.

¹⁴⁶ *RR*, ii, lines 4169-4172, 8353-8362, 8493; E.M.C. van Houts, 'Wace as Historian', in *The history of the Norman people: Wace's Roman de rou*, trans. G.S. Burgess, with ns. by E.M.C. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. xliii, lix.

¹⁴⁷ van Torhout, 'Les sièges', p. 23 n. 76.

¹⁴⁸ *DD*, pp. 271-2.

¹⁴⁹ *OV*, ii, p. 120.

Mont Saint-Michel under Richard II and probable illegitimate son or son-in-law of Richard I, may have married a descendant of the comital dynasty of Maine; while his children may have been connected to the Nigellide *vicomtes* of the Cotentin.¹⁵⁰ The daughters of Robert of Conteville, installed in Mortain by the Conqueror in the 1060s, extended the county's influence southwards through marriages into the nearby Breton and Manceaux houses of Vitré and Laval.¹⁵¹

Lower Norman ecclesiastical life was equally representative of local society's cross-border interests. We have seen through grants by families associated with the county of Mortain to the houses of Redon, Saint-Magloire and Saint-Georges that cross-border patronage in the immediate environs of the frontier was particularly prevalent.¹⁵² Similarly, the great frontier houses of Mont Saint-Michel and, from the early twelfth century, Savigny commanded networks of aristocratic patronage that stretched across the borderland of Brittany, Normandy and Maine and even beyond.¹⁵³ Such connections fostered an integrated society in the immediate frontier zone, evidenced by Mont Saint-Michel's selection of the Breton Rivallon of Dol as custodian and defender of its rights in Pontorson, on the Norman side of the border.¹⁵⁴ Links, however, were not solely limited to this area. Orderic's narrative included a detailed account, drawn from several sources, of the life and miracles of the Breton saint Judoc, whose cult was growing during the early twelfth century and whose body – the

¹⁵⁰ C. Potts, 'The Earliest Norman Counts Revisited: The Lords of Mortain', *HSJ* 4 (1992), pp. 25-31; *MSM*, nos. 2, 31 and p. 232; K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Bilichildis: Problèmes et possibilités d'une étude de l'onomastique et de la parenté de la France de l'ouest', in *Onomastique*, ed. Keats-Rohan and Settiani, pp. 57-68; van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 21-2.

¹⁵¹ Above, pp. 56-7; below, p. 232.

¹⁵² Above, p. 32 n. 42.

¹⁵³ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, maps 4-5; P. Bouet, 'Le Mont Saint-Michel entre Bretagne et Normandie de 960 à 1066', in *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Age*, pp. 174, 183, 196, 198; D. Pichot, 'Savigny: une abbaye entre Normandie, Bretagne et Maine', in *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Age*, p. 256, for useful maps of these abbeys' estates and priories.

¹⁵⁴ *MSM*, app. ii. no. 4. Rivallon also received Lande-de-Qui from the Mont during Suppo's abbacy (*ibid.*, no. 18).

monks of Saint-Évroult claimed – was preserved in their church at Parnes, on the border of the French and Norman Vexin.¹⁵⁵ An awareness of older Breton foundations might also account for Herluin of Conteville's establishment of a monastery at Grestain, close to Samson's house of *Pental* and perhaps on the site of another Breton house, *Pennante*.¹⁵⁶ While ecclesiastical donations were more common close to the border, Breton ecclesiastical personnel found employ throughout Normandy. The aforementioned careers of Hoël and Geoffrey Brito demonstrate the opportunities available for Breton ecclesiastics in the duchy and the occasional references to Breton anthroponyms among the monks, canons and ecclesiastical tenants of Lower Normandy suggests that less prominent Bretons were equally able to make their way in the Norman church.¹⁵⁷

Social connections spanning political frontiers were not always beneficial. The threat of war and the desire to escape its dangers and responsibilities are evident in a number of Montois charters. Several Breton seigneurial families donated property to the abbey in return for aid or asylum during wartime.¹⁵⁸ Loyalties were far from clear given the confused framework of tenurial and familial connections common to frontier districts. Main of Fougères almost simultaneously recognised the overlordship of William and Conan for his disparate estates in the 1050s, which must have placed him in a difficult position during the Norman-Breton conflict of 1064.¹⁵⁹ Rivallon of Dol and those other Bretons who supported William's invasion of Brittany in 1064 certainly engendered considerable odium among their countrymen in what was, for a duchy

¹⁵⁵ OV, ii, pp. 156-68, appendix ii, pp. 366-7.

¹⁵⁶ Le Maho, 'Ermitages et monastères', pp. 87-91; van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 136.

¹⁵⁷ Above, pp. 28, 43-4, 54-5, 58-9; van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 136.

¹⁵⁸ MSM, nos. 21, 24, 54.

¹⁵⁹ Above, p. 56; H. Guillotel, 'La place de Châteaubriant dans l'essor des châtellenies bretonnes (XI^e-XII^e siècles)', MSHAB 66 (1989), pp. 20-21.

embroiled in an ongoing civil war, a surprisingly concerted Breton counter-reaction – a response to Norman aggression only derailed by Conan's untimely death in 1066.¹⁶⁰ William's success in gaining support from the Breton frontier lords of the Ille-et-Vilaine in both 1064 and after the Conquest was due in no small part to the strength of these cross-border social and tenurial connections. Neighbouring regions regularly became places of refuge in the aftermath of failed revolts or successful coups against established authority. Hugh Brito, discussed above, came to Lower Normandy alongside the exiled Archbishop Juhel of Dol.¹⁶¹ When the young Henry I, then count of the Cotentin, fled to Brittany in the 1090s, he became the most recent in a line of Norman lords to find shelter there.¹⁶² Some, like *vicomte* Neil II de Saint-Sauveur, were western lords with pre-existing Breton connections.¹⁶³ Others, like the Drengot family, later conquerors of Italy, who fled to Brittany in c. 1030 after murdering one of Duke Robert's favourites, are more difficult to place.¹⁶⁴ Though the Drengots have usually been traced to Upper Normandy, some sources place them in the Alençonnais, a region where Breton connections were less unusual.¹⁶⁵ Whether the Drengots' flight west resulted from short-term expediency or long-term association, they would have found a willing protector in Alan III, himself at war with Robert around this time.

¹⁶⁰ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 168.

¹⁶¹ Above, p. 43.

¹⁶² OV, iv, p. 250.

¹⁶³ Below, pp. 129-30, 202-203, 211, for Nigellide connections with Brittany, p. 195 n. 4, for the Constantine family, who may have been in a similar position.

¹⁶⁴ OV, ii, p. 56; Amatus of Montecassino, *Ystoire de li normant*, ed. M. Guéret-Laferté (Paris, 2011), p. 251. Geoffrey of Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius*, ed. E. Pontieri (Bologna, 2 vols., 1927-8), i, pp. 24-5 – Geoffrey's account of the flight to Brittany in the wake of murdering a ducal favourite of the Lower Norman Serlo de Hauteville, who perhaps did have local Breton links, should probably be discounted as being based on the Drengot tradition.

¹⁶⁵ *Orderici Vitalis angligenæ, coenobii uticensis monachi, historiae ecclesiasticae libri tredecim*, ed. A. Le Prévost (Paris, 5 vols., 1838-55), ii, p. 55 n. 1.

1.4) Conclusion

Though joyfully reported by contemporaries, with hindsight the failure of the Norse assault upon Saint-Lô does not seem so surprising. Ninth-century Lower Normandy was a very different world from that existing contemporaneously along the Seine valley. For the Robertian and Carolingian claimants of the Frankish throne, Lower Normandy was a distant, lost land – the promise of which might temporarily distract Norse rulers otherwise intent upon dabbling in the disputed royal affairs of their rapidly fragmenting kingdom. In reality, the western *pagi* posed a greater challenge to Norse raiders accustomed to the civil disorder of the Île-de-France and its surrounding districts, actively protected, as they were, by Brittany's rulers. Like the Norse, Brittany's ninth-century rulers exploited divisions within the late Carolingian state for their own ends. The occupation of the late ninth century thus represented the zenith of Breton influence in Lower Normandy.

Despite the subsequent collapse of Breton power in the early tenth century, these years cast a long shadow throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries. The Bretons left a discernible mark on various aspects of Lower Norman life – ecclesiastical customs and venerations, place- and personal names. While it is unsurprising that cross-border links survived longest and are recorded most extensively in the southern Avranchin – the immediate vicinity of the eventual political frontier – it is notable that even by the late eleventh century links were not confined to this area, but spread throughout Lower Normandy. How far the region's inhabitants recognised this Breton heritage is difficult to determine, but the evidence available is surely broad enough in character and chronological scope to support the argument that some did – through familial traditions, naming

customs, political allegiances and ecclesiastical patronage. If the foreign connotations of such influences were lost upon Lower Normandy's own inhabitants, they certainly appeared unusual and perhaps threatening to the ducal dynasty and associated aristocracy of Upper Normandy. With time, these unusual aspects became less prevalent. Though Upper Norman ecclesiastical institutions and settlers adopted some Lower Norman practices, including saint's cults and naming customs, for the most part it was Lower Norman society which altered to mirror those of its eastern neighbour. As we shall see, such change resulted largely from the increasing political dominance of the ducal dynasty of Rouen. What cannot be denied, however, is that the changing face of eleventh-century Lower Norman society was in part a face that changed in reaction to the survival of earlier Breton influences.

Chapter 2) Les Premières Normandies: Normans East & West to c. 960

2.1) Introduction: Death on the Somme

On Saturday 17 December 942 William Longsword, duke of Normandy, was lured to an island in the river Somme near Picquigny and assassinated on the orders of Arnulf, count of Flanders, one of his local political rivals.¹ According to Dudo, William's flock sang out with a single voice in reply to this treachery. 'Normans and Bretons' present on the river bank 'were eager for revenge' and bore William's body away 'with much wailing'.² At the duke's funeral in Rouen, attended by his young son, Richard, Dudo evoked a similar scene of unity:

'Berenger and Alan and the rest of the Bretons, and the chiefs of the Normans as well, caught sight of him [Richard] and declared with much outcry: – We have lost a lord, alas! Let us now with one mind make a lord'.³

In the years that followed, the men of Coutances and Bayeux, led, on behalf of the young duke, by 'king Harold of Dacia', in turn murdered Herluin II of Montreuil at a meeting with Louis IV d'Outremer on the Dives, damning him by association with Arnulf's act for giving poor advice to the French king following William's assassination.⁴

Dudo's account of Longsword's death restates many key themes from his wider work. By 942, there already existed a duke of Normandy, recognised as a major player in regional politics, whose son should naturally succeed to his duchy and whose authority, centred upon Rouen, reached out westwards to embrace not only the districts of Coutances and Bayeux, but Brittany as well. As we have seen,

¹ *De moribus*, pp. 205-209; Flodoard, s.a. 943; J. Lair, *Étude sur la vie et la mort de Guillaume Longue-épée, duc de Normandie* (Paris, 1893), pp. 61-8; *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. 205 nn. 292 and 295, 206 n. 299, for additional conspirators and dating.

² *De moribus*, p. 208 – *Northmanni...et Britones...ulcisci praeoptantes...cum magno ejulato*.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 208-209 – *videntes Berengerius et Alannus, caeterique Britones, necnon Northmannorum principes dixerunt nimium ejulantes: 'Seniorem, proh dolor! Perdidimus, seniorem unanimes faciamus'*.

⁴ *De moribus*, pp. 240-42, 244 – *Daciae rege Haigroldo*, at p. 241; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 214 n. 360. Flodoard, s.a. 945 omits all mention of Herluin's murder.

Dudo's account was shaped by the political circumstances of his own time.⁵ Behind these, however, lay a very different reality. During the mid-tenth century itself, as the near-contemporary poem, the *Lament on the Death of William Longsword* reveals, Norman patriotic pretensions were far more parochial. Written between 943 and 963, either in Jumièges or the south of France under the patronage of Longsword's sister, Gerloc/Adela, duchess of Aquitaine and Poitou, the *Lament* is the earliest surviving text written from a Norman perspective.⁶ Therein, both Longsword and his son Richard are referred to simply as 'count of Rouen' and the territory and peoples under their command left obscure.⁷ Contemporary Frankish chroniclers reveal what Dudo and the author of the *Lament* only hint at, namely that Longsword's assassination was followed not by political unity, but factional fragmentation – a sequence of calamitous events which almost spelt the end for independent Norse rule in Rouen. Flodoard's account even calls into question the place of Rouen's first Norse rulers during these early years, casting them as much in a subordinate as a starring role in the initial stages of Scandinavian settlement.

This should come as no surprise. The preceding chapter demonstrated the lack of political and cultural homogeneity in the land that would become Normandy during the late Carolingian period. The settlers themselves were no less divided.⁸ Migrants flocked to Normandy from across the Scandinavian world over the course of the late ninth and early tenth centuries. In the Pays de Caux, Anglo-Saxon toponymic elements suggest that Normandy's eastern settlers had

⁵ Above, pp. 1-2.

⁶ *Normans in Europe*, ed. and trans. van Houts, p. 41; E.M.C. van Houts, 'The *Planctus* on the Death of William Longsword (943) as a Source for Tenth-Century Culture in Normandy and Aquitaine', *ANS* 36 (2013), pp. 1-22.

⁷ Lair, *La vie et la mort*, pp. 62, 65, 68 – *comes rothomensis*. Helmerichs, 'Rollonid Designators', p. 66, however, notes that the choice of *comes* may simply derive from metrical constraints.

⁸ Above, p. 8, for some initial remarks on this subject.

crossed from England, perhaps descendants of the Danes who made peace with King Alfred a generation earlier;⁹ while Rollo perhaps came from Norway and enjoyed close links with the Norwegian rulers of the Orkneys.¹⁰ Dudo, followed by later Norman chroniclers, identified the Danes as the largest settler contingent.¹¹ In the west, however, the frequency of Celtic toponyms found in the northern Cotentin points strongly towards a Hiberno-Norse, perhaps specifically Hebridean origin for the majority of the region's settlers, a pattern paralleled by contemporary Norse migration from Ireland and the Western Isles to northern England.¹² The importance of this Irish element is confirmed by the hagiographical and dedicatory evidence already touched upon.¹³ Irish influence is also evident among anthroponym and toponym elements common in the west, most notably the name Neil (inaccurately Latinised as Nigel), from the Norse *Njáll*, itself derived from the Gaelic *Niall*.¹⁴ The diverse origins of Normandy's settlers must have hampered any move towards political cohesion. Each group 'would have had scant reason to consider the Vikings of Rouen as their overlords' and, as they did not arrive simultaneously, it is probable that 'each new wave would have to be subordinated from scratch' by any prospective line of rulers.¹⁵

⁹ De Beaurepaire, 'Les noms', pp. 307-16; idem, *Les noms des communes et anciennes paroisses de la Seine-Maritime* (Paris, 1979), pp. 56, 166.

¹⁰ Douglas, 'Rollo', pp. 419-20; Potts, 'Normandy, 911-1144', p. 22. *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 187 n. 114, for difficulties with this identification.

¹¹ *De moribus*, pp. 141-2, for Rollo's supposed Danish origins. L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', in *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and E.M.C. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2002), p. 53, for the significance of later literary references.

¹² L. Musset, 'Pour l'étude comparative de deux fondations politiques des Vikings: le royaume d'York et le duché de Rouen', in his *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 166-7; Fellows-Jensen, 'Scandinavian place-names', p. 132.

¹³ Above, pp. 32, 36-7.

¹⁴ Musset, 'Participation', pp. 281-91. E. Ridel, 'From Scotland to Normandy: The Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings', in *West over sea: studies in Scandinavian sea-borne expansion and settlement before 1300*, ed. G. Williams, B.B. Smith and S. Taylor (Leiden, 2007), pp. 81-91, for an update of Musset's work.

¹⁵ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 87; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 21, for these citations, respectively. Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 71-2, for similar remarks.

To borrow from Bauduin, the period up until Richard I reached maturity in c. 960 is best seen as one of multiple *premières Normandies*, in which various Norse leaders and communities fought for dominance both within and beyond the geographical confines of the later duchy. The Scandinavian settlements of Lower Normandy are crucial in this regard. While this chapter will demonstrate that close connections between the Norse of Upper and Lower Normandy existed from the first stages of raiding and settlement, such connections will be shown to provide no evidence for Rouen's early political dominance or even prominence in this most distant section of the later duchy. Instead, ducal authority and even influence remained at only a nascent level by the end of the tenth century, with important consequences for the dukes who followed Richard I.

2.2) The First Settlements

The origins of Norse settlement in Lower Normandy are obscure in the extreme. Tentative deductions must be drawn from sources that, while diverse in form, are limited in quantity. Written from the perspective of the ducal dynasty in Rouen, later Norman histories have no particular interest in the origins of western settlements. Flodoard, whose *Annals* notably open with a grisly rendition of the Viking assault on Brittany in 919, at least records a succession of Norse raids along the northern French coastline and the various peace treaties and political agreements that often followed them, but he provides no direct evidence for the transition from marauders to settlers. While anthroponyms, toponyms and even patterns of ecclesiastical veneration suggest much about the overseas origins of settler communities, the preceding discussion of Breton influences in Lower Normandy has shown that such evidence is open to interpretation. Archaeology provides some insight into the earliest stages of settlement. In the northern

Cotentin, the two-mile long Hague Dike was a pre-Christian defensive rampart, utilised by the Norse newcomers to protect a landing-stage on the narrow peninsula leading to the Cap de la Hogue. The area also boasts a number of Viking burial sites.¹⁶ Both the Hague Dike and the burials, however, illustrate the limitations of the existing archaeological evidence – their identification with Norse settlement being by no means conclusive.¹⁷ For the most part, however, there is a dearth of archaeological evidence compared with other areas of Scandinavian settlement, most notably in England, though, as Lesley Abrams notes, this might partly be explained by differing practices and less extensive excavation in France.¹⁸ Despite the historical gloom that shrouds late ninth- and early tenth-century Lower Normandy, some cautious conclusions can be reached on a number of issues, including when settlement began, the intensity of colonisation and, perhaps most interestingly, the way in which the region's inhabitants came both to view themselves and be viewed by their cousins on the Seine.

Fixing the exact date at which the Norse began settling the west is impossible. Norse raids on north-western France certainly preceded Charles the Bald's grant of the Cotentin to Salomon in 867. Salomon guaranteed to support Charles against his enemies, including Viking raiders on the Loire.¹⁹ There is, however, no direct evidence of attacks upon the Cotentin until the Saint-Lô raid of

¹⁶ H. Arbman, 'Hague-Dike: les fouilles en 1951 et 1952', *Meddelanden från Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum* (1953), pp. 191-222; M. de Boüard, 'La Hague, camp retranché des Vikings?', *AN 3* (1953), pp. 3-14; idem, 'Le Hague-Dike', *Cahiers Archéologiques: Fin de l'Antiquité et Moyen Âge 8* (1956), pp. 117-45; idem, 'A propos de la datation du Hague-Dike', *AN 14* (1964), pp. 270-71; idem, 'Sépultures énigmatiques à Réville (Manche)', *AN 14* (1964), pp. 258-63.

¹⁷ Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, pp. 79-81; V. Carpentier, 'Les vikings en Normandie: archéologie d'un paradoxe identitaire', *Les dossiers d'archéologie* 344 (2011), pp. 74-5, for the Dike and tombs' potentially prehistoric origins. The Dike, at least, was probably reused in the medieval period (E. Ridel, 'La Hague, terre de Vikings', *Dossiers d'archéologie* 277 (2002), p. 36).

¹⁸ Abrams, 'Early Normandy', pp. 46-9.

¹⁹ *ASB*, s.a. 868, 873.

889. Breton success there would suggest that further Norse raiding and settlement in the region only followed later, probably after Alan the Great's death in c. 907. In 906, Charles the Simple made provision for the transfer of St. Marcouf's remains from their monastery on the vulnerable Cotentin coast to Corbény, near Rheims 'on account of the excessive and prolonged attacks of the pagans', there to be joined by the community's monks and, perhaps, a refugee bishop of Coutances.²⁰ By 919, as we have seen, Brittany had fallen to the Loire Norse. This state of affairs was recognised by both Robert of Neustria and his son, Hugh the Great, who successively waged war against these Norsemen in 921 and 927. Both campaigns ended with hostage exchanges and Frankish magnates conceding control of Brittany and the Nantais.²¹ Given their recent history of Breton rule, it is possible these grants included Frankish recognition of Norse control in the Avranchin and Cotentin.²² Further east, Norsemen had been operating on the Seine, where they posed an immediate threat to the centres of Carolingian royal authority upriver, since the 840s.²³ From the beginning of the tenth century until the collapse of their power in Brittany in c. 931, however, it is the Loire Norse who appear to have been the most powerful and successful faction in France. As we shall see, it is with the Norse chieftain Ragnvald, not Rollo that Flodoard concerns himself most during these years.²⁴ The early Cotentinois Vikings were, then, as likely associated with the Loire Vikings as with their later masters on the Seine, if, indeed, they felt the need to act in concert with anyone. The decade that

²⁰ *Actes de Charles III*, ed. Lot and Lauer, no. 53 – *quoniam ob nimiam atque diutinam paganorum infestationem*. Translation from *Normans in Europe*, ed. and tr. van Houts, p. 24. This need not imply Frankish political control of the region, as van Houts suggests, as Breton relics were regularly being carried into Francia during this period (above, p. 31).

²¹ Flodoard, s.a. 921, 927. Above, pp. 5-8, for the nature of these grants.

²² Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 49; R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (London, 1983), p. 245.

²³ ASB, s.a. 841.

²⁴ Below, pp. 77-9.

saw Rollo legitimise his growing settlement on the Seine in the eyes of the crumbling Carolingian court at Paris thus probably also saw Norse settlers in Lower Normandy secure a position in what had become a no-man's land both beyond the effective reach of Carolingian or Breton authority and between the orbits of their more prominent brethren on the Seine and the Loire.

Given the limitations of archaeological evidence, linguistic influences provide a useful measure of the intensity of Scandinavian settlement. As Abrams remarks, Normandy's 'place-names match northern England's in density and 'Norseness', and Scandinavian personal names were in some cases retained for generations'.²⁵ Outside of the littoral regions of Upper Normandy, the Cotentin coast, curving round from Cherbourg in the north to Granville on the western seaboard presents the greatest concentration of Scandinavian placenames in the duchy.²⁶ The variety of forms identifiable and eleventh-century witnesses to their existence are suggestive both of intensive settlement throughout Normandy and the coining of new placenames at a comparatively early date.²⁷ The scale of Norse influence on toponyms in the Cotentin is hinted at in a request for help made to the Conqueror's wife, Matilda, in c. 1055 by the abbey of Saint-Florent, Saumur. Eager to regain lost estates, a charter notes that these properties had not ceased to exist, 'but rather they have lost their names'.²⁸ The appearance of *thorp*- and *delle*-type toponyms is suggestive of the widespread redistribution of property during the settlement period.²⁹ Uniquely in Normandy, however, there are signs of

²⁵ Abrams, 'Early Normandy', p. 47, for this citation, pp. 51-8, for the most recent overview of the linguistic evidence, upon which the following analysis relies heavily. Two French settlers in pre-Conquest England (Richard fitzScrob and William fitzSkialdvarthr) can only be firmly identified as Normans by their Scandinavian patronyms (Lewis, 'French in England', p. 136).

²⁶ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 16-17.

²⁷ Abrams, 'Early Normandy', pp. 51-2.

²⁸ P. Marchegay, 'Chartes normandes de l'abbaye de Saint-Florent', *MSAN* 30 (1880), pp. 666-8, no. 2 – *sed potius nomina perdidisse*. Translation from Abrams, 'Early Normandy', p. 54.

²⁹ Abrams, 'Early Normandy', p. 54.

considerable administrative disruption in the northern Cotentin. Substantial alterations in the pre-existing Carolingian *pagus* structure appear to have taken place and the resultant units bore Scandinavian names. These changes have commonly been associated with the intensity of early settlement and the region's distance from ducal authority in Rouen.³⁰ The appearance of the place-name *Le Tingland* in the peninsula, probably derived from the Old Norse *thing*, 'assembly', might suggest that alternative governmental structures arose in this part of Normandy.³¹ Spoken Norse also had an influence on the Romance vernacular. While only c. 145 borrowed Norse words can be identified in Normandy,³² these typically related to maritime and commercial activities – areas of significant Scandinavian interest,³³ especially in the early stages of establishing a Norse presence in the region and penetrating the interior.³⁴ Lower Normandy has often been seen as a bastion of spoken Norse, after Dudo's suggestion that William Longsword sent his infant son, Richard, to Bayeux to learn Norse there, because the language was no longer widely spoken in Rouen.³⁵ Lower Normandy was, perhaps, more in touch with the older saga traditions of the first settlers,³⁶ but Dudo's remark was probably just part of his wider efforts to rehabilitate his ducal

³⁰ *Recueil*, no. 58; L. Musset, 'Aperçus sur la colonisation scandinave dans le nord du Cotentin', in *Annuaire des cinq départements de la Normandie* (1954), p. 36; Yver, 'Les premières institutions', pp. 310-11; Fellow-Jensen, 'Scandinavian place-names', p. 119. R.R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, 1991), pp. 20-24, for a later example from the Welsh March of intensive colonisation altering administrative structures.

³¹ J. Renaud and E. Ridel, 'Le *tingland*: l'emplacement d'un *þing* en Normandie?', *Nouvelle revue d'onomastique* 35-6 (2000), pp. 303-306.

³² E. Ridel, *Les Vikings et les mots: l'apport de l'ancien scandinave à la langue française* (Paris, 2009), pp. 107-14; idem, 'The Linguistic Heritage of the Scandinavians in Normandy', in *Scandinavia and Europe, 800-1350: Contact, Conflict and Co-existence*, ed. J. Adams and K. Holman (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 150-51, for disagreements over the total number of Scandinavian loan-words.

³³ Ridel, *Les Vikings et les mots*, pp. 65-92, 112-4; idem, 'Linguistic Heritage', pp. 154-5; Abrams, 'Early Normandy', p. 53.

³⁴ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 71, for the role of Normandy's coastline and rivers.

³⁵ *De moribus*, pp. 221-2.

³⁶ F. Amory, 'The *Dönsk tunga* in Early Medieval Normandy: A Note', in *American Indian and Indoeuropean Studies: Papers in Honor of Madison S. Beeler*, ed. K. Klar, M. Langdon, and S. Silver (The Hague, 1980), pp. 282-4.

patrons in the eyes of his Frankish readers by making them appear more civilised than many of their Norse neighbours.³⁷ Despite such limitations, it seems safe to conclude that Lower Normandy, especially the Cotentin was settled at least as intensively as those regions (the Pays de Caux and Seine valley) that would go on to form the core of the later Norman duchy.

In the absence of home-grown Lower Norman literature from the tenth and eleventh centuries, the writings of later ecclesiastics, such as Dudo, provide the only insight into how the inhabitants of the region were perceived and portrayed throughout the rest of Normandy and the wider world. Given Dudo's eagerness to distance the ducal dynasty from their Scandinavian heritage, however, sorting fact from fiction is no easy task. Dudo's near-contemporary, Richer of Rheims, continued to denounce the Normans and the ruler of Rouen as 'pirates' in the late tenth century.³⁸ In contrast, Dudo compared Rollo favourably with the marauder Hasting, has Norman rebels accuse Longsword of being too close to the Franks, and, by Richard I's reign, represents Scandinavians as an ever-diminishing group of external allies and visitors with whom the duke co-operated only occasionally.³⁹ Dudo specifically used Lower Normandy in this programme, contrasting the ducal dynasty with the region's 'unreconstructed vikingism'.⁴⁰ This was the region where spoken Norse survived, whose strong and able warriors took bloodthirsty revenge in kind for the assassination of William Longsword and fell upon their enemies 'as wolves attack lambs' – a land populated by a people

³⁷ Amory, *'Dönsk tunga'*, p. 281; Johnson, 'Origin Myths', pp. 157-8; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. xv-xvi, 21; Webber, *Norman Identity*, pp. 26-8, 31-3.

³⁸ Richer, *Histoire*, i, pp. 156, 168, 172; ii, p. 328, for exempla.

³⁹ Webber, *Norman Identity*, pp. 31-3; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 23, 36-8.

⁴⁰ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 223 n. 452, however, p. 210 n. 326, for Christiansen's questioning of Bates' suggestion that this was part of a set programme on Dudo's part.

who even Dudo felt able to describe, albeit obliquely, as pagan pirates.⁴¹ Like William of Poitiers' later description of the Bretons,⁴² Dudo's account of Lower Normandy and its inhabitants doubtless drew on classical models.⁴³ He regularly employed these in his quest to produce a literary monument for Richard I, who had commissioned Dudo's work, 'that was universally acceptable to the pro-active, to the intellectuals and to the religious'.⁴⁴ Regardless of the precise nature of his audience,⁴⁵ Dudo was thus 'portraying [the Normans] in the way that they saw themselves, or were willing to be seen'.⁴⁶ In so doing, Dudo reveals that at the turn of the eleventh century the duke and his attendant nobles, drawn almost exclusively from Upper Normandy, were still willing to look askance at their western neighbours. Other authors mirrored this critical assessment. For the twelfth-century author of the *De statu huius [Constantiensis] Ecclesie*, a short tract detailing the history of the diocese of Coutances from 836 to the death of Bishop Geoffrey de Montbray in 1093, saintly relics were to be saved from a land described as 'devoid of Christians' and 'crushed by pagan thieves and the pollution of idolatry'.⁴⁷ The eleventh-century hagiographer of St. Wulfran praised the ducal dynasty for removing such threats. Compared to other Norse leaders, Rollo was 'militarily more powerful...more even-handed, and more prudent in council' – a stark contrast to the endless onslaught of earlier leaders, which had

⁴¹ *De moribus*, pp. 204 – *ut lupi agnos*, 221-2, 237, 240-41, 287; *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. 80 (cited here), 162, 223 n. 452.

⁴² *GG*, p. 74.

⁴³ *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. xx-xxi.

⁴⁴ Webber, *Norman Identity*, p. 35.

⁴⁵ Above, p. 9 n. 50, for this debate.

⁴⁶ Webber, *Norman Identity*, p. 24.

⁴⁷ 'De statu', col. 217 – *Christicolis vacuus erat and foeditate idololatriae et paganis furibus conculcatur*. Translation from Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 95.

seen ‘the length of the coast of the English Channel...reduced to a desert’.⁴⁸

While such accusations did not necessarily reflect reality, their continuing appearance proves that they represented an important element in wider Norman perceptions of Lower Normandy and its inhabitants.

If eleventh-century writers chose to depict the west as a primitive and unruly part of the duchy, this overview has shown that the first Scandinavian settlements in the Cotentin were, by various measures, every bit as established and successful as those in the east. Settled contemporaneously with and independently of Rollo’s community on the Seine, we must now consider how far the relationship between this region and Rouen’s earliest rulers laid the foundations for the later political unification of Normandy.

2.3) Taken for granted?: The Counts of Rouen and Lower Normandy, c. 911- c. 960

The traditional narrative of early Norman history, as we have seen, is based almost entirely upon Flodoard’s account of military and diplomatic activity in northern Francia from 919 to 966. Flodoard had no love for Francia’s pagan neighbours.⁴⁹ When it came to the Normans, he provides a surprisingly brief (given his love of political machinations) description of Longsword’s assassination – his account showing Frankish ‘dismissal, disinterest and, above all else, superiority at work’.⁵⁰ Most importantly, writing without the hindsight of eleventh-century authors, Flodoard, as we shall see, ‘gives no indication that Rollo and his successors were superior to or more legitimate’ than any other

⁴⁸ *Inventio et miracula*, ed. Laporte, p. 26 – *potentior militari manu, aequitate modestior, prudentior consiliis* and *plaga largiori sinu maris Britannici recepta in desertum est*. Translation from *Normans in Europe*, ed. and trans. van Houts, p. 37.

⁴⁹ *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, p. xii.

⁵⁰ Flodoard, s.a. 943; Webber, *Norman Identity*, p. 47 (cited here).

Norse group operating in mid-tenth-century France.⁵¹ Further analysis of Flodoard's annals and a concerted attempt to peer behind the curtain of Dudo's later depiction of early Normandy combine to undermine the image of a relatively simple westward advance in ducal power under Rollo and William Longsword that a straightforward reading of the procession of campaigns and grants they record might at first seem to reveal.

In Rollo's case, having received official recognition of his position in the Seine valley from Charles the Simple in 911, there is little evidence that he took any real interest in events further west. Dudo is the only source for Rollo's supposed amphibious assault on Bayeux, during which he carried off his bride, Poppa.⁵² Rollo's unorthodox union with Poppa might demonstrate his desire, even prior to 911, to secure his political position by forging links with local families and establish his rule west of the Seine. There is, however, little to support Dudo's account.⁵³ While the tenth-century *Lament* notes that William Longsword's mother was Christian, it also states that he was born overseas.⁵⁴ Dudo's veracity is further undermined by the fact that his subsequent story of Rollo's marriage to Charles the Simple's daughter, Gizla, is pure fantasy.⁵⁵ Whatever connections Rollo may or may not have enjoyed with the Frankish aristocracy, the manner in which contemporary authors and charters refer to both him and other Norse leaders suggests that any recognition of their position was viewed as little more than an unfortunate necessity. Dudo has the title *dux* conferred upon Rollo by the

⁵¹ *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, p. xxi.

⁵² *De moribus*, p. 157.

⁵³ Nelson, 'Normandy's Early History', pp. 11-12.

⁵⁴ Lair, *La vie et la mort*, pp. 61, 63, 66.

⁵⁵ *De Moribus*, pp. 166-9; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 195 n. 199; Nelson, 'Normandy's Early History', pp. 10-11.

Treaty of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte.⁵⁶ In reality, the usage and attribution of titles by and to Rollo and his successors was far more complex.⁵⁷ Frankish chroniclers had been using the phrase *dux Normannorum* to describe a string of Viking war-leaders since the 840s.⁵⁸ These *duces*, however, were rarely associated with the control of former Frankish territories – a notable exception being Flodoard's use of the term to describe Felecan, a leader of the Loire Norse in Brittany, in 931.⁵⁹ Flodoard never afforded the title *dux* to Rollo or Longsword, instead addressing them simply as *princeps Nordmannorum* – a title used to describe other Norse leaders in France.⁶⁰ Flodoard used *princeps* as a generic title to describe various Frankish nobles, always in addition to their specific status, but applied it most commonly to the Norse and Hugh the Great, perhaps, as Robert Helmerichs suggests, because he found their respective roles in Frankish politics difficult to define using more common terminology.⁶¹ Nor did Charles the Simple's charter of 918, which mentioned Rollo's settlement on the Seine, refer to him by any official title.⁶² Flodoard's failure to afford the tenth-century Norse settlers proper titles illustrates his society's continuing opinion of them as unwanted, rather than instantly integrated outsiders. By the 960s, several Frankish titles were being used to describe Richard I, but a disapproving tone is still sometimes detectable.⁶³ As we have seen, Richer of Rheims, writing in the 990s, may have recognised

⁵⁶ *De Moribus*, pp. 172-4.

⁵⁷ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 148-50, for an introduction to title use; above, p. 2 n. 6, for Werner and Helmerich's studies on this topic.

⁵⁸ Helmerichs, 'Rollonid Designators', p. 61.

⁵⁹ Flodoard, s.a. 931; *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, p. xi.

⁶⁰ *Annals of Flodoard*, ed. and trans. Fanning and Bachrach, p. xxi; Flodoard, s.a. 925 (Rollo), 933, 939, 940, 942, 943 (Longsword), 923 (Ragnvald).

⁶¹ Helmerichs, 'Rollonid Designators', pp. 65-6.

⁶² Above, p. 1 n. 3; Helmerichs, 'Rollonid Designators', p. 67.

⁶³ Lair, *La vie et la mort*, pp. 62, 65, 68 – *comes* (942-63); *Recueil*, nos. 1 – *dux* (c. 963/4), 3 – *marchisus* (968), 4 – *consul* (990); *Recueil des actes de Lothaire et de Louis V, rois de France* (954-987), ed. L. Halphen and F. Lot (Paris, 1908), no. 24 – *marchisus* (966); Helmerichs, 'Rollonid Designators', pp. 63, 71-5.

Richard I and his father as *duces*, but he sounded a derogatory note by calling them *piratarum dux* or *piratarum principi* – ‘leader of the pirates’.⁶⁴ The adoption and wider recognition of official titles drawn from the Carolingian system is best seen not as the work of Normandy’s earliest rulers, but rather of their successors.⁶⁵

Comparison of contemporary references to Rollo and other Norse leaders also suggests that the Seine Norse were seen as no more significant than any of their fellows. While Rollo may have been active in northern France before c. 911, no reference is made to him in contemporary chronicles, unlike other leaders, such as Hæsten.⁶⁶ Even after Rollo appeared on the scene, Flodoard often focused on Ragnvald, the leader of the Loire Norse – at the peak of their powers after the conquest of Brittany in 919 – in his account of the 910s and 920s. Whatever the terms of the alliance concluded between Rollo and Charles the Simple at Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, Norse efforts to support the king’s army in 923 failed before Ragnvald’s arrival from the Loire. Flodoard’s language makes clear that, though they marched separately, the Seine Norse were subordinate to Ragnvald. Rollo is not even named.⁶⁷ At the close of 923, the Seine Norse, with Rollo again passing unnamed, did make independent arrangements with Charles’ Robertian opponents, demanding further lands ‘beyond the Seine’ and ultimately accepting

⁶⁴ Above, p. 72 n. 38; Helmerichs, ‘Rollonid Designators’, p. 66.

⁶⁵ Above, p. 10 n. 52, for eleventh-century Frankish authors’ use of these titles.

⁶⁶ Nelson, ‘Normandy’s Early History’, p. 11. S. Coupland, ‘From poachers to gamekeepers: Scandinavian warlords and Carolingian kings’, *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), pp. 85-114; J.L. Nelson, ‘Hæsten (fl. 882-893)’, *ODNB*, for contrasting chieftains in the Carolingian period. The eleventh-century Burgundian author, Rodulfus Glaber was unaware Rollo even existed – for him William Longsword was the first duke (*Rodulfus Glaber*, ed. and trans. France, Bulst and Reynolds, p. 36).

⁶⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 923 – *Ragenoldus...Franciam trans Isaram, conjunctis sibi plurimis ex Rodomo, deprædatur; cuius castris supervenientes fideles Heriberti, qui per castella remanserant...Quo cognito, Ragenoldus exagitatus furore in pagum Atrabatensem prædatum progreditur* (my highlighting).

the Bessin and Maine from Ralph of Burgundy in 924.⁶⁸ The treaty, however, brought little respite for the Robertians. Ragnvald remained hostile and spent 924 laying waste ‘to the lands of Hugh [the Great], between the Loire and the Seine’.⁶⁹ There is no evidence that Rollo, now invested with his own interests in this region, opposed the Loire leader.⁷⁰ Ralph’s grant was presumably designed to split the Seine Norse away from Charles and Ragnvald, whom Hugh continued to form alliances against. The plan failed. Having shown no interest in their newly-acquired possessions, the Seine Norse instead attacked the land around Beauvais and Amiens in 925, leaving their own territories to be ravaged by the men of the Bessin, now supposedly under their rule. No effort was made to prevent Ragnvald’s return to the Seine valley, where he made a desperate stand against Ralph’s army.⁷¹ After 925, Rollo repeatedly launched campaigns east – his interest in further expansion there evidenced by the alliance he concluded with Hugh, which explicitly excluded the lands of the counts of Flanders, Boulogne-Thérouanne, Ponthieu and Amiens-Vexin-Valois, which all lay east and north-east of Rouen.⁷² While one might imagine that the Norsemen hoped to make their vague treaties with the Franks mean as much as possible in practice, Rollo’s decision to ignore the treaty of 924 demonstrates quite the reverse. In this context, the inclusion of Maine in this treaty (which has troubled many modern historians)⁷³ makes perfect sense – had the grant succeeded in directing Rollo as far westward as possible it would have not only undermined Carolingian support,

⁶⁸ *ibid.*, s.a. 923 (cited here), 924 – *si tamen eis terra daretur quam spaciosam petebant ultra Sequanam.*

⁶⁹ *ibid.*, s.a. 924 – *Ragenoldus cum suis Nordmannis...terram Hugonis inter Ligerim et Sequanam depopulator.*

⁷⁰ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 71.

⁷¹ Flodoard, s.a. 925.

⁷² *ibid.*, s.a. 925 – *Hugo, filius Rotberti, pactum securitatis accepit a Nordmannis, terra filiorum Balduini, Rodulfi quoque de Gaugeio atque Hilgaudi extra securitatem relicta.*

⁷³ Above, p. 4 n. 20, for this debate.

but also potentially prompted a clash between the Seine and Loire Norse in western Francia.⁷⁴ There is, then, little to suggest that Rollo took an interest in the land that would become Lower Normandy during these years and if the Norse groups operating independently in the region owed allegiance to any outside figure, Ragnvald would have been as viable a candidate as Rollo – if not more so, given his greater presence in the political arena.

In the case of Rollo's son and successor, William Longsword, a more solid argument for involvement in Lower Normandy can be made, once Dudo's fabrications are cast aside. Having included Brittany in the terms of Saint-Clair-sur-Epte, Dudo has Longsword wage an extensive campaign from Bayeux through to Brittany against the Breton counts Alan and Berengar, who cast off their allegiance on Rollo's death – ending in their submission and Alan's exile to England.⁷⁵ Dudo's account is yet another flagrant anachronism, conflating William with both the Breton revolt against Norse rule in 931 and the successful Norse invasion of Brittany in c. 919, which drove so many, including Alan's father, into exile.⁷⁶ Judicael Berengar, count of Rennes, did remain in Brittany, as Dudo notes, but most probably in association with the Loire Norse, not those of the Seine.⁷⁷ Dudo's claims that William was involved in the recall of both Louis IV d'Outremer and Count Alan II Barbetorte – the latter of whom he had

⁷⁴ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 50.

⁷⁵ *De moribus*, pp. 182-5.

⁷⁶ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 199 nn. 232, 237, 239; Flodoard, s.a. 919, 931.

⁷⁷ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 199 n. 232. Judicael Berengar's position during these years is not as clear as has often been thought. The charter recording his grants to Redon in 931 is spurious (*Cartulaire de Redon*, ed. de Courson, no. 305; *Cartulaire de l'abbaye Saint-Sauveur de Redon*, ed. J. Jullien and J. Charpy (Rennes, 2 vols., 1998-2004), i, p. 77) and his oft-cited role in the revolt of that year is itself the result of a conflation by Hugh of Fleury of Flodoard's account of 931 with Dudo's own undated record of Berengar and Alan's rebellion against Longsword discussed here (above, p. 33 n. 52). Guillotel, 'Le premier siècle', pp. 68-9 identified the problem in combining evidence from Dudo, Hugh of Fleury and the *Chronique de Nantes*, but did not recognise Hugh's dependence upon Dudo. The earliest unchallengeable appearance of Judicael Berengar is not, in fact, until 944 (Flodoard, s.a. 944).

ostensibly just banished – from exile at Athelstan’s court in 936 are similarly false.⁷⁸ Flodoard attributes Louis’ homecoming to Robert of Neustria’s son, Hugh the Great; he mentions no-one asking Alan to return to Brittany.⁷⁹ Alan’s return was a blow to the Loire Norse. Unlike his father, Longsword actively sought to diminish the threat posed by the latter to Rouen’s authority, arranging a marriage alliance with Duke William II of Aquitaine.⁸⁰

While the specifics of Dudo’s account are wildly inaccurate, there is other evidence for William taking an interest in the lands west of the Seine. In 933, in a bid to keep Longsword occupied during his own campaign against the count of Vermandois, Ralph of Burgundy granted the Normans ‘the land of the Bretons...located along the sea coast’, widely identified with the Cotentin and Avranchin.⁸¹ The collapse of Loire Norse rule in Brittany during the 930s certainly presented William with a unique opportunity. Rouen’s ruler now became the leading figure among the surviving Scandinavian communities and pirate groups in Francia. For the first time, William had the chance to transform pre-existing contacts into recognition of Rouen’s ultimate overarching authority. There are hints that this is exactly what William sought to do. A hoard recovered from Mont Saint-Michel contained a coin produced by a moneyer with the Celtic name of Riwallon, bearing the engraving +VVILEIM DV + IRB, which Dolley and Yvon reconstructed as +VVILEIM DVX BRI – ‘William, duke of Brittany’.⁸² Longsword was remembered at Mont Saint-Michel in the 1020s, when the abbey begged restitution from Richard II of a series of estates said to have been donated

⁷⁸ *De moribus*, pp. 193-4.

⁷⁹ Flodoard, s.a. 931, 936, 937.

⁸⁰ Lair, *La vie et la mort*, pp. 65, 68; van Houts, ‘*Planctus*’, pp. 21-2, for further evidence of this alliance.

⁸¹ Above, pp. 4, 8, for this grant.

⁸² M. Dolley and J. Yvon, ‘A group of tenth-century coins found at Mont-Saint-Michel’, *British Numismatic Journal* 40 (1971), pp. 7-11.

by his grandfather.⁸³ Flodoard's report that William's son, Richard I was born of a Breton concubine, Sprota, provides further evidence of campaigning or political contacts to the west;⁸⁴ as perhaps does William of Jumièges' story that William 'entrusted the defence...of the Cotentin' to an exiled Danish royal, Harold Bluetooth.⁸⁵ It may have been during Longsword's reign that the recently-restored church of Fécamp miraculously acquired a new roof from the sanctuary of Saint-Marcouf, which lay on an island off the Cotentinois coast.⁸⁶ Dudo has the men of the Cotentin join William in his assault on Montreuil-sur-Mer; his report of Richard I's education in Bayeux has already been discussed.⁸⁷

This evidence, however, is of questionable value. William's relationship with Sprota implies increasing contact between Rouen and the west, but it does not necessarily suggest outright conquest or coercion. The fact that Sprota's name is more probably Frankish or Scandinavian than Breton also raises questions about her supposed background.⁸⁸ Jumièges' mention of Harold Bluetooth was designed to explain the presence of an independent Viking chieftain in Bayeux during Richard I's minority.⁸⁹ Fécamp's acquisition of its roof is hard to date

⁸³ *MSM*, no. 2.

⁸⁴ Flodoard, s.a. 943; *De moribus*, pp. 185-6, 218; *GND*, i, pp. 78, 102. Neither Flodoard nor Dudo knew Sprota's name, which is first provided by William of Jumièges, whose work may have been informed by her grandson, John d'Ivry (*GND*, i, pp. xlv-xlv). William held Sprota in higher regard than Flodoard, describing her as *nobilissima puella*, but admits that she was only attached to Longsword *Danico more* (in 'Danish fashion'). He subsequently has Louis IV denounce Richard I as *meretricis filium ultro uirum alienum rapientis* ('the son of a whore who had seduced another woman's husband'). While Louis is clearly being portrayed in a hostile light, this passage highlights the difficulties Christian authors faced when discussing such unions.

⁸⁵ *GND*, i, pp. 88-90 – *Constantiniensem ei ad presidium concessit*.

⁸⁶ 'Libellus de revelatione', cols. 714-715.

⁸⁷ *De moribus*, pp. 204, 221-2.

⁸⁸ *Normans in Europe*, ed. and trans. van Houts, pp. 47 n. 77, 182. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Poppa of Bayeux and her family', *The American Genealogist* 72 (1997), pp. 192-3 posits that Sprota may have hailed from the Norse colony in Brittany. Such a union might suggest that Longsword, like his father, remained to some extent bound to the Loire Norse.

⁸⁹ Below, pp. 85-7.

precisely.⁹⁰ If it did occur at this point, the story may reflect nothing more than the opportunistic seizure of building materials by marauding Norsemen, rather than a symbol of ducal authority over Lower Normandy.⁹¹ It is unlikely that William had any involvement with Mont Saint-Michel,⁹² but, even had Longsword genuinely granted property to the abbey, the charter's tale of lands lost and restitution required suggests that the 'protection of "gifts" in western Normandy was not possible from Rouen in the tenth century'.⁹³ The significance of the coin found at Mont Saint-Michel is particularly open to question, with the notion that Bretons were minting coins in William's name in the 930s being met with varying degrees of acceptance and scepticism.⁹⁴ There is no conclusive proof that the William mentioned thereupon should be identified with Longsword, nor that the engraving must be reconstructed in the manner Dolley and Yvon suggested. The coin (the exact provenance of which is unknown) bears a design completely different from any of the major tenth-century Norman issues, including those others attributed to Longsword.⁹⁵ Indeed, the title *dux*, whether referring to Normandy or Brittany,

⁹⁰ While the *Libellus* makes it clear that this occurred during Longsword's lifetime, the *Fécamp Chronicle* is less clear, simply placing the acquisition after the church's re-foundation (Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum*', p. 44).

⁹¹ Compare J. Le Maho, 'Une exode de reliques de la Basse Seine à la fin du IX^e siècle', *Bulletin de la Commission Départementale des Antiquités de la Seine-Martime* 46 (1998), p. 180 with L. Trân-Duc, 'Les princes normands et les reliques (X^e-XI^e siècles): contribution des culte des saints à la formation territorial et identité d'une principauté' in *Reliques et sainteté dans l'espace médiéval*, ed. J.-L. Deuffic (Saint-Denis, 2006), pp. 547-9. Trân-Duc dismisses Le Maho's explanation on the grounds that he has this raid predate Longsword's reign – contrary to the chronology established in *Libellus*. It is entirely possible that such raids continued during William's lifetime.

⁹² *MSM*, app. iii, no. 2-3, p. 206 notes that references to 'grants' made by earlier dukes represented a common method by which 'ancient, usually pre-Norman, property was returned to the Carolingian abbeys of Normandy'. Fellows-Jensen, 'Scandinavian place-names', p. 133 supports this view, noting that all the estates supposedly granted by Longsword have old Frankish toponyms. Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 97 arguably reconstructs the relationship between Longsword and the abbey most accurately when she notes 'one imagines that the inhabitants of the Mont... would have been more inclined to flee from William Longsword and his band raiding the Breton shores than ask him for favours'.

⁹³ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 76-7.

⁹⁴ Compare Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 9-10 with Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 53-4.

⁹⁵ Moesgaard, 'Coin Production', p. 113, for standard Norman designs; Dolley and Yvon, 'Tenth-century coins', pp. 1, 12-14, for this find's obscure origins.

never appears on any of these coins.⁹⁶ Any claim to ducal title in Brittany may have stemmed from command of the Cotentin and Avranchin, former Breton possessions, after 933, rather than activity in Brittany itself. The moneyer, Riwallon, may have been one of the many inhabitants of Lower Normandy to bear a Breton anthroponym.⁹⁷ If the coin is to be associated with Longsword, it may, like the contemporaneous Anglo-Saxon coin minted for the Welsh king Hywel Dda at Chester, represent a medallion given to western leaders as a marker of Longsword's political ambition to rule over them all, rather than evidence of his success in doing so.⁹⁸

Wider numismatic evidence casts further doubt on successful intervention west of the Seine. The marked division in style and organisation of production between the Carolingian mints of Upper and Lower Normandy continued into the tenth century and there is little evidence of circulation between the two regions, indicative of limited inter-regional contact.⁹⁹ While Moesgaard concludes that Normandy's political unification did not bring 'about monetary unification immediately',¹⁰⁰ continuing numismatic differences may in fact suggest that political unification had yet to take place.¹⁰¹ Though evidence for minting at Rouen during Rollo's reign is hard to come by, Bayeux does appear to have produced coinage in the tenth century, raising the possibility that some sort of Frankish administration survived in Lower Normandy.¹⁰² While Longsword may

⁹⁶ F. Dumas, *Le trésor de Fécamp et le monnayage en Francie occidentale pendant la seconde moitié du X^e siècle* (Paris, 1971), pp. 71-97; Dumas and Pilet-Lemière, 'La monnaie normande', pp. 125-6.

⁹⁷ Dolley and Yvon, 'Tenth-century coins', p. 9; L. Musset, 'Naissance de la Normandie', in *Histoire de la Normandie*, ed. M. de Boüard (Toulouse, 1970), p. 96.

⁹⁸ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 281 n. 71; C.E. Blunt, 'The Cabinet of the Marquess of Ailesbury and the Penny of Hwyl Deda', *British Numismatical Journal* 52 (1983), pp. 118-20.

⁹⁹ Moesgaard, 'Coin Production', pp. 101-103, 115.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid.*, p. 118.

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*, pp. 109-111, for stylistic differences between Norman mints.

¹⁰² *ibid.*, p. 109.

have been one of the first Frankish magnates to mint coins in their own name, finds have been limited, even within Upper Normandy, which suggests much about the geographical limits of his authority.¹⁰³ If Longsword was ever interested in western affairs, his interest appears not to have lasted long. By 940, he had committed himself to Louis IV d'Outremer – the recently-crowned Carolingian king, freshly returned from Athelstan's England – in return only for those lands that Louis' father, Charles the Simple had conceded to the Norse in 911.¹⁰⁴ There are no signs that William was unhappy with this arrangement, perhaps suggesting that Rouen's rulers had made little progress in making good Ralph of Burgundy's grants of 924 and 933. Whether or not William accepted Louis' notional contraction of the physical limits of his authority, throughout these years he is depicted as being intrinsically involved in Frankish, rather than Breton or Lower Norman affairs.¹⁰⁵

While Dudo presents an anachronistic portrait of unchallenged, wide-ranging ducal rule since 911, modern historians such as Searle and Bauduin consider William's rule to have been essentially hegemonic – his ability to take action in the west or anywhere else depending upon 'his capacity to establish individual relationships with local chiefs, and by the powers of those local chiefs'.¹⁰⁶ Uncovering the realities of such relationships, however, is difficult. Bauduin effectively wrote off any prospect of accurately gauging the character of ducal rule in Lower Normandy prior to c. 960, noting of the region that 'des Scandinaves solidement implantés qui ont établi des relations avec le comte de

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, pp. 111-13, 116-17.

¹⁰⁴ Above, pp. 5-6.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 53.

Rouen sans qu'il soit possible d'évaluer avec précision la nature de ce lien'.¹⁰⁷ Yet even Dudo found it difficult 'de passer totalement sous silence les réalités politiques de la « Normandie » primitive'.¹⁰⁸ Memories of the autonomous rulers with whom Longsword must have fought and co-operated survive in the accounts of Dudo and later authors, who transformed them into a series of ducal allies, officers, appointees and rebels, all working for or against Rouen's interests. In Dudo's narrative these 'counts and chiefs' together demanded Rollo's retirement from leadership.¹⁰⁹ Later, he has a nobleman called Riulf gather support amongst the other Norse chiefs for his revolt against Longsword, while Bernard of Senlis publicly humiliated the duke in front of his remaining loyal chiefs in order to shock him into action.¹¹⁰ The young Richard I consulted his chiefs, who were by no means entirely loyal to him, when deciding whether to free himself from Ralph Torta's tutelage in c. 950.¹¹¹ Longsword's own upbringing by his father's leading general, Botho, and his later decision to have the same man take his own son, Richard I to Bayeux to be educated is redolent of the practice of fosterage between allied rulers.¹¹² Dudo and William of Jumièges identified the Harold to whom Longsword entrusted the defence of the Cotentin as Harold Bluetooth, the exiled king of Denmark, in an effort to explain where this powerful figure of the 940s came from without calling into question Longsword's perceived paramount

¹⁰⁷ Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, p. 82.

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 80-81.

¹⁰⁹ *De Moribus*, p. 181 – *comites principesque*.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp.187 – *Riulfus...convocatis plurimis principum Northmannorum*, 190 – *His asperimis sermocinationibus Willelmus instigatus dixit Bernado Dacigenae coram caeteris principibus*.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 248 – *Ricardus...ascitis regionis Northmanniae principibus, quid de inopia modicae distributionis ageret, ab eis sciscitatur. Principes vero. Quia illi sacramento verae fidei colligato, et aliquantuli beneficiis eius munificati, nuntiaverunt Rodulfo agnomine Tortae animositatem irascentis senioris*.

¹¹² *ibid.*, pp. 181, 221-2.

position in Normandy.¹¹³ Jumièges' later addition to Dudo's narrative of Longsword's 'grant' of the Cotentin to Harold further emphasised the Norman duke's functioning authority in the west and associated Harold with the ducal dynasty, which he would later seek to defend, out of some quasi-patriotic sense of Norse solidarity, from Frankish influence during Richard's minority. In reality, contemporary Frankish tradition makes Harold an independent local leader with a powerbase around Bayeux during the 940s and 950s.¹¹⁴ Similarly, Dudo presents men like Riulf, who led an attempt to overthrow Longsword and Ralph *Torta*, who worked closely with the Frankish regime in Rouen during Richard I's minority as rebels and quislings, working against their rightful lords and natural loyalties, rather than as individual rulers, intent on securing and increasing their own authority.¹¹⁵

While peaking behind the curtain of Dudo's account provides only a glimpse of the complicated relationships Rollo and William must have had with local chieftains, it is clear that such relationships existed. Modern historians, however, have nevertheless sought to maximise ducal authority during these years. Thus, Bates and even Bauduin depict Hugh the Great's attack on Harold of Bayeux in the Cotentin in 954 as 'deliberate aid in re-establishing Richard [I]'s

¹¹³ *De moribus*, pp. 239-42, 244-6; *GND*, i, pp. 88-90, 114-16. In the latter pages, Jumièges undermines Harold's independent role further by inventing a reconciliation between him and his usurping son, Svein, which allowed the Danish king to leave Normandy soon after Richard I took personal control of the kingdom. In fact, Harold Bluetooth found refuge and died among the Slavs.

¹¹⁴ Searle's comment that 'Norman and Frankish tradition alike made "Hagrold", or Harold, a newcomer' (Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 84) is borne out by neither Flodoard (Flodoard, s.a. 945) nor Prentout's cited remarks (Prentout, *Étude critique*, pp. 359-63). Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, p. 52; L. de Saint-Pierre, *Rollon devant l'histoire (les origines)* (Paris, 1949), pp. 186-9, offer alternative foreign identifications. Oral legend, set down in the early nineteenth century, records another independent chieftain in the Cotentin from the late Carolingian period, Moeren (L.T.L. Ragonde, 'Le Château de Mont-Haguez', in *Memoirs de la Société royale académique de Cherbourg* (1835), pp. 357-79).

¹¹⁵ *De moribus*, pp. 187-91, 248-9.

power in Lower Normandy'.¹¹⁶ Such statements assume that Dudo and Jumièges were correct in depicting Harold as in some sense subordinate to Longsword before the latter's death in 942.¹¹⁷ The weak position of Rouen's early rulers is further emphasised by the contemporary author of the *Lament*, who unequivocally remarks that 'when [Longsword's] father died, faithless ones rose up in arms against him'.¹¹⁸ Dudo's account of Riulf's revolt (traditionally dated to the mid-930s, but hard to pin down accurately) remains perhaps the most significant indicator of the limits of both William's hegemonic control and geographical sphere of activity.¹¹⁹ Despite his own apparently Frankish name, Riulf complained to his fellow chieftains that William had 'procured Frankish friends for himself' to their detriment.¹²⁰ Riulf persuaded them to support his demand for 'the land up to the Risle' from Longsword in order that the distance and resources gained would put them beyond his reach.¹²¹ Rejecting a conciliatory offer, Riulf's party finally marched on Rouen.¹²² At this point William promised land 'not only up to the Risle, but even as far as the Seine', but Riulf scoffed at his ability to provide such territory and took the field against the duke in a battle that Longsword ultimately won.¹²³ Dudo probably designed his story to magnify Longsword's achievements and, as such, goes to considerable lengths to make Riulf a credible threat,

¹¹⁶ 'Annales Nivernenses', in *MGH SS* 13 (Hannover, 1881), p. 89; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 14 cited here. Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, p. 169 n. 116, for similar remarks.

¹¹⁷ Hugh may have been acting on his own behalf, rather than Richard's in 954. He had wanted to add Bayeux to his own domain in 944, ultimately going to war with Louis in 945 when the king failed to uphold a promise to turn the city over to him (below, p. 90).

¹¹⁸ Lair, *La vie et la mort*, pp. 61, 63, 66, p. 66 for this citation – *moriente infideles suo patre surrexerunt contra eum bellicose*. Translation from F. Lifshitz, *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria: historiographic discourse and saintly relics, 684-1090* (Toronto, 1995), p. 174, who argues that the use of *infideles* was designed to imply that these rebels were both traitors and pagans.

¹¹⁹ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 200 n. 243, for difficulties in dating this episode.

¹²⁰ *De Moribus*, p. 187 – *Francigenas amicos acquirit sibi*. *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 200 n. 243, for Riulf's name.

¹²¹ *De moribus*, p. 187 – *terram usque ad flumen Rislam*.

¹²² *ibid.*, p. 188.

¹²³ *ibid.*, p. 189 – *terram autem...non solum usque ad Rislam, verum etiam usque ad Sequanam*.

recording how William sent his wife to safety lest Riulf ‘the ‘cruellest of all beasts’, should win sole authority over the Norman region with his accomplices, as seemed probable’.¹²⁴ As the only source for this rebellion, the value of Dudo’s account has been hotly debated. Eric Christiansen suggests that it may be nothing more than a fiction designed to foreshadow an equally ill-recorded rebellion against Richard II soon after his accession in 996.¹²⁵ There are, however, no obvious grounds for doubting the bones of Dudo’s account and his tale was fleshed out by later authors. Perhaps unsurprisingly, given his upbringing in the Cotentin and Channel Islands, the twelfth-century poet Wace identified Riulf as count of the Cotentin;¹²⁶ while Orderic identified him with Évreux – the former better fitting the generally-accepted image of a ‘widespread, powerful, and coherent Norman lordship’ in this early period.¹²⁷ Given the demands for territory near the Risle, however, an origin in the Évrecin appears more probable.¹²⁸ Riulf’s Frankish name and the absence of extensive ducal influence in this region until the 960s suggest that his ‘revolt’ might even be interpreted as the efforts of a minor Frankish noble to secure an independent powerbase for himself, away from both French and Norse interference.¹²⁹ Irrespective of its precise nature, Riulf’s revolt emphasises William’s continuing dependence upon the support of lesser leaders and that his overarching authority remained geographically limited and not beyond question.

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, p. 218 – *ut si forte Riulfus, omnium belluarum crudelissimus, Northmannicae regionis monarchiam cum suis complicitibus sibi vindicaret, ut aestimabatur, ne eam raperet, ad Anglos citius transfretaretur.*

¹²⁵ *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 200 n. 243.

¹²⁶ *RR*, i, lines 1373-1376.

¹²⁷ *OV*, i, p. 154; Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 74 cited here.

¹²⁸ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 74-5.

¹²⁹ Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 162-73, for limited early evidence of ducal involvement in the Évrecin.

Whatever progress William may have made westwards must have been undermined by the chaos that followed his assassination in 942. Such anarchy may itself be seen as indicative of William's success in uniting the disparate inhabitants of the future duchy before his death. In fact, Flodoard's account of the 940s and 950s reveals the continuing, underlying divisions within the later duchy that had preceded William's murder. Though Louis IV granted Normandy to William's young son, Richard, in 943, the Norman chieftains were divided in their reaction to Longsword's death – some choosing to commit themselves directly to either the Frankish king or Hugh the Great. That same year, Évreux and Rouen became Frankish targets. In the Évrecin, Hugh combated a mixture of pagan Norsemen freshly-arrived in Francia and earlier settlers who had returned to their heathen ways. He won control of Évreux itself through the agency of its Christian Norse population, who, unhappy with the rule of their pagan kinsmen, voluntarily surrendered the city to him. Hugh, in turn, handed it over to Louis later that year.¹³⁰ In Rouen, the heathen Turmod won control of the young duke and whipped up a pagan revival and conspiracy against Louis. Upon the arrival from overseas of the opportunistic pagan king Setricus (tentatively identified as Sihtric Sihtricsson, the exiled brother of the king Olaf Sihtricsson of York),¹³¹ Turmod revolted openly against the Frankish king, who defeated the coalition in battle outside Rouen. Louis gave Longsword's old ally, Herluin of Montreuil-sur-Mer custody of the city and, according to Dudo, carried Richard away with him into France, ostensibly to provide for the boy's security and education.¹³² Meanwhile, Herluin, the Frankish lord for the support of whom Longsword had lost his life, sought to secure his authority over the Norse by gaining retribution for the duke's

¹³⁰ Flodoard, s.a. 943.

¹³¹ Dolley and Yvon, 'Tenth-Century Coins', p. 11.

¹³² Flodoard, s.a. 943; *De moribus*, pp. 224-7.

death, attacking his enemy, Arnulf of Flanders and killing William's murderer, whose amputated hands he had sent back to Rouen in a particularly grisly demonstration of success.¹³³ Herluin failed to secure control of the city and was in Louis' army when the king invaded Rouen once more in 944.¹³⁴ That year again saw a divided reaction to Frankish aggression. Though initially presenting a united front against the advancing Louis at Arques-la-Bataille, by the time the king had forced a passage through to Rouen the city's inhabitants were divided enough for some to stay and receive the king and the rest to fly overseas. While Rouen ultimately accepted the king, Bayeux chose to resist and was besieged by Hugh the Great, to whom Louis promised the city should he 'aid the king in conquering this group of the Northmen'. The city ultimately surrendered directly to Louis, who ordered Hugh to raise the siege.¹³⁵ By 945, Louis' position in Rouen seemed entirely secure – he had Richard I in safe-keeping, was minting deniers in the city, and raised a Norse army to conduct a new war against Hugh the Great, who was deeply aggrieved by Louis' frustration of his designs upon Bayeux.¹³⁶ While Louis took personal charge of Rouen, Bayeux – which had submitted peacefully the previous year – seemingly remained under its own rulers. Though Dudo suggests a conspiracy on the part of the Seine Norse, it is more probable that the ambush of Louis' forces in 945, including Norsemen from

¹³³ Flodoard, s.a. 943. Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 157-60; for an important reassessment of Norman-Montreuil relations in Longsword's reign.

¹³⁴ Flodoard, s.a. 944. *De moribus*, pp. 240-42, for the story that the Norsemen held Herluin indirectly responsible for Longsword's death. If accurate, such ill-feeling may account for Herluin's inability to secure his position. It is unlikely, despite Dudo's suggestion, to have provoked the prearranged Norman ambush of Louis in 945, which cost Herluin his life.

¹³⁵ Flodoard, s.a. 944 – *si eum ad subiciendam sibi hanc Nordmannorum gentem adjuvaret*.

¹³⁶ Flodoard, s.a. 944, 945; F. Dumas, 'La monnaie comme expression du pouvoir', in *Pouvoirs et libertés au temp des premiers Capétiens*, ed. E. Magnou-Nortier (Maulevrier, 1987), p. 171.

Rouen, was instigated independently by Harold of Bayeux.¹³⁷ Flodoard narrates how, after the Lower Norman ruler's successful ambush, Louis, accompanied by a solitary, steadfast Norse retainer, fled back to Rouen, only for the townsfolk, whom he had thought faithful to him, to take this opportunity to renounce their former loyalties and hold him as a prisoner for ransom, eventually handing Louis over to his great enemy, Hugh the Great.

Louis' defeat and capture in 945 could not save Upper Normandy from continued Frankish intervention. Released from captivity in 946, Louis allied with king Otto of Germany to attack Hugh the Great and ravage Norse territory along the Seine.¹³⁸ Louis' influence, if not direct control, over Rouen revived after this assault with Ralph Torta, one of Richard's inner circle who had encouraged Louis' earlier armed intervention in Normandy, coming to power and effectively governing the duchy until his flight, which perhaps post-dated 950.¹³⁹ Himself possibly a Frank, Ralph's connections paid dividends – his son had supposedly succeeded to the bishopric of Paris by the time Ralph fled Rouen.¹⁴⁰ While Ralph Torta may have been connected to Louis, Hugh the Great continued to employ his own Norse auxiliaries while campaigning in Picardy in 948 and 949.¹⁴¹ While Upper Normandy continued to deal with the Frankish fall-out from Longsword's death into the 950s, the west seems to have been largely safe from Frankish intervention until the middle of that decade, when Hugh campaigned against

¹³⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 945; *De moribus*, pp. 235-42 – the latter suggests that the Seine Norse never truly submitted to Louis, but feigned allegiance so as to set the king and Hugh the Great against one another.

¹³⁸ Flodoard, s.a. 946.

¹³⁹ *De moribus*, pp. 248-9; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 216 n. 374. *GND*, i, pp. 108-110, for the Jumièges tradition on Ralph's government of Upper Normandy and association with Louis; *Recueil*, no. 53, for Ralph's grants to Saint-Ouen.

¹⁴⁰ *De moribus*, p. 249; *History*, trans. Christiansen, pp. 123, 216 n. 376. Ralph's foreign relations were perhaps more complex, Dudo also describes him as *formidans superventurum Franciscæ gentis exercitum* – 'fearful indeed of the arrival of an army of the Frankish nation'.

¹⁴¹ Flodoard, s.a. 948, 949.

Harold of Bayeux in the Cotentin.¹⁴² Indeed, the Norse of Lower Normandy did not simply survive during this period, they flourished. Exploiting political dissent in Brittany in 944, Norse forces broke a peace pact and won a series of victories around Dol that partially reversed Alan II's triumphs of the late-930s. The Norse who made these victories possible 'had recently come over from across the sea' – it is tempting to identify these men not as independent raiders, but with the inhabitants who fled Rouen before Louis marched against the city that very year.¹⁴³ If this latter identification is to be preferred, then the Seine Norse were not triumphant conquerors (as Le Patourel portrayed them), but political refugees, fleeing west in search of safer opportunities for settlement and plunder.

2.4) Conclusion

When Richard I finally took personal charge at Rouen, probably in the early 950s, the idea of 'Normandy' – a territory encompassing the Scandinavian settlements of northern France united under ducal rule – had yet to crystallise. The lack of any political cohesion in the region is demonstrated not only by the differing reactions of its towns and chieftains to the threat and reality of Frankish invasion, but also by the varying treatment of the Norse settlements by the Franks themselves. In the campaigns of the 940s, Louis IV and Hugh the Great carved up early Normandy piecemeal, subjugating different areas over a prolonged time-frame. The Franks were aware of such disunity, as made clear by Flodoard's comment on the assault on Bayeux in 944, namely that the king would give Bayeux to Hugh if he should

¹⁴² Above, pp. 86-7.

¹⁴³ Flodoard, s.a. 944 – *ipsique Nordmanni, qui nuper a transmarinis advenerant regionibus*. Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 7 identifies the raiders with the Seine Norse; Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 84 as newly-arrived pagans from far overseas; Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, p. 52 chalks the attack up to Harold of Bayeux, based upon his belief that Harold was a recently-arrived Danish ruler from overseas.

‘aid the king in conquering *this group* of the Northmen’.¹⁴⁴ Once in Frankish hands, territories could be governed directly, promised and granted out to leading supporters and exchanged between them, placed in the charge of puppet rulers or allowed to remain under local leaders. Whatever Dudo might have later believed, there was no sense that the Franks thought ‘Normandy’ had to be conquered or controlled as a single entity.¹⁴⁵ The contrast with the next successful French invasion, 260 years later, when Normandy fought and fell as one duchy, could not be more obvious. Equally clear is the contrast between Upper and Lower Normandy during this period. While the ducal dynasty in Rouen tottered under the pressure of Frankish intervention, the Norse of Lower Normandy demonstrated, to use Dudo’s phraseology, ‘persistent cunning’ in freeing themselves from such threats.¹⁴⁶ The region continued to offer opportunities and shelter for both newly-arrived Norseman and, perhaps, those fleeing trouble on the Seine. The freedom that Lower Normandy enjoyed during these years renders Richard I’s achievement of forging the duchy into a more coherent political unit in the second half of the tenth century all the more impressive. That same freedom, however, and the limited headway west made by Rollo and Longsword both suggest that Richard was in for a tougher ride than many historians have previously postulated.

¹⁴⁴ Flodoard, s.a. 944 – *si eum ad subiciendam sibi **hanc Nordmannorum gentem** adjuvaret* (my highlighting).

¹⁴⁵ *De moribus*, p. 237 – when Hugh asked why Louis had refused him Bayeux, the king answered that *tellus Northmanniae non nisi unius senioris unquam tuebitur advocatione, nec debet esse divisum quod decet esse continuum* – ‘the land of Normandy will never be subject to the protection of more than a single lord, nor is it right that what ought to be united should be divided’.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid.*, p. 244 – *qui regem Luthdovicum subegerunt **astu tam pervicaci*** (my highlighting), as Dudo has Bernard of Senlis say, claiming this virtue for the Seine Norse.

Chapter 3) The Beginning of Winning?: Richard I and Lower Normandy

3.1) Introduction: Falls The Shadow

The period between Richard I reaching maturity in the 950s and his death in 996 was one of the most important in Norman history. After over a decade of anarchy, Richard's majority rule proved 'a time of stability and consolidation' that laid 'the foundations for the achievements of the eleventh-century Norman dukes'.¹ While the word 'Normandy' had yet to be coined, Richard's reign provides the earliest contemporary conferral of the ducal title upon Rouen's rulers, from both within and without their territories.² Richard can also be tied more firmly than his father to events in Lower Normandy. He apparently used Frankish aid to curb the independence of Lower Norman leaders, constructed a fortress in Bayeux, and dabbled in Breton affairs, allying with the counts of Rennes in a war against the emergent house of Blois-Chartres.³ By 965, Richard was able to re-found Mont Saint-Michel on what would become Normandy's westernmost frontier, while the resurgent houses of Upper Normandy received Lower Norman estates.⁴ Richard attempted to restore the canons of Coutances, while a bishop took up residence in Avranches for the first time since the mid-ninth century.⁵ Most importantly, Richard married a Lower Norman noblewoman – his former concubine, Gunnor.⁶

The limited evidence for Rollo and Longsword's involvement in the west and the chaos that followed the latter's assassination, however, calls into question

¹ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 24, 26, respectively.

² Above, p. 76 n. 63.

³ 'Translatio beati Audoeni anno 941', *PL* 162, col. 1161; F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens: Lothaire, Louis V, Charles de Lorraine (954-991)* (Paris, 1891), pp. 347-8.

⁴ *Actes de Lothaire et Louis V*, ed. Halphen and Lot, no. 24; *Recueil*, nos. 4 (Fécamp), 5 (Saint-Taurin d'Évreux).

⁵ 'De statu', col. 218, for Richard's activities at Coutances; *Recueil*, no. 4, for Bishop Norgod of Avranches' attestation of Fécamp's foundation charter.

⁶ *De moribus*, p. 289; *GND*, i, p. 128; ii, pp. 266-8, for Richard's marriage to Gunnor. D.C. Douglas, 'The Ancestors of William fitzOsbern', *EHR* 59 (1944), pp. 67-9; van Houts, 'Countess Gunnor', pp. 7-9, for Gunnor's possible Lower Norman origins.

Bates' argument that Richard's reign saw the 'recovery of control over the territory...approximating to that which started to be called 'Normandy' in the eleventh century'.⁷ Unfortunately, modern understanding of this apparently crucial period is hampered by the paucity of evidence. Flodoard's annals break off in 966 and, for all his supposed authority, Richard made little impression on Flodoard's continuator, Richer of Rheims.⁸ While Richard's reign saw the duke witnessing documents for the first time, these were often drawn up on behalf of non-Norman parties.⁹ References in later Norman documents to spoken grants and confirmations suggest that Richard's own government continued to rely on oral memory over written record.¹⁰ We have already encountered some of the interpretative difficulties that arise from possessing such limited evidence. The motivation for Hugh the Great's campaign of 954 against Harold of Bayeux, for instance, as likely lay with his own designs upon Lower Normandy as it did with a desire to restore or 'plutôt l'instauration', as Bauduin astutely notes, Norman ducal authority in the west.¹¹ While Dudo assures us that Richard enjoyed a close relationship with Hugh from c. 945 onwards,¹² the clearest evidence for a connection between the two – Richard's marriage to Hugh's daughter, Emma, in 960 – postdates Hugh's own death by four years.¹³ Though suggestive of political links between Richard and Hugh's son, Hugh Capet, the marriage cannot be taken as definitive proof of the existence of older familial associations.¹⁴

⁷ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 25.

⁸ *ibid.*

⁹ *Recueil*, nos. 1-3; *Actes de Lothaire et Louis V*, ed. Halphen and Lot, no. 24.

¹⁰ *Recueil*, no. 53; Abrams, 'Early Normandy', pp. 62-3.

¹¹ Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, p. 169 n. 116; above, pp. 86-7, for further discussion.

¹² *De moribus*, pp. 250-51.

¹³ Flodoard, s.a. 956, 960. Despite suggestions to the contrary, it seems likely that this union was childless (van Houts, 'Countess Gunnor', pp. 10-12).

¹⁴ *De moribus*, pp. 251, 263-4 reports that Hugh had promised his daughter in marriage to Richard long before his death. *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 216 n. 378 notes that 'these preliminaries may be quite imaginary'. Certainly false is Dudo's story that Richard served as guardian to the

On closer inspection, the evidence for Richard I's involvement in Lower Normandy is replete with such interpretative problems. Richard's reign may have been crucial in the stabilisation of ducal rule in Upper Normandy, but taken together these problems cast serious doubts upon the western limits of Richard's authority that cannot simply be explained away through lack of sufficient evidence. Rather it will be argued that though ducal ambitions encompassed Lower Normandy by the close of Richard's long reign, the realities of power did not yet match his pretensions.

3.2) Interpretative Problems (c. 960-996)

The 960s saw Richard's only recorded interventions in wider Frankish politics, including the formation of his supposed alliance with the counts of Rennes. This alliance emerged from Richard's clashes with Louis IV's son, Lothair and the counts of Flanders, Blois-Chartres and Anjou. In the wake of Hugh the Great's death and the minority of his son, Hugh Capet, these latter asserted their independence, becoming leading figures in Frankish politics. In 961, Richard attempted to disrupt a royal *placitum* at Soissons and a subsequent meeting of the allies closer to the Norman border – in retaliation, Dudo assures us, for an earlier effort by the coalition to trap him in the Beauvaisis.¹⁵ The instigator of this alliance against Richard appears to have been Theobald I of Blois-Chartres, whom Dudo accuses of raiding Normandy in the run-up to the dispute.¹⁶ The war centred upon the Évreux – Lothair and Theobald seized Évreux itself, while Richard responded with raids on Dunes and Chartres. Theobald then pressed on as far as

deceased Hugh's wife and children (*De moribus*, p. 263; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 218 n. 398).

¹⁵ *Flodoard*, s.a. 961; *De moribus*, pp. 266-7, 271-2. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Flodoard reports that Richard was driven away from the meeting after heavy losses, while Dudo states that he withdrew voluntarily in the face of heavy opposition.

¹⁶ *De moribus*, p. 265.

Rouen, before being defeated. With the arrival of Norse support from overseas, Richard was able to partially reverse his losses and secure Évreux once more.¹⁷ While Richard was fighting Theobald in the Évrecin, the counts of Rennes were tussling with the latter's allies in Brittany. With Alan II Barbetorte's death in 952, Theobald had become guardian to Alan's young son, Drogo and, following Drogo's own demise in 958, the main supporter of Count Hoel of Nantes' claim to the Breton duchy.¹⁸ Against this unsettled backdrop, a Norse flotilla raided Nantes in 960.¹⁹ Ferdinand Lot interpreted this as evidence of Richard I's support for Count Conan I of Rennes' opposition to Hoel's claims.²⁰ The *Chronique de Nantes* itself, however, depicts these Norsemen as simply seizing upon the chaos following Alan II's death.²¹ Lot himself noted the largely indiscriminate nature of Norse raiding, with relics removed inland for safe-keeping from the cathedral of St. Malo and the abbey of Saint-Magloire de Léhon.²² Both lay within the territory of the counts of Rennes – Richard's supposed allies. There are no firm grounds for associating Richard with the Norse raiders of 960 – they may have been operating independently from Lower Normandy or anywhere else along the western French seaboard.²³ Indeed, the record in the *Chronique de Nantes* of the *palus magnus, in ore Ligeris fixus, metum Normannis faciens* suggests, if anything, a base on the Loire, rather than the Seine.²⁴ According to Richer, Conan received Loire Norse support at the second battle of Conquereuil in 992 – they

¹⁷ Flodoard, s.a. 962 records Theobald's defeat; *De moribus*, pp. 273-80 provides the only record of raiding, treachery and the assault on Rouen. Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 65-6, for possible Norman losses as a result of this conflict.

¹⁸ CN, pp. 107-14.

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 111-12.

²⁰ Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, pp. 34-5, 347-8.

²¹ CN, p. 111 – *Porro Normanni, piratici et diabolici viri, morte Alani audita, redientes Britanniam coeperunt depredari et venerunt usque ad civitatem Namnetensem.*

²² Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens*, pp. 110-11, 352.

²³ Price, *Vikings in Brittany*, p. 53.

²⁴ CN, p. 112; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 91 n. 50.

may also have provided the Norse support he is recorded as receiving by the *Chronique de Nantes* in 982.²⁵ As we shall see, it is also unlikely that the counts of Rennes sought to buy Richard's support by patronising the Norman house of Mont Saint-Michel, as some have argued.²⁶ Furthermore, the reference to Richard in the *Translatio sancti Maglorii*, which Lot took as evidence for the duke's involvement, is a later interpolation that does not fit the wider chronology of the movement of the saint's remains – better dated to the early tenth century.²⁷ Theobald of Blois' meteoric rise to power illustrates the capacity for late tenth-century rulers to exert influence across northern Frankish politics, but there is little evidence that Richard followed suit by extending his influence westward towards Brittany. In fact, Richard's war in the Évrechin, his alliance with Hugh Capet and his struggles against Lothair all suggest not only that his interests, like those of his father, lay with the politics of the Île-de-France, but also that his control of Upper Normandy remained contestable.²⁸

Richard's continuing struggles close to home call into question his supposed control of Lower Normandy. Scholarly arguments for Richard's authority in the west have largely rested on the evidence of his marriage to Gunnor and his efforts to restore the Norman Church. Richard's marriage to his former mistress, Gunnor, at some point after 968, ultimately proved instrumental

²⁵ CN, pp. 118-19; Richer, *Histoire*, ii, pp. 280-82.

²⁶ G. Devailly, 'Les dépendances bretonnes des abbayes Normandes (X^e-XIII^e siècles)', in *Aspects du monachisme en Normandie (IV^e-XVIII^e siècles): Actes du Colloque Scientifique de l'Année des Abbayes Normandes*, ed. L. Musset (Paris, 1982), pp. 121-2, for this suggestion. Below, pp. 108-13, for contemporary events at Mont Saint-Michel.

²⁷ Guillotel, 'L'exode', pp. 292-7, 304.

²⁸ Richer, *Histoire* ii, pp. 270-72, 292-4 demonstrates that Richard remained intermittently involved in Frankish politics, supporting the newly-crowned Hugh Capet at Méhun in c. 991, but subsequently aiding the king's enemy, Odo of Blois-Chartres, against Fulk II Nerra of Anjou, a royal favourite. Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 170-73, for Richard's limited authority in Upper Normandy.

in strengthening ducal authority in Lower Normandy.²⁹ Gunnor's kindred have traditionally been associated with the Cotentin since D.C. Douglas identified her brother, Arfast, as holding estates in the region by hereditary right.³⁰ With time, as Robert of Torigny's mid-twelfth-century genealogies reveal, Gunnor became the nexus of a vast, complicated web of connections that linked the foremost families of Upper Normandy to the ducal kindred.³¹ Such genealogies, or at least the notion of connection to the ducal kindred through Gunnor, were not recent inventions.³² At the turn of the twelfth century, Anselm warned Henry I against marrying an illegitimate daughter of William de Warenne on grounds of consanguinity that match Torigny's genealogical record precisely.³³ A little later, in c. 1113, bishop Ivo of Chartres supplied Henry with information about the descent of the Montgomery family, seemingly provided by the Montgommerys themselves and again identical to Torigny's account.³⁴ As Bates cautions, however, the development by the early twelfth century of a familial desire to be linked to the ducal kindred is hardly surprising, given the dukes' recent successes and the contemporary emergence of such traditions elsewhere in northern Europe.

²⁹ The exact date of the marriage is unknown. Richard's first wife, Emma, was still alive in 968 (*Recueil*, no. 3). William of Jumièges, who coyly overlooks Richard and Gunnor's original relationship, notes that their marriage occurred soon after Emma's death (*GND*, i, p. 128). Dudo suggests that Richard was involved with numerous women, who bore him several sons and daughters, before his relationship with Gunnor and only later married her after the repeated protestations of the Norman nobility (*De moribus*, p. 289). Robert of Torigny provides the latest date, noting that Richard only married Gunnor so as to allow their second son, Robert, to ascend to the archbishopric of Rouen in c. 989 (*GND*, ii, pp. 266-8).

³⁰ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. M. Guérard (Paris, 3 vols., 1840), i, p. 108; Douglas, 'Ancestors', pp. 67-9. The family's later estates around Breteuil in Upper Normandy were also probably inherited (van Houts, 'Countess Gunnor', p. 8 n. 5).

³¹ *GND*, ii, pp. 264-74 – families mentioned include the Montgommerys, fitzOsberns, Beaumonts, Giffards and Warennes, along with a number of less eminent Upper Norman lineages.

³² Bates, *Normandy*, p. 108.

³³ *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, ed. F.S. Schmitt (Edinburgh, 6 vols., 1938-61), v, pp. 369-70, *epistola* no. 424.

³⁴ Ivo of Chartres, 'Epistolae', *PL* 162, no. 112, col. 266. E.M.C. van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni as Genealogist', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. Allen Brown*, ed. C. Harper-Bill, C.J. Holdsworth and J.L. Nelson (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 215-33, for further confirmation of Torigny's data.

Bates' own demonstration of the shifting genealogy of the Tosny family – in c. 1080 happy to trace their roots to a tenth-century Frankish landholder in the French Vexin, transformed, by the time Orderic was writing in the early twelfth century, into a house with ducal associations stretching back to Rollo himself – serves as a valuable warning on the invention of familial relations.³⁵ Connections to Gunnor's kindred or other Lower Norman lineages may have played a part in the acquisition of western estates by Upper Norman families, but there is little direct evidence of this process before the second quarter of the eleventh century.³⁶ While Richard and Gunnor's marriage had important long-term consequences for Norman society, there are further grounds for questioning its significance for the westward extension of ducal authority during Richard's own lifetime.

One might suppose that marriage to Gunnor allowed Richard to procure property in Lower Normandy and, through the new local connections the union would have given him, better enforce his authority over the region's former Frankish ecclesiastical and comital estates. Even given the limited documentation available from his reign, however, there is little evidence that Richard held extensive estates in Lower Normandy. Possession of some property in the Bessin is demonstrated by Richard's grant of Mondeville and Argences, both to the south-east of Caen, to the newly-established collegiate community of Fécamp in 990 – later confirmed by his son in 1025.³⁷ Richard II similarly noted his father's grants to Jumièges, which included property in the vicinity of Caen, the Lieuvain forest and the Pays d'Auge.³⁸ Richard I's role at Saint-Taurin de Évreux is more

³⁵ 'Acta Archiepiscopi Rotomagensis: Study and Edition', ed. R. Allen, *Tabularia Documents: sources écrites de la Normandie médiévale* 9 (2009), p. 38; *GND*, ii, pp. 94-5; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 108-109.

³⁶ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 103.

³⁷ *Recueil*, nos. 4, 34.

³⁸ *ibid.*, no. 36.

open to question. The abbey's foundation charter, which includes the grant of three estates in the Cotentin, survives only in a thirteenth-century cartulary, is replete with anachronistic terminology, and possibly confuses Richard I with his grandson, Count Richard I of Évreux, potentially pushing the date of territorial acquisitions later.³⁹ Richard may also have been the source of two further estates in the Bessin, lying to the south-west of Caen, given to Mont Saint-Michel in 1015 by his widow, Gunnor, who held them as dower from their marriage.⁴⁰ Searle suggested that the charter confuses dower with dowry, making these properties descend from Gunnor's own kindred; Potts wonders whether they represent estates over which Richard had a theoretical claim, but in a region where Gunnor's family exercised practical control.⁴¹

Richard's reign has traditionally been seen as a key era in the revival of Norman ecclesiastical life and transformation of the Church into an organ of ducal government.⁴² This should not hide the fact, however, that Richard, despite his later portrayal by Dudo,⁴³ emerges as a far less pious Christian than his father and only a reluctant reformer, perhaps a hangover from his education in Scandinavian Bayeux.⁴⁴ Much of the evidence for ecclesiastical reform comes from Richard's last years. Fécamp's well-known foundation charter is the first document in over a century to record the existence of a named bishop occupying every Norman see, including Richard's own son, Robert, as archbishop of Rouen. Yet Fécamp's

³⁹ *Recueil*, no. 5. J.-F. Lemarignier, E. Lamon and V. Gazeau, 'Monachisme et aristocratie autour de Saint-Taurin d'Évreux et du Bec (X^e-XII^e siècles)', in *Aspects du Monachisme*, ed. Musset, pp. 93-5; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, p. 171, for the difficulties presented by this charter. Saint-Taurin's foundation date is itself hotly contested (Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 67 n. 26). The earliest verifiable reference to the community dates to 989 ('De beati Audoeni translatione et eius sacratissimi corporis integritate', *PL* 142, col. 1162).

⁴⁰ *MSM*, no. 4.

⁴¹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 295 n. 7; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 98 n. 96.

⁴² Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 30-33.

⁴³ Below, p. 104.

⁴⁴ Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', p. 22.

foundation and Robert's appointment date to c. 990; the establishment of Saint-Taurin may have been similarly late.⁴⁵ Prior to this Richard had shown little interest in reform, failing to support the restoration of Saint-Wandrille in both 944/53 and c. 960.⁴⁶ The reasons for this change in policy are hard to discern. François Neveux suggests that Richard exercised insufficient control over the Norman aristocracy to ensure the security of ecclesiastical estates prior to the late tenth century.⁴⁷ Such a theory fits well with the preceding discussion of Richard's tentative links with the Lower Norman aristocracy. It is notable that the aforementioned Lower Norman monastic grants were largely confined to regions on the edge of Upper Normandy, such as the Lieuvin, or the coastal plain of the Bessin, which would have been most easily accessible from the Seine valley, rather than the interior.⁴⁸ Similarly, the further from Upper Normandy these grants get, the more open to question the evidence for them becomes. George Gandy, however, argues that Richard's new policy was driven by a shift in the political culture of the Norman court.⁴⁹ Richard came to recognise the potential administrative benefits of ecclesiastical renewal. Dudo's history certainly reveals a growing desire to leave the pagan past behind.⁵⁰ These hypotheses are not mutually exclusive – a shift in political culture might have derived from increasing internal security. Nor should we overlook the possibility that with Richard's advancing years the dread of something after death caused him to rethink his priorities.

⁴⁵ *Recueil*, no. 4; above, p. 101.

⁴⁶ Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', pp. 23-4.

⁴⁷ F. Neveux, *La Normandie des ducs aux rois, X^e-XII^e siècle* (Rennes, 1998), pp. 274-5.

⁴⁸ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 71.

⁴⁹ Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', p. 23.

⁵⁰ Above, pp. 71-2; below, p. 104.

Richard's tardy conversion meant that when time finally caught up with the old duke the process of ecclesiastical restoration was still in its early stages, especially in Lower Normandy. While the see of Avranches was at long last filled,⁵¹ little practical progress was made in re-establishing diocesan authority in the region until the eleventh century. Richard's appointee, Norgod, found the challenges of his long-abandoned post overwhelming, retiring to Mont Saint-Michel in c. 1017 (where he died on 14 October 1026/36), leaving the see again unfilled for at least a further five years.⁵² Efforts to restore Coutances were equally ineffective. *De statu* records Richard's attempt to re-establish the chapter at Coutances after the bishops' abandonment of their western diocese at the turn of the century.⁵³ There is, however, no way of verifying the twelfth-century author's claim that Richard I was responsible for these efforts, rather than his son and successor.⁵⁴ Whoever began the initiative, it soon faltered. Bishop Hugh of Coutances (c. 990-1025), who never left his self-imposed exile in Rouen, soon recalled seven of the restored canons from the west (his ability to recall them representing the only evidence of his authority within the diocese itself) and his successors later seized the property of the remaining prebends for themselves.⁵⁵ The bishops of Coutances would not return to their western diocese until after Hugh's death, and then only to a temporary home in the fortress city of Saint-Lô on the diocese's extreme easternmost limit.⁵⁶

⁵¹ GC, xi, col. 474, where, between bishops Walbert (*d.c.* 862) and Norgod (c. 990-c. 1017), the editors simply note *aliquot adhuc praesulum Abrincensium nomenclatura seculo toto deficit*.

⁵² 'Notae Monasterii Montis Sancti Michaelis', in *RHF*, xxiii, p. 580; R. Allen, 'A proud and headstrong man': John of Ivry, bishop of Avranches and archbishop of Rouen, 1060-79', *Historical Research* 83 (2010), p. 196 n. 52, for dating Norgod's death.

⁵³ 'De statu', col. 218.

⁵⁴ *Recueil*, no. 6.

⁵⁵ 'De statu', col. 218.

⁵⁶ *ibid.*

The slow recovery of the Lower Norman episcopate might be taken to suggest that regional ecclesiastical life had been hit especially hard by Norse raiding and subsequent settlement in the ninth and early tenth centuries. This was certainly the view espoused by eleventh- and twelfth-century Norman ecclesiastical literature – as noted above, the tenth-century Coutances was, according to the Coutances chronicler, a land ‘devoid of Christians’ and ‘crushed by pagan thieves and the pollution of idolatry’.⁵⁷ This tradition, however, ultimately derives from Dudo’s account of the early dukes. We have already seen how, as part of his mission to civilise the ducal dynasty in the eyes of Frankish contemporaries, Dudo chose to depict Lower Normandy’s inhabitants as savage, possibly pagan warriors.⁵⁸ In similar vein, Dudo has Richard I convert recent Norse immigrants,⁵⁹ modelling his account of the duke on Merovingian and Carolingian hagiographies, including the fifth-century *Life of St. Germanus*, the missionary-bishop of Auxerre.⁶⁰ As modern scholars have increasingly realised, the despairing accounts of the ecclesiastical situation in tenth-century Lower Normandy included in the histories produced at Upper Norman monasteries during the eleventh and twelfth centuries also served as justification for the steady acquisition of property in and saintly relics from that region by those same houses.⁶¹ So successful was this tradition even native Lower Normans, such as the Coutances chronicler and Wace,⁶² came to accept it as fact.⁶³ Norman authors

⁵⁷ Above, p. 73.

⁵⁸ Above, pp. 72-3.

⁵⁹ *De moribus*, pp. 283-6.

⁶⁰ L. Shopkow, ‘The Carolingian World of Dudo of Saint-Quentin’, *JMH* 15 (1989), pp. 20, 23-4, 27.

⁶¹ Potts, ‘Saints go marching’, pp. 24-7; Arnoux, ‘Before the *Gesta Normannorum*’, pp. 33-8, 40.

⁶² *RR*, ii, appendice, lines 389-398 describe the destruction of the abbeys of Le Ham and Saint-Marcouf in the late ninth century.

⁶³ The origin of this tradition with Dudo and Upper Norman accounts rather undermines Felice Lifshitz’s theory that the ‘aggressively “not-Christian”’ image of the Cotentin was a ‘self-

were not alone in painting Lower Normandy as a savage land. Writing in the late eleventh century, Hariulf of Saint-Riquier justified the translation of St. Vigor's remains from Bayeux to his abbey by describing the Bessin at the end of the tenth century as 'so devastated by the incursion of barbarians, that not only secular pomp, but even ecclesiastical decorum came to be defiled', such that 'the divine services of the churches...were entirely lacking'.⁶⁴ In such circumstances, local clergymen, in this case one Avitianus had no choice but to flee. Paganism may have survived in Lower Normandy through until the early eleventh century. The *Vita Vigoris*, produced in the 1030s at the newly-established monastery of Cerisy-la-Forêt in the Bessin, focused on the saint's role as a missionary.⁶⁵ It is perhaps significant that this region provides two contemporary examples of local lords replacing their Scandinavian names with baptismal ancillaries, suggesting recent conversion to Christianity.⁶⁶ According to Wace, the Channel Islanders of the mid-eleventh century believed that the exiled Archbishop Mauger of Rouen possessed a familiar called Toret, perhaps derived from the Norse God Thor – a story similarly indicative of long-standing pagan traditions.⁶⁷

Scandinavian raiding and settlement clearly did disrupt ecclesiastical life in Lower Normandy and bring some pagans to the region, but at a local level the Church probably survived as well there as it did anywhere else in the duchy.⁶⁸

conception...a function of the region's desire to remain independent of the aggressively "Christian" rulers of Upper Normandy' (Lifshitz, *Pious Neustria*, pp. 34-5).

⁶⁴ Hariulf: *Chronique de l'abbaye de Saint-Riquier (V^e siècle-1104)*, ed. F. Lot (Paris, Collection des textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'Histoire, 1894), p. 163 – *barbarorum incursu adeo vastari, ut non modo pompam saecularem, verum etiam decorum ecclesiasticum contigerit foedari* and *ecclesiarum quoque obsequie, quae sanctis Dei devote solent exhiberi, penitus defecisse cerneret*, respectively. Translation from Herrick, *Sacred Past*, p. 91.

⁶⁵ Herrick, *Sacred Past*, pp. 83-8.

⁶⁶ Above, p. 50, for Thurstan 'Richard' Haldup and 'Odo' Stigand.

⁶⁷ RR, ii, lines 4573-4582; J.-G. Gouttebroze, 'Le Diable dans le *Roman de Rou*', in *Le Diable au Moyen Age (doctrine, problèmes moraux, représentations)* (Aix-en-Provence, 1979), pp. 227-31.

⁶⁸ The lack of episcopal organisation in Lower Normandy may simply demonstrate the 'absence of Roman-style administrative methods', which may itself represent 'a function of regional

Church dedications and parish structures appear unchanged from the pre-Viking period.⁶⁹ At the turn of the eleventh century, Richard II's dower for his wife, Judith of Rennes, included grants in the northern Cotentin of thirty-eight estates and seventeen churches.⁷⁰ Taking this as a guide, approximately 45% of Cotentinois estates had some ecclesiastical provision already in this period – a ratio that, though lower than in Upper Normandy, would hold through to the fourteenth century.⁷¹ Archaeology and toponymy provide further evidence for tenth-century ecclesiastical activity. The parish church at Querqueville, in the far north of the Cotentin, was extended in c. 900, during an era of intensive Scandinavian assault and settlement.⁷² Twelve other Cotentinois churches show evidence of pre-twelfth-century construction phases, some of which may date back to the tenth century.⁷³ Toponyms such as Querqueville – which may derive from *kirkja*, the Scandinavian word for 'church' – of which there are several in Lower Normandy, arguably suggest that the incomers recognised the ecclesiastical significance of particular locations.⁷⁴

Upon closer inspection, even the Upper Norman literary sources provide evidence of continuity. The *Beati Severi translatio*, probably written by a canon of Rouen in the early eleventh century, records that the body of St. Severus was discovered by clerks from Rouen en route to Mont Saint-Michel being tended by a

independentism or ethnic separatism..., rather than the presence of "not-Christians" (Lifshitz, *Pious Neustria*, p. 35).

⁶⁹ T. Jarry, 'Les débuts du Christianisme dans le Cotentin', *Revue de la Manche* 41 (1999), pp. 16-19; Picard, 'Early Contacts', pp. 90-92, Map 1; Fleuriot, *Les Origines*, pp. 103, 149-52, Map 7.

⁷⁰ *Recueil*, no. 11.

⁷¹ Petts, 'Churches and Lordship', pp. 309-10.

⁷² R. Dold, 'La chapelle Saint-Germain de Querqueville (Manche): les vestiges d'un édifice paléochrétien sur le littoral bas-normand', *AM* 8 (1978), p. 111; J. Pilet-Lemière, 'Querqueville: Chapelle Saint-Germain', in *Les premiers monuments chrétiens de la France 3: Ouest, Nord et Est*, ed. N. Duval (Paris, 1998), pp. 307.

⁷³ J. Deshayes, 'Structures murales et phases de construction: la première génération des églises du Cotentin', in *La paroisse en Normandie au Moyen âge: la vie paroissiale, l'église et le cimetière: histoire, art archéologie*, ed. E. Barré and M. Guibert (Saint-Lô, 2008), pp. 278-97; Petts, 'Churches and Lordship', pp. 310-13.

⁷⁴ Petts, 'Churches and Lordship', p. 303.

parish priest in a church with a 'cheap straw roof and wicker walls'.⁷⁵ The removal of his remains to Rouen caused uproar, as the locals rioted in protest.⁷⁶ As the *Translatio* illustrates, the liturgical calendars and libraries of Upper Norman houses readily incorporated the death dates, holy days and hagiographies of Lower Norman saints, suggesting that local religious practices had survived the Scandinavian settlement.⁷⁷ Nor were all commentators as dismissive of Lower Norman Christianity as the author of the *Translatio*. We have already seen how Fécamp sources recorded the miraculous transportation of Saint-Marcouf's roof, used to complete Fécamp's new church. This implies that Saint-Marcouf, the site of the ancient Carolingian monastery of Nant, had 'not only survived the wars and the raids of the previous century, but was better maintained and furnished than Fécamp itself'.⁷⁸ The documentary sources are similarly suggestive of widespread survival. The possessions of the former Carolingian abbeys of Deux-Jumeaux, Saint-Fromond, Saint-Marcouf and Saint-Martin all eventually found their way into the hands of Cerisy-la-Forêt, founded by Robert the Magnificent in the 1030s.⁷⁹ Grants of ancient *abbatiae* with their pertinent estates were not uncommon in Lower Normandy. Richard II granted the old house of Saint-Pair and its dependencies to Mont Saint-Michel in the early 1020s; while his son, Richard III, granted the estates of Port-Bail to his wife later that decade.⁸⁰ Many ancient monastic communities became the site of later re-foundations or priories belonging to Upper Norman or French houses, but by the eleventh century these

⁷⁵ 'Beati Severi translatio Rotomagnum anno 1089', in AASS Feb., i, col. 192 – *vili tecta stramine, vimineisque parietibus contexta*.

⁷⁶ 'Beati Severi translatio', col. 192; Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum*', p. 37.

⁷⁷ Potts, 'Saints go marching', pp. 22-3, 25-6, 28-9.

⁷⁸ Above, pp. 81-2; Potts, 'Saints go marching', pp. 26-7 (cited here).

⁷⁹ L. Musset, 'Notes sur l'ancienne abbaye de Deux-Jumeaux', *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 405-21; idem, 'Les origines du prieuré de Saint-Fromond: Un acte négligée de Richard II', *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 475-89.

⁸⁰ *MSM*, no. 2; *Recueil*, no. 58. Potts, 'Saints go marching', p. 27; Musset, 'Monachisme d'Époque', pp. 68-9, for Port-Bail's later re-emergence as a priory of Lessay.

ancient monasteries may have amounted to little more than ruined remains.⁸¹ The survival into the eleventh century of both the names of and a record of the pertinent property belonging to earlier foundations at Saint-Pair, Port-Bail and Saint-Marcouf, however, is strongly suggestive of ongoing religious observance and organisation at these sites throughout the tenth century.⁸² The survival of an early eleventh-century inscription from Lieusaint, south of Valognes, recording the death of two local priests, provides evidence for just such activity at a small ecclesiastical community, otherwise unmentioned by documentary or literary sources.⁸³ Where ecclesiastical upheaval did occur in Lower Normandy, it was a result of the extension of ducal authority. While Fécamp's building materials may have been acquired during earlier Norse raids, the removal of relics to Rouen must have followed swiftly on the heels of Richard's intervention in the region.⁸⁴ Similarly, the translation of St. Vigor's remains from supposedly-barbarous Bayeux in c. 987 coincided with Richard's establishment of a palace there.⁸⁵

It is against this background of limited effective interaction with the Lower Norman church that Richard's arguably most famous ecclesiastical venture – the re-foundation of Mont Saint-Michel in 965 – must be set. The abbey's early history was recorded in the *Introductio monachorum*, an official history of the abbey collated from disparate materials in the period 1080-1095 and heavily dependent upon Dudo, as was the case with all contemporary Norman

⁸¹ Musset, 'Monachisme d'Époque', pp. 63-71, for this phenomenon; OV, ii, pp. 14-16, for a fine literary description of a ruined house.

⁸² Potts, 'Saints go marching', p. 27. The survival of an epitaph for one Dedila at Saint-Pair, dating to the late eighth through early eleventh centuries, is similarly suggestive (*Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale 22: Calvados, Eure, Manche, Orne, Seine-Maritime*, ed. R. Favreau and J. Michaud (Paris, CRNS Éditions, 2002), no. 125).

⁸³ *Corpus des inscriptions 22*, ed. Favreau and Michaud, no. 116.

⁸⁴ Above, p. 82 n. 90.

⁸⁵ 'Translatio beati Audoeni', col. 1161; Herrick, *Sacred Past*, p. 91.

historiography.⁸⁶ The *Introductio* reveals the existence of a lax collegiate community of canons living at the Mont until 965, when Richard replaced them with a new body of Benedictine monks.⁸⁷ Richard allegedly sought to reform this existing community from c. 960 and canons continued to inhabit the Mont after 965.⁸⁸ How far the laxity of this community really underpinned Richard's re-foundation is questionable. Corrupt canons had become a common justification for Benedictine reform by the late eleventh century,⁸⁹ and Dudo notably makes no mention of them.⁹⁰ As we have seen, it is possible that Richard in fact reformed an existing monastic community, but this is hotly debated.⁹¹ At first glance, the re-foundation of Mont Saint-Michel so early in Richard's reign seems out of character with the ecclesiastical developments discussed above. This and the confused nature of the Mont's tenth-century history have led many modern historians to challenge Dudo and the *Introductio*'s account. Dudo's reference to Richard's involvement at the abbey might be seen as part of his programme of painting ducal authority throughout Normandy and beyond – indeed, he has Rollo give property to the Mont after his baptism.⁹² The *Introductio*, however, provides hard evidence for Richard's involvement in the form of both a papal bull of John XIII, promising free abbatial elections and a royal diploma of Lothair, confirming Richard's re-foundation and the pope's grant. Of these, the bull is undeniably

⁸⁶ *Chroniques latines*, pp. 149-51, 190-99.

⁸⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 210-13.

⁸⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 162-5, 210-11.

⁸⁹ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 85; Potts, 'Saints go marching', pp. 27-8; *MSM*, p. 16. L. Musset, 'Recherches sur les communautés des clercs séculiers en Normandie au XI^e siècle', *BSAN* 55 (1961), pp. 5-38, for collegiate communities in eleventh-century Normandy and their role, esp. pp. 14-19, for further Norman examples of corrupt canons.

⁹⁰ *De moribus*, p. 290.

⁹¹ Above, p. 32 n. 43, for the debate over the character of the Montois communit(y)ies pre-965. J. Hourlier, 'Le Mont Saint-Michel avant 966', in *Millénaire monastique du Mont Saint-Michel*, ed. J. Laporte *et al* (Paris, 6 vols., 1966-71), i, pp. 23-7, for a more outlandish theory on the Mont's earlier inhabitants.

⁹² *De moribus*, pp. 170-71.

forged.⁹³ Reference to it in the *Annals* composed at the Mont in the eleventh century suggests that its creation should be dated to c. 1030, when the monks were trying to free themselves from increasing ducal influence by electing their own abbot.⁹⁴ Aside from the interpolated reference to the papal bull, Lothair's diploma appears broadly authentic.⁹⁵ The historical context of the diploma, its stylistic points and its failure to appear independently of the forged bull led both Guillotel and Keats-Rohan to suggest that it too was a forgery.⁹⁶ The existence of similar contemporary acts from elsewhere in northern France and the exactitude with which the diploma matches the unique output of Lothair's then chancellor, Gezo (958-969) renders this unlikely.⁹⁷ Why might Richard have shown such uncharacteristic interest in the Mont at this time? Gandy suggests that the re-foundation was part of the peace treaty between Richard and his foes, Lothair and Theobald, signed at Gisors in 966.⁹⁸ Such an interpretation has much to commend it. The Franks continued to think of the Normans as pagan invaders until the end of the century.⁹⁹ Lothair would have been happy to undermine the regional authority of his rival, Hugh Capet.¹⁰⁰ For Richard, the re-foundation represented a grand gesture that required little commitment on his part. The pre-existence of an ecclesiastical community at the Mont and the absence of an active bishop in the region meant that the duke did not have to give up his own estates to found the

⁹³ *Actes de Lothaire et Louis V*, ed. Halphen and Lot, no. 24, for details.

⁹⁴ *MSM*, pp. 18-22, for this theory; app. i, no. 1a, for the *Annals*. The bull remained a valuable tool in defending the abbey's interests and may have been altered further subsequently (*Chroniques latines*, pp. 156-7).

⁹⁵ *Actes de Lothaire et Louis V*, ed. Halphen and Lot, no. 24.

⁹⁶ Guillotel, 'Les temps', pp. 336-7; *MSM*, pp. 18-21. Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum*', p. 38; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 82 are similarly sceptical.

⁹⁷ *Chroniques latines*, pp. 158-9. Keats-Rohan, 'Le histoire secrète', p. 145, suggests the monks may have had access to material on which to base a forgery or interpolated a genuine diploma of Lothair to include reference to Richard's re-foundation, but there is no hard evidence for either suspicion.

⁹⁸ Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', pp. 24-5.

⁹⁹ Above, pp. 72, 76-7.

¹⁰⁰ *Chroniques latines*, p. 161. This would account for Lothair's appearance, which troubled Keats-Rohan (*MSM*, pp. 19-20).

monastery or face challenges from those with conflicting local interests.¹⁰¹ Whether the re-foundation allowed Richard to divest himself of the reformist monks of Saint-Wandrille depends upon the later tradition identifying Mainard I, abbot of Mont Saint-Michel with the Flemish reformer and follower of Gérard de Brogne, who had led the most recent attempt to restore the former monastery in c. 960.¹⁰² There is, however, little consensus on this point.¹⁰³

Given the likely circumstances of Richard's involvement at Mont Saint-Michel, it is perhaps unsurprising that he paid little attention to ongoing affairs at the abbey. Dudo and the *Introductio* had Richard rebuild the abbey and endow it with gifts.¹⁰⁴ The early eleventh-century *Annals*, however, ascribed reconstruction work to Richard II;¹⁰⁵ while the first recorded grants of property to the monastery by members of the ducal kindred, none of which made any reference to previous grants by Richard I, date to c. 1015.¹⁰⁶ Richard's only appearance in the main body of the abbey's cartulary comes from an interpolation of c. 1058/60 into Richard II's grant of estates in c. 1022/6, which is made to include a recognition of the freedom from episcopal jurisdiction supposedly given by his father and Pope John XIII.¹⁰⁷ Interestingly, in the original version of this same charter, when the monks wanted Richard II to restore former estates to Mont

¹⁰¹ Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', p. 24.

¹⁰² *Inventio et miracula*, ed. Laporte, p. 34.

¹⁰³ Keats-Rohan, 'L'histoire secrète', pp. 151-2; V. Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica* (Caen, 2 vols., 2007), i, pp. 205-11, for objections; Gandy, 'La abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel', pp. 18-20, 23-4, for support. While Robert of Torigny did not lend credence to this theory in his major works, both Keats-Rohan and Gazeau fail to note that this tradition was recorded in *De abbatibus [Montis Sancti Michaelis] rubrica*, written at the Mont during Torigny's abbacy (1154-1186), but based on earlier materials and perhaps the product of his own hand (T.N. Bisson, 'On the Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel. An Edition and Translation', *HSJ* 22 (2010), pp. 166-7, 174). Nor do Mainard's connection to Gérard necessarily preclude the Norman origins ascribed to him by Torigny's contemporary at the Mont, William of Saint-Pair (William of Saint-Pair, 'Le Roman du Mont-Saint-Michel', ed. F. Michel, *MSAN* 20 (1853), p. 534).

¹⁰⁴ *De moribus*, p. 290; *Chroniques latines*, pp. 214-17.

¹⁰⁵ *MSM*, app. i, no. 1a.

¹⁰⁶ *MSM*, nos. 2-4, 31; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 96, 98-9.

¹⁰⁷ *MSM*, no. 2.

Saint-Michel, they claimed that these properties had been granted to the abbey not by Richard I, but by William Longsword.¹⁰⁸ So limited was the impression Richard I made at the Mont, the *Annals* and the *Revelatio* (the earliest extant copy of which dates from no later than 1015) make little reference to him at all.¹⁰⁹ Over forty years elapsed between the re-foundation and the first recorded Norman act for the abbey – Richard II's replacement of abbot Mainard II in 1009.¹¹⁰ Had any grants been made in the interim, the monks would doubtless have included them – the entire cartulary is biased towards Norman material, placing charters from 'Richard II, Gunnor, Robert the Magnificent, and William the Conqueror all before benefactions from other sources, several of which predate the Norman acts'.¹¹¹ The only evidence for contact with Normandy during this period is Mainard I's appearance at the translation of Saint-Ouen's remains in 989.¹¹² Whatever Mainard's origins, it must have soon become clear to him that the Mont would have to look closer to home for reliable support. The abbey succeeded in securing extensive patronage from successive counts of Rennes and Le Mans and the lesser nobility of Brittany and Maine, witnessed by the ecclesiastical hierarchy of those regions, rather than of the archdiocese in which the Mont theoretically lay.¹¹³ These links remained significant throughout the first half of the eleventh century, a period that saw Norman ducal influence at Mont Saint-Michel grow

¹⁰⁸ *ibid.*. Above, pp. 82-3, for the improbability of Longsword's intervention.

¹⁰⁹ *MSM*, no. 1; app. i, no. 1a. J.J.G. Alexander, 'A Romanesque copy from Mont Saint-Michel of an initial in the Corbie psalter', in *Millénaire monastique*, ii, p. 241, for the copying of the *Revelatio*.

¹¹⁰ *MSM*, no. 52; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 82, 89.

¹¹¹ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 88.

¹¹² 'De beati Audoeni', col. 1162.

¹¹³ The *Beati Severi translatio* reveals that clergy from Rouen visited the Mont in the early eleventh century (above, pp. 106-107). Their discovery of St. Severus' remains en route, however, suggests that this road was seldom trod, despite the Normans' dedication to St. Michael (Keats-Rohan, 'Identification of Abbots', p. 107).

increasingly in strength.¹¹⁴ As Potts concludes, Richard I's involvement at the Mont represented merely 'a signal of his aspirations, rather than his dominance, over this monastery'.¹¹⁵ The limited success of ducal involvement in Lower Norman ecclesiastical life during this period is further signalled by Mont Saint-Michel's continuing isolation – it remained the only recorded monastery west of the Touques until after 1025, the only house west of the Vire until c. 1060.¹¹⁶

3.3) Conclusion

Dudo presents Richard I as an active figure in Lower Normandy right up until his death, stating that when his final illness set in 'he withdrew from the district of Bayeux to the hall of his Fécamp residence, lest the people should be averse to transporting him after he was dead'.¹¹⁷ By the time of Richard's death in 996, ducal authority throughout the territories that would become Normandy was more extensive and secure than it had ever been during his father's heyday, despite the anarchy that had gripped the region during his minority. While this chapter has challenged the extent of Richard's involvement in Lower Normandy, his reign nevertheless had a transformative effect on the region's relationship with the ducal dynasty. By becoming the supreme patron of the Norman Church, advancing members of his own family to ecclesiastical office and restoring vacant sees Richard not only bound the Church to ducal authority and transformed it into an agent of that same authority, he also implicitly extended the scope of his rule and influence to incorporate the entire territory covered by the archdiocese of Rouen. This is, as we have seen, the first period of Norman history in which such

¹¹⁴ *MSM*, nos. 22-3, 26-8, 30, 32, 35, 47, app. ii, nos. 1-2, for pre-1015 Breton and Manceaux material; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 87-95, for discussion of this material.

¹¹⁵ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 98.

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 88.

¹¹⁷ *De moribus*, p. 297 – *a Bajocacensi pago ad aulam Fiscanniae sedis secedere, ne, eo defuncto, fastidium translationis esset in plebe*. Of course, this story tacitly acknowledges where the true centre of ducal authority lay during this period.

a judgement can be proven to be true – a fact further confirmed by his choice of a Lower Norman bride. Nevertheless, Richard's influence in this region was almost certainly not as extensive as has been argued previously. Nor, in the case of the Church, was his limited success the result of particularly problematic pre-existing circumstances in Lower Normandy. Rather, the difficulties Richard faced in enforcing his authority stemmed from the earlier absence of ducal involvement in Lower Normandy discussed above, though Richard, unlike his father and grandfather, was clearly not entirely inactive in this region. While his efforts may have been limited, Richard laid the foundations for both the future enforcement of ducal authority in Lower Normandy and the methodology that would secure it. Richard's marriage to Gunnor and his other less reputable unions produced a brood of children who, alongside his half-brother, Rodulf d'Ivry and under the aegis of his chosen heir, Richard II, would finally realise their father's grand aspirations in the early eleventh century.

Chapter 4) Opportunity Knocks: Co-operation and Coercion in the Reign of Richard II

4.1) Introduction: A Wedding by the Sea

In c. 1003, Mont Saint-Michel, the monastery perched not only in peril of the sea, but upon Normandy's future border with Brittany, played host to a major diplomatic event. In a ceremony supposedly held at the Mont, Duke Richard II of Normandy married Judith, sister of Count Geoffrey I of Rennes.¹ Geoffrey had already taken Richard's sister, Hawise to be his own wife.² This dual marriage alliance provides the first incontrovertible proof of Norman ducal interests extending westward beyond Lower Normandy. By 1008, however, Geoffrey was gone – dead on the pilgrim road home from Rome.³ While Geoffrey's body was returned for burial at Mont Saint-Michel, where his father had been interred before him, Richard moved swiftly to replace the abbot with one of his own choosing and bind the monastery to his dynasty by granting it extensive Norman estates.⁴ These events serve to demonstrate the significance of Richard II's reign for ducal involvement in Lower Normandy. This period saw the gradual solidification of Richard I's more theoretical interests into real ducal power and influence in the region and, in the process, the increasing interaction of Upper and Lower Norman society and institutions.

As the events that followed Geoffrey's death reveal, Richard had to react astutely to make the most of changing circumstances throughout his thirty-year reign – a fact also shown by his swift response to the popular and aristocratic

¹ *GND*, ii, p. 28; D.C. Douglas, 'Some Problems of Early Norman Chronology', *EHR* 65 (1950), pp. 289-91, for this possible date within the broader range of 996-1008. G.N. Gandy, 'Who built what at Mont Saint-Michel during the 10th Century?', *AN* 65 (2015), pp. 172-80 identifies a structure that may have been designed to accommodate this wedding, though Richard I's association with its construction remains conjectural at best.

² *GND*, ii, p. 14.

³ 'Aliud Chronicon Eiusdem Montis', *PL* 202, col. 1324.

⁴ *GC*, xi, col. 514.

unrest that immediately followed his succession in 996.⁵ For the most part, he simply built upon his father's policies. As we have seen, it was only in Richard II's reign that contemporary sources began to use the word 'Normandy' to describe the territories ruled by the ducal dynasty – the dukes' association with territories roughly conterminous with the archdiocese of Rouen surely stemming from Richard I's close association with the episcopal hierarchy resident in that city.⁶ Richard I had appointed churchmen to Lower Normandy who served as little more than figureheads in their dioceses; Richard II, as his actions at Mont Saint-Michel illustrate, not only appointed, but dismissed both ecclesiastical and secular officials, who were themselves more involved in regional administration than ever before. The eleventh century saw ducal patronage extend in reality, rather than theory to religious communities throughout Normandy. Richard I may have played only the most limited of roles at Mont Saint-Michel, but Richard II had a major influence on that monastery. Indeed, a growing number of individuals began to travel back and forth between the Mont and Rouen, though they were not always kindly met at either end of their journey. Dudo, who initially visited Normandy during Richard I's reign, notably completed his history during Richard II's. As we have seen, the picture of the past Dudo painted better reflects the realities of Richard II's rule.⁷ Richard I's marriage to Gunnor perhaps inspired the more ambitious Breton unions sought by his son. The legacy of that earlier marriage can be seen from Richard II's reign on, with the duke and his successors finally emerging as major landholders in Lower Normandy, revealed through their wives' dowries and the series of extensive grants made to Upper Norman houses throughout the region. The growing body of documentary and literary evidence

⁵ *GND*, ii, pp. 8-11.

⁶ Above, pp. 2-3, 103, 113-14.

⁷ Above, pp. 1-2.

concerning Lower Normandy produced by those same houses stands as testament to Richard's success in this regard. Richard also employed the burgeoning ranks of the ducal family to good effect, with both legitimate and illegitimate relatives, alongside loyal supporters, being appointed as officers of ducal government (*comites* and *vicecomites*) throughout the duchy – all men whose titles and posts derived from the legitimacy of Richard's own position.⁸

Moving beyond Richard himself, the greater body of source material available for early eleventh-century Lower Normandy has allowed scholars to study the way ducal influence effected regional society in a manner impossible for the tenth century. This evidence must still be approached with caution. As we shall see, acts that seemingly demonstrate pre-existing ducal authority in the region may in fact have been designed to cultivate it. In terms of the quantity of documentary evidence, the very fact that Lower Normandy remains poorly served compared to the wider duchy will be used to investigate the place of regional society in the broader Norman context. The successful consolidation of ducal authority in Lower Normandy will be shown to have depended upon the careful touch of a duke willing to work with local figures, rather than the heavy-handed impositions of a powerful outsider. This process was not wholly straightforward, nor one that inevitably swept local society up in its wake. Some members of the Upper Norman hierarchy were not necessarily as keen on establishing western ties as their ducal master, especially if they threatened the primacy of their own positions. The infrequent appearance of Lower Normans in ducal charters and

⁸ D.C. Douglas, 'The Earliest Norman Counts', *EHR* 61 (1946), pp. 129-56; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 99, 156; G. Garnett, 'Ducal' succession in early Normandy', in *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy*, ed. G. Garnett and J. Hudson (Cambridge, 1994), pp. 98-102, for the proliferation of comital titles amongst the ducal kindred after c. 1000. The growing use of grandiose titles, such as *dux* and *marchisus*, in Richard's charters perhaps represented a desire to elevate the duke above the new positions he was creating for family members (Garnett, 'Ducal' succession', pp. 98-9).

their intermittent involvement in conflict and unrest similarly hint towards the region's ongoing distance and independence from ducal rule. Despite the increasing social integration suggested by marriage alliances between Upper and Lower Norman families, there is much to suggest that western society retained a sense of individuality, responded to by Richard II and his successors. While Richard was prepared to deal with local figures, Bates has noted that the eleventh century has 'something of the character of an Upper Norman colonisation of Lower Normandy'.⁹ Richard's reliance on local versus external figures thus provides another important measure of the level of integration achieved during both his and his successors' reigns.

4.2) Family Matters: Judith, Emma & Gunnor in Lower Normandy

The extensive territorial endowment granted to Judith upon her marriage to Richard II provides the earliest insight into the duke's plans for Lower Normandy.¹⁰ This document is not without difficulties, surviving, as it does, only from an early eighteenth-century transcription of an entry in a Fécamp manuscript,¹¹ with the details of transmission from the original to the Fécamp MS unknown. The resultant text is riddled with defects, including repeated, incomplete and inexact toponyms.¹² The identification (and even number) of individual estates and *pagi* thus remains debatable.¹³ Despite these issues, Judith's dower estates seemingly fell into three major parcels, lying in the Lieuvain (centred

⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 103.

¹⁰ *Recueil*, no. 11.

¹¹ *Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum*, ed. E. Martène and U. Durand (Paris, 5 vols. 1717), i, cols. 122-4, for the original transcription.

¹² *Recueil*, p. 83 n. 5.

¹³ *Rotuli Scaccarii*, ed. Stapleton, i, pp. lxxxi, xcv; J. Adigard des Gautries, *Les noms de personnes scandinaves en Normandie de 911 à 1066* (Lund, 1954), p. 113 n. 62; *Recueil*, no. 11; L. Musset, 'Actes inédits du XI^e siècle III: Les plus anciennes chartes normandes de l'abbaye de Bourgueil', *BSAN* 54 (1959), p. 32; P. Bauduin, 'Du bon usage de la dos dans la Normandie ducal (X^e-début XII^e siècle)', in *Dots et douaires dans le haut moyen âge*, ed. F. Bougard, L. Feller and R. Le Jan (Rome, 2002), p. 439; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 24 n. 16; appendix, *passim*, for efforts to date.

around Bernay and right on the modern boundary of Upper and Lower Normandy), the district immediately south of Caen, and the extreme north of the Cotentin. Ducal possessions in the latter region, for which Judith's dower provides the earliest evidence, are confirmed by subsequent ecclesiastical donations. After Judith's death in 1017, Richard gave several former dower estates to Marmoutier.¹⁴ Similarly, Richard's gifts to Saint-Père de Chartres in the early 1020s included the church of Théville to the east of Cherbourg and its dependencies.¹⁵ Though unmentioned in its confirmatory charter of 1025, Fécamp had presumably gained possession of the island sanctuary of Saint-Marcouf off the Cotentin coast by c. 1000, when the community recorded the miraculous transportation of the chapel roof.¹⁶ The significance of this evidence has not been lost on historians, but interpretations have differed wildly. Van Torhoudt concluded that the disposition of these estates demonstrates that the western *pagi* of the Cotentin and Avranchin thus formed 'un secteur où la présence ducal fut extrêmement puissante dès le début du XI^e siècle'.¹⁷ Hagger, however, has argued that the spread of these properties rather 'emphasises Normandy's lack of territorial integrity in the first years of the eleventh century'.¹⁸ Richard's grant of these properties certainly shows that he must have had both land available in the region and a recognised right to distribute it as he saw fit. As the absence of any reference to estates in the Avranchin suggests, Hagger's interpretation is closer to the realities of the duke's position in Lower Normandy than van Torhoudt's. Detailed analysis of both the geography and wider historical context of Judith's

¹⁴ *Recueil*, no. 23.

¹⁵ *ibid.*, no. 32.

¹⁶ Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum*', pp. 33-4, 44.

¹⁷ van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges', p. 34.

¹⁸ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 24.

dower reveals more about the limitations of ducal authority in the region and the methods used to increase it.

Two significant peculiarities emerge from such a study. Noticeably absent from Judith's dower are any estates in the heartlands of ducal power – Upper Normandy itself. One way or another, however, Judith's properties were still all easily accessible from the east. The latter point in particular illuminates the means by which ducal authority had marched westward. Lying on the extreme edge of Upper Normandy, Judith's estates in the Lieuvin were positioned on the obvious overland path westward from Rouen into Lower Normandy. As Hagger points out, however, Judith's estates in the northern Cotentin and Bessin were most easily accessed from Rouen by sea, via the two major ports of Caen and Cherbourg.¹⁹ The same can be said of those properties granted to monastic houses in both the Bessin and the northern Cotentin – the peninsula proper, surrounded on three sides by the sea – during this period. Maritime connections between Rouen and these Lower Norman ports were varied and extensive. Caen implicitly appears in a miracle collection from Saint-Wandrille, in a story involving a ship carrying grain from the estuary of the Orne, which runs through the town, to Rouen.²⁰ The story of the miraculous transportation eastward of Saint-Marcouf's roof to Fécamp may have been based on the extensive movement of building materials by sea.²¹ When at war with Alan III of Brittany in the 1030s, Richard II's son, Robert the Magnificent, abandoned a planned naval expedition to England and instead sent his fleet, gathered in the Seine estuary, to ravage the Breton coast.²² Robert's interest in shipping is confirmed by the grant of the island

¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 24-5.

²⁰ Above, p. 15 n. 70.

²¹ Above, pp. 81-2.

²² *GND*, ii, pp. 77-9; S. Keynes, 'The Æthelings in Normandy', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 193-4.

of Guetehou to Mont Saint-Michel by one Restald, the duke's former ship-master.²³ The return of the bishops of Coutances in 1025 from exile in Rouen to a temporary residence at Saint-Lô, on the lower reaches of the Vire and thus accessible by sea provides further evidence of maritime transit and communication. Given the significance of the sea, navigable rivers and littoral regions to the initial Scandinavian settlement of Normandy, it should come as no surprise that the earliest evidence for the successful enforcement of ducal authority in Lower Normandy should also come from the hinterland around later coastal centres. The continuing significance of maritime connections is reinforced by the general geographical continuity of these major coastal sites. While the Vikings of the late ninth century had fortified the Cap de la Hogue and pillaged, then secured, Bayeux, Richard II established himself around the nearby towns of Cherbourg and Caen. Similarly, Saint-Lô, like Bayeux raided from the Seine in 889, became the base for the bishops of Coutances returning from their refuge on the same eastern estuary. The ongoing importance of the maritime centres of Caen and Cherbourg for the successful government of Normandy throughout the eleventh century is also attested by William the Conqueror's great outpouring of wealth in pursuit of their further development.²⁴ As Hagger notes, the possibility of communication by sea means that Judith's scattered estates need not suggest 'that the dukes had also brought the region between them under their control'.²⁵ Indeed, aside from Gunnor's supposed dower estates of Livry and Domjean, later granted to Mont Saint-Michel,²⁶ 'there are no places mentioned in ducal *acta* in the Bessin before 1009 located west of a line from Bayeux through Tilly-sur-

²³ *MSM*, no. 33.

²⁴ *Recueil*, no. 224; *Regesta*, nos. 45, 59; D. Bates, *William the Conqueror* (2nd edn., London, 2001), pp. 86-90, for William's construction programme in the two towns.

²⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 24.

²⁶ Above, p. 101.

Seulles to Thury-Harcourt'.²⁷ Similarly, there is no evidence for ducal possessions in the Avranchin or southern Cotentin until the last years of Richard II's reign, when the duke granted property to Mont Saint-Michel there.²⁸ Rather than being 'intérieur et rural',²⁹ Judith's estates in the northern Cotentin were almost certainly on the frontiers of ducal authority in the early years of Richard's reign.³⁰

Maritime concerns also had an important impact on the duchy's external relations, most notably with Anglo-Saxon England. In 991, at the instigation of Pope John XV, Richard I and Æthelred the Unready made a pact agreeing not to aid their respective enemies.³¹ In Æthelred's case that meant the various Viking fleets repeatedly attacking his kingdom, often from bases along the Norman coast. Whatever Richard I's intentions, severing Norman connections with marauding Norsemen was not an easily achievable ambition. We have seen how pirate bands tried to dominate Rouen during his minority and played a vital role in defeating Richard's French enemies in the 960s.³² If Richard I actively enforced this anti-Viking policy, Richard II abandoned it – the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* noting that an invading Danish fleet withdrew to spend summer in Normandy in 1000.³³ In the face of this betrayal, Æthelred launched a reprisal raid against Normandy. Landing at Val-de-Saire in the Cotentin, the Anglo-Saxons were defeated by a local force under the command of Neil the Elder, who was, as we shall see, well-placed to take immediate action against the invaders.³⁴ Cordial relations were at least partially restored by Æthelred's marriage to Richard II's sister, Emma in

²⁷ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 25.

²⁸ *MSM*, no. 2.

²⁹ Musset, 'Actes inédits III', p. 32.

³⁰ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 25.

³¹ *Recueil*, p. 22 n. 15.

³² Above, pp. 89, 97.

³³ *ASC*, C, s.a. 1000.

³⁴ *GND*, ii, pp. 10-14; below, p. 129.

1002,³⁵ though William of Jumièges records that Richard happily accepted a share of the spoils from Sven Forkbeard's invasion of England later that decade.³⁶ Richard II's ever-changing relationship with both England and the Norsemen who beset it offers another insight into the extent of ducal authority throughout Normandy. Both Richard and his father were clearly interested in maintaining political contacts with their counterparts across the Channel, yet their persistent provision of harbours for Norse raiders and collaboration in the distribution of their booty obviously undermined these English interests. Such faithlessness probably derived as much from pragmatic necessity as from financial opportunism. Regardless of their wider English interests, the Norman dukes would have been hard-pressed to deny access to passing Norse raiders, who were just as capable of attacking Normandy as England. The dukes may simply have been unable to police the lengthy Norman coastline against visitors whose arrival may have been awaited enthusiastically by a local populace eager for a share in overseas spoils. Seen in this light, Æthelred's dispatch of forces to the Cotentin (which he instructed his men to ravage indiscriminately, sparing only the holy site of Mont Saint-Michel) takes on a new significance. The Anglo-Saxon assault might be taken as suggestive of a particular involvement in ongoing cross-Channel raids by the region's inhabitants.³⁷

Tracing the origins of the emerging ducal presence in Lower Normandy is a difficult task. Richard II's establishment in the northern Cotentin, revealed by Judith's dower, probably owed much to his mother's kindred. Gunnor's brother,

³⁵ ASC, C, s.a. 1002.

³⁶ GND, ii, pp. 16-18.

³⁷ M. Gardiner, 'Shipping and Trade between England and the Continent during the Eleventh Century', *ANS* 22 (2000), p. 76 notes that, statistically, most recorded cross-Channel voyages were 'generally made to the immediately opposing port on the other side'. Much, then, depends on the base of the English fleet. If operating from Portsmouth, the Lower Norman seaboard may have represented the obvious destination for the English fleet, regardless of political concerns.

Arfast, appears as a notable landholder in this region, granting several estates to Saint-Père de Chartres, before retiring to that monastery in the early 1020s.³⁸ Arfast's nephew, Bosolinus inherited part of the still unidentified *Torgis Villa* (the rest having been given to Saint-Père), but, unable to hold it due to violence and robbery, also ultimately entered the abbey.³⁹ Hagger suggests that Richard II only inherited many of his maternal family's estates late in his reign, after Arfast and Bosolinus' retirement.⁴⁰ Gunnor's family may also have owned various properties in the Bessin, later passed to Mont Saint-Michel and it is possible, though hotly debated, that Arfast's son, Osbern took his toponymic surname 'de Crepon' from the coastal town of that name near Bayeux.⁴¹ An association with the north Norman coast might account for a number of the traditions surrounding Gunnor's family. Their supposed descent 'from the most famous stock of Dacian nobles' suggests recent emigration from overseas, though it is far more probable that Dudo invented this detail to give the ducal dynasty suitably august kin.⁴² Perhaps of greater significance were the circumstances surrounding Gunnor and Richard I's initial meeting, which Robert of Torigny describes as occurring in Upper Normandy, at Saint-Vaast d'Équieville on the river Béthune near Arques in the

³⁸ *Cartulaire de Saint-Père*, ed. Guérard, i, p. 108; Douglas, 'Ancestors', pp. 67-8.

³⁹ *Cartulaire de Saint-Père*, ed. Guérard, i, p. 109; van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni', pp. 230-31.

⁴⁰ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 29. This argument is not entirely convincing. The details of ducal possessions provided by Richard III's dower for Adela (*Recueil*, no. 58), such as the varying levels of castellation in the northern and southern Cotentin do suggest that regional properties were acquired at different times and under different circumstances. Hagger's argument that Richard I and his sons' consent for Arfast's grant to Saint-Père implies the ducal family had 'some future right to the property in question' appears more tenuous. Richard and his sons may simply have given their consent in their capacity as Arfast's overlord.

⁴¹ *MSM*, no. 4; above, pp. 100-101, 121, for Gunnor's estates in the Bessin; *GND*, ii, pp. 272-3; van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni', p. 231 n. 71, for discussion of Crépon.

⁴² *De moribus*, p. 289 – *ex famosissima nobilium Dacorum*. The conclusion that Dudo invented this detail becomes more likely when one discounts the flimsy evidence for Searle's notion that Gunnor was a vital source for Dudo's composition. Compare E. Searle, 'Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of St. Quentin', *Viator* 15 (1984), pp. 133-7, with Lifshitz, 'Dudo's Historical Narrative', p. 117 n. 54, for this argument.

Pays de Caux, where Gunnor's sister, Sainsfrida had married a local forester.⁴³ If true – and having served as abbot of Mont Saint-Michel, Torigny probably had access to local evidence – this story confirms the existence of important early social connections along the north Norman coast.⁴⁴ The dukes, by developing their own familial ties in this littoral area, could use such connections to successfully establish their own authority further west.

Gauging how significant Gunnor's western kindred were for the development of ducal authority throughout the duchy, not least in Lower Normandy, remains difficult. Gunnor's grant of property in the Bessin to Mont Saint-Michel in 1015 does not predate her son's involvement at the abbey, suggesting that familial influence had little role in the extension of ducal authority into the southern Cotentin and Avranchin. More interestingly, though Upper Norman families later traced their genealogical connections to the ducal house through relation to Gunnor's kindred,⁴⁵ there are few references to Lower Norman lineages linking themselves to the ruling dynasty in this manner, despite their presumed ties to Gunnor's kin in the northern Cotentin.⁴⁶ Indeed, there are few references to any sort of close familial relations between Lower Norman lineages and the ducal dynasty.⁴⁷ When such links do appear, their origins are often late.⁴⁸

⁴³ *GND*, ii, p. 266.

⁴⁴ van Houts, 'Countess Gunnor', p. 8, for the probable veracity of this tale, p. 9, for the possibility that Gunnor's Frankish-named siblings may have been the product of a subsequent re-marriage into a Frankish family by her father or mother.

⁴⁵ Above, pp. 98-100.

⁴⁶ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 225-6. *GND*, ii, p. 274 notes that one of Gunnor's nieces married Osmund de 'Centumvilla', *vicomte* of Vernon. One of their daughters was subsequently mother to Baldwin de Reviere. Given the ongoing mystery surrounding the lineage of the Reviere/Vernon dynasty, it is hard to take these relationships as indicative of specifically western familial ties.

⁴⁷ Above, pp. 58-9; below, p. 152 n. 170, for a possible, but unproven marital link between the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur and Richard I's bastard, Robert d'Avranches.

⁴⁸ J. Le Melletier, *Les seigneurs de Bohon, illustre famille anglo-normande, originaire du Cotentin* (Coutances, 1978), pp. 9-10, 119 – Humphrey de Bohon's mid-eleventh-century grant of the collegiate church of Bohon to Marmoutier identifies his parents as Richard I *de Mari* and *Billeheude*. Both were probably locals – Richard's toponym hailing from Sainte-Marie-du-Mont in the northern Cotentin and *Billeheude* being a variation on 'Bilihildis', a name common in western

Given the leading role supposedly played by Gunnor's family in Lower Normandy, the absence of such traditions among local families is somewhat strange. The comparative shortage of available material from the region might be used to explain this lacuna. Such a suggestion is unsatisfactory, however, given the great interest in noble lineages shown by Robert of Torigny, himself a native of Lower Normandy.⁴⁹ Though Torigny's interpolations of the *Gesta Normannorum Ducum* were undertaken while he was still a monk at Bec, his later *Chronicon*, which also includes genealogical data, was completed during his abbacy at Mont Saint-Michel, a fine source of information on the ducal dynasty's western relations, yet few relevant remarks are forthcoming.⁵⁰ The same can be said of Wace, who was born in Jersey and whose ecclesiastical career began in Caen and ended in Bayeux.⁵¹ Furthermore, Lower Norman families were at least partially aware of their relationships with each other.⁵² The author of *De statu*

Normandy and neighbouring Maine (below, pp. 150, 152). The notion that Richard was a companion of Rollo only appears in a now lost fifteenth-century *pancarte* of the Bohon's Longueville descendants. Delacampagne, 'Seigneurs, fiefs et mottes du Cotentin', p. 186 records a similar 'companion' role for Anslech, the ancestor of the Bertram family of the Bessin and northern Cotentin. How they came to be associated with a man remembered in Upper Norman placenames is unknown (*De moribus*, p. 220; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 210 n. 323). In the case of the Nigellide dynasty, ducal connections are an even later inventions, unrecorded until the works of late nineteenth-century French antiquarians, finding their way into S.P.H. Statham, *The descent of the family of Statham* (London, 1925), pp. 3-4, 7, where various ducal marriage alliances are 'suggested'. Some modern historians have argued that Tancred de Hauteville's two wives, Moriella and Frésende were illegitimate daughters of Richard I or, more recently, II (S. de Vajay, 'Mahaut de Pouille, comtesse de Barcelone et vicomtesse de Narbonne dans le context social de son temps', in *Béziers et le Biterrois: XLIII^e congrès, Béziers, 30-31 mai 1970* (Montpellier, 1971), pp. 130-31), but the evidence for this is unclear and comparatively late. The family's earliest chronicler, Geoffrey of Malaterra, makes no specific reference to such a relationship, which should therefore probably be discounted (below, p. 126 n. 52; van Houts, *Normans in Europe*, p. 239 n. 48).

⁴⁹ Robert of Torigny, 'Chronica', in *Chronicles of...Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I*, ed. Howlett, iv, pp. ix-x; 'Extracts', pp. 335, 339, 340, 343-4, for Robert's nephew, Durand, provost of Torigny-sur-Vire and another relative, Philip de Carteret.

⁵⁰ van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni', p. 215.

⁵¹ van Houts, 'Wace as Historian', pp. xxxv-xxxvii, for Wace's life and career.

⁵² This was not always the case. Geoffrey of Malaterra, presumably writing to please his Hauteville patrons, described Tancred de Hauteville and his wife, Moriella, as being of 'outstanding lineage' (*genere splendidam*), but provides no evidence for this assertion (Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae*, i, p. 9). His account of Tancred serving as a military commander in Richard II's household, for which there is no contemporary evidence, was doubtless designed for similar effect (*ibid.*, i, p. 6).

records Geoffrey of Coutances' blood-ties to *vicomte* Neil the Younger. The latter family's possible relationship with the Reviers lords of Néhou is recorded in a grant to Saint-Père de Chartres of c. 1060.⁵³ Despite their mid-twelfth century date, Elisabeth van Houts has convincingly argued that there are many important historical details about Lower Norman families to be gleaned from both Torigny and Wace.⁵⁴ So, too, what Torigny and Wace do not relate may be important. The absence of references to ducal kinship in the surviving Lower Norman genealogical traditions might suggest that Gunnor's family were not as well-connected as has usually been supposed.⁵⁵ This dichotomy in Upper and Lower Norman familial traditions more probably demonstrates the continuing divisions within eleventh-century Norman society. While Upper Norman society was evermore centred upon the powerful ducal house, further west, despite increasing familial connections, the eleventh-century dukes remained distant figures, outsiders with whom local aristocrats only slowly established closer bonds.

The ongoing need to strengthen ducal ties with Lower Normandy may also account for Richard's decision not to endow Judith with any estates in Upper Normandy. His other grants demonstrate that Richard certainly had property to distribute there – indeed, his arrangements for Judith stand in stark contrast to the provisions made for other family members. Dudo's early eleventh-century account of the rebel Riulf's prophecy for Normandy – a land where all property and offices would be owned by the duke's kinsmen – accurately recounts Richard's contemporary creation of a series of new lordships for his close

⁵³ 'De statu', col. 222; *Recueil*, no. 147; van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 22-3.

⁵⁴ van Houts, 'Robert of Torigny', pp. 215-33; idem, 'Wace as Historian', pp. xxxv-lxii. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'Aspects of Robert of Torigny's Genealogies Revisited', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 37 (1993), pp. 21-7 also considers Torigny's information generally sound.

⁵⁵ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 103-104; Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 27-9.

relatives.⁵⁶ With one notable exception,⁵⁷ the great counties – compact lordships centred round major fortresses – that Richard created for his male kinsmen ringed Upper Normandy, protecting the approach to the ducal capital at Rouen from the direction of Lower Normandy, as much as from the rest of northern France.⁵⁸ While Judith's estates in the Lieuvin – in the same region as the county of Brionne and property belonging to the count of Ivry – formed part of this framework, her extensive properties in the Bessin and northern Cotentin did not.⁵⁹ Judith's use of her estates in these various regions, however, suggests that Richard was doing more than just keeping his wife clear of his own centres of landed wealth and authority. Judith used her dower to found and endow a new monastery at Bernay, the estates of which were confirmed by Richard II in c. 1025.⁶⁰ Unlike most Norman monasteries of the period, Bernay was not built on the site of an earlier Frankish foundation, nor was it endowed with any former abbatial estates. Judith's personal choice of site and endowment for Bernay thus offers a unique insight into her attitude towards her Norman estates. Situated in the Lieuvin and given the majority of Judith's dower properties in that region, Bernay's location close to the centres of ducal authority in Upper Normandy probably helped ensure the security of the new community. Judith's choice, however, might also suggest that she was eager to retain properties further west in her own hands.

Judith's decision to retain her western estates, particularly those in the Cotentin, was probably related both to their geographical proximity to her Breton homeland and her pre-existing social contacts in the region. Richard II's reign

⁵⁶ *De moribus*, p. 187 – *terram autem quam possidemus parentibus suis in hæredum suorum possessionem dabit, eosque muneribus nostris affluenter ditabit.*

⁵⁷ Below, pp. 148-53.

⁵⁸ Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 153; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 99, 156.

⁵⁹ Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 201-204, for Rodulf d'Ivry's possessions in the Lieuvin; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman counts', pp. 133-5, for Brionne's interests there.

⁶⁰ *Recueil*, no. 35.

provides few references to ducal vassals living in Lower Normandy.⁶¹ Van Torhoudt has suggested that Judith's familial contacts in the west played a pivotal role in bringing local families into ducal service for the first time.⁶² Of these lineages, arguably the most important was that of *vicomte* Neil the Elder, whose name bears witness to the Hiberno-Norse origins of so many of the region's inhabitants and whose dynasty would be associated from the twelfth century onwards with Saint-Sauveur.⁶³ The *vicaria...Kelgenas* in the northern Cotentin, in which the dynasty's property was concentrated, formed part of Judith's dower.⁶⁴ Neil's first charter appearance as *vicecomes* followed shortly after Judith's death in 1017, when he witnessed Richard's transferral of a number of his wife's former properties in this region to Marmoutier.⁶⁵ By this point, he was already a trusted figure in Norman government, having defended the Cotentin from Anglo-Saxon attack in c. 1000 and co-commanded the ducal castle of Tillières-sur-Avre on the border of the Évrecin, constructed after a combined Norman-Breton expedition against Odo of Chartres in 1013-14.⁶⁶ Though a landholder in the northern Cotentin, Neil's origins lay further south – he held estates on the Cotentin/Avranchin border, near those of his relatives, the lords of Montbray.⁶⁷ Neil's chief southern seat was at La Colombe – given to Mont Saint-Michel by Richard II in a charter of 1022-26, which Neil witnessed.⁶⁸ Van Torhoudt supposes that Neil came into possession of La Colombe only after 1027, but, while this may be true, the grant of 1022-26 represents neither Neil's earliest

⁶¹ *Recueil*, nos. 34, 36; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 170-71; Map 9. Below, pp. 134-5, for possible vassals involved in grants to Mont Saint-Michel.

⁶² van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', pp. 140-41.

⁶³ Above, pp. 36-7, 66, for Hiberno-Norse influences in the Cotentin.

⁶⁴ *Recueil*, no. 11.

⁶⁵ *ibid.*, no. 23.

⁶⁶ *GND*, ii, pp. 12, 22-4.

⁶⁷ Above, pp. 126-7, for this familial relationship.

⁶⁸ *MSM*, no. 2.

appearance in the region, nor his first connection with Mont Saint-Michel.⁶⁹ A Neil, with whom Neil the Elder should probably be identified, appears without vicecomital title alongside several other western lords, including Gunnor's brother, Arfast, witnessing Gunnor's grant of two estates to the monastery in 1015.⁷⁰ In his later years, Neil, perhaps like several other family members, chose to end his days as a monk in the abbey.⁷¹ It seems possible, then, that Neil the Elder was an aristocrat from the southern Cotentin, who, through his association with Mont Saint-Michel, itself closely associated with the counts of Rennes at the turn of the eleventh century, came into first Judith's, and subsequently the ducal dynasty's service.⁷² Neil's family enjoyed close connections to both Mont Saint-Michel and the comital house of Rennes throughout the eleventh century.⁷³

4.3) Ecclesiastical Reform: Richard II and the Church in Lower Normandy

Just as Richard had learnt from his father in seeking out a strategically valuable marriage, he also – as the probable role of Mont Saint-Michel in Neil's recruitment suggests – learnt to use the Church to his advantage. At the beginning of Richard's reign, ducal influence over Lower Norman ecclesiastical affairs remained limited. These limitations are arguably demonstrated by the decision to celebrate Richard and Judith's marriage at Mont Saint-Michel. Though the frontier abbey might be thought a natural meeting place for the houses of Rouen and Rennes, the choice of Mont Saint-Michel as the wedding venue most probably reflected the monastery's close association with the latter dynasty.⁷⁴ Judith's father, Conan I and brother, Geoffrey I were both substantial benefactors

⁶⁹ van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges', p. 20.

⁷⁰ *MSM*, no. 4.

⁷¹ *ibid.*, no. 115, for Neil, nos. 16, 43, 79, for possible family members.

⁷² van Torhoudt, 'Les Bretons', p. 140.

⁷³ van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges', pp. 23-4; *idem*, 'Les Bretons', pp. 140-41.

⁷⁴ Guillotel, 'Les temps', pp. 336-7.

of the Mont.⁷⁵ Both men also chose to be interred there.⁷⁶ Rather than a neutral half-way house, the abbey church in which Richard married Judith in c. 1000 was thus a family monastery and mausoleum for the counts of Rennes – a community still dependent, in the absence of Norman benefactions before 1015, upon Breton and Manceaux donations and closely connected to those same region's ecclesiastical establishments, whose officers regularly witnessed Montois charters and were sometimes former members of the Montois community.⁷⁷ By the time of Richard's death in 1026, the balance of influence at the Mont had shifted substantially. The Norman ducal family had become major benefactors of the abbey, supporting extensive building projects there. Montois monks were teaching in Rouen, while Upper Norman churchmen were increasingly involved in the ecclesiastical life of the community. Even the current abbot was a ducal appointee. While his father had shown little interest in the abbey, Richard's influence during the latter part of his reign is well-documented and wide-ranging.

The fulcrum around which this realignment of interests at the abbey took place was undoubtedly Count Geoffrey of Rennes' death in 1008.⁷⁸ Geoffrey left behind a Norman wife, two young sons and a power vacuum on Normandy's western frontier. While the dual marriage alliance between the houses of Rennes and Rouen had further tied Richard, already the scion of a Cotentin family, into the pre-existing matrix of social relations in Lower Normandy, Geoffrey's death presented another, greater opportunity that the duke pressed to the fullest

⁷⁵ *Actes de Bretagne*, nos. 6, 18, 22.

⁷⁶ *GC*, xi, col. 514.

⁷⁷ Above, pp. 59, 112-13, for Breton and Manceaux activity at Mont Saint-Michel; *GC*, xiv, col. 1044, for Rolland, a Montois monk who became bishop of Dol in c. 1004.

⁷⁸ Above, pp. 2, 115.

advantage.⁷⁹ Geoffrey's sons became wards at their uncle's court and, as Potts noted, it seems more than mere coincidence that 1009, the year after Geoffrey's death, saw Richard throwing his weight around at the border monastery of Mont Saint-Michel for the first time.⁸⁰ In that year, Richard refused to appoint a co-adjutor at the request of the then abbot, Mainard II. Instead, the duke removed Mainard from office, arguing that the abbot's advanced age rendered him unable to discharge his duties properly and that he should thus be replaced entirely.⁸¹ Richard took the unusual precaution of recording his provisions in a highly-formalised charter, noting that he had reached his decision both at the monks' request and having consulted his bishops and nobles.⁸² Dom Jean Laporte argued that the formality of Richard's document suggested, despite his protestations, that he was imposing on the monks an abbot they did not want and that Mainard's deposition was less to do with age and more to do with him falling out of favour.⁸³ Other evidence lends credence to Laporte's suspicions. Mainard's close connections with the comital house of Rennes are revealed by a copy of the annals of Saint-Sauveur, Redon, preserved at Mont Saint-Michel. These state that Count Geoffrey had appointed Mainard abbot of Redon, in addition to his post at Mont Saint-Michel and that Mainard retired there following his deposition from the

⁷⁹ S. Morin, *Trégor, Goëlo, Penthièvre: le pouvoir des Comtes de Bretagne du XI^e au XIII^e siècle* (Rennes, 2010), p. 48 goes so far as to suggest that Richard colluded in Olaf Haroldson's attack on Dol so as to undermine Breton authority in the vicinity of the Mont, but this raid almost certainly preceded the Norwegian's employment by the duke (*GND*, ii, pp. 24-7).

⁸⁰ *GND*, ii, p. 28; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 96.

⁸¹ *MSM*, no. 52 – *Pastoralis etenim curam sollicitudinis quam idem memorabilis senex perficere nequid viribus propriis, subrogati sibi laudabiliter exposcit complere adjutorio fratris*; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 40-41, 58, 117; ii, p. 199, for Mainard's deposition.

⁸² *MSM*, no. 52 – *per consultum episcoporum ac nostrorum nobilium virorum maximeque prememoratorum monachorum rogatu*. Richard may have produced this charter in response to a petition against his decision by some of the monks (*Actes de Bretagne*, p. 68).

⁸³ J. Laporte, 'L'abbaye du Mont Saint-Michel aux X^e et XI^e siècles', in *Millénaire monastique*, i, pp. 67, 69.

latter abbacy.⁸⁴ Mainard survived at Redon as late as 1019; his obit was recorded at Mont Saint-Michel.⁸⁵ There is a danger of misidentification here – as Laporte admitted, the name Mainard was not uncommon in the region.⁸⁶ Nevertheless, it was as likely Mainard's wider responsibilities in Brittany as his advancing years that initially led him to seek assistance at Mont Saint-Michel from Richard.⁸⁷ If Mainard was responsible for approaching Richard, the plan backfired. Richard's aid came at a price – Mainard's age perhaps representing no more than a useful pretext for replacing an abbot whose interests lay more with Richard's neighbours than with the duke himself.

If Richard's dismissal of Mainard reflects a growing involvement in and influence over Lower Norman affairs, the duke's choice for Mainard's successor and his subsequent interactions with the abbey reveal some surprising facts about Richard's efforts to further his interests. Rather than inserting a trusted Upper Norman from the heartlands of ducal power as abbot, Richard's appointment – a young, virtuous monk from the Montois community called Hildebert (1009-17) – was the son of Bernard, a Cotentin landholder.⁸⁸ The duke may have had little choice in this matter. Mainard had possibly selected Hildebert as his potential co-adjutor – *De abbatibus* notes that it was Mainard who appointed Hildebert as his

⁸⁴ 'Aliud Chronicon', col. 1324 – *Eodem tempore sub Gaufrido, Conani filio, Mainardus abbas Rothoniense monasterium et abbatiam sancti Michaelis de Periculo maris optime rexit sed, Rothiense vivens, dimisit.*

⁸⁵ *Actes de Bretagne*, nos. 10 (1009x1019), 11 (1019); Keats-Rohan, 'Identification of Abbots', p. 99.

⁸⁶ Laporte, 'L'abbaye', p. 66. Mainard's dual role, however, would explain the contemporaneous transmission of manuscripts between the two monasteries (*Actes de Bretagne*, p. 67).

⁸⁷ It is tempting to connect Norman influence at the Mont to Mainard's efforts to restore the abbey after the devastating fire of c. 992 (*Rodulfus Glaber*, ed. and trans. France, Bulst and Reynolds, p. 110; Bisson, 'Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel', p. 174; Laporte, 'L'abbaye', p. 64). While Richard II was certainly involved in later rebuilding, the absence of any evidence for Norman involvement before 1009 renders this unlikely.

⁸⁸ *MSM*, no. 2; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 40, 62, 117, 218; ii, p. 201.

successor.⁸⁹ Hildebert was in turn succeeded by another local man, his nephew Hildebert II (1017-23).⁹⁰ The duke worked closely with these men, expanding the abbey's landed endowment and financing an extensive rebuilding project at the Mont, supposedly begun in c. 1023.⁹¹

Richard's grants to the abbey demonstrate both a similar willingness to foster local connections and the continuing limitations of the duke's position in Lower Normandy. Most of the estates Richard gave to Mont Saint-Michel were western ecclesiastical properties – the domains of the old abbey of Saint-Pair, the church of Chanteloup and its appurtenances, Montois estates formerly lost to the abbey and now restored.⁹² Richard's other donations raise interesting issues of interpretation. Some estates, including Bricqueville, Flamanville and Vesly, lay along the coast of the northern Cotentin and Bessin, in areas where, as Judith's dower has shown, ducal power was more firmly established. The status of these estates, however, is problematic. Hagger includes them in his survey of ducal demesne in the Cotentin, so casting them as properties held directly by Richard II.⁹³ In the case of Mont Saint-Michel, however, it is unclear whether the estates granted by Richard were held directly by him or whether he was simply redrafting the obligations of these properties and their current holders. The widespread

⁸⁹ Bisson, 'Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel', p. 174 – *Mainardus...elegit successorem sibi dominum Hildebertum*. Above, p. 111 n. 103, for this source. Both Mainard and Hildebert witnessed *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 10, which might suggest that there were no hard feelings between the two.

⁹⁰ Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 58, 184; ii, p. 202. J. Laporte, 'Les séries abbatiale et priorale du Mont Saint-Michel', in *Millénaire monastique*, p. 271 questioned whether Hildebert I and II were actually one and the same man. Bisson, 'Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel', p. 176 is the earliest source to record the existence of two separate Hildeberts.

⁹¹ *MSM*, app. i, no. 1a; pp. 20-21, for dating both the *Annals* and re-construction work. While Hildebert I only witnessed Norman documents concerning the Mont itself (*ibid.*, no. 4), his successor witnessed a grant to Saint-Ouen (*Recueil*, no. 24) – a further sign of increasing Norman influence at the abbey (Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 274-5).

⁹² Above, pp. 105-106, for the probable survival of rural churches in Lower Normandy.

⁹³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', appendix, pp. 48-55, for a survey of demesne property in the Cotentin.

holdings of Bricqueville, Flamanville⁹⁴ and Lengronne are described as being held by one Grimbald; property at Vesly and on Jersey derived from Durand and Peter the Monk respectively.⁹⁵ Together with Richard's grant of La Colombe (soon afterwards associated with *vicomte* Neil the Elder) and Rouilly (held by abbot Hildebert I's father, Bernard), these ducal donations might represent Richard's role as overlord and confirmer of previous bequests, rather than as landholder.⁹⁶ Irrespective of their precise nature, the location of these properties also reveals the duke's continuing dependence on maritime communication. Ducal property hugged the coast – both Chanteloup and Hérenguerville lay only three miles inland, while the abbatial estates of Saint-Pair were 'bounded to the east by the public road to Coutances' – the old Roman road that ran north from Avranches, straight and true, some fifteen miles inshore from the Cotentinois coast.⁹⁷ The composition of Richard's grants suggests that ducal resources in Lower Normandy remained limited and that much of the interior was still beyond their reach in the early 1020s. Nevertheless, Richard's patronage of Mont Saint-Michel clearly demonstrates both his wider role as guardian and patron of the Norman Church and growing recognition of his authority in the region. Richard's endowment of Mont Saint-Michel from his limited western resources, as opposed to from his more extensive eastern estates was a shrewd choice. Though Richard's own position in Lower Normandy remained tenuous, Mont Saint-Michel, sat on the border of Brittany, Maine and Normandy and with easy access to the Cotentinois coastline, was well-placed to make the most of new properties in the

⁹⁴ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 50 notes that the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur also held land in this vill. There is no obvious reason to think, however, that their property here had been granted to them by the duke.

⁹⁵ This grant represents the earliest evidence for ducal involvement in the Channel Islands.

⁹⁶ *MSM*, no. 2.

⁹⁷ *ibid.* – *terminator ab oriente via puplica tendente Constantias.*

region.⁹⁸ Furthermore, Richard's grants tied Mont Saint-Michel into his grander designs for Norman monasticism, which saw the duke endow several Upper Norman houses, including Fécamp and Jumièges with scattered estates throughout the west.⁹⁹ As with Mont Saint-Michel, these properties were often associated with Normandy's former Frankish monasteries.¹⁰⁰ Though right on the edge of the ever-expanding sphere of ducal influence, Richard's actions show that Mont Saint-Michel was to be treated equally to its trusted Upper Norman counterparts.

With Hildebert II's death in 1023, Richard tried a new tack to increase ducal influence at Mont Saint-Michel still further by appointing one of his trusted Upper Norman reformers to the vacant abbacy. After a failed bid to install Suppo of Fruttuaria,¹⁰¹ Richard finally managed to insert Thierry of Jumièges. No Norman himself, but rather a disciple of William of Volpiano, the Italian reformer whom Richard had brought to establish monasticism at the formerly clerical community of Fécamp in 1001, Thierry was already abbot of Jumièges and *custos* of Bernay by the time Richard appointed him to Mont Saint-Michel in c. 1023.¹⁰² Whatever Richard's hopes, it seems probable that Thierry's elevation to what was effectively his third abbacy did not go down well with the Montois community. The manner of Thierry's appointment is suggestive of an earlier internal election for the vacant abbacy, which was subsequently overturned by order of the duke,

⁹⁸ M. Mollat, 'La seigneurie maritime du Mont Saint-Michel', in *Millénaire monastique*, ii, pp. 73-88, for the development of Mont Saint-Michel's maritime interests from the eleventh century onwards.

⁹⁹ *MSM*, no. 2; *Recueil*, nos. 34-6 – Richard's grant to Mont Saint-Michel should perhaps be dated to his Fécamp court of August 1025, at which he produced a glut of confirmations and extensions of monastic property, for Fécamp, Bernay and Jumièges.

¹⁰⁰ Above, pp. 107-108, for this phenomenon.

¹⁰¹ Bisson, 'Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel', p. 176; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 203; i, pp. 52-5, for the possibility that he was forced out by the monks on grounds of simony. Below, p. 176, for Suppo's return to the Mont.

¹⁰² 'Chronicon Sancti Benigni Divionensis', *PL* 162, col. 824; 'Ex Diversis Chronicis et Gestis', in *RHF*, x, p. 322; H. Chanteux, 'L'abbé Thierry et les églises de Jumièges, du Mont Saint-Michel et de Bernay', *Bulletin Monumental* 98 (1939), pp. 67-72; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 213-15; ii, pp. 30-31, 147-9, 203-204, for Thierry's career.

who instead inserted his own candidate. Whatever the precise nature of his appointment, Thierry was certainly far removed from his predecessors. While Hildebert I and II were clearly acceptable appointees as far as the duke was concerned, they were both members of the monastic community and local men with connections to the abbey's other patrons. By contrast, Suppo and Thierry were outsiders without local links, whose positions relied entirely upon the duke – it would be strange had this not rankled with the monastic community. In the short term, such direct imposition of authority proved influential – Mont Saint-Michel's contemporary re-construction in the Romanesque style owed everything to ducally-supported reformist intervention.¹⁰³ In the long term, however, the duke's efforts to control abbatial appointments led to a backlash against Norman influence at the Mont. The election that followed Thierry's death in 1027 saw an internal candidate without Norman links selected – the Manceaux monk, Almod.¹⁰⁴ Though Richard raised the ducal stock at the leading Lower Norman monastery a great deal, this reaction suggests he attempted too much too quickly.

The 'imposition of a more traditional monasticism' at Mont Saint-Michel under Richard's appointees may also have contributed to the re-location of Fromond, a Montois monk, to Rouen in the early eleventh century.¹⁰⁵ Fromond found himself the subject of an extraordinary poetic diatribe, written during Richard II's reign by Warner – a clerk, perhaps monk of Rouen – for his patron,

¹⁰³ Chanteux, 'L'abbé Thierry', pp. 69-72, for the architectural resonances of Thierry's construction work throughout Normandy.

¹⁰⁴ GC, x, col. 515; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, pp. 177, 195; ii, pp. 60-61, 204-205; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 99-101; Chanteux, 'L'abbé Thierry', p. 67-9. Below, pp. 173-6, for events during Almod's abbacy.

¹⁰⁵ C.J. McDonough, 'Warner of Rouen and the Monk from Mont Saint-Michel', *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 32 (1997), pp. 28-9, for the identification of Fromond; p. 31, for this citation.

Archbishop Robert.¹⁰⁶ Like so many Upper Norman accounts of the west, Warner's attack on Fromond is characteristically derogatory.¹⁰⁷ Warner portrays Fromond as a small-town monk drawn to the bright lights of big city Rouen, driven to break his vows of monastic obedience in pursuit of secular knowledge, money and material possessions.¹⁰⁸ Warner clearly wanted nothing more than for the rustic Fromond to return to Mont Saint-Michel.¹⁰⁹ The circumstances behind Warner's critique, however, reveal a different picture. Warner felt compelled to write to the archbishop in defence of a local *magister* whom Fromond had publically denounced in the abbey church of Saint-Ouen, suggesting that the latter was frustrated 'at the level of musical attainment there, and probably much else'.¹¹⁰ While Warner was keen to cast aspersions on Fromond's literacy, it is clear not only that Fromond was an accomplished scholar, but that Mont Saint-Michel had become a centre of musical theory more advanced than any in Upper Normandy.¹¹¹ Rather than fleeing an increasingly strict regime at home, Fromond may thus have been specifically 'brought to Saint-Ouen to share his knowledge'.¹¹² This story serves as further testament to either the rapid re-establishment of monastic life at the Mont in the late tenth century or its continuation throughout the difficult years of the ninth and early tenth centuries.¹¹³ More importantly, it suggests that Richard's efforts to establish ties with the Lower Norman church were hampered by the self-interest of the Upper Norman clergy. Rouen's ecclesiastical elite happily acquired property, relics and

¹⁰⁶ *ibid.*, p. 26, for Warner's origins; pp. 44-51, for an edition of this poem. The possible allusion to Count Richard of Avranches' rebellion might date the composition late in Richard II's reign (*ibid.*, pp. 25, 48; below, pp. 150-51).

¹⁰⁷ Above, p. 104.

¹⁰⁸ McDonough, 'The Monk from Mont Saint-Michel', pp. 33, 44-5.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 38, 47.

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 27, 44; 41, for this citation.

¹¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 34-5, 41; 29-30, for the possibility that Fromond was *cantor* of Mont Saint-Michel.

¹¹² *ibid.*, p. 41.

¹¹³ Above, pp. 32 n. 43, 109, for this debate.

authority in the west, but were unwilling to share their overwhelming access to ducal patronage with other deserving individuals and institutions.

That Mont Saint-Michel was already an especially influential monastery, possessed of an international, rather than simply local reputation, cannot be denied. If King Æthelred's desire to spare the monastery from pillaging was an invention of William of Jumièges, later Anglo-Saxon appreciation of the Mont's pre-eminent status is confirmed by Edward the Confessor's 'grant' of estates in England while living in exile in Normandy in the 1020s and 1030s.¹¹⁴ Keats-Rohan has suggested that the earliest recorded grant made to the Mont establishes its considerable standing among the French proponents of the monastic reform movement. Involving property previously belonging to the ancient and powerful house of Marmoutier, the charter reveals Montois links with both that abbey and the even more prestigious house at Cluny, along with the latter community's famous abbot, Mainol.¹¹⁵ By contrast, the rest of the Lower Norman church, despite surviving the Viking onslaught better than later chroniclers were prepared to admit,¹¹⁶ was nowhere near as well-established or influential. Nevertheless, the comparative failure of Richard's efforts to restore the episcopal hierarchy and wider monastic life of the region remains surprising. Ineffective engagement with local society appears the most plausible explanation for Richard's limited success.

In terms of the western episcopate, Richard II's reign saw only the most limited advance on the theoretical position set out by his father. In c. 990, Richard I had appointed the first bishop to the vacant see of Avranches since c. 862. In so doing, Richard staked a claim to the archdiocese of Rouen – and with it territories roughly coterminous with the bounds of the later duchy – for the first time.

¹¹⁴ *MSM*, no. 10. Keynes, 'The Æthelings', pp. 190-94, for this charter's authenticity.

¹¹⁵ *MSM*, no. 32, pp. 21-2.

¹¹⁶ Above, pp. 105-108.

While Richard I had established the duke's right to appoint bishops to Normandy's western sees, his appointees, as we have seen, played a negligible role within their dioceses. The bishop of Avranches soon retired to Mont Saint-Michel; at Coutances, the restoration of the prebends, if it should even be assigned to Richard I, rather than his son, ended with the withdrawal of the canons back east to Rouen by Bishop Hugh (c. 990-1025), who continued to reside there.¹¹⁷ Hugh's death brought the long exile of the bishops of Coutances to an end. Even then, however, his successors – the short-lived Herbert (d.c. 1025) and the translated Robert of Lisieux (1026-c. 1048) – fought shy of returning to Coutances, instead taking up residence in the ancient fortress-city of Saint-Lô, on the easternmost edge of their western diocese.¹¹⁸ The bishops' choice of base suggests that newcomers to Lower Normandy faced continuing difficulties. Richard II's estates in the northern Cotentin clustered around the maritime centres of Cherbourg and Caen, where contact with Upper Normandy could be maintained by sea. Situated some twenty kilometres inland on the navigable river Vire, Saint-Lô provided the bishops of Coutances with similar easy access back east. Saint-Lô also controlled the lowest crossing of the Vire and possessed a powerful castle, control of which rendered its bishops almost unique among the Norman episcopate, whose authority rarely had such a major military element.¹¹⁹ The frontier character of early eleventh-century episcopal life is clear.

While the bishops of Coutances held their diocese at arm's length, the early eleventh-century bishops of Avranches made greater efforts to engage with their charges. The end result, however, was much the same. A five-year gap

¹¹⁷ Above, p. 103.

¹¹⁸ 'De statu', col. 218; above, pp. 103, 121.

¹¹⁹ *Recueil*, no. 214; Power, *Norman Frontier*, p. 132; Yver, 'Les châteaux-forts', p. 51. Only the archbishop of Rouen and bishop of Bayeux possessed castles – the latter, of course, being in a similar situation to the bishops of Coutances.

separated Norgod's retirement and Maugis' appointment in c. 1022. Maugis too wanted to retire to Mont Saint-Michel, but Abbot Hildebert II dissuaded him.¹²⁰ The impact these early bishops had in the Avranchin is hard to determine. The internal quarrel that arose during Hildebert I's abbacy between Mont Saint-Michel's clerical and monastic communities over control of St. Aubert's relics has been linked to the revival of the bishopric of Avranches.¹²¹ The eleventh-century *Miracula* (produced at the Mont by the same author as the *Introductio*)¹²² records that the canons unsuccessfully hid the relics of St. Aubert, the bishop of Avranches who had founded their community in 708, to prevent the monks taking possession of them.¹²³ That the then bishop, Norgod, fomented this unrest seems extremely improbable given his personal interest in the monastic community. A more plausible explanation might be that the argument arose naturally after the discovery of St. Aubert's lost skull (venerated at the Mont to this day) during construction work at the abbey.¹²⁴ The monks' acquisition of Aubert's relics and the retirement (attempted or achieved) of two bishops to the Mont emphasise that the abbey continued to dominate ecclesiastical life in the early eleventh-century Avranchin. Maugis, at least, left some mark upon his diocese, laying the foundations in c. 1025, shortly before his death, of a new cathedral church in Avranches – a project that would take over a century to complete.¹²⁵

While Richard's appointees struggled to assert themselves in their western dioceses, the duke looked to the religious houses of Upper Normandy and

¹²⁰ J.-J. Desroches, 'Annales religieuses de l'Avranchin', *MSAN* 14 (1844), p. 418.

¹²¹ *MSM*, pp. 17-18, for dating this incident to Hildebert's abbacy.

¹²² *Chroniques latines*, pp. 259-60.

¹²³ *ibid.*, pp. 304-13.

¹²⁴ *MSM*, p. 20 n. 61.

¹²⁵ The cathedral church in Avranches was not consecrated until 1122, although lengthy gaps between the completion of construction and consecration were not uncommon (*GC*, xi, col. 466-7; D. Levalet, 'La cathédrale Saint-André et les origines chrétiennes d'Avranches', *AM* 12 (1982), p. 121; P. Bouet and M. Dosdat, 'Les évêques normands de 985 à 1150', in *Les évêques normands du XI^e siècle*, ed. P. Bouet and F. Neveux (Caen, 1995), p. 22).

northern France more generally to revive the fortunes of Lower Norman monasticism. As noted previously, the character of contemporary annals from Upper Norman institutions reflected their dual desire to justify the steady accumulation of estates in Lower Normandy and establish each individual institution's primacy in so doing.¹²⁶ Despite the survival of some form of ecclesiastical life in the region during the tenth century,¹²⁷ Richard II clearly wanted to place ongoing ecclesiastical re-organisation throughout Rouen's archdiocese in trusted hands. His reign thus saw ecclesiastical interests in Lower Normandy carved up between the great Norman houses of Fécamp, Jumièges, Saint-Ouen and Saint-Wandrille and French houses, such as Saint-Père de Chartres and Marmoutier.¹²⁸ The distribution of property that followed tells a similar story to Richard's provisions for his wife. As with Judith's dower, the vast majority of these estates lay in the Lieuvin, the immediate vicinity of Caen and the eastern edges of the Hiémois. Explicit references to property in the two westernmost dioceses are rare. The Cotentinois estates given to Marmoutier, Saint-Père and Fécamp all lay in the north of the peninsula, within easy reach of the ducal centre at Cherbourg.¹²⁹ Like Judith's dower, they serve only to emphasise the geographical limits of ducal authority in the region.

How far these limited efforts succeeded in encouraging the revival of monasticism in the region is open to debate. In Upper Normandy, Richard's reign saw aristocratic families not only lend support to ducal foundations, but begin to found smaller religious communities of their own. Collegiate houses were established at Eu, Auchy-lès-Aumale, La Ferté-en-Bray and perhaps Auffay and

¹²⁶ Above, p. 104.

¹²⁷ Above, pp. 105-108.

¹²⁸ Musset, 'La Contribution', p. 61; *Recueil*, nos. 34 (Fécamp), 36 (Jumièges), 44, 53 (Saint-Ouen), 27, 52 (Saint-Wandrille), 32 (Saint-Père de Chartres), 23 (Marmoutier).

¹²⁹ Above, pp. 107, 119, 123-4, 129.

Gournay as well, followed by a glut of aristocratic monasteries from the 1030s onwards.¹³⁰ By contrast, Lower Norman society was seemingly less eager to embrace either incoming monasteries or home-grown foundations. Richard's reign affords only two examples of local benefactions to either French or Upper Norman houses. One was Arfast's donation to Saint-Père in the 1020s. Given that Arfast was a member of the ducal kindred and a very holy man (he had reputedly infiltrated a heretical movement so as to better denounce it during the Orléans trial of 1022), his patronage is perhaps not indicative of the general attitude of Lower Norman society.¹³¹ A gift of property at Livry in the Bessin to Saint-Wandrille by one Albert is the only other contemporary example of local monastic patronage.¹³² The origins of one of Lower Normandy's earliest collegiate foundations might also be less suggestive of local interest in ecclesiastical reform than once thought. Converted to a monastery in the 1080s, the former collegiate community at Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte is first referenced in a *pancarte* of the late 1130s, which states that it was founded 'in the time of duke Richard and *vicomte* Roger'.¹³³ Tradition has dated the foundation to Richard I's reign and identified Roger as an ancestor of Neil the Elder.¹³⁴ Van Torhoudt, however, argues for a foundation date during Richard II's reign and identified *vicomte* Roger not with Neil's lineage, but with Roger I de Montgomery – *vicomte* in the Hiémois, but possessed of estates in the northern Cotentin, perhaps through his supposed marriage into Gunnor's kindred.¹³⁵ Richard II's reign provides only one firm example of a

¹³⁰ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 219, Map 11; Musset, 'Les communautés des clercs séculiers', pp. 7, 28-9.

¹³¹ *Cartulaire de Saint-Père*, ed. Guérard, i, pp. 109-15; Douglas, 'Ancestors', pp. 62-4, 67-8.

¹³² *Recueil*, no. 7.

¹³³ *Regesta*, no. 260; L. Delisle, *Histoire du château et des sires de Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte suivie de pièces justificatives* (Valognes, 1867), no. 48 – *a tempore vetuli Ricardi comitis et Rogeri vicecomitis, qui ecclesiam inchoavit et liberam eam construxit*.

¹³⁴ Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur*, pp. 1-2.

¹³⁵ van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges', pp. 25-7.

Lower Norman landholder endowing a new religious community – Robert du Hommet’s establishment of a collegiate church at Saint-Fromond, notably founded on the site of an older Merovingian institution.¹³⁶

Lower Norman society’s general disinterest in ecclesiastical foundation and patronage has had a marked impact on modern studies of regional history. Describing the difference between the study of tenth- and eleventh-century Norman history, Bates noted that to emerge into the latter ‘is to leave darkness for bright sunlight. The sources suddenly become almost numerous, a fact which itself illuminates changed social conditions’.¹³⁷ The continuing dearth of contemporary material for Lower Normandy demonstrates that the pace of social change in the duchy was far from consistent, even if its ultimate direction remained the same. Though the tragic destruction of the *archives départementales* at Saint-Lô by Allied bombing in 1944 clearly did cause the loss of many local documents, this dichotomy arguably runs deeper than a mere accident of survival. As we shall see, it is not until the second quarter of the eleventh century, with the establishment of ducal abbeys at Cerisy and Caen that the complexities of local society begin to emerge from a growing corpus of literary material. These ducal houses were followed by new local foundations at Lessay, Montebourg and Saint-Sever from the 1050s onwards. The ever-increasing incidence of Lower Norman material over the course of the eleventh century not only charts changing local attitudes to monasticism, but also gives lie to the notion that there was necessarily much early eleventh-century documentary material to begin with.

¹³⁶ Musset, ‘Saint-Fromond’, pp. 475-88.

¹³⁷ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 38.

4.4) Administrative Reform: *Comites* and *Vicecomites* in Lower Normandy

Given the ongoing gulf between the interests of Upper and Lower Norman society revealed by patterns of ecclesiastical patronage, it comes as no surprise that Richard II largely relied upon members of the former to serve not only as bishops, but also as secular office-holders in his extensive programme of improving ducal administration. Richard's reign saw the emergence of a number of official titles conferred upon those aristocrats who acted, in some sense, as the duke's deputies, most notably *comes* and *vicecomes*. While the personnel and geographical distribution of these two offices were markedly different, an analysis of both ultimately supports the wider theme of Lower Normandy's peripheral involvement with the duke during the first quarter of the eleventh century. Of the two titles, *comes* was associated exclusively with members of the ducal kindred. Dudo and William of Jumièges refer to Richard II's uncle, Rodulf d'Ivry, as *comes* during Richard I's reign, while Jumièges and an independent account describe how, soon after Richard II's accession in 996, the new duke granted his half-brother William the castle of Exmes and county of Hiémois, which the latter lost upon rebelling soon afterwards.¹³⁸ Contemporary documentary evidence, however, suggests that the comital title was not granted to ducal family members until the first decade of the eleventh century – with Rodulf acquiring the title between 1006 and 1011 and William not designated as such until 1015, by which time he had been forgiven and probably made count of Eu.¹³⁹ Richard II, then, was ultimately responsible for the extension of the comital title to family members – a move best viewed in the context of his own experimentation with ducal

¹³⁸ *De moribus*, p. 297; *GND*, i, p. 134, ii, pp. 8-10; *GC*, xi, instr., cols. 153-4. Notably, neither Jumièges nor the independent account, composed at the behest of William's wife, Lescelina, explicitly refer to William as *comes*.

¹³⁹ *Recueil*, nos. 4, 9, 13, 14bis, 18; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', pp. 131, 135-7.

nomenclature.¹⁴⁰ While the creation of the comital title arose partly from the need to compensate auxiliary members of the ducal kindred,¹⁴¹ Richard could also use such men, assuming they remained loyal, to advance his own authority. This new use of an old Carolingian title raises two questions pertinent to understanding early eleventh-century Lower Normandy – what powers did counts possess and where in Normandy were they to be found?

The nature of comital authority has been subjected to repeated analysis. Douglas associated Normandy's counts with the ancient Carolingian administrative sub-divisions of the *pagi*, also known by the tenth century as *comitati* or *vicecomitati*, seeing them as, in some sense, agents of ducal governance comparable to the *vicecomes*.¹⁴² While individual counts were often associated with a particular *pagus*,¹⁴³ the estates held by each *comes*, usually culled from a mixture of ducal and ecclesiastical property covered only a fraction of the associated *pagus*. In the cases of Brionne and Ivry (the latter neglected by Douglas), there existed no obvious link between comital estates and an earlier Carolingian *pagus*.¹⁴⁴ As Yver emphasised, the earliest geographical descriptors of comital office refer not to *pagi*, but to the counts' possession of major towns and fortresses.¹⁴⁵ Though control of such military and administrative centres and the later development of considerable judicial privileges within their domains lent Norman counts 'something of an antique air of quasi-public authority', for the most part they remained not officers of ducal governance, but autonomous lords

¹⁴⁰ Above, pp. 2, 117 n. 8.

¹⁴¹ Garnett, 'Ducal' succession', pp. 99-110, for this principle and its limitations.

¹⁴² Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', pp. 149-53.

¹⁴³ *Recueil*, no. 100, in which William describes himself as both *Arcacensis comitis* and *comes territorii quod Talohu nuncupatur* – 'count of Arques' and 'count of the territory called Talou'.

¹⁴⁴ Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 134, for Brionne; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 201-8, for Ivry.

¹⁴⁵ *Recueil*, no. 92 – *Ricardi comitis Ebroice civitatis*; Yver, 'Les premières institutions', pp. 323-5; idem, 'Les châteaux-forts en Normandie jusqu'au milieu du XIIe siècle. Contribution à l'étude du pouvoir ducal', *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 36-8, 49-51.

with prestigious titles and familial links to the ducal house, who, under the duke's watchful eye, played a vital, trusted role in the defence of sensitive, usually frontier regions within the duchy.¹⁴⁶

The military dimension to the new counties reveals much about the geographical extent and interests of ducal authority. Richard II's reign saw the establishment of five counties. Of these, all but one lay in the east – Ivry, Évreux, Eu and Brionne.¹⁴⁷ Subsequently, eastern Normandy would see two further creations – Arques in the Conqueror's reign and, more ephemerally, Exmes, supposedly granted to Richard II's half-brother, William at the start of his reign and later briefly in the hands of Richard's son, Robert.¹⁴⁸ By contrast, western Normandy saw only a single comital creation in these years – Avranches/Mortain. The dichotomy in the treatment of Upper and Lower Normandy is further emphasised by the existence of a count at Brionne. As Bates states, all the Norman counties were 'located at a strategic point on the frontier, Brionne included, since on the river Risle in central Normandy, it lay on the extreme edge of the region in which Richard II's power was concentrated'.¹⁴⁹ Judith's estates around Bernay perhaps performed a similar function.¹⁵⁰ The county of Ivry's territorial make-up also reveals a contemporary interest in securing the line of the Risle, with Count Rodulf receiving estates along the river, possibly even before Richard I's death in 996, if Robert of Torigny's twelfth-century account is to be believed.¹⁵¹ The comital title saw little use beyond the Risle. Counts in the

¹⁴⁶ D. Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London, 1992), pp. 55-6 cited here; Power, *Norman Frontier*, pp. 55-66, 213-18; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 99, 156.

¹⁴⁷ Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', pp. 131-40.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 135-7, 145-6. Though they undoubtedly held land in the Hiémois, Douglas questioned whether either William or Robert were ever officially styled *comes*.

¹⁴⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 156.

¹⁵⁰ *Above*, pp. 118-22, 127-8.

¹⁵¹ *GND*, ii, p. 174; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 201-204, map no. 11.

Hiëmois had only a transitory existence, while Bauduin explains Orderic's assertion that Rodulf d'Ivry was 'count of Bayeux' as resulting from confusion with his son's position as bishop in that city.¹⁵² While Rodulf possessed estates west of the Risle, near Caen, the bulk of his property remained in the east. Richard II and his successors thus ringed Upper Normandy with counties, designed to protect ducal authority not only against outsiders, but also, it must be assumed, against those parts of Normandy where ducal rule was not yet secure.

The existence of a count of Avranches/Mortain thus represents something of a geographical anomaly, one which the limited source material available renders almost impossible to untangle. While there are complexities in the study of Upper Normandy's early comital families, the history of the first counts of Avranches/Mortain is shrouded in almost impenetrable gloom – a degree of confusion that extends even to their geographical affiliations.¹⁵³ This has led to a marked Anglo-French division in scholarly accounts of the early counts, only clarified by Potts in the 1990s.¹⁵⁴ The grant of an allod at Tissey in the southern Cotentin to Mont Saint-Michel in c. 1015 by one Count Robert represents the earliest appearance of a count in the Avranchin.¹⁵⁵ Unlike Richard II's other brothers and half-brothers, Robert is entirely unmentioned in Norman chroniclers' accounts, whether contemporary or later, of this period. His existence and

¹⁵² OV, ii, p. 140 – *Baiocarum comitis*; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, p. 200.

¹⁵³ Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', pp. 133-40, for the complexities surrounding the early holders of Eu, Exmes and Brionne. The early eleventh-century counts are specifically referred to as both *Morituniensis comes* (*Recueil*, no. 214 – a fourteenth-century *vidimus* for Coutances cathedral) and *Abricatinensium comes* (André de Fleury, *Vie de Gauzlin, abbé de Fleury*, ed. R.-H. Bautier and G. Labory (Paris, 1969), pp. 48-9). Castles were established at both Avranches and Mortain during the early eleventh century (Groud-Cordray, 'Le Val de Mortain', p. 192).

¹⁵⁴ Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', pp. 23-35, for the following discussion.

¹⁵⁵ MSM, nos. 31, 60.

relationship to the duke is revealed solely by a small body of surviving charters.¹⁵⁶ Douglas posited that this Robert was a half-brother of Richard II, identifying him with both the Robert who witnessed Richard I's grant to Fécamp in c. 990, attesting after Richard's other known illegitimate sons and the Count Robert who witnessed, alongside Neil the Elder, Richard II's grant of several properties in the northern Cotentin to Marmoutier during the abbacy of Everard (1013-20).¹⁵⁷ Douglas argued that this familial relationship was also evident in the Tissey charter, which states that the grant was approved by 'Count Richard and Archbishop Robert and their mother Gunnor', so identifying Count Robert as Richard II's half-brother by another mother.¹⁵⁸ As Potts notes, the comment in the Tissey charter need not in itself be evidence of a familial relationship between Count Robert and Richard II.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Douglas' theory is supported by the Conqueror's restoration of the church of Saint-James-de-Beuvron to the abbey of Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, originally granted by 'Richard, duke of the Normans and Robert, his brother'.¹⁶⁰ The two men should most probably be identified with Richard II and Count Robert, as Robert's grant of the church of Saint-James-de-Beuvron, alongside that of Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët is independently recorded in the *Vita Gauzlini* – a life of Gauzlin, abbot of Saint-Benoît (1004-1030), composed in the 1040s by Andrew, a monk of that abbey.¹⁶¹ Robert's final (and presumably posthumous) appearance in a Mont Saint-Michel charter, produced

¹⁵⁶ *De moribus*, p. 289 names Richard's half-brothers; *GND*, i, pp. 128-30 lists his legitimate children. Robert's omission is not necessarily malicious, as Jumièges admits ignorance over the identity of two of Richard's legitimate brothers.

¹⁵⁷ *Recueil*, nos. 4, 23; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 144. He should also be identified with the *Rotberti comitis* who witnessed Gunnor's donation to Mont Saint-Michel, contemporaneous with his own (*MSM*, no. 4).

¹⁵⁸ *MSM*, nos. 31, 60 – *Richardi comitis atque Roberti archiepiscopi et eorum matris Gonnor*; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 144 n. 3.

¹⁵⁹ Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', p. 26.

¹⁶⁰ *Regesta*, no. 251 (April 1067) – *Ricardus Normannorum dux et Robertus frater eius*.

¹⁶¹ Fleury, *Vie de Gauzlin*, pp. 48-9; Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', pp. 29-30.

during Maugis' episcopate at Avranches (c. 1022-26), puts the count's earlier grant of Tissey into perspective. The gift can have been little recompense for the slew of estates Robert was accused of having stolen from the monastery during his lifetime, all properties that Richard II vowed to return to the abbey in his charter extending and confirming its lands and privileges.¹⁶²

The county's fate after Robert's death has been the main source of scholarly debate. The Tissey grant details the make-up of the count's immediate family. He had two wives (Bilihildis, followed by Ascelina) and three sons (William, Robert and Richard). Douglas assumed that William succeeded to his father's estates, becoming known to history as William Werlenc, whom Orderic identified as the son of Count Mauger of Corbeil, another of Richard II's half-brothers.¹⁶³ He dismissed as anachronistic and unprovable the copy, in a fourteenth-century *vidimus*, of an eleventh-century confirmatory charter by the Conqueror for Coutances cathedral, which included a grant of property and forest rights in the northern Cotentin and Bessin by one Count Richard of Mortain.¹⁶⁴ This evidence is supported, however, by the testimony of the *Vita Gauzlini*, which states that Gauzlin succeeded in regaining the churches of Saint-James-de-Beuvron and Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët, granted to Saint-Benoît by Robert, 'count of Avranches', after they had been seized by his son and successor, Richard.¹⁶⁵ Richard was originally a novice at the abbey, but on the death of his brothers (William and Robert, who, notably, attest before him in the Tissey charter) his father withdrew him from the house to succeed him, which he duly did at some

¹⁶² MSM, no. 2.

¹⁶³ OV, iv, p. 98; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 141-3, 145.

¹⁶⁴ *Recueil*, no. 214 – *Richardus Morituniensis comes*; Douglas, 'Earliest Norman Counts', p. 145 n. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Fleury, *Vie de Gauzlin*, pp. 48-51, 48 – *Abricatinensium comes*. William Werlenc, similarly titled, later extended the abbey's property at Saint-James, allowing for the construction of a new church and mill (*ibid.*, pp. 72-3).

point between 1015 and the end of Richard II's reign. Robert's grant, then, may have represented an entrance gift upon his son's admission to the monastery, which, following his exit, Richard felt justified in recouping, particularly given the *Vita*'s comment that he found the lands left to him by his father insufficient.¹⁶⁶ The *Vita* adds that Richard subsequently rebelled unsuccessfully against Duke Richard. After the count's flight across the sea, Duke Richard willingly returned the contested properties. Richard II's reign, then, witnessed both the creation and suppression of the first comital dynasty of Avranches/Mortain.

Regardless of the eventual outcome, Richard II's ability to appoint a family member as a count in Lower Normandy, particularly in the Avranchin where, despite growing links with Mont Saint-Michel, his authority seems to have been at its weakest, was an astounding achievement. Questions remain, however, about how Richard orchestrated Robert's introduction to the region and what the counts' activities reveal about ducal authority there. The origins of Robert's territorial endowment are especially obscure. As discussion of Mont Saint-Michel has revealed, there is little evidence for extensive ducal possessions in the southern Cotentin even by the close of Richard's reign.¹⁶⁷ Where, then, did Richard find the resources to endow a count in the Avranchin earlier in his reign? One explanation might lie in the mystery surrounding Robert's parentage. One of Richard I's bastards, nothing is known of Robert's mother. Might she, like Gunnor, have hailed from Normandy's western *pagi*, so providing her son with a pre-existing familial interest there? Though mere supposition, strong western connections would explain the counts' almost total absence from the ducal court, with no recorded eastern appearances after Robert's attestation of Richard I's

¹⁶⁶ Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', pp. 29-30.

¹⁶⁷ Above, pp. 134-5, 142.

Fécamp charter in c. 990.¹⁶⁸ Robert's marriage to Bilihildis, whom Keats-Rohan identifies with the sister of another Montois patron, Ivo fitzFulcoin – a scion of the comital dynasty of Maine who restored substantial estates to the abbey in the borderlands between Brittany, Maine and the Avranchin in c. 1000 – represents another possible sign of early, perhaps pre-existing involvement in the region.¹⁶⁹ The marriage probably occurred early in Richard II's reign, as by 1015 Robert had both remarried and sired three sons (perhaps by his second wife), of whom Richard, old enough to succeed him in the years after 1015, was the youngest.¹⁷⁰ Whatever the source and nature of the new county's endowment, Robert evidently considered his existing estates insufficient. His extensive despoliation of Mont Saint-Michel's estates demonstrates both the count's own desire to extend his property and the duke's continuing unwillingness or inability to act in Lower Normandy. While Richard might have chosen to turn a blind eye to his half-brother's despoliations, this seems unlikely given his contemporaneous efforts to improve relations with the Mont. This theme of stretched territorial resources recurs with Count Richard's seizure of Saint-Benoît's estates, specifically because he found his inheritance insufficient to meet his needs. Whether Count Richard's failed rebellion pre- or post-dated Richard II's restoration of the estates taken from Mont Saint-Michel by Robert is unknown. It remains possible, then, that the young count was driven to desperate measures by the duke's own increasingly

¹⁶⁸ While further references to the counts' western activities were perhaps lost in the disastrous bombing of Saint-Lô in 1944, their absence from the witness lists of contemporary Upper Norman charters cannot be ascribed purely to an accident of survival.

¹⁶⁹ *MSM*, nos. 26, 31, 60.

¹⁷⁰ van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 21-2 posited a further link with the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur, which also used the anthroponym 'Bilihildis'. He provides no solid evidence for this assumption, however, which must therefore remain hypothetical.

direct involvement in Lower Norman affairs. Despite this eventual rebellion,¹⁷¹ the methods used by this first comital dynasty in Lower Normandy – local marriage alliances and ecclesiastical patronage – were those of the duke himself, employed on a smaller scale. A combination of sheer distance and pursuit of personal interests seemingly limited both Robert and Richard's contacts with the duke and their usefulness as agents of his authority.¹⁷²

While his own family proved untrustworthy, Richard II's relations with the men who filled the office of *vicecomes* in the western *pagi* appear to have been far more cordial and successful. Whereas the Norman counts appointed by Richard during the first half of his reign were drawn purely from his kinsmen, the *vicecomites* enjoyed no such familial connections and were often, like many of Richard II's bishops, 'relatively obscure Upper Norman landholders'.¹⁷³ Differences remained, however, between the *vicecomites* of Upper and Lower Normandy and these too reveal much about the nature of ducal authority in the latter region during the first quarter of the eleventh century. The role of the *vicecomites*, like that of the early Norman counts, remains subject to debate. While Norman counts were often associated with a former Carolingian *pagus*, their actual estates, as we have seen, covered only a fraction of each *pagus*. By contrast, each *vicecomes* was responsible for numerous activities throughout a given administrative unit, dubbed their *vicecomitatus* or *comitatus* and usually, though not always, conterminous with an earlier Carolingian *pagus*.¹⁷⁴ The

¹⁷¹ Such rebellions within the ranks of the ducal kindred were far from uncommon (Garnett, 'Ducal' succession', pp. 101-110) and cannot be specifically linked to Count Richard's role in Lower Normandy.

¹⁷² Neither Robert nor Richard attested a ducal charter after their elevation to comital rank. Robert's brothers and half-brothers, Godfrey, William and Mauger, all did (*Recueil*, nos. 18, 24, 69).

¹⁷³ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 116-17, 210-11, p. 116 cited here.

¹⁷⁴ F.L. Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*, trans. B. Lyon and M. Lyon (New York, 1968), pp. 28-34. *Recueil*, no. 99 (dated 1042, but possibly interpolated and thus indicative

continuity implied by the geographical congruity between the Carolingian and Norman periods has led many commentators to argue that the responsibilities of the Norman *vicecomites* were similarly equivalent to those of their Carolingian predecessors – maintaining public order, administering justice, gathering and leading regional military forces and collecting local revenues from ducal properties and prerogatives.¹⁷⁵ Such views, however, overlook the lengthy absence of *vicecomites* from Norman records following the Scandinavian invasion. *Vicecomitati* first re-appear in Richard I's charters, but, as noted previously, these documents survive only as later copies of lost originals – they may well include interpolated, anachronistic terminology.¹⁷⁶ Richard II's reign provides the first reference to an individual *vicecomes*, but not until Robert the Magnificent's reign is a named *vicecomes* specifically associated with a particular *vicecomitatus*.¹⁷⁷ Richard II's reign perhaps saw a marked revival of the office after the partial breakdown of the Carolingian system in the tenth century, as use of the title appears to have steadily increased under his rule. Gunnor's grant to Mont Saint-Michel in 1015 was attested by two *vicecomites*, Tescelin and Anschetil, but six of the remaining witnesses bore the same names as individuals associated with vicecomital office from c. 1020 onwards – Osmund, Geoffrey, Neil, Wimund, Odo and Thurstan.¹⁷⁸ A gradual restoration of the office is also hinted at by Hagger's recent revisionist work on the nature of vicecomital

of later administrative developments – below, p. 204) reveals the complexity of these arrangements. This grant to Cerisy refers not only to the *vicecomitati* of the Cotentin (a former Carolingian *pagus*), but also to those of Coutances and Gavray (smaller, later units based on those settlements).

¹⁷⁵ C.H. Haskins, *Norman Institutions* (New York, 1918), pp. 45-7; Yver, 'Les premières institutions', pp. 325-32.

¹⁷⁶ *Recueil*, nos. 3, 5.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid.*, nos. 10, 83.

¹⁷⁸ *MSM*, no. 4; *Recueil*, no. 35 – all five witnessing Richard's confirmatory charter for Bernay in 1025 as *vicecomites*. All appear independently elsewhere in the charter corpus, beginning with Neil (*Recueil*, no. 23 (1017x1020)).

authority. He suggests that *vicecomites* played a far more limited role in ducal government than previously thought, largely confined to administering ducal property and rights within their *vicecomitates* and only involving themselves in military and judicial matters infrequently, in an *ex officio* capacity.¹⁷⁹ Whatever their precise role, the wider geographical remit of the *vicecomites* and their involvement with ducal property and prerogatives made them more immediate, public representatives of ducal authority than the duke's own relatives, the counts, who were little more than particularly powerful landholders.

Beneath this general portrait, however, significant variations between the *vicecomites* of Upper and Lower Normandy remain. Despite the difficulty of matching individual *vicecomes* to their territorial charges, it has traditionally been assumed that the number of *vicecomites* recorded in eleventh-century Normandy at any one time equalled the twelve Carolingian *pagi* from which the duchy was formed. As Bates notes, however, this view is not unequivocally supported by the available evidence.¹⁸⁰ While twelve *vicecomites* witnessed Richard II's confirmatory charter for Judith's foundation at Bernay in 1025, this list did not include Anschetil, known to be *vicecomes* of the Bessin both before and after that date.¹⁸¹ The turn-over in personnel during the period 1014 to 1026, when twenty-one *vicecomites* administered the supposed twelve *pagi* is also suggestive of a numerical disparity.¹⁸² This discrepancy might be partially explained by the twelve Carolingian *pagi* being joined in the years before 1066 by references to the *vicecomitati* of Bayeux, Fécamp, Coutances and Gavray, among others.¹⁸³ Yet, as

¹⁷⁹ M. Hagger, 'The Norman *Vicomte*, c. 1035-1135: What Did He Do?', *ANS* 29 (2007), pp. 82-3.

¹⁸⁰ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 156-7.

¹⁸¹ *Recueil*, no. 35.

¹⁸² Bates, *Normandy*, p. 157.

¹⁸³ *Recueil*, nos. 36, 99, 203.

the dowers for both Richard II's wife, Judith and Richard III's bride, Adela reveal, the situation in Lower Normandy may have been even more complicated.

In Upper Normandy, Carolingian administrative structures had survived the tumult of the ninth and tenth centuries largely intact – not just the territorial make-up of the units themselves (which, in some cases, bestrode the political frontier with France), but also their original Frankish names.¹⁸⁴ Further west, however, both Judith and Adela's dowers reveal increasing irregularities in the earlier Carolingian system. The terminology and toponymy used in Judith's dower provides the earliest evidence of such changes. As noted previously, Judith's dower consisted of three broad clusters of property spread throughout Lower Normandy – a distinction made as much in the grant itself as by later historians charting the location of these holdings on modern maps. The dower document describes the first set of estates as lying *in pago videlicet Sisoienne* – the old Carolingian *pagus* of the Lieuvin. The next two groups, however, were located by reference not to the *pagi* in which they lay, but to their appropriate *vicariae* – Cingal and *Kelgenas*.¹⁸⁵ While the absence of any mention of the wider *pagi* of the Bessin and Cotentin respectively may, at a push, be taken as indicative of a temporary breakdown in earlier administrative structures, the treatment of the *vicariae* certainly illustrates one major change from the pattern of administrative continuity common in Upper Normandy. Though the *vicariae* were themselves old Carolingian units with Frankish names, by the eleventh century Judith's Cotentinois *vicaria* was identified by a Scandinavian toponym – the unidentified *Kelgenas*. While Judith's dower hints at changes, the terminology and toponymy

¹⁸⁴ The Vexin was famously divided into the Vexin Normand and Français, so retaining the earlier Frankish name. The Méresais also survived, despite the absorption of half its territory into the Évrechin, probably at some point in the tenth century (Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 58-9).

¹⁸⁵ *Recueil*, no. 11. A *vicaria* was a Carolingian administrative sub-division of the *pagus*.

of Richard III's grant to Adela in c. 1027 are even further from the established Carolingian system. In addition to the *comitati* of Coutances and Bayeux (which, as the further specification of the *civitatem que appellatur Constancia* demonstrates, were presumably separate from the urban centres themselves), Adela was granted the *pagi* of Saire (*Sarnes*), *Rosthelnensis*, *Helgenes*, La Hague (*Haga*) and Baupiais (*Balteis*).¹⁸⁶ All of these *pagi* and, indeed, both the *civitas* and *comitatus* of Coutances lay within the bounds of the greater Carolingian *pagus* of the Cotentin. All these so-called *pagi* also bore names that were clearly Scandinavian, rather than French in origin.¹⁸⁷ This transformation bears witness not only to the Cotentin's significant Scandinavian heritage, but also to the comparative irrelevance of earlier administrative systems in a region 'particulièrement éloignée du centre d'autorité rouennais'.¹⁸⁸ While the broad framework of the Carolingian system clearly survived in Lower Normandy (as demonstrated by the continuing existence of the Cotentin, Avranchin and Bessin as administrative units), the anomalous use of terminology in these two dowers¹⁸⁹ suggests that Richard II was forced to partially (and inaccurately) restore local administrative structures, based on the pre-existing Carolingian system with which he was familiar from Upper Normandy.

If Lower Norman administrative structures were atypical of those found elsewhere in the duchy, so too those individuals who held vicecomital office in the region during Richard II's reign stand apart from their eastern contemporaries.

¹⁸⁶ *Recueil*, no. 58 – the *pagi* of *Rosthelnensis* and *Helgenes* are mentioned in only one of the two seventeenth-century copies of this document.

¹⁸⁷ Fellows-Jensen, 'Scandinavian place-names', p. 119.

¹⁸⁸ Yver, 'Les premières institutions', pp. 310-11, p. 311, for this citation. Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 26 similarly notes that the inaccurate use of terminology in these dowers 'probably suggests an attempt to establish the legitimacy of ducal rule [over the Cotentin] rather than the continuity of Carolingian institutions'.

¹⁸⁹ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 26 also notes that Adela's dower provides the only use of the Carolingian term *curtes*, in place of *ville*, in any Norman ducal *acta*.

The vast majority of Richard's household officers, *vicecomites* and even bishops appear to have come from comparatively lowly Upper Norman families.¹⁹⁰ Only in the 1030s and 1040s did powerful Upper Norman families begin to assert hereditary control over these offices of state.¹⁹¹ For the most part, Richard II's *vicecomites* left only fleeting traces in the contemporary charter corpus and seemingly played little role in the foundation of these later office-holding dynasties.¹⁹² Richard's Lower Norman *vicecomites*, however, were exceptional in both respects, being local men who clearly did establish long-lasting families closely associated with their respective offices. It is difficult to consider Neil the Elder, with his Hiberno-Norse name, his extensive ecclesiastical and social contacts in the region and estates throughout the Cotentin, as anything other than a local man come good, whatever his connection to Richard's first wife, Judith.¹⁹³ Furthermore, Neil's command of armies and castles and frequent appearances in both charter and chronicle sources from across Richard's reign mark him out as one of the duke's most powerful and trusted adherents.¹⁹⁴ Despite rebellion and deposition, the dynasty Neil established would remain closely associated with vicecomital office in the Cotentin into the mid-twelfth century.¹⁹⁵ Neil's counterpart in the Bessin, Anschetil, also first emerges under Richard, witnessing

¹⁹⁰ Above, p. 153.

¹⁹¹ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 117-18.

¹⁹² *Recueil*, no. 10; *MSM*, no. 4 – the earliest known Norman *vicecomes*, Richard attested a ducal charter dated to before 1007 and is described as *filium Tescelini*, but it seems unwise to identify Richard's father with the only known *vicecomes* Tescelin, who witnessed Gunnor's grant to Mont Saint-Michel in 1015. *Recueil*, no. 31; *GND*, ii, pp. 100-102 – Thurstan Goz first appears during the period 1017-25, but he too cannot truly be said to have founded an hereditary dynasty of office-holders, as he and his son held different *vicecomitati*.

¹⁹³ Above, pp. 129-30.

¹⁹⁴ *GND*, ii, pp. 12, 22 (earliest appearance dated c. 1000); *Recueil*, nos. 23 (dated 1017x1020), 31, 33, 34, 43, 55; *MSM*, no. 2, also perhaps nos. 4, 31, where he appears simply as *Nielli*.

¹⁹⁵ *OV*, vi, pp. 510-14; Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur*, pp. 27-9 – Neil's last known vicecomital descendant, his great-grandson Roger, was murdered during an ambush in c. 1138, while defending the Cotentin against the enemies of Stephen of Blois. His surviving friends and kinsmen exacted a bloody revenge.

ducal *acta* more regularly in Robert's reign.¹⁹⁶ He established a family that eventually dominated the *vicecomitati* of both the Bessin and Avranchin.¹⁹⁷ The *Alveredus vicecomes* who witnessed two of Richard II's charters should perhaps be identified with another leading Lower Norman landholder of the time, Alfred the Giant of Gavray, who first appears witnessing a Bellême charter in c. 1025, before becoming one of Duke Robert's military commanders in the 1030s.¹⁹⁸

4.5) Conclusion

Rather than being imposed through the threat of force, ducal authority in early eleventh-century Lower Normandy depended upon the co-operation of local elites and institutions. Whereas Richard II favoured lowly figures as *vicecomites* in Upper Normandy, his courting of well-established local families in Lower Normandy secured an influential cadre of regional officers who contributed more extensively to ducal government than any of their peers. The careers of Richard's kinsmen, the counts of Avranches/Mortain suggest that they also understood the importance of establishing strong local relationships. Count Richard's eventual rebellion, however, emphasises the division between local experience and outside talent that has been rehearsed throughout this analysis of Richard II's reign. At Mont Saint-Michel, ducal influence waxed ever stronger during Richard's reign, but relations with the community differed, both in the long- and the short-term, depending on whether the abbot was a local or an outsider, whether they had ducal support or not. Mont Saint-Michel itself rose above it all, remaining both the equal of (perhaps, in some ways, superior to) its Upper Norman peers and an

¹⁹⁶ *MSM*, no. 4.

¹⁹⁷ Anschetil's grandson, Ranulf le Meschin, earl of Chester became *vicomte* of both *pagi* in 1120 due to the patronage of Henry I and his kinship with the Goz dynasty.

¹⁹⁸ *Recueil*, no. 35; *MSM*, no. 2, for Alfred *vicecomes*. *GND*, ii, p. 58; *RR*, i, lines 2609-2612, 2641-2728; ii, lines 3561-3584; *Recueil*, nos. 33, 69, 99, 195; below, pp. 171, 177, 188, for Alfred the Giant.

ecclesiastical force not just in Lower Normandy, but in the neighbouring Breton and Manceaux borderlands as well, overshadowing ducal attempts to introduce and embed other monastic houses and episcopal appointees in the region. Lower Norman aristocrats appear to have embraced the ducal example of ecclesiastical patronage much later than their eastern counterparts. Of those Lower Norman foundations that there were, some, most notably Saint-Sauveur, perhaps owed their origins to Upper Norman nobles, who, like the duke himself, were slowly establishing themselves in the region. Such colonisation, alongside the appearance of Neil the Elder and his colleagues in ducal service, evince extensive contemporary contact between Upper and Lower Normandy. Nevertheless, both the difficulties outsiders faced in establishing themselves in the region and the limited local (and, sometimes, Upper Norman) support for Richard's wider ecclesiastical programme suggest that such contact was, to some degree, on Lower Normandy's own terms, no matter how much Richard may have wanted to set the pace with his ecclesiastical and secular appointments.

That this was the case should come as no surprise. The preceding analyses of both the geographical composition of ducal estates and familial contacts in the region have demonstrated that Richard II was not nearly so well-established or connected in Lower Normandy as has been previously supposed. Richard consolidated his authority in the east by ringing Rouen with powerful counties controlled by trusted family members; in Lower Normandy, his authority, like that of his Viking predecessors, reached only so far inland. Just as in the tumultuous ninth and tenth centuries, Normandy's coast and rivers remained vital thoroughfares of power – the primary medium through which Richard projected his authority over the western reaches of his duchy, starting in the northern

Cotentin and gradually extending southward. Despite Gunnor's presumed local links, Richard remained disconnected from Lower Normandy's leading families, who displayed little interest in propagating ties to the ducal house, whether real or imagined. Indeed, it was Richard's Breton wife, Judith who apparently played the leading role in establishing connections with local landholders. It was not until the retirement of his uncle, Arfast to Saint-Père in c. 1020 that Richard appears as a major landholder in the southern Cotentin. The partial breakdown of Carolingian administrative systems, which remained largely intact further east, is also indicative of Lower Normandy's continuing distance from the duchy's Upper Norman heartlands.

By the time of his death in 1026, Richard II had advanced the cause of ducal power in Lower Normandy enormously. Despite the slow pace of ecclesiastical revival in the region and the qualified success of the first counts of Avranches/Mortain, Lower Normandy's native landholders had come to recognise Richard's authority and serve in his administration. Ducal influence at Mont Saint-Michel had also become a political reality, celebrated by Richard's grant of c. 1025. It is worth recalling, however, that Richard's greatest advances were made during the power vacuum that followed the death of his former ally, Geoffrey I of Rennes in 1008. With Geoffrey's half-Norman sons in Richard's care and Richard's sister administering her husband's Breton county, one of Richard's natural rivals in Lower Normandy was temporarily out of the way. It was in this context that Dudo penned his work extolling Rollo's ancient, royally-granted rights over Brittany.¹⁹⁹ The years following Richard II's death, however, would see Geoffrey's son and heir, Alan III, come of age. Faced with a resurgent

¹⁹⁹ *De moribus*, p. 168; *History*, trans. Christiansen, p. 195 n. 204.

Brittany, the reigns of Richard's sons would see the extension of ducal authority over Lower Normandy seriously challenged for the first time. As will be shown in the next chapter, while Richard III and Robert the Magnificent were up to the task, this and other challenges reveal yet more about the duke's relationship with the furthest reaches of his realm.

Chapter 5) War in the West: The Triumph of Robert the Magnificent

5.1) Family Matters Revisited: Richard III, Adela and Lower Normandy

Just as Richard II had faced rebellion following his accession to the dukedom, so too his eldest, favoured son, Richard III, was beset by difficulties after his father's death on 28 August 1026.¹ Probably in the hopes of securing fraternal loyalty, on his deathbed Richard II granted his younger son, Robert, the Hiémois to hold under his brother.² Richard's attempts at fairness proved in vain. Robert soon rebelled against Richard III, holding his recently-received county in contempt and eventually withdrawing to Falaise, where he was subsequently besieged by the new duke.³ Richard no sooner secured his brother's submission and returned to Rouen than he died, on 6 August 1027, apparently murdered by poisoning – the first of several such allegations at the mid-eleventh-century Norman court.⁴ Lasting less than a year, Richard III's brief reign nevertheless reveals much about the development of ducal authority in Lower Normandy, largely as a result of the young duke's marital and extra-marital relations. While Richard was largely tied up with military operations against his brother, he also found time to prepare a dower for his betrothed, Adela. Though the wedding itself may never have taken place, this document remains of considerable importance and not simply in the administrative field discussed already above.⁵

Adela is an interesting, mysterious figure in her own right. Traditionally identified with the daughter of Robert the Pious of France and later wife of Count

¹ Garnett, 'Ducal succession', pp. 91-3 dismisses the traditional view that Richard II had already associated Richard III with the ducal title during his lifetime.

² *GND*, ii, p. 40; 44 n. 3, for the possibility that Robert had no more than the custody of Exmes.

³ *ibid.*, p. 44.

⁴ *GND*, ii, p. 46. William of Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, ed. and trans. R.A.B. Mynors, R.M. Thomson and M. Winterbottom (Oxford, 2 vol., 1998-9), i, p. 211, for the earliest reference to Robert being responsible for this poisoning.

⁵ *Recueil*, no. 58; above, pp. 156-7.

Baldwin V of Flanders,⁶ the latter marriage may account for the claims of consanguinity subsequently raised against William the Conqueror and Matilda's marriage.⁷ The survival of two copies of the dower in the cartularies of Saint-Pierre d'Aire-sur-la-Lys, founded by Baldwin is suggestive, but no more.⁸ The absence of any firm contemporary evidence for this identification has led to challenges from both van Houts and Hagger. William of Jumièges described Adela of France as still being an infant when she married Baldwin, strongly implying that she could not have been married previously.⁹ When discussing Richard's marriage to Adela, Jumièges made no reference to any royal connections, which we might expect had she really been the French king's daughter.¹⁰ The likelihood is that Richard and Baldwin's Adela were two different individuals. Hagger suggests that, like Gunnor and Judith before her, Adela already had important familial connections in Lower Normandy and may have been chosen as a bride and granted substantial ducal estates in the region for that very reason.¹¹ That Richard was not above using familial ties to strengthen ducal connections in Lower Normandy is supported by the marriage of his own illegitimate daughter, Alice to Rannulf, *vicomte* of the Bessin – though this marriage may post-date Richard's death.¹² Both Alice and, perhaps, Adela's marriages illustrate the dukes' continuing desire to bind Lower Norman families ever closer to them, by whatever means available.

⁶ M. de Boüard, *Guillaume le Conquérant* (Paris, 1958), p. 72; D.C. Douglas, *William the Conqueror: The Norman impact upon England* (London, 1964), p. 77.

⁷ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 72.

⁸ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 25 n. 21.

⁹ *GND*, ii, pp. 52, 53 n. 2.

¹⁰ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 25 n. 21.

¹¹ *ibid.*, pp. 25, 30-31.

¹² Torigny, 'Chronica', p. 24; J.-M. Bouvris, 'Une famille de vassaux des vicomtes de Bayeux au XI^e siècle: Les Broc', *Revue du Département de la Manche* 19 (1977), pp. 9-10.

Whether of royal birth or not, Richard III undoubtedly intended his bride, like Gunnor and Judith before her, to play a major part in the expansion of ducal authority in Lower Normandy. Though Bates suggested that Richard III may have been forced to give Adela property in the Cotentin due to the depletion of ducal resources in Upper Normandy, Hagger notes that later dukes freely gave estates further east to both wives and monasteries until the mid-eleventh century.¹³ The deliberate choice of dower for Adela, almost exclusively composed of property in the Cotentin, demonstrates the steady westward progression of ducal grants, the intensification of ducal authority and continuing dynastic ambitions in this region. The majority of Adela's properties lay in areas where ducal authority was already established – in the northern Cotentin, where Judith had received land,¹⁴ the Vire valley, to which the bishops of Coutances had returned in 1025,¹⁵ and the emerging economic powerhouse of Caen on the coast of the Bessin.¹⁶ Further assessment of these properties indicates both how far ducal authority in the region had advanced since Richard II's dower for Judith and the continuing constraints upon it. Judith was provided with a slew of rural estates in the northern Cotentin that were 'widespread, undeveloped [and] insecurely held'.¹⁷ By 1026, the region had been totally transformed. Castles – administrative and military centres of ducal governance, as well as visual symbols of their authority – now stood at Cherbourg, Brix and Le Homme. A new administrative framework had been imposed, seemingly covering the entirety of the peninsula proper, with the five

¹³ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 152-3; Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 30-31.

¹⁴ The castles of Cherbourg, Le Homme and Brix, an estate in Valognes, the abbatial property of the former Merovingian house of Portbail and the *pagi* of Saire, Baupiais, La Hague and *Helgenes*. The other unidentified *pagi* of *Rosthelensis*, with its Scandinavian toponym, probably also lay in this region. *Recueil*, no. 58, p. 182, for details of these estates and those that follow.

¹⁵ The estates of Esglandes and Moyon; above, pp. 103, 121, 140, for the return of the bishops of Coutances to Saint-Lô.

¹⁶ Adela was to receive the whole town of Caen, with its churches, vineyards, meadows, mills, market, port and all other appurtenances.

¹⁷ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 140.

pagi of Saire, Bauplois, La Hague and the unidentified *Rosthelnensis* and *Helgenes* reporting to Adela. As discussed above, the unusual mixture of Carolingian terminology and Scandinavian toponyms suggests that Richard II had tried to import a system familiar from Upper Normandy which had broken down further west, perhaps not simply for administrative reasons, but also ‘to establish the legitimacy of ducal rule over the region’.¹⁸ In the northern Cotentin, then, ducal power had come of age through a combination of methods, including military architecture, complex administration and claims to the rightful inheritance of a reinstituted pseudo-Carolingian infrastructure.

Yet Adela also received property in areas where ducal authority had until c. 1026 been poorly attested, namely the southern Cotentin.¹⁹ She held the city and *comitatus* of Coutances and estates at Ver, Cérences, Agon, Percy and Hambye.²⁰ This represented a marked change from the earliest at all reliable account of ducal property transactions in the Avranchin and Cotentin discussed previously, namely Richard II’s great charter of c. 1022-25, which confirmed, expanded and restored Mont Saint-Michel’s holdings.²¹ This grant included former ecclesiastical estates, properties closely associated either therein or soon afterwards with local families and lands supposedly gifted by William Longsword. All were within twenty miles of the Cotentinois coast. Adela’s dower confirms the recent dependence upon the coastline. Richard III granted her all of the *comitatus* of Coutances, save for two properties granted to Archbishop Robert of Rouen, probably at Varreville and Saint-Marcouf – both, like the properties in

¹⁸ Hagger, ‘How the west was won’, p. 26; above, pp. 156-7.

¹⁹ Above, pp. 100-101, 103, 140, for the dukes’ failure to re-establish Coutances’ prebends and Richard I’s possible grants to Saint-Taurin d’Évreux.

²⁰ *Recueil*, no. 58.

²¹ *MSM*, no. 2; above, pp. 134-6.

the Mont Saint-Michel grant, hugging the coast of the Cotentin peninsula.²² The remainder of Adela's dower, however, suggests a considerable advance in ducal authority in the southern Cotentin in the mid-1020s. Her estates extended considerably further inland than those granted previously, with Percy and Hambye sitting on the upper reaches of the river Sienne. Given the greater geographical range of these grants and absence of castles amongst the properties concerned, Hagger concluded both that 'domination had been effected more peaceably in that area [and] that ducal control had now been imposed across the Cotentin as a whole'.²³ This is, perhaps, going a little too far. No castles were recorded amongst Judith's estates in the northern Cotentin at the turn of the eleventh century, but they had subsequently appeared by the time of Adela's dower. The absence of castles, then, might instead represent the nascent stage of ducal authority in the southern Cotentin in 1026 rather than a completely successful, peaceful takeover. Certainly castles would later be built at several of these sites, including Cérences. The very existence of a *comitatus* of Coutances, apparently separate from the *comitatus* of the Cotentin by 1042, is itself peculiar and suggests that, as in the north, the dukes had made something of a hash of reconstructing a pseudo-Carolingian administrative framework in recently-acquired territory.²⁴ The limited development of ducal rule over these properties perhaps owed much to their likely origin. Hagger suggests that they were inherited from Gunnor's kindred, perhaps after her brother, Arfast withdrew into the monastery of Saint-Père de Chartres in

²² Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 25, 54-5.

²³ *ibid.*, p. 26.

²⁴ *Recueil*, no. 99; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 26. Below, p. 204, for this complicated charter.

the early 1020s or when his nephew, Boselinus abandoned his share of his uncle's estates due to the deprivation of outlaws soon afterwards.²⁵

These arrangements also emphasise the vital role played by maritime and riparian connections in spreading ducal property and power westward. Adela's estates in the southern Cotentin all lay along the Sienne valley – Coutances and Agon at the river mouth, Ver and Cérences controlling important crossings, Percy and Hambye amongst its headwaters. Richard's charter identifies the estates to be granted by reference to the sea and rivers. Ver and Cérences are described as lying *super fluvium Sane*; in the Bessin, Caen lies *super fluvium Olne*; Agon is a *curtem supra mare*; while Portbail *sita est super aquam Jor fluctum* – this last literally describing the abbey's location on the estuary of the river Gerfleur, 'on the waving water of the Gerfleur'.²⁶ The location of these properties was no accident of geography. While the sea and rivers were certainly convenient local landmarks for identifying estates, they also enter Adela's dower, both implicitly and explicitly, as sources of wealth and means of communication. Lying on the Vire, though not specifically associated with it in the text, Esglandes was granted 'with its waters and fisheries' and Richard also gave the *aquae* of the *pagi* of Bauplois and Saire.²⁷ More obviously, the abbey of Portbail, the *pagi* of Saire, La Hague, *Rosthelnensis* and *Helgenes* and Caen itself were all granted *cum portu maris* and much of the wealth of the market also granted at Caen must have derived from the maritime and riparian trade that passed through such harbours.

Lower Normandy had offered immense opportunities during Richard II's reign. The progression in ducal authority evident in Adela's dower demonstrates that those opportunities had not been wasted. Nevertheless, we should not assume

²⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 29.

²⁶ *Recueil*, no. 58.

²⁷ *ibid.* – *cum aquis, piscatoriis*.

that even in the Cotentin everything was done and dusted by c. 1026. Richard III's provision for his new bride itself represented a further attempt to shore up and extend ducal control over recently-acquired possessions. Of course, the growing security of the ducal position in Lower Normandy is as much evidenced by the context of Adela's dower as by its content. As a result of Robert's rebellion in the Hiémois, central Normandy in 1026-7 was a major theatre of military activity. Richard III clearly felt secure enough in his hold over the duchy to provide for his future bride in the most geographically distant part of his realm – the ease and regularity of passage along the coast bypassing Normandy's troubled central districts. Much remained to be done, however, before the strength of ducal rule in the southern Cotentin, let alone in the Avranchin matched that attained in the peninsula proper over the course of the preceding quarter-century. Ultimately, Adela played no part in the ongoing story – Richard's untimely death cut short his ambitious plans for her. Instead, his rebellious brother and successor as duke was to take a far more direct role in Lower Norman affairs.

5.2) War & Influence: Duke Robert, Brittany and Mont Saint-Michel

As we have seen, Richard II's plans for his younger son, Robert, ultimately came to naught. His intentions, however, are revealing. Lying south-south-east of the coastal entrepot of Caen and south-west of the existing countships of Brionne and Évreux, Robert's placement in the Hiémois, irrespective of the precise nature of his role,²⁸ represented a marked extension inland of ducal interests. Robert's continuing involvement in the region during the late 1020s, including his relationship with Herleva and campaign against the Bêlleme family near Alençon (whose hold over the bishopric of Sées had been briefly broken already by

²⁸ Above, pp. 147 n. 148, 163.

Richard II), provides further evidence of growing ducal ambitions in the interior.²⁹ Nevertheless, the civil war that followed Richard III's accession has been seen as inaugurating a period marked 'by the disintegration of ducal government, and by a complex transformation in the powers and organisation of the aristocracy'.³⁰ The following quarter-century saw the Norman aristocracy expand their landed wealth and defend it with private castles, gain hereditary control over ecclesiastical and governmental positions, and found collegiate churches and monasteries, previously the preserve of the ruling dynasty.³¹ In Lower Normandy, these changes would alter the shape of local society and encourage the gradual acquisition of estates by Upper Norman families as part of the extension of their power and interests. Robert's reign was certainly unsettled. With suspicion surrounding Richard III's death and Robert's recent past as an unsuccessful rebel, the new duke faced an uphill struggle to establish his authority. His father's former advisors were clearly unconvinced. Both his uncle, Archbishop Robert of Rouen and his cousin, Hugh d'Ivry, bishop of Bayeux caused trouble during the early years of Robert's reign. Both possessed estates in Lower Normandy – the archbishop's being referred to in Adela's dower, Hugh's being particularly extensive given his position in the Bessin.³² In both cases, the focus of rebellion remained Upper Normandy, with campaigning around Évreux and Ivry

²⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 68-70, for Robert's involvement with the Bêlleme family. Bates characterised such campaigns as being directed 'against [the] erosion of the Norman frontier' (ibid., p. 69). In the context of ducal expansion sketched here, they might be more properly viewed as the active enforcement of earlier theoretical claims of authority. E.M.C. van Houts, 'The Origins of Herleva, mother of William the Conqueror', *EHR* 101 (1986), pp. 399-404, for Herleva's origins in the Hiëmois. Robert and Herleva's close relationship seemingly precluded the development of further marital ties with Lower Normandy in the manner of the duke's grandfather, father and, potentially, brother.

³⁰ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 237.

³¹ ibid., pp. 99-101, 112-21, for these developments.

³² Hugh was the first member of the ducal kindred to be appointed to a bishopric (as opposed to an archbishopric). It is tempting to link his appointment as bishop to his father's possession of estates in the Bessin (above, p. 148, for Rodulf d'Ivry).

respectively.³³ While Robert's reign may have been a period of change and upheaval, characterising it as one in which ducal authority was consistently undermined overlooks the progress made in Lower Normandy. As we shall see, Robert was more engaged in Lower Norman affairs than any of his predecessors – an involvement that began with his humbling of Alan III of Brittany in the 1030s.

William of Jumièges provides the sole account of this conflict, which cannot be dated any more accurately than to the early 1030s, most probably c. 1033.³⁴ Jumièges' narrative effectively breaks down into three set pieces. Robert initiated military action, gathering an army and marching west to the Couesnon, near which he raised a castle at *Caruscas*. He then crossed into Brittany, pillaging the area around Dol and returning home rich with plunder.³⁵ Alan launched a reprisal raid on the Avranchin, only halted when he was defeated in battle by the guardians of *Caruscas*, *vicomte* Neil the Elder and Alfred the Giant.³⁶ At this point, Jumièges breaks off to describe Robert's failed attempt to reinstate the sons of Æthelred the Unready, then exiled in Normandy, to the English throne – a story that may not be as fanciful as it seems.³⁷ The fleet Robert prepared for this foreign expedition was apparently blown off course, eventually arriving at Mont Saint-Michel by way of Jersey. Once there, Robert re-allocated part of the fleet to join in a two-pronged attack on Brittany. While his armada was commanded to ravage the Breton coast, the duke himself prepared a mounted force to attack by land. So threatened, Alan turned to his and Robert's uncle, Archbishop Robert of Rouen, to mediate a peace between the two at Mont Saint-Michel, which apparently saw

³³ *GND*, ii, pp. 48, 52.

³⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 56-8, 76-8.

³⁵ *ibid.*, p. 56.

³⁶ *ibid.*, pp. 56-8.

³⁷ Above, p. 120 n. 22.

Alan enter the Norman duke's service. With this done, Robert dispatched messengers to recall his raiding fleet.³⁸

Despite its brevity, Jumièges' bald account and its subsequent interpretation by modern commentators reveals much both about the expansion of ducal authority westward and how that process has until recently been perceived. Jumièges argued that Alan III initiated the conflict – the Breton 'count...began persistently to withdraw from the service he owed the duke'.³⁹ He also added that Alan returned to Robert's service once peace had been negotiated.⁴⁰ That Alan owed any form of fealty to Normandy prior to his eventual defeat by Robert seems highly unlikely. Like Dudo's earlier account of Breton servitude, composed in the favourable circumstances following Count Geoffrey of Rennes' death in 1008, Jumièges almost certainly read backwards from the subjection of Brittany achieved by Robert and subsequently re-affirmed by his son.⁴¹ Certainly, the alliance that existed between Geoffrey and Richard II at the turn of the eleventh century, from which any future obligation must have sprung, was one between equals. Since notions of subservience seem anachronistic, it is worth considering that Jumièges depicts Robert as making the first move and how the wider political situation had changed since Richard II's reign. Count Geoffrey's untimely death had presented Richard II with immense opportunities. Richard's connections to the grieving house of Rennes were extensive – marriage to Geoffrey's sister, Judith; brother to his widow, turned regent, Hawise; and guardianship of his young sons, Alan and Eudo – which effectively combined to give him a free hand

³⁸ *GND*, ii, pp. 76-8.

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 56 – *comes Alanus...a ducis Rodberti servitio se surripere pertinaciter est aggressus*.

⁴⁰ *ibid.*, p. 78.

⁴¹ Above, pp. 1-2, for Dudo's re-writing of Norman-Breton relations and its context.

in Lower Normandy during his wards' minority.⁴² By Robert's reign, however, the situation had changed markedly. Alan and Eudo had come of age and were ready to take their destinies into their own hands. The path they chose for themselves would not have endeared them to their Norman cousin. Alan's marriage to Bertha, the daughter of Odo II of Blois-Chartres, one of Normandy's traditional enemies, may have seemed an aggressive move.⁴³ Perhaps more significant was Alan's relationship with the ancient border monastery of Mont Saint-Michel, where he sought to renew Breton influence. Alan's father and grandfather had been major patrons of Mont Saint-Michel, enjoying close relations with its abbots during life and being buried there after death.⁴⁴ Alan both confirmed his ancestors' grants and added considerable ones of his own, with his example inspiring increasing contact between Mont Saint-Michel and other Breton sponsors in the same period.⁴⁵ He may also have employed Montois monks in the reform of Saint-Melaine de Rennes.⁴⁶

While Alan's activities may have given Robert cause for alarm, descent into armed conflict suggests that both men felt a great deal was at stake in the Avranchin. The mysterious causes of the conflict, however, including the identity of its instigator, raise important questions about the status of this border region during the early eleventh century. Modern opinions on this have differed. Bates concluded that 'the [Norman] frontier held firm' in the 1030s, implying that the Couesnon already represented the western boundary of ducal rule.⁴⁷ Potts is more ambiguous, noting that Alan sought to 'resist Norman encroachment', implying

⁴² Above, pp. 115-16, 130-32.

⁴³ OV, ii, p. 304; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 70; above, pp. 94, 96-8, for Norman campaigns against Blois-Chartres.

⁴⁴ Above, pp. 130-31.

⁴⁵ *Actes de Bretagne*, nos. 17, 18, 22; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 100.

⁴⁶ *Actes de Bretagne*, p. 72.

⁴⁷ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 71.

Breton claims over the region – though she emphasises that this was only the Breton point of view.⁴⁸ Keats-Rohan has gone further, expressing the view that the region was not already under Norman rule – rather the war was Alan’s ‘bid to retain as Breton land in the Avranchin lying between the Couesnon and Sélune’.⁴⁹ The growing role of Robert’s predecessors at Mont Saint-Michel, the emergence of a comital dynasty in Avranches/Mortain, and the appointment of Norman prelates to the diocese of Avranches already discussed above might lead us to discount this suggestion.⁵⁰ Yet Alan’s confirmation of a grant made to Saint-Georges de Rennes by his Norman mother, Hawise, which included a mill at Pontorson, seems indicative of continuing Breton control in the immediate environs of the Couesnon at least.⁵¹ This and Alan’s intervention at Mont Saint-Michel combine to suggest that Breton influence in the Avranchin remained significant. Indeed, abbot Almod even approached Alan in search of patronage.⁵² Furthermore, the Norman dukes’ efforts to enforce their authority in the Avranchin through the appointment of counts and bishops were only partially successful. The comital dynasty seized estates and ultimately rebelled; the bishops seemingly despaired of their diocesan work. Importantly, only two Norman charters involved territory in the Avranchin prior to 1026 and both provide limited evidence for ducal activity in the westernmost part of the *pagus*, between the Sélune and Couesnon.⁵³

⁴⁸ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 100.

⁴⁹ *MSM*, app. iii, no. 17, p. 216.

⁵⁰ Above, pp. 130-41, 147-51.

⁵¹ *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 32. This grant must have occurred before Hawise’s death in early 1034. *MSM*, no. 17 similarly included property on the Couesnon that can no longer be identified.

⁵² *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 22; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 100-101.

⁵³ *MSM*, no. 2; *Recueil*, p. 24 n. 24. In the former, all territory mentioned to the west of the Sélune had fallen into the hands of Robert, count of Avranches. Richard II simply promised the safe return of these properties, which may or may not have been achieved (below, p. 177 n. 66). In the latter, four estates (Pontabault, Juilley, Poilley, Précey) lie in the Sélune valley itself, on the river’s western bank.

Mont Saint-Michel's stance during Robert's clash with Alan is similarly indicative of the limited nature of ducal authority in the Avranchin up until this point. As we have seen, Richard II was instrumental in establishing Norman influence at the Mont in the first quarter of the eleventh century.⁵⁴ Not all of Richard's interventions, however, were universally welcomed. His appointments of Suppo and Thierry – Upper Norman reformers – to Mont Saint-Michel in 1023 were deeply unpopular and led to the monks electing an internal candidate as abbot in 1027 – a Manceaux brother called Almod.⁵⁵ Keats-Rohan has suggested that Montois forgeries were produced at this time to prevent further interference by Norman dukes in abbatial elections.⁵⁶ Almod's appointment emphasised that the Montois 'community had in the sixty-odd years since its refoundation [in 965] developed stronger ties and interests in Brittany and Maine than in Normandy'.⁵⁷ The monastery possessed no Norman estates east of Caen in 1027, but extensive properties in Maine and the Rennais.⁵⁸ Almod actively sought the patronage of Alan III, not Robert.⁵⁹ The monastery had already offered its services as a neutral shelter during wartime to local Bretons.⁶⁰ Even after Alan's defeat in the 1030s, the monks still turned to Breton landholders for guarantees of protection, with Rivallon of Dol-Combours promising to defend the monastery's interests around Pontorson (on the Norman side of the Couesnon) in the mid-eleventh century.⁶¹ During the war itself, the Mont clearly backed the wrong side. Having humbled Alan before Mont Saint-Michel, Robert removed Almod from office, instead

⁵⁴ Above, pp. 130-39.

⁵⁵ Above, p. 137.

⁵⁶ *MSM*, pp. 20-21.

⁵⁷ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 100. Notably, Almod's uncle of the same name served as abbot for Saint-Sauveur de Redon from 1062-1083 (*GC*, xiv, col. 948; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 205).

⁵⁸ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, Map 5.

⁵⁹ Above, p. 175 n. 54.

⁶⁰ *MSM*, no. 24.

⁶¹ Above, p. 61 n. 154.

appointing him abbot of the new foundation at Cerisy – further from the disputed frontier.⁶² Mont Saint-Michel was again bound to the wider programme of Norman monasticism with the re-appointment of Suppo of Frutturia, a reformist, as abbot in Almod's place in 1033.⁶³ Robert then sought to buy the monastery's loyalty with further property grants in the Cotentin and Channel Islands.⁶⁴ Robert's efforts were still not enough to bind the Mont inexorably to Normandy as the monastery had yet to gain property in the duke's Upper Norman heartlands. As with Richard II's grant of 1022-6, Robert's benefaction further emphasised the maritime nature of the duke's Lower Norman interests – these estates lay either directly in the shadow of the Mont or in more distant locations accessible quickly and directly by sea.

While ducal influence and involvement in Lower Normandy had clearly increased during Richard II's reign, it was still far from firmly entrenched by Robert's accession in 1027. Unlike his father, Robert also faced more organised Breton opposition to Norman influence. It was to Robert's credit that, rather than accept the status quo, he instead sought to solidify his authority, over both the Avranchin and his Breton neighbours. Having set aside Jumièges' unlikely tale of Breton service arrogantly withdrawn, it is Robert's invasion of Brittany and construction of a castle at *Caruscas* that appear aggressive. The locations suggested for this castle reveal much about historians' attitudes to the extent of ducal authority along the Breton frontier at the start of Robert's reign. Many modern commentators have identified *Caruscas* with Cherrueix, on the Breton

⁶² *GND*, ii, p. 78; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 60.

⁶³ *MSM*, app. i, no. 1a; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, pp. 205-207.

⁶⁴ *MSM*, no. 5.

side of the Couesnon.⁶⁵ Thomas Stapleton, however, long ago identified *Caruscas* with Charcey (Latin *Carcei*), a former Montois estate in the parish of Moidrey on the Norman side of the Couesnon and immediately adjacent to Pontorson – the site of a later ducal fortress.⁶⁶ The latter location arguably better fits Jumièges' description of Robert invading Brittany only after constructing the castle.⁶⁷ Wace, a Lower Norman himself, professed ignorance as to whether Robert's castle was at Pontorson or *Carues*⁶⁸ - this confusion perhaps arising from the geographical proximity of Charcey and Pontorson, which lie only a mile apart.⁶⁹ This is certainly easier to understand than any confusion between the later Norman fortress and Cherrueix, which lie ten miles apart on either side of the Couesnon. The distinction is not insignificant. By constructing a castle at Charcey, on the westernmost edge of the Avranchin, Robert was visibly laying claim to the entire *pagus* for the first time.⁷⁰ It served its purpose well. When Alan launched his unsuccessful reprisal raid, Charcey's local guardians, Neil and Alfred the Giant, rode against him. If based on contemporary knowledge, Jumièges' note that Breton bodies lay strewn about 'the surrounding fields and the riverbanks' might just suggest that the battle took place near the fortress itself.⁷¹ It may not be coincidental, either, that Robert's success in both the Avranchin and Channel Islands signalled a shift in the tenorial language used in regional charters. Previously, Richard II had confirmed monastic grants by family members and

⁶⁵ *GND*, ii, p. 56; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 71; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 100; Yver, 'Châteaux forts en Normandie', p. 39.

⁶⁶ *Rotuli Scaccarii*, ed. Stapleton, i, p. xciii. Presumably, Charcey had either never been returned to Mont Saint-Michel or was requisitioned for the purpose of castle construction by Robert.

⁶⁷ Power, *Norman Frontier*, p. 13 n. 53.

⁶⁸ *RR*, i, lines 2605-2607. *GND*, ii, p. 56, where, after Jumièges' initial reference to *Caruscas*, Robert of Torigny notes *id est Carues*.

⁶⁹ *Rotuli Scaccarii*, ed. Stapleton, i, p. xciii.

⁷⁰ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 100 thus rightly notes that 'the Couesnon was not yet seen as a demarcation between the two realms', though not in the way she intended.

⁷¹ *GND*, ii, p. 58 – *per camporum plana...fluminis litora*.

aristocrats of allodial and inherited estates in Lower Normandy only.⁷² While allods and inheritances could be held in return for service from a superior lord in early eleventh-century Normandy, the meaning of such terms was not as precise as the contemporary usage of the term *beneficium*, which, in the context of the laity's possessions, always implied an obligation of service.⁷³ Robert's reign saw the earliest use of the latter term in Lower Normandy, with both Neil the Elder and the knight, Adelelm holding their estates in Guernsey and the Avranchin as *beneficia* from the duke.⁷⁴ While such language ties neatly into the broader theme of growing ducal authority in Robert's reign, the limited quantity of Lower Norman charters available combined with their infrequent employment of precise terminology renders it unwise to set too much store by these examples.⁷⁵

The establishment of the Couesnon as the frontier between Brittany and Normandy is significant. Robert's successful western campaign against Alan meant that the boundaries of the duchy now almost matched those of Rouen's archdiocese.⁷⁶ We have already seen how the dukes made extensive use of pre-existing ecclesiastical structures to legitimise and extend their authority throughout their growing duchy.⁷⁷ In the case of the Avranchin, the military campaigns of the 1030s led not only to tighter control over Mont Saint-Michel,

⁷² *MSM*, nos. 4, 31 (both involved *alodia*); *Recueil*, no. 7 (involving land held by hereditary right).

⁷³ E.Z. Tabuteau, *Transfers of Property in Eleventh-Century Norman Law* (Chapel Hill & London, 1988), pp. 95-106, 298 n. 53, for an exhaustive overview of the available evidence. *MSM*, no. 43; *Recueil*, no. 196, for two Lower Norman examples of allods seemingly held from the duke. Both examples notably hail from William's reign, when the precise definition of *alodium* was becoming increasingly hazy.

⁷⁴ *MSM*, nos. 5, 8.

⁷⁵ The majority of Lower Norman charters are vague in their definitions of tenure and doubtless hide more complex realities, which only rarely become apparent. In the Cotentin, Duke William granted five churches to Saint-Wandrille in 1047-53 (below, p. 195 n. 4, for the possible context of this grant). The initial charter notes simply that these properties had been held by Hugh Paisfolet (*Recueil*, no. 128 – *tenebat Hugo Pasfolet*), but a later confirmation from the 1080s describes them as being *benefitio Hugonis Paisfolet* (*ibid.*, no. 234). The latter document, of course, need not necessarily be correct in its assertion.

⁷⁶ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 190-91; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 7. The Perche was never absorbed. The French Vexin remained a bone of contention throughout the twelfth century.

⁷⁷ Above, esp. pp. 10, 113-14, 139.

but also to greater episcopal activity in the diocese of Avranches. The earliest Norman bishops of Avranches had endured difficult times, despite work beginning on a new cathedral church in 1025 and Richard II's grant of various estates in the Avranchin.⁷⁸ Both bishops Norgod and Maugis had found their distant dioceses burdensome. Norgod had retired into Mont Saint-Michel in c. 1017, where his successor, Maugis tried to follow him – a sure sign of where ecclesiastical authority really lay in the Avranchin during the early eleventh century.⁷⁹ Many modern commentators have detected little change during the episcopate of Maugis' successor, Hugh (c. 1028-c. 1060). Hugh seemingly focused his attentions on Upper Normandy, where he was particularly involved with Fécamp.⁸⁰ The visit of the scholar Lanfranc to the diocese during this period has largely been dismissed as evidence of growing intellectual activity in Avranches under Hugh's aegis.⁸¹ Lanfranc was probably more interested in scholarship at Mont Saint-Michel under the auspices of his countryman, Abbot Suppo.⁸² Modern scholarship, however, has perhaps been too harsh on Hugh. Unlike his predecessors, his thirty years in post demonstrate his commitment to his office. Furthermore, the most important sections of the reconstruction work at Avranches cathedral begun by his predecessor took place during Hugh's episcopate (though it is uncertain how far he influenced this work personally).⁸³ In the short term, Hugh acquired property in the Channel Islands at the expense of

⁷⁸ *Recueil*, p. 24 n. 24; above, pp. 140-41.

⁷⁹ Above, pp. 103, 141.

⁸⁰ *Recueil*, nos. 72, 93, 145; L. Musset, 'Notules fécampoises', *BSAN* 54 (1959), pp. 595-6; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 158, 195, 211.

⁸¹ 'Vita Lanfranci', ed. M. Gibson, in *Lanfranco di Pavia e l'Europa del secolo XI nel IX centenario della morte (1089-1989)*, ed. G. D'Onofrio (Rome, 1993), p. 668; M. Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978), pp. 20-21; H. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: scholar, monk, and archbishop* (Oxford, 2003), p. 10.

⁸² Gibson, *Lanfranc*, p. 21; Cowdrey, *Lanfranc*, p. 10.

⁸³ M. Baylé, 'Les évêques et l'architecture normande au XI^e siècle', in *Les évêques normands*, ed. Bouet and Neveux, pp. 158-61.

Mont Saint-Michel.⁸⁴ His episcopate also saw the cathedral endowed with extensive estates, perhaps a result of his influential place at Duke Robert's court.⁸⁵ Unlike his father's grant, Robert's included several properties lying between the Sélune and Couesnon – further evidence that Robert's Breton war had been brought to a successful conclusion.⁸⁶

The naval dimension to the Breton war, irrespective of whether it occurred by accident or design, allowed Robert to shore up ducal authority in the Channel Islands, as well as the Avranchin. While Richard II's grant to Mont Saint-Michel in 1022-6 is the first ducal act to mention Jersey, there the duke passed the 'land of Peter the Monk' to the abbey – perhaps indicative of overlordship rather than ownership.⁸⁷ From Robert's reign onwards, however, the Islands appear more frequently in ducal *acta*, suggesting that the Breton campaign gave Robert the opportunity to both subjugate them and begin to treat them as ducal demesne.⁸⁸ Robert rewarded his loyal Lower Norman supporters with island property. *Vicomte* Neil received half of Guernsey and, perhaps, extensive estates on Jersey as well. Indeed, the majority of twelfth-century landholding families in the Channel Islands hailed from the nearby Cotentin.⁸⁹ Alongside Lower Norman families, the region's religious houses and bishops became the principal ecclesiastical beneficiaries of island property during the reign of Robert's son.⁹⁰ Interestingly, Restald, a former ship-master to Robert, granted property on

⁸⁴ *MSM*, no. 80.

⁸⁵ *Recueil*, p. 26 n. 29; R. Allen, 'Un évêque et sa ville: les évêques d'Avranches de 990 à 1134', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du Pays de Granville* 86 (2009), pp. 19-20.

⁸⁶ These properties were the churches of Céaux, Vessey, Le Croix-Avranchin, Villiers and Saint-Senier de Beuvron and land at Chassilly.

⁸⁷ *MSM*, no. 2 – *terram Petri monachi*. Above, pp. 134-5, for further examples of this possibility.

⁸⁸ J.A. Everard and J.C. Holt, *Jersey 1204: the forging of an island community* (London, 2004), pp. 42-4.

⁸⁹ *MSM*, no. 5; Everard and Holt, *Jersey 1204*, pp. 44, 123-5.

⁹⁰ *Recueil*, nos. 99 (Cerisy), 214 (Coutances), 224 (Cherbourg), 231 (La Trinité, Caen); above, p. 180 n. 84, for Bishop Hugh of Avranches' estates; Everard and Holt, *Jersey 1204*, pp. 45-53.

Guetehou to Mont Saint-Michel – presumably given to him by the duke in return for his role in saving the fleet and bringing the Islands under ducal control in c. 1033.⁹¹ Given the Islands' proximity to the Norman coast, it seems likely that Robert utilised pre-existing familial and ecclesiastical links in the region. Indeed, Hagger argues that Anschetil, *vicomte* of Bayeux already possessed property on Guernsey, of which Robert deprived him in order to endow Mont Saint-Michel.⁹² Though Robert was clearly not afraid to make changes, he did nothing to fundamentally alter an integrated maritime community that would continue to exist along the western Cotentinois coast right up until the Plantagenet loss of Normandy in 1204. The arrival of Robert's fleet also shifted the balance of the Breton war in the short term. While Neil and Alfred had successfully resisted Alan's raid on the Avranchin, it was only after Robert's arrival (if only accidental) with a substantial force transported by sea that the count was forced to submit.⁹³ Robert thought in maritime terms when planning his campaign. While Robert operated on land, he dispatched half his fleet under a trusted commander, Rabel to raid the Breton coast – with messengers, presumably travelling by sea themselves, maintaining communications between the two forces.⁹⁴

5.3) Changing Circumstances: Gunnor, Cerisy and the Norman Aristocracy

The war against Alan III represented an excellent opportunity for Robert to consolidate his position in both the Avranchin and Channel Islands. Unlike his

⁹¹ *MSM*, no. 33.

⁹² Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 40.

⁹³ *GND*, ii, pp. 56-8, 78.

⁹⁴ *GND*, ii, p. 78. *Recueil*, nos. 65, 69, for Rabel's attestations at Robert's court. The former charter involved Mont Saint-Michel, as did Rabel's attestation of Edward the Confessor's grant to the monastery (*MSM*, no. 10). Both documents are genuine (above, p. 139 n. 114) and were probably produced during this expedition. It is possible Robert sought to make contact by sea with Alan's internal enemies. A donation by Alan to Sainte-Croix de Quimperlé, dated 1030/1 notes that it took place *timens periculum hostium*, *Guihomarch videlicet vicecomitis cum aliis tirannis* (*Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Sainte-Croix de Quimperlé*, ed. L. Maître et P. de Berthou (Paris & Rennes, 2nd edn., 1904), no. 3). Guihomarch was *vicomte* of Léon (*Actes de Bretagne*, no. 12).

father, who took advantage of Count Geoffrey of Rennes' death to advance Norman interests in the west, it is, as we have seen, eminently possible that Robert engineered this conflict deliberately. This suggests either that conflict with Brittany was a natural extension to the process of strengthening ducal authority in Lower Normandy undertaken by Robert's father and grandfather or that underlying circumstances changed in c. 1030 to encourage Robert's more aggressive intervention. In fact, both played a part in what was for Hagger a critical moment in the development of ducal authority in Lower Normandy – the death of Robert's grandmother, Countess Gunnor in c. 1030/1.⁹⁵ The wider significance of Richard I's marriage to Gunnor has already been discussed,⁹⁶ but in the immediate context of the 1030s her death would have brought further Lower Norman estates (presumably these were mainly in the southern Cotentin, close to those properties already hypothesised as originating with her family) into Robert's hands.⁹⁷ Unfortunately, we have no way of reliably identifying Gunnor's former estates and Robert was presumably content to keep his properties here intact – apparently granting out only a single estate in this area during his reign.⁹⁸

Gunnor also possessed estates, whether by inheritance or dower, in the Bessin. It is thus possible that the acquisition of these properties influenced Robert's decision to found the monastery of Cerisy-la-Forêt in this region at around this time. Cerisy's foundation, alongside that of Montivilliers near Fécamp, gives lie to the view that Robert's reign was characterised simply by an

⁹⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 29 n. 46, for this date.

⁹⁶ Above, pp. 98-101, 123-7.

⁹⁷ Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 29-30.

⁹⁸ *Recueil*, no. 64 – this was Maupertuis in the upper reaches of the Sienne valley, given to Cerisy. Hagger suggests that Gunnor's estates might be reconstructed from later grants to Coutances cathedral (*ibid.*, no. 214), but there is no way of verifying such an analysis.

aristocratic 'feast on church property'.⁹⁹ Potts has already challenged this, arguing that aristocratic usurpation of ecclesiastical property is impossible to prove directly from charter evidence. Instead, she suggested that Upper Norman monasteries worked closely with local aristocrats to protect and develop their regional interests.¹⁰⁰ Whether ecclesiastical property exchanged hands as a result of co-operation or usurpation (or, more likely, a combination of both), the conclusions that can be drawn about the character of Lower Normandy in this period are broadly similar. Unjust seizure of property reveals both ecclesiastical institutions unable to hang on firmly to their possessions in the region and a duke unable or unwilling to provide adequate protection.¹⁰¹ Organised property exchanges with and delegation of responsibilities to local aristocrats illustrate the difficulties ducal monasteries still faced when operating so far from their Upper Norman bases – a point Potts made when discussing Fécamp possessions in the Séeois, but applicable elsewhere.¹⁰² The protection abbeyes sought from local landholders, often with ducal approval, further emphasises the limited nature of the duke's own authority in these regions.¹⁰³ The very fact that more on-the-spot protection was required is equally suggestive. Where monasteries actively sought to acquire further property in areas of Lower Normandy, however, a more successful implantation of Upper Norman interests is evident.¹⁰⁴ Irrespective of their precise relations with the aristocracy, then, Upper Norman monasteries found their Lower Norman possessions hard to manage. Nevertheless, progress

⁹⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 100.

¹⁰⁰ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 118-31.

¹⁰¹ Robert himself was sometimes even responsible for usurpation, seizing property from Fécamp, Montivilliers and Saint-Wandrille (*Recueil*, nos. 70, 80, 95). Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 121, 131 accepts that usurpation identifiably did take place in some cases.

¹⁰² Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 123-4.

¹⁰³ *ibid.*, pp. 122-3, 125, for Roger de Montgomery and Humphrey de Vieilles' role in ensuring the security of monastic estates at ducal instigation.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 116-17.

had been made and perseverance had clearly paid off in some areas. The identity of those areas, however, is significant. Bar the possible exception of Saint-Taurin d'Évreux, by the end of Robert's reign Upper Norman houses had still failed to gain a purchase in the two westernmost Norman *pagi*.¹⁰⁵ Like his father, Robert was unwilling to provide for these houses in the far west, nor was his refusal made up for by grants from local landholders.

While Upper Norman monasteries may have received little ducal support in Lower Normandy during Robert's reign, this was partly a result of the duke's focus on his new foundation at Cerisy. Located on the site of the former Merovingian abbey of Saint-Vigor, along the old Roman road between Bayeux and Saint-Lô, Cerisy was initially entrusted to an Upper Norman, Durand – a monk of Saint-Ouen, the first Norman house to be restored following the Scandinavian invasions of the late ninth and early tenth centuries.¹⁰⁶ As with Richard II's introduction of reformists at Mont Saint-Michel, the appointment to this western institution of an abbot drawn from a long-established, eastern ducal house ensured that Cerisy became a local extension to the wider programme of endowing Upper Norman monasteries with Lower Norman property. As at Mont Saint-Michel, such influence extended as far as abbatial architecture.¹⁰⁷ Though Cerisy would later be responsible for new stylistic developments, such as the chevron ornamentation first used at the abbey in c. 1070, which became so popular in post-Conquest England, these were in the same vein as the design school founded by William of Volpiano at Fécamp and fostered by his neighbours

¹⁰⁵ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 77-8; above, pp. 100-102, for Saint-Taurin.

¹⁰⁶ Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, pp. 59-60.

¹⁰⁷ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 218; above, p. 137, for Thierry's architectural influence at Mont Saint-Michel.

and successors in Upper Normandy.¹⁰⁸ Cerisy's extensive endowment in the Bessin reveals that Robert's interest and influence in the region had not declined as much as the fate of other ducal monasteries in this period might initially suggest.¹⁰⁹ With Durand's death in c. 1032, however, Robert turned to local figures to lead the abbey's development. The former abbot of Mont Saint-Michel, Almod, replaced Durand – an interesting choice given his questionable loyalties during Robert's war with Alan III.¹¹⁰ Almod died soon afterwards,¹¹¹ but he was replaced by another Montois monk, Garin.¹¹²

The details of Cerisy's foundation reveal some major differences to what had gone before. Unlike earlier ducal foundations, Cerisy enjoyed less freedom from ecclesiastical authorities, receiving some episcopal customs, but no sweeping exemptions from the local bishop in Bayeux.¹¹³ Almost uniquely amongst ducal foundations, nor did the monastery owe military service.¹¹⁴ Cerisy's relationship with the diocese of Bayeux demonstrates the revival of episcopal authority in Lower Normandy, already evidenced by the return of the bishops of Coutances to Saint-Lô in 1025 and Hugh d'Ivry's recovery of long-lost estates belonging to Bayeux in c. 1037.¹¹⁵ Robert and his immediate successor, William, however, may still not have felt confident about placing the same requirements upon the abbey's local tenants as were becoming acceptable further east, perhaps explaining its otherwise unaccountable absence from monastic provisions of military service. Such concern for local sensibilities is not so

¹⁰⁸ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 224.

¹⁰⁹ *Recueil*, no. 64.

¹¹⁰ Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 60.

¹¹¹ 17 May 1033 (*GC*, xi, col. 409). Interestingly, Almod was buried at the Mont (Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 204).

¹¹² Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 61.

¹¹³ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 197.

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, p. 169 – La Trinité, Caen being the only other exception.

¹¹⁵ Above, pp. 58 n. 145, 103, 121, 140.

unlikely. The absence of military service must be placed alongside the rare references to ducal vassals in Lower Normandy during Richard II's reign and the fact that Lower Norman landholders had shown no inclination to provide ducal abbeys with property and privileges in the past. This combination of factors 'at the very least...suggests that the Lower Norman regions were not so firmly integrated into the structure of fidelity to the duke'.¹¹⁶ The new *Vita Vigoris* produced at Cerisy soon after its foundation alludes to such issues. As Samantha Herrick has demonstrated, however, the *Vita*'s focus on the protection of ecclesiastical property,¹¹⁷ the recognition of spiritual and secular authority,¹¹⁸ and Vigor's missionary work in the Bessin¹¹⁹ all point to the difficulties facing the new monastery in the early eleventh century. The *Vita* 'fostered the image of the good prince', because the duke's 'authority in Lower Normandy did not yet enjoy the force he hoped to achieve'.¹²⁰ As a result, the monks 'faced the danger of depredation' unless they could instil local respect for their ducal founder.¹²¹

Robert's Cerisy, however, ultimately found favour with local landholders, who endowed it accordingly. Why? The foundation of a new monastery in Lower Normandy demonstrated greater ducal commitment to the region than ever seen before. The abbey was a visual symbol of Robert and, subsequently, William's desire to win over or simply overawe local landholders and certainly exuded a more physically impressive presence in their everyday lives than the distant houses of Upper Normandy. The new foundation's respect for local interests also

¹¹⁶ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 170-71, the latter cited here.

¹¹⁷ Herrick, *Sacred Past*, pp. 75-80.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 80-83.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 83-8.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 90, 89, for these citations respectively.

¹²¹ Herrick, *Sacred Past*, p. 90. Some locals may have been recent converts to Christianity (above, pp. 105). P. Bauduin, 'Richard II de Normandie: figure princière et transferts culturels (fin dixième-début onzième siècle)', *ANS* 37 (2015), pp. 52-82, for the role authors played in constructing the ducal image.

helped secure success. Cerisy was dedicated to St. Vigor – a sixth-century missionary and bishop of Bayeux. Robert's choice for Cerisy's first abbot, Durand was especially fitting given that the relics of St. Vigor had previously been translated to his home monastery of Saint-Ouen for safe-keeping.¹²² The production of the *Vita Vigoris* at Cerisy offers further evidence of the desire to foster a cult based upon the home-grown traditions of Lower Normandy. Cerisy did not become a major influence in Lower Norman life overnight. It remained an isolated ducal presence in the region until the establishment of William and Matilda's twin foundations at Caen in the early 1060s. Potts has suggested that Cerisy was 'intent on collecting property in the region west of Bayeux and the abbey', namely the Cotentin.¹²³ In fact, Robert's foundation charter showed no signs that he planned for the abbey to be heavily involved in the area.¹²⁴ Aristocratic grants of privileges and property there date from William's reign and then only after the duke led the way with further grants from his own resources in the peninsula.¹²⁵ Though Cerisy eventually restored a number of old Carolingian houses – Deux-Jumeaux, Saint-Fromond, Saint-Marcouf, Saint-Martin – as priories, these were all in the Bessin, rather than further west.¹²⁶

While it took time for Cerisy to win favour amongst the local aristocracy, Robert's reign still saw more Lower Normans in ducal service than ever before.¹²⁷ Neil the Elder remained a trusted ducal officer and received half of Guernsey and

¹²² Herrick, *Sacred Past*, pp. 43-4.

¹²³ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 76.

¹²⁴ *Recueil*, no. 64 – Cerisy received the tithe from woodland at Maupertuis in the upper reaches of the Sienne valley, but all further privileges and properties hailed from the Bessin or Upper Normandy.

¹²⁵ *Recueil*, no. 99, for William's extensive additions to the endowment in the Cotentin and Channel Islands; nos. 167, 169, 170, 195, 196, for grants by local landholders.

¹²⁶ Above, p. 107.

¹²⁷ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 151.

perhaps other estates in return for his loyalty.¹²⁸ For the first time, however, Neil was joined in ducal service by another Cotentinois aristocrat, Alfred the Giant of Gavray, with whom he fought the Bretons in the 1030s.¹²⁹ These men were joined by families from further east. Robert's reign saw a number of powerful aristocratic figures emerge in the Bessin and Hiémois – Anschetil, *vicomte* of the Bessin,¹³⁰ Roger I of Montgomery,¹³¹ Ralph Taisson, who held land around Thury-Harcourt,¹³² Humphrey de Vieilles from the Risle valley¹³³ and, latterly, Thurstan Goz, *vicomte* of the Hiémois either side of Montgomery's tenure of that office.¹³⁴ The advancement of aristocratic lineages from these latter regions must, of course, be placed in the context of the wider social changes occurring throughout Normandy during this period. Bates characterises Robert's reign as an era during which 'numerous powerful families...established domination over offices in ducal government and over weaker neighbours, and consolidated their power around castles'.¹³⁵ The geographical origin of these particular families, however, is indicative of something more. While the social changes occurring in mid-eleventh-century Normandy have been seen as detrimental to ducal rule their character nevertheless owed much to the culture of ducal authority established in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Aristocrats emulated the duke by

¹²⁸ Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 33-4; *Recueil*, no.73.

¹²⁹ *GND*, ii, pp. 56-8; *Recueil*, no. 69. Alfred first witnessed a ducal charter for William of Bellême, however, in Richard II's reign (*Recueil*, no. 33).

¹³⁰ *Recueil*, no. 17, for his first attestation under Richard II; nos. 65, 69, 80, for attestations under Robert. Above, p. 164, for the marriage of Anschetil's son, Rannulf to Richard III's illegitimate daughter.

¹³¹ *Recueil*, no. 27, for his first attestation under Richard II; nos. 69, 74, for attestations under Robert.

¹³² *Recueil*, no. 33, for his first attestation under Richard II; nos. 65, 95, 98, for attestations under Robert.

¹³³ *Recueil*, no. 29, for his first attestation under Richard II; nos. 55, 85, 88, 89, for attestations under Robert.

¹³⁴ *Recueil*, nos. 31, 34, 35, 49, 55, for Thurstan as *vicomte* under Richard II. For whatever reason, he was out of office for the early part of Robert's reign, appearing again only in 1031/5 (*Recueil*, no. 85; *GND*, ii, pp. 100-101 n. 6).

¹³⁵ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 135.

constructing castles and founding monasteries, served in his government and, most obviously, claimed kinship with him. In the case of the Bessin and Hiémois, the emergence of figures such as Roger I de Montgomery under Robert illustrates how far this culture had spread throughout those lands claimed by the duke. Despite Robert's western campaigns and programme of ecclesiastical patronage, the Cotentin and Avranchin remained out of step with this wider culture. The majority of castles known in the region were of ducal construction.¹³⁶ Western lords scarcely endowed ducal monasteries, let alone founded their own.¹³⁷ Despite Torigny's personal knowledge of Lower Normandy, none of the families whose lineages he traced hailed from Normandy's westernmost *pagi*.¹³⁸ Robert's one kinsman with property in the far west, William Werlenc, count of Mortain failed to attest even a single ducal charter during his reign.¹³⁹

The emergence of aristocratic lineages during Robert's reign fuelled the spread of such Upper Norman practices further west. As with Upper Norman monasteries during Richard II's reign, these families could be granted property in Lower Normandy out of the ducal demesne, which, as we have seen, probably expanded under Robert following Gunnor's death. This method not only served to reward the loyalty of these Upper Norman lineages, but also gave them a vested

¹³⁶ *Recueil*, no. 58, for Brix, Le Homme and Cherbourg; *GND*, ii, pp. 56-8, for Charcey.

¹³⁷ Neither Mont Saint-Michel, save Gunnor's grant of property in the Bessin in 1015 (*MSM*, no. 4), nor Cerisy received any grants from Lower Normans until William's reign. Above, pp. 143-4, for the foundation of collegiate churches at Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte and Saint-Fromond in the early eleventh century and the theories that surround them.

¹³⁸ Aside from the marriage of Richard III's illegitimate daughter, Alice to Rannulf of the Bessin (above, p. 164), the closest Torigny came to discussing a Lower Norman family was Baldwin de Reviers, who he thought to be descended from one of Gunnor's nieces. The genealogy of the Reviers family, however, has never been satisfactorily deciphered and the family, originally from Reviers in the Bessin, only gained land in the Cotentin after the rebellion of 1047 (*GND*, ii, p. 274; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 41).

¹³⁹ William was probably the son of Richard II's brother, Count Malger of Corbeil, becoming count of Mortain after the rebellion of his cousin, Richard in the mid-1020s (Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', pp. 31-3). He may have been involved in a property exchange involving Avranches cathedral, though this possibly occurred during his successor's tenure (*Recueil*, p. 27). He witnessed a single act of William I (*Recueil*, no. 162).

interest in bringing these distant regions under closer control. Archbishop Robert of Rouen,¹⁴⁰ Roger de Beaumont¹⁴¹ and the Taisson¹⁴² and Tosny¹⁴³ families all seemingly acquired property in the Cotentin in this way from the 1020s onwards. Episcopal office-holding represented another way in which Upper Norman families could increase their stock in Lower Normandy. Hugh of Avranches feathered his nest by leasing property from Mont Saint-Michel,¹⁴⁴ but Hugh of Coutances did far greater damage to his see, granting out episcopal estates to various relatives, including perhaps the Warenne family.¹⁴⁵ The aristocracy's desire to forge links with the ducal dynasty, however, probably played a larger part in this process. As we have seen, various Upper Norman families claimed kinship with the ducal dynasty through marriage to Gunnor's lineage.¹⁴⁶ The Beaumonts claimed descent from Gunnor's sister, Duvelina; the Giffards and Tancarvilles traced their lines back to her other sister, Wevia.¹⁴⁷ Various families claimed descent from Gunnor's nieces, including the Warennes, Montgomerys, the vicecomital dynasties of Vernon and Rouen and Nicholas de Bacqueville's descendants.¹⁴⁸ Though claims of descent from Gunnor must be taken with a pinch of salt,¹⁴⁹ van Houts has shown many of the genealogical traditions

¹⁴⁰ F. Lot, *Etudes critiques sur l'abbaye de St-Wandrille* (Paris, 1913), pièces justificatives, no. 18; Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 54, 55 – Robert's properties were most likely at Saint-Marcouf and Varreville.

¹⁴¹ *Recueil*, nos. 128, 129, for Beaumont holdings at Varreville, Audoville-le-Hubert, Poupeville all probably acquired in the 1030s. Below, pp. 195 n. 4, 236-7, however, for the possibility of Beaumont acquisition in the 1040s.

¹⁴² *Regesta*, no. 149, for Ralph II Taisson's possession of a portion of Percy in the 1070s.

¹⁴³ L. Musset, 'Aux origines d'une classe dirigeante: les Tosny, grands barons normands du X^e au XIII^e siècle', *Francia* 5 (1978, for 1977), pp. 72-3 for the family's acquisition of Saint-Christophe-du-Foc by the 1080s, a former dower estate of Judith. Bates, *Normandy*, p. 103 considers this 'a clear early example', though there is no exact evidence as to when the Tosnys acquired the estate.

¹⁴⁴ *MSM*, no. 80.

¹⁴⁵ 'De statu', col. 218; L.C. Loyd, 'The origin of the family of Warenne', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 31 (1934), pp. 98-103.

¹⁴⁶ Above, pp. 99-100.

¹⁴⁷ *GND*, ii, p. 268.

¹⁴⁸ *GND*, ii, pp. 272-4.

¹⁴⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 108.

recorded by Torigny to be based in fact and some marry up closely with evidence from earlier sources, such as the letters of Ivo of Chartres and Anselm of Bec.¹⁵⁰ The dowries incurred in such marriages would have provided Upper Norman families with property further west. Hagger has identified various properties in the Cotentin that may have been acquired in this manner by the Beaumonts, Tancarvilles and Montgomerys.¹⁵¹ In their quest for greater power and status, the aristocratic lineages of Upper Normandy became the perfect tools for strengthening social ties with the west. Marriage alliances, however, did not represent one-way traffic – Lower Normans had much to gain too. Thurstan Haldup, a major Cotentinois landholder who emerged onto the stage in William's reign, inherited land from his wife in the vicinity of Argentan in the Séeois, some of which he later granted to Cerisy.¹⁵² Thurstan's eastern interests were further advanced by the marriage of his daughter, Emma to Arnold of Échauffour, a landholder in the Hiémois.¹⁵³ Hagger posited possible kinship links between Haimo Dentatus, a landholder in both the Bessin and Cotentin and his tenant, Thurstan Goz, sometime *vicomte* of the Hiémois – such links perhaps explaining the early westward spread of Goz interests, which would result in their elevation to *vicomtes* of Avranches in the 1050s.¹⁵⁴ Even in the case of Gunnor's family, it is worth remembering that in Torigny's (undoubtedly somewhat embroidered) tale of Gunnor's sisters, Sainsfrida had already married into a minor noble family in the Pays de Caux.¹⁵⁵ Aside from Gunnor's own marriage, the most successful

¹⁵⁰ Above, pp. 98-100, 125-7, for van Houts and Keats-Rohan's work on Robert of Torigny. Ivo of Chartres, 'Epistolae', *PL* 162, no. 261, col. 266, for the genealogy of the Montgomery family. *S. Anselmi*, ed. Schmitt, v, pp. 369-70, *epistola* no. 424, for the genealogy of the Warenne family.

¹⁵¹ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 28.

¹⁵² *Recueil*, no. 167; Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 34-5.

¹⁵³ *OV*, ii, pp. 124-6; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 35.

¹⁵⁴ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 39. Below, p. 206, however, for some difficulties with this theory.

¹⁵⁵ *GND*, ii, p. 266.

union from the perspective of a Lower Norman was that of her nephew, Osbern to Count Rodulf d'Ivry's daughter, Emma, which brought with it extensive properties around Breteuil.¹⁵⁶ Many have suggested that this marriage served as compensation for loss of property in the Cotentin – with estates there instead passing to the ducal dynasty and Saint-Père de Chartres on the retirement of Osbern's father, Arfast to that abbey in c. 1022.¹⁵⁷ This is not, however, entirely satisfactory. Though the identification has been debated, Osbern's continuing association with Crepon, most likely in the Bessin, suggests that he retained some property in Lower Normandy.¹⁵⁸ Beyond marriage to Emma, a more likely source of territorial compensation for Osbern might be the extensive estates he possessed in the lower Seine valley – the origin of which are otherwise unknown.¹⁵⁹

5.4) Conclusion

Considering his reign as a whole, Bates concluded that while 'Duke Robert undoubtedly exerted himself...he appears to have been unequal to the task of ruling firmly'.¹⁶⁰ Such a view underestimates Robert's achievements not only in Lower Normandy, but arguably elsewhere too. The rise of the aristocracy during the 1030s certainly undermined various ducal prerogatives, such as monastic foundation and endowment, and signalled a move away from the post-Carolingian administration favoured by Richard I and II. The fact that the Norman aristocracy, however, both emulated ducal practices, in terms of ecclesiastical patronage and castle-building, and sought to associate themselves with the duke, both through kinship ties and administrative service, is a testament to the success of the ducal

¹⁵⁶ W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London, new ed., 6 vols. in 8, 1817-30), vii, p. 1101; *Recueil*, nos. 118, 119, 182, 193; Douglas, 'Ancestors', pp. 68-75. van Houts, 'Robert of Torigni', pp. 231-2, however, suggests that these estates may also have descended from Arfast.

¹⁵⁷ Douglas, 'Ancestors', p. 68; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 29.

¹⁵⁸ Above, p. 124, for this debate.

¹⁵⁹ Douglas, 'Ancestors', pp. 76-7.

¹⁶⁰ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 174-5 (the latter cited here).

model. Robert put Normandy's increasingly powerful aristocracy to good use in his efforts to enforce ducal rule in Lower Normandy. Despite Richard II's efforts, the dukes continued to rely upon trusted lieutenants of varying types in their quest to tighten their hold over this most distant part of their domain. Richard III's wife, Adela, the new monastic foundation of Cerisy-la-Forêt, Upper Norman lords and local allies all performed this function. Whatever the precise conjunction of circumstances surrounding his war with Alan III, it is clear that, through both his own actions and his effective deployment of such agents, Robert exercised far more control over this region than any of his forebears. The process of establishing ducal authority in Lower Normandy, however, was not yet complete. The disinterest in monastic patronage, kinship ties to the ducal dynasty and service in their administration displayed by the majority of Lower Norman landholders illustrates the continuing social and cultural divide between eastern and western Normandy. Robert's premature death on the pilgrim road from Jerusalem, however, left all of his achievements under threat. Lower Normandy would become the setting for the first act of the reign of Robert's young, illegitimate successor, Duke William. The latter's success would lay the foundations for the region's ultimate integration into the administrative, social and cultural structures of the Norman duchy.

Chapter 6) The West Won: William the Conqueror and Lower Normandy, 1035-1087

6.1) Introduction: From the Orne to the Couesnon

In the summer of 1047, Duke William II faced the greatest threat yet to his so far short reign. A coterie of ducal officers, ecclesiastics and major landholders gathered around William's cousin, Guy of Burgundy to face the young duke and his temporary ally, King Henry I of France in battle on the plain of Val-ès-Dunes, some twelve kilometres south-east of Caen in the Orne valley.¹ Although Guy's powerbase lay in eastern Normandy, centred upon castles at Brionne and Vernon and where he had the support of Rouen's townsfolk, the exclusively Lower Norman origin of his known and suspected allies is well-attested. They numbered among their ranks the *vicomtes* of the Cotentin and Bessin, Neil II de Saint-Sauveur and Rannulf I de Briquessart respectively, Haimo Dentatus, lord of Creully and Torigny-sur-Vire, Grimoult du Plessis-Grimoult and Ralph Taisson, lord of Thury-Harcourt, whom Wace informs us ultimately deserted the rebels for the loyalist side.² Suppo, abbot of the great frontier monastery of Mont Saint-Michel, so often a source of tension in the region, abandoned his office at about this time, while William seized several Montois estates – facts often taken as a sign of Suppo's complicity in the revolt.³ Hugh Paisfolet and the Constantine

¹ *GND*, ii, pp. 120-22; *GG*, pp. 8-12; *OV*, iv, pp. 82-4; Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, i, pp. 426-8; *RR*, ii, lines 3585-4226.

² William Busac, count of Eu might also be added to this list (D. Crouch, *The Normans: The History of a Dynasty* (London, 2002), p. 65). *GND*, ii, p. 128 offers no specific grounds for associating his rebellion with Guy's plot, but the earliest references to William's brother, Robert inheriting Eu date to 1047/8 (*Recueil*, nos. 104, 105; *GND*, ii, p. 10 n. 4). The rebels may have been backed by Eudo of Penthièvre, although it is possible he only turned against the duke in the 1050s (Morin, *Trégor, Goëo, Penthièvre*, p. 66, 90-91; below, p. 211).

³ *Neustria Pia*, ed. A. du Monstier (Rouen, 1663), pp. 384-5; *GC*, xi, col. 515; *MSM*, nos. 7, 115; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 82; J.J.G. Alexander, *Norman Illumination at Mont St. Michel, 966-1100* (Oxford, 1970), pp. 11-13; Laporte, 'Les séries abbatiale', p. 273.

family, Cotentinois landholders, may also have supported the rebels.⁴ Two further major regional figures, Bishop Hugh of Avranches and William Werlenc, count of Mortain (the latter of whom would ultimately be dispossessed) are curiously absent from any accounts of the revolt, which may suggest that many locals chose to wait and see how the situation developed.⁵ Wace even had the first blow of the rebellion fall in the west. Narrowly avoiding a botched attempt of his life at Valognes, organised by Grimoult and Serlo de Lingèvres,⁶ William evaded his pursuers to reach the safety of Falaise.⁷ From there, Orderic had William travel to Poissy, outside Paris, to successfully solicit the aid of the French king.⁸ Modern historians have regularly described the battle as the first important turning-point of William's reign – defeat would have brought the threat of replacement; victory allowed William to retain his title and begin to enforce his authority throughout the length and breadth of Normandy and, ultimately, beyond.⁹

Val-ès-Dunes is the hinge on which the history of Lower Normandy during William's long reign pivots. While interpretations of the reasons for and

⁴ Hugh witnessed a confirmation charter for Mont Saint-Michel early in William's reign (*MSM*, no. 8 (1035x1046)), but his estate at Saint-Marcouf in the Cotentin had been granted first to Robert de Beaumont, then to Saint-Wandrille by 1053 (*Recueil*, no. 128 (1040x1053)). Though not conclusive proof, the pace of land transfer suggests that Hugh may have played a part in the 1047 rebellion (Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 54). Hugh's Lower Norman origin is perhaps supported by the existence of a Paisforere family among Odo of Bayeux's English tenants (*DP*, p. 317). The Constantine family's involvement is more open to question. William confirmed an earlier grant to the collegiate church at Cherbourg by Neil fitzConstantine, who had subsequently departed for Apulia – a common destination for exiles (*Recueil*, no. 224 (1063x1066)). He may have travelled there via Brittany – potential family members and their grants appearing in several charters for Saint-Georges de Rennes, sometimes in the company of Eudo of Penthievre (Morin, *Trégor, Goëo, Penthievre*, pp. 90-91; *Cartulaire de Saint-Georges*, ed. de La Bigne Villeneuve, nos. 5 (1032x1036), 13 (c. 1050), 16 (c. 1060), 21 (post-1034), 55 (c. 1040)).

⁵ M. Hagger, *William, King and Conqueror* (London, 2012), pp. 8-9.

⁶ Serlo was also a tenant of the Montbray family at Buceels (arr. Bayeux, cant. Balleroy) in the Bessin (*Regesta*, no. 48 (1079/80x1082)).

⁷ *RR*, ii, lines 3641-3760, 4209-4220.

⁸ *OV*, i, p. 158.

⁹ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 47-52; Bates, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 27-8; Hagger, *King and Conqueror*, pp. 7-11. In all three works discussion of Val-ès-Dunes comes at the end of chapters dealing with the Conqueror's youth and minority, implicitly casting the battle as a coming-of-age, baptism-of-fire moment in William's life. Similarly, de Boüard, *Guillaume le Conquérant* discusses the battle in a chapter entitled 'La fin du commencement'.

scale of the rebellion vary wildly, all commentators agree that the revolt provides an important insight into the character of Lower Normandy during the anarchic years of William's minority.¹⁰ In the long term, William's reaction to both the uprising itself and subsequent western threats to his authority would have a transformative effect on almost every aspect of regional life – political affiliations, administrative structures, ecclesiastical patronage, social networks and cultural traditions. These changes saw the fortunes of not only the Lower Norman aristocracy, but also their Breton and Manceaux neighbours increasingly bound to those of the ducal dynasty. It saw the administration of the western *pagi* redistributed, expanded and centralised. Monastic foundation and endowment spread ever further westward and, more importantly, gained widespread regional support and emulation for the first time, while the restoration and reorganisation of the local dioceses gained much needed momentum. William partly achieved such feats by actively encouraging greater aristocratic integration throughout Normandy, leading by example by tying his own family into western kinship groups more closely than ever before. Even the urban and economic evolution of the region arguably owed something to the legacy of Val-ès-Dunes, as both the Conqueror and his recently-endowed lieutenants sought to develop their powerbases with castles, abbeys and markets. Of this no finer example exists than the already-emergent town of Caen, through which the blood and bodies of the battle must have run. Equidistant from the Seine valley and the Cotentin, Caen was chosen by William to be his second capital, perhaps with the specific

¹⁰ Compare Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 47-51; Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 284; Bates, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 48-9; idem, 'The Conqueror's Adolescence', *ANS* 25 (2003), pp. 14-15; and Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 36-7, 40.

intention of ‘reinforcing the cohesion of the west of the duchy’.¹¹ Ultimately, William’s reshaping of Lower Normandy would cast a long shadow over the most important event of his reign – the Conquest of England. Post-Conquest settlement patterns provide both an insight into William’s opinion of the Lower Norman aristocracy and a mirror of continental concerns.

The half-century that followed William’s accession saw ducal involvement in Lower Normandy undergo a period of rapid and sustained intensification unseen, both in terms of breadth and scale, in the previous 150 years. The Breton war of 1064 stands as testament to how far and quickly the situation in the region evolved. Part of a visitor’s programme for the recently-arrived Harold Godwinson, William chose to illustrate Norman military might to his unexpected guest by taking him on a campaign across the Couesnon to campaign against Conan II of Brittany. In the wider context of William’s reign, this campaign marked the culmination of a lengthy process whereby the duke had humbled or obtained the acquiescence of the territorial princes surrounding Normandy in anticipation of an increasingly probable expedition to England.¹² As with Val-ès-Dunes, however, the details of the war of 1064, including the reasons for the campaign, William’s success during it and even the precise date of the invasion are poorly attested and understood.¹³ Some sources present Conan II as the

¹¹ L. Jean-Marie, *Caen aux XI^e et XII^e siècles: espace urbain, pouvoirs et société* (Caen, 2000), pp. 71-3, p. 72, for this citation (my translation).

¹² Bates, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 69-70.

¹³ E. John, ‘Edward the Confessor and the Norman Succession’, *EHR* 94 (1979), p. 260, for the unlikely date of 1065, which clashes with the account of Harold’s Welsh activities in ASC, C and D, s.a. 1065. GG, pp. 74-6 and the Bayeux Tapestry, in *English Historical Documents, 1042-1189*, ed. D.C. Douglas and G.W. Greenway (London, 1953), plates XIX-XXV, pp. 234-5, 248-51 present two very different accounts of the campaign. The former has William’s assault peter out after the relief of Dol, with food in short supply and a stand-off between the Norman army and the combined forces of Conan and Geoffrey of Anjou; the latter depicts William pressing on further into Brittany to attack both Rennes and Dinan. Keats-Rohan, ‘Breton Contingent’, p. 165, for Geoffrey of Anjou’s involvement, which arguably reinforces the Manceaux dimension to this conflict.

aggressor.¹⁴ Others, however, suggest that William either sought to gain a renewed recognition of the fealty extracted by his father from Brittany in the 1030s or invaded in reaction to Breton intervention during his own takeover of Maine in 1063. Whatever the cause, a campaign in Brittany arguably allowed William to further secure his expanding dominions against external assault.¹⁵ Modern historians have focused increasingly on William's relations with a group of rebellious Breton border lords, led by Rivallon, seigneur of Combours and guardian of the temporalities of the episcopal see of Dol, who together held the latter town against Conan – resulting in the siege that the Norman army relieved upon its arrival in Brittany.¹⁶ Regardless of whether this revolt was a cause or a consequence of William's invasion, the duke's ability to win the support of these frontier barons owed everything to his success in Lower Normandy. As we have seen, Breton lords had long enjoyed considerable territorial, familial and ecclesiastical connections with Lower Normandy, especially in the Avranchin. Growing ducal involvement in the region after 1047, however, allowed William to exploit these connections in a manner previously unseen, with Rivallon and his compatriots increasingly appearing in the duke's company and steadily acquiring further territorial and familial interests throughout the Norman world from the 1050s onwards. While the gains made by his father in the 1030s had proven transitory, William's more entrenched presence in the west, enshrined in ducal castles, churches, officers and kinsfolk guaranteed long-lasting results. Even the

¹⁴ GG, p. 72. How extensive a threat Conan represented to Normandy is debatable. William's construction of the frontier castle of Saint-James-de-Beuvron to defend the Breton border, usually associated with this campaign (GND, ii, p. 208; Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 178), may in fact post-date the Conquest (Regesta, nos. 251, 252; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 165). Orderic's notion that Conan had a claim on Normandy is fanciful (GND, ii, pp. 162-4).

¹⁵ OV, ii, p. 104; GND, ii, p. 208, for Norman claims of fealty. Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 165; *Cartulaire Blésois de Marmoutier*, ed. C. Métais (Chartres et Blois, 1891), no. 42; O. Guillot, *Le Comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XI^e siècle* (Paris, 2 vols., 1972), ii, C 254, for possible Breton activity in Maine in c. 1063.

¹⁶ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 178; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 162-6.

setback William experienced outside Dol after Ralph de Gaël's revolt of 1075 could not reverse this trend, as the appearance of so many Breton border lords in the pages of Domesday Book attests.

Though it cannot truly be described as a 'conquest',¹⁷ the methods and personnel that William employed in imposing his authority over the west in the years after 1047 provided both valuable experience and loyal support during all his subsequent campaigns and occupations. Indeed, without the stability that William brought to Lower Normandy attempts at expansion into Maine and Brittany would surely have proven impossible and the conquest of England a more dangerous, less widely-supported affair. Despite William's best efforts, there remained, as we will see, significant limitations on the effective enforcement of ducal authority in Lower Normandy. Nevertheless, given the wider impact of William's early interactions with the region, understanding the duke's relationship with Lower Normandy is of greater importance in assessing his reign as a whole than has perhaps previously been considered the case. Of course, the legacy of Val-ès-Dunes was built upon the battle itself. It is to reconstructing the context and character of this engagement that we must first turn.

6.2) Val-ès-Dunes: Context and Character

While Val-ès-Dunes provides a wonderful moment of theatre when discussing William's early years, the scale and character of the revolt remain poorly understood. Douglas emphasised that the rebellion involved 'many of the foremost families of the duchy'; de Boüard the wealth and influence of the individuals involved.¹⁸ In fact, the limited number of named conspirators and the absence from that list of any of the greatest Norman aristocratic dynasties

¹⁷ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 37 n. 111.

¹⁸ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 47; de Boüard, *Guillaume le Conquérant*, pp. 122-3.

(Montgomery, Beaumont, Tosny, FitzOsbern) suggests that the revolt was a smaller affair. Indeed, its western focus left Guy of Burgundy's position 'relatively weak'.¹⁹ Even Henry I of France's involvement in the battle is open to interpretation. While it may demonstrate the seriousness with which William viewed the rebellion, a political operator as skilful as Henry would hardly have thrown his weight behind the weaker party when the situation offered him the hope of advancing his own interests.²⁰

Regardless of the scale of both the revolt and the battle itself, the largely Lower Norman composition of the rebel party has prompted numerous interpretations of the uprising's causes. William of Poitiers, doubtless influenced by classical models, described the rebellion as a reaction to the duke's attempts from c. 1042 onwards to restore order after the chaos of his minority – a view to which Hagger partly ascribes.²¹ Rather than accept William's efforts, the rebels 'preferred to enjoy their accustomed liberty, retaining their own possessions and seizing those of others at their pleasure'.²² Given that the minority had affected the entire duchy, why should the lords of Lower Normandy in particular have felt this way? Le Patourel suggested that the revolt's origins lay in ongoing, deep-seated differences between the inhabitants of the duchy's extreme east and west. The rebellion of the Lower Norman nobility represented a 'last gesture of independence from the country west of the Orne towards a line of 'dukes' who

¹⁹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 201, for this quotation; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 36.

²⁰ Compare Bates, *William the Conqueror*, p. 49 and Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 201, 315 n. 8 on the scale and significance of Henry's contribution. Gaining William's gratitude would certainly have aided Henry's own interests.

²¹ Bates, 'Conqueror's Adolescence', pp. 3-4, for William's efforts to establish his personal rule from around this date. Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 16-19.

²² GG, p. 8.

had hitherto lived and moved, for the most part, east of the Risle'.²³ This interpretation, however, has been criticised by Bates, who argues:

'The war of 1046-7 was unquestionably a quarrel between kinsmen and one whose origins can be located at court. All involved were prominent in the charters of William's adolescence. There is indeed something rather bizarre about the interpretation of the events as a great conflict between the Scandinavian traditions of Lower Normandy and the increasingly French ones of Upper Normandy. Regional difference there undoubtedly was, but an army led by prominent curial figures with predominantly French personal names, all of who were in one way or another *protégés* of the Norman rulers is a most unconvincing explanation of its supposedly deeply entrenched character.'²⁴

Rather than existing on the edges of ducal authority, the leading rebels, including westerners such as Neil II were thus integral players in Norman power politics, who resented being increasingly side-lined as William established his own ruling clique during the early 1040s, which may have contained other Lower Norman nobles.²⁵ Many rebels, however, were demonstrably neither involved nor interested in court politics, instead having their own personal reasons for unrest. Hagger thus concluded that Guy of Burgundy simply provided 'a figurehead...a focus around which disgruntled men could rally, but whose goal was not necessarily their own', making the events of 1047 little different to many later Norman revolts, such as those of Henry I's reign.²⁶ None of these interpretations are entirely satisfactory and all, save Le Patourel's, fail to address the enigma at the heart of the revolt. Why were the rebels almost exclusively Lower Normans? Though it had nothing to do with Norse heritage, the events of 1047 arguably reflect continuing political, social and cultural divisions between mid-eleventh-century Upper and Lower Normandy. The very fact that the Lower Norman

²³ Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 284.

²⁴ Bates, 'Conqueror's Adolescence', p. 14.

²⁵ Hagger, *King and Conqueror*, pp. 6-7.

²⁶ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 40.

aristocracy felt the need to rebel, however, reveals that this gap was narrowing. William's victory at Val-ès-Dunes would ensure it narrowed in his favour.

The immediate context of the revolt was the anarchic events that gripped Normandy following William's accession as an illegitimate minor in 1035. The great Norman families vied amongst themselves for land and influence, utilising murder and mutilation in pursuit of their aims, while the young duke's guardians came to a succession of sticky ends.²⁷ Most of these stories stem from the pen of Orderic Vitalis, who was primarily concerned with chronicling events in the area surrounding his own abbey of Saint-Évroult. Widespread castle-building, however, suggests that problems were not limited simply to Normandy's southern *pagi*.²⁸ Yet this descent into chaos was neither instantaneous nor entirely unchecked. While they lived, William's guardians attempted to maintain order. Rather than resist their efforts, as Le Patourel might have expected, two powerful Lower Norman magnates supported their work. In the first years of William's minority, *vicomte* Neil I assisted the young duke's guardian, Archbishop Robert and one count Eudo, most likely brother to another guardian, count Alan III of Brittany in adjudicating land disputes involving the bishopric of Bayeux.²⁹ That Neil was mentioned by name, rather than lumped in with those 'other magnates who had rights of justice in the kingdom', is testament to his high standing throughout Normandy at this time.³⁰ Ralph Taisson, the lord of Thury-Harcourt and later turncoat of Val-ès-Dunes also had a prominent position at court during these years, despite appearing only fleetingly in previous reigns.³¹ The support of

²⁷ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 39-43 remains the most detailed account.

²⁸ Yver, 'Les châteaux-forts', pp. 52-7, for baronial castle-building during this period.

²⁹ Above, p. 58 n. 145.

³⁰ Translation from Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, p. 39.

³¹ Ralph first appears in c. 1025 (*Recueil*, no. 33) and again during Robert's reign (*Recueil*, no. 65). He made six appearances in the years up to 1047 (*Recueil*, nos. 93, 98, 100, 103, 105, 110 –

such western figures is neither entirely surprising nor necessarily indicative of local reaction as a whole. Neil I's pre-eminence in Lower Normandy had been bolstered by his long service to the ducal house, which had given him relevance beyond the Cotentin. Given his family's Breton connections, Neil would also have been well-placed to co-operate with William's guardian, Count Alan. Neil thus had a vested interest in maintaining ducal rule and was in a strong position to do so. Ralph perhaps calculated that long-term opportunities might arise from loyal service at the ducal court during these difficult years. The absence of any other western aristocrats, however, suggests that not all felt the same way. Indeed, Ralph and Neil's 'outstanding' level of attendance at court may have left them particularly out of touch with local opinion,³² given the lengthy absence from their own estates and neighbourhood that this would have entailed.³³

Whatever Neil and Ralph had hoped to achieve, all was to change as William approached maturity. From c. 1042 onwards, Bates argues, William began to rule more actively and surround himself with a coterie of advisors of his own choosing, causing many, including Ralph and Neil II de Saint-Sauveur, successor to Neil I (d.c. 1042) as *vicomte* of the Cotentin, to feel increasingly marginalised at court. Both men were absent from a number of charters produced in c. 1046 in the immediate run-up to the rebellion.³⁴ Hagger goes further, arguing that Neil's absence from 'an act of 1042, which records a transfer of some

being identifiable in the latter due to the reference to his brother, Erneis). Ralph was second only to William fitzOsbern in terms of the number of attestations made during William's minority (Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 112 n. 34).

³² Bates, *Normandy*, p. 159.

³³ The precise itinerary of the ducal household is unknown. William's charters suggest he spent more time travelling through Lower Normandy than any of his predecessors (Bates, *Normandy*, p. 152). This, however, was likely a consequence of the intensification of ducal control over the region that followed his victory at Val-ès-Dunes in 1047. Most charter and chronicle references for the period up until 1066 continue to place the ducal household and major assemblies of the Norman nobility in Upper Normandy – far from Ralph and Neil's own territories.

³⁴ Bates, 'Conqueror's Adolescence', pp. 14-15; Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 159-60; *Recueil*, nos. 106-108.

revenues produced by the *vicomtés* of the Cotentin, Coutances and Gavray' to Cerisy – an act that directly affected Neil's area of jurisdiction – demonstrated William's determination to impose his personal influence in the west and forge new social connections in the region.³⁵ Two other Lower Normans, Alfred the Giant and Thurstin Haldup attested this act, alongside two ducal favourites, Roger de Montgomery and William fitzOsbern. Both hypotheses are interesting, but difficult to prove. While William may have started to assert himself as early as c. 1042, he remained insecure and open to influence by the great nobles around him. Thurstan Goz's rebellion of c. 1043 against which Rodulf de Gacé to all intents and purposes led the ducal forces provides a case in point.³⁶ While they may be absent from those acts dated explicitly to 1046, both Neil and Ralph appear in a number of other ducal charters, which, while not dated so specifically, may well have been produced in the mid-1040s.³⁷ They may, then, not have been as marginalised at court as they at first appear. Similarly, William's grant to Cerisy is open to alternative interpretations. Though dated internally to 1042, Duchess Matilda's subscription, which could only have been added after 1050 and the 'remarkably detailed and sophisticated' level of the financial information it contains suggest that the document went through several forms before its inclusion in the now-lost twelfth-century *pancarte* on which all subsequent copies were based.³⁸ Resultantly, both the original content of the grant and Neil's absence from the witness list are open to question. Were Neil's absence genuine, it may have been the result of his age. Van Torhoudt suggests that Neil was too

³⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 36-8; *Recueil*, no. 99.

³⁶ *GND*, ii, pp. 100-102.

³⁷ *Recueil*, no. 105 (1035x1047/8); *MSM*, no. 8 (1035x1046), for Ralph Taisson. *Recueil*, nos. 104 (1035x1047) and 111 (1035x1048); *MSM*, no. 8, for Neil II.

³⁸ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 184 n. 40. Neil II was exiled in c. 1056, with his family losing their vicecomital status as a result (below, pp. 211-12, 239-40), which may explain their absence from any later witness list.

young to succeed immediately to his father's *vicomté* in c. 1042, though this seems unlikely given his appearance alongside Neil I in acts from Duke Robert's reign.³⁹

Bold though William's western ambitions may have been, the reality was considerably less impressive. Of the 20 ducal charters that probably pre-date Val-ès-Dunes, only three dealt with Lower Normandy – the Cerisy grant and two confirmations.⁴⁰ Though they were significant local figures, aristocrats such as Haimo Dentatus and Rannulf, *vicomte* of the Bessin attested few, if any ducal *acta*,⁴¹ emphasising the duke's continuing problems in that *pagus*, let alone the Cotentin. Though William perhaps sought to strengthen contacts with other Lower Norman families during these years, most notably with the Haldup dynasty, which acquired ducal demesne in the Cotentin and married into the ducal house,⁴² it is impossible to date such connections accurately. They may, therefore, post-date Val-ès-Dunes. Nevertheless, though more a result of Duke Robert's reign and the opportunities of William's minority than the young duke's own actions, a wider array of Lower Normans were now coming to the fore. Appearances, however fleetingly, by Alfred the Giant, Haimo Dentatus, *vicomtes* Anschetil and his son, Rannulf I de Briquessart, Ralph Taisson and, perhaps, Thurstan Haldup support Hagger's overall argument that Neil no longer represented 'the principal link between the Cotentin and the duke', though he was doubtless still a major

³⁹ van Torhout, 'Les sièges', p. 14; *MSM*, no. 5.

⁴⁰ *Recueil*, nos. 92-109, 112-13 – no. 94 confirms numerous donations to Fécamp, including properties in the Cotentin and Bessin; *MSM*, no. 8 – confirming Adelelm's grants to Mont Saint-Michel. *Recueil*, no. 111, in which William organised the return of land in the Channel Islands to Rannulf, *vicomte* of the Bessin almost certainly post-dates the rebellion (Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 40).

⁴¹ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 39, although Rannulf does attest *Recueil*, no. 105, which may pre-date Val-ès-Dunes. Keats-Rohan identifies Haimo with the *vicecomes* who witnessed *MSM*, nos. 5 (1027x1035) and 8 (1037x1046). This same *vicecomes* also appears in *Recueil*, no. 85 (1031x1035).

⁴² Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 35-6.

player.⁴³ Neil thus had some cause for feeling marginalised or threatened by 1047, but opportunistic greed might have played an equal role. Guy of Burgundy certainly paid handsomely for Neil's support, passing the custody of the castle of Le Homme over to him ahead of the rebellion.⁴⁴ If the motives of Neil II and Ralph remain open to debate, those of their fellow conspirators present an equally mixed picture. Rannulf, *vicomte* of the Bessin perhaps sought to recover estates in Guernsey that had been unjustly seized by Robert the Magnificent – unlawful dispossession of hereditary property representing a common cause for rebellion in eleventh-century Normandy, with which many aristocrats would sympathise.⁴⁵ Hagger suggests that Haimo Dentatus, identified by Wace as lord of Creully, rebelled in support of the exiled Thurstan Goz, who was himself connected to a family that used this toponym.⁴⁶ Though interesting, this theory is hard to verify. The exact relationship between the Goz and Creully families remains unclear, while, aside from the toponym itself, there is nothing to link the Creully family to that of Haimo.⁴⁷ Various dates have been given for Abbot Suppo's flight from

⁴³ *ibid.*, p. 37.

⁴⁴ *Regesta*, no. 58; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 38; *idem*, 'Norman *Vicomte*', pp. 70-71.

⁴⁵ *MSM*, nos. 5, 7; Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 39-40; Roche, 'The way vengeance comes', pp. 132-3.

⁴⁶ *RR*, ii, lines 4025-4028; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 39.

⁴⁷ L. Musset, 'Actes inédits du XI^e siècle I, Les plus anciennes chartres du prieuré de Saint-Gabriel (Calvados)', *BSAN* 52 (1952-4), pp. 124-9. Musset correctly notes that both the Goz and Creully families were benefactors of Troarn and that the families were connected by possessions at Rucqueville and Tailleville (*Regesta*, nos. 49, 280). While the two families display notable genealogical, topographic and onomastic similarities, his identification of Richard de Creully with Richard Goz cannot be categorically proven and is not without problems. If correct, Richard would have been politically active from the late 1020s (*MSM*, appendix ii, no. 3 (1027x1033); *Recueil*, no. 72 (1027x1035)) until the late 1080s (*Regesta*, nos. 48 (1081x1087), 146 (1086)), suggesting that he lived to a (suspiciously) venerable age. Given Richard de Creully's attestations in the late 1020s, Keats-Rohan, 'Four Case Studies', pp. 26-7 is surely wrong to attribute the Goz family's association with the honour to Haimo Dentatus' fall from grace in 1047, unless the Goz only became overlords of a separate Creully family at that point. Whatever the initial tenurial relationship, Hugh d'Avranches was calling the shots by the 1080s. In *Regesta*, no. 48 William fitzRobert Goz, perhaps identifiable with the son of Richard de Creully's elder brother, Robert (Musset, 'Actes inédits I', pp. 132-3) gave the land of Robert 'the Doctor' fitzThurstin (presumably to be identified as the son of Thurstin II de Creully, Richard's brother) at Eterville and Colomby-sur-Thaon to Saint-Étienne, Caen with Hugh's consent, despite William seemingly

Mont Saint-Michel, ranging between 1042 and 1048.⁴⁸ The abbey may thus have been operating without a ducally-approved and appointed abbot for several years before the rebellion – a further sign of William’s limited authority in the region. Suppo’s departure has traditionally been attributed to hostility from the monks as a result of mismanaging the abbey’s possessions, but internal politics do little to explain the extensive losses suffered by Mont Saint-Michel after 1047.⁴⁹ It is possible that self-preservation or a desire for greater independence persuaded the monks, if not necessarily the abbot himself, to support the local cause and, as the events of the 1030s attest, the abbey certainly had form in this regard.⁵⁰ Conversely, we cannot be certain whether Guy of Burgundy, the figurehead for the revolt, sought to replace William as duke or whether he desired nothing more than to improve his position at court.⁵¹ The motives of Grimoult, Serlo and Hugh Pasfolet are similarly unclear, with Grimoult’s apparent desire to assassinate the duke proving a particular point of interest that undoubtedly contributed to his harsh treatment by William in the long term.⁵²

Despite such lacunae and complexities, taken together these accounts of individual rebels provide an explanation for the revolt’s western focus. In 1047, the history and geography of Lower Normandy conspired to place its inhabitants in a position where they felt rebellion was a viable option. Whatever the Nigellides and Taissons hoped to achieve during William’s minority, their chances of influencing the duke in the long term were always going to be slim.

descending from a senior line of the family. Garnett, ‘“Ducal’ succession’, pp. 82-6, for an overview of the evolution of *parage* in eleventh-century Normandy.

⁴⁸ Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, i, p. 119, ii, pp. 205-206; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 101.

⁴⁹ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, p. 101 n. 112 and citations there.

⁵⁰ Alexander, *Norman Illumination*, p. 12, for this theory.

⁵¹ Crouch, *The Normans*, p. 65; Hagger, ‘How the west was won’, p. 37. Guy may have hoped for a more respected, regular position in the duke’s counsel (of the sort suggested by the frequent charter attestations of ducal favourites, such as fitzOsbern and Montgommery) or a significant office within the ducal household (Bates, *Normandy*, p. 155).

⁵² *RR*, ii, lines 3757-3760, 4203-4226.

Unsurprisingly, the men with whom William surrounded himself as he matured were drawn exclusively from Upper Normandy. It was there that William grew up and the region's families had long traditions of service at the ducal court, familial links to the ruling dynasty and patronage of the regime's ecclesiastical foundations. The same could not be said of the Lower Norman aristocracy. For those who were interested, distance made regular attendance at a household mainly based to the east difficult and there were dangers in leaving one's lands for too long.⁵³ We have already seen how, even as late as the twelfth century, local families had little obvious interest in either concocting or recording familial connections with the ducal house.⁵⁴ Grants by Lower Normans to ducal houses were similarly few and far between.⁵⁵ Whether or not William had begun to forge links with certain local families before 1047, only one native Lower Norman, Bishop Geoffrey of Coutances was to receive the same level of patronage as William's Upper Norman favourites after the Conquest – a reward for a long and varied career in ducal service.⁵⁶ Despite their descent from Gunnor, the Norman dukes had displayed little interest in the western aristocracy prior to 1047. Instead, former dukes had happily encouraged Upper Norman settlement in the region,

⁵³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 33. Neil attested more acts than any other *vicomte* during Robert's reign, bar Gozelin, *vicomte* of Rouen, who, like Neil, witnessed seven.

⁵⁴ The same could be said of Thurstan Goz, descendant of Ansfrid the Dane, whose name is reminiscent of the local chieftains of William Longsword's reign.

⁵⁵ *Recueil*, no. 34 (1025) is the earliest from the Bessin, indeed Odo fitzGosfrid, who granted half of the coastal town of Ryes to Fécamp, is the first known ducal vassal from Lower Normandy (Musset, 'Notules fécampoises', p. 588). *Recueil*, no. 94 (1035x1040), which includes grants to Fécamp by two *milites*, Alfred and Anschitil, is the earliest from the Cotentin. Muriel d'Amblié may have granted property in the Cotentin to Fécamp under Duke Robert, but the details of her benefactions only emerge in William's reign (*Recueil*, no. 85; *Regesta*, no. 143). In *Recueil*, no. 61 (1030), Robert confirmed the donation of an unidentified manor in the Cotentin to Trinité-du-Mont, but this had presumably been granted by the abbey's founder, the aforementioned *vicomte* Gozelin – another example of an Upper Norman acquiring estates in the west.

⁵⁶ After 1066, Geoffrey spent most of his time in England, according to 'De statu', col. 220. J. Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray, Bishop of Coutances, 1049-1093', *EHR* 59 (1944), pp. 143ff., for an outline of his military, administrative and legal career and the rewards he reaped in England. Geoffrey witnessed c. 70 of William's charters. Only Odo of Bayeux witnessed more (*Regesta*, *passim*).

both lay and ecclesiastical, to bring it to heel. Integration was to be achieved more by colonisation than co-operation. They had ridden roughshod over local rights, as with Rannulf de Briquessart; ignored familial connections that were not of their making, as perhaps with Haimo Dentatus and the Goz family; and failed to understand that practical necessities would all too often override political affiliations, as with Mont Saint-Michel.

Yet if the events of 1047 reveal the ongoing rifts between Upper and Lower Normandy, they also demonstrate that the inhabitants of the latter region saw themselves as part of a broader Norman community. Though they had shown little interest in wider affairs previously, the rebels of 1047 recognised that for their grievances to be heard and the status quo maintained they needed more influence over the duke in Rouen. If Wace is to be believed, some were even willing to use murder to achieve these ends. That a revolt was required at all thus demonstrates how much more integral a part of regional affairs the duke had become after the gradual progression of Richard II and Robert's reigns, despite the local aristocracy still existing largely on the periphery of the court circle. The rebels' failure at Val-ès-Dunes, however, did not see them consigned to oblivion. Instead, as Hagger remarks, it encouraged William to engage with Lower Normandy more actively and extensively than any previous duke.⁵⁷ William's efforts would transform the region, consolidating his authority and extending his influence beyond the duchy's western borders more successfully than ever before.

6.3) Val-ès-Dunes: Consequences

The installation of ducal officials, foundation and endowment of monasteries and development of ducal castles, palaces and towns all evidence William's direct

⁵⁷ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 40.

intervention in the west following his victory at Val-ès-Dunes. Such activities represented a conscious effort to spread the post-Carolingian administrative framework of Upper Normandy. Equally important, however, were the more subtle results of William's greater interaction with the local aristocracy. Some western families went into eclipse, the fortunes of others waxed strong. At the same time, through grants of ducal demesne and forfeited estates, William continued to introduce loyal Upper Norman supporters into the region. The transformative effect that such contacts achieved was vast. Local aristocrats increasingly established familial connections throughout the wider duchy and became more dependent than ever before upon the duke himself for their advancement. Patterns of ecclesiastical patronage, naming customs and familial connections shifted accordingly. Furthermore, this process was a self-perpetuating one. Closer contact meant that William was increasingly well-placed to exploit specific events in Lower Normandy during the 1050s and early 1060s to further strengthen his influence and authority both there and abroad, while also weeding out any remaining disruptive elements.

This process began with William's treatment of the defeated rebels of 1047. Rather than dispossess them wholesale, William recognised the value in restoring many to their positions and addressing their concerns.⁵⁸ Rannulf I de Briquessart was treated especially well, retaining his office and estates. William even arranged the restitution of his lost estates in the Channel Islands.⁵⁹ Given that his father, Anschetil had served as *vicomte* of the Bessin until the end of Duke

⁵⁸ Harsh treatment of rebels in eleventh- and twelfth-century Normandy was by no means unusual or frowned upon (Roche, 'The way vengeance comes', pp. 119, 134-5). William of Poitiers notes that the duke *supplicia item consociis, quae capitalia ex aequo irrogarentur, condonare maluit ob rationabiles causas* – 'preferred to remit for reasonable causes the punishment of Guy's confederates, **who justly deserved death**' (GG, p. 12 – my highlighting).

⁵⁹ MSM, no. 7.

Robert's reign,⁶⁰ Rannulf's connections to the ducal kindred (through marriage to Richard III's illegitimate daughter, Alice) may only have been acquired after 1047 in a further attempt to secure his loyalty. Despite such kindnesses, Rannulf made no obvious effort to develop closer contacts with the ducal court.⁶¹ Neil, too, appears initially to have been forgiven. He retained the office of *vicomte*, witnessing several ducal and private charters in the early 1050s.⁶² Poitiers, however, notes that Neil was subsequently 'punished with exile because he had offended seriously'.⁶³ It is impossible to know whether the partial forfeiture of familial property, on which William established several incomers to the region,⁶⁴ was a cause or consequence of this second rebellion. Wace's record of Neil's exile to Brittany is confirmed by his attestation of a grant to Saint-Aubin d'Angers by his father's former ally and William's then foe, Eudo of Penthievre, in 1056/7.⁶⁵ By 1059, Neil was in the company of another of William's foes, Henry I, with whom the duke was busily contesting control of Thimert.⁶⁶ William was slow to forgive. Neil's actions contributed to a decline in the status of his son, Neil III, in

⁶⁰ *Recueil*, no. 80 (1029x1035), for Anschetil's latest appearance as *vicomte*.

⁶¹ Before 1066, Rannulf attested only four further ducal charters. Three involved monasteries in his *vicomte* (*Recueil*, nos. 169, 196 (Cerisy), 231 (La Trinité, Caen)); while the fourth was enacted at Domfront in Lower Normandy (no. 159). The grants to Cerisy, recorded in the abbey's cartulary, may simply have been confirmed by the duke, having been drawn up locally – a not uncommon occurrence (Bates, *Normandy*, p. 159). In other words, Rannulf may not even have been in the duke's presence on these occasions. After 1066, he attests only one charter that had no link to a Lower Norman monastery, witnessing Gulbert d'Auffay's agreement with Fécamp in 1085 (*Regesta*, no. 145). While such examples do not preclude attendance on the duke, they are suggestive. Rannulf's tenants, however, did begin to patronise ducal monasteries – Alfred of Saint-Quentin, Robert de Insula and Thurstin de Aneseio all gave land to Cerisy with Rannulf's consent (P. de Farcy, *Abbayes de l'évêché de Bayeux* (Laval, 1886), pp. 84-5).

⁶² *Recueil*, nos. 141, 160-62; *MSM*, no. 43.

⁶³ *GG*, p. 12 – *quoniam improbe offensabat, exilio punitum fuisse comperio*. Brunterc'h, 'Geoffroy Martel', pp. 314-15, for the following discussion.

⁶⁴ Below, pp. 220-21.

⁶⁵ *RR*, ii, lines 4169-4172; *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Saint-Aubin d'Angers*, ed. A. Bertrand de Broussillon (Paris, 3 vols., 1903), ii, no. 677, witnessed by *Niellus vicecomes*. *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 55, for this dating. Neil may have been involved in the hostilities against William at Ambrières in 1054, in which Eudo took part (*GG*, p. 52), though this is close to his attestation of *MSM*, no. 43 (1054). The Constantine family, who also appear alongside Eudo, may have been involved in this second rebellion (above, p. 195 n. 4).

⁶⁶ Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, no. 28 (1059).

Lower Normandy,⁶⁷ with Wace depicting the former *vicomte* (or, perhaps, his heir) fighting at Hastings ‘with great vigour’ in an effort to secure ‘the love and goodwill of his lord’.⁶⁸ In contrast to Rannulf’s apparent apathy and Neil’s continuing non-compliance, the turncoat Ralph Taisson picked up where he left off in 1047, witnessing ducal *acta* throughout the 1050s and 1060s, fighting alongside the duke at Mortemer in 1054 and founding the abbey of Fontenay (c. 1050) in emulation of Frankish-inspired Upper Norman aristocratic practices.⁶⁹ Haimo, son of Haimo Dentatus, who had died in battle at Val-ès-Dunes found service as a steward at the ducal, later royal court.⁷⁰ His later position as sheriff of Kent suggests that he also retained good local relations with Odo, bishop of Bayeux, from whom he held land in that shire.⁷¹ Furthermore, the Goz family, out of sympathy for whom Haimo Dentatus may have rebelled, soon returned to favour.⁷² An Osbern Paisforere, perhaps a relative of the dispossessed Hugh Paisfolet, appears as one of Odo’s tenants in Domesday Kent, suggesting that this family too retained some interests in Lower Normandy rather than being dispossessed entirely.⁷³ Only the would-be-assassin, Grimoult of Le Plessis-Grimoult was cast into perpetual imprisonment.⁷⁴ While Grimoult’s lands were certainly forfeited after his eventual death in 1074,⁷⁵ his tenants and kinsmen were

⁶⁷ Below, pp. 239-40.

⁶⁸ *RR*, ii, lines 8356-8358 – *par grant vigor, mult s’entremet d’avoir l’amor e le boen gré de son seignor*. Unless stated, all translations from *Wace’s Roman de rou*, trans. G.S. Burgess.

⁶⁹ *Recueil*, nos. 115, 122, 140-41, 157, 160-62; *RR*, ii, line 4829; L. Musset, ‘Actes inédits du XI^e siècle, V Autour des origines de Saint-Etienne de Fontenay’, *BSAN* 56 (1963, for 1961-2), pp. 11-41, esp. pp. 15-19, for the date of the foundation.

⁷⁰ *RR*, ii, lines 4021-4024; D.C. Douglas, *Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury* (London, 1944), pp. 55-6; Loyd, *Origins*, p. 50.

⁷¹ Below, p. 254.

⁷² *GND*, ii, p. 102.

⁷³ *DP*, p. 317.

⁷⁴ *RR*, ii, lines 4203-4204.

⁷⁵ *Regesta*, no. 27, for William’s grant of Grimoult’s estates to Odo of Bayeux. *RR*, ii, lines 4225-4226 also notes that ‘part of it...was granted to the abbey in Caen’ (*partie en fu...mise a Chaem en l’abeïe*), perhaps confirmed by *Regesta*, no. 52.

allowed to retain their possessions.⁷⁶ Grimoult's accomplice, Serlo of Lingèvres was allowed to go free, becoming a benefactor of Saint-Étienne, Caen, to which he wished to retire as a monk, and witnessing a grant by a neighbour, Hubert of La Hogue to Cerisy.⁷⁷ His descendants remained active in and around Caen and Bayeux into the twelfth century.⁷⁸ Though its involvement with the rebellion is disputed, Mont Saint-Michel certainly suffered in the wake of Val-ès-Dunes. The abbey's twelfth-century cartulary includes a register of appropriated properties, including those seized by William himself.⁷⁹ William re-ordered abbatial estates to suit his purposes, installed Upper Norman supporters on abbey property and, for a price, placed the abbey under the loyal leadership of Ralph de Beaumont, brother, perhaps, to Roger de Beaumont – one of the greatest Upper Norman nobles.⁸⁰ Mont Saint-Michel, however, continued to rest fitfully under ducal rule. By 1053, Ralph had died on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, perhaps forced out by the hostile monks.⁸¹ The monks continued to battle by fair means and forged to secure their right to free election throughout the 1050s, something which they achieved with the controversial election of Rannulf de Bayeux in c. 1055.⁸² As Bates remarks, while most of the rebels 'seem at a superficial level to have been

⁷⁶ Before 1047, William d'Aubigny had married Grimoult's sister and gained possession of Bougy and Danvou. These were held by his descendants from the bishop of Bayeux (H. Navel, 'L'Enquête de 1133 sur les fiefs de l'évêché de Bayeux', *BSAN* 42 (1934), pp. 16, 27 nn. 20-22, 36 n. 144). While William's grant to Bayeux notes that he had disinherited Grimoult's family in perpetuity, land belonging to an Anschetil fitzGrimoult at *Radulfi* (there are a number of Rauvilles in the Cotentin, including Rauville-la-Place, directly to the east of Saint-Sauveur) was later given by Rannulf the Priest to the abbey of Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte (Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, no. 45, pp. 50-55). Allemagne, an estate of Saint-Étienne, Caen formerly belonging to a Grimoult (*Regesta*, no. 52), is also associated with an Anschetil (nos. 48, 49, 53, 55). This chimes with Wace's note that Caen, as well as Bayeux, received estates following Grimoult's fall. Still later a Roger Grimoult held a tenement from Bayeux (Navel, 'L'Enquête', p. 22). The name is uncommon enough to suggest a possible familial relationship.

⁷⁷ *Regesta*, nos. 48-9; *Recueil*, no. 169.

⁷⁸ van Houts, 'Wace as Historian', p. xxxix.

⁷⁹ *MSM*, no. 115.

⁸⁰ *MSM*, nos. 7, 90; *GC*, xi, col. 515, Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 208.

⁸¹ Laporte, 'L'abbaye', pp. 76-7; idem, 'Les séries abbatiale', p. 273; Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, p. 207.

⁸² Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 101-102.

mercifully treated', they remained 'at most on the margins of favour' and were almost entirely 'excluded from major rewards after 1066'.⁸³ This was not, however, necessarily the result of an overarching ducal policy. William was doubtless eager to punish those who threatened him personally and curb the influence of figures, such as the Nigellides, upon whom his predecessors had relied heavily. He did not, however, completely overturn the familial rights to forfeited property customary in eleventh-century Normandy.⁸⁴ Individual choices and circumstances also played a role. Neil, Rannulf and the monks of Mont Saint-Michel clearly had little interest in appeasing the duke, while the Taisson family partly fell upon hard times due to minorities and the division of their estates between sons and vassals.⁸⁵ Against this, however, must be set Orderic's report of the flight of William's various enemies to Southern Italy, where they remained until his death.⁸⁶

More important to William was the opportunity Val-ès-Dunes provided to broaden his connections with the Lower Norman aristocracy as a whole. Rather than depend on one or two specific individuals, William's wider patronage won him a host of valuable supporters, already possessed of enviable local knowledge and long-standing familial connections. The most cordial of these new relationships was that which William established with the Haldup family. As with most Lower Norman lineages, the origins of the Haldups (the surname means 'the deaf') are obscure.⁸⁷ Thurstan Haldup's first appearance is in William's problematic grant to Cerisy, dated 1042, but perhaps no longer in its original

⁸³ Bates, *Normans and Empire*, p. 73.

⁸⁴ J.C. Holt, 'Politics and Property in Early Medieval England', *Past and Present* 57 (1972), p. 31. There were, as Holt points out (pp. 21-3), fewer pressures on pre-Conquest rulers to do so.

⁸⁵ L. Musset, 'L'aristocratie normande au XI^e siècle', in *La noblesse au moyen âge, xi^e-xv^e siècles: Essais à la mémoire de Robert Boutruche*, ed. P. Contamine (Paris, 1976), pp. 81-2.

⁸⁶ OV, iv, p. 102.

⁸⁷ Hagger, *King and Conqueror*, p. 7.

form. His possession of a separate baptismal name (Richard, which he rarely used) reveals that he was an adult convert to Christianity, though the date of his conversion is unknown.⁸⁸ Before the Conquest, however, Thurstan used his wealth to endow the local ducal house at Cerisy.⁸⁹ This charter is important, as it reveals that, without encouragement from the duke, Thurstan had sought to extend his interests eastward, marrying one Emma from an unidentified family with estates around Argentan and Falaise. Thurstan's interests in the Hiémois were further developed by the marriage of his daughter to Arnold d'Échauffour.⁹⁰ The family's original estates, however, as the provisions for their foundation at Lessay reveal, were spread throughout the Cotentin.⁹¹ Indeed, Orderic later described Thurstan's son, Eudo as 'one of the wealthiest and most powerful of the Norman nobles in the Cotentin'.⁹² Thurstan and Eudo thus provided William with the perfect regional replacements for the rebellious Nigellides and he worked tirelessly to court them. As Hagger has demonstrated, William provided Thurstan and Eudo with a string of further properties, including, but not limited to Héauville, Portbail, Baupte and Pouppeville.⁹³ Most importantly, Eudo married William's half-sister, Muriel,⁹⁴ an alliance that, as Hagger notes, 'gave the duke a kinsman in the Cotentin for the first time, and must have altered the political landscape of the region'.⁹⁵ It certainly contributed towards Eudo's rising role in the ducal administration. He is regularly identified with the Eudo, *vicomte* of the

⁸⁸ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 34 n. 89. Presumably his choice of name was influenced by the late duke.

⁸⁹ *Recueil*, no. 167.

⁹⁰ OV, ii, pp. 124-6.

⁹¹ *Regesta*, no. 175.

⁹² OV, ii, p. 124 – *in pago Constantino diuitiis et potestate inter Normanniae proceres eminebat*.

⁹³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 35 and citations there.

⁹⁴ *Regesta*, no. 175; *RR*, ii, lines 6003-6006, for the identification, which is further supported by Muriel's brother, Robert of Mortain possessing confraternity rights at Lessay (*GC*, xi, col. 917).

⁹⁵ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 36.

Cotentin who witnessed William's grant of Bernières to Bayeux,⁹⁶ Wace depicted him as one of William's chief advisors ahead of the invasion of 1066,⁹⁷ and he served as a steward at William's court.⁹⁸ William was thus duly grateful for the influence Eudo could exert on his behalf over local families, including the d'Aubignys, Grimoult's tenants and kinsmen, but also patrons of the Haldup house at Lessay.⁹⁹

Even before their alliance with the duke, the Haldups were clearly influential and extensive western landholders. It was often, however, locals of more modest means who flocked to the ducal banner in the hope of replacing those great lords who had fallen from grace in 1047. Many would receive rewards in England after 1066. Only a few, however, can be identified as playing a significant role in the transformation of William's rule in the region before the Conquest. William de Vauville, one of Neil II's former vassals, and Robert Gernon clearly pinned their colours to the ducal mast, witnessing a number of William's charters concerning the Cotentin in the years before 1066.¹⁰⁰ By far the most successful local figure, however, was Geoffrey de Montbray, bishop of Coutances (1049-1093). In the years after the Norman victory at Hastings, Geoffrey would assist at William's coronation, lead Norman forces against Anglo-Saxon rebels, oversee numerous legal cases and regularly attend the royal court. His rewards for such loyal service were vast. Geoffrey alone of the native barons of western Normandy would appear in Corbett's list of Class A magnates, recording the wealthiest lords of Domesday England, with estates worth nearly

⁹⁶ *Recueil*, no. 219 (c. 1060x1066); Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, pp. 22-3.

⁹⁷ *RR*, ii, lines 5979-6024.

⁹⁸ *OV*, ii, p. 124; *CDF*, nos. 921-3.

⁹⁹ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 35 n. 99.

¹⁰⁰ *Recueil*, nos. 132, 150, 163bis, 199, 224.

£800.¹⁰¹ Geoffrey's later prominence has prompted some commentators to posit kinship ties with the ducal house,¹⁰² but 'De statu' – written by a member of Geoffrey's own cathedral chapter within fifty years of his death – notes only that he was related to the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur.¹⁰³ This makes the background to Geoffrey's election far more surprising than previous commentators have suggested. William certainly had reasons for plucking Geoffrey from obscurity. The Coutances chronicler admits that Geoffrey's brother, Mauger, had bought Geoffrey his bishopric, presumably from the duke.¹⁰⁴ Such a payment suggests that the Montbray family were far from poor and William's acceptance of it that they had not been closely associated with Neil's revolt two years previous. Nevertheless, short-term financial gain did not come without the significant risk of granting a major post in a distant and unsettled region to a man whose family were related to known rebels and with whom William can have had little previous contact. It is worth remembering too that Geoffrey's election made him one of only two Norman bishops at the time (alongside Ivo de Bellême, bishop of Sées, whose personal circumstances were not dissimilar) who were neither drawn from the ducal house, nor Upper Normandy in general.¹⁰⁵ Conversely, William seemingly had little to lose through such an appointment. Though the author of 'De statu' clearly overemphasised for

¹⁰¹ W.J. Corbett, 'The Development of the Duchy of Normandy and the Norman Conquest of England', in *Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. H.M. Gwatkin *et al* (Cambridge, 8 vols., 1911-1936), v, pp. 510-11; C. Warren Hollister, 'The Greater Domesday Tenants-in-Chief', in *Domesday Studies*, ed. J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1987), p. 242. Above, p. 208 n. 56, for Geoffrey's career. Odo of Bayeux, Robert of Mortain and Hugh d'Avranches all had extensive Lower Norman interests, but none originated in the region.

¹⁰² M. Chibnall, 'La Carrière de Geoffroi de Montbray', in *Les évêques normands*, ed. Bouet and Neveux, p. 281.

¹⁰³ 'De statu', col. 222; Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray', pp. 131-2.

¹⁰⁴ 'De statu', col. 219; Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray', pp. 132-3. The author of 'De statu' does not specify to whom the bribe was paid, but it is hard to see how any such arrangement could have been made without William's approval at the very least.

¹⁰⁵ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 226-9, for William's appointment of kinsmen to bishoprics where possible. As Searle noted, Geoffrey's unclear relationship to the duke serves 'to underscore the vagueness of kinship ties with the west' (p. 227, for this quotation).

effect, the church of Coutances was undoubtedly in a parlous state at the time of Geoffrey's election. Bishops had only returned from Rouen to Saint-Lô on the Vire in c. 1025, earlier ducal provisions for the cathedral's canons had failed abjectly, swathes of the church's property had been lost and re-construction work on the cathedral, begun by Geoffrey's predecessor before c. 1031 was unfinished and underfunded. The diocese must have seemed an unattractive prospect to any outsider and, given the failure of previous external appointees to expedite the process of restoration and reorganisation, William may have thought it prudent to turn to a man with more local knowledge and social connections. These qualities certainly proved crucial in Geoffrey's campaign to transform the fortunes of his troubled diocese. Geoffrey quickly settled upon an expedition to Southern Italy in 1050 in order to raise funds amongst the Lower Normans, many of them his own relatives, who had settled there.¹⁰⁶ While Norman adventurers had been active in the region since c. 1015, most had arrived during the preceding two decades, many as a result of the troubles of William's minority and exile by/flight from the duke. Whatever his intentions in appointing Geoffrey, William had thus allowed the diocese of Coutances to tap into a revenue stream it might otherwise have found difficult to access. After the Conquest, Geoffrey was largely absent in England, whose wealth he used to further endow his cathedral church. As the Coutances chronicler is at pains to point out, however, most of the groundwork for the diocese's revival and reorganisation had occurred before 1066 under Geoffrey's direct aegis.¹⁰⁷ In addition to the re-construction of the cathedral, Geoffrey purchased a swathe of property both in Coutances itself and throughout the length and breadth of the Cotentin and neighbouring Channel Islands. He

¹⁰⁶ 'De statu', col. 219; Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray', pp. 136-7.

¹⁰⁷ 'De statu', col. 220; *Recueil*, no. 214 (1056x1066), for confirmation of Geoffrey's purchases and ducal grants.

funded a vast programme of urban development at Saint-Lô, built a new episcopal palace, restored the canons' prebends, re-organised the administration of both the cathedral chapter and the wider diocese, and established a school at Coutances, the products of which would win the church further patronage.¹⁰⁸ Geoffrey's focus on his own diocese is confirmed by his infrequent visits to the ducal court before 1066 – he rarely appears in Upper Normandy and witnessed few charters.¹⁰⁹ As was so often the case in Normandy's history, however, ecclesiastical revival went hand-in-hand with the expansion of ducal authority. Geoffrey had proven himself a loyal supporter and gifted administrator, thence the favours shown him after 1066. His wider family, however, remained insignificant figures. Orderic listed Geoffrey's brother, Roger de Montbray, amongst the 'outstanding' laymen of pre-Conquest Normandy, yet he attested no surviving ducal *acta* and made but one known grant to a ducal monastery.¹¹⁰ Similarly, Roger's son and eventual heir to Geoffrey's English estates, Robert, appears similarly disconnected throughout much of William's reign, only witnessing royal charters from the late 1070s onwards and receiving his earldom of Northumbria, which he held but briefly, in 1086.¹¹¹ The family's Norman fief, which passed to another Lower Norman family, the d'Aubignys, following Robert's final rebellion in 1095, was of seemingly modest proportions, consisting of estates scattered throughout the

¹⁰⁸ Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray', pp. 138-42, for an overview.

¹⁰⁹ Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray', p. 143, for his appearances at church councils in Rouen in 1055 and 1063; *Recueil*, nos. 141, 163, 163*bis*, 181, 227. The first three dealt with property belonging to Marmoutier in Geoffrey's diocese, the latter two were notably signed in or near the borders of Lower Normandy, at Brionne and Bayeux respectively.

¹¹⁰ OV, ii, p. 140; *Recueil*, no. 231 (1066), in which the duke confirmed Roger's gift of Grainville-sur-Odon to La Trinité, Caen, given upon his daughter's entrance into the abbey. Roger did not witness this confirmation.

¹¹¹ *Regesta*, nos. 48, 49, 50, 53, 115 and 175 – all (save no. 115 for Durham) involved Lower Norman monasteries in which the family had an interest, namely Caen and Lessay.

Cotentin and Bessin and owing service of only five knights from a total enfeoffment of 11.39 in the Inquest of 1172.¹¹²

While Geoffrey won favour restoring the church in the Cotentin, William entrusted one of the great lay lordships in the region to another local figure plucked from relative obscurity. Originally from the Bessin, Richard I de Reviers was rewarded with an honour based on Néhou, constructed from estates forfeited by Neil II and, perhaps, some ducal demesne and centred on what had probably been one of Neil's key estates in the northern peninsula.¹¹³ The Reviers family already had extensive familial links with Upper Normandy, where William gave Richard custody of the castle at Thimert and his nephew and eventual heir, Richard II, that of Vernon in the 1080s.¹¹⁴ Though not native to the Cotentin, Hagger's depiction of Richard as an 'outsider' is perhaps a little strong. His origins on the Bessin coastline tied him into the wider society of Lower Normandy, of which the Cotentin was but part and the speed with which he established relations with his neighbours is similarly indicative of local knowledge. Richard was attended on his deathbed by several Lower Norman figures, including William Maminot, Robert Bertram and Hubert de Ryes and, perhaps, the Vernon brothers mentioned here. He may even have established marital links with the family he had in part replaced. His grant to Saint-Père refers to 'a certain Neil who had married his sister'.¹¹⁵ The family continued to make

¹¹² *RBE*, ii, p. 629.

¹¹³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 41; van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 27-31.

¹¹⁴ *Recueil*, no. 147; *Regesta*, ed. Davis, Johnson and Cronne, i, no. 308; *Charters of the Redvers family and the earldom of Devon, 1090-1217*, ed. R. Bearman, (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, n.s. 37, 1994), p. 2; Bauduin, *Première Normandie*, pp. 233-7. *GND*, ii, p. 274; Keats-Rohan, 'Robert of Torigny's Genealogies', pp. 24-7, for the complex genealogical links between the Vernon, Reviers and fitzOsbern families.

¹¹⁵ *Recueil*, no. 147 (August 1060) – *Nigellus, sororgius eius*. This marriage may have affected anthroponym usage in the Nigellide family (Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, no. 31 (c. 1060); Keats-Rohan, 'Poppa of Bayeux', p. 187). *DP*, p. 362, for the possibility that the Latin 'de Vernon' may derive from Ver-sur-Mer on the coast of the Bessin.

links along the coastline, with Richard's daughter marrying Richard de Angerville, a lord from the eastern Bessin who seemingly gained a share of Benoîtville (arr. Cherbourg, cant. Les Pieux) through their marriage.¹¹⁶ This estate eventually found its way into the hands of the new ducal monastery of Montebourg in the northern Cotentin, of which the Reviers family became such major patrons that Orderic mistakenly credited them with the house's foundation.¹¹⁷ The family's early charters demonstrate how immersed in local society they had become by the turn of the twelfth century, with numerous other local lords and vassals witnessing and joining them in their acts.¹¹⁸ The establishment of the Reviers family thus created an alternative (and, from William's perspective, loyal) focus for familial relationships, ecclesiastical endowments and seigneurial obligations in the Cotentin, which had surely been the duke's intention all along. Richard may not have been the only native of the Bessin employed in this manner after 1047. Former ducal demesne at Moyon in the Cotentin had passed by the 1080s to one Alfred, whose grant of Ranville in the Bessin to La Trinité, Caen upon his daughter becoming a nun reveals a familial relationship with the nearby Ryes family.¹¹⁹ The Moyon family also later appear as tenants of Bayeux.¹²⁰

While Geoffrey and Richard helped William make good the opportunity Val-ès-Dunes had presented in the Cotentin, the duke's fortunes in the Avranchin owed much to another minor local figure. According to Orderic, Robert Bigot, a poverty-stricken household knight of Count William Werlenc of Mortain proved

¹¹⁶ *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, no. 5; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 48.

¹¹⁷ OV, vi, pp. 144-6.

¹¹⁸ *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, nos. 2-5.

¹¹⁹ *Regesta*, nos. 59, 61. Ranville was apparently divided between Alfred and Hubert de Ryes. Alfred's portion, which 'his sister had been given when she married' (*quam soror eius...habuerat in coniugio*), perhaps suggests a marriage alliance with Hubert or one of his tenants.

¹²⁰ *Antiquus cartularius*, i, no. 24, pp. 32-3; Navel, 'L'Enquête', p. 18.

instrumental in his master's removal from office.¹²¹ Purportedly, Werlenc advised Robert not to leave for Apulia to seek his fortune since the count would shortly secure wealth enough for his knight within Normandy. Robert conveyed this story to the duke, with whom he had made contact via his kinsman, Richard 'of Avranches'.¹²² The duke used Robert's story as a pretext to accuse Werlenc of plotting rebellion and exile him from Normandy.¹²³ Werlenc's deposition no later than 1063 was the pivotal moment in extending direct ducal rule into the Avranchin,¹²⁴ allowing William to both create a new *vicomté*, to be governed by Richard Goz,¹²⁵ and place Werlenc's frontier county of Mortain in the hands of his loyal half-brother, Robert de Conteville.¹²⁶ Through Richard Goz, William had

¹²¹ *GND*, ii, p. 126.

¹²² Writing in the early twelfth century, Orderic understandably misuses the '*Abrincatensem*' toponym at this point. L. Musset, 'Les origines et le patrimoine de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever', in *La Normandie bénédictine au temps de Guillaume le Conquérant (XI^e siècle)*, ed. L. Gaillard (Lille, 1967), pp. 357-67, esp. p. 365 argued that Richard did not gain property in the Avranchin until after his appointment as *vicomte*, which probably followed Werlenc's deposition.

¹²³ *OV*, iv, p. 98 provides a shorter account of Werlenc's fate without reference to Robert Bigot, noting simply that the count was deposed 'on some trivial pretexts' (*pro minimis occasionibus*). Morin, *Trégor, Goëlo, Penthièvre*, p. 90, however, suggests that Werlenc may have been involved in the conspiracy that led to *vicomte* Neil II's exile in c. 1056 – an interesting, if unproven hypothesis.

¹²⁴ *Recueil*, no. 162 (c. 1050x1056/7) for William's sole attestation as '*comitis de Mauritonio*'. The dating range of this charter can be tightened based on Neil II's exile (above, p. 211). Richard Goz attests only as '*Richardi filii Torestini*', not *vicomte* in the witness list. Werlenc may be the unnamed count of Mortain referred to during Bishop Hugh's episcopate (d. 1060) in the mid-eleventh-century *pancarte* for Avranches (*Recueil*, p. 27 n. 33).

¹²⁵ *Recueil*, no. 155 (1061x1066, probably c. 1063) – in this lost charter, recorded by Orderic, Richard is referred to as '*de Abrincis Turstini filio*'. He is first referred to as '*vicecomite Abrincatino*' specifically in *Recueil*, no. 159 (1063x1066). A *vicomte* Richard witnesses *Recueil*, nos. 133, 140, 141, 148 and 151 – the earliest of which, no. 140, dates to as early as 1049. This figure cannot be definitively identified as Richard Goz, however, given that a '*Richardi vicecomitis*' and '*Richardi filii Turstinci*' independently attest *MSM*, no. 8 (1037x1046). It is, therefore hard to support the date of c. 1055/6 for Richard's accession to the *vicomté* first posited in L. Musset, 'Aux origines de la féodalité normande: l'installation par les ducs de leurs vassaux normands et Bretons dans le comté d'Avranches (XI^e siècle)', *RHDFE*, 4th série, 29 (1951), p. 150.

¹²⁶ Robert appears as '*Moritonii comes*' in *Recueil*, no. 156 (1063). Nos. 190 (1049x1066), 199 (1051x1066) and 209 (1055x1066), in which he is also associated with Mortain, may pre-date this. Robert is referred to simply as William's brother in nos. 140 and 146, which may date from as late as 1060. Resultantly, Werlenc's deposition and replacement by both Richard and Robert are best placed in the early 1060s. Despite Orderic's protestations that he left Normandy with but a single squire (*GND*, ii, pp. 126-7), it seems likely that Werlenc's entire family joined him in exile (Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae*, i, p. 93; E. Johnson, 'The Process of Norman Exile into Southern Italy', in *Exile in the Middle Ages: selected proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*, ed. L. Napran and E.M.C.

also made contact with a family which, though far less eminent than the Haldups, had connections across Lower Normandy and beyond. Robert himself appears in a charter concerning Avranches cathedral in 1066.¹²⁷ Keats-Rohan suggests that he might be identifiable with the Robert Bigot, son of Norman, who was a benefactor of Sées in the 1090s and lord of Pirou and Cerisy-la-Salle in the Cotentin.¹²⁸ The latter identification is particularly interesting. Either Robert already possessed these estates before Werlenc's deposition or he may have received them in recognition of his service to the duke.¹²⁹ Robert was also presumably related to the extremely successful family of Roger Bigod (d. 1107), one of the wealthiest Lower Norman lords in Domesday England, a remarkable fate given his humble origins as a vassal of the bishops of Bayeux in the southern Bessin and minor lord in the Lieuvin.¹³⁰ Their Lower Norman origins are perhaps confirmed by the name of one of Roger's daughters, Gunnor – the former duchess's pagan name – and their links with the Goz family.¹³¹ Roger held various estates from Hugh d'Avranches in East Anglia, as did his tenant, Robert de Courson, who hailed from just to the north-west of the Goz family stronghold of Saint-Sever.¹³² Bigot of Les Loges, who also held properties from Hugh in Cheshire was presumably another scion of the family, as perhaps was Azo Bigod, who held land in Shropshire under Roger de Montgomery.¹³³

van Houts (Turnhout, 2004), p. 36) – a further sign of the duke's commitment to freeing the region from independent and possibly rebellious influences.

¹²⁷ *Recueil*, no. 229.

¹²⁸ *DP*, p. 396.

¹²⁹ If the former, this would suggest that the counts of Mortain already had an influence over and, perhaps, outlying estates in the Cotentin before William granted his brother ducal demesne in the *pagus* following Werlenc's deposition (Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 42).

¹³⁰ Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 14-15, 32.

¹³¹ *DP*, p. 396.

¹³² *LDB*, fols. 152v, 153r, 299r, 299v, 301v, 302v. *DP*, p. 375, for Robert de Courson.

¹³³ *DP*, pp. 159-60, 168.

The role that other Lower Norman families played in William's schemes is harder to trace. William's saviour in 1047, Hubert de Ryes, despite possible service as a royal steward,¹³⁴ remained a minor figure, largely interested in local affairs. He appears witnessing grants concerning Ryes itself and William's great foundation at nearby Caen, as well as perhaps attending his neighbour, Richard de Reviers, on his deathbed.¹³⁵ Hubert's sons, however, received considerable patronage from both the duke and his closest allies. Most famously, Eudo both served as a steward at the royal court and received extensive estates not only in England, but also in Upper Normandy, where he came into possession of the honour of Prèaux.¹³⁶ Of his brothers, Robert became bishop of Sées (c. 1070/1-c. 1082), while Adam received property from Odo of Bayeux and served as a Domesday commissioner.¹³⁷ There is no evidence, however, of the family acting on the duke's behalf in the Bessin in the same manner as the Haldup or Reviers families in the Cotentin. Other old local figures soon faded from view. This was certainly true of *vicomte* Neil I's former colleague, Alfred the Giant, who had been in ducal service since c. 1025 and defended *Caruscas* from Breton assault during Duke Robert's reign.¹³⁸ Alfred may even have married into Neil's family – a 'Neil brother of Alfred's wife' appears in a purchase of property at Héauville by

¹³⁴ *Regesta*, ed. Davis, Johnson and Cronne, i, p. xxiii; *Regesta*, nos. 45, 54.

¹³⁵ *Recueil*, nos. 145, 147, 231. E.A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England* (Oxford, 6 vols., 1867-1879), iii, pp. 694-5, for Hubert's supposed embassy to Edward the Confessor in 1065, recorded by the chronicler of St. John's, Colchester, founded by his son, Eudo, in William Rufus' reign. J.H. Round, 'The Legend of 'Eudo Dapifer'', *EHR* 37 (1922), pp. 1-34, for the unlikely possibility that Hubert held land in England and other legends ascribed to the Ryes family by the Colchester chronicle.

¹³⁶ *CDF*, no. 97.

¹³⁷ *OV*, ii, p. 254; *DP*, p. 123; *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesiae Wigorniensis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 2 vols., 1723), i, pp. 287-8.

¹³⁸ *Recueil*, nos. 33; *GND*, ii, pp. 56-8. It is tempting to identify him with the *vicomte* of the same name who appears during this period (*Recueil*, nos. 35, 49), especially given his later attestation alongside Thurstan Haldup concerning the *vicomtés* of the Cotentin, Coutances and Gavray in 1042.

Marmoutier before the Conquest.¹³⁹ No commentator linked Alfred to the rebellion of 1047, with Wace instead depicting him as a world-weary figure during William's minority, eager to withdraw into seclusion.¹⁴⁰ In fact, Alfred did not make his grants to Cerisy and put on his habit until at least the 1050s.¹⁴¹ While Alfred himself had been a significant figure in Lower Normandy, his descendants are harder to trace. Documentary sources reveal that Alfred had at least two sons, Aigulf and William and two daughters, Ascelina and another who married into the Milly family.¹⁴² Orderic Vitalis adds another son, Juhel, whom he associates with Robert Curthose's rebellion of 1079.¹⁴³ Hagger proposed that Alfred was the same man as Alfred de Moyon, presumably father to the William de Moyon who went on to amass estates in the West Country after 1066.¹⁴⁴ The fact that direct reference is made to both Alfred de Moyon and Alfred the Giant separately in the same Caen confirmation charter – one in respect of Alfred de Moyon's daughter, the other by Ascelina, daughter of Alfred the Giant's grants in respect of her niece – seemingly suggests that the two Alfreds were different individuals.¹⁴⁵ Familial anthroponym usage is also suggestive. In a charter for Bath Abbey, William de Moyon referred to his brothers, Wimund and Durand and his sons, William, Geoffrey and Robert, none of which are names especially associated with Alfred the Giant.¹⁴⁶ By contrast, the Devonshire tenant-in-chief, Judhael of Totnes,

¹³⁹ *Recueil*, no. 163bis – *Niellus frater Alfredie uxoris*.

¹⁴⁰ *RR*, ii, lines 3561-3584.

¹⁴¹ *Recueil*, no. 195.

¹⁴² *Recueil*, no. 195; *Regesta*, no. 59. The identification of which Milly family Alfred's daughter married into is itself debatable. The spelling '*Millei*' might suggest Milly, Calvados, near Noron-la-Poterie (arr. Bayeux, cant. Balleroy), but *DP*, pp. 42, 286 suggests Milly, Manche (arr. Avranches, cant. Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët).

¹⁴³ *OV*, iii, pp. 100-102.

¹⁴⁴ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 43.

¹⁴⁵ *Regesta*, no. 59.

¹⁴⁶ *Two Chartularies of the Priory of St. Peter at Bath*, ed. W. Hunt (London: Somerset Record Society 7, 1893), no. 34. *Regesta*, no. 164, for Alfred holding property alongside a Wimund and *vicomte* Walter in Les Crouttes, near Saint-Pierre-d'Entremont (arr. Argentan, cant. Tinchebray).

specifically identified his father as an Alfred and named his own son after him.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, an Adelina, perhaps Judhael's sister, appears at Montchamp (arr. Vire, cant. Vassy) with a son named Juhel in a Troarn charter of Henry I's reign.¹⁴⁸ As Williams notes, given his appearance holding substantial English estates in Domesday Book, Judhael of Totnes was almost certainly not the landless, high-spirited young noble Orderic (perhaps somewhat romantically) paints Alfred's son to have been in 1079.¹⁴⁹ Nevertheless, a connection with Robert Curthose might explain why Judhael was relieved of his honour by William Rufus and why he married a sister of Germond de Picquigny, who hailed from the borderlands between Flanders and Normandy, where Curthose made his home after his failed rebellion.¹⁵⁰ Judhael's establishment of Totnes Priory as a cell of SS Serge and Bacchus, Angers and the appearance of a Neil, who perhaps married his sister, among his Devonshire tenants also hint at an origin in Lower Normandy.¹⁵¹ Although both Judhael of Totnes and William de Moyon had brothers called Robert,¹⁵² it is unlikely that they were both sons of Alfred the Giant. Family members, especially in the Domesday West Country, tended to be established as co-parceners to an individual or group of Anglo-Saxon *antecessor/res* – Judhael and William were not.¹⁵³ Like the rebels of 1047,

¹⁴⁷ H.R. Watkin, *The History of Totnes Priory and Medieval Town* (Toquay, 2 vols., 1917), ii, p. 672 and Plate I, for Judhael's father; J.B. Williams, 'Judhael of Totnes: the life and times of a post-Conquest baron', *ANS* 16 (1994), p. 288, for his son.

¹⁴⁸ *Regesta*, no. 281(II).

¹⁴⁹ Williams, 'Judhael of Totnes', p. 274.

¹⁵⁰ *DP*, p. 285.

¹⁵¹ Williams, 'Judhael of Totnes', p. 282; *DP*, pp. 42, 286 – note also the possible links to Baldwin I de Reviens.

¹⁵² Watkin, *Totnes Priory*, p. 658 and Plate I, for mention of Judhael's brother, Robert.

¹⁵³ Three West Country families shared *antecessores* between themselves – William Cheever and Ralph de la Pomeroy, Walter and Gotshelm de Claville and Theobald fitzBerner and his son-in-law, Odo fitzGamelin. Serlo de Burcy and his son-in-law William de Falaise, however, did not. In the Midlands, Geoffrey Alselin and his brother, Roger de Calz were also co-parceners.

Alfred's family appear to have been local figures, who, in Normandy at least, the duke chose simply to bypass.

William's manipulation of regional society had allowed him both to smooth over former concerns and create loyal local supporters in the west. While William had increased his level of contact with regional families, for the most part he fought shy of rewarding them with extensive estates in their home regions. The Haldup family were already well-established in the west before William's grants of land and vicecomital office, while the fortunes of the Montbray, Ryes and Bigod families would largely be made after 1066 and in areas far from Lower Normandy. Only Richard de Reviers would receive extensive estates in the west itself and, as Hagger notes, these were in the Cotentin, rather than his home region of the Bessin. Despite the benefits of local knowledge, William continued to rely on the tried-and-tested method of implanting kinsmen and Upper Normans directly into the region to serve as agents of ducal rule.¹⁵⁴ These men were the driving force behind Lower Normandy's increasing integration into wider Norman and, subsequently, Anglo-Norman familial and seigneurial networks, serving in every conceivable position in regional life, including as counts, *vicomtes*, bishops, abbots and landholders, the latter provided for either through marriage alliances, forfeited estates or grants of ducal demesne. What such men lacked in local knowledge, they made up for through their familial ties to William and greater, often total reliance upon his patronage for their advancement, both of which made them dependable ducal servants.¹⁵⁵

This was no truer than of William's uterine brothers, Odo and Robert. As the foundation charter for the familial foundation at Grestain reveals, their father,

¹⁵⁴ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, pp. 197-229, for William's general use of kinsmen.

¹⁵⁵ Garnett, 'Ducal succession', pp. 102-105, for the dangers, which William largely avoided, of granting estates to close family members.

Herluin possessed only a modest estate.¹⁵⁶ Furthermore, despite his marriage to William's mother, he was a rare attestor of ducal charters.¹⁵⁷ Ducal patronage thus provided the mainstay of Odo and Robert's future fortunes and both men were at the forefront of William's work in Lower Normandy. Odo was the first to find employment, replacing another ducal kinsman, Hugh d'Ivry at Bayeux between October 1049 and April 1050.¹⁵⁸ Despite a tempestuous relationship with Duke Robert, Hugh had ultimately proven a central support for ducal rule in the Bessin.¹⁵⁹ Hugh's work to secure church property during William's minority has already been remarked upon, but he was also responsible for beginning the reconstruction of his cathedral church, supporting ducal and noble monasteries throughout the diocese and establishing close relationships with many of the local landholders who would become patrons and tenants of the bishopric.¹⁶⁰ Finding both a loyal and capable replacement for Hugh was thus a top priority for William, especially with the revolt of the Bessin's great secular lords still so fresh in the memory. From the start, Odo demonstrated a clear commitment to the development of his diocese in a series of projects that all gained substantial funding in the wake of the Conquest.¹⁶¹ From William's perspective, however, Odo's diocesan work was not as important as his role in influencing local society. Odo's efforts ensured that, by the twelfth century, the bishopric of Bayeux had become one of the most powerful lords and landholders in the entire duchy. The 1133 Inquest into Bayeux's estates and obligations notes that the bishop owed the

¹⁵⁶ *Regesta*, no. 158; D. Bates and V. Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain et la famille d'Herluin de Conteville', *AN* 40 (1990), pp. 16-17, 22-3.

¹⁵⁷ *Recueil*, no. 218; Bates and Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain', p. 22.

¹⁵⁸ D. Bates, 'Notes sur l'aristocratie Normande', *AN* 23 (1973), p. 27.

¹⁵⁹ *GND*, ii, p. 52.

¹⁶⁰ Bates, 'Notes', pp. 15-20.

¹⁶¹ D. Bates, 'The Character and Career of Odo, bishop of Bayeux (1049/50-1097)', *Speculum* 50 (1975), pp. 6, 12-15.

duke service of twenty knights from a total of 100 knight's fees, a figure which had risen to 120 fees by the Survey of 1172 and which was unmatched by any other Norman honour.¹⁶² Given the unsettled conditions at Bayeux under Odo's immediate successors, the 'quota and enfeoffments of 1133 must...reflect the immense wealth of the bishopric in Odo's time rather than any subsequent enrichment'.¹⁶³ Though Odo, like many of his contemporaries, was not above granting episcopal estates to members of his own family,¹⁶⁴ most of the bishopric's tenants were clearly pre-existing local landholders with whom Odo worked closely. The duke encouraged such co-operation. His grant of Grimoult's forfeited estates to Bayeux in 1074 both extended Odo's interests into the neighbouring Cotentin and forced the rebel's former tenants, such as the d'Aubigny family, to come to terms with the duke's representative in the region.¹⁶⁵ After the Conquest, Odo's closest allies amongst Bayeux's honorial baronage soon found favour in England, not only as the bishop's tenants, but also as officers and landholders in their own right, doubtless through his patronage.¹⁶⁶ Like the duke, Odo relied heavily on humble members of the local aristocracy. The families of Lacy, Bigod and Port held only small tenancies from Bayeux, yet would go on to experience substantial success after the Conquest. Unlike William, however, episcopal patronage failed to bind such figures to Odo's cause in the

¹⁶² *RBE*, ii, pp. 625, 645-7; Hollister, 'Domesday Tenants-in-Chief', pp. 225-6.

¹⁶³ S.A. Gleason, *An Ecclesiastical Barony of the Middle Ages: The Bishopric of Bayeux, 1066-1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936), pp. 17-25, for Odo's successors; Hollister, 'Domesday Tenants-in-Chief', p. 226 n. 27, for this quotation.

¹⁶⁴ Bates, 'Notes', pp. 33-7; Bates and Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain', p. 17.

¹⁶⁵ *Regesta*, nos. 27 (for Grimoult's estates), 57 (for Odo's appearance as overlord of the Lower Norman Rainald de Orval for his share in the church of Notre-Dame de Baupte (arr. Coutances, cant. Périers)).

¹⁶⁶ Below, pp. 252-4.

long term. Few joined the bishop in his disastrous revolt against William Rufus in 1088.¹⁶⁷

As noted previously, Odo's brother, Robert had to wait rather longer, perhaps as late as 1063, before being granted his reward – the county of Mortain. Though full of opportunities, the situation which confronted Robert was also more difficult than that faced by his brother. Odo was presented by a church already enjoying a revival in a region with a thriving urban economy, where the ducal dynasty, though recently unpopular, had possessed fortresses and property and supported monasteries since the turn of the eleventh century.¹⁶⁸ By contrast, no Upper Norman monastery possessed estates in the Avranchin in 1047 and Mont Saint-Michel, which supposedly recognised ducal authority, had repeatedly proven a prickly customer.¹⁶⁹ Duke Robert had campaigned in the region in the 1030s and granted and confirmed estates to both the Mont and Avranches cathedral, but the diocesan bishops themselves had remained sometimes distant, often ineffective figures. Though they left little mark on the historical record, the duke's kinsmen in the region were undoubtedly powerful local figures, a fact attested to by their being styled counts 'of Avranches' as often as 'of Mortain'.¹⁷⁰ Musset's theory on the origins of the Goz family's estates in the region also suggests that some of their properties may have originally belonged to the early counts.¹⁷¹ While Robert's county would also include substantial estates in the

¹⁶⁷ Bates, 'Character and Career', p. 11.

¹⁶⁸ Bates, 'Character and Career', pp. 5-6; idem, *Normandy*, pp. 129-30; above, pp. 100-101, 108, 208 n. 55, for early ducal activity in the Bessin.

¹⁶⁹ Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 77-79, 100-102.

¹⁷⁰ Potts, 'Lords of Mortain', *passim*, for the early history of the honour.

¹⁷¹ Several of the estates Richard Goz received after Werlenc's fall were held from Robert as count of Mortain. Before 1121, Robert fitzMartin gave land at Vengeons (arr. Avranches, cant. Sourdeval) to Savigny with the consent of both Stephen, count of Mortain, 'of whose fee is that land' and Richard, earl of Chester, 'of whom Robert and his wife held it' (*CDF*, nos. 796, 797, for these quotations). Vengeons may formerly have been held by a cadet branch of the Goz family (R.N. Sauvage, *L'abbaye de Saint-Martin de Troarn au Diocèse de Bayeux, des origines au*

Bessin and Cotentin, there is evidence that the earliest counts possessed property in the latter region as well.¹⁷² Unfortunately for the dukes, previous counts of Mortain had proven to be at best despoilers of church property and rare attendees at the ducal court, at worst rebels.¹⁷³ Yet the county's strategic position was sound. Comital castles and estates sat astride the western access routes to Normandy. From Mortain one might influence events in neighbouring Brittany and Maine and watch over the lordship of Bellême, itself often a source of worry for the Norman duke.¹⁷⁴ As with Odo, William's decision to employ Robert to fill this important position proved an inspired choice. Robert worked to develop every aspect of his county right up until his death in 1095.¹⁷⁵ In addition to his castle at Mortain, Robert had established fortresses at Saint-Hilaire-du-Harcouët by 1083 and at Tinchebrai and Le Teilleul by the early twelfth century.¹⁷⁶ Robert also joined William in extending Norman territory southward, establishing a castle at Gorron in the Passais by 1082.¹⁷⁷ Indeed, Robert briefly served as a hostage during negotiations with the count of Anjou in 1081.¹⁷⁸ Robert played a more active role in local diplomacy via a series of marriage alliances, which saw him establish familial links with a number of important regional dynasties. Robert himself married Matilda, the daughter of Roger de Montgomery, who had inherited the neighbouring honour of Bellême through his marriage to Mabel in

seizième siècle (Caen, 1911), p. 358; Douglas, *Domesday Monachorum*, pp. 51-2). Richard Goz's successors owed the Mortain honour military service in the twelfth century (*RBE*, ii, pp. 626-7; F.M. Powicke, 'The Honour of Mortain in the Norman *Infeudationes Militum* of 1172', *EHR* 26 (1911), pp. 91-2).

¹⁷² *Recueil*, no. 214, for Count Richard's former property at Saint-André de l'Épine (arr. Saint-Lô, cant. Saint-Clair-sur-l'Elle); also the possible Cotentinois lordship of Werlenc's knight, Robert Bigot. Boussard, 'Le comté de Mortain', pp. 269-72, for Robert's estates there.

¹⁷³ William Werlenc was the only count before Robert to attest a ducal document (*Recueil*, no. 162). There is no other evidence of close contact between the dukes and their kinsmen in Mortain.

¹⁷⁴ Boussard, 'Le comté de Mortain', pp. 270, 273-6; Pouëssel, 'Les Structures militaires', *passim*; Golding, *Robert of Mortain*, pp. 120-21.

¹⁷⁵ B. Golding, 'Robert, count of Mortain', *ODNB*, s.v., for the date of Robert's death.

¹⁷⁶ Pouëssel, 'Les Structures militaires', pp. 37, 39-40, 66-7.

¹⁷⁷ *Regesta*, no. 215.

¹⁷⁸ *Recueil d'Annales Angevines et Vendômoises*, ed. L. Halphen (Paris, 1903), p. 88.

the 1040/50s.¹⁷⁹ Two of Robert's own daughters would marry Andrew de Vitré and Guy de Laval, both important Breton frontier lords.¹⁸⁰ The former also held property from Robert in both Cornwall and the Avranchin,¹⁸¹ as did several other Breton lords.¹⁸² While the high hills and deep valleys of the land around Mortain kept and still keep agricultural yields low, Robert increased his revenue by exploiting his lordship's frontier position and command of transport routes to develop a network of towns, tolls and fairs, including the lucrative market at Montmartin-sur-Mer in the Cotentin.¹⁸³ Robert used his wealth to endow local monasteries, such as Marmoutier, Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire and Mont Saint-Michel,¹⁸⁴ patronize popular religious figures, such as Vitalis of Savigny and William Firmatus,¹⁸⁵ and follow Upper Norman aristocratic custom by founding his own collegiate church and cell of Marmoutier at Mortain.¹⁸⁶ The speed at which Robert established himself in the west is hinted at by his promise of 120 ships for William's war fleet in 1066. This was the largest number offered by any Norman lord – all the more remarkable when one considers that Robert may only have been in possession of Mortain for three years at that point.¹⁸⁷ Despite Robert's commitment to his strategically positioned lordships not only in Normandy, but also, after the Conquest, England, he spent some considerable

¹⁷⁹ OV, ii, pp. 46-8, 364-5; *GND*, ii, p. 119 nn. 4 and 5.

¹⁸⁰ Keats-Rohan, 'Four Case Studies', pp. 32-3.

¹⁸¹ 'Chronique de Vitré', p. 16; *RBE*, ii, p. 644.

¹⁸² Pouëssel, 'Les structures militaires', pp. 86-94, for the Fougères fief; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 168-70; Power, *Norman Frontier*, pp. 502-3, for Geoffrey fitzRivallon.

¹⁸³ Boussard, 'Le comté de Mortain', pp. 275-9; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 75.

¹⁸⁴ *Regesta*, nos. 204, 207, 252; *MSM*, nos. 11-12; *CDF*, no. 1207.

¹⁸⁵ Étienne de Fougères, 'Vitae BB Vitalis et Gaufridi', ed. E.P. Sauvage in *Analecta Bollandiana* 1 (1882), pp. 362-4; idem, 'Vita de Sancto Guillemo Firmato', in *AASS*, Aprilis t. iii, p. 340d.

¹⁸⁶ *Regesta*, nos. 205, 215. B. Golding, 'The Religious Patronage of Robert and William of Mortain', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages, Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R. Gameson and H. Leyser (Oxford, 2001), pp. 211-30, for the count's ecclesiastical patronage.

¹⁸⁷ E.M.C. van Houts, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror', *ANS* 7 (1987), p. 176.

time at William's court. Through his charter attestations,¹⁸⁸ military leadership¹⁸⁹ and service as a judge,¹⁹⁰ Robert displayed more commitment to his ducal/royal master than any of his predecessors as count.

William's half-brothers were not the only family members employed in linking Lower Normandy more closely with the ducal house. In the Avranchin, Robert's appointment as count of Mortain was perhaps preceded by John d'Ivry's election to the bishopric of Avranches in 1060, where he served until his elevation to Rouen in 1067. John's career has been subject to extensive study by Richard Allen, who argues that, like Geoffrey and Odo at Coutances and Bayeux, John's episcopate was to play a vital role in William's wider efforts 'to consolidate his power in Lower Normandy'.¹⁹¹ Like Odo and Robert, John had no pre-existing connections with the west or, indeed, with the church. Until his elevation to Holy Orders and thence the episcopate in his forties, he had lived as a secular landholder on his inherited honour of Saint-Philbert in the Risle valley, which he used to endow a number of local abbeys, including Saint-Pierre and Saint-Léger de Préaux and Bec.¹⁹² John's predecessor at Avranches, Bishop Hugh had been responsible for some important developments, including major rebuilding works at the cathedral and expansion of episcopal property. Nevertheless, his considerable involvement at Fécamp suggests a somewhat absentee figure.¹⁹³ Furthermore, though Hugh had exchanged property with Mont Saint-Michel, the abbey itself had continued to avoid episcopal jurisdiction, claiming in c. 1059 that

¹⁸⁸ Robert witnessed ten pre-Conquest charters (*Recueil*, nos. 140, 146, 156, 190, 199, 219, 220, 228-30) and some sixty royal *acta*, though the 'count Robert' mentioned in six of these may not have been Robert of Mortain (*Regesta*, *passim*).

¹⁸⁹ OV, ii, pp. 228-30, for the Anglo-Saxon attack on Robert's castle at Montacute in Somerset and his own service against the Danes in Lindsay in 1069.

¹⁹⁰ *Recueil*, no. 209; *CDF*, no. 78; *Regesta*, no. 146; E. Miller, 'The Ely Land Pleas in the Reign of William I', *EHR* 62 (1947), pp. 446-8.

¹⁹¹ Allen, 'John of Ivry', pp. 192-203, for John's early career, p. 198, for this citation.

¹⁹² Allen, 'John of Ivry', p. 193; 'Acta Archiepiscopum Rotomagensium', ed. Allen, p. 20.

¹⁹³ Above, p. 179 n. 82.

only the duke, not the bishop had the right to discipline the abbot.¹⁹⁴ John soon brought the monastery to heel and consolidated his predecessor's work, while at the same time becoming a more active participant in regional politics. In 1061, he successfully enforced episcopal jurisdiction over Mont Saint-Michel, bribing the abbot to forego the abbey's customary independence by appointing him as a diocesan archdeacon. By involving him and, by extension, his abbey in the wider administration of the see, John paid respect to the Mont's pre-eminent position in the diocese, but emphasised his own overarching authority.¹⁹⁵ This same document also perhaps reveals John's efforts to use Mont Saint-Michel's material wealth to make up for the poverty of his own cathedral church and organise regular diocesan synods.¹⁹⁶ John's authorship of *De officiis ecclesiasticis* in the 1060s demonstrated his commitment to episcopal organisation and reform.¹⁹⁷ As Geoffrey had done at Coutances, John organised a *pancarte* confirming episcopal property and sought additional rights from the duke.¹⁹⁸ He also added extensive estates on the Risle to the bishopric, drawn from his own honour of Saint-Philbert.¹⁹⁹ Such largesse served to tie the distant diocese to Upper Normandy even more closely and John himself was committed to both regional and duchy-wide affairs. He oversaw disputes and land grants not only in the Avranchin,²⁰⁰ but also in neighbouring Brittany and Maine,²⁰¹ where he may have become something of an expert on local customs.²⁰² At the same time, he attended dedication ceremonies and episcopal synods throughout Normandy and was

¹⁹⁴ MSM, nos. 2, 80.

¹⁹⁵ *ibid.*, appendix ii, no. 5.

¹⁹⁶ Allen, 'John of Ivry', pp. 197-8.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid.*, pp. 201-202.

¹⁹⁸ *Recueil*, pp. 24-7 nn. 24, 29, 33, 37; Allen, 'John of Ivry', pp. 198-9.

¹⁹⁹ *Recueil*, no. 229; Allen, 'John of Ivry', pp. 199-200.

²⁰⁰ MSM, no. 6.

²⁰¹ *Cartulaire de l'abbaye de Redon*, ed. Courson, no. 326; *Recueil*, nos. 159, 227; Allen, 'John of Ivry', p. 200.

²⁰² R.E. Barton, *Lordship and the County of Maine, c. 890-1160* (Woodbridge, 2004), p. 217.

involved in William's discussions ahead of the Hastings campaign.²⁰³ John's episcopate was not an unqualified success. Re-construction work on his cathedral church was painfully slow, with the church only finally being consecrated on 17 September 1121.²⁰⁴ Nevertheless, in a mere seven years, John, like Robert, had done much to enforce ducal authority and foster wider links in Normandy's westernmost *pagus*.²⁰⁵

In addition to his half-brother and distant cousin, William employed one more figure in his efforts to bring the Avranchin under firm ducal rule – Richard Goz. The son of the rebellious *vicomte* Thurstan of the Hiémois, Richard was apparently instrumental in reconciling his father with the duke after the events of c. 1043.²⁰⁶ Richard first appears in the duke's company, alongside his father, before the revolt of 1047 in a grant to Mont Saint-Michel.²⁰⁷ As noted previously, early identification of Richard's role at court and as *vicomte* of Avranches is confused by the existence of a separate *vicomte* Richard in this and other charters from the 1050s and early 1060s. Richard himself demonstrably was in the duke's company during this period, appearing in three charters for Marmoutier as 'Richard fitzThurstin' that pre-date William Werlenc's removal from office.²⁰⁸ Richard attested in this manner as late as 1063, perhaps only becoming *vicomte* later that same year.²⁰⁹ Richard certainly had pre-existing links with Lower Normandy. In the Bessin, Musset identified the Goz with the lords of Creully and

²⁰³ Allen, 'John of Ivry', pp. 200-201. 'Acta Archiepiscopum Rotomagensium', ed. Allen, p. 20 – like his appointment to a frontier episcopate, the latter was hardly surprising given his military upbringing.

²⁰⁴ GC, xi, cols. 466-7. Allen, 'John of Ivry', p. 201 n. 92 provides a possible explanation for slow construction under John.

²⁰⁵ John's replacement by an Italian outsider, Michael is also arguably indicative of increasingly secure ducal rule in the Avranchin.

²⁰⁶ GND, ii, pp. 102-103.

²⁰⁷ MSM, no. 8 (1037x1046). Thurstan's presence suggests this charter should have an earlier end date.

²⁰⁸ Recueil, nos. 160-62.

²⁰⁹ ibid., no. 157 (1063).

Richard's daughter, Margaret, would marry *vicomte* Rannulf II de Briquessart.²¹⁰ The Goz owed service to Bayeux and a collateral branch of the family later patronized Saint-Étienne, Caen with the consent of Richard's son, Hugh.²¹¹ Richard himself supported the Montgomery foundation of Saint-Martin de Troarn and, perhaps, Fécamp's priory of Saint-Gabriel with grants in this region,²¹² where the family's own monastery of Saint-Sever also gained property.²¹³ Nevertheless, there is no evidence that the family possessed estates in the Avranchin before his appointment as *vicomte*.²¹⁴ The establishment and endowment of Saint-Sever in the northern Avranchin demonstrates Richard's commitment to his new western office, though its financial value is harder to assess. By 1172, the earls of Chester had fifty knights enfeoffed on their Norman estates, though by then Goz family property had merged with that of the vicecomital dynasty of the Bessin.²¹⁵ The Norman pipe rolls reveal that the farm of the *vicecomitatus* of the Avranchin was a modest £60 *per annum*, though by the late twelfth century several major sources of revenue, including income from Avranches itself were in other hands.²¹⁶ By contrast, the farm of the Bessin was £140.²¹⁷ The Goz family, however, also enjoyed revenue from Saint-James-de-Beauvron, farmed for £100 in the late twelfth century.²¹⁸ The castle, if not the town had been given over to Richard soon after its foundation in the 1060s.²¹⁹ Richard's task was arguably more complicated than those of John d'Ivry and Count Robert. Like Robert, he had an important role

²¹⁰ OV, vi, p. 308.

²¹¹ Navel, 'L'Enquête', pp. 17, 21; *Regesta*, no. 48.

²¹² *Regesta*, no. 280; above, p. 206 n. 47.

²¹³ Musset, 'Les origines et le patrimoine', pp. 358-9, 362-3.

²¹⁴ Musset, 'Les origines et le patrimoine', p. 365. This renders Green's description of Richard's son, Hugh as being 'from western Normandy' in J.A. Green, *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 38 somewhat imprecise.

²¹⁵ *RBE*, ii, p. 626.

²¹⁶ Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp. 75-6.

²¹⁷ *ibid.*, p. 73.

²¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 76.

²¹⁹ *GND*, ii, p. 208.

guarding Normandy's frontier, but he also had to establish an effective administrative system in a region where direct ducal rule had until his appointment been extremely limited. The foundation of Saint-Sever and the success of Richard's son, Hugh in drawing support from the region after the Conquest demonstrate that, like his colleagues, Richard was remarkably successful in a comparatively short space of time.

A number of other Upper Normans filled important positions in the west. Roger de Beaumont, one of William's chief advisors was granted a number of estates in the Cotentin, though several of these had been redistributed to Saint-Wandrille by 1053;²²⁰ while Ralph, who may have been his brother, briefly held the abbacy of Mont Saint-Michel.²²¹ The duke also established William Paynel, a landholder in the Lieuvin with links to the Montgomery-Bellême clan, in the southern Cotentin, sculpting him an honour out of ducal demesne and a marriage alliance that brought with it estates held from Mont Saint-Michel.²²² Odo Stigand of Mézidon in the Lieuvin may also have been gifted ducal demesne in the northern Cotentin;²²³ while the Broc family, originally from Rouen, had become tenants of Rannulf de Briquessart in the Bessin and Cotentin by the end of the eleventh century.²²⁴ Baldwin de Meulles, son of Count Gilbert of Brionne and thus a distant cousin to the duke certainly gained property in the southern Cotentin before 1066, though this was probably through his second marriage, rather than

²²⁰ *Recueil*, no. 128. *Regesta*, no. 203 suggests that the family retained lordship rights elsewhere in the Cotentin, perhaps through marriage into Gunnor's kindred (Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 44-5). The William de Beaumont who appears in *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, no. 5 may have been a younger son or a member of a similarly-named local family.

²²¹ Above, p. 213.

²²² Loyd, *Origins*, p. 103; *MSM*, no. 90 - *illa terra quam rex Anglorum dedit sibi cum femina sua*; M. Guilmin, 'Un exemple de réseau relationnel de l'aristocratie anglo-normande, les Paynel et leur entourage (milieu du XI^e siècle-début du XII^e siècle)', in *Tinchebray*, ed. Gazeau and Green, pp. 222-4; Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 43.

²²³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 54.

²²⁴ Bouvris, 'Les Broc', pp. 3-44, esp. pp. 11-24, for familial interests in Lower Normandy.

ducal connivance.²²⁵ Most important, however, was Robert Bertram, who gained an honour based on Bricquebec formed, like that of Richard de Reviers, from a former portion of *vicomte* Neil's estates. Robert proved a particularly loyal servant, patronizing the ducal monasteries of Saint-Ouen and Caen,²²⁶ witnessing numerous ducal documents,²²⁷ and possibly fighting at Hastings.²²⁸ In addition to his estates, Robert was also trusted to serve as *vicomte* in the Cotentin, though the period in which he held this office is open to debate.²²⁹

As Robert's case illustrates, William's establishment of new families in Lower Normandy often went hand in hand with administrative reform. Unlike in the east, the western *vicomtés* had long been associated with powerful local families.²³⁰ Victory at Val-ès-Dunes allowed William to redress this situation somewhat. In the Bessin, William challenged the independence of Rannulf de Briquessart directly through his support for the new town at Caen. Part of a wider blossoming of medieval urban life, Caen's rapid rise from obscurity, first appearing only in c. 1025 was accelerated through William and Matilda's dual foundation of Saint-Étienne and La Trinité in c. 1059 and c. 1063 respectively and the construction of walls encircling and a ducal castle within the city at about the same time.²³¹ The city's emergence as a governmental centre saw migrants flock to it, with the abbeys' charters recording urban property grants by ducal courtiers,

²²⁵ *DP*, pp. 162, 440. Baldwin granted several estates on the banks of the Limon to Avranches cathedral before 1067 (*Recueil*, p. 27 n. 37) and he and his second wife, Emma would subsequently give land near La Chaise-Baudouin to Saint-Étienne, Caen (*Recueil*, no. 231). He was initially married to Albreda (Dugdale, *Monasticon*, v, p. 377), William's aunt (OV, iv, p. 208).

²²⁶ *Recueil*, no. 205; *Regesta*, nos. 49, 59.

²²⁷ *Recueil*, nos. 147, 148, 156, 224, 231; *MSM*, no. 6; *Regesta*, no. 258.

²²⁸ *RR*, ii, lines 8501-8504. Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 41-2, for Robert's career.

²²⁹ *Regesta*, no. 200; *Recueil*, no. 151. Below, p. 240, for Robert's vicecomital service.

²³⁰ Bates, *Normandy*, p. 117.

²³¹ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 128-32, for Norman urban development in general; Jean-Marie, *Caen aux XI^e et XII^e siècles*, pp. 27-36, for Caen's emergence and William's development of the city.

nobles from across Normandy and tradesmen from as far afield as Brittany.²³² Caen's role as the economic hub for the Bessin rendered Rannulf's former wealth and influence somewhat moot.²³³ In the Cotentin too, ducal administration was transformed through the emergence of increasingly powerful urban centres, most notably Cherbourg, at the heart of which lay another ducal castle-church complex, and Coutances, which was largely divided between William's close allies, Robert of Mortain and Geoffrey de Montbray.²³⁴ Equally important, however, was William's reorganization of the *vicomté* itself. The succession to the *vicomté* of the Cotentin after 1047 is by no means clear.²³⁵ While retaining the office in the wake of Val-ès-Dunes, Neil II seemingly forfeited his position as *vicomte* following his exile in the mid-1050s.²³⁶ By the mid-1070s, Neil's son, Neil III had succeeded to the family's remaining estates.²³⁷ The office of *vicomte*, however, appears to have passed to one Eudo, regularly identified with Thurstin Haldup's son, Eudo au Chapel.²³⁸ Eudo was active throughout the 1070s and 1080s,²³⁹ appearing specifically as *vicomte* in documents concerning Saint-Benoît-sur-Loire, Saint-Florent de Saumur and Saint-Étienne and La Trinité, Caen²⁴⁰ and when adjudicating a dispute concerning Humphrey de Bohon's gifts to

²³² *Les actes de Guillaume le Conquérant et de la Reine Mathilde pour les abbayes Caennaises*, ed. L. Musset (Caen, 1967), pp. 46-7 and no. 17; Jean-Marie, *Caen aux XI^e et XII^e siècles*, pp. 213, 218-19.

²³³ Jean-Marie, *Caen aux XI^e et XII^e siècles*, pp. 59-70, 227, 232-3, for Caen's economy and William's administration of the city.

²³⁴ *Recueil*, no. 224; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 130; Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 75.

²³⁵ Here I disagree with Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 42 n. 158.

²³⁶ Above, pp. 211-12.

²³⁷ Previous genealogies have placed Neil II's death as late as c. 1090, but van Torhout, 'Les sièges', pp. 7-9, 14-15 rightly challenges this. The confirmation by Neil fitzNeil (i.e. Neil III) of his father's gift of property on Guernsey to Marmoutier would suggest Neil II was dead by the mid-1070s (Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, no. 21, pp. 24-5 (c. 1048); *Regesta*, no. 197 (1073x1077)). Whether Neil II should be identified with the *Nigellus senex* who gave land at Céaux to Mont Saint-Michel upon entering the abbey as a monk is less certain (*MSM*, no. 115; van Torhout, 'Les sièges', p. 23 n. 73).

²³⁸ Above, pp. 215-16, for Eudo.

²³⁹ *Regesta*, nos. 26 (1074), 198 (1071x1079), 206 (c. 1070x1083), 267 (1080).

²⁴⁰ *ibid.*, no. 49 (1081x1087), nos. 57 (1079x1082), 59 (1082), 61 (1066x1083), 252 (1084), 266 (probably late 1070s).

Marmoutier.²⁴¹ Eudo, however, did not act alone as *vicomte*. Robert Bertram also appears as *vicomte* in a dispute with Marmoutier over property in the Cotentin heard before Queen Matilda at Cherbourg in December 1080, at which Eudo was present.²⁴² The adjudication of the Bohon dispute, in which Eudo served as *vicomte*, almost certainly took place at the same meeting of the queen's court, so suggesting that the Cotentin had been divided into two *vicomtés*, each held by a loyal ducal supporter. The situation is further complicated, however, by Neil III's apparent elevation to vicecomital status by June 1080.²⁴³ Within the space of a single year, three *vicomtes* can thus be found operating simultaneously in the Cotentin. Though Robert Bertram was soon dead, Eudo and Neil III may have continued to work side by side.²⁴⁴ This is just one sign of the complex administrative system apparently emerging in the Cotentin over the course of William's reign. The complexities of William's grant to Cerisy in 1042, if the version of the charter recorded in the abbey's *pancarte* did indeed represent a post-1050 adaptation of a lost original, might be mentioned and include the apparent division of the Cotentin into a number of *vicomtés*. So too might the proliferation of ducal officials below the rank of *vicomte*. A writ from William to Queen Matilda concerning Marmoutier's rights in Normandy (which, given the abbey's estates, must have equated largely to Lower Normandy) refers to the

²⁴¹ *ibid.*, no. 201(1080x1081).

²⁴² *ibid.*, no. 200 (27 December 1080).

²⁴³ *Regesta*, no. 30 (2 June 1080). There are difficulties with dating the different sections of this document, but there is further evidence for Neil's gradual return to favour. In addition to confirming his father's gifts to Marmoutier (*Regesta*, no. 197), Neil III had previously served as a ducal judge during a dispute over Mont Saint-Michel's mill at Vains (*MSM*, no. 6 (1076)). Such service may have convinced William of his trustworthiness and there is no evidence to suggest he was associated with Ralph de Gaël's rebellion (van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges', pp. 23-4). He might also be identifiable with the Neil who confirmed the gift by his brother, Hugh, of property on Guernsey to the same abbey (*MSM*, no. 79 (1058x1085)).

²⁴⁴ Robert Bertram gave land to Saint-Étienne 'as death approached' (*Regesta*, no. 49 (1081x1087) – *imminente morte*). Both Eudo and Neil III attest no. 48 (1079x1087) as *vicecomitis*. The current *signa* list, however, was probably compiled in c. 1090 from attestations added across a longer period. The two men may, then, have served consecutive terms, rather than contemporaneously.

duke's foresters, mentioning Hugolin de Cherbourg by name.²⁴⁵ William may have sought to use Matilda herself as a governor in the region. In addition to the disputes settled at her court in Cherbourg in December 1080, Hagger identifies several occasions on which Matilda was treated as a major authority in the Cotentin by the duke and others and she certainly received estates in the region.²⁴⁶ This theory is supported further by the appearance of a number of Lower Normans amongst landholders associated with Matilda in Domesday Book.²⁴⁷

The long-term success of William's policy of alliances, appointments and administrative reform can be traced through his military interventions in Lower Normandy and its neighbouring regions. William's initial campaigns demonstrate a largely defensive mind-set and, arguably, the continuing insecurity of his authority in the west. Almost as soon as William had put down internal unrest in 1047, the duchy's southern borders were threatened by the rising power of Geoffrey Martel, count of Anjou. Having campaigned pro-actively against Geoffrey in Anjou alongside the French king in 1049,²⁴⁸ William was presented with a direct threat to his own duchy in c. 1051. Having subdued Maine, Geoffrey formed an alliance with the Bellême family,²⁴⁹ whose castles at Alençon and Domfront commanded Normandy's southern border. Given Ivo of Bellême's position as bishop of Sées and his family's extensive possessions throughout that same region, Geoffrey was well-positioned to challenge William's authority as far

²⁴⁵ *Regesta*, no. 202. Hugolin should almost certainly be identified with the forester of this name who appears in William's foundation of the collegiate church of Notre-Dame, Cherbourg (*Recueil*, no. 224). Hagger, 'Norman *Vicomte*', p. 79, for an overview of ducal officers below the rank of *vicomte*.

²⁴⁶ Hagger, 'How the west was won', pp. 43-4 and references there; *Regesta*, no. 63.

²⁴⁷ Below, p. 266 n. 396.

²⁴⁸ *GG*, p. 14. *GND*, ii, p. 122; *OV*, ii, p. 365, for dating this and subsequent campaigns on Normandy's southern frontier.

²⁴⁹ The precise identity of the Bellême family members involved in this rebellion is unclear (*OV*, ii, p. 364, for Arnold's possible role; Bates, *Normandy*, p. 79, for Ivo's).

north as Argentan.²⁵⁰ Far from approaching this threat 'in an adventurous, even a playful spirit',²⁵¹ William's initial attempt to seize Domfront by force and, perhaps, the marriage of his half-sister to an otherwise unremarkable local lord, William de la Ferté-Macé, demonstrate how seriously the young duke viewed this threat to his authority and the brutality he subsequently meted out to the insulting defenders of Alençon his determination to crush all further thoughts of rebellion by any means.²⁵² While the campaign resulted in the duke gaining control of Domfront for the first time,²⁵³ William's failure to follow up on his success demonstrates the underlying limitations of his position. It would take time for the new, loyal lord of Bellême, William's close ally, Roger de Montgomery to become established in the region;²⁵⁴ while Geoffrey would continue to threaten the duchy, with or without possession of these castles until his death in 1060.²⁵⁵ That these events have proven so difficult to date probably reflects the near-constant nature of warfare during the late 1040s and early 1050s, a further sign of how insecure William's hold of the frontier was during this period.²⁵⁶ By the 1060s, however, the establishment of ducal allies and officers in the west, as well as Geoffrey's death and the Angevin civil war that followed it, allowed William to go on the offensive. William's establishment of allies and kinsmen on Normandy's southern march in the early 1050s provided the solid groundwork

²⁵⁰ Bates, *William the Conqueror*, p. 57.

²⁵¹ Searle, *Predatory Kinship*, p. 208.

²⁵² GG, pp. 22-8; GND, ii, pp. 122-4, for contemporary accounts of the campaign; *Chartes de Saint-Julien de Tours (1002-1300)*, ed. L.C. Denis (Le Mans, 2 vols., 1912-13), nos. 24, 29, 45, 46; *Recueil*, no. 131; *Regesta*, no. 279; Douglas, *Domesday Monachorum*, pp. 35-6, for the La Ferté-Macé marriage. G. Garnett, 'Robert Curthose: The Duke Who Lost His Trousers', *ANS* 35 (2013), pp. 218-20, for the political difficulties contemporary chroniclers faced in discussing these events.

²⁵³ Hagger, *King and Conqueror*, p. 183 n. 5.

²⁵⁴ OV, ii, p. 365.

²⁵⁵ Douglas, *William the Conqueror*, pp. 63-76, for Geoffrey's campaigns against Normandy during the intervening years.

²⁵⁶ OV, ii, p. 365. Bates, *Normandy*, p. 79, for the theory that Ivo only returned to the ducal fold in c. 1057.

required to support expansion into Maine from 1062 onwards. Similarly, growing ducal connections in the Cotentin and Avranchin created a platform for William's intervention in Brittany in 1064.²⁵⁷ The extent and varied nature of familial, tenurial, ecclesiastical and cultural links between Brittany and Lower Normandy up to and beyond the Conquest has been discussed at length in the first chapter of this thesis.²⁵⁸ These included familial relationships and territorial possessions that criss-crossed the Couesnon. The marriage alliances organised in the mid-eleventh century by both local figures, such as Humphrey de Bohon, and newcomers, such as Robert of Mortain, demonstrate that such connections remained an important part of regional life even as the political, social, administrative and ecclesiastical influence of Upper Normandy came into the ascendant. This rise in ducal influence, however, meant that Bretons with interests in the region, such as Rivallon I of Dol and Maino de Fougères increasingly had to deal with William directly, as well as maintaining their long-established links with local landholders.²⁵⁹ The unstable situation in Brittany, where Conan II was attempting to assert his authority over the nobility of the Nantais and Rennais following a long, violent minority, may have encouraged many to work with William 'to promote their own interests'.²⁶⁰ Keats-Rohan suggests that it was through their agency that William gained access to Brittany in 1064. This support, alongside William's military might, forced Conan to withdraw and come to terms, so allowing the duke to consolidate further his conquest of Maine free from Breton

²⁵⁷ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 164-5, for dating.

²⁵⁸ Above, pp. 39-61, esp. pp. 57-61, for the familial relationships that follow.

²⁵⁹ *Recueil*, nos. 159-62; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 162, 165-6. Given the dates established above for William's appointments in the Avranchin, his rising influence over the Breton border lords may post-date the Breton civil war of 1047-57.

²⁶⁰ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 162. Such political calculations along Normandy's southern frontier might also account for Aimeri of Thouars' involvement in the Conquest, though this is hard to verify (J. Martindale, 'Aimeri of Thouars and the Poitevin Connection', *ANS* 7 (1985), p. 244).

intervention.²⁶¹ William's Breton allies subsequently received rewards both in England and Normandy following the Conquest, while William himself continued to interfere across the Breton border for the rest of his reign, most notably in his continued support for Iuthael, the deposed bishop of Dol from 1076-1081.²⁶²

As well as empowering the duke to take a more proactive stance in the affairs of his western neighbours, William's policies also had a transformative effect on the lives of Lower Normandy's inhabitants, which stretched far beyond those families with whom he had established close relationships. Nowhere is this clearer than in the region's evolving ecclesiastical scene. In addition to the extensive work carried out by Lower Normandy's bishops discussed above, the practices of monastic endowment and foundation experienced a renaissance during William's reign. Upon William's accession in 1035, the monastic situation in the west was little changed from that which had existed in the tenth century. Upper Norman houses, including Fécamp and Jumièges had come into possession of some scattered estates in the Bessin and, perhaps, Cotentin, mainly during the 1020s.²⁶³ While Mont Saint-Michel had acquired territory in the west through ducal patronage, its relationship with Rouen remained strained. Furthermore, entries in the abbey's cartulary suggest that, aside from members of the ducal house itself, few Lower Normans patronized the Mont before c. 1050.²⁶⁴

²⁶¹ Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 166.

²⁶² K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'The Bretons and Normans of England 1066-1154: the family, the fief and the feudal monarchy', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 36 (1992), pp. 49-52; P. de Fougerolles, 'Pope Gregory VII, the Archbishopric of Dol and the Normans', *ANS* 21 (1999), pp. 54, 61.

²⁶³ Musset, 'La contribution de Fécamp', pp. 57-66; idem, 'Actes inédits I', p. 117; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 74-7. Above, pp. 100-102, for Saint-Taurin's possessions in the Cotentin.

²⁶⁴ *MSM*, nos. 8 (1037x1054), 9, 43 (both 1054). The first involved Adelelm, one of Duke Robert's knights in the Avranchin; the second William Pichenoht, a local landholder in the Avranchin and Channel Islands; the third, Neil the Priest, probably a member of the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur. Before William's reign, only one Norman landholder (and he a ducal servant, Restald, Duke Robert's ship-builder) had granted the abbey property in the Channel Islands (no. 33 (1027x1035)). Given the cartulary's inclusion of extensive tenth- and early eleventh-century Breton and Manceaux materials, such an absence can hardly be explained as an accident of

Similarly, while Duke Robert had shown his desire to further ducal authority in the west through the foundation of a new ducal monastery at Cerisy-la-Forêt in 1032, that abbey probably also only began to receive local support some twenty years later.²⁶⁵ From c. 1030 onwards, the Upper Norman aristocracy began to emulate the duke by establishing their own collegiate churches and monasteries.²⁶⁶ There is little evidence for their Lower Norman counterparts following suit.²⁶⁷ Victory at Val-ès-Dunes, however, was followed by a rapid upturn in local support for monastic development – a direct result of increased ducal activity in Lower Normandy. William himself invested more heavily than any of his predecessors in regional ecclesiastical initiatives. The dual foundations at Caen begun in the 1060s represented part of the duke's wider plan to develop the town as his second capital. Concurrently, William also established a new college of canons in the important western port-town of Cherbourg, attached to his castle chapel.²⁶⁸ After the Conquest, this was followed by an abbey at Montebourg – the first ducal house to be established in the Cotentin.²⁶⁹ The local dioceses and many earlier monastic foundations, including Cerisy,²⁷⁰ Saint-

survival. Conversely, local interest is implied by the fact that abbots Hildebert I and II came from a Lower Norman family (Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica*, ii, pp. 201-202).

²⁶⁵ *Recueil*, nos. 64 (1032), 99 (1042), for ducal grants to Cerisy. Several early grants by local landholders cannot be placed with any precision (nos. 167-170, all made at any point between 1035 and the Conquest), but two clearly date from c. 1050 at the earliest (nos. 195, 196). As with Mont Saint-Michel, there is little reason to suspect that material might be missing. All early grants to Cerisy had been collected in a *pancarte* and confirmed by Henry I within ninety years of the abbey's foundation.

²⁶⁶ Musset, 'Les communautés de clercs séculiers', pp. 5-38; Potts, *Monastic Revival*, pp. 105-32, for this process.

²⁶⁷ The honourable exception was Robert du Hommet's foundation of a collegiate church at Saint-Fromond in 1026 (Musset, 'Saint-Fromond', pp. 475-88). Above, pp. 143-4, for the disputed origins of the collegiate church of Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte.

²⁶⁸ *Recueil*, no. 224.

²⁶⁹ *Regesta*, no. 209 (1066x1087 or 1096x1100), for William I or II's exemptions in favour of Montebourg. É. van Torhout, 'L'"énigme" des origines de l'abbaye de Montebourg: une question de méthode?', in *De part et d'autre de la Normandie médiévale: recueil d'études en hommage à François Neveux*, ed. P. Bouet et al (Caen, 2009), pp. 331-46, for the abbey's foundation.

²⁷⁰ *Recueil*, no. 99 (1042).

Wandrille,²⁷¹ and the foreign houses of Saint-Florent de Saumur and Marmoutier,²⁷² the latter of which now established a priory at Héauville in the Cotentin,²⁷³ all continued to receive ducal patronage.²⁷⁴ Such activity was unprecedented not only in scale, but also in terms of the reaction it inspired. While Mont Saint-Michel and Cerisy had waited decades to receive local patronage, William's efforts garnered almost instant support. As the existence of the aforementioned houses demonstrates, this upturn was not solely due either to the proximity of the foundations in question or ducal patronage. Rather, William's appointment of outsiders to prominent positions in the west following the revolt of 1047 and the fall of William Werlenc had a transformative effect upon local traditions. By the 1050s, Upper Norman aristocrats were habitual patrons of local religious institutions. Grants of Lower Norman property by comparative newcomers to the region, such as Baldwin de Meulles,²⁷⁵ Odo Stigand,²⁷⁶ Richard Goz,²⁷⁷ Robert Bertram,²⁷⁸ Robert of Mortain,²⁷⁹ the Beaumont family and Walter Broc²⁸⁰ thus represented the direct extension westward of existing Upper Norman practice. This combination of extensive aristocratic and ducal patronage in Lower Normandy encouraged local lords to do likewise. Unsurprisingly, all those locals who can be identified as enjoying close links with the duke engaged in

²⁷¹ *ibid.*, no. 128 (1047x1053).

²⁷² *Recueil*, nos. 141, 160-61, 199; *Regesta*, no. 202.

²⁷³ *Recueil*, nos. 150-51, 163, 163*bis*.

²⁷⁴ *Recueil*, nos. 214, 219; *Regesta*, no. 27; above, p. 235 n. 198, for William's grants to Coutances, Bayeux and Avranches.

²⁷⁵ *Recueil*, p. 27 n. 37 (Avranches), no. 231 (La Trinité, Caen).

²⁷⁶ *Recueil*, no. 222 (Sainte-Barbe-en-Auge).

²⁷⁷ *Regesta*, nos. 49 (Saint-Étienne, Caen), 280 (Saint-Martin de Troarn).

²⁷⁸ Above, p. 238 n. 226.

²⁷⁹ Bates and Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain', *passim*. Above, p. 232, for Robert's western grants to other houses.

²⁸⁰ *Regesta*, no. 89 (Cerisy); *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, no. 5 (Montebourg); Bouvris, 'Les Broc', pp. 13, 42-3.

ecclesiastical patronage from c. 1050 onwards,²⁸¹ most notably the families of Haldup,²⁸² Montbray,²⁸³ Moyon,²⁸⁴ Reviers,²⁸⁵ and Alfred the Giant.²⁸⁶ Those locals who were tenants of either Upper Norman lords or Lower Normans with connections to the duke often did likewise.²⁸⁷ A plethora of more minor local figures with no obvious connections to the duke, however, also began to seek his confirmation for their donations from c. 1050 onwards.²⁸⁸ This particular development was mirrored throughout Normandy, further demonstrating the region's increasing integration.²⁸⁹ Even William's old foes, the vicecomital dynasties of the Cotentin and Bessin and Grimoult's accomplice, Serlo de Lingèvres engaged in the increasingly popular practice of monastic patronage.²⁹⁰ Most remarkable was the instantaneous support for William and Matilda's dual foundation at Caen. The earliest charters from both houses include ducal confirmations of donations by local landholders that must have been made almost

²⁸¹ *Regesta*, nos. 161, 162 (Rainald, a former ducal chaplain from Bayeux granted property in the town to Jumièges).

²⁸² *Recueil*, nos. 167 (Cerisy), 231 (La Trinité, Caen); *Regesta*, no. 206 (Marmoutier).

²⁸³ Above, p. 219 n. 110.

²⁸⁴ *Regesta*, nos. 59, 61 (La Trinité, Caen).

²⁸⁵ *Recueil*, no. 147 (Saint-Père de Chartres); *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, nos. 2, 5 (Montebourg).

²⁸⁶ *Recueil*, no. 195 (Cerisy); *Regesta*, no. 59 (La Trinité, Caen).

²⁸⁷ *Regesta*, nos. 91 (Ralph Suard gave land to Cerisy with Bishop Odo's consent), 203 (Humphrey fitzAnsketil granted property to Marmoutier with Roger de Beaumont's consent), 215 (various Mortain tenants made grants to Robert's new collegiate church of Saint-Évroult), 257 (Richard de Creully and his son, Thurstan gave land to Fécamp, if they were indeed separate individuals from the Goz family); *CDF*, no. 920 (for the d'Aubigny family's grant to Lessay); *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, no. 5 (various locals associated with the Reviers family gave property to Montebourg); *MSM*, nos. 71-3 (for grants by William fitzWimund of Avranches' family, tenants of Baldwin de Meulles, to Mont Saint-Michel), 74 (Rannulf de Champeaux gave land to Mont Saint-Michel with Hugh d'Avranches' consent). *GC*, xi, instr., col. 201 (Saint-Pierre de Préaux), *Regesta*, no. 280 (Saint-Martin de Troarn), for further grants by the Creully family.

²⁸⁸ *Recueil*, nos. 168 (Robert Oison), 169 (Herbert de la Hogue), 170 (Hubert fitzAudrieu), 196 (Vigot de Saint-Denis); *Regesta*, nos. 90 (Osmund), 92 (William du Hommet), 93 (Guy de Saint-Quentin d'Elle), 95 (William de Montfiquet), 96 (Ralph fitzWilliam), 97 (Roger de Montigny), 143 (Muriel d'Amblie and her daughter, Gisla), 199, 217 (Humphrey de Bohon), 256 (Neil de Brévands). This is without considering the extensive grants given by local landholders to the two houses at Caen (*Regesta*, nos. 45, 49, 54, 56, 59, 61).

²⁸⁹ Bates, *Normandy*, pp. 159-60.

²⁹⁰ *Regesta*, nos. 48 (Rannulf's grant to Saint-Étienne, Caen), 48, 49 (Serlo's grants to the same house), 197 (Neil fitzNeil's confirmation of his father's grant to Marmoutier). Above pp. 131, 240, for Saint-Sauveur family grants to Mont Saint-Michel (and, perhaps, *MSM*, no. 79). Above, p. 211 n. 61, for the more extensive support shown to Cerisy by Rannulf's tenants.

as soon as each abbey had been founded.²⁹¹ Such grants demonstrate how rapidly patterns of patronage emerged in the west after c. 1047, but their subsequent confirmation by William, at the behest of donors, as well as receivers, is equally significant, revealing how quickly patronage became associated with the recognition of ducal authority by local lords. Another sign of increasing local interest in monasticism was that many of these grants were made on the occasion of a family member entering a religious institution.²⁹² Local support for monasticism, though much increased, was not without limitations. While several aristocratic monasteries and collegiate churches were established in Lower Normandy during William's reign, most were founded by Upper Norman nobles (Saint-Gabriel, Saint-Sever, Saint-Vigor-le-Grand, the college of Saint-Évroutl and cell of Marmoutier at Mortain) or those local families with the closest connections to the duke (Fontenay, Lessay, Sainte-Marie de Néhou).²⁹³ Among the less favoured local lords, Humphrey de Bohon established his own collegiate church at Saint-Georges-de-Bohon, which was soon transferred to Marmoutier.²⁹⁴ The Hommet family's earlier collegiate church at Saint-Fromond was similarly entrusted to Cerisy.²⁹⁵ Local society, however, remained open to external

²⁹¹ *Recueil*, no. 231 (1066), for the earliest charter for La Trinité, which includes grants by the family of Rannulf the moneyer, Roger fitzHugh des Moutiers, Ralph de Billy's clerk, Arnost and Osmelin fitzThierry and Herbert Folenfant. *Regesta*, no. 45 (1066x1077), for the earliest major confirmation charter for Saint-Étienne, which includes Lower Norman grants by Bernard fitzOspac, Hugh de Rosel and William the Fat.

²⁹² *Regesta*, nos. 48-51, 56, 59, 61, 90, 93, 97, 161, 217; *MSM*, no. 70. Fécamp's priory of Saint-Gabriel was founded partly under the aegis of a monk, Vitalis, who was brother to the local benefactor, Richard de Creully (Musset, 'Actes inédits I', pp. 120, 123-4).

²⁹³ *GC*, xi, col. 913; Musset, 'Les origines et le patrimoine', p. 360 (Saint-Sever); *GC*, xi, col. 354; Bates, 'Character and Career', p. 6 (Saint-Vigor-le-Grand); *Regesta*, nos. 205, 215; *CDF*, no. 1207 (Mortain). Musset, 'Actes inédits I', pp. 132-7; *Regesta*, no. 257 (Saint-Gabriel). Above, pp. 212 n. 69, 215 n. 91, for the foundation of Fontenay and Lessay by the Taisson and Haldup families, respectively. *Charters of the Redvers family*, ed. Bearman, no. 4 (Sainte-Marie de Néhou).

²⁹⁴ *Regesta*, nos. 199, 201.

²⁹⁵ *ibid.*, no. 92.

ecclesiastical influences, as demonstrated by Warin de Bailleul's foundation of Saint-Cyr de Bailleul, a priory of Saint-Magloire de Léhon in c. 1060.²⁹⁶

By the Conquest and certainly by William's death in 1087, the duke's authority in Lower Normandy had scaled new heights. In practical terms, this had been achieved through the development of ducal centres, such as Caen and increasing ducal control over the appointment and remit of regional officers, most notably the *vicomtes*. Yet subtle methods were equally important in cementing ducal interests in the region, including the establishment of closer relationships with local figures and the creeping spread of ecclesiastical patronage. These efforts served to make Norman society increasingly homogenous. By 1087, Lower Normans, like their eastern counterparts, can be found in the duke's company, serving as officers in his household and supporting and founding ecclesiastical institutions. The successful establishment of ducal rule in the west played a critical role in William's later career. William's imperious campaigns into Maine and Brittany in the 1060s would have been unthinkable without the preceding establishment of Lower Normandy as a loyal and secure base for ducal operations. Indeed, as we have seen, William's intervention in Brittany was almost certainly dependent upon the increasing influence the duke and his allies had over cross-border contacts in the Cotentin and Avranchin. Even the Conquest of England was greatly aided, if the evidence of the *Ship List* is to be believed, by the duke's growing control over the resources of Lower Normandy – the region's soldiers and ships surely represented in the large contingents pledged to William's cause by figures such as Robert of Mortain, Odo of Bayeux and Hugh d'Avranches. Nevertheless, William's success in the west was not absolute. In the Avranchin,

²⁹⁶ Above, p. 32 n. 42, for details and the contemporary grant of La Bazoge, near Mortain, to Saint-Sauveur de Redon.

the comparatively late installation of ducally-appointed officers, both secular and ecclesiastical, and William's continuing travails with the monks of Mont Saint-Michel, suggest ongoing insecurity. Similarly, William's decision to exile his disgraced uncle, Mauger to Guernsey in 1054 suggests that he saw the Channel Islands as something of a backwater, safely out of the way on the periphery of the duchy, despite their accessibility by sea.²⁹⁷ More importantly, William continued to rely more on his own favoured appointees than on members of the local aristocracy, many of whom remained distant figures, despite the duke's efforts to engage them. The wider consequences of these limitations will become evident as we move on to consider the most transformative of all influences on eleventh-century Normandy and its residents, the Conquest of England.

6.4) After the Fall: Lower Normans in England

No analysis of any aspect of William's reign would be complete without considering the impact of his greatest achievement. The breadth and depth of the Conquest's transformative influence on Norman politics, economics, society and culture have been well-rehearsed elsewhere. This section will concern itself with the carefully-orchestrated colonisation of England by the Normans and their allies after 1066, as recorded in Domesday Book.²⁹⁸ The selection of both landholders and the location of their estates were determined by myriad factors, including strategic concerns, the complexities of Anglo-Saxon lordship relationships, pre-Conquest French interests, the transferal of existing English honorial complexes and aggressive personal enterprise.²⁹⁹ In addition to these influences, as a minority

²⁹⁷ *GND*, ii, p. 142; 'Acta Archiepiscopum Rotomagensium', ed. Allen, pp. 38-9; above, pp. 38 n. 68, 105.

²⁹⁸ J. Le Patourel, 'The Norman Colonization of Britain', in *I Normanni e loro*, pp. 409-38, for the first discussion of this term.

²⁹⁹ See R. Fleming, *Kings & Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991), pp. 107-214 and Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 48-125, for some contrasting views on the role of these factors.

group in a foreign, hostile land, it was also important that individual French landholders were surrounded by people they knew and trusted, both as neighbours and their own sub-tenants. Pre-existing tenurial and familial links thus played a major role in establishing French settlement patterns, which, as Keats-Rohan has noted, meant that ‘the destiny of post-Conquest landholders in England was determined by their continental region of origin, because that determined their tenurial and familial links’.³⁰⁰

Amongst the various regional groups that contributed to the Conquest, the role played by Lower Normans in this great drama has to date been subject to little attention. A plethora of prosopographical studies, of which *Domesday People* is the most recent and comprehensive, provides the means to analyse how the Lower Norman origins of many Domesday landholders shaped their part in William’s greatest enterprise. While, as Keats-Rohan herself notes, the identification of continental origins for many Domesday tenants and sub-tenants remains ‘predicated upon the notion of probability, not of certainty’, she has used this data to draw some preliminary conclusions about Lower Normandy’s role in the Conquest, noting that by 1086 ‘there were perhaps as many west Norman landholders in England as East Norman’, indeed possibly even ‘a slight balance in favour of the west’.³⁰¹ From a purely numerical perspective, this would suggest that William’s ongoing efforts to integrate Lower Normandy with the rest of the duchy had proven extremely successful by 1086. While certainly suggestive, such a statistical overview does not consider the individual circumstances of England’s Lower Norman landholders. When these are considered, a more nuanced picture

³⁰⁰ *DP*, p. 7.

³⁰¹ *ibid.*, pp. 122, 64, 73 respectively, for these citations. For the purposes of my analysis, I have tried to note, as far as possible, where the continental origins of individual tenants and sub-tenants remain unknown or ambiguous.

of Lower Normandy's role in the post-Conquest settlement of England emerges. It is one that strongly reflects the methodology William employed in establishing ducal authority in Lower Normandy after 1047, as outlined in the previous section. William's continuing reliance on Upper Norman allies, his growing connections with regional aristocrats and ongoing social links between Lower Normandy and Brittany are all echoed in post-Conquest settlement patterns. Yet the limitations of William's newfound authority in both the Avranchin and his direct patronage of the Lower Norman aristocracy are equally evident.

Just as he had in Lower Normandy after 1047, William relied on a core of Upper Norman kinsmen and close supporters when organising the settlement of England after 1066. Unsurprisingly, there was considerable overlap between those figures who had previously been enriched in the west and those who subsequently acquired English estates. Of no one was this truer than William's half-brothers, Odo of Bayeux and Robert of Mortain. Until his fall from grace in 1082, Odo was the single wealthiest French recipient of English estates, possessing property stretched over 22 counties and worth approximately £3050 in 1086.³⁰² Domesday Book reveals that Robert was nearly as powerful, indeed second only to Roger de Montgomery, amongst William's secular supporters, possessing estates worth over £2,100 spread across 20 counties.³⁰³ While neither Odo nor Robert were Lower Normans themselves, the limited Upper Norman inheritance bequeathed them by their father had forced both brothers to depend heavily on Lower Norman support in the years up to 1066. Unsurprisingly, then, the majority of the brothers' new English sub-tenants hailed from their areas of influence in Lower Normandy. In the case of Odo, this meant men drawn from his church's estates or nearby. For

³⁰² Bates, 'Character and Career', p. 10.

³⁰³ Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', pp. 119, 124.

the majority, the lands they held from Odo were their only English possessions.³⁰⁴ Some individuals may not have depended entirely upon Odo for their advancement, enjoying broader familial connections,³⁰⁵ possessing sub-tenancies from other lords,³⁰⁶ or a mixture of both.³⁰⁷ Given that all these individuals held the majority of their estates from Odo, originated in his diocese and, in some cases, held Norman estates from his church, it would perhaps be as well not to overemphasise this point. In addition to his vast estates, Odo's wide-ranging role in royal government, which included not only influence over the king's decisions, but also direct control over tenurial arrangements made in the king's absence, allowed Odo to advance the careers of those close to him even more broadly.³⁰⁸ Powerful English tenants-in-chief such as Gilbert Maminot, bishop of Lisieux,³⁰⁹ Roger Bigod,³¹⁰ Ilbert de Lacy,³¹¹ and Hugh de Port³¹² all held extensive sub-

³⁰⁴ *DP*, pp. 125 (Adeloid the Chamberlain), 155, 352 (the Vaubadon family, cf. Loyd, *Origins*, p. 108), 176 (Corbin de Agneaux), 199, 380 (Robert fitzWilliam de Thaon), 200 (Fulbert de Douvres), 247, 293-4 (Helto Dapifer and, perhaps, Mauger de Roxley, cf. I.J. Sanders, *English Baronies* (Oxford, 1960), pp. 1, 144-5), 317 (Osbern Paisforere), 353 (Ranulf de Colombières), 365 (Richard fitzWilliam – a Lower Norman, but, interestingly, one whose origins lay some distance away from Bayeux), 407 (Roger fitzAnsketil), 433 (Turstin de Gueron, cf. Loyd, *Origins*, p. 45), 473 (William de Castellon, cf. Loyd, *Origins*, p. 25). To these might be added five further landholders of less certain Norman origin – *DP*, pp. 251 (Herfird de Bavent), 340-41 (Ralph fitzRobert), 374 (Robert de Barbières), 487 (William fitzOger). The Wadard family possessed estates to the east of Caen, perhaps by marriage, but might also be identified with witnesses for grants in Upper Normandy to Préaux abbey (*DP*, pp. 350, 444).

³⁰⁵ Adam fitzHubert (*DP*, p. 123), son of Hubert de Ryes and brother of Eudo Dapifer, held only from Odo, but, as we have seen, his family was illustrious.

³⁰⁶ Hugh de Bréboeuf, a very minor tenant-in-chief, also held from Ivo Taillebois (*DP*, p. 261). Hugh almost certainly originated in the Bessin (Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 19-20). Restold held land from both Odo and Lanfranc and in Caen (*DP*, p. 358). William fitzRobert (*DP*, pp. 488-9) may also have held from Roger de Courseulles, himself one of Odo's protégés.

³⁰⁷ Anschetil de Rots held only from Odo, but Geoffrey de Rots, perhaps a relative, also held from Canterbury. Another of Odo's tenants, Ansgot de Rots, may have been a further relative. All seem to have originated from Rots, Calvados, arr. Caen, cant. Tilly-sur-Seulles (Douglas, *Domesday Monachorum*, pp. 29-30, 87, 105; *DP*, pp. 153-4, 157, 227; Loyd, *Origins*, p. 86; Sanders, *Baronies*, pp. 105-106). Anschetil and Ralph fitzUnspac held of Odo and Canterbury respectively. They may have been related and originated from near Caen, but both points are thoroughly uncertain (*DP*, pp. 151, 341).

³⁰⁸ Bates, 'Character and Career', pp. 6-8, for the extensive nature of Odo's vice-regal activities; Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 51-3, for his involvement in tenurial organisation.

³⁰⁹ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 57, for the family's estates in the Bessin. The Maminot's origins were not exclusively Lower Norman. OV, iii, pp. 18-20, notes that Gilbert was descended from Robert de Courbépine, a knight from the vicinity of Bernay.

³¹⁰ Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 14-15; *DP*, pp. 396.

tenancies from Odo in England (some of which may have pre-dated their own tenancies) and provided knights for his Norman episcopate.³¹³ Odo may also have secured advancement for other members of these families. Ralph de Courb  pine, doubtless a relative of Gilbert, held a sub-tenancy from Odo in Kent.³¹⁴ Hubert de Port, like his relative Hugh, held land in Hampshire.³¹⁵ Ilbert's brother, Walter received extensive estates in Herefordshire and Gloucestershire directly from the king, rather than via William fitzOsbern as previously supposed.³¹⁶ To this list might be added Roger de Courseulles and Robert Gernon. Though neither man held English estates from Odo, both families owed substantial service to the bishopric of Bayeux.³¹⁷ In Roger's case, his father, William can also be found holding a single manor in Somerset from Robert of Mortain, which further suggests a link to the Conteville family.³¹⁸ As sub-tenants of Roger de Montgomery in Shropshire and benefactors of that family's monastery of Saint-Martin de Troarn, however, William and Roger's English fortunes cannot have depended solely on Odo's patronage.³¹⁹ Odo probably also played a role in restoring the fortunes of Haimo, son of the rebel Haimo Dentatus, who, as well as serving as a royal steward, held of the bishop in Kent, where he was sheriff.³²⁰

The continental origins of Robert of Mortain's sub-tenants are more difficult to determine. Herluin's meagre inheritance passed solely to Robert,

³¹¹ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 53; *DP*, p. 277.

³¹² Loyd, *Origins*, p. 79. Hugh's first role in England was to serve as sheriff in Odo's county of Kent (Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 60).

³¹³ Navel, 'L'Enqu  te', pp. 17-18, 30 nn. 66 and 67, 32 n. 79.

³¹⁴ *DP*, p. 332.

³¹⁵ *ibid.*, p. 257.

³¹⁶ C.P. Lewis, 'The Norman Settlement of Herefordshire under William I', *ANS* 7 (1985), pp. 203-204, 212; W.E. Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy 1066-1194* (Oxford, 1966), pp. 120-23. The two branches of the Lacy family performed the service owed to Bayeux jointly (Wightman, *Lacy Family*, pp. 215-26), which supports the idea that Odo exerted influence over the fortunes of Walter as well as Ilbert.

³¹⁷ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 33; Navel, 'L'Enqu  te', pp. 14, 17-18, 24-5 n. 7.

³¹⁸ Draycott. The toponymical identification 'de Courseulles' is provided in *Exon*, fol. 267r.

³¹⁹ *DP*, p. 403.

³²⁰ *ibid.*, pp. 242 and, for his Lower Norman sub-tenants, 334 (Ralph de Marcy), 419 (Serlo).

providing him with some property in the vicinity of Falaise, Lisieux and Conteville in addition to his Lower Norman county.³²¹ Several Mortain sub-tenants clearly hailed from these properties, including Boselin and his brother, Hugh – Mortain tenants in Sussex and Northamptonshire from the Bessin/Lieuvain border – and Ralph de la Pomeroy and his brother, William Capra – minor tenants in Cornwall and Devon from the vicinity of Falaise, who also gained substantial tenancies-in-chief in both the latter county and Somerset.³²² Walter, one of Robert's comital sheriffs in the Rape of Pevensey originally came from Ricarville, near Dieppe.³²³ Robert also acquired his English properties piecemeal over an extended period, with William initially granting his later possessions in Cornwall and Suffolk to the Breton count, Brian of Penthievre, who left England in c. 1070.³²⁴ Robert may, then, have inherited some tenants from his predecessor, rather than enfeoffed them personally. Despite these caveats, it is clear that the majority of Robert's 88 sub-tenants did come from his Lower Norman estates.³²⁵ From Mortain itself came Richard de Sourdeval, who held almost half of Robert's Yorkshire estates³²⁶ and, perhaps, Alan de Ducey, who possessed property in Buckinghamshire and Sussex.³²⁷ Ralph Chesneduit also hailed from Normandy's southern borderlands, though the distance of Chêneduait (near Putanges, Orne) from Robert's castle at Tinchebray (some 25 kilometres to the west) and the fact that it was held from the Braose family render this association interesting.³²⁸ From the Bessin came William de Cahagnes, one of Robert's wealthiest subtenants and

³²¹ *RBE*, ii, pp. 635, 637; *Regesta*, no. 158.

³²² *DP*, pp. 169, 262; Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 78-9.

³²³ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 86; *DP*, p. 453.

³²⁴ Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', pp. 124-8; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', p. 160.

³²⁵ *DP*, p. 24.

³²⁶ Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', p. 138; *DP*, p. 362.

³²⁷ *DP*, p. 130. Alan's identification is open to question, but the anthroponym supports a Lower Norman or Breton identification.

³²⁸ *ibid.*, p. 329.

his chief representative in Northamptonshire, where he was also sheriff in 1086.³²⁹ Even more powerful was Reginald *de Valle Torta*, Robert's leading tenant in Devon, whose estates across the south-west formed the basis for the later barony of Trematon.³³⁰ Reginald and his possible brothers, Hugh and Godfrey almost certainly came from Torteval-Quesnay in the Bessin, although they have traditionally been associated with Vautortes, near Mayenne – another area where Mortain influence would have been much in evidence.³³¹ Interestingly, by far the majority of those sub-tenants whose continental origins can be clearly identified came from the count's scattered estates in the Cotentin.³³² Other sub-tenants, though probably Lower Norman, are difficult to place with certainty.³³³ The

³²⁹ *Rotuli Scaccarii*, ed. Stapleton, ii, p. ccli n. c; Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', p. 137; *DP*, p. 472.

³³⁰ Sanders, *Baronies*, pp. 90-91; Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', pp. 136-7.

³³¹ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 42; *DP*, pp. 21, 228, 267, 348-9. Keats-Rohan does not associate Godfrey, who also held property from Roger de Courseulles, with Reginald and Hugh. The limited evidence for Manceaux lords and tenants in England before 1087 (cf. *DP*, pp. 33-4) lends weight to Keats-Rohan's identification.

³³² Mauger de Carteret (*DP*, p. 293), William de Lestre (*DP*, p. 475) and Bretel and Hubert de Saint-Clair (*DP*, pp. 170, 257). To these names might also be added, with varying degrees of certainty, Donecan de Airel (*DP*, p. 178), Drogo de Montagu (*DP*, p. 180) and William fitzNigel de la Haye (*DP*, p. 486), who also held from Hugh d'Avranches. The Ranulf who held of Robert in Sussex, Hertfordshire and Buckinghamshire may have been Ranulf de la Haye(-du-Puits), the count's seneschal, but there are no firm grounds for this identification (J.F.A. Mason, 'Barons and their Officials in the Later Eleventh Century', *ANS* 13 (1991), p. 246; *DP*, p. 353).

³³³ Eudo fitzNigel (*DP*, pp. 7, 195): both anthroponyms were common in Lower Normandy. It is not impossible that this may have been *vicomte* Eudo II of the Cotentin, brother and heir to Neil III de Saint-Sauveur. Dodeman (*DP*, p. 177): an unusual Scandinavian name, his Lower Norman origins are suggested by the fact that he also held from William de Moyon and Roger de Courseulles. Hamelin of Cornwall (*DP*, p. 243): the name is perhaps Breton (Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', p. 20), but he is found in the same Norman context as Alan de Ducey. Nigel Fossard and his son, Robert (*DP*, pp. 302-303, 388): again, a common Lower Norman anthroponym. The surname perhaps refers to Villiers-Fossard, between Saint-Lô and Cerisy-la-Forêt in the Cotentin. Rabel (*DP*, p. 326): an uncommon name, occasionally found in Lower Normandy. Also the name of Robert the Magnificent's fleet commander against Brittany in the 1030s, perhaps a man with local knowledge of the Breton coastline (above, p. 181). Ralph the Priest (*DP*, p. 343): identified with Henry I's chancellor, Ranulf (B. Golding, 'The Coming of the Cluniacs', *ANS* 3 (1980), p. 70; J.A. Green, *The Government of England Under Henry I* (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 28 and 235; Sanders, *Baronies*, p. 14). His early association with Henry I suggests a Lower Norman origin (Davies, 'Count of the Côtentin', p. 133). Richard fitzTuroid (*DP*, pp. 364-5; I.N. Soulsby, 'Richard fitzTuroid, lord of Penhallam, Cornwall', *Medieval Archaeology* 20 (1976), pp. 146-8; Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', pp. 136, 138; Mason, 'Barons and their Officials', p. 246): the count's steward and leading landholder in Cornwall appears, as does his father, in grants to Mont Saint-Michel, but these concerned his own English estates, so an origin in the Avranchin is questionable (Sanders, *Baronies*, p. 110). Robert fitzIvo (*DP*, pp. 385-6): the count's constable and possible ancestor of the Beauchamp family. There are several Beauchamps in the vicinity of

continental origins of some twenty Mortain sub-tenants are impossible to determine, including those of important baronial officials such as Thurstin and Gilbert, comital sheriffs in Cornwall and the Rape of Pevensey respectively.³³⁴ While some Mortain sub-tenants clearly had unusual origins,³³⁵ the preponderance of Lower Normans would suggest that many of these unidentified individuals also came from Robert's western estates.

The Goz family also played a major role in both Lower Normandy and England. While Richard Goz remained active only in Normandy until the late 1080s,³³⁶ his son, Hugh d'Avranches became, like Odo and Robert, one of the wealthiest magnates of post-Conquest England, possessing estates worth over £800 in twenty counties by 1086.³³⁷ Hugh's prominence after 1066 led later sources to depict him as a major figure in pre-Conquest Normandy. It is Hugh, rather than his father, who is listed as providing vessels for William's invasion fleet, according to the *Ship List* of 1067-c. 1072.³³⁸ Writing in the 1070s, William of Poitiers identified a Hugh *vicecomes* as one of the great lay lords of pre-Conquest Normandy, though he almost certainly meant Hugh II de Montfort, who also contributed vessels to the fleet, not Hugh d'Avranches.³³⁹ Orderic Vitalis, using William of Poitiers in the twelfth century, may, like some modern commentators, have mistaken this Hugh *vicecomes* for Hugh d'Avranches, as he

Mortain estates throughout Normandy. Whether Robert was related to Hugh de Beauchamp, an important royal official and tenant-in-chief, is unknown.

³³⁴ Mason, 'Barons and their Officials', pp. 245-6.

³³⁵ Two of Robert's tenants, Erchenbald and Fulcher, were probably Flemings (*DP*, pp. 189, 201). Below, pp. 272-4, for a discussion of Robert's Breton tenants.

³³⁶ Richard did not die until the late 1080s, as he attests both *Regesta*, nos. 48 (1081x1087) and 146 (1086). Hugh's first appearance as *vicomte* is no earlier than 1079 (*Regesta*, no. 48 (1079x1087)), but he appears to have been in office by 1085 (*MSM*, no. 74), suggesting that Richard had retired before his death.

³³⁷ Hollister, 'Domesday Tenants-in-Chief', p. 242; C.P. Lewis, 'The formation of the honor of Chester, 1066-1100', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society* 71 (1991), p. 42.

³³⁸ van Houts, 'Ship list', pp. 166-7, 176.

³³⁹ *GG*, p. 102; *Recueil*, nos. 137; van Houts, 'Ship list', p. 176.

omitted the name from his own list of great lay lords.³⁴⁰ Orderic disliked Hugh, hence this omission, though even he admitted elsewhere that Hugh was pre-eminent among William's Norman magnates.³⁴¹ Given the absence of any pre-Conquest references to Hugh in Normandy, however, Lewis argued that he was probably too young to have fought at Hastings and had 'no existing baronage awaiting rewards in England', instead attracting 'a following of knights from various parts of Normandy'.³⁴² The continental origins of Hugh's most powerful sub-tenants are certainly obscure, which may support Lewis' argument that they were 'mostly young men of his own generation', eager for land and wealth of their own.³⁴³ The origins of Hugh fitzNorman of Mold and his brother, Ralph, the earl's steward are completely unknown. Osbern fitzTezzo and William Malbank of Nantwich may perhaps have come from the Goz family's old stomping grounds in the Hiémois.³⁴⁴ Only two of Hugh's closest supporters can be located with any certainty – his constable, William fitzNigel, who probably hailed from the Cotentin and, of course, his cousin, Robert of Rhuddlan, whose immediate family were active in the Lieuvin and Hiémois.³⁴⁵ Robert fitzHugh of Malpas may have been another family member.³⁴⁶ An analysis of Hugh's lowlier sub-tenants reveals that they, like Robert of Mortain's followers, were drawn from a mixture of recently-acquired estates in the Avranchin and older family holdings further east. Several came from or were associated with the Hiémois and neighbouring

³⁴⁰ OV, ii, p. 140; Hollister, 'Domesday tenants-in-chief', pp. 236-7, 243, 248, and Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 335, for modern examples of this error.

³⁴¹ OV, iii, p. 216, for Hugh's importance in Normandy; ii, pp. 260-62, for Orderic's character assassination.

³⁴² C.P. Lewis, 'Hugh d'Avranches', *ODNB*; a view reiterated in Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 75, 94.

³⁴³ Lewis, 'Hugh d'Avranches'.

³⁴⁴ *DP*, pp. 316, 492-3 – Osbern can be found granting property in Lincolnshire to Saint-Évrout. William also held land from Roger of Montgomery in Shropshire, which might suggest a pre-Conquest Norman link, though could just as easily represent strategic co-ordination on the March.

³⁴⁵ *DP*, pp. 379, 486.

³⁴⁶ Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 75.

Lieuvin;³⁴⁷ while some may have been connected to Hugh through his wife, Ermentrude de Clermont-en-Beauvaisis.³⁴⁸ Others, however, hailed from the Bessin, where the Goz had extensive interests around Creully.³⁴⁹ These early holdings may account for the supposed genealogical ties between the Goz and Bigod families,³⁵⁰ though Richard and Hugh became more directly associated with the family following their establishment in the Avranchin.³⁵¹ Many sub-tenants, however, certainly did hail from the immediate vicinity of the family's post-Conquest monastic foundation at Saint-Sever-Calvados,³⁵² from estates only acquired after Richard's appointment as *vicomte* of the Avranchin.³⁵³ Only two of Hugh's tenants can be placed in the Avranchin proper,³⁵⁴ though Hugh's connections there are also attested by his employment of Gerald of Avranches as a household clerk.³⁵⁵ The Goz family's Lower Norman estates thus played a

³⁴⁷ Baldric de Bocquencé (*DP*, p. 160), Erneis de Buron (*DP*, p. 191 – mainly associated with Odo of Bayeux), and William de Percy (*DP*, pp. 478-9). Perhaps also Geoffrey *de Sartes* (*DP*, p. 227) and Rozelin de Normanville (*DP*, p. 415), a Lincolnshire tenant who also held a Percy sub-tenancy in Yorkshire.

³⁴⁸ Keats-Rohan, 'Four Case Studies', p. 24, for some suggestions.

³⁴⁹ Fulk de Banville (*DP*, p. 201), Walter fitzBurning from Caen (*DP*, p. 460), and Richard de Presles (*DP*, p. 360; Keats-Rohan, 'Four Case Studies', pp. 27-9). Tezelin may also have hailed from this region (below, p. 265 n. 387), as might the Vernon family, perhaps named from Vaire-sur-Mer (*DP*, pp. 362, 454), though Hugh admittedly had one tenant, Drogo from Les Andelys, which is close to Vernon in Eure (*DP*, p. 179).

³⁵⁰ *GND*, ii, p. 126 – the toponymic '*Abrincatensem*' is chronological inaccurate at this point.

³⁵¹ Roger Bigod and his tenant, Robert de Courson, who notably hailed from just to the north-west of Saint-Sever (*DP*, p. 375), held a number of Hugh's estates in East Anglia (*LDB*, fols. 152v, 153r, 299r, 299v, 301v, 302v). While these sub-tenancies may have arisen from the post-Conquest practicalities of administering Hugh's distant, scattered estates in East Anglia, Bigot of Les Loges, presumably a member of the same family, possessed substantial estates in Cheshire as well (*DP*, p. 168).

³⁵² Ilbert de Roullours (*DP*, p. 279; *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. W. Farrer and Sir C.T. Clay (Edinburgh, 12 vols., 1914-65), v, pp. 95-6, hereafter *EYC*), Nigel de Burcy (*DP*, p. 301), and Ranulf de Maisnilwarin (*DP*, p. 354; W. Farrer, *Honors and Knights' Fees* (London, 3 vols., 1923-5), ii, pp. 227-8). If William fitzNigel is to be identified with a La Haye in the Cotentin, La Haye-Pesnel is not far distant (above, pp. 256 n. 332, 258). Humphrey de Cotentin (*DP*, p. 275) may have been connected to Hugh by either this region or his possessions in the Hiémois.

³⁵³ Musset, 'Les origines et le patrimoine', pp. 358, 360.

³⁵⁴ Haimo de Macey (Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 61-2) and, perhaps, Roger de Milly, though he may also have come from Meslay near Thury-Harcourt, which would not be surprising given the Goz estates in that region (*DP*, p. 405).

³⁵⁵ *DP*, p. 206. According to Orderic, Gerald persuaded several of Hugh's knights to become monks at Saint-Évroult, a further sign of Hugh's ongoing activity in the Hiémois (*OV*, iii, pp. 216, 226-8).

significant role in shaping the make-up of the honorial baronage of Hugh's English fief. Indeed, if his appearance in the *Ship List* is to be taken at face value, it would surely have been impossible for Hugh to offer William such extensive support without access to his father's considerable wealth.

Two further Upper Norman tenants-in-chief with interests in Lower Normandy similarly granted English estates to men drawn from their adoptive region. Of these, the most powerful was William's own kinsman, Baldwin de Meulles, who held property worth over £350 by 1086. Though Baldwin's patrimony lay largely in the Lieuvin,³⁵⁶ from where several Domesday tenants on his Devon honour of Okehampton were drawn,³⁵⁷ his second marriage, as we have seen, brought with it interests along the border between the Cotentin and Avranchin. While the continental origins of the vast majority (approximately 14) of Baldwin's subtenants, including his major baronial officials are unknown,³⁵⁸ a large number of those who can be identified came from this same region – at least as many as originated from Baldwin's eastern estates.³⁵⁹ Baldwin's daughter, Matilda was even married to one of these sub-tenants, William fitzWimund d'Avranches, and later remarried another Lower Norman lord with no vested

³⁵⁶ Including property at Le Sap, as well as Meulles (*DP*, p. 162).

³⁵⁷ Roger de Meulles (Loyd, *Origins*, p. 65), Ralph de Bruyère (*DP*, p. 331), Richard de Neville (*DP*, p. 360), Robert de Pontchardon (*DP*, p. 378); Ralph de la Pomeroy (above, pp. 254-5) and Roger fitzPayne, a Pomeroy tenant in both England and Normandy (*DP*, p. 408). The latter two were Baldwin's neighbours in Devon.

³⁵⁸ Mason, 'Barons and their Officials', pp. 246-7, for Baldwin's officers.

³⁵⁹ Rogo fitzNigel and his brother, Cadio (*DP*, pp. 172, 413); tenants and officers of the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur. Hugh of Dol and Hugh of Rennes (*DP*, pp. 262, 271); two, or possibly one and the same, Breton subtenant/s. Robert de Beaumont (*DP*, pp. 374-5): perhaps best identified with a separate Cotentino family of this name, who were benefactors of Montebourg and Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte, rather than the more famous family. William Niger (*DP*, p. 493): an individual of this name held property from Mont Saint-Michel near Sartilly, only 10km from Baldwin's estates at La Chaise-Baudouin. From further afield, but still a Lower Norman was Morin de Caen (*DP*, p. 299) and perhaps also Aubrey (*DP*, p. 132), who may have hailed from the northern Cotentin. Richard fitzTurolde, Reginald de *Valle Torta* and Oliver (*DP*, p. 313) all held from Baldwin and perhaps had Lower Norman/Breton interests, but were all more closely associated with Baldwin's neighbours in Devon, Robert of Mortain and Theobald fitzBernier, himself probably a Breton (*DP*, p. 425; *Actes de Bretagne*, no. 50).

interest in Baldwin's English honour, Ranulf Avenel.³⁶⁰ Less significant was Ralph Paynel, who succeeded the Anglo-Saxon Merlesveinn in an honour worth only a little more than £110, including wastelands in Yorkshire. Ralph was the son of William Paynel, a baron from Les Moutiers-Hubert in the Lieuvin whom the duke had established in the southern Cotentin following the events of 1047. Ralph's advancement may have had much to do with his family's powerful noble patrons – not only the Montgomery-Bêlleme family mentioned previously, but increasingly the Conteville brothers as well.³⁶¹ Ralph's six sub-tenants are largely unidentifiable,³⁶² but one, Robert de Rouellé, perhaps came from the Passais, where later Paynels held land.³⁶³ Ralph himself twice married into Lower Norman families, though they were also his neighbours in Yorkshire, namely the Lacys and Sourdevals, the latter of whose estates he ultimately inherited.³⁶⁴ His sons' somewhat unusual names – Jordan, Helias, Alexander – further evidences the considerable influence that Normandy's southern frontier had over the family.³⁶⁵

The overall numerical parity between Upper and Lower Norman settlers in post-Conquest England thus does not signal that Normandy's regional aristocracies had come to be treated equally by William towards the end of his reign. Given that Odo, Robert and Hugh represented three out of Corbett's eleven Class A magnates (the single most powerful secular landholders in Domesday England),³⁶⁶ while Baldwin de Meulles was the wealthiest landholder in Devon, the majority of the Conquest's Lower Norman flavour depended not on the

³⁶⁰ *DP*, pp. 162, 490, for William fitzWimund.

³⁶¹ Above, p. 237; Guilmin, 'Les Paynel et leur entourage', pp. 224-7.

³⁶² The origins of the powerful Roger d'Ivry are well-known (Loyd, *Origins*, p. 52; *DP*, pp. 403-404), but Herbert, Hubert, Odger and Robert fitzRozelin's are not.

³⁶³ Loyd, *Origins*, p. 87; *EYC*, vi, pp. 47-8, 134 n 6.

³⁶⁴ Sanders, *Baronies*, p. 55.

³⁶⁵ *EYC*, vi, pp. 38 n. 8, 66-9.

³⁶⁶ Hollister, 'Domesday Tenants-in-Chief', p. 220.

patronage of the duke, but of his recently-established regional officers and allies.³⁶⁷ Nor was the situation that prevailed by 1086 necessarily the one William had initially hoped to establish. Having proven themselves valuable ducal agents in the volatile conditions following Val-ès-Dunes, these men might seem natural choices for key English positions. Yet there are signs that William wished to avoid overburdening his western appointees with English interests. As noted previously, Robert of Mortain only acquired estates in Cornwall, Devon and East Anglia after the previous holder, Count Brian, left England in c. 1070. Similarly, Hugh d'Avranches only received the earldom of Chester after the withdrawal of Gerbod the Fleming in c. 1071,³⁶⁸ though he may have held a command in Staffordshire before this.³⁶⁹ The subsequent increase in both men's estates thus ensured that there were more Lower Normans in England by 1086 than William might originally have envisaged.

William's increasing, but still shaky connections with Lower Normandy's aristocracy can be seen through their lack of prominence amongst his major tenants-in-chief. As Judith Green expected, detailed investigation does not 'overthrow the correlation clearly perceptible between landed wealth in Domesday and an origin in upper Normandy'.³⁷⁰ Only one of Corbett's eleven Class A magnates – Geoffrey, bishop of Coutances – was a native Lower Norman; his extensive estates reward for a lifetime in ducal service. Unsurprisingly, the vast majority of his identifiable sub-tenants, though by no means all, hailed from

³⁶⁷ The same can be said (and has been, see *DP*, p. 73) for those English landholders hailing from the modern *département* of Orne, who were largely employed by William's close ally and newcomer to that region, Roger de Montgomery.

³⁶⁸ *OV*, ii, p. 260; R.H. George, 'The contribution of Flanders to the Conquest of England', *Revue Belge Philologie et d'Histoire* 5 (1926), p. 87 n. 28.

³⁶⁹ *OV*, ii, p. 264; Lewis, 'Formation of the honor of Chester', pp. 40-41.

³⁷⁰ Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 36-40, for an overview of this issue, p. 36 for this citation.

his western diocese.³⁷¹ Some were connected via Geoffrey's familial or ecclesiastical interests,³⁷² but most were clearly local lords or tenants of Geoffrey's family.³⁷³ Geoffrey's connections were not confined to the Cotentin, however, with a number of important supporters hailing from the neighbouring Bessin.³⁷⁴ Unfortunately, the continental origins of some twenty sub-tenants, who appear only in Domesday, are unidentifiable. The rebellion of Geoffrey's nephew and heir, Robert de Montbray in 1095 seemingly resulted in considerable deposition amongst their honorial baronage.³⁷⁵ As with Class A, only a single Lower Norman – Roger Bigod – can be found among Corbett's eleven Class B barons.³⁷⁶ Roger's rise from comparative obscurity, as we have seen, owed much to his family's loyal service to both Duke William and Odo of Bayeux before the Conquest (indeed, Roger had effectively taken over the deposed bishop's East Anglian estates by 1086). Roger was also likely related to William's close allies, the Goz and, as Green notes, his early gains in East Anglia left him perfectly

³⁷¹ Ralph and Roger of Berkeley, tenants of Geoffrey in Gloucestershire, perhaps came from the neighbourhood of Aumale in Seine-Maritime (Green, *Government*, p. 234). It is worth remembering that, during the absence of the bishops of Coutances from their own diocese, they were provided with interests in Upper Normandy.

³⁷² *DP*, pp. 280, 441-2, 540 (Geoffrey's own niece, who was married to his sub-tenant, Ingelbald), 465 (Guy the Priest).

³⁷³ Drogo de Carteret (*DP*, p. 180), the son of Robert of Mortain's tenant, Mauger was by far the most powerful, holding almost all of Geoffrey's estates in Devon, where his brother, Humphrey also appears (*DP*, p. 273). Geoffrey de Trelly (*DP*, p. 228) was a tenant in Bedfordshire, where he was also associated with the Lower Norman Hugh de Beauchamp. Though a Breton himself, Aubrey de Vere's appearance as one of Geoffrey's tenants was perhaps due to his wife, Beatrice coming from the Cotentin (*DP*, pp. 131-2, 440), while the first name of the otherwise unknown Nigel *de Gurnai* might also be suggestive of an origin in this region (*DP*, pp. 301-302).

³⁷⁴ Geoffrey's steward, William should perhaps be identified with William de Meslay, near Thury-Harcourt (*DP*, pp. 469-70). Geoffrey Malreward and William de Monceaux both hailed from the countryside between Bayeux and Caen (*DP*, pp. 230, 476). The exact origins of Azelin (*DP*, p. 159), a Somerset tenant of a number of Lower Norman lords, including Roger Arundel and Roger de Courseulles, are unknown.

³⁷⁵ Deposition seems likely, given the survival of the families of Domesday sub-tenants as tenants-in-chief on the estates of Odo of Bayeux and William of Mortain after their forfeitures in 1082 and 1104 respectively.

³⁷⁶ William de Briouze, from the vicinity of Argentan, was the only other Norman 'outsider' in this group and he probably owed his advancement to the duke's ally, Roger de Montgomery (Green, *Aristocracy*, pp. 38-9).

placed to exploit the fall of Ralph de Gaël in 1075.³⁷⁷ Unsurprisingly, Roger's tenants reflected his familial interests in the Bessin,³⁷⁸ Avranchin,³⁷⁹ and Lieuvin.³⁸⁰ Nevertheless, Roger also drew tenants and relatives from further afield, a sign perhaps of both his ambition and rapid rise in Norman society.³⁸¹ Lower Normans were more evident among Corbett's twenty-four or so Class C barons, with nine western nobles possessed of estates worth between £200 and £400. As with Roger's rise, however, Odo's influence is especially notable in the cases of the Lacy brothers, Hugh de Port and Robert Gernon.³⁸² Of the remainder, Eudo Dapifer's extensive honour was reward for his family's service to the duke in 1047, though even he had to wait until 1075 to collect many of his English estates – benefiting from the fall-out of yet another rebellion against William's rule.³⁸³ The early appearance in England of both Robert d'Oilly and the Taillebois brothers, all from the Orne valley and William Peverel, who probably held property in Barfleur in the northern Cotentin bears further witness to the growing local connections the duke was able to build through his sponsorship of urban development in Caen and Cherbourg.³⁸⁴ The most unusual figure among the nine

³⁷⁷ Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 8.

³⁷⁸ The brothers Aitard and Robert de Vaux-sur-Seulles (*DP*, pp. 126, 382); Humphrey de Culey-le-Patry (*DP*, p. 273); Ralph de Savenay (*DP*, p. 337) and, perhaps, Thurstin fitzGuy (*DP*, p. 434). Ralph fitzHerluin, who also held from another Lower Norman, John, nephew of Waleran fitzRanulf the Moneyer, was also likely from this region (*DP*, p. 340).

³⁷⁹ Robert de Courson and, most probably, his dapifer, Turolde (above, p. 223 n. 132; *DP*, p. 432); William de Bosco may have hailed from Le Boscq (*DP*, p. 471).

³⁸⁰ Hugh de Corbun and, perhaps, Ralph de Tourville-en-Auge (*DP*, pp. 261-2, 338).

³⁸¹ Roger's brother-in-law, Hugh de Houdain appears to have originated in either Seine-Maritime or Oise (*DP*, p. 264). Rannulf fitzWalter's daughter married Robert de Vaux, but he himself had married an Upper Norman, Matilda de Lanquetot, leaving his origins obscure (*DP*, p. 354). William de Bourneville came from Eure (*DP*, p. 472). There are no Lower Norman examples of the peculiarly named Warenger, who held from Roger in Norfolk (*DP*, pp. 459-60). Robert Malet was, of course, a major tenant-in-chief, while William Pecche and William Scutet were associated with other East Anglian landholders (*DP*, pp. 389-91, 494, 496).

³⁸² Above, pp. 253-4.

³⁸³ *DP*, p. 194.

³⁸⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 283, 378, 494, 496. The marriage of William Peverel's daughter to Richard II de Reviers is, perhaps, a further sign of his origins in the northern Cotentin. William de Vauville, the first Norman sheriff of Devon, also came from the coast of the Cotentin peninsula, where ducal rule in the region was first established.

was Ranulf Peverel, who may or may not have been related to the aforementioned William of the same name. Ranulf hailed from Vengeons in the Avranchin, making him the wealthiest tenant-in chief native to that region. His relationship with the duke is unknown, though it is notable that he also held a sub-tenancy from William's ally, Roger de Montgomery.³⁸⁵ Unsurprisingly, either all³⁸⁶ or the vast majority³⁸⁷ of these men's identifiable English sub-tenants were drawn from their Lower Norman homeland. There were thus comparatively few Lower Normans among the top, even second rank of William's post-Conquest baronage and those that were owed their good fortune to specific circumstances.

The majority of Lower Norman tenants-in-chief were therefore low-ranking figures, possessed of estates totalling no more than £200 in value. Though clearly somewhat removed from William's inner circle, the territorial disposition of their holdings nevertheless suggests considerable discernment in their

³⁸⁵ *DP*, pp. 355-6. Though there is no obvious link between them, it may be significant that the Goz family also apparently had interests in Vengeons (above, p. 230 n. 171).

³⁸⁶ Eudo Dapifer: *DP*, pp. 274 (Humphrey de Anneville), 325-6 (Pivot), 361 (Richard de Sauqueville), 429 (Turgid de Meuvaines), 473 (William de Cairon), 488 (William fitzRaineguard). Hugh de Port: *DP*, pp. 197-8 (Faderlin), 267 (Hugh de Saint Quentin), 271 (Hugh de Macey), 473 (William de Chernet) – the latter three all probably from the Avranchin, which may suggest the Port family had an otherwise unknown interest in that *pagus*. Ilbert de Lacy: *DP*, pp. 255 (Hervey Legatus de Campeaux), 275 (Humphrey de Villy), 278 (Ilbert de Reineville), 379-80 (Robert de Sommervieu), 394 (Robert de Reineville). Ivo Taillebois: *DP*, pp. 261 (Hugh de Bréboeuf, who also held from Odo of Bayeux), 304 (Nigel, who was perhaps from the Séeois), 351 (Rainfrid de Bretteville). Ranulf Peverel: *DP*, pp. 273 (Humphrey fitzAubrey), 317 (Osbern Mascels), 337 (Ralph de Savenay, who was also a Bigod tenant), 339 (Ralph fitzBrian, whose patronymic suggests a Breton/border origin). Robert Gernon: *DP*, pp. 378 (Robert de Pont-Chardon), 382 (Robert de Vesly), 470 (William de Aunay-sur-Odon), 475 (William de Letchworth, if he is to be identified with William de Montfichet). Robert's son-in-law, Picot of Cambridge may also have originated in Lower Normandy, he certainly later held there of the Gernon fee (*DP*, p. 324). As a tenant-in-chief, Picot himself had one sub-tenant, Saisfrid the Reeve, who may have come from Caen (*DP*, p. 418). William Peverel: *DP*, pp. 376-7 (Robert de Hérils). One of William's Buckinghamshire tenant bore the Breton name of Tihel (*DB*, fol. 148b).

³⁸⁷ Robert d'Oilly: *DP*, pp. 209, 327-8, 358 (Gilbert, Ralph and Richard Basset), 402 (Roger de Quesnay), 406 (Roger d'Oilly), 416 (Salomon the Priest, whose anthroponym suggests a Breton origin). Perhaps also, Robert fitzWalter, whose successors may have come from Bray-la-Campagne, on the border of the Bessin and Lieuvin (*DP*, p. 387). The exception was Drogo de les Andelys, who also held of Hugh d'Avranches in Cheshire (above, p. 259 n. 349). Roger de Lacy: *DP*, pp. 249 (Herbert de Furches), 264-5 (Hugh de Lacy), 308 (Odo de Bernières), 336 (Ralph de le Saussey), while the Herefordshire and Cheshire context in which Tezelin (p. 426) is found might also suggest a Lower Norman origin. The two exceptions were Robert de Bacqueville and William d'Évreux from the Vexin and Évrecin respectively. The latter, at least, may have been connected to the Lacys by marriage (*DP*, pp. 374, 474).

employment. The preponderance of Lower Normans and their Breton neighbours in the West Country, where Robert of Mortain, Geoffrey of Coutances and Baldwin de Meulles all had substantial interests, has not passed unnoticed.³⁸⁸ Baldwin's predecessor as sheriff of Devon and defender of Exeter in 1069 was a trusted Lower Norman, William de Vauville.³⁸⁹ By 1086, major Lower Norman tenants-in-chief in the region, many of whom brought with them followers from their continental dominions, included William de Moyon,³⁹⁰ Judhael of Totnes,³⁹¹ Roger Arundel,³⁹² and Roger de Courseulles.³⁹³ Below them were several other minor landholders and sub-tenants,³⁹⁴ including Serlo de Burcy, Osbern de Sacey, Richard de Reviers,³⁹⁵ and, unsurprisingly given her apparent role in the Cotentin, several figures associated with Queen Matilda.³⁹⁶ The reason for such concentrated settlement in the West Country is open to interpretation. Green has suggested that, since many local landholders received few estates elsewhere, their West Country fiefs represented a 'one-off reward for men who took little further

³⁸⁸ Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 65.

³⁸⁹ OV, ii, p. 224; GND, ii, p. 304.

³⁹⁰ The wealthiest Lower Norman in the region, with a lordship based on Dunster in Somerset, where he was also sheriff (Sanders, *Baronies*, p. 114; DP, p. 476). His sixteen sub-tenants included Dodeman (DP, p. 177), who held from a number of Lower Norman lords, his neighbour Roger de Courseulles, and his steward and possible relative, Durand, whose son perhaps took the surname *de Moion* (DP, p. 182).

³⁹¹ Williams, 'Judhael of Totnes', pp. 271, 274; DP, pp. 285-6. None of his sub-tenants, bar his neighbour, Ralph de la Pomeroy, can be identified.

³⁹² From La Bréhoulère in the Avranchin (DP, p. 395). Seven of his fifteen sub-tenants were clearly Lower Normans: DP, pp. 140 (Alfred de Banville), 159 (Azelin), 180 (Drogo de Carteret), 308 (Odo de Fourneaux), 370 (Robert Tilly), 404 (Roger de Margueray), 465 (Guy the Priest).

³⁹³ Roger had seven Lower Norman sub-tenants out of a total of nineteen: DP, pp. 159 (Azelin), 177 (Dodeman), 228 (Geoffrey de Vaux-sur-Seulles), 249 (Herbert de Saint-Quentin – though both placenames suggested here were far from Courseulles), 388-9 (Robert Gernon), 473-4 (William de Daumeray), 488-9 (William fitzRobert).

³⁹⁴ In terms of sub-tenants, possible Lower Normans include DP, pp. 255 (Hervé fitzAnsger, holding of Milton Abbey in Dorset), 337 (Ralph de Tilly, holding of Tavistock Abbey in Devon), 359-60 (Richard de Meri, holding of Alfred d'Epaignes in Somerset), 447 (Walter *Burgundiensis*, holding of Gotshelm de Claville in Devon).

³⁹⁵ DP, pp. 315 (Osbern), 360-61 (Richard), 418 (Serlo). The exact origin of Osbern is unclear, Sacey in the Avranchin, Saussey in the Cotentin and Saussey in the Bessin all being possibilities. Depending on the origin of the family's association with the Reviers dynasty, the latter may be most likely.

³⁹⁶ DP, pp. 130-31 (Aubrey the Queen's Chamberlain, who gave land in the Cotentin to Montebourg), 153 (Anschild fitzAmelina de Cherbourg, who had initially held his Dorset estate from the Queen).

active part' in future campaigns.³⁹⁷ As she also notes, however, the south-west was dominated by compact, composite, often coastal lordships, which suggests that the tenurial re-organization of the region was influenced more by strategic considerations than the comparative orderliness of property transfers based on antecessorial grants.³⁹⁸ Such strategic concerns may themselves explain William's placement of so many tenants-in-chief with links to Brittany and Lower Normandy in this region. In his description of the major south-western city of Exeter, during its revolt in 1068, Orderic noted its command of 'the shortest routes to Ireland and Brittany'.³⁹⁹ Employing men from Brittany and Lower Normandy, whose continental estates and allies lay close at hand across the sea, made sense militarily. Settlers from the west would also have been most at home with the cultural and economic character of life in the eleventh-century West Country – a land not unlike their own regions, complete with its very own Mount of St. Michael, marked by lingering Celtic influences and reliant more on pastoralism than cereal production.⁴⁰⁰

Beyond the south-west, Lower Normans were scattered about the country, with disparate interests at play. In the Home Counties, Hugh de Beauchamp, Nigel d'Aubigny and William Spec each held honours centred on Bedfordshire. Hugh's origins are open to debate, but those that can be identified for his sub-tenants on balance seem to support Le Melletier's identification of him with

³⁹⁷ Green, *Aristocracy*, p. 64.

³⁹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 66.

³⁹⁹ OV, ii, p. 210 – *ex Hibernia vel Brittaniam minore brevissimo aditur spacio*. J.R. Maddicott, 'Trade, Industry and the Wealth of King Alfred', *Past and Present* 123 (1989), pp. 3-51; J.O. Prestwich, 'Military intelligence under the Norman and Angevin kings', in *Law and Government*, ed. Garnett and Hudson, pp. 4-8, for the significance of Exeter.

⁴⁰⁰ Kapelle, *Conquest of the North*, pp. 228-9, for economic conditions in Lower Normandy. *The Domesday Geography of South-West England*, ed. H.C. Darby and R. Welldon Finn (Cambridge, 1967), pp. 36, 53, 69, for regional settlement patterns and their economic impact. I.N. Soulsby, 'Introduction to the Cornwall Domesday', in *The Cornwall Domesday*, ed. A. Williams (Alecto County Editions vol. 4, London, 1988), pp. 5-7, for the cultural and economic difficulties facing the Normans in Cornwall.

Beauchamps, cant. La Haye Pesnel. He had probably inherited his estates and position as sheriff of Bedfordshire through his marriage to the daughter of Ralph Taillebois.⁴⁰¹ Nigel was the son of William d'Aubigny, who, despite his marriage to a daughter of the rebel Grimoult de Plessis, had retained his estates after 1047, seemingly co-operating with William's local agents, Odo of Bayeux, from whom they held land and the Haldups, whose foundation at Lessay they later supported. The family's Norman estates descended through Nigel's brother, Roger to William d'Aubigny *Pincerna* in Henry I's reign, suggesting that Nigel was a younger son seeking a fortune of his own through ducal service.⁴⁰² As with Hugh d'Avranches, however, his list of identifiable sub-tenants suggests that he had access to men drawn from his familial estates,⁴⁰³ though he notably also shared a number with his English neighbours, Hugh de Beauchamp and Eudo Dapifer.⁴⁰⁴ William Spec was closely associated with Nigel.⁴⁰⁵ In addition to his own Lower Norman tenants,⁴⁰⁶ like Nigel, William shared tenants with Hugh and Eudo.⁴⁰⁷ In Essex and Norfolk, Peter de Valognes served as sheriff and married a sister of *vicomte* Eudo de Saint-Sauveur.⁴⁰⁸ Many Lower Normans were notable by their absence after 1066. Unsurprisingly, former rebels, such as the vicecomital

⁴⁰¹ *DP*, p. 260 and references there, for Hugh's disputed origins; for those of his tenants, *ibid.*, pp. 228 (Geoffrey de Trelly), 291 (Liboret), 318 (Osbert de Brouay), 419 (Serlo de Rots), 467 (William Basset), 475 (William de Loucelles), 477 (William de Origny), 498 (Wimund de Tessel). Acard d'Ivry, however, was clearly from the Évrechin; while William Froissart's surname also has Upper Norman connections (*ibid.*, pp. 123, 490).

⁴⁰² L.C. Loyd, 'Origin of the Family of Aubigny of Cainhoe', *Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* 19 (1937), hereafter *BHRS*, pp. 101-109 and tables.

⁴⁰³ *DP*, pp. 190 (Erfast), 302 (Nigel de la Vast).

⁴⁰⁴ *DP*, pp. 325-6 (Pirot), 429 (Turgis de Meuvaines), 473 (William de Cairon). It may be worth noting that Turgis' sons were patrons of St. Alban's, where Nigel's brother, Richard, was later abbot (*The Heads of Religious Houses England and Wales 940-1216*, ed. D. Knowles, C.N.L. Brooke and V.C.M. London (Cambridge, 1972), p. 66; Dugdale, *Monasticon*, ii, p. 220). Rualon, sub-tenant to Nigel and Hugh, was perhaps another d'Aubigny family member (*DP*, p. 415).

⁴⁰⁵ *DP*, p. 496; *Regesta*, ed. Davis, Johnson and Cronne, ii, appendix, no. clxxvii; Loyd, 'Aubigny of Cainhoe', p. 102; Green, *Government*, p. 246.

⁴⁰⁶ *DP*, pp. 342-3 (Ralph Passelewe), 491 (William Gros).

⁴⁰⁷ Serlo de Rots and William fitzRaigneguard, respectively. Hugh de Beauchamp also held property from William himself (W. Farrer, 'The Honour of Old Wardon', *BHRS* 11 (1927), p. 25).

⁴⁰⁸ *DP*, pp. 322, 338, for a possible Lower Norman sub-tenant, Ralph Fatatus.

dynasties of the Cotentin and Bessin, failed to receive estates, though their vassals sometimes did.⁴⁰⁹ Yet many of William's local allies and appointees also gained little – the heirs of Richard de Reviers and Robert Bertram each held only one English manor, while Eudo Haldup received nothing at all.⁴¹⁰ Hagger argues that this was itself a result of William's greater strategy for Lower Normandy. These men had already been rewarded with extensive estates in the Cotentin, where their attentions were best focused. In contrast, by enriching men such as Nigel d'Aubigny, William de Moyon, Peter de Valognes and Ralph Paynel (to whom we might add Hugh de Beauchamp and Judhael of Totnes) in England, William sought to make them 'the equals of their neighbours in the Cotentin' and so fragment 'the political community and pack...it with men beholden to him'.⁴¹¹ If so, William's selection criteria are hard to discern. Humphrey de Bohun, a local of similar standing to the aforementioned noblemen, gained only two estates in Norfolk,⁴¹² though a possible continental vassal, William fitzStur, gained considerable property in Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.⁴¹³ Whatever William's motives, the comparatively small size of these tenancies suggests that he still lacked confidence in these men. Nevertheless, such grants allowed William to establish relationships with a number of nobles from beyond the northern Cotentin. In the Midlands, Geoffrey Alselin and his brother and nephew, Roger and Ralph de Calz may have held property in the southern Cotentin and Sééois.⁴¹⁴ Their neighbours included two probable lords of the Avranchin, Robert de Boucey

⁴⁰⁹ *DP*, p. 173, for Carbonel, who held a single manor in Herefordshire. A Carbonnel of 'Rafovilla' appears in two charters from c. 1090 and c. 1104 for the *vicomtes de Saint-Sauveur* (Delisle, *Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte*, nos. 45-6).

⁴¹⁰ Mosterton (*DB*, fol. 83r) and Polhampton (*DB*, fol. 47r), respectively.

⁴¹¹ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 46.

⁴¹² *LDB*, fol. 262v.

⁴¹³ *DP*, p. 489.

⁴¹⁴ *ibid.*, pp. 224, 346-7.

and Robert de Vessey, the former of whom may have been married to a daughter of Hugh d'Avranches.⁴¹⁵ They were joined by a host of minor figures from the inland Bessin,⁴¹⁶ south and central Cotentin,⁴¹⁷ and Avranchin.⁴¹⁸ Many minor Lower Norman tenants-in-chief gained their estates through serving the royal household,⁴¹⁹ in a pattern unchanged since the Anglo-Saxon period.⁴²⁰ Minor tenancies for Anschetil de Herolville, Ralph de Buron, William fitzTheobald and, perhaps, William fitzConstantine may also reflect ducal influence around Caen.⁴²¹

Irrespective of whether they owed their English positions either directly to the duke or through the influence of his recently-appointed western agents and allies, the scarcity of tenants-in-chief and sub-tenants from the Avranchin requires explanation. With effective ducal authority in the region only truly established in the 1060s, might Robert of Mortain and the Goz family have struggled to establish a strong relationship with local landholders, who had been used to a certain level of independence from Rouen?⁴²² Continued insecurity may explain why William chose to leave Richard Goz in post and instead advance his son, Hugh, in England after 1066, as well as why Robert of Mortain's original English honour was small. As key players in a recently-secured region with insecure borders, political realities on the ground meant that William could not afford to divide their

⁴¹⁵ *DP*, pp. 375, 382; J.A. Green, 'Women and Inheritance in Norman England: The Case of Geva Ridel', *Prosopon Newsletter* 12 (2001), p. 4.

⁴¹⁶ *DP*, pp. 298 (Milo de Molay), 474 (William de Felgeres, perhaps to be identified with Feugères, near Bayeux, cf. Loyd, *Origins*, pp. 42-3).

⁴¹⁷ *DP*, pp. 343 (Ralph Percehaie), 480 (William de Ver, perhaps to be identified with Ver, near Coutances).

⁴¹⁸ *ibid.*, pp. 168 (Bertram de Verdun), 343 (Ralph Pinel), 386 (Robert fitzMurdac).

⁴¹⁹ *ibid.*, pp. 151 (Anschetil de Gray), 225 (Geoffrey the Chamberlain), 230 (Geoffrey Marshal), 274 (Humphrey the Chamberlain), 282 (Judicael the Priest), 422 (Stephen the Chaplain), 423 (Stephen the Steersman), 468 (William the Chamberlain), 176, 283-4, 434, 446 (the family of Rannulf the Moneyer and their sub-tenants).

⁴²⁰ S. Baxter and J. Blair, 'Land Tenure and Royal Patronage in the Early English Kingdom: a model and a case study', *ANS* 28 (2006), pp. 27-8, 41-4.

⁴²¹ *DP*, pp. 151, 331, 485, 489.

⁴²² Robert Bigot's role as an informant (above, pp. 221-2), whether real or invented, against William Werlenc and his substantial reward afterwards rather suggests that the majority of Mortain tenants remained steadfast.

attention unduly. As we have seen, there is some evidence to support this theory. Though Robert was reasonably involved in William's post-Conquest government of England, Richard attended court infrequently, suggesting that he focused on affairs in the Avranchin.⁴²³ Yet neither appears to have struggled in their role. As we have seen, both men played an active role protecting and expanding ducal interests on Normandy's south-western frontier, while at the same time pursuing their own familial, tenurial, commercial and ecclesiastical interests. Both (in Richard's case via his son, Hugh) felt confident enough in their positions to contribute substantially to the Hastings campaign.⁴²⁴ Successful though Richard and Robert may have been, external threats increasingly challenged William's position in the most distant part of his duchy after 1066. In Maine from 1069 onwards Norman rule was briefly overthrown and never fully re-secured; in Brittany Ralph de Gaël's rebellion of 1075 undermined the achievements of 1064.⁴²⁵ As a result, Robert and Richard's tenants in the Avranchin probably had their hands too full at home securing the region's borders to play a major role in England. Such concerns may have informed William's use of tenants-in-chief from the region, but almost all those men whom William employed directly from the Avranchin had links elsewhere. All of Rannulf Peverel and Roger Arundel's sub-tenants came from the Cotentin, whence came Rannulf's possible relative, William Peverel; Ralph Pinel may have had links there too. Roger was also a patron of Saint-Étienne, Caen.⁴²⁶ This further adds to the impression that the local aristocracy, unless they had interests to the north and east, had little direct

⁴²³ Above, pp. 232-3, for Robert's English career. Richard Goz witnessed some sixteen royal charters after 1066, of which only two dealt with religious institutions outside of Lower Normandy (*Regesta*, nos. 212, 232). Only one was drawn up in England (*Regesta*, no. 146).

⁴²⁴ Above, pp. 232, 257-60.

⁴²⁵ Bates, *Normans and Empire*, pp. 77-8; Keats-Rohan, 'Breton Contingent', pp. 167-8; Keats-Rohan, 'Bretons and Normans', pp. 45-6, 48-9.

⁴²⁶ *Regesta*, no. 53.

involvement with William, emphasising once again how vital Robert of Mortain and Richard Goz were in securing ducal authority in the Avranchin.

By contrast, the political and strategic considerations of Normandy's western frontier actively encouraged the employment of Bretons in England by both William directly and his local supporters. The general characteristics of Breton settlement have been the subject of considerable research over the last twenty years.⁴²⁷ The connections between Breton settlers and Lower Normans, however, require further consideration. Many Lower Norman tenants-in-chief, including leading figures like Geoffrey of Coutances and Baldwin de Meulles, employed Breton sub-tenants.⁴²⁸ Though they cannot always be traced, such connections often reflected marriage alliances, economic links and migration between Brittany and Lower Normandy – the continuing influence such interactions had on the society of the latter region has been considered at length above.⁴²⁹ Cross-border contact must have been particularly common in the Avranchin, but the scarcity of tenants-in-chief drawn from the region makes this supposition difficult to verify within the context of the post-Conquest settlement. As noted above, however, newcomers to the region, namely Richard Goz and Robert of Mortain, certainly did establish links with their Breton neighbours. Unsurprisingly, both Robert and Richard's son, Hugh employed a number of Breton sub-tenants in England.⁴³⁰ In Robert's case, his own influence is open to debate. Given Robert's succession to Brian of Penthievre in Cornwall and Suffolk, his predecessor may have been responsible for the advancement of

⁴²⁷ Keats-Rohan's research, cited already herein, is paramount here.

⁴²⁸ Above, pp. 260 n. 359, 263 n. 373.

⁴²⁹ Above, pp. 39-61.

⁴³⁰ Hugh's sub-tenants included: *DP*, pp. 235-6 (Jocelyn the Breton), 265 (Hugh de Mara, perhaps from Dol). His relative, Robert of Rhuddlan had a Breton tenant named Tudwald in North Wales (*DP*, p. 428).

Breton sub-tenants in these regions,⁴³¹ though not necessarily so.⁴³² Beyond Cornwall, two of Robert's most powerful sub-tenants were probably Bretons. In Devon and Somerset, Robert created a substantial sub-tenancy for Ansger Brito, who also gained a small tenancy-in-chief, based on Odcombe.⁴³³ Ansger's continental background, however, is complex. While he probably hailed from the vicinity of Fougères, *Liber Exoniensis* also refers to him as Ansger 'de Senardi ponte', which has been traditionally identified with Senarpont on the Somme.⁴³⁴ Given the preponderance of his ethnic by-name and his association with Mortain, this toponymical identification must be seen as suspect. Still more significant was Alfred, the count's butler, by far the wealthiest of Robert's English tenants.⁴³⁵ The name was a popular Breton one, though it also appears in a Lower Norman context.⁴³⁶ His family's marriage alliances in Sussex suggest Norman interests, though this could well have been a result of the post-Conquest English situation, rather than pre-existing interests in the duchy.⁴³⁷ Post-Conquest settlement patterns reveal that William recognised the importance of these various cross-border links. Brittany's frontier lords were almost exclusively enfeoffed in the West Country and southern Welsh Marches, alongside their Lower Norman

⁴³¹ These were Blohin Brito (*DP*, p. 168; Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', pp. 21-2), Brian (*DP*, p. 171; Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', pp. 20-21) and Wihumar (Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', pp. 22-3). To these names might be added Blechu (*DP*, p. 168; Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', p. 14) and Humphrey (*DP*, p. 276, assuming he is not to be identified with Robert's tenant in Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire; Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', p. 22), though their identification as Bretons is less certain.

⁴³² Andrew de Vitre was almost certainly granted property in Cornwall by Robert, whose daughter Agnes he had married (*DP*, p. 151). Bletcu and Wihomarch both held estates that had seemingly been acquired from the royal demesne after Robert replaced Brian (*DB*, fols. 120a, 125a). Hamelin, if he was Breton, seemingly served as Robert's sheriff in Cornwall, suggesting that he too was a trusted household member (above, pp. 53, 256 n. 333; Mason, 'Barons and their Officials', p. 245).

⁴³³ Sanders, *Baronies*, pp. 132-3.

⁴³⁴ *DP*, p. 156; *Exon*, fols. 65r-71r, 502r-503v.

⁴³⁵ Golding, 'Robert of Mortain', p. 136.

⁴³⁶ Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers', pp. 16, 19; Keats-Rohan, 'Bretons and Normans', p. 49 n. 29. For Lower Normandy, Alfred the Giant is the most notable example.

⁴³⁷ *DP*, pp. 143-5.

neighbours.⁴³⁸ How far these tenants-in-chief in fact interacted, however, is open to debate. There was little overlap in terms of sub-tenancies. Alfred Brito held several estates from Robert of Mortain and Baldwin de Meulles.⁴³⁹ Roald Adobed's sub-tenants included Robert's supporter, Reginald *de Valle Torta* and another Lower Norman, Walter de Omonville.⁴⁴⁰ Even Aubrey de Vere, with his familial interests in the Cotentin, enfeoffed only a single Lower Norman sub-tenant, Ralph fitzOsmund.⁴⁴¹ Only Hervé Bituricensis in East Anglia appears to have employed a substantial number of Lower Norman sub-tenants.⁴⁴²

The role of Lower Normandy in the post-Conquest settlement of England thus provides further insight into William's subjugation of the region after the events of 1047. By the end of his reign, William enjoyed tighter control over Lower Normandy than any of his predecessors, with his ever less autonomous officials overseeing tax collection and legal cases.⁴⁴³ Resultantly, William gained a fuller understanding of the socio-cultural character of life in the western reaches of his duchy, as evidenced by his careful employment of Lower Norman nobles and their Breton neighbours in England after 1066. Despite his new alliances with western nobles and development of the region's urban centres, William's conservative grants of English offices and property to Lower Norman aristocrats demonstrate a continuing unwillingness to place too much trust in his western vassals, even when attempting to bind them to him more closely. It is possible that

⁴³⁸ Keats-Rohan, 'Bretons and Normans', pp. 49-51. The Breton lords concerned were Ralph I de Fougères, Alfred Brito, Ruald Adobed, William fitzBaderon and Theobald fitzBerner. In East Anglia, Hervé Bituricensis may also have come from this region, but he was only enfeoffed after the fall of Ralph de Gaël (*DP*, pp. 253-4).

⁴³⁹ *DB*, fols. 105v, 107r.

⁴⁴⁰ *DB*, fols. 114v, 115r; *DP*, p. 452.

⁴⁴¹ *DP*, p. 340.

⁴⁴² *ibid.*, pp. 165, 253-4, 322 for Bernard de Alençon and Peter de Paludel. Several other sub-tenants had anthroponyms that appear more Norman than Breton, namely Garner, Ranulf and Reginald.

⁴⁴³ Hagger, 'How the west was won', p. 45.

the prominence Wace afforded to Lower Norman landholders in his list of the Conqueror's companions at Hastings might reflect local disgruntlement at the lack of sufficient recognition for their contribution to the Conquest.⁴⁴⁴ Most importantly, post-Conquest settlement patterns reflect the ongoing insecurity of the Norman position in the Avranchin and the duke's own limited contacts there as late as 1086. In reality, then, William remained a somewhat distant figure, ruling through intermediaries – some local, most not. Having proven themselves in Lower Normandy before the Conquest, these men ultimately came to the fore in England after it. It was these men, the king's half-brothers most notable among them, whose contacts and interests in Lower Normandy proved most influential in selecting which choice scraps from the Conqueror's table fell into the hands of the region's inhabitants after 1066. This, however, was to change. William's two eldest surviving sons would spend the next decade fighting over the Conqueror's inheritance. In the meantime, William's youngest son, Henry made a name for himself in Lower Normandy and the Breton borderlands. His early career would transform the balance of power in the west and redefine the region's relationship with the ruling dynasty.

⁴⁴⁴ Of those Normans present at Hastings according to Wace, c. 56 hailed from west of the Dives, compared to c. 45 from east of the river (van Houts, 'Wace as Historian', p. xlviii).

Conclusion

In the last week of July 1087, William the Conqueror fell ill during a surprise attack on the town of Mantes in the French Vexin.¹ Six weeks later he was dead.² Orderic Vitalis' dramatic account of the events surrounding William's death and burial was designed to demonstrate both the king's contrition for a lifetime's worth of sin and the transitory nature of worldly power.³ It also serves as a measure of the advancement of ducal authority in Lower Normandy by the closing years of the eleventh century. The archbishop of Rouen, William Bona Anima, decreed that the Conqueror's body should be transported to Caen, for interment in the king's own foundation of Saint-Étienne.⁴ The obsequies did not run smoothly. The funeral procession was interrupted by an outbreak of fire in the town; the service itself by an outburst from the crowd. One Ascelin fitzArthur complained that the king's burial plot lay on the former site of his father's house, from which the Conqueror had wrongfully evicted Arthur at the time of the abbey's foundation. The assembled dignitaries, led by the king's son, Henry, hurriedly paid Ascelin off, allowing the ceremony to continue.⁵ While Orderic's record of a fire during the procession may have been exaggerated for effect, Ascelin's intervention is supported by documentary evidence from Saint-Étienne.⁶

¹ ASC, E, s.a. 1087; 'De obitu Willelmi', in *GND*, ii, p. 184; OV, iv, p. 78 simply record that William fell ill during the assault; Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, ii, p. 336 notes that he was injured internally while riding by being thrown against the pommel of his saddle.

² OV, iv, p. 78, for the dating of William's illness and death.

³ *ibid.*, pp. 78-108.

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 102.

⁵ OV, iv, pp. 104-106; *RR*, ii, line 9280-9340. The former agree on the sum of 60s given to Ascelin for the place of burial. Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, i, p. 512 emphasises Henry's role, though his figure of £100 for the sum given to Ascelin is almost certainly an exaggeration. The service famously did not end well, with the rotting bowels of William's corpulent corpse splitting as his remains were forced into too small a coffin, resulting in an 'intolerable stench' (OV, iv, p. 106 – *intolerabilis foetor*) which assailed the funeral party.

⁶ Saint-Étienne charters record the existence of houses on the site where the abbey was built, the acquisition of land from Arthur, and the later renunciation of property rights *intra ecclesiasm et circa* by Ascelin's son, Ralph (*Abbayes Caennaises*, ed. Musset, pp. 45-6).

The image of Caen and its environs that emerges from Orderic's account is one of a region where ducal rule was firmly established by the late eleventh century, but where memories of the imposition of that authority were still raw. Given William's patronage of Saint-Étienne and his wife's entombment in La Trinité, it is unsurprising that the Norman ecclesiastical elite selected it for the site of his burial. Indeed, the very act of burying the duke in Caen highlights the effectiveness of William's subjection of the region, brought about through a sustained campaign of construction within the town during his lifetime. Despite the local support for Caen's twin houses already identified,⁷ Ascelin's story reminds us that the duke remained something of an outsider in Lower Normandy, his authority secured as much through the exertion of violent force as through social bonds or traditional recognition of his position. Orderic's list of the leading clergymen in attendance at William's funeral is similarly suggestive of the continuing disconnection between Upper and Lower Normandy in the highest echelons of Norman society – only one, Geoffrey of Coutances, hailed from the latter region.⁸

The events surrounding William's death and burial thus serve as a fitting final reminder of the central argument of this thesis. Over the course of the preceding chapters, the varied and extensive divisions apparent within the Norman duchy of the tenth and eleventh centuries have been emphasised time and time again. That such divisions existed to begin with is hardly surprising, given the different historical experiences of Upper and Lower Normandy. In the far west, Frankish rule had given way to Breton over the course of the ninth century. The heterogeneous character of Scandinavian settlement throughout the later

⁷ Above, pp. 247-8.

⁸ OV, iv, p. 104.

duchy during the early tenth century also encouraged regional distinctiveness. Of greater significance than the mere existence of such divisions, however, is that their legacy can be identified for such an extended period. We have, for example, seen how Breton influence can be traced in myriad ways, including via familial traditions, political alliances and ecclesiastical connections, through to the late eleventh century and not simply in the immediate vicinity of the Norman frontier. Regional distinctions arising from early Scandinavian settlement, including variations in naming customs, administrative arrangements and patterns of ecclesiastical patronage, remain similarly identifiable across the same period. By William's death in 1087, these local differences were starting to fade. As van Torhout demonstrates, Breton anthroponyms were declining in popularity in the Cotentin and Avranchin by the late eleventh century, especially amongst more powerful Lower Norman families. Local aristocrats were also becoming more invested in the customs of ecclesiastical patronage and, to a lesser extent, monastic foundation already common in Upper Normandy, while ducal administration in the western *pagi* was becoming ever more complex.

The prolonged survival and late decline of such divisions call into question the traditional narrative of the advance of ducal authority, based largely upon the works of Dudo of Saint-Quentin and Flodoard of Rheims. If Lower Normandy displayed evidence of a past independent of rule from Rouen as late as 1087, then the notion that the region had begun to be drawn into the orbit of the ducal dynasty as early as the 920s seems somewhat suspect. This is especially so given that regional distinctiveness appears to have declined proportional to Lower Normandy's increasing contact with both the ducal dynasty and the wider Upper Norman aristocracy and ecclesiarchy from the first quarter of the eleventh century

onwards. It has been argued here that this apparent contradiction in fact derives from the inaccurate use of the aforementioned authors' accounts – the central source of misunderstanding being the interpretation of and emphasis placed upon Flodoard's record of early tenth-century Frankish royal grants. The reassessment of this evidence attempted here instead suggests that early ducal interactions with Lower Normandy were extremely limited in scope. The contemporary significance of Rouen's rulers amongst the wider Scandinavian settler communities of northern France has been called into question; those same rulers' preoccupation with events beyond the eastern and southern, rather than western, boundaries of Upper Normandy emphasized. What, if any, authority Rollo and Longsword wielded in Lower Normandy must have been loose and hegemonic in character; the lack of political cohesion throughout the territories of the later duchy being evidenced by the differing responses to both Longsword's assassination in 942 and the dangerous, chaotic events of Richard I's minority that followed.

This important reappraisal of early ducal interest (or lack thereof) in Lower Normandy casts fresh light on the duchy's shadowy, late tenth-century history as a whole. Richard I's reign emerges as a dynamic era in which ducal ambitions turned westward for the first time, rather than a calm period of restoration and consolidation. The revival of the Norman episcopate under Richard's patronage was the central element in this broadening of ducal horizons, providing the theoretical framework for the expansion of the dynasty's authority throughout the territories encompassed by the archdiocese of Rouen. It is equally evident, however, that ducal pretensions did not reflect reality, as at Mont Saint-Michel, and that some of his supposed interventions, for instance in Brittany, are

unlikely to have ever taken place. Those actions that can be attributed firmly to Richard, such as his marriage into a Lower Norman family, were slow to bear fruit. Modern interpretation of Richard's reign has been hampered by the prejudices of eleventh-century ecclesiastical authors. Their bleak accounts, produced to justify the westward expansion of Upper Norman ducal and monastic authority, are considerably at odds with the more vibrant picture of local ecclesiastical life emerging from ongoing archaeological investigation. The very fact that such accounts were composed in the first place points towards the existence of continuing regional divisions into the eleventh century.

While the late tenth century witnessed the birth of ducal ambitions for Lower Normandy, the business of effectively imposing Rouen's rule throughout the region was thus left to Richard I's successors. Richard II's reign saw rapid progress in the establishment of ducal rule over Lower Normandy. Unlike his father, Richard became an influential figure at Mont Saint-Michel, while ducal family members became powerful local landholders. This transformation was doubtless aided by the early death of Richard's major local opponent, Count Geoffrey of Rennes. Despite such favourable circumstances, however, one of the most striking features of Richard's reign is the continuing limitations placed upon his success. Involvement at Mont Saint-Michel inspired an internal backlash, while the duke's relatives, the counts of Avranches/Mortain, rebelled. Richard's success depended upon the co-operation of local figures, such as Neil de Saint-Sauveur and, perhaps most importantly, his wife, Judith of Rennes. Any notion that the contemporary use of the word 'Normandy' confirms the existence of a clearly-defined and well-organized political entity of that name at the turn of the eleventh century should be abandoned in the wake of such findings. Equally

striking, and readily discernible only from Richard II's reign onward, is the important legacy of Normandy's Scandinavian maritime heritage. Naval communication, which formed the basis for many local commercial and tenurial networks, underpinned ducal expansion too. Over the course of the eleventh century, ducal property grants gradually extended inland from major administrative centres on the coast, most notably Caen and Cherbourg, while military campaigns were often accompanied by naval support. From the port-towns of the Seine estuary, the ducal dynasty was perfectly placed to dominate the Lower Norman coastline from a distance. William the Conqueror's great naval expedition of 1066 was thus built on a history of ducal maritime expertise.

Duke Robert's reputation emerges enhanced from this reinterpretation of Lower Norman history and more befitting of his historical byname. Traditionally seen as a period of rentrenchment in the face of resurgent external forces and rising internal pressures, Robert's reign in fact witnessed the consolidation of ducal authority in Lower Normandy. The Channel Islands were conquered, the Avranchin secured against Breton intervention, the independently-minded monks of Mont Saint-Michel brought to heel, the programme of monastic endowment further strengthened with the foundation of Cerisy, and more members of the local nobility drawn into ducal service. Rather than being overwhelmed by them, Robert also employed the increasingly powerful aristocratic families of Upper Normandy to good effect in his efforts to tighten his grip on the west. While regional divisions remained, as illustrated by differing patterns of ecclesiastical patronage and emphasis placed on kinship with the ruling dynasty, it is clear that from Robert's reign onward the Lower Norman nobility were thoroughly invested in the duchy's future.

Nowhere are these two points more obvious than in the revolt of 1047. Lower Norman involvement in Guy of Burgundy's bid to unseat (or, at least, gain traction over) the young Duke William displays a clear interest in how Normandy should be governed. Those locals who had previously enjoyed close connections with the ducal dynasty were concerned by potential changes to their position. For the most part, however, regional aristocrats had few such links and numerous figures perhaps felt ignored or aggrieved by ducal actions. Revolt offered them the possibility of inclusion and recompense, but success presented William with an opportunity to stamp ducal authority over the west more firmly than ever before. From the construction of a new capital at Caen to the development of an increasingly sophisticated administrative system throughout the region, William was an incredibly active figure in Lower Normandy. Though he continued to broaden links with the local aristocracy, the legacy of Val-ès-Dunes gave William the confidence to impose his will over leading regional figures in a manner previously unseen. This was most obvious in his treatment of the vicecomital dynasty of Saint-Sauveur, whose pre-eminent position in the Cotentin now came to an end. Changing patterns of ecclesiastical patronage and kinship relationships reveal that William's efforts encouraged the increasing standardisation of the Norman elite's socio-cultural interests throughout the duchy.

While William's reign saw the destinies of Upper and Lower Normandy bound indelibly together, the partnership of east and west remained uneven. The duke continued to favour Upper Norman aristocrats over their Lower Norman counterparts. Indeed, the former – many of whom only became established in the west in the wake of William's victory at Val-ès-Dunes – remained the bedrock of ducal authority in Lower Normandy, including, most notably, William's own

uterine brothers and close friend, Richard d'Avranches. As the attendance at William's funeral reveals, the remarkable Bishop Geoffrey of Coutances was the only native Lower Norman to establish himself in the duke's inner circle. Analysis of post-Conquest settlement patterns confirms this bias. The vast majority of Lower Norman landholders in England after 1066 came as sub-tenants of William's Upper Norman appointees, rather than as tenants-in-chief in their own right. The Avranchin was particularly underrepresented, emphasising once more the continuing limitations of ducal authority in the westernmost reaches of the duchy. Despite this, however, the events of William's reign were hugely transformative, both on a personal level for the duke and on a wider political level for the duchy as a whole. The experience William gained in establishing his authority over Lower Normandy proved invaluable for his later career. It would perhaps be going too far to suggest that William's treatment of Lower Normandy after 1047 served as a model for his later conquests. The consolidation of ducal authority in the region, however, certainly provided William with the perfect springboard for aggressive expansion into neighbouring Brittany and Maine – campaigns that presaged his most famous conquest.

Just as the anarchy following his own father's death had threatened to do, so too the crisis precipitated by William's untimely demise in 1087 could easily have undermined the progress made in Lower Normandy during his lifetime. With the Conqueror's eldest sons squabbling over his divided inheritance, the duchy was soon mired in civil war. That ducal authority in the region emerged not only intact, but actually enhanced from this period of conflict was due almost entirely to the desperate opportunism of William's youngest son, the future Henry I. Left landless in the wake of his father's death, Henry was at least bequeathed the

substantial sum of £5000.⁹ In 1088, Henry used £3000 of this inheritance to purchase the title of count of the Cotentin from his brother, Duke Robert Curthose, and with it, according to Orderic, land amounting to one-third of Normandy.¹⁰ Henry's early career has been the subject of numerous academic studies, though the exact nature and extent of his authority in Lower Normandy remains open to debate.¹¹ It is possible, though unlikely, that William had planned to create some sort of apanage in the region for one of his younger sons.¹² Whatever the character and origin of his position, historians from J.H. Round onwards have emphasised the leading role individuals from Lower Normandy and the neighbouring Breton borderland played in Henry's subsequent reign – as officers of royal government, recipients of royal patronage and settlers in Scotland.¹³

Kathleen Thompson rightly notes that Henry was far from the first member of the ducal dynasty 'to cut his political teeth in lower Normandy',¹⁴ but

⁹ OV, iv, p. 94; GND, ii, p. 204.

¹⁰ OV, iv, pp. 118-20, 148; GND, ii, p. 204; RR, ii, lines 9375-9420; Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, i, pp. 710-14; 'The *Brevis Relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum*, written by a Monk of Battle Abbey', ed. E.M.C. van Houts, in *Chronology, Conquest and Conflict in Medieval England*, Camden Miscellany XXXIV, Camden 5th Series, x (1997), p. 36.

¹¹ J. Le Patourel, 'Henri Beauclerc, comte du Cotentin 1088', *RHDFE*, 4th série, 53 (1975), pp. 167-8; C. Warren Hollister, *Henry I* (New Haven and London, 2001), pp. 49-99, esp. pp. 51-6; J.A. Green, *Henry I* (Cambridge, 2006), pp. 25-37; K. Thompson, 'From the Thames to Tinchebray: The Role of Normandy in the Early Career of Henry I', in *Henry I and the Anglo-Norman World: Studies in Memory of C. Warren Hollister*, ed. D.F. Fleming and J.M. Pope, *HSJ* 17 (2007), pp. 16-26, esp. p. 19; É. van Torhout, 'Henri Beauclerc, Comte du Cotentin reconsidéré (1088-1101)', in *Tinchebray*, ed. Gazeau and Green, pp. 101-21, esp. pp. 102, 105, 107-109; Davies, 'The Count of the Côtentin', pp. 123-40, esp. p. 130.

¹² Henry's elder brother, Richard, who had died in c. 1081, once attested a ducal charter as Richard *de Abrincas*, but this evidence is insubstantial and Henry's specific association with the Cotentin, rather than the Avranchin, may suggest otherwise (*Recueil*, no. 218; G. Garnett, *Conquered England: kingship, succession and tenure, 1066-1166* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 182-3 n. 399; Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, p. 343 n. 2).

¹³ J.H. Round, *Studies in Peerage and Family History* (London, 1901), pp. 124-5; Le Patourel, *Norman Empire*, pp. 341-8; Green, *Government of England*, pp. 146-9; Keats-Rohan, 'Bretons and Normans', pp. 55-61; idem, 'North French Prosopography', pp. 27-37; Warren Hollister, *Henry I*, pp. 57-61; G.W.S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots* (London, 1973), pp. 321-7. Malmesbury, *Gesta Regum*, i, p. 728 drew attention to the favour Henry had shown to the Bretons during the king's own lifetime.

¹⁴ Thompson, 'Thames to Tinchebray', p. 18.

no previous member of the ruling family had spent such a prolonged period in the region (intermittently from 1088-1100) or depended so totally upon the native population for their survival. The monks of Mont Saint-Michel provided a refuge when Henry's brothers united against him in 1091; Brittany an escape route when he was finally forced to flee.¹⁵ Henry's fortunes in Lower Normandy were revived in 1092 as a result of local support – the population of Domfront rebelling against their lord, Robert of Bellême and installing Henry in his place.¹⁶ Secure in Domfront and with his brothers once again at each others' throats, Lower Norman lords flocked to Henry's banner after 1092 as he quietly restored his powerbase. Robert of Torigny identified Hugh d'Avranches, Richard de Reviers and Roger de Magneville as key figures in the restoration of Henry's rule over the Cotentin, but there were surely others.¹⁷ Some were moved by Henry's personal wealth,¹⁸ his influence with William Rufus (with whom he had concluded a new alliance by 1095),¹⁹ or their own personal reasons.²⁰ Many were lower-ranking tenants of the Conqueror's Upper Norman appointees, such as Count Robert of Mortain and his son, William, who had gained little or nothing in England after 1066. The switch of allegiance to Henry may have offered the hope of securing greater future rewards.²¹ Given his dependence upon such men in his early career, it is

¹⁵ OV, iv, p. 250; *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. R.R Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. P. McGurk and J. Bray (Oxford, 3 vols., 1995-), iii, s.a. 1091; Malmesbury, *GR*, ii, pp. 550-52, 710-14.

¹⁶ OV, iv, pp. 256-8.

¹⁷ *GND*, ii, p. 208.

¹⁸ It is possible that Henry's treasure remained secure, despite his numerous imprisonments and exiles. OV, iv, p. 96 assures us that, upon gaining his inheritance, Henry's first action was to place his fortune in a strong-house in the care of trusted companions.

¹⁹ *ASC*, E, s.a. 1095.

²⁰ Several of Henry's illegitimate children were probably born during these years, including Robert of Gloucester. There is, however, little tangible evidence for sexual relationships between the young Henry and the Lower Norman nobility, though this is not unlikely. Of the king's bastards, William de Tracy bore a Lower Norman toponymic (K. Thompson, 'Affairs of State: the illegitimate children of Henry I', *JMH* 29 (2003), pp. 138, 141-2, 146).

²¹ Davies, 'Count of the Côtentin', pp. 132-8, for Henrician supporters' links to the Mortain honour and the possible reasons for his popularity in Lower Normandy.

unsurprising that Henry's reign saw the balance of Upper and Lower Norman landholders in England redressed. The pendulum also swung because of the hostility Henry faced from many of the individuals established in Lower Normandy during his father's lifetime. Odo of Bayeux, Geoffrey of Coutances, Robert of Mortain, Robert de Bellême and their families understandably saw Henry's new, nebulous, but seemingly far-reaching position as a threat to their existing authority.²² As king from 1100 onwards, Henry could return the favour, undermining his opponents both in England and, subsequently, in the duchy itself.

The Conqueror's death thus represents an important turning-point in Lower Norman history. William had finally won the west for the ducal dynasty. Despite his development of ducal complexes at Caen and Cherbourg, however, he continued to rule Lower Normandy as something of an outsider. Ultimately, Henry unmade not only his father's settlement of the west, but all that had stemmed from it. In so doing, Henry arguably achieved the aims of the rebels of 1047. Under William, Lower Normandy remained a region that had to be won, a region whose inhabitants seemingly enjoyed little influence over their ruler. Under Henry, the west and its people could finally make a place for themselves as equal partners in the wider Anglo-Norman realm.

²² Davies, 'Count of the Côtentin', pp. 129-32, for the threat Henry represented to the counts of Mortain; van Torhout, 'Henri Beauclerc', pp. 111-14, for a more general, recent account of Henry's adversaries.

Bibliography:

Abbreviations:

AASS	<i>Acta Sanctorum quotuot toto orbe coluntur</i> , ed. J. Bollandus <i>et al.</i> (Antwerp, Paris and Brussels, 67 vols., 1643-)
AASS OSB	<i>Acta Sanctorum Ordinis Sancti Benedicti</i> , ed. J. Mabillon <i>et al</i> (Paris, 9 vols., 1668-1707)
AB	<i>Annales de Bretagne</i>
AM	<i>Archéologie médiévale</i>
AN	<i>Annales de Normandie</i>
ANS	<i>Anglo-Norman Studies</i>
BSAN	<i>Bulletin de la société des antiquaires de Normandie</i>
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
GC	<i>Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributa</i> , ed. D. de Sainte-Marthe <i>et al</i> (Paris, 16 vols., 1715-1865)
HSJ	<i>Haskins Society Journal</i>
JMH	<i>Journal of Medieval History</i>
MGH	<i>Monumenta Germaniae Historica</i>
SS	<i>Scriptores</i>
SSRG	<i>Scriptores rerum Germanicarum in usum scholarum</i>
MSAN	<i>Mémoires de la société des antiquaires de Normandie</i>
MSHAB	<i>Memoires de la Societe d'histoire et d'archéologie de Bretagne</i>
ODNB	H.C.G. Matthew and B. Harrison (eds.), <i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> (Oxford, 2004), cited from online version, accessible at http://www.oxforddnb.com
PL	<i>Patrologia cursus completus: Series Latina</i> , ed. J.-P. Migne (Paris, 221 vols., 1844-64)
RHDFE	<i>Revue historique du droit français et étranger</i>

RHF *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, ed. L. Delisle et al
(Paris, 24 vols., 1869-1904)

Printed Primary Sources:

‘Acta Archiepiscopum Rotomagensium: Study and Edition’, ed. R. Allen,
Tabularia Documents: sources écrites de la Normandie médiévale 9 (2009),
pp. 1-66

*Les actes de Guillaume le Conquérant et de la Reine Mathilde pour les abbayes
Caennaises*, ed. L. Musset (Caen, 1967)

Adhémar de Chabannes, *Ademari Cabannensis Chronicon*, ed. R. Landes and G.
Pon (Turnhout, 1999)

‘Aliud Chronicon Eiusdem Montis’, *PL* 202, cols. 1323-6

Amatus of Montecassino, *Ystoire de li normant*, ed. M. Guéret-Laferté (Paris,
2011)

André de Fleury, *Vie de Gauzlin, abbé de Fleury*, ed. R.-H. Bautier and G. Labory
(Paris, 1969)

Anselm of Bec, *S. Anselmi Cantuariensis Archiepiscopi Opera Omnia*, ed. F.S.
Schmitt (Edinburgh, 6 vols., 1938-61)

Annales de Saint-Bertin, ed. F. Grat, J. Vielliard and S.V. Clémencet (Paris, 1964)

Annales Fuldenses, ed. G.H. Pertz and F. Kurze (Hannover, *MGH SSRG* 7, 1891)

‘Annales Nivernenses’, in *MGH SS* 13 (Hannover, 1881), pp. 88-91

The Annals of St-Bertin, ed. and trans. J.L. Nelson, (Manchester, 1991)

‘Annales Vedastini’, in *Annales Xantenses et Annales Vedastini*, ed. B. de Simson
(Hannover, *MGH SSRG* 12, 1909), pp. 40-82

Antiquus cartularius ecclesiae Baiocensis (Livre Noir), ed. V. Bourrienne (Rouen,
2 vols., 1902-3)

- ‘Beati Severi translatio Rotomagnum anno 1089’, in AASS Feb., i, cols. 192-194
- T.N. Bisson, ‘On the Abbots of Le Mont Saint-Michel. An Edition and Translation’, *HSJ* 22 (2010), pp. 163-91
- ‘The *Brevis Relatio de Guillelmo nobilissimo comite Normannorum*, written by a Monk of Battle Abbey’, ed. E.M.C. van Houts, in *Chronology, Conquest and Conflict in Medieval England*, Camden Miscellany XXXIV, Camden 5th Series, x (1997), pp. 1-48
- Calendar of Documents Preserved in France*, ed. J.H. Round (London, 1899)
- Cartulaire de l’Abbaye de Redon en Bretagne*, ed. A. de Courson (Paris, 1863)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Saint-Aubin d’Angers*, ed. A. Bertrand de Broussillon (Paris, 3 vols., 1903)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Sainte-Croix de Quimperlé*, ed. L. Maître et P. de Berthou (Paris & Rennes, 2nd edn., 1904)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Saint-Georges de Rennes*, ed. M.P. de La Bigne Villeneuve (Rennes, 1876)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Saint-Père de Chartres*, ed. M. Guérard (Paris, 3 vols., 1840)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye Saint-Sauveur de Redon*, ed. J. Jullien and J. Charpy (Rennes, 2 vols., 1998-2004)
- Cartulaire de l’abbaye de Saint-Vincent du Mans*, ed. R. Charles et le vte Menjot d’Elbenne (Mamers, 1886-1913)
- The Cartulary of the Abbey of Mont-Saint-Michel*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan (Donnington, 2006)
- Charters of the Redvers family and the earldom of Devon, 1090-1217*, ed. R. Bearman, (Exeter: Devon and Cornwall Record Society, n.s. 37, 1994)

Chartes de Saint-Julien de Tours (1002-1300), ed. L.C. Denis (Le Mans, 2 vols., 1912-13)

Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II, and Richard I, ed. R. Howlett (London, 4 vols., 1884-9)

‘Chronicon Sancti Benigni Divionensis’, *PL* 162, cols. 753-860

La Chronique de Nantes (570 environ-1049), ed. and trans. R. Merlet (Paris, 1896)

‘Les Chroniques de Vitré’, in Pierre le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne*, ed. Hozier, pp. 1-88

Chroniques latines du Mont Saint-Michel (IX^e-XII^e siècle), ed. P. Bouet and O. Desbordes (Caen, 2009)

Corpus des inscriptions de la France médiévale 22: Calvados, Eure, Manche, Orne, Seine-Maritime, ed. R. Favreau and J. Michaud (Paris, CRNS Éditions, 2002)

L. Delisle, *Histoire du château et des sires de Saint-Sauveur-le-Vicomte suivie de pièces justificatives* (Valognes, 1867)

‘De statu huius ecclesiae ab anno 836 ad 1093’, in *GC*, xi, instrumenta, cols. 217-24

Domesday Book seu Liber Censualis Wilhelmi Primi Regis Angliae, ed. A. Farley and H. Ellis (London, 4 vols., 1783-1816)

Dudo of Saint-Quentin, *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniæ ducum, auctore Dudone Sancti Quintini decano*, ed. J. Lair (Caen, 1865)

———, *Dudo of St Quentin, History of the Normans*, trans. E. Christiansen (Woodbridge, 1998)

W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (London, new ed., 6 vols. in 8, 1817-30)

Early Yorkshire Charters, ed. W. Farrer and Sir C.T. Clay (Edinburgh, 12 vols., 1914-65)

English Historical Documents, 1042-1189, ed. D.C. Douglas and G.W. Greenway (London, 1953)

Étienne de Fougères, 'Vita de Sancto Guiliemo Firmato', in *AASS*, Aprilis t. iii, cols. 334-42

———, 'Vitae BB Vitalis et Gaufridi', ed. E.P. Sauvage in *Analecta Bollandiana* 1 (1882), pp. 355-410

'Ex Diversis Chronicis et Gestis', in *Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France*, ed. L. Delisle et al (Paris, 24 vols., 1869-1904), x, pp. 316-24

'Extracts from the Cartulary of Mont-Saint-Michel', in *Chronicles of Stephen, Henry, and Richard*, ed. Howlett, iv, pp. 331-45

P. de Farcy, *Abbayes de l'evêche de Bayeux* (Laval, 1886)

Flodoard of Rheims, *Les annales de Flodoard*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1905)

———, *Historia Remensis Ecclesiae*, ed. M. Stratmann (Hannover, *MGH SS* 36, 1998)

———, *The Annals of Flodoard of Reims, 919-966*, ed. and trans. S. Fanning and B.S. Bachrach (Plymouth & Peterborough, Ont., 2004)

'Fragmentum Chronici Fontanellensis', ed. G.H. Pertz, in *MGH SS* 2 (Hannover, 1829), pp. 301-4

Gallia Christiana in provincias ecclesiasticas distributa, ed. D. de Sainte-Marthe et al (Paris, 16 vols., 1715-1865)

Geoffrey of Malaterra, *De rebus gestis Rogerii Calabriae et Siciliae comitis et Roberti Guiscardi ducis fratris eius*, ed. E. Pontieri (Bologna, 2 vols., 1927-8)

Gesta Abbatum monasterii Sancti Albani, ed. H.T. Riley (London, 3 vols., 1867-9)

H. Guillotel, *Les actes des ducs de Bretagne (944-1148)*, ed. P. Charon, P. Guigon, C. Henry, M. Jones, K.S.B. Keats-Rohan & J.-C. Meuret (Rennes, 2014)

Hariulf of Saint-Riquier, *Hariulf: Chonique de l'abbaye de Saint-Riquier (V^e siècle-1104)*, ed. F. Lot (Paris, Collection des textes pour servir à l'étude et à l'enseignement de l'Histoire, 1894)

Hemming, *Hemingi Chartularium Ecclesiae Wigorniensis*, ed. T. Hearne (Oxford, 2 vols., 1723)

'Historia Translationis Sancti Launomari Abbatis Corbionensis in Oppidum Blesas', in *AASS OSB*, iv, part ii, pp. 245-59

Hugh of Fleury, 'Hugonis liber qui modernorum regum Francorum continent actus', ed. G. Waitz, in *MGH SS* 9 (Hannover, 1851), pp. 376-95

Inventio et miracula sancti Vulfranni, ed. J. Laporte, Mélanges publiés par la Société de l'Histoire de Normandie, 14e série (Rouen, 1938)

Ivo of Chartres, 'Epistolae', *PL* 162, cols. 11-296

John of Worcester, *The Chronicle of John of Worcester*, ed. R.R Darlington and P. McGurk, trans. P. McGurk and J. Bray (Oxford, 3 vols., 1995-)

J. Lair, *Étude sur la vie et la mort de Guillaume Longue-épée, duc de Normandie* (Paris, 1893)

'Libellus de revelatione, edificatione et auctoritate Fiscanensis monasterii', *PL* 151, cols. 699-724

Magni rotuli scaccarii Normanniæ sub regibus Angliæ, ed. T. Stapleton (London, 2 vols., 1840-44)

C.J. McDonough, 'Warner of Rouen and the Monk from Mont Saint-Michel',

Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch 32 (1997), pp. 23-51

'Miraculi sancti Wandregisili', in *AASS* 22 Julliet, v, cols. 281-4

'Miraculi sancti Wulfranni episcopi', in *AASS* Mar., iii, cols. 150-61

Neustria Pia, ed. A. du Monstier (Rouen, 1663)

'Notae Monasterii Montis Sancti Michaelis', in *RHF*, xxiii, pp. 570-82

Orderic Vitalis, *Orderici Vitalis angligenæ, coenobii uticensis monachi, historiæ ecclesiasticæ libri tredecim*, ed. A. Le Prévost (Paris, 5 vols., 1838-55)

——, *The Ecclesiastical history of Orderic Vitalis*, ed. and trans. M. Chibnall (Oxford, 6 vols., 1969-80)

Pierre le Baud, *Histoire de Bretagne, avec les chroniques des maisons de Vitré et de Laval*, ed. P. Hozier, (Paris, 1638)

Recueil d'Annales Angevines et Vendômoises, ed. L. Halphen (Paris, 1903)

Recueil des actes de Charles III le Simple, roi de France, ed. F. Lot and P. Lauer (Paris, 1940)

Recueil des actes de Robert I^{er} et de Raoul, rois de France (922-936), ed. J. Dufour (Paris, 1978)

Recueil des actes des ducs de Normandie de 911 à 1066, ed. M. Fauroux (Caen, 1961)

Recueil des Historiens des Gaules et de la France, ed. L. Delisle et al (Paris, 24 vols., 1869-1904)

The Red Book of the Exchequer, ed. Hubert Hall (London, 3 vols., 1896)

Regesta regum anglo-normannorum, 1066-1154, ed. H.W.C. Davis, C. Johnson and H.A. Cronne (Oxford, 4 vols., 1913-69)

Regesta regum Anglo-Normannorum: the Acta of William I (1066-1087), ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998)

Regino of Prum, *Regionis abbatis Prumensis Chronicon: cum continuatione treverensi*, ed. F. Kurze (Hannover, MGH SSRG 50, 1890)

Richer of Reims, *Histoire de France (888-995)*, ed. R. Latouche (Paris, 2 vols., 1930-7)

Robert of Torigny, 'Chronica', in *Chronicles of Stephen, Henry, and Richard*, ed. Howlett, iv, pp. 3-315

Rodulf Glaber, *Rodulfus Glaber, Opera*, ed. and trans. J. France, N. Bulst and P. Reynolds (Oxford, 1989)

Rotuli chartarum in Turri londinensi asservati, ed. T.D. Hardy (London, 1837)

'Translatio beati Audoeni anno 941', *PL* 162, cols. 1160-63

The Normans in Europe, ed. and trans. E.M.C. van Houts (Manchester, 2000)

Thesaurus Novus Anecdotorum, ed. E. Martène and U. Durand (Paris, 5 vols. 1717)

'Translatio Corporum Bajocis ad ecclesias S. Victoris et S. Salvatoris', in *AASS Mai.*, iii, cols. 620-624

Two Chartularies of the Priory of St. Peter at Bath, ed. W. Hunt (London: Somerset Record Society 7, 1893)

Two of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles Parallel, ed. C. Plummer and J. Earle (Oxford, 2 vols., 1892-9)

'Vita Lanfranci', ed. M. Gibson, in *Lanfranco de Pavia e l'Europa del secolo XI nel IX centenario della morte (1089-1989)*, ed. G. D'Onofrio (Rome, 1993), pp. 661-715

Wace, *Le roman de Rou de Wace*, ed. A.J. Holden (Paris, 3 vols., 1970-73)

———, *The history of the Norman people: Wace's Roman de rou*, trans. G.S. Burgess, with ns. by E.M.C. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2004)

William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni, *The gesta Normannorum ducum of William of Jumièges, Orderic Vitalis, and Robert of Torigni*, ed. and trans. E.M.C. van Houts (Oxford, 2 vols., 1992-95)

William of Poitiers, *The Gesta Guillelmi of William of Poitiers*, ed. and trans. H.W.C. Davis and M. Chibnall (Oxford, 1998)

William of Saint-Pair, 'Le Roman du Mont-Saint-Michel', ed. F. Michel, *MSAN* 20 (1853), pp. 510-73

Secondary Works:

L. Abrams, 'England, Normandy and Scandinavia', in *Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Harper-Bill and van Houts, pp. 43-62

———, 'Early Normandy', *ANS* 35 (2013), pp. 45-64

E. Albu, *The Normans in their Histories* (Woodbridge, 2001)

J.J.G. Alexander, 'A Romanesque copy from Mont Saint-Michel of an initial in the Corbie psalter', in *Millénaire monastique*, ed. Laporte *et al*, ii, pp. 239-45

———, *Norman Illumination at Mont St. Michel, 966-1100* (Oxford, 1970)

R. Allen, 'Un évêque et sa ville: les évêques d'Avranches de 990 à 1134', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du Pays de Granville* 86 (2009), pp. 1-49

———, '"A proud and headstrong man": John of Ivry, bishop of Avranches and archbishop of Rouen, 1060-79', *Historical Research* 83 (2010), pp. 189-227

F. Amory, 'The *Dönsk tunga* in Early Medieval Normandy: A Note', in *American Indian and Indoeuropean Studies: Papers in Honor of Madison S. Beeler*, ed.

K. Klar, M. Langdon, and S. Silver (The Hague, 1980), pp. 279-90

- H. Arbman, 'Hague-Dike: les fouilles en 1951 et 1952', *Meddelanden från Lunds Universitets Historiska Museum* (1953), pp. 191-222
- M. Arnoux, 'Before the *Gesta Normannorum* and beyond Dudo: Some Evidence on Early Norman Historiography', *ANS* 22 (2000), pp. 30-48
- G.W.S. Barrow, *The Kingdom of the Scots* (London, 1973)
- F. Barth (ed.), *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organisation of Cultural Difference* (London, 1969)
- R.E. Barton, *Lordship and the County of Maine, c. 890-1160* (Woodbridge, 2004)
- D. Bates, 'Notes sur l'aristocratie Normande', *AN* 23 (1973), pp. 7-38
- , 'The Character and Career of Odo, bishop of Bayeux (1049/50-1097)', *Speculum* 50 (1975), pp. 1-20
- , *Normandy Before 1066* (London and New York, 1982)
- , 'Review: Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power, 840-1066', *Speculum* 65 (1990), pp. 1045-7
- , *William the Conqueror* (2nd edn., London, 2001)
- , 'The Conqueror's Adolescence', *ANS* 25 (2003), pp. 1-18
- , *The Normans and Empire* (Oxford, 2013)
- D. Bates and V. Gazeau, 'L'abbaye de Grestain et la famille d'Herluin de Conteville', *AN* 40 (1990), pp. 5-30
- P. Bauduin, 'Une famille châtelaine sur les confins normanno-manceaux: les Géré (X^e-XIII^e siècles)', *AM* 22 (1992), pp. 309-56
- , 'Du bon usage de la dos dans la Normandie ducale (X^e-début XII^e siècle)', in *Dots et douaires dans le haut moyen âge*, ed. F. Bougard, L. Feller and R. Le Jan (Rome, 2002), pp. 429-55
- , *La Première Normandie (X^e-XI^e siècles)* (Caen, 2004)

- (ed.), *Les fondations scandinaves en Occident et les débuts du duché de Normandie* (Caen, 2005)
- , 'Richard II de Normandie: figure princière et transferts culturels (fin dixième-debut onzième siècle)', *ANS* 37 (2015), pp. 52-82
- S. Baxter and J. Blair, 'Land Tenure and Royal Patronage in the Early English Kingdom: a model and a case study', *ANS* 28 (2006), pp. 14-46
- M. Baylé, 'Les évêques et l'architecture normande au XI^e siècle', in *Les évêques normands*, ed. Bouet and Neveux, pp. 151-72
- F. de Beaurepaire, 'Les noms d'Anglo-Saxons contenus dans la toponymie normande', *AN* 10 (1960), pp. 307-16
- , *Les noms des communes et anciennes paroisses de la Seine-Maritime* (Paris, 1979)
- C.E. Blunt, 'The Cabinet of the Marquess of Ailesbury and the Penny of Hwyl Deda', *British Numismatical Journal* 52 (1983), pp. 117-22
- M. de Bouïard, 'La Hague, camp retranché des Vikings?', *AN* 3 (1953), pp. 3-14
- , 'Le Hague-Dike', *Cahiers Archéologiques: Fin de l'Antiquité et Moyen Âge* 8 (1956), pp. 117-45
- , *Guillaume le Conquérant* (Paris, 1958)
- , 'A propos de la datation du Hague-Dike', *AN* 14 (1964), pp. 270-71
- , 'Sépultures énigmatiques à Réville (Manche)', *AN* 14 (1964), pp. 258-63
- P. Bouet, 'Le Mont Saint-Michel entre Bretagne et Normandie de 960 à 1066', in *Bretons et Normands*, ed. Quaghebeur and Merdrignac, pp. 165-200
- P. Bouet and F. Neveux (eds.), *Les évêques normands du XI^e siècle* (Caen, 1995)
- , 'Les évêques normands de 985 à 1150', in *Les évêques normands*, ed. Bouet and Neveux, pp. 19-37

- J. Boussard, 'La Seigneurie de Bellême aux X^e et XI^e siècles', in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Âge dédiés à la mémoire de Louis Halphen*, ed. C.-E. Perrin (Paris, 1951), pp. 43-54
- , 'Le comté de Mortain au XI^e siècle', *Le Moyen Âge* 58 (1952), pp. 253-79
- J.-M. Bouvris, 'Une famille de vassaux des vicomtes de Bayeux au XI^e siècle: les Broc', *Revue du département de la Manche* 19 (1977), pp. 3-44
- , 'Une version inédite de la confirmation par le duc Robert Courteheuse d'une donation faite en 1087 par Guillaume le Conquérant à l'abbaye de Saint-Étienne de Caen', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du Pays de Granville* 64 (1987), pp. 3-21, 67-81.
- J.-P. Brunterc'h, 'Geoffroy Martel, Conan II et les comtes bretons Eude et Hoël de 1055 à 1060', in *Mondes de l'Ouest et villes du monde: Regards sur les sociétés médiévales: Mélanges en l'honneur d'Andre Chédeville*, ed. C. Laurent, B. Merdrignac and D. Pichot (Rennes, 1998), pp. 311-24
- V. Carpentier, 'Les vikings en Normandie: archéologie d'un paradoxe identitaire', *Les dossiers d'archéologie* 344 (2011), pp. 72-7
- H. Chanteux, 'L'abbé Thierry et les églises de Jumièges, du Mont-Saint-Michel et de Bernay', *Bulletin Monumental* 98 (1939), pp. 67-72
- , 'Le Toponyme 'Bretteville' en Normandie et son origine', in *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel* (Paris, 2 vols., 1955), i, pp. 248-54
- A. Chédeville, 'Anthroponymie bretonne', in *Genèse médiévale de l'anthroponymie moderne: Tome II - Persistances du nom unique*, ed. M. Bourin and P. Chareille (Tours, 2 vols., 1992), pp. 9-40
- M. Chibnall, *The World of Orderic Vitalis* (Oxford, 1984)

- , 'La Carrière de Geoffroi de Montbray', in *Les évêques normands*, ed. Bouet and Neveux, pp. 279-93
- W.J. Corbett, 'The Development of the Duchy of Normandy and the Norman Conquest of England', in *Cambridge Medieval History*, ed. H.M. Gwatkin *et al* (Cambridge, 8 vols., 1911-1936), v, pp. 481-520
- S. Coupland, 'From poachers to gamekeepers: Scandinavian warlords and Carolingian kings', *Early Medieval Europe* 7 (1998), pp. 85-114
- H. Cowdrey, *Lanfranc: scholar, monk, and archbishop* (Oxford, 2003)
- D. Crouch, *The Image of the Aristocracy in Britain, 1000-1300* (London, 1992)
- , *The Normans: The History of a Dynasty* (London, 2002)
- H.C. Darby and R. Welldon Finn (eds.), *The Domesday Geography of South-West England* (Cambridge, 1967)
- K. Davies, 'The Count of the Côtentin: Western Normandy, William of Mortain and the Career of Henry I', *HSJ* 22 (2012), pp. 123-40
- R.R. Davies, *The Age of Conquest: Wales 1063-1415* (Oxford, 1991)
- W. Davies, 'Franks and Bretons: the impact of political climate and historiographical tradition on writing their ninth-century history', in *Frankland: the Franks and the world of the early Middle Ages – essays in honour of Dame Jinty Nelson*, ed. P. Fouracre and D. Ganz (Manchester, 2008), pp. 304-21
- F. Delacampagne, 'Seigneurs, fiefs et mottes du Cotentin (X^e-XII^e siècles): Étude historique et topographique', *AM* 12 (1982), pp. 175-207
- J. Deshayes, 'Structures murales et phases de construction: la première generation des églises du Cotentin', in *La paroisse en Normandie au Moyen âge: la vie*

- paroissiale, l'église et le cimetière: histoire, art archéologie*, ed. E. Barré and M. Guibert (St. Lô, 2008), pp. 278-97
- J.-J. Desroches, 'Annales religieuses de l'Avranchin', *MSAN* 14 (1844), pp. 395-498
- G. Devailly, 'Les dépendences bretonnes des abbayes Normandes (X^e-XIII^e siècles)', in *Aspects du monachisme*, ed. L. Musset, pp. 115-24
- E.M.R. Ditmas, 'Breton Settlers in Cornwall after the Norman Conquest', *Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion* (1977), pp. 11-39
- G.H. Doble, 'Dedications to Celtic Saints in Normandy', *Old Cornwall* 3 (1940), pp. 275-82
- R. Dold, 'La chapelle Saint-Germain de Querqueville (Manche): les vestiges d'un edifice paléochrétiensur le littoral bas-normand', *AM* 8 (1978), pp. 95-116
- M. Dolley and J. Yvon, 'A group of tenth-century coins found at Mont-Saint-Michel', *British Numismatic Journal* 40 (1971), pp. 1-16
- D.C. Douglas, 'Rollo of Normandy', *EHR* 57 (1942), pp. 417-36
- , 'The Ancestors of William fitzOsbern', *EHR* 59 (1944), pp. 62-79
- , 'The Earliest Norman Counts', *EHR* 61 (1946), pp. 129-56
- , 'Some Problems of Early Norman Chronology', *EHR* 65 (1950), pp. 289-303
- , *Domesday Monachorum of Christ Church, Canterbury* (London, 1944)
- , *William the Conqueror: The Norman impact upon England* (London, 1964)
- F. Dumas, *Le trésor de Fécamp et le monnayage en Francie occidentale pendant la seconde moitié du X^e siècle* (Paris, 1971)

- , 'La monnaie comme expression du pouvoir', in *Pouvoirs et libertés au temp des premiers Capétiens*, ed. E. Magnou-Nortier (Maulevrier, 1987), pp. 170-94
- F. Dumas and J. Pilet-Lemière, 'La monnaie normande – Xe-XIIe siècle: Le point de la recherché en 1987', in *Les mondes normands*, ed. Galinié, pp. 125-31
- J.A. Everard and J.C. Holt, *Jersey 1204: the forging of an island community* (London, 2004)
- W. Farrer, *Honors and Knights' Fees* (London, 3 vols., 1923-5)
- , 'The Honour of Old Wardon', *Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* 11 (1927), pp. 1-46
- G. Fellows-Jensen, 'Scandinavian place-names and Viking settlement in Normandy: a review', *Namn och Bygd* 76 (1988), pp. 113-37
- R. Fleming, *Kings & Lords in Conquest England* (Cambridge, 1991)
- L. Fleuriot, *Les Origines de la Bretagne* (Paris, 1980)
- P. de Fougerolles, 'Pope Gregory VII, the Archbishopric of Dol and the Normans', *ANS* 21 (1999), pp. 47-66
- E.A. Freeman, *The History of the Norman Conquest of England* (Oxford, 6 vols., 1867-1879)
- H. Galinié (ed.), *Les mondes normands, VIII^e-XII^e siècles* (Caen, 1989)
- G.N. Gandy, 'Who built what at Mont Saint-Michel during the 10th Century?', *AN* 65 (2015), pp. 155-82
- , 'Retour sur la fondation de l'abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel et le role du duc Richard I^{er} de Normandie', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest* 123 (2016), pp. 7-33

- F.L. Ganshof, *Frankish Institutions under Charlemagne*, trans. B. Lyon and M. Lyon (New York, 1968)
- M. Gardiner, 'Shipping and Trade between England and the Continent during the Eleventh Century', *ANS* 22 (2000), pp. 71-93
- G. Garnett, '“Ducal” succession in early Normandy', in *Law and Government*, ed. Garnett and Hudson, pp. 80-110
- , *Conquered England: kingship, succession and tenure, 1066-1166* (Oxford, 2007)
- , 'Robert Curthose: The Duke Who Lost His Trousers', *ANS* 35 (2013), pp. 213-43
- G. Garnett and J. Hudson (eds.), *Law and Government in Medieval England and Normandy* (Cambridge, 1994)
- J. Adigard des Gautries, *Les noms de personnes scandinaves en Normandie de 911 à 1066* (Lund, 1954)
- V. Gazeau, *Normannia Monastica* (Caen, 2 vols., 2007)
- V. Gazeau and J.A. Green (eds.), *Tinchebray 1106-2006* (Flers, 2009)
- P.J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe* (Princeton, 2002)
- R.H. George, 'The contribution of Flanders to the Conquest of England', *Revue Belge Philologie et d'Histoire* 5 (1926), pp. 81-99
- M. Gibson, *Lanfranc of Bec* (Oxford, 1978)
- S.A. Gleason, *An Ecclesiastical Barony of the Middle Ages: The Bishopric of Bayeux, 1066-1204* (Cambridge, Mass., 1936)
- J. Glenn, *Politics and History in the Tenth Century: The Work and World of Richer of Reims* (Cambridge, 2004)

- B. Golding, 'The Coming of the Cluniacs', *ANS* 3 (1980), pp. 65-77
- , 'Robert of Mortain', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 119-44
- , 'Robert, count of Mortain', *ODNB*
- , 'The Religious Patronage of Robert and William of Mortain', in *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages, Studies presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R. Gameson and H. Leyser (Oxford, 2001), pp. 211-30
- J.-G. Gouttebroze, 'Le Diable dans le *Roman de Rou*', in *Le Diable au Moyen Age (doctrine, problèmes moraux, représentations)* (Aix-en-Provence, 1979), pp. 213-35
- J.A. Green, *The Government of England Under Henry I* (Cambridge, 1986)
- , *The Aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997)
- , 'Women and Inheritance in Norman England: The Case of Geva Ridel', *Prosopon Newsletter* 12 (2001), pp. 1-9
- , *Henry I* (Cambridge, 2006)
- C. Groud-Cordray, 'Le Val de Mortain. Morphologie et rôles d'un espace frontière entre Normandie, Bretagne et Main, X^e siècle-début XIII^e siècle', in *Tinchebray*, ed. Gazeau and Green, pp. 189-206
- G.F.B. de Gruchy, 'The People of the Channel Islands', *EHR* 2 (1887), pp. 736-7
- O. Guillot, *Le Comte d'Anjou et son entourage au XI^e siècle* (Paris, 2 vols., 1972)
- H. Guillotel, 'L'action de Charles le Chauvre vis-à-vis de la Bretagne de 843 à 851', *MSHAB* 53 (1975-6), pp. 1-32
- , 'La place de Châteaubriant dans l'essor des châtellenies bretonnes (XI^e-XII^e siècles)', *MSHAB* 66 (1989), pp. 1-46

- , 'Le premier siècle du pouvoir ducal breton (936-1040)', in *Actes du 103e Congrès national des Sociétés Savantes, Nancy-Metz, 1978* (Paris, 1979), pp. 63-84
- , 'L'exode du clergé Breton devant les invasions scandinaves', *MSHAB* 59 (1982), pp. 269-315
- , 'Une autre marche de Neustrie', in *Onomastique*, ed. Keats-Rohan and Settipani (Oxford, 2000), pp. 7-13
- , 'Les temps des rois VIIIe-Xe siècle', in A. Chédeville and H. Guillotel, *La Bretagne des saints et des rois Ve-Xe siècle* (Rennes, 1984), pp. 191-404
- M. Guilmin, 'Un exemple de réseau relationnel de l'aristocratie anglo-normande, les Paynel et leur entourage (milieu du XI^e siècle-debut du XII^e siècle)', in *Tinchebray*, ed. Gazeau and Green, pp. 221-34
- M. Hagger, 'The Norman *Vicomte*, c. 1035-1135: What Did He Do?', *ANS* 29 (2007), pp. 65-83
- , 'How the west was won: the Norman dukes and the Cotentin, c. 987–1087', *JMH* 38 (2012), pp. 20-55
- , *William, King and Conqueror* (London, 2012)
- C. Harper-Bill and E.M.C. van Houts (eds.), *A Companion to the Anglo-Norman World* (Woodbridge, 2002)
- C.H. Haskins, *Norman Institutions* (New York, 1918)
- R. Helmerichs, 'Princeps, Comes, Dux Normannorum: Early Rollonid Designators and their Significance', *HSJ* 9 (2001), pp. 57-77
- S.K. Herrick, *Imagining the Sacred Past: Hagiography and Power in Early Normandy* (Cambridge, Mass., 2007)

- C.E. Hohler, 'Some Service-Books of the Later Anglo-Saxon Church', in *Tenth-Century Studies: essays in commemoration of the millennium of the Council of Winchester and Regularis Concordia*, ed. D. Parsons (London, 1975), pp. 60-83, 217-27
- J.C. Holt, 'Politics and Property in Early Medieval England', *Past and Present* 57 (1972), pp. 3-52
- J. Hourlier, 'Le Mont Saint-Michel avant 966', in *Millénaire monastique*, ed. J. Laporte *et al*, i, pp. 13-28
- E. James, *The Origins of France: from Clovis to the Capetians, 500-1000* (London, 1982)
- T. Jarry, 'Les débuts du Christianisme dans le Cotentin', *Revue de la Manche* 41 (1999), pp. 7-31
- L. Jean-Marie, *Caen aux XI^e et XII^e siècles: espace urbain, pouvoirs et société* (Caen, 2000)
- E. John, 'Edward the Confessor and the Norman Succession', *EHR* 94 (1979), pp. 241-67
- E. Johnson, 'The Process of Norman Exile into Southern Italy', in *Exile in the Middle Ages: selected proceedings from the International Medieval Congress, University of Leeds, 8-11 July 2002*, ed. L. Napran and E.M.C. van Houts (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 29-38
- , 'Origin myths and the construction of medieval identities: Norman chronicles 1000-1100', in *Texts and Identities in the early Middle Ages*, ed. R. Corradini (Vienna, 2006), pp. 153-64
- W.E. Kapelle, *The Norman Conquest of the North: The Region and its Transformation, 1000-1135* (London & Chapel Hill, NC, 1979)

- K.S.B. Keats-Rohan, 'William I and the Breton Contingent in the non-Norman Conquest 1060-1087', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 157-72
- , 'Le problème de la suzeraineté et la lutte pour le pouvoir: la rivalité bretonne et l'état Anglo-Normand 1066-1154', *MSHAB* 68 (1991), pp. 45-69
- , 'The Bretons and Normans of England 1066-1154: the family, the fief and the feudal monarchy', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 36 (1992), pp. 42-78
- , 'The Prosopography of Post-Conquest England: Four Case Studies', *Medieval Prosopography* 14.1 (1993), pp. 1-52
- , 'Aspects of Robert of Torigny's Genealogies Revisited', *Nottingham Medieval Studies* 37 (1993), pp. 21-7
- , 'Two studies in North French Prosopography', *JMH* 20 (1994), pp. 3-37
- , 'Les role des Bretons dans la politique de colonisation normande de l'Angleterre', *MSHAB* 74 (1996), pp. 181-215
- , 'Poppa of Bayeux and her family', *The American Genealogist* 72 (1997), pp. 187-204
- , 'Bibliothèque municipale d'Avranches, 210: Cartulary of Mont-Saint-Michel', *ANS* 21 (1999), pp. 95-112
- , *Domesday People: a prosopography of persons occurring in English documents, 1066-1166* (Woodbridge, 2 vols., 1999-2002)
- , 'Bilichildis: Problèmes et possibilités d'une étude de l'onomastique et de la parenté de la France de l'ouest', in K.S.B. Keats-Rohan and C. Settapani (eds.), *Onomastique et parenté dans l'Occident medieval* (Oxford, 2000), pp. 57-68

- , ‘Poppa “de Bayeux” et sa famille’, in *Onomastique et Parenté dans l’Occident médiéval*, ed. K.S.B. Keats-Rohan and C. Settipani (Oxford, 2000), pp. 140-53
- , ‘L’histoire secrète d’un sanctuaire célèbre: la reformation du Mont-Saint-Michel d’après l’analyse de son cartulaire et de ses nécrologes’, in *Culte et pèlerinages à Saint Michel en Occident: les trois monts dédiés à l’archange*, ed. P. Bouet and A. Vauchez (Rome, 2003), pp. 139-59
- , ‘Francs, Scandinaves ou Normands? Aperçus sur les premiers moines des monastères normands’, in *Fondations scandinaves*, ed. Bauduin (Caen, 2005), pp. 195-208
- , ‘The Identification of Abbots in the Necrologies of Mont-Saint-Michel’, in *Le pouvoir et la foi*, ed. Quaghebeur and Soleil, pp. 89-108
- H.G. Keene, ‘The Channel Islands’, *EHR* 2 (1887), pp. 22-6
- S. Keynes, ‘The Æthelings in Normandy’, *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 173-206
- D. Knowles, C.N.L. Brooke and V.C.M. London (eds.), *The Heads of Religious Houses England and Wales 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972)
- J. Laporte et al (eds.), *Millénaire monastique du Mont Saint-Michel* (Paris, 6 vols., 1966-71)
- J. Laporte, ‘L’abbaye du Mont-Saint-Michel aux X^e et XI^e siècles’, in *Millénaire monastique*, ed. Laporte et al, i, pp. 53-80
- , ‘Les séries abbatiale et priorale du Mont-Saint-Michel’, in *Millénaire monastique*, ed. Laporte et al, i, pp. 267-81
- C. Laurent, B. Merdrignac and D. Pichot (eds.), *Mondes de l’Ouest et villes du monde: Regards sur les sociétés médiévales: Mélanges en l’honneur d’Andre Chédeville* (Rennes, 1998)

- J. Le Maho, 'Châteaux d'époque franque en Normandie', *AM* 10 (1980), pp. 153-65
- , 'Une exode de reliques de la Basse Seine à la fin du IX^e siècle', *Bulletin de la Commission Départementale des Antiquités de la Seine-Martime* 46 (1998), pp. 171-81
- , 'The Fate of the Ports of the Lower Seine Valley at the End of the Ninth Century', in *Markets in Early Medieval Europe: Trading and 'Productive' Sites, 650-850*, ed. T. Pestell and K. Ulmschneider (Macclesfield, 2003), pp. 234-48
- , 'Les Normands de la Seine à la fin du IX^e siècle', in *Fondations scandinaves*, ed. Bauduin, pp. 161-79
- , 'Ermitages et monastères bretons dans la province de Rouen au haut Moyen Âge (VI^e -IX^e siècle)', in *Bretons et Normands*, ed. Quaghebeur and Merdrignac, pp. 65-95
- J.-F. Lemarignier, *Recherches sur l'hommage en marche et les frontières féodales* (Lille, 1945)
- J.-F. Lemarignier, E. Lamon and V. Gazeau, 'Monachisme et aristocratie autour de Saint-Taurin d'Evreux et du Bec (X^e-XII^e siècles)', in *Aspects du Monachisme*, ed. Musset, pp. 91-108
- J. Le Patourel, 'Geoffrey of Montbray, Bishop of Coutances, 1049-1093', *EHR* 59 (1944), pp. 129-61
- , 'The Norman Colonization of Britain', in *I Normanni e la loro Espansione in Europa Nell'Alto Medioevo*, Settimane de Studio del Centro Italiano de studi sull'alto Medioevo 16 (Spoleto, 1969), pp. 409-38
- , 'Henri Beauclerc, comte du Cotentin 1088', *RHDFE*, 4th série, 53 (1975), pp. 167-8

- , *The Norman Empire* (Oxford, 1976)
- D. Levalet, 'La cathédrale Saint-André et les origines chrétiennes d'Avranches', *AM* 12 (1982), pp. 107-53
- C.P. Lewis, 'The Norman Settlement of Herefordshire under William I', *ANS* 7 (1985), pp. 195-213
- , 'The formation of the honor of Chester, 1066–1100', *Journal of the Chester Archaeological Society* 71 (1991), pp. 37-68
- , 'The French in England before the Norman Conquest', *ANS* 17 (1995), pp. 123-44
- , 'Hugh d'Avranches', *ODNB*
- F. Lifshitz, 'Dudo's historical narrative and the Norman succession of 996', *JMH* 20 (1994), pp. 101-20
- F. Lifshitz, *The Norman Conquest of Pious Neustria: historiographic discourse and saintly relics, 684-1090* (Toronto, 1995)
- F.J. des Longrais, 'Les Moines de l'abbaye Saint-Melaine de Rennes en Angleterre: Les Chartres du Prieuré d'Hatfield Regis', in *Recueil de travaux offerts à M. Clovis Brunel* (Paris, 2 vols., 1955), ii, pp. 31-54
- F. Lot, *Les derniers Carolingiens: Lothaire, Louis V, Charles de Lorraine (954-991)* (Paris, 1891)
- , *Etudes critiques sur l'abbaye de St-Wandrille* (Paris, 1913)
- F. Lot and L. Halphen, *Le règne de Charles le Chauve (840-877)* (Paris, 1907)
- J. Loth, *Chrestomathie Bretonne (Armoricaïn, Gallois, Cornique)* (Paris, 1890)
- G. Louise, *La Seigneurie de Bellême X^e–XII^e siècles: évolution des pouvoirs territoriaux et construction d'une seigneurie de frontière aux confins de la Normandie et du Maine à la charnière de l'an mil* (Flers, 2 vols., 1990-1)

- L.C. Loyd, 'The origin of the family of Warenne', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal* 31 (1934), pp. 97-113
- , 'Origin of the Family of Aubigny of Cainhoe', *Bedfordshire Historical Record Society* 19 (1937), pp. 101-109
- , *The Origins of Some Anglo-Norman Families* (Baltimore, 1980)
- J.R. Maddicott, 'Trade, Industry and the Wealth of King Alfred', *Past and Present* 123 (1989), pp. 3-51
- J.-M. Maillefer, 'Une famille aristocratique aux confins de la Normandie: les Géré au XI^e siècle', *Cahiers des Annales de Normandie* 17 (1985), pp. 175-206
- P. Marchegay, 'Chartes normandes de l'abbaye de Saint-Florent', *MSAN* 30 (1880), pp. 665-711
- J. Martindale, 'Aimeri of Thouars and the Poitevin Connection', *ANS* 7 (1985), pp. 224-45
- J.F.A. Mason, 'Barons and their Officials in the Later Eleventh Century', *ANS* 13 (1991), pp. 243-62
- R. McKitterick, *The Frankish Kingdoms under the Carolingians, 751-987* (London, 1983)
- J. Le Melletier, *Les seigneurs de Bohon, illustre famille anglo-normande, originaire du Cotentin* (Coutances, 1978)
- R. Merlet, 'Origine de la famille des Bérenger, comtes de Rennes et ducs de Bretagne', in *Mélanges d'histoire du Moyen Âge offerts à M. Ferdinand Lot par ses amis et ses élèves* (Paris, 1925), pp. 549-61
- E. Miller, 'The Ely Land Pleas in the Reign of William I', *EHR* 62 (1947), pp. 438-56

- J.C. Moesgaard, 'A Survey of Coin Production and Currency in Normandy, 864-945', in *Silver Economy in the Viking Age*, ed. J. Graham-Campbell and G. Williams (Walnut Creek, Calif., 2007), pp. 99-121
- M. Mollat, 'La seigneurie maritime du Mont Saint-Michel', in *Millénaire monastique*, ed. Laporte et al, ii, pp. 73-88
- S. Morin, *Trégor, Goëlo, Penthièvre: le pouvoir des Comtes de Bretagne du XI^e au XIII^e siècle* (Rennes, 2010)
- L. Musset, *Nordica et normannica: Recueil d'études sur la Scandinavie ancienne et médiévale, les expéditions des Vikings et la fondation de la Normandie* (Paris, 1997)
- 'Pour l'étude comparative de deux fondations politiques des Vikings: le royaume d'York et le duché de Rouen', in idem, *Nordica et normannica*, pp. 157-72
- , 'Les domaines de l'époque franque et les destinées du regime domanial du IX^e au XI^e siècle', *BSAN* 49 (1946), pp. 7-97
- , 'Aux origines de la féodalité normande: l'installation par les ducs de leurs vassaux normands et Bretons dans le comté d'Avranches (XI^e siècle)', *RHDFE*, 4th série, 29 (1951), p. 150
- , 'Actes inédits du XI^e siècle, I: Les plus anciennes chartes du prieuré de Saint-Gabriel (Calvados)', *BSAN* 52 (1955), pp. 117-41
- , 'Notes sur l'ancienne abbaye de Deux-Jumeaux', *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 405-21
- , 'Les origines du prieuré de Saint-Fromond: Un acte négligée de Richard II', *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 475-89

- , 'Actes inédits du XI^e siècle, III: Les plus anciennes chartes normandes de l'abbaye de Bourgueil', *BSAN* 54 (1959), pp. 15-54
- , 'A-t-il existé en Normandie une aristocratie d'argent', *AN* 9 (1959), pp. 285-99
- , 'Notules fécampoises', *BSAN* 54 (1959), pp. 584-98
- , 'Recherches sur les communautés des clercs séculiers en Normandie au XI^e siècle', *BSAN* 55 (1961), pp. 5-38
- , 'Actes inédits du XI^e siècle, V: Autour des origines de Saint-Etienne de Fontenay', *BSAN* 56 (1963), pp. 11-41
- , 'La Contribution de Fécamp à la reconquête monastique de la Basse-Normandie (990-1066)', in *L'Abbaye bénédictine de Fécamp: ouvrage scientifique du XIII^e centenaire* (Fécamp, 3 vols., 1959-63), i, pp. 57-66, 341-3
- , 'Les origines et le patrimoine de l'abbaye de Saint-Sever', in *La Normandie benédicte au temps de Guillaume le Conquérant (XI^e siècle)*, ed. L. Gaillard (Lille, 1967), pp. 357-67
- , 'Naissance de la Normandie', in *Histoire de la Normandie*, ed. M. de Bouïard (Toulouse, 1970), pp. 75-130
- , 'L'aristocratie normande au XI^e siècle', in *La noblesse au moyen age, xi^e-xv^e siècles: Essais à la mémoire de Robert Boutruche*, ed. P. Contamine (Paris, 1976), pp. 71-96
- , 'Aux origines d'une classe dirigeante: les Tosny, grands barons normands du X^e au XIII^e siècle', *Francia* 5 (1978), pp. 45-80
- (ed.), *Aspects du monachisme en Normandie (IV^e-XVIII^e siècles): Actes du Colloque Scientifique de l'“Année des Abbayes Normandes”* (Paris, 1982)

- , ‘Essai sur le peuplement de la Normandie (VI^e-XII^e siècle)’, in *Les mondes normands*, ed. Galinié, pp. 97-102
- , ‘Origines et nature du pouvoir ducal en Normandie jusqu’au milieu de XI^e siècle’, in idem, *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 263-77
- , ‘Participation de Vikings venus des pays celtés à la colonisation scandinave de la Normandie’, in idem, *Nordica et normannica*, pp. 279-96
- , ‘Considérations sur la genèse et le tracé des frontières de la Normandie’, in idem, *Nordica et Normannica*, pp. 403-13
- , ‘Aperçus sur la colonisation scandinave dans le nord du Cotentin’, in *Annuaire des cinq départements de la Normandie* (1954), pp. 34-7
- , ‘Monachisme d’Époque Franque et Monachisme d’Époque Ducale en Normandie: le Probleme de la Continuité’, in idem (ed.), *Aspects du Monachisme*, pp. 55-74
- L. Musset and H. Chanteux, ‘Essai sur les invasions Bretonnes et Normandes dans le Maine aux IX^e et X^e siècles’, *Bulletin de la Commission Historique et Archéologique de la Mayenne*, New Series, 29 (1973), pp. 37-59
- H. Navel, ‘L’Enquête de 1133 sur les fiefs de l’évêché de Bayeux’, *BSAN* 42 (1934), pp. 5-80
- J.L. Nelson, *Charles the Bald* (Harlow, 1992)
- , ‘Hæsten (fl. 882-893)’, *ODNB*
- , ‘Normandy’s Early History since *Normandy Before 1066*’, in *Normandy and its Neighbours, 900-1250: Essays for David Bates*, ed. D. Crouch and K. Thompson (Turnhout, 2011), pp. 3-15
- F. Neveux, *La Normandie des ducs aux rois, X^e-XII^e siècle* (Rennes, 1998)

- , ‘La foundation de la Normandie et les Bretons (911-933)’, in *Mondes de l’Ouest*, ed. Laurent, Merdrignac and Pichot, pp. 297-309
- J.S. Nye Jnr., *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* (New York, 2004)
- D. Petts, ‘Churches and Lordship in Western Normandy AD800-1200’, in *Churches and Social Power in Early Medieval Europe: Integrating Archaeological and Historical Approaches*, ed. M. Shapland and J.C. Sánchez-Pardo (Turnhout, 2015), pp. 297-328
- J.-M. Picard, ‘Early Contacts between Ireland and Normandy: the cult of Irish Saints in Normandy before the conquest’, in *Ogma: Essays in Celtic Studies in honour of Próinséas Ní Chatáin*, ed. M. Richter and J.-M. Picard (Dublin, 2002), pp. 85-93
- D. Pichot, ‘Savigny: une abbaye entre Normandie, Bretagne et Maine’, in *Bretons et Normands*, ed. Quaghebeur and Merdrignac, pp. 241-57
- J. Pilet-Lemière, ‘Querqueville: Chapelle Saint-Germain’, in *Les premiers monuments chrétiens de la France 3: Ouest, Nord et Est*, ed. N. Duval (Paris, 1998), pp. 305-307
- C. Potts, ‘The Earliest Norman Counts Revisited: The Lords of Mortain’, *HSJ* 4 (1992), pp. 23-35
- , *Monastic Revival and Regional Identity in Early Normandy* (Woodbridge, 1997)
- , ‘When the Saints Go Marching: Religious Connections and the Political Culture of Early Normandy’, in *Anglo-Norman Political Culture and the Twelfth-Century Renaissance*, ed. C. Warren Hollister (Woodbridge, 1997), pp. 17-31

- , 'Normandy, 911-1144', in *Companion to the Anglo-Norman World*, ed. Harper-Bill and van Houts, pp. 19-42
- J. Pouëssel, 'Les structures militaires du comté de Mortain (Manche, XI^e et XII^e siècles)', *Revue de l'Avranchin et du pays de Granville* 58 (1981), pp. 11-74, 81-146
- D. Power, *The Norman Frontier in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries* (Cambridge, 2004)
- F.M. Powicke, 'The Honour of Mortain in the Norman *Infeudationes Militum* of 1172', *EHR* 26 (1911), pp. 89-93
- , *The Loss of Normandy, 1189-1204: Studies in the History of the Angevin Empire* (Manchester, 2nd edn., 1960)
- H. Prentout, *Étude critique sur Dudon de Saint-Quentin et son Histoire des premiers ducs normands* (Caen, 1915)
- J.O. Prestwich, 'Military intelligence under the Norman and Angevin kings', in *Law and Government*, ed. Garnett and Hudson, pp. 1-30
- N.S. Price, *The Vikings in Brittany* (London, 1989)
- J. Quaghebeur and B. Merdrignac (eds.), *Bretons et Normands au Moyen Âge: Rivalités, malentendus, convergences* (Rennes, 2008)
- J. Quaghebeur and S. Soleil (eds.), *Le pouvoir et la foi au Moyen Âge, en Bretagne et dans l'Europe de l'ouest: Mélanges à la mémoire du Professeur Hubert Guillotel* (Rennes, 2010)
- L.T.L. Ragonde, 'Le Château de Mont-Haguez', in *Memoirs de la Société royale académique de Cherbourg* (1835), pp. 357-79
- J. Renaud and E. Ridet, 'Le *tingland*: l'emplacement d'un *þing* en Normandie?', *Nouvelle revue d'onomastique* 35-6 (2000), pp. 303-306

- E. Ridel, 'La Hague, terre de Vikings', *Dossiers d'archéologie* 277 (2002), pp. 34-43
- , 'From Scotland to Normandy: The Celtic Sea Route of the Vikings', in *West over sea: studies in Scandinavian sea-borne expansion and settlement before 1300*, ed. G. Williams, B.B. Smith and S. Taylor (Leiden, 2007), pp. 81-91
- , *Les Vikings et les mots: l'apport de l'ancien scandinave à la langue française* (Paris, 2009)
- , 'The Linguistic Heritage of the Scandinavians in Normandy', in *Scandinavia and Europe, 800-1350: Contact, Conflict and Co-existence*, ed. J. Adams and K. Holman (Turnhout, 2004), pp. 149-59
- T. Roche, 'The way vengeance comes: rancorous deeds and words in the world of Orderic Vitalis', in *Vengeance in the Middle Ages: Emotion, Religion and Feud*, ed. S.A. Throop and P.R. Hyams (Farnham, 2010), pp. 115-36
- J.H. Round, *Feudal England* (London, 1895)
- , *Studies in Peerage and Family History* (London, 1901)
- , 'The Legend of 'Eudo Dapifer'', *EHR* 37 (1922), pp. 1-34
- L. de Saint-Pierre, *Rollon devant l'histoire (les origines)* (Paris, 1949)
- I.J. Sanders, *English Baronies* (Oxford, 1960)
- R.N. Sauvage, *L'abbaye de Saint-Martin de Troarn au Diocèse de Bayeux, des origines au seizième siècle* (Caen, 1911)
- E. Searle, 'Fact and Pattern in Heroic History: Dudo of St. Quentin', *Viator* 15 (1984), pp. 119-37
- , 'Frankish Rivalries and Norse Warriors', *ANS* 8 (1986), pp. 198-213

———, *Predatory Kinship and the Creation of Norman Power 840-1066*
(Berkeley, 1988)

L. Shopkow, 'The Carolingian World of Dudo of Saint-Quentin', *JMH* 15 (1989),
pp. 19-37

———, *History and Community: Norman Historical Writing in the Eleventh and
Twelfth Centuries* (Washington, 1997)

N. Simmonet, 'La fondation du Mont Saint-Michel d'après la *Revelatio ecclesiae
sancti Michaelis*', *Annales de Bretagne et des Pays de l'Ouest* 106, no. 4
(1999), pp. 7-23

J.M.H. Smith, *Province and Empire: Brittany and the Carolingians* (Cambridge,
1992)

M. Sot, *Un historien et son église au X^e siècle: Flodoard de Reims* (Paris, 1993)

G. Souillet, 'Un mirage toponymique: les établissements bretons du Nord de la
France', *AB* 60 (1953), pp. 191-9

———, 'Les Brette et Bretteville de Normandie sont-ils des établissements
bretons?', *AB* 62 (1955), pp. 408-12

I.N. Soulsby, 'Richard fitzTurold, lord of Penhallam, Cornwall', *Medieval
Archaeology* 20 (1976), pp. 146-8

———, 'Introduction to the Cornwall Domesday', in *The Cornwall Domesday*, ed.
A. Williams (Alecto County Editions vol. 4, London, 1988), pp. 1-17

D.S. Spear, 'Geoffrey Brito, Archbishop of Rouen (1111-1128)', *HSJ* 2 (1990),
pp. 123-37

S.P.H. Statham, *The descent of the family of Statham* (London, 1925)

- F.M. Stenton, 'The Scandinavian Colonies in England and Normandy', in *Preparatory to Anglo-Saxon England*, ed. D. M. Stenton (Oxford, 1970), pp. 335-45
- E.Z. Tabuteau, 'The family of Moulins-la-Marche in the eleventh century', *Medieval Prosopography* 13 (1992), pp. 29-65
- , *Transfers of Property in Eleventh-Century Norman Law* (Chapel Hill & London, 1988)
- T. Taylor, 'Blohin: his descendants and lands', *The Ancestor* 9 (1904), pp. 20-27
- K. Thompson, 'Family and influence to the south of Normandy in the eleventh century: the lordship of Bellême', *JMH* 11 (1985), pp. 215-26
- , 'The lords of Laigle: ambition and insecurity on the borders of Normandy', *ANS* 18 (1995), pp. 177-99
- , *Power and Border Lordship in Medieval France: The County of the Perche, 1000-1226* (Woodbridge, 2002)
- , 'Affairs of State: the illegitimate children of Henry I', *JMH* 29 (2003), pp. 129-51
- , 'From the Thames to Tinchebray: The Role of Normandy in the Early Career of Henry I', in *Henry I and the Anglo-Norman World: Studies in Memory of C. Warren Hollister*, ed. D.F. Fleming and J.M. Pope, *HSJ* 17 (2007), pp. 16-26
- N.-Y. Tonnerre, 'Celtic literary tradition and the development of a feudal principality in Brittany', in *Literacy in Medieval Celtic Societies*, ed. H. Pryce (Cambridge, 1998), pp. 166-82
- L. Trân-Duc, 'Les princes normands et les reliques (X^e-XI^e siècles): contribution des cultes des saints à la formation territoriale et identité d'une principauté' in

Reliques et sainteté dans l'espace médiéval, ed. J.-L. Deuffic (Saint-Denis, 2006), pp. 525-61

S. de Vajay, 'Mahaut de Pouille, comtesse de Barcelone et vicomtesse de Narbonne dans le context social de son temps', in *Béziers et le Biterrois: XLIII^e congrès, Béziers, 30-31 mai 1970* (Montpellier, 1971), pp. 129-50

E.M.C. van Houts, 'The Origins of Herleva, mother of William the Conqueror', *EHR* 101 (1986), pp. 399-404

———, 'The Ship List of William the Conqueror', *ANS* 10 (1987), pp. 159-83

———, 'Robert of Torigni as Genealogist', in *Studies in Medieval History presented to R. Allen Brown*, ed. C. Harper-Bill, C.J. Holdsworth and J.L. Nelson (Woodbridge, 1989), pp. 215-33

———, 'Countess Gunnor of Normandy (c. 950-1031)', *Collegium Medievale* 12 (1999), pp. 7-24

———, 'Wace as Historian', in *The history of the Norman people: Wace's Roman de rou*, trans. G.S. Burgess, with ns. by E.M.C. van Houts (Woodbridge, 2004), pp. xxxv-lxii

———, 'The *Planctus* on the Death of William Longsword (943) as a Source for Tenth-Century Culture in Normandy and Aquitaine', *ANS* 36 (2013), pp. 1-22

É. van Torhoudt, 'Les sièges du pouvoir des Néel, vicomtes dans le Cotentin', in *Les lieux du pouvoir au Moyen Age en Normandie et sur ses marges*, ed. A.-M. Flambard Héricher (Caen, 2006), pp. 7-34

———, 'Les Bretons dans les diocèses d'Avranches et de Coutances (950-1200 environ): une approche onomastique de la question de l'identité', in *Bretons et Normands*, ed. Quaghebeur and Merdrignac, pp. 113-44

- , ‘L’“énigme” des origines de l’abbaye de Montebourg: une question de méthode?’, in *De part et d’autre de la Normandie médiévale: recueil d’études en hommage à François Neveux*, ed. P. Bouet et al (Caen, 2009), pp. 331-46
- , ‘Henri Beauclerc, Comte du Cotentin reconsidéré (1088-1101)’, in *Tinchebray*, ed. Gazeau and Green, pp. 101-21
- , ‘La résistance franco-bretonne à l’expansion normande dans le nord-ouest de la Neustrie (924-954): une marche de Normandie?’, in *Le pouvoir et la foi*, ed. J. Quaghebeur and S. Soleil, pp. 601-617
- C. Warren Hollister, ‘The Greater Domesday Tenants-in-Chief’, in *Domesday Studies*, ed. J.C. Holt (Woodbridge, 1987), pp. 219-48
- , *Henry I* (New Haven and London, 2001)
- H.R. Watkin, *The History of Totnes Priory and Medieval Town* (Toquay, 2 vols., 1917)
- N. Webber, *The Evolution of Norman Identity* (Woodbridge, 2005)
- K.F. Werner, ‘Quelques observations au sujet des débuts du “duché” de Normandie’, in *Droit privé et institutions régionales: études historiques offertes à Jean Yver*, ed. R. Aubreton et al (Paris, 1976), pp. 691-709
- W.E. Wightman, *The Lacy Family in England and Normandy 1066-1194* (Oxford, 1966)
- J.B. Williams, ‘Judhael of Totnes: the life and times of a post-Conquest baron’, *ANS* 16 (1994), pp. 271-89
- J. Yver, ‘Les châteaux-forts en Normandie jusqu’au milieu du XIIe siècle. Contribution à l’étude du pouvoir ducal’, *BSAN* 53 (1957), pp. 28-115

———, 'Les premières institutions du duché de Normandie', in *I Normanni e la loro Espansione in Europa Nell'Alto Medioevo*, Settimane de Studio del Centro Italiano de studi sull'alto Medioevo 16 (Spoleto, 1969), pp. 299-366

Unpublished Theses:

J. Bickford-Smith, 'Orderic Vitalis and Norman society: c. 1035-1087'
(unpublished D.Phil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2006)