

# English (and European) Royal Charters: from Reading to reading

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What follows was first delivered as a lecture ‘off the cuff’ in November 2018, in circumstances rather different from those in which, writing this in January 2021, I now set down an extended text. In the intervening two and a bit years, Brexit has come, and gone. The Covid virus has come, but shows no immediate sign of going. When I lectured in 2018, although the edition of *The Letters and Charters of King Henry II* was in press, the publishers were still working to produce proofs. These were eventually released in December 2019, ensuring that I spent the entire period of Covid lockdown, from March to December 2020 correcting and re-correcting 4,200 proof pages. The first 3,200 of these were published, in six stout volumes, at the end of December 2020.<sup>1</sup> A seventh volume, of indexes, should appear in the spring of 2021, leaving an eighth volume, the ‘Introduction’, for completion and publication later this year. All told, these eight volumes assemble an edition of 4,640 items, derived from 286 distinct archival repositories: the largest such assembly of materials ever gathered for a twelfth-century king not just of England but of any other realm, European or otherwise.

In a lecture delivered at the University of Reading, as a part of a symposium intended to honour one of Reading’s more distinguished former professors, I shall begin with the debt that I and the edition owe to Professor Sir James (henceforth ‘Jim’) Holt.<sup>2</sup> It was Jim, working from Reading in the early 1970s, who struck the spark from which this great bonfire of the vanities was lit. In what follows, I have an opportunity to revisit the bald account of the genesis of our project supplied as ‘foreword’ to volume I of *Letters and Charters*. Enroute (or perhaps better ‘unterwegs’), I shall do my best to place the edition of Henry II within a broader European tradition, and to explain how it may alter understanding of Plantagenet history more generally. I shall end with possibilities for the future deliberately omitted from an edition that in

itself was intended to be, so far as is possible, ‘definitive’.<sup>3</sup> That is the problem with ‘definitive’ editions: they risk strangling their young, making a desert and calling it ‘fulfilment’. In the very process of their completion they answer questions that render their materials a great deal less alluring. As I hope to demonstrate below, with Henry II there are still as just as many questions as answers. So let us begin with one question to which I can offer an immediate and I hope satisfactory response.

Why have I spent much of the past thirty years engaged in collecting and editing the letters of Henry II, first Plantagenet King of England 1154-1189, duke of Normandy from 1150 and of Aquitaine from 1152, count of Anjou from 1151? The answer, simply put, is ‘Jim Holt’. In 1993, as a fall-back and substitute for one of Jim’s own pupils, I was asked to undertake a nine-month tour of French archives, tracking down materials that had, until that time, escaped Jim’s net.<sup>4</sup> Thereafter, for a further year or so, although an independent agent in my dealings with archives and editorial procedure, I remained in other senses merely an amanuensis to a project still in 1993 very much under Jim’s direction.

Not all was plain sailing (to adopt an expression that Jim himself might have considered preposterously nautical). As readers will learn from other essays in this volume, Jim was a formidable operator, never lacking in Yorkshire grit. On the whole, he left me to my own devices. On the few occasions when we disagreed, he could be politely stubborn. I remember replying to one of his briefer notes with a writ of my own, addressed ‘Domino regi vicecomes: Dissentio’. At a lunch that he kindly arranged for Judith Everard and me in his London club (the National Liberal), and having been urged to ever greater haste, I felt obliged to draw his attention to the club’s cabinet of curiosities (much of it devoted to Mr Gladstone), reminding him as I did so of the less than polite summary of the G.O.M.’s sense of urgency broadcast by the late Lord Randolph Churchill.

Even so, for two potentially cussed individuals, we rubbed along well enough. It was Jim’s report on my submission for a Cambridge prize fellowship that had effectively saved my academic career. At that point, in 1989, we had neither corresponded nor met. When we did meet, we found that we had in common a love of mountains: one of the first ice-breakers (almost literally) was the pair of skis that Jim noticed

in my rooms at Peterhouse. Sibelius, Beethoven, the Cumberland fells, and (dare I confess it) the novels of John Buchan could be added to our shared enthusiasms. But mountains were particularly significant to Jim. So they were, perhaps not coincidentally, to another of my supporters, Michel Nortier, finisher of one of the few modern charter editions that can compare in scale with what Jim put in train for Henry II. A family military connection helped, and this despite the fact that the politics of the gallant young gunner Holt were not at all those of my (likewise gallant) grandfather. Perhaps above all, from the very beginning, I was an unashamed admirer of Jim the historian. *The Northerners* is a masterpiece: one of the finest things I read as an undergraduate (or after), endowing a whole host of de-personified 'barons', previously mere names, with ideas, ambitions and grievances.<sup>5</sup>

So much for Holt and Vincent, but what of Holt and Henry II? If it was Jim who drew me to Henry II's charters, then who, or what, had first drawn Jim? The 'who' here is easily answered: Doris Mary Stenton, née Parsons (1894-1971), and behind her, her husband Sir Frank (1880-1967), the University of Reading's first and founding Professor of History. As George Garnett reminds us, framed photographs of the Stentons, remained amongst the most conspicuous furnishings of Jim's college office, placed there above an almost complete set of Wisden.<sup>6</sup> *Jude the Obscure*, and the post-war planners have ensured that for at least the past century Reading has never stood particularly high in any list of English medieval beauty spots. In scholarly competition, fashions change, the captains and the queens depart, and excellence flits from tree to tree. Or rather from chair to chair. But in the 1960s, when Jim Holt first came to Reading, thanks to the Stentons, viewed not just in national but international terms, the university there stood if not at the head, then still very much amongst the upper and more sentient parts of medieval history.

Besides producing a slew of monographs and articles, with Sir Frank Stenton's *First Century of English Feudalism* (1932) and *Anglo-Saxon England* (1943) at the crest of that particular wave, the Stentons were assiduous collectors of charters. Sir Frank's volumes on the Danelaw, on the Gilbertines, and even the massive appendices to his *First Century*, consisted of little save a catena of charter texts assembled from the collections of the British Museum and Public Record Office. Frank Stenton's wooing of his former student, Doris Parsons, as early

as 1916 involved her being sent ('indentured' might be a more appropriate term) to Canon Foster, at Timberland in the Lincolnshire fens, there to transcribe as many as possible of the Lincoln Cathedral charters for what was to become Foster's great edition of the *Registrum Antiquissimum*: 'I hope you are finding [Miss Parsons] useful and, which is equally important, are not hesitating to exploit her', wrote her tutor and future husband to Foster, in January 1917, two years before marriage and only a month before revolution engulfed the Czar.<sup>7</sup> More significantly, and in many instances as a consequence of their charter collecting, Frank and Doris Stenton had either initiated or reinvigorated various of the grander editorial projects in English medieval studies.

The British Academy's *Sylloge of British Coins*, now in 65 volumes, was one such still-ongoing venture, first promoted in 1956 through Sir Frank.<sup>8</sup> Another is the Academy's English Episcopal Acta series, first proposed in Stenton's 1929 article 'Acta Episcoporum', today approaching the finishing line in nearly 50 individual volumes backed in red.<sup>9</sup> Another red-backed project on which, thanks to the patronage of John Horace Round, Frank Stenton first cut his scholarly teeth, the Victoria County History has to date achieved more than 230 folio volumes without any sign of imminent completion. In blue and green, rather than red, though in all cases appropriately lettered in gold, the Selden Society, and the Pipe Roll Society, both owe their success, from the 1920s onwards, to Doris Stenton, chief labourer in Sir Frank's ever-fruitful vineyard. To all of these projects, into the 1960s the Stentons and through them the University of Reading, remained the most generous of contributors. And this without mentioning such ventures as the English Place-Name Society, the British Academy's Anglo-Saxon Charters project, the History of Parliament, or the many local record society series, to which the Stentons' support was almost as great.

It is therefore no surprise that, in 1971, when thanks to what he termed 'a sudden access of government money' (in reality, an underspend by the then university grants agency), Jim Holt found himself with access to significant research funding, he was determined to attempt something on a scale to match what the Stentons had achieved.<sup>10</sup> This was the era of Tomorrow's World, of *grands projets* from Concorde to the new British Library, before the OPEC oil crisis of 1973, somewhere in the turbid waters between Harold Wilson's

White Heat of Technology and the descent of crepuscular environmentalism. It is also no surprise that, having decided that the charters of the Plantagenet kings were to be the focus of his new project, Jim turned for approval first and foremost to Christopher Cheney.

As Judith Everard reveals elsewhere in this volume, Cheney's response was cautious. Already in 1955, in his inaugural lecture as Professor of Medieval History at Cambridge, Cheney had hinted at the possibility that there might never be a complete edition of the charters of Henry II. In the absence of such an edition, and rather than leave the corpus an unfathomable abyss, Cheney had proposed a *Regesta* 'on the German model', beginning with that indispensable tool of inter-war scholarship: a multi-copy card-index arranged in alphabetical sequence.<sup>11</sup> Even so, Cheney himself was the obvious authority for Jim to consult: author of the definitive study of *English Bishops' Chanceries* (1950), and hence joint godfather with Stenton of the English Episcopal Acta series; in his own right compiler of a definitive *Regesta* to the English letters of Pope Innocent III (1967), and already feted as editor of *Councils and Synods* (1964), itself the product of proposals to remake Wilkins' *Concilia* promoted since the 1930s as a continuation to the work of William Stubbs, revisiting and reinvigorating the pre-Stubbsian editorial heroics of Wilkins, Hearne, Madox, Rymer, and ultimately of Dodsworth and Dugdale.<sup>12</sup>

There was another consequence here, worth recording even at the expense of indiscretion. In 1978, having embarked upon his collection of Henry II's charters, Holt moved from Reading to Cambridge. There, succeeding Cheney as professor of Medieval History, he found himself working alongside another of Cheney's admirers, Christopher Brooke. Although five years Holt's junior, Brooke (1927-2015) had been promoted professor at Liverpool in 1956, a full six years ahead of Holt's promotion at Nottingham. Even at the British Academy, to which he was elected in 1978 aged 56, Holt lagged several steps behind Brooke, elected in 1970 at the (in Academy terms) indecently precocious age of 43. Long considered Cambridge's once and future king, as recently as 1977 Brooke had been restored to what he (although not all others) considered his hereditary roost in Caius College, as Dixie Professor of Ecclesiastical History.

Holt (Bradford Grammar School, Oxford, active service in the Royal Artillery) was by no means a natural stable-mate for Brooke

(Winchester, Cambridge, national service in the Army Educational Corps). It is perhaps telling that Cheney's festschrift, published in 1976 with Brooke as editor, contained essays by several distinguished Cambridge historians, but nothing from Reading.<sup>13</sup> In Cheney's footsteps, Brooke had succeeded as chairman and chief contributing editor both of *Councils and Synods* and of English Episcopal Acta. He had long ranked amongst the most active authors, indeed as scholarly mastermind of the series of facing page Latin-English translations known as Nelson's, subsequently as Oxford Medieval Texts. As early as 1969, he had drawn attention to what he described as the 'urgent' need for an edition of the charters of Henry II, in a review that may have proved crucial in Holt's decision, a year or so later, to embark on precisely that task.<sup>14</sup> Where Holt was first and foremost a historian with only a passing interest (or experience) in Latin editorial work, Brooke was already an editor of great proficiency. Where Holt was a confirmed Yorkshire atheist, Brooke was heir to several generations of southern clerical gentry.

From such dissimilarities a certain ultimately creative tension developed. It was still detectable into the 1990s, when I arrived in Cambridge and, as a contributor to EEA, was immediately taken under Brooke's sheltering wing. As a stranger to Cambridge, I found both great men welcoming. Nonetheless, I recall a momentary frisson, late in 1993, when I first told Christopher that I had been asked 'to cover the French end of Jim's Henry II'. 'What a lot of money that edition has cost!', was the immediate response, followed by 'Of course, he is very lucky to have you'. In the Cambridge of the 80s, Jim's 'Acta' had been broadcast (perhaps cannonaded would be a better expression) as one of the greater glories of a Cambridge History Faculty itself never entirely at ease with greatness. In alliance with Geoffrey Elton, Jim took pride in having saved James Stirling's History Faculty building: a monument to modernist brutality eminently suited to demolition, but in Jim's view simply too costly to replace. There Jim and the Acta filing cabinets took up residence in a Faculty office perched high amidst the crumbling concrete and rattling glass. There they remained long after Jim himself had retired both as Professor and as Master of Fitzwilliam College. There they still were, a dozen or more years later, when Jim's squatters' rights were rescinded and the project filing cabinets were divided

between the archives of the University of Reading, and my own University of East Anglia.

So much for personalities. I collected Henry II's charters because Jim had done so before me, and Jim collected them because of his determination to follow the Stentons' lead. This answers the 'who'. It does nothing to answer either the 'what' or the 'why'. Why have historians laid such stress, generation after generation, on the collection and edition of charters, and what do they hope to gain from such exercise? All of the charters of Henry II were originally issued as single sheet 'originals', written on pieces of sheepskin parchment, authenticated by pressing the King's double-sided metal seal-matrix into bees' wax to form seal 'impressions'. Of our total of 4,640 items for Henry II, roughly one in three is either a document issued by someone other than the King or represents a text now entirely lost save for its mention in some other source.<sup>15</sup> Of the remaining 3,000 or so for which a text has been salvaged, three quarters survive not as single-sheet 'originals' but as copies, transcribed for the English or French royal chanceries from the thirteenth century onwards, preserved by post-medieval antiquaries, or as title deeds copied into the 'cartularies' (or charter books) of English, French, and in rare instances Irish, Welsh, Scottish, Belgian or other foreign beneficiaries.

Only 473 of the 3,000 or so full texts of Henry II survive as original single-sheets issued under the King's seal. Of these, the largest is a 7000-word pancarte (or confirmation of multiple gifts) for the monks of Saint-Etienne at Caen, measuring approximately 560 millimetres (22 inches) from side to side, and 800 millimetres (31 and a half inches) from top to bottom: by far and away the most grand of all the grand charters in our new edition.<sup>16</sup> The smallest is a 52-word writ for La Grande Chartreuse, only 135 millimetres (5 and a third inches) across and 40 millimetres (one and a half inches) deep.<sup>17</sup> No less than 83 such writs could potentially be cut from the surface area of the Saint-Etienne pancarte, itself containing almost twice as many words, and more than twice as large as any of the originals of King John's 'Great Charter' (Magna Carta 1215, 3600 Latin words, the largest of its four surviving originals a mere 1784cm<sup>2</sup>, less than half the 4480cm<sup>2</sup> surface area of the Saint-Etienne charter of Henry II).<sup>18</sup>

Why collect these sheets and scraps? Firstly, because they have survived from a period of history, in our particular instance from the

second half of the twelfth century, from which so much else has either perished or was never committed to writing. Secondly, because as records of many thousands of individual transactions between the King and his subjects, governing political and diplomatic relations, property-holding and legal process, they have much to teach us. So too do their more routine features, from the style by which the King chose to describe himself (in Henry II's case 'King of the English, duke of the Normans and the Aquitanians, count of the Angevins'), through to their witness lists and, in Henry II's case, their specified place of issue. Without these lists of names and locations, we would be deprived of the bulk of what can be discovered both of the King's movements around his dominions (his 'Itinerary') and of the shifting composition of his court. As a result, charters constitute one of the essential building blocks to our written record of the medieval past. Another such building block is supplied by the chroniclers, and for the reigns of Henry II and his sons, the chronicle sources are especially rich: Roger of Howden, Robert de Torigny, Gerald of Wales, the Becket biographers, Ralph Niger, Richard of Devizes, and across France and Britain an entire shelf of other such things.<sup>19</sup> A further essential contribution derives from the records of central or local government, at least for those parts of Europe for which government records – royal, ecclesiastical or aristocratic – survive. From the reign of Richard I onwards, we begin to have access to rolls of the King's law courts, and from the reign of King John (from 1199 onwards) to the rolls of chancery. Before this, however, for the reign of Henry II, we are more or less limited to a series of records known as Pipe Rolls, recording certain (but by no means all) aspects of the annual income and expenditure of the King's Exchequer at Westminster.

We have already noticed the part that the University of Reading played in the publication of Pipe Rolls, principally through Doris Stenton. It was she who, from the 1920s onwards, helped revive the Pipe Roll Society, dormant since before the First World War. It was she who edited the rolls themselves, year by year, through the reign of Richard I into that of King John, and it was she thereafter who chivvied editors both at Reading and at the Public Record Office to produce what now amounts to a series of nearly 100 volumes, unmatched by the records of any other twelfth or early thirteenth century polity. The Pipe Rolls cover England, and on occasion parts of southern Wales. From

1180, 1184 and again for the reigns of Richard and John, we have Exchequer rolls, or fragments of such rolls, for Normandy, and from the reign of John we have the vestiges of what was once a similar series of rolls for the King's revenues in Ireland, almost all now perished in the great bonfire made in 1922 of the Irish Public Record Office. Overall, the focus here remains predominantly English, with only scrappy coverage of the King's other dominions, especially for those large parts of France stretching from the Loire southwards to the Pyrenees and from the Atlantic almost as far east as the Rhône.

More significantly, the Pipe Rolls cover the activities of the King's Exchequer but supply only glimpses of the workings of the chancery: the office from which most royal letters and charters were issued. From 1199 onwards, King John's administration began to preserve transcripts of at least part of their outgoing correspondence, copied into the so-called chancery rolls, themselves divided between their various categories depending upon whether they enrolled charters (or grants in perpetuity), letters sent for open proclamation (patents), or writs sealed-up so as to be readable only by the individual to whom they were addressed (letters close). The introduction of these three types of enrolment – Charter, Patent, and Close Rolls – was an innovation of King John's reign, even though there are reports before this (though no surviving enrolments) to suggest that the chancery kept copies of a selective body of outgoing writs controlling the King's financial affairs. Meanwhile, from the very beginnings of royal letter writing, through to 1199, we have no central resource from which such letters can be recovered.

Some came to rest in parts of the governmental apparatus that preserved records, and are still to be found in the files of chancery or Exchequer, today in The National Archives at Kew. Some, because of their significance as title deeds, were preserved and later shown to government officials, not least so that they might be officially copied into the records of later medieval English kings by a process of 'inspeximus': the deliberate copying and confirmation of charters of the twelfth-century kings in the name of their thirteenth-century or later medieval successors, a process that continued long into the 1600s, and to which we owe a great deal of what we know of early Plantagenet history. Even so, a far larger number survive because they were preserved by those to whom they were sent. As a result, they are today lodged with what

survives, in England, France or elsewhere, of the archives of medieval monasteries, cathedrals or the greater feudal landowners, sometimes as single sheets of parchment, more often as later copies, either in medieval cartularies or amongst the notes of antiquaries and post-medieval historians. The materials themselves are both widely scattered and diverse in character. They range from brief instructions to sheriffs or other local officials (writs, themselves of a bewildering variety of types), via public proclamations, grants or confirmation of land, statutes and laws, through to the most public of diplomatic agreements or treaties. Today, although a majority of Henry II's charters are to be found in the archives and libraries of England and France, others have escaped to lodgings as distant as California, Rome, or St Petersburg.

Collectively so far, I have employed the term 'charters' to describe such materials, even though many of them do not comply with the technical definition of a charter as adopted in the thirteenth-century royal chancery: a written document with general address, conferring rights or property in perpetuity. Many of our so-called 'charters', especially the briefer or more ephemeral instructions addressed to local officials, would have been described in the Middle Ages not as charters but as 'letters', 'writs' or 'breves'.<sup>20</sup> The problems of taxonomy in sifting writs from charters were addressed by Jim Holt in 1996, in one of his last published papers, drawing both upon his wife's technical understanding of evolutionary biology, and the wisdom of Frederic William Maitland.<sup>21</sup> They are best resolved by Richard Sharpe, in papers published in response to Holt's.<sup>22</sup> At their looser or less formal extremes, the categories of both charter and writ merge into that of simple 'letters', 'newsletters', or the King's more personal correspondence.<sup>23</sup> Jim's project at Reading was first established in the 1970s, at a time when it was fashionable to apply the Latin noun 'acta' to all manner of medieval written communication, as in Stenton's 'Acta Episcoporum' or the subsequent English Episcopal Acta project. It was as 'The Acta of the Plantagenets' that Jim publicized his venture, and that, in 1996, it was officially adopted as a British Academy Research Project. However, as pointed out to me early on, most forcefully by both Jane Sayers and Diana Greenway, 'acta' is a technical term best reserved for the procedures, some of them written others of them not, by which cases were tried and settled in canon law. I had to argue long and hard in committee, and even then without entirely persuading Jim, that I was

engaged in editing 'Letters and Charters' rather than the 'acta' of Henry II. Six years after Jim's death, it as *The Letters and Charters* that the edition has at last appeared.

As a result, these 'Letters and Charters' now take their place alongside the chronicles and the pipe rolls as an essential building-block in our understanding of Plantagenet history. Many of them come to us direct from the thought processes and pens of the clerks who dictated and wrote them, under the direct supervision of the King and his courtiers. Even so, we should not think of them as an infallible resource, requiring mere collection for their meaning and significance to be disclosed. Many of them (a proportion as high as 10 per cent) are spurious: forged *ex nichil*, or spuriously reworked from authentic materials. The detection of such forgeries, and the explanation of why they were made, is a prerequisite of any modern edition. Not only this, but there are patterns of survival and loss, observable across the collection as a whole, that have to be taken into consideration if we are to understand what our evidence can or cannot prove. At the most obvious extreme, our collection will tell us very little of the King's more private thoughts. Either these were never committed to writing, or else the letters in which they were recorded have been lost or deliberately destroyed.<sup>24</sup> We may doubt the claims of one of Thomas Becket's biographers, that the King dispatched letters demanding that Becket be killed, written out by a scribe named Nigel de Sackville who wept as he wrote.<sup>25</sup> But that letters were sent on the King's private business on this and many other occasions, there is no doubt. As we shall see, of these we have occasional glimpses but barely a single certain instance. On the contrary, the vast majority of our collection derives from administrative routine, itself with significant implications, yet demanding context and collective assessment if we are to trace patterns, or winnow exceptions from more general trends.

To reassemble such materials into coherent modern editions has long been one of the chief enterprises in medieval history, especially for the letters and charters of the most exalted of rulers or landowners: popes and emperors, kings and queens, bishops, earls and others of the medieval elite. For the kings of England, the edition of Henry II is merely the latest offshoot of a project first mooted in Oxford in 1904, when a committee was established seeking to list the charters of King William I and his Anglo-Norman successors through to 1154. Here, as

we shall now see, the English came very late to an idea already with a long history both in Germany and France.

The immediate model for the Oxford *Regesta* was German, supplied by the work of Johann Friedrich Böhmer (1795-1863), the independently wealthy librarian of Frankfurt am Main, with a romantic yearning towards Catholicism and the traditions of the free cities of the Holy Roman Empire, and a corresponding distaste for all things Prussian.<sup>26</sup> From the 1830s onwards, Böhmer had been commissioned to list all surviving charters of the medieval German emperors beginning in 1831 with an inventory of all German royal charters from Conrad I to Henry VII (911-1313), followed by a similar listing for the Carolingians, itself first planned in November 1831, thereafter composed in indecent haste in the six months beginning on Christmas Eve 1832.<sup>27</sup> As this suggests, Böhmer's work was less than sophisticated and almost immediately in need of revision, supplied for the early Carolingians by Theodor Sickel in 1867, and for the later post-Carolingian emperors and kings of Germany beginning with supplements published by Julius von Ficker, Emil von Ottenthal and Eduard Winkelmann, between 1881 and 1901.<sup>28</sup> Meanwhile, Böhmer's basic model had been adopted by Philipp Jaffé (1819-1870) whose *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum* (1851) sought to list all known papal letters from the beginnings to 1198. As with Böhmer's, this listing was then revised and greatly expanded, by Samuel Löwenfeld, Paul Ewald and Ferdinand Kaltenbrunner working originally under the supervision of Wilhelm Wattenbach, between 1881 and 1901. In a world of textual scholarship, dominated by Böhmer's contemporary, Karl Lachmann (1793-1851), it was accepted that medieval texts should not, as in the past, be edited as so much raw sausage meat. Instead they must be marinaded in notation and textual apparatus, itself inherited from the classicists, delineating the layers by which any individual text had been laid down, from its surviving or lost original, through to its various and often subtly differing later copies. Work of this sort on a corpus as large as that of the charters of a medieval king might take decades or even centuries to complete, king by king and copy by widely scattered copy. In the meantime, better that lists be prepared for subsequent editors to work with, than that editions be launched prematurely and without proper forethought.

Much of this work, including that by Böhmer, was conducted under the auspices of the *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Germany's venerable and from the 1870s publicly funded research institute, established in 1819 and for its first 18 years dependent upon financial support from the King Electors of Hanover, in effect from the English kings George and William IV.<sup>29</sup> The intention, from the beginning, was that the *Monumenta* employ Böhmer's listings as the basis for definitive editions of charter texts or 'Diplomata'. Eventually inaugurated in 1872 by Karl Pertz, son and intended successor to the *Monumenta*'s veteran director Georg Heinrich Pertz (1795-1876), with a (dismally incompetent) collection of the charters of the Merovingians, this was supplemented within a few years by a (near perfect) edition of the charters of Conrad I, Henry the Fowler and Otto I, by Theodor Sickel (1826-1908, in due course ennobled as Von Sickel, but in the 1870s still without *particule*).<sup>30</sup> In an age of intense Franco-Prussian rivalry, Sickel himself was a peculiarly amphibious creature, pivoting between his adopted Austrian homeland, and the opposing poles of Paris and Berlin. After doctoral studies at the universities of Berlin (where he heard Lachmann lecture) and Halle (PhD 1850), he had been expelled from Prussia for involvement in liberal causes. Exiled to Paris, he attended classes at the *École des Chartes* at the same time that his close contemporary, Léopold Delisle (1826-1910), graduated as the *École*'s most glorious alumnus.<sup>31</sup> After further studies in Italy, Sickel was to find a permanent home as Professor at the University of Vienna. It was to Vienna, after Georg Pertz's retirement (itself in large part a consequence of Sickel's devastating review of Karl Pertz's Merovingian charters), that Sickel ensured the transfer of direction of the *Monumenta's* *Diplomata*.<sup>32</sup> There, following Austria's defeat in the war of 1866, the French could choose to regard him as a fellow victim of Prussian aggression. Meanwhile, as early as the 1850s, Sickel had begun to impose his authority on the study of Merovingian and Carolingian charters: a Franco-German conflict-zone that the French had long considered their own to command. Having entered the field a century or more before Böhmer or Jaffé, indeed, the French had good cause to regard diplomatic itself as an exclusively French affair.

French predominance here is traditionally associated with Jean Mabillon (1632-1707), and through Mabillon with the work of the Benedictine congregation of Saint-Maur (first established 1621).

Certainly, the Maurist contribution was considerable, and Mabillon's *De re diplomatica* (1681) an important milestone on the road towards appreciation of the auxiliary sciences of palaeography, sigillography and diplomatic, vital to sifting the authentic from the spurious in many tens of thousands of surviving medieval charters.<sup>33</sup> In an age of religious controversy, with relics and heresy both hotly disputed, it was necessary to establish rules of evidence by which such disputes might be adjudicated. In an age of aristocracy, and hence of aristocratic scandal, not least the notorious affair of the Cardinal de Bouillon and his forged proofs for the house of La Tour d'Auvergne (1695-1704), it was no less essential that the evidence for bloodlines be judged by reliable genealogical criteria.<sup>34</sup> Hence, diplomatic and the rules of documentary evidence were as important to the state as to the Church, with Louis XIV's first minister, Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619-1683), establishing both an Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres (1663) to acquire information on charters, coins, seals and other such artefacts, and his own personal collection of charters, books and manuscripts, in due course merged with the rapidly expanding Bibliothèque royale to form the nucleus of what is today the Bibliothèque nationale de France.<sup>35</sup>

It was in pursuit of charters, amongst other things, that both the Maurists, and the secular antiquaries – André Duchesne (1584-1640, historiographer royal from c.1632), Pierre Dupuy (1582-1651, one-time keeper of the King's library), Étienne Baluze (1630-1713, from 1667 Colbert's librarian, deeply implicated in the Bouillon affair), François Roger de Gaignières (1642-1715, a client of both Louis XIV and the house of Guise), Pierre Clairambault (1651-1740, royal genealogist), and their like – began to scour the archives of king, Church and political elite. From these, and in many cases under direct government sponsorship, they copied vast numbers of charters into transcript volumes today, for the most part, preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale: several hundred volumes in the handwriting of Gaignières and his amanuenses; a further 121 in the collection Duchesne, 302 in the collection Clairambault, 958 in the collection Dupuy, 398 in the collection Baluze, and so forth.<sup>36</sup> From 1759 under the active sponsorship of Jacob-Nicolas Moreau (1717-1804), future librarian and confidant of Marie-Antoinette, attempts were made to streamline these endeavours into a 'Dépôt', otherwise known as the 'Cabinet des chartes', established from 1769 in the Place Vendôme, from 1782 run

(as so many such things are still run in France) by a ‘comité’, comprising Moreau, Louis Georges Oudard-Feudrix de Bréquigny (1714-95), Dom Pierre Nicolas Grenier (1725-89), and other leading antiquaries, deliberately mingling laymen, Maurists, and secular clergy.<sup>37</sup>

The original intention had been that the Dépôt des chartes should contribute to the coherent and chronological publication of royal laws and ordinances, the so-called *Ordonnances du Louvre* (named after its place of publication): 21 volumes in all, inaugurated in 1723, still ongoing as late as 1849 and indeed (albeit in rather different guise) through to the present day, gathering up the rulings and legislative decrees of all French kings, from Hugh Capet onwards.<sup>38</sup> In the event, exceeding this commission, Moreau’s comité and its small army of volunteers pursued a far more ambitious yet never precisely articulated course, to calendar and ultimately to publish ALL charters known to survive, royal or otherwise, directly or even indirectly relevant to the history of France. These were to be assembled from printed books and from the Dépôt’s vast store of transcripts furnished by antiquaries now commissioned to provision Moreau’s venture from across France. Thirty to forty thousand such copies were gathered by the time that Revolution intervened.<sup>39</sup> Most of these are today amongst the nearly two thousand manuscripts of the Bibliothèque nationale’s collection Moreau.<sup>40</sup>

Beginning in 1769, a *Table chronologique des diplomes, chartes, titres et actes imprimés concernant l’histoire de France* was redacted, with Bréquigny as chief editor, intended to supply lists of the more significant materials thus gathered.<sup>41</sup> Of this, three volumes were published before 1789, taking Bréquigny’s calendar from the year 142 AD to 1179; from a letter supposedly sent by Pope Pius I to the bishop of Vienne, through to the death of King Louis VII.<sup>42</sup> After the hiatus of Revolution, a further five volumes appeared, published from 1836 onwards, continuing the series to the year 1314 and the death of King Philip IV. Meanwhile, acting in accordance with his instructions not merely to collect and calendar but to print full texts of documents, in 1791 Bréquigny published a distinct series of three folio volumes of *Diplomata, chartae, epistolae et alia documenta ad res francicas spectantia*. Appearing at possibly the least propitious time for any work of French scholarship, the second and third of these volumes comprised an attempt by La Porte du Theil (long-time resident in

Rome) to supplement Baluze's much earlier work on the registers of Pope Innocent III. The first volume, however, offered an edition of 362 Merovingian or early Carolingian texts, entirely the work of Bréquigny, supposedly dated between 475 and 751, drawn from the resources of the Dépôt des chartes. As with Bréquigny's *Table*, after a long hiatus, progress here resumed in the 1830s, with the publication of two further volumes of *Diplomata*, editing 608 documents dated between 417 and 752 AD.<sup>43</sup>

The *Diplomata* lingered to 1849, the *Table* as late as 1876. But in effect the reign of Napoleon III brought an end to what had long been recognized as an absurdly over-ambitious venture. Even so, as an example of how to calendar many thousands of individual charters into lists facilitating future edition in depth, the *Table chronologique* served as a model for what subsequently became the German, and ultimately the English tradition of 'Regesta'. In France, it continued to find advocates, not least Léopold Delisle, with his *Catalogue* of the charters of Philip Augustus (published in 1856), and Delisle and Sickel's fellow chartiste, Marie Henri d'Arbois de Jubainville (1827-1910), with his catalogues of the charters of the counts/dukes of Champagne, sometime kings of Navarre (published 1859-69).<sup>44</sup> Elsewhere across Europe the *Table* was widely imitated, not least for the charters of Belgium (in calendar form published by Alphonse Wauters from 1866 onwards, still ongoing as recently as 1971), and the lists of charter materials, albeit for the most part adopting the German term 'Regesta', for the medieval kingdoms/principalities of Denmark (1843-), Savoy (1889), Jerusalem (1893), and Norway (1898-).<sup>45</sup>

Virtually no historian today would feel obliged to consult, let alone to rely upon Moreau and Bréquigny's *Table*. It seems that Böhmer was not even aware of its existence, or at least that he had no access to a copy by the time he first compiled his *Regesta*, albeit working along similar lines to Bréquigny.<sup>46</sup> Certainly, far fewer today use the *Table* than engage with the *Regesten* either of Böhmer or Jaffé. The *Table* indeed was fundamentally flawed: not least in its failure to distinguish forgeries, and its insistence on precisely dating the undated and in many cases the undateable. As a result, the *Table* was effaced. However, its offshoot, Moreau and Bréquigny's *Diplomata* project, was not so easily extinguished. Taken under the wing of the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres and officially adopted as a responsibility of the Institut

de France from 1847 onwards, the *Diplomata* were henceforth to be linked to the Académie's own collection of charter transcripts, distinct from those gathered for Moreau's *Dépôt des chartes*.<sup>47</sup> Where Moreau's transcripts now formed a monolithic but static pillar of the Bibliothèque impériale (after 1871, evolving into the Bibliothèque nationale), the Académie's collection continued to grow. Particular attention was paid here to the very earliest charters, Merovingian and Carolingian, at first under the guidance of Benjamin Guérard and Natalis de Wailly, thereafter, from January 1858, under the direction of the young Léopold Delisle. Drawn from many of the newly established Archives départementales and continually augmented by transcripts made by pupils of the École des Chartes, within a year of Delisle's appointment this collection already filled 39 stout boxes, preserving copies of upwards of 26,000 individual charter texts.<sup>48</sup> A further 10 boxes were added under Delisle's direction.<sup>49</sup> But what was to be done with them? By the 1870s, although the French project hung fire, with the *Table* defunct and the latest volume of the *Diplomata* published as long ago as 1849, the Germans, under Pertz and Sickel had already begun to convert their *Regesten* into proper Latin editions.

French pride was at stake.<sup>50</sup> Determined to repair the humiliations inflicted by Sedan and the siege of Paris, from the 1870s onwards French historians nonetheless watched powerless as their rivals in the *Monumenta*, having begun with Pertz's Merovingians in 1872 (only a year after the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine), now claimed editors' privileges over the charters of Pepin, Carloman, Charlemagne, and Louis the Pious: the founders and chief heroes of a dynasty regarded as fundamental to French national identity.<sup>51</sup> There was some consolation here in the fact that a Frenchman, Jean-Louis-Alphonse Huillard-Bréholles (1817-71), had stolen a march on the Germans, between 1852 and 1864 editing large numbers of the charters of the Hohenstaufen Frederick II, followed in 1865 by the letters of Frederick's panegyrist Peter de Vinea.<sup>52</sup> But Huillard-Bréholles died in March 1871, during the opening week of the Paris Commune, still in post at the Archives impériales, themselves only narrowly saved from destruction a month or so later as revolutionary violence reached its climax.<sup>53</sup> As Léopold Delisle declared, in a memorial address delivered 'sur la tombe', Huillard-Bréholles had died of longstanding natural

causes, but nonetheless ‘profondément blessé dans ses sentiments patriotiques’.<sup>54</sup>

Although championed by Arbois de Jubainville, himself a native of Lorraine, a new French series of ‘Diplômes royaux et impériaux’ was only officially sanctioned by the Académie in 1894, and not inaugurated in print until 1908.<sup>55</sup> The adjectival form ‘impériaux’ was carefully chosen here, albeit in vain. Although intended to match and where possible outdo the *Monumenta*, the Académie’s *Chartes et diplômes* series was, from its very beginning, banished from the greater feasts of either Merovingian or Carolingian imperial diplomatic. These had been claimed by Sickel for the *Monumenta* as long ago as 1867, although in the event editions were delayed for many years, until 1906 in the case of Pepin, Carloman and Charlemagne (by Engelbert Mühlbacher, completed after his death by colleagues), and for almost a century and a half in the case of Louis the Pious (finally, albeit finely, brought to completion by Theo Kölzer in 2016).<sup>56</sup> Instead, the French were left only a few Carolingian scraps, together with the charters of the Capetians.<sup>57</sup> The reign of Charles the Bald remained a no-man’s land, in the 1890s opportunistically claimed for France but not brought to completion there until 1943, by which time Franco-German relations stood on an even more perilous footing.<sup>58</sup>

Meanwhile, the Académie’s chief efforts focused on the edition of the charters of the ‘French’ Carolingians of the tenth century, the earliest of them, Louis IV ‘d’Outremer’ (published in 1914), preceded in print although not in dynastic succession by Lothair, Louis V ‘le Fainéant’, and the Capetian Philip I (all published 1908).<sup>59</sup> By the outbreak of World War I, these remained the only three volumes in the series, for any of France’s kings. No doubt aware of this slow progress, and following his ignominious dismissal as Director of the Bibliothèque nationale in 1905, Léopold Delisle himself now offered to contribute to the *Chartes et diplômes*. Deliberately turning his back on the metropolitan godlessness that he blamed for his own recent troubles, he offered a calendar of the French charters not of a king of France but of England’s King Henry II.<sup>60</sup> First brought to press with an Introduction and a volume of facsimiles published in 1909, this remained a simple catalogue until 1916 when an edition of texts began to appear, undertaken by Élie Berger and destined to become one of

the principal foundations upon which Jim Holt and later I myself were to build.<sup>61</sup> More of Delisle and Berger in due course.

But what meanwhile of England? Amidst all of this French and German activity, how had the English fared? As is widely acknowledged, having begun well, the scientific pursuit of history in England had been eclipsed from the 1690s onwards by the rise of faction, and in due course the ascendancy of the Whigs.<sup>62</sup> The seventeenth-century antiquaries had laboured heroically in the publication of source materials, including charters, perhaps most notably in the great *Monasticon Anglicanum* of William Dugdale (1605-86) and Roger Dodsworth (1585-1654). The *Monasticon* easily matched the achievements of its closest French equivalent: the *Gallia Christiana* (begun in the 1620s, first published in 1656, but thereafter reorganized under Maurist supervision and reissued in a revised and far more ambitious format, of which 13 volumes were published between 1715 and 1785, and a further 10 thereafter, between 1856 and 1920).<sup>63</sup> However, English enterprise slowed to a trickle more or less at the same time that the French, and in due course the Germans began to pick up speed. As late as 1769, in the preface to the first volume of his *Tables chronologique*, Bréquigny could still look back to the heroic days of English antiquarianism as setting standards unmatched in France. In particular (and with polite exaggeration) he acknowledged the achievements of Thomas Rymer (1642/3-1713) in publishing, under the patronage of Queen Anne, 'tous les actes' relative to English history, now held up as a model for what Bréquigny hoped to achieve with his *Table*.<sup>64</sup>

In reality, Rymer's *Foedera* was an even more selective venture than Bréquigny's *Table*, reliant for the most part upon what Rymer could cull from his own searches amongst the medieval chancery rolls in the Tower of London, or from previous editions, including those of the Puritan polemicist William Prynne (1600-69). As a reign-by-reign assembly of source materials beginning with a Treaty agreed between King Henry I and the Count of Flanders (1101), it neither aspired to, nor achieved completeness, but instead, as Rymer's original commission from Queen Mary had proclaimed, as long ago as 1693, was concerned with 'all the leagues, treaties, alliances, capitulations, and confederacies, which have at any time been made between the Crown of England and any other kingdoms, princes and states'.<sup>65</sup> Or as the

Latin title of his book eventually allowed, with *foedera, conventiones, literae et cuiuscunque generis acta publica*. For the entire reign of Henry II, Rymer published only 34 documents, of which a mere twelve were charters of the King himself.<sup>66</sup> This set against the more than 3,000 we now know. Even by the time of the latest and splendidly augmented edition of the *Foedera*, published in 1816, the government's official Record Commission had added only a further 27 charters of Henry II to the dozen gathered for Rymer's first edition of 1704.<sup>67</sup> By contrast, Dugdale and Dodsworth's *Monasticon* had between 1655 and 1673 already published 178 texts of Henry II, in whole or in part; a total further augmented by John Stevens in his additions to the *Monasticon*, published in 1722-3.<sup>68</sup> On a more positive note, Rymer did not merely calendar texts but printed them in full Latin transcripts, for their date, remarkably accurate, and (in the same tradition as Mabillon) generously supplied with engraved facsimiles of early documents, including letters of twelfth-century popes and kings.

As in France, the English antiquaries of the seventeenth century were far from dispassionate observers of the medieval past. Controversy – religious, genealogical, political – was an important spur to their work. Most had been obliged to take sides in the English Civil War, including the royalist Sir Christopher Hatton whose 'Book of Seals', published by Doris Stenton in 1950 as a 70<sup>th</sup> birthday tribute to Sir Frank, represents the most magnificent attempt by any seventeenth-century antiquary to salvage medieval charter evidences, in many cases thereafter dispersed or destroyed in the conflict of the 1640s. Hatton's charters were themselves testimony to the pursuit of bloodlines and feudal descents, no less significant to Hatton's circle of gentlemen Heralds than they were to contemporaries such as André Duchesne in France.<sup>69</sup> In the same spirit, the *Monasticon* of Dugdale and Dodsworth, published in the depths of the Cromwellian Commonwealth, opens with a *ΠΡΟΠΥΛΑΙΟΝ*, or 'gateway', by the royalist antiquary Sir John Marsham, reminding its readers in euphonic caroline Latin of the antiquity of a Church now spread to the furthest corners of the earth 'in spite of hatred of truth, and unbowed before the rage of persecution'.<sup>70</sup> This in 1655, when the very survival of the Anglican establishment was in jeopardy and any memorial to its pre-Reformation past a potentially dangerous undertaking.

Even more glaring was the political bias of Rymer, conscious of the fact that his own father had been hanged for conspiring against the newly restored King Charles II in the Farnley Wood Plot of 1668, determined to ingratiate himself with royalty, not least by opening his *Foedera* in an age of Anglo-Dutch monarchy with proofs that England and Flanders had been allies since at least 1101.<sup>71</sup> Rymer's omissions, and above all his failure to search for English treaties in the archives of foreign powers, were to some extent repaired from the 1720s onwards, by Thomas Carte (1684-1754), an out-and-out Jacobite obliged to make a virtue of necessity, by conducting his archival researches as an Englishman exiled to France.<sup>72</sup> Also of Jacobite tendency, although perhaps more to vex the place-seekers than from any genuine desire to foment rebellion, was the Oxford antiquary Thomas Hearne, first editor both of the *Gesta of Henry II* and of the returns to Henry II's great survey into knights' fees. In 1713, Hearne lost his post in the Bodleian Library and only narrowly avoided charges of treason for loose talk over a portrait of the Old Pretender displayed to a Mr Molineux, a visiting Irish Whig.<sup>73</sup> Political correctness is no modern invention, and nor should the study of charters be dismissed as harmless drudgery divorced from politics or human imagination. This remained true, indeed, long into the eighteenth century, beyond the work of Thomas Madox (1666-1727), in some ways the last of the great Stuart antiquaries, through the age of William Blackstone into that of the Hanoverian Record Commission and the slow dawning of awareness, after 1800 or so, that the rolls and records of English medieval government were a resource deserving both more careful preservation and the most painstaking of published editions.<sup>74</sup>

After Madox, and into the nineteenth century, the need for editions of medieval texts had to a large extent gone unheeded, eclipsed by advances in classical Latin and Greek editorial work associated with the names of Bentley and Porson. Not that medieval charters were entirely neglected.<sup>75</sup> Blackstone's commentaries on Magna Carta were widely known, and reached even the attention of Bréquigny in Paris. How else, save by a hasty misreading of Blackstone's figures, can Bréquigny have concluded that no less than seventeen sealed originals of King John's Magna Carta were still in existence?<sup>76</sup> Even so, rather than apply the new advances in classical philology to the study of medieval texts, those editions that were attempted after 1750 or so, including Abraham

Farley's great printing of *Domesday*, the *Statutes of the Realm*, and in due course the Record Commission's work on the chancery rolls, represented in many ways a step back into medievalism, not a leap forwards into the age of Lachmann and Pertz.

Mabillon and in due course Rymer had both advertised the use of facsimiles in the study of diplomatic. But in the work of Farley and the Record Commissioners this was carried to entirely new extremes, by typography intended to supply printed texts that were in many ways not so much editions as reproductions, their so-called 'record type' imitating the abbreviated Latin written by medieval scribes. The trained professional may today glory in editions such as Farley's *Domesday* (1783) or those of the early Charter, Patent and Close Rolls of King John's reign, produced from the 1830s onwards. At the time, however, and even today to those not adept in palaeography or the abbreviated forms of medieval Latin, this in effect restricts the use of such editions to a small professional clique. It is indeed ironic that by the 1840s, English readers, no matter how advanced their Latin, would have found it easier to read the editions of French or German charter texts produced by the Académie française or the Monumenta than they would to decipher the typeface used for the letters of England's medieval kings. Even thereafter, and despite a massive upsurge in publication associated with the English state-subsidized Rolls Series, the edition of charters, royal or otherwise, continued to be neglected in favour of chronicles and other written memorials.<sup>77</sup> William Stubbs (1825-1901), the greatest of Victorian medievalists, edited many volumes of chronicles from the reign of Henry II, but only forty or so of the King's charters, and even these only because they were embedded in some way in the manuscripts of the chronicles in which he was chiefly interested.<sup>78</sup> Although famed today as the author of Stubbs' *Select Charters* (intended as a teaching aid, first published 1870), Stubbs himself was principally a chronicles man, not a diplomatist.<sup>79</sup>

There was only one great exception to this trend: John Mitchell Kemble (1807-57). But although Kemble was very much a Cambridge product, a friend and contemporary of the future Lord Tennyson, his professional inclinations were entirely Germanic, fostered in Göttingen under Jacob Grimm. Moreover, the editions he produced, most notably his *Codex diplomaticus aevi Saxonici* (1839-48), were restricted to the

period before 1066, revolutionizing understanding of charters as a gateway to the Anglo-Saxon past, yet leaving the field of royal or other charters after 1066 entirely unploughed.<sup>80</sup> Kemble's self-appointed successor, Walter de Gray Birch (1842-1924), was by comparison a mere compiler; his editions useful and fuller, not just for the Anglo-Saxons but for various later charters, but entirely lacking the master's stamp.<sup>81</sup>

And so we return full circle, via Kemble, Stubbs, and Birch, to the Oxford of 1904 and the determination, long after such things had been satisfactorily arranged in Copenhagen or Turin, let alone in Berlin, Vienna or Paris, that the charter evidences for eleventh and twelfth century English kingship were in need first of listing, and then in due course of proper editing. With none of the institutional support afforded by the Académie or the Monumenta or even by the research institutes of Scandinavia or Italy, and with only a bare minimum of critical-textual forethought, the Oxford project adopted the methods of Böhmer and Jaffé and hence the title *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*. Its first volume (covering the reigns of William I and II) appeared with remarkable, indeed in due course much regretted, haste, published in 1913 under the guidance of H.W.C. Davis. So lukewarm was the reception of this volume, criticized both for its failure to use, let alone to supply, reliable texts and for its lack of diplomatic discernment, that no successor was published for 43 years.<sup>82</sup> In 1956, a second volume appeared, carrying the listing through the reign of Henry I to 1135.<sup>83</sup> In 1967, a third volume, edited by R.H.C. Davis, son of the project's founder, for the first time supplied not only selective but full Latin texts, in this instance of the charters of King Stephen (1135-54) and his various rivals for the English throne: the Empress Matilda, Geoffrey Plantagenet and their son, the future Henry II, before his coronation as King. In due course supplemented with a thinnish collection of facsimiles, there the *Regesta* lapsed.<sup>84</sup>

Since the *Regesta*'s demise, and following in the footsteps of Marie Fauroux's 1961 edition of the charters of the dukes of Normandy from the beginnings through to 1066, David Bates has splendidly re-edited the charters of King William I.<sup>85</sup> Published in 1998, this will shortly be supplemented by an online listing of addenda and corrigenda.<sup>86</sup> The Scots and the Welsh have both, over the same period, progressed from bald listings to full editions of most of their medieval royal or princely

evidences.<sup>87</sup> Before his untimely death in 2020, Richard Sharpe embarked on a project properly to re-edit and supply texts of William Rufus, and Henry I, with many results now available online.<sup>88</sup> Even so, for most English royal charters from 1066 to 1154 we continue to rely upon the *Regesta* and its often far from accurate listings of texts themselves in many cases available only from scattered antiquarian printings. Above all, for the period from 1154 to 1199, the reigns of Henry II and Richard I, Davis and his successors left nothing but a gaping hole. It was this hole that in 1971 Jim Holt proposed to plug.

Jim Holt was not an avid reader of Böhmer, or Sickel, or Giry, or even of Delisle. I doubt that he would have recognized many of the names of the greater diplomatics cited above, beyond the English and one or two whom he might have acknowledged as well-known 'foreigners'. He had bravely followed the guns of 1944 across much of northern France. As a tool for historical research, he continued to use the Royal Artillery maps thus acquired. But he had no particular specialism in Norman as opposed to Anglo-Norman history, and with the exception of a late-flowering mutual admiration between himself and Georges Duby, no particular liking for the French. Before he embarked on the collection of Henry II's charters he had only limited archival experience. Above all, he had very little training as an editor, most of what he had done here, in his monograph on *Magna Carta* (1965), being simply to adapt texts from other modern printings.<sup>89</sup> As with many chasms across which the unwary are tempted to leap, a little more peering into the mist and Jim might never have leapt. Those who knew the ground better – Cheney for instance – cautioned him against it. To this extent, not only did ignorance prove bliss, but we must all be grateful that he who ventured gained. As for the progress of Jim's leap, I have described it elsewhere so there is no need here to supply an action replay.<sup>90</sup>

Three invaluable pieces of equipment helped break his fall. The first was supplied by the Shropshire clergyman, R.W. Eyton, the second by Léopold Delisle, and the third by the last of the research assistants to serve the project before Jim's retirement: Richard Mortimer, in many ways the most agile of Jim's Sherpas. Eyton's *Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II* (1878) had briefly calendared 432 charters of Henry II, for the most part from the resources of the English Public Record Office.<sup>91</sup> Delisle and Berger, between 1909 and 1927, had

published no fewer than 755, drawn in large part from archives in France.<sup>92</sup> In addition, there were the 400 or so original charters and writs listed in T.A.M. Bishop's survey of royal scribes, the *Scriptores Regis* published in 1961. There were many overlaps between Eyton's listing and those by Delisle, Berger, and Bishop. But perhaps 1200 of the just over 3,000 charter texts of Henry II now known had already been identified by the time in 1971 that Jim put on his climbing boots. Over the next twenty years, through a search of the published PRO calendars, and through painstaking work on cartularies in the British Library, Jim and his assistants added several hundred more. In particular, with Richard Mortimer setting the pace, from 1981 onwards, the search extended through correspondence, although as yet seldom *in situ*, to a large number of English provincial archives, sufficient by the mid 1980s to allow for the publication of a provisional *Handlist* of originals surviving in British repositories.<sup>93</sup> There then followed a hiatus. By the time that I boarded the gun carriage, late in 1993, there were perhaps 1800 paper files of charters for Henry II assembled in the Cambridge office, here strongly emphasising the word 'files'.

From the outset, and very sensibly, Jim had determined that the processes of search and edition should be strictly segregated. They were also deliberately extended beyond Henry II to his immediate family, including his wife Eleanor of Aquitaine, and his son and successor, King Richard I. For Richard, the project could draw on the listings published by Lionel Landon in 1935.<sup>94</sup> File after file, Jim's materials were assembled, with each charter assigned a project serial number, where possible an approximate date, and thereafter whatever could be gathered by way of bibliographical information, including ideally either a photograph or a xerox from the relevant original or manuscript copies. I well recall the air of slight condescension, early in the 1990s, with which Jim once remarked to me that 'poor old Hugh' (referring here to one of Peterhouse's more eminent if notorious former heads of house) had failed to grasp the potential either of the word processor or the xerox machine. Not for nothing did the former artillery officer pull rank on the Intelligence Corps, considering machines essential to victory. As yet, however, not a single word from Jim's vast stack of photocopies had been transcribed, let alone word processed. Many of the files were still without manuscript copies, especially from the Public Record Office. For France, they consisted of little save xeroxes from Delisle and

Berger's printed *Recueil*. Even for England, such rich seams as Farrer and Clay's *Early Yorkshire Charters* had yet to be properly excavated.

For a synopsis of what happened thereafter, readers can turn to volume one of *Letters and Charters*, mapping the process by which collecting activities in France (1994) led on to adoption as a British Academy Research Project (1996), and thereafter to a complete revisiting of the English, Welsh and Scottish archives (1996-2000) including those of the then PRO (subsequently The National Archives), the transformation of what had previously been raw materials into a skeleton electronic edition (1995-9), the writing of commentaries (1997-2002), and the laborious process of indexing (begun in 2003, brought to publication in 2021, but never entirely finished given that large numbers of place-names and toponymic surnames still defy identification, especially for France). It was Jim who bid for and obtained funding for much of the earlier activity here. But although he remained chairman of the British Academy's project committee, he henceforth played no active role either in searching or in editorial work. From the late 1990s, he was a sleeping partner in every sense, save that he regularly woke up to demand madder music and stronger wine, that the pace might increase and the volumes themselves be hurried into print. The best way of dealing with such demands, I found, was either to ignore them or, in extremis, to remind him of one of Yorkshire's finest. For Geoffrey Boycott, dash and slash were never watchwords: less Dowson's *Cynara*, more 246 not out. Here, both of us benefited from the patient diligence of a succession of project research assistants: Michael Staunton, Kate Dailinger, and, *prima inter pares*, Judith Everard.

Along the way, there were many surprises. A few stories to evoke the flavour of the chase. In France, there was the blind cathedral archivist, on a day of fog and mystery straight from *The Name of the Rose*, who gave me the key to an upstairs cupboard and left me there to pore over a collection of manuscripts, once known, long looked for, but for more than a century assumed lost. There was ducal castle in northern England whose catalogue listed half a dozen twelfth-century charters, reported by a highly supercilious archivist as being impossible to locate. Told that it might be worth his while to search for them 'given their potential monetary value' (a phrase that I have found propels even the noblest up ladders or into the darker recesses of muniment rooms),

he replied with a drawl worthy of the Duke of Omnium, that we had just walked past two paintings on the stairs, each of them valued at £8 million, ‘So I am hardly going to waste my tea-time looking for some old scraps’.<sup>95</sup> There was the local government official (a growing menace in county record offices) who refused me permission to remove a piece of modern sealing wax, making it impossible to read something first noticed in the 1920s by William Farrer. Impossible, that is, until I very accidentally dropped the document, shattered its modern impediment, and showed that it preserved one of the few truly personal letters written in Henry II’s name: the very earliest authentic writ of military summons known for any medieval king.<sup>96</sup>

There were the private collections that turned out to be pawned, burned, bombed, flooded, or in one memorable instance (involving a large cellar full of medieval charters) entirely eaten by mice.<sup>97</sup> There is the château outside Rouen, said to belong to a plutocratic cheesemaker, where repeated efforts have failed to secure access to charters of Henry II last seen in the 1840s by Léopold Delisle.<sup>98</sup> Then there are the charters that Delisle searched for but did not find, since brought to light in one instance in the Russian Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg, in another on the very day before the Covid lockdown in March 2020, in the Archives départementales in Le Mans, on the trail of something entirely unrelated: instances of serendipity that at the time can seem positively uncanny.<sup>99</sup> Even now, it is not unknown for entirely ‘new’ originals of Henry II and his family to appear, either at auction or in collections whose very existence has previously gone unnoticed.<sup>100</sup> There will, I hope, be more such surprises in future. On average, indeed, I would expect any modern published charter collection to have something approaching a ten per cent margin of omission. According to that reckoning, there may be at least 50 originals of Henry II and as many as 300 copies out there, still awaiting discovery.

Having collected our materials, we must then edit them. I shall not describe process in any detail, save to note that some texts are long and survive in multiple versions, whereas others are short and survive either as unique copies or, in the very easiest of scenarios, as authentic originals. The longer the text, and the more various the copies, the more laborious the process of collation.<sup>101</sup> In all of this, my immediate model was that supplied by Cheney for the English Episcopal Acts series (albeit with minor modifications). In turn, the rules to which Cheney adhered

were those laid down by Sickel, as long ago as 1879, set out in the first of the editions of German royal or imperial Diplomata that Sickel published for the Monumenta, in his bid for the throne of Pertz.<sup>102</sup> These rules were adopted as best practice even in France, in some cases surreptitiously, in others unconsciously, even for the editions of the Académie française.<sup>103</sup>

Besides length, script can pose problems. The worst of early-modern copyists were often working at speed, either through indifference or because they were paid by the line. If their blunders can be appalling, then their attempts at accuracy can be even harder to repair. Like all readers, I have learned over the years to relish the work of certain copyists (Robert Glover, Dugdale, Gaignières, even Dodsworth once one has got into his rhythm) but to dread others, including the anonymous French transcriber of Henry II's writ for the Ile-d'Ans: one of only two such writs as yet identified, neither of them known to Delisle, by which the King issued commands to his officers south of the Loire, yet in this instance fiendishly difficult to decipher.<sup>104</sup> As with charters more generally, the Latin of Henry II's chancery is simple stuff: formulaic, for the most part unadventurous in vocabulary, lacking colours of rhetoric or the elaborate preambles or 'arengas' that make certain imperial or Anglo-Saxon charters tricky to construe. Which is not to say that the editor can avoid all errors, even the simplest, especially when it comes to confusing proper for impersonal nouns.

As an instance, consider the Latin third declension noun 'palus/paludis'. This is generally translated as 'swamp or marsh'. In the plural form 'paludes' or 'paludibus' it occurs in just such a sense in a handful of charters of Henry II for beneficiaries scattered from Poitiers, via Pembrokeshire and Kent to the Fenland regions of Ely.<sup>105</sup> In a charter for the abbey of Luçon, however, in the plusher parts of the Vendée, it occurs as 'the estate called Paludense', clearly here being used as a place-name, otherwise unidentified. This lost place-name is itself then defined as 'Paludense, the marsh where stands the vill of Choupeau' (Choupeau being a known place-name in the modern département of Charente-Maritime), save that the phrasing here makes little or no sense ('scilicet mariscum consulare ubi sita est villa Cadupellis').<sup>106</sup> What are we to make of the spare word 'consulare'? Is

it a personal name, a place, an infinitive, or simply the result of confusion by a later copyist?

In an opposite direction, consider a charter for the men of Chester granting them the right to buy and sell ‘ad detailum apud Duuelinam’.<sup>107</sup> This might easily be interpreted as ‘at Detailum’, i.e. at an (unidentified) place-name ‘within (the city of) Dublin’. In reality, it is the right to trade retail (in modern French ‘au détail’). In this same sense, it occurs in a charter for the men of Chichester, denying anyone from outside their city the right to sell cloth there ‘per detaillium’.<sup>108</sup> But unless we keep a careful watch both on Latin vocabulary, and on the repetition of words across widely scattered instruments, we might easily be lured into error, as indeed was I, when first attempting to make sense of these particular texts. It is not that such confusions arise in every charter. But in virtually every charter there are place and personal names, sometimes many dozens of them, all of which have to be identified and in due course indexed, often in contexts that are uncertain or that require laborious investigation before certainty (or for that matter uncertainty) can be achieved.

Once a text had been transcribed, collated, and its variants properly noticed, much of the work that follows resides in establishing authenticity and date. Some editors are inclined to suspect forgery in everything they see, the most suspicious being the French Jesuit, Jean Hardouin (1646-1729), who by the 1690s had convinced himself that, with certain exceptions including Virgil’s *Georgics* (but definitely not the *Aeneid*), the entire corpus of classical Greek and Latin literature was a vast medieval hoax.<sup>109</sup> Other editors veer to an opposite extreme, seeking excuses for even the most blatant of spuria. I have done my best to steer a middle course. But even so, I have flagged as definitely or potentially spurious at least one in ten of the surviving corpus, for reasons that are various but that can have significant implications for the historical record. Perhaps the most telling example is the rejection of various of the charters of Battle Abbey previously considered authentic.<sup>110</sup> This in turn raises doubts over the abbey’s chronicle, generally considered reliable save where indubitably proved false, better regarded, I would suggest, as unreliable in anything that cannot be independently substantiated.<sup>111</sup> Dating criteria in the case of Henry’s charters depend heavily on witnesses, sometimes allowing a narrow

window of opportunity, in other instances demanding a wide span of years or even decades.

Delisle's basic rule for dating is now confirmed, so that charters in which the King adopted the style *Dei gratia* (King 'by God's grace'), especially if this formula occurs in a surviving original, are to be dated to the second half of his reign, charters without the formula to the years before 1172. Delisle's claim, however, that this was a change made c.1172-3 has been significantly refined, in part from Irish evidence that Delisle ignored, in part thanks to an article, not widely known, published in 1920 by Henri Prentout, professor at Caen.<sup>112</sup> The change in formula, I now suggest, occurred in the spring of 1173, at some time between March and June. It began in the chancery of Henry the Young King who in March that year defected to the court of Louis VII. Hence the altered style of his father, King Henry II, adopted at some time before July 1173, to mirror a change first introduced under Capetian influence by his rebellious elder son.<sup>113</sup>

Here we begin to see that, beyond the individual details, wider conclusions emerge across the collection as a whole. Many such conclusions are set out in the edition's Introduction. They are laborious to draw, since each has to be tested against a far larger body of evidence than is available for any of Henry II's contemporaries save the Pope. Our main series of 3,039 charters of Henry II, for instance, let alone the total edition of more than 4,600 items, constitutes a corpus more than twice the size of that obtained for Henry's contemporaries, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa or Philip Augustus King of France, not to mention the mere 1,875 entries in Peter Sawyer's *Handlist of Anglo-Saxon Charters*, or the 850 or so recently assembled for the Latin kings of Jerusalem, spanning two or more centuries rather than the mere 35 years of Henry II's reign.<sup>114</sup> For present purposes, a few highlights must suffice.

Let us begin with the question of evidential bias, depending upon the particular ways in which we divide up the collection, by date, by geographical focus, or by the personal identities of witnesses and beneficiaries. It has long been apparent that there are disproportionately more charters for Henry's early years, from his coronation in 1154 to his departure for France in August 1158, than for any period of his reign thereafter. Now, however, we can quantify this distinction. Of the 2,800 charters of Henry II that can be assigned a date

narrower than simply 1154 X 1189, a total of 1,182 date to the first half of the reign: almost twice as many as can be dated after 1172. Moreover, of these 1,182 charters, a high proportion can be certainly or provisionally dated to the first three and a half years 1154-8, suggesting that nearly 1,200 items from the corpus of 2,800 should be assigned to this same brief period. If we restrict ourselves to charters that can be more narrowly dated, within only one or two rather than a broader span of years, we find at least 119 than can be certainly or provisionally assigned to the single year 1155, 66 to 1157, and 67 to 1175: totals that equal or surpass the 66 charters that can be certainly assigned to the entire period between January 1166 and December 1169, a span of 48 months crucial to the King's dealings with rebellion in France and to the Becket conflict, yet supplied with an average of a mere 1.4 charters a month as opposed to 12 a month for the single year 1155.<sup>115</sup> Put crudely, from the charter evidence we know almost ten times as much about 1155 as we do about the years from 1166 to 1169.

The basic cause here is obvious. As at the beginning of any new reign, there was a need to confirm things from the time of a new king's predecessors, in this particular instance rendered all the more pressing by Henry II's determination to restore the *status quo ante bellum*, silently suppressing the memory of Stephen's reign and returning to what was believed to have held true in the time of his grandfather, King Henry I. Hence one of the most common phrases throughout the corpus of Henry II's charters, restoring possessions as in 'the time of' (at least 460 instances) or 'at the death of' (at least a further 86 instances) 'my grandfather King Henry I'.<sup>116</sup> Stephen meanwhile is referred to as 'king' in less than a dozen of Henry II's charters, themselves sometimes revealing, as for example in their willingness to grant Stephen title as count of Mortain but not with his royal title, or referring to Stephen as 'my usurper' (*ablator*), presiding over a time of 'persecution' or 'war'.<sup>117</sup> Which is not to suggest that Henry II did as he sometime threatened to do, and entirely remade the landed settlement of England as it had been in 1135. On the contrary, many of Stephen's awards lingered on, as did various of those who had benefitted from his patronage.<sup>118</sup> I have shown elsewhere that, in a particularly notorious instance, itself illuminated by new charter evidence, three of the four courtiers who stormed Canterbury Cathedral in December 1170 and there murdered Thomas Becket were men with strong links to Stephen's regime. These three

therefore had all the more reason to prove their loyalty to King Henry II, even at the cost of butchering an archbishop perceived to be Henry's most troublesome foe.<sup>119</sup>

If we now recut the pack, not by date but by geography, we find that other significant patterns emerge. We should note here a significant difference between the edition of Henry II and the tradition followed by Sickel and Delisle. Both the *Monumenta Diplomata* and the Académie's 'Chartes et diplômes' follow the lead set by Bréquigny's *Table* and Böhmer's *Regesta* in attempting to sort their materials into as close to chronological order as can be achieved. This contrasts with the English tradition, perhaps first canonized in R.H.C. Davis' *Regesta* for King Stephen, thereafter adopted for the English *Episcopal Acta* series, arranging charters by beneficiary rather than by date, in the case of King Stephen, for example, from no.1 (a confirmation to Abbotbury Abbey, datable between 1149 and 1154) and no.995 (notice of a lost charter for York St Mary's, datable perhaps as early as 1135). We have already noted the problems that chronological ordering caused Bréquigny, given the impossibility of establishing firm dates for a majority of internally undated instruments. In the case of Henry II, both Eyton and Delisle had on occasion awarded conflicting dates to what were in effect variants of the same text, thereby inserting false duplicates within their series.<sup>120</sup> Jim Holt's decision to order by beneficiary not only avoided the risk of duplication but in turn helps us to detect a further series of patterns, invisible from any arrangement by chronology.

Arranged by beneficiary and then counted according to national or regional allegiance, England far outweighs all other parts of Henry II's dominion in terms of charter survival. All told, 72 per cent of the collection, or nearly three in every four charters, concerns an English beneficiary. Amongst the remaining 28 per cent, Normandy is disproportionately significant, accounting for almost five times as many charters as survive for the next most significant regional focal-point, greater Anjou. Normandy, indeed, accounts for 62 per cent of the charters for non-English beneficiaries, or 17 per cent of the collection as a whole. By contrast, there are a mere seven charters for Gascon beneficiaries: as few as survive for Scotland and fewer than survive for Flanders, even though, by contrast to Gascony, neither Scotland nor Flanders was ever ruled by Henry II.<sup>121</sup>

Why such disparity? In part it must reflect twelfth-century realities: a lack of hard power south of the Loire, for instance, and only a brief period of personal intervention by Henry II in either Wales or Ireland. Even so, Wales and Ireland (where, taken together, the King spent less than a year) supply 59 charters, outnumbering the mere 26 from Poitou and the Limousin (where the King remained a regular visitor throughout his reign). Rather than a reflection of power on the ground, what we have here may be distortions in evidential survival rates, not least for those regions such as Ireland or Gascony where all medieval charter evidence has been lost or destroyed in ways not true of Normandy or Anjou, let alone of most parts of England. In addition, there are underlying political considerations. In England after 1189 Henry remained a real presence, part of legal and historical memory, his charters important title deeds to be inspected and renewed by his Plantagenet, Lancastrian, Yorkist and Tudor successors. In France, by contrast, following King John's loss of Normandy and much of his continental estate after 1204, Henry's grants were rendered of historic but not necessarily of legally-binding significance. This in turn is reflected in the gross disparity between the more than 800 of his charters for which our principal source is a confirmation or copy surviving in the later English chancery rolls, as opposed to the mere 56 instances where such confirmations survive in vidimus or copies entered into the chancery registers of the Capetian or Valois kings of France.<sup>122</sup>

Nor is this all. As with the memory of Anglo-Saxon England after 1066, so with the memory of Plantagenet Normandy or Anjou after 1204. Much of what was remembered was not so much authentic memory but wishful invention. As a result, a significant proportion of Henry's charters as confirmed by the French royal chancery after 1204 consists of forgery: a proportion indeed, as high as 40 per cent, more than three times higher than for the equivalent English evidences, and including not only charters but laws, themselves in many cases invented after 1204, or even after 1300, as a means of foisting upon the Capetian and Valois kings privileges that the men of Normandy believed ought to have been granted to them, but for which no authentic written evidence survived.<sup>123</sup> One notorious instance here involves a version of the English Magna Carta of 1225, now retooled as a protection for the liberties of the men of Normandy, shown to Capetian kings after 1280

and supposedly sanctioned by charter of King Henry II, in reality of his grandson, King Henry III.<sup>124</sup> With conquest itself an inevitable spur to forgery, whether in England after 1066 or Normandy after 1204, we should no more trust to the authenticity of Henry II's Norman laws and charters than we would to such texts as the *Instituta Cnuti* or the *Leges Edwardi Confessoris* concocted in post-Conquest England. For a particularly telling instance here, I would cite an incompetently forged privilege of Henry II for the Bordeaux hospital of Saint-Jacques, known only from a vidimus issued by Charles VII's seneschal for Aquitaine on 30 July 1451, only a month after Bordeaux's capitulation to Valois conquest.<sup>125</sup>

So much for geography as a determinant of evidential survival. But what of its significance to the King himself? Here the locations specified as the place of issue of upwards of 2000 of our charters are essential both to our reconstruction of the King's itinerary, and to our understanding of regional politics.<sup>126</sup> Even if we restrict ourselves to England, there is a clear disparity between the 500 or more charters issued at locations in the Home Counties (including at Westminster, easily the most favoured place of issue), or the similar numbers from the Thames Valley from Windsor through to Wiltshire, set against the mere handful issued at locations in East Anglia, including Essex, a county where King Stephen had been particularly active. Of the fourteen charters issued in either Norfolk or Suffolk, most and perhaps all were issued during a single visit in April/May 1157, shortly after the King had clipped the wings of the greatest of local potentates, the Bigod earls of Norfolk.<sup>127</sup> Even so, East Anglia appears relatively well-favoured compared to the counties of the south west, for which we have a mere three charters issued at locations in Dorset or Somerset and not a single charter issued anywhere in either Devon or Cornwall.<sup>128</sup> All of this, I suspect, would greatly have pleased Jim Holt, emphasising the strong regional dimension to English politics long before the reign of King John and the rise of Jim's fellow 'Northerners'. Needless to say, similar things can be reported of Normandy and regions further south, not least if we now turn from geography to personalities, beginning here with beneficiaries now divided not by region but by category.

Given the relatively high rate of survival amongst ecclesiastical as opposed to aristocratic or other lay archives, the vast majority of our surviving texts are inevitably those issued for clerics rather than for the

laity. This despite the fact that by the time we have any relatively full record of all outgoing royal charters, from King John's Charter Roll for the first year of his reign 1199-1200), a proportion as high as 58 per cent was awarded to lay rather than to clerical beneficiaries.<sup>129</sup> Under Henry II, for whom no such central record is available, and where we depend instead upon the hazards of archival survival, charters for lay beneficiaries account for a mere 26 per cent of the surviving evidence, itself thereafter divisible according to the status of these beneficiaries: towns, provinces, or individual men and women. There is a particularly glaring shortage of charters to lay beneficiaries from Normandy or points south, from which regions less than 70 such items survive. Clearly, our evidence supplies only a warped reflection of twelfth-century realities. At a rough guess, a proportion perhaps as high as 90 per cent of the letters and charters of Henry II issued for Norman laymen have vanished entirely without trace.

But here another consideration intrudes. We have seen that upwards of 500 or our charters survive as original single sheets. These in turn were assigned by Bishop, in 1961, to the workmanship of the twenty or so individual chancery scribes by whom they were written. By means that remain reliable but that do not require detailed repetition here, Bishop showed that a proportion of Henry II's charters perhaps as high as one third continued to be produced by scribes attached not to the royal chancery but to individual beneficiaries.<sup>130</sup> What Bishop failed to notice was the glaring distinction here between beneficiaries lay and clerical. All told, we have 103 original charters of Henry II written by identified chancery scribes in favour of laymen, set against less than a dozen instances (perhaps 10 per cent all told) in which we find authentic charters written for laymen outside chancery, by scribes as yet unidentified. Even in these dozen instances, the laymen in question seem in most cases to have had strong monastic or clerical connections. By contrast, for the 400 or more originals in favour of clerical or monastic beneficiaries, the rate of beneficiary production seems to be much higher, approaching 30 per cent.<sup>131</sup>

This in turn raises questions over one of the abiding and more general assumptions of medieval diplomatic: that the proportion of chancery production increased exponentially, across twelfth-century Europe, and that where earlier kings had for the most part relied upon beneficiaries to produce their charters, only by the late twelfth century

in England (earlier in the case of the papacy, slightly later in the case of the German emperors or the kings of France) did they command chanceries sufficiently professional to produce all but a small proportion of their outgoing letters. In reality, as the case of Henry II suggests, kings of England as early as the 1150s could, where necessary, produce large numbers of charters 'in house', especially in cases where lay beneficiaries would have struggled to produce such charters themselves. For those working on earlier medieval diplomatic, or for chanceries for which there is a poor survival rate of original charters issued to lay beneficiaries, this raises a warning to compare like with like. The surviving evidence for earlier periods is inevitably biased towards charters for ecclesiastical beneficiaries, today preserved in ecclesiastical archives. From the reigns of Edward the Confessor and William the Conqueror, for instance, William's two writs for Deorman and the men of London are perhaps the only originals granted to laymen still surviving of the many hundreds or thousands that must have been issued.<sup>132</sup> In these circumstances, there is a severe risk of overestimating the rate of beneficiary production and by the same token of underestimating of the rate of production in chancery.

This consideration of scribal identities carries us on to the personalities most regularly evidenced in the collection: the identities of the witnesses. All told, we find the names of at least 1,161 individuals, virtually all of them men, named as witnesses across the collection as a whole, varying from single witnesses (790 instances), through to the 38 (laymen) who witnessed Henry's Constitutions of Clarendon in 1164. Looking for patterns here, it is possible albeit laborious to tabulate the 200 or so witnesses who appear most frequently, beginning with Thomas Becket, witness to at least 553 of Henry's charters, and descending thereafter via the more to the less frequent and thence to those who witness no more than eight charters each. All of these we can assume were 'courtiers' at least in the loosest sense of the term. All but one were male. Roughly half were clerics, half laymen. Tabulated they reveal further patterns, above all a clear preponderance of those of Anglo-Norman origin. We thus have 14 Normans, 14 Englishmen and no less than 124 individuals who might be defined as Anglo-Norman, set against a mere 10 from greater Anjou, six from the Capetian realm, six from Maine, five Bretons, two Anglo-Picards, and only a single

Poitevin, appropriately enough the only woman regularly reported as witness, the King's wife Eleanor of Aquitaine.

'Anglo-Norman', of course, is itself a potentially ambiguous term, further divisible between those who held lands more or less equally on both sides of the Channel (40 instances), those principally Norman by upbringing but with a scattering of more recent English lands or benefices (22 instances), and a clear majority (62 instances) of men who, although of Norman descent, sprang from families principally landed and resident in England. This in turn has all manner of implications, not just for the political settlement of Henry's realm but for issues such as language, accent, and the patronage of literature at court. It helps us to appreciate, for instance, that the great rebellion of 1173-4 was a far more dangerous affair in Normandy than has previously been acknowledged, joined by large numbers of the greater Norman feudatories themselves never properly attached to Henry II's court.<sup>133</sup> In turn, looking forwards to the reigns of Henry II's sons, this has implications for what was to happen after 1189, in the detachment of Norman from English interests and the eventual collapse of King John's authority north of the Loire, in 1204.<sup>134</sup> Elsewhere, a similar significance, albeit with subtly different consequences, attaches to the dearth of Poitevins, and the almost total absence of Gascons from Henry's court.<sup>135</sup>

We might continue in this vein, province by province, and person by person. Our witness lists, for example, reveal clear evidence of ranking and favouritism at court, both for earls and bishops, and no doubt for lesser courtiers, based not upon any fixed ranking of earldoms or bishoprics but upon the personal and potentially fleeting favour of the King. The witness lists can likewise be used to reveal the fundamental loyalty of Henry's courtiers, so that of those regularly encountered as witnesses, virtually none was to defect to the rebellions either of 1173-4 or 1183. At the same time, this casts even more garish light on the fall of that great Lucifer, Thomas Becket: across the entire reign, virtually the only member of the King's inner circle either to rise so high or to fall so utterly from grace.

It is certainly an irony worth pondering that, had Becket (born c.1120) remained as chancellor in 1162, or had he as archbishop done as Henry wished and governed the church in harmony with the state, he might have remained active in royal service into the late 1180s,

perhaps even into the reign of King John, by the time of whose accession, in 1199, he would still have been under eighty years old: a mere stripling compared to various of the longer-lived of Henry II's courtiers. Elsewhere, what we find is a pattern of fidelity and adherence, sometimes across long spans of time, in the case of at least eleven clerks and fifteen laymen, of thirty years or more: thirty-five years in the cases of Hugh du Puiset, William bishop of Le Mans, Aubrey III de Vere and William d'Outillé. William de Sainte-Mère-Église, Henry's chamber clerk of the 1180s, it might be noted, was still witnessing at court almost forty years later, as bishop of London into the reign of Henry's grandson, Henry III: one of 30 or so such men prominent in witness lists before 1189, destined to survive as courtiers not just into the reign of Richard I but late into that of King John.<sup>136</sup>

Such glimpses of events after Henry's death carry us on, in conclusion, to the future prospects of the project from which such glimpses are obtained. The charters are now docketed and indexed. By the end of 2021, the entire edition will be in print, including Introduction. But the risk hereafter is that they will become an assembly of so many dead letters: evidences whose significance, it will be assumed, has been squeezed dry beneath their weight of commentary and annotation. They surely deserve better than this. So what ways forwards can be discerned? Three in particular occur to me. The first is geographical or rather cartographic. So many thousands of charters have now been indexed, their lists of estates identified, their beneficiaries and their places of issue duly noted. There is an opportunity here for an exercise in historical mapping, using modern GIS techniques to visualize not only the patterns of Plantagenet patronage, the King's itinerary and interests, but also the local authority wielded by individual beneficiaries, clergy and laity alike. The second is prosopographical, and leads on from the identification of beneficiaries and witnesses. Of the 207 most frequent witnesses to Henry II's charters, only 100 achieved notice in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Those not in the *ODNB*, beyond the smaller fry, include some of the most powerful figures at Henry's court, even within the top 20 witnesses: Richard du Hommet, Manasser Biset, Reginald de Courtenay, William fitz Ralph, Rotrou of Evreux, William fitz Hamo and William fitz Audelin, all of them important figures deserving further investigation. In due course, they merit a volume of their own

devoted to courtier careers and charters, beyond those issued in the name of the King. More generally, they suggest the need for a group biography or 'Plantagenet Prosopography', equivalent to what has previously been attempted for the Roman or Byzantine worlds, or the Anglo-Norman realm either side of 1066. This too is now made possible by the publication of Henry II's charters and the ongoing collection and edition of those of his wife, sons and brothers. We are already some way on the road here towards publication of the charters of Eleanor of Aquitaine (more than 170 charters), the future King John as count of Mortain (in excess of 370), Henry the Young King (c.40 charters, almost all of them listed by Roger Smith, formerly a pupil of Jim Holt at Nottingham), and Richard I (upwards of 1200 charters: a large collection, but nothing like so daunting as that of Richard's father).

As this in turn suggests, a third imperative remains editorial. Not merely to carry the edition to completion with Henry's immediate family and successors, closing the gap between the ending of the *Regesta* in 1154 and the chancery rolls that begin in 1199, but looking now to a rather wider prospect. The charters themselves are frequently illuminated by the chronicles for Henry II's reign, both in terms of circumstance and of date. It is now time for the light shed by the charters to be reflected back upon the chronicles. Although there have been many collective studies of the Plantagenet chroniclers, some of these studies more useful than others, surprisingly little has been done with the manuscripts, in many cases more or less untouched since William Stubbs in the 1860s or 70s.<sup>137</sup> We have modern re-editions and translations of Robert of Torigny and of part of the great output of Gerald of Wales.<sup>138</sup> But for the rest, even today there is no reliable translation either of the *Gesta* or of the *Chronica* of Roger of Howden; no translation of Ralph of Diss or Ralph of Coggeshall; not even a reliable edition of Ralph Niger's extraordinary diatribes against Plantagenet rule, save in the crude and too frequently overlooked version by Colonel Anstruther, published obscurely in 1851.<sup>139</sup> Even with respect to the manuscripts of these histories, Stubbs' conclusions are in many cases badly in need of revision.

Take the particular instance of Roger of Howden. Much work has been done both on Howden the man and Howden the chronicler.<sup>140</sup> Beginning with Doris Stenton, and therefore carrying us back once again to Reading and its predominance in twentieth-century medieval

studies, it has been widely accepted that Howden wrote both the *Gesta*, previously attributed to 'Benedict of Peterborough', and the *Chronica*, produced as the *Gesta*'s revised continuation into the reign of King John.<sup>141</sup> What seems not to have been noticed, but becomes apparent once we begin comparing the texts of Henry II's charters as supplied by the various manuscripts of *Gesta* and *Chronica*, is that the *Chronica* texts of such charters are not simply copied from those in the *Gesta*.<sup>142</sup> On the contrary, for the *Chronica*, Howden seems still to have had access to the originals from which the *Gesta*'s copies were made, allowing him to insert improved details within the *Chronica* copies, not preserved in those found in surviving manuscripts of the *Gesta*. This contention supports the view of David Corner, both that the *Chronica* was able to quote in full materials merely *précised* in the *Gesta*, and that the two surviving manuscripts of the *Gesta* exist at one or more remove from the *Gesta* manuscript with which Howden was working when his *Chronica* was written.<sup>143</sup>

We have resorted to the metaphor of illumination here, suggesting that the charters now be used to shed light on the chronicles. With reference to Henry II, perhaps the scientifically least accurate use of such a metaphor occurs in Amy Kelly's life of Eleanor of Aquitaine, first published in 1950. Thinking here of their tombs at Fontevraud, but becoming somewhat muddled in her optical physics, Kelly informs us that 'The highhearted Plantagenets are marble still; the dusty sunlight falls softly where they sleep'.<sup>144</sup> Thanks to Jim Holt, to the University of Reading, and to an edition now landing far from softly on the desks of those who take an interest in such things, the sleepers now wake. But in an essay in which I have attempted to blend the personal with the historical, the wider tradition of charter studies with the specific problems and opportunities of Plantagenet diplomatic, I would like to end not with Henry II but Holt, and to some extent with myself.

In some eyes, no doubt, the 50-year delay between Jim's leap of 1971 and the published edition of 2020 may appear an inexcusable abuse of the patience both of fellow scholars and of the various funding bodies that have supported this venture (for the past twenty years, principally the British Academy with a generous but hardly princely £5000 a year). In reality, we have moved with the speed of a mountain chamois, at least when compared with other such ventures: the 150 years between Sickel's prolegomena and Kölzer's edition of the charters

of Louis the Pious, for instance; the almost identical gulf between Delisle's *Catalogue* of 1856 and the final volume of Michel Nortier's edition of the acts of Philip Augustus (published in 2005, and even now still without index), let alone the incalculable abyss that divides Böhmer' *Regesta* or Huillard-Bréholles' *Historia Diplomatica* from the Monumenta edition of the charters of Frederick II, still only half way through the second decade of Frederick's reign with a further two and a half decades looming inscalable ahead.<sup>145</sup> Even the splendours of Hans Eberhard Mayer's edition of the c.850 acts of the kings of Jerusalem, completed in 2010, are divided by 117 years from Röhricht's *Regesta* first published in 1893.<sup>146</sup>

Not for any of these giants the short-term research 'project', so beloved of the modern UK funding councils. Nor for Stenton either, in whose honour this lecture series is named. As Doris Stenton recalls, in her memoir of Sir Frank (still, I suppose, at 109 pages the longest such memoir ever published by the British Academy), a London season ticket and 'the excellent train service of those days' were both essential considerations for any professor at Reading, let alone for a professor whose charter collections, begun long before 1912, did not properly bear fruit until 1929 in *First Century*, and whose *Anglo-Saxon England*, begun in 1929, not published until 1943, was still being revised and improved more than twenty years later.<sup>147</sup> Not for the Stentons the discreetly earmarked 'research day', set aside from a timetable otherwise devoted to committees and endless 'catch-ups' or coffee meetings, arranged through 'my P.A.'. Stenton's world is today long vanished, concreted over by the ninnymom of Research Excellence Frameworks and diversity-aware 'safe spaces': three words here - 'excellence', 'safe(ty)' and 'diversity' - that today mean precisely the opposite of what Stenton might have assumed them to mean.

I have noted already that charter scholarship, far being apolitical drudgery, from its very beginnings has been allied both to politics and to controversy. Those who in the 1860s edited the charters of the Merovingians or Frederick II, like those who began publishing the charters of Philip Augustus, victor of Bouvines, in 1916, in the shadow of Verdun, could not but reflect upon the extraordinary times in which they lived. By that same token, and here having done my best to set the edition of royal charters in the broadest of European perspectives, I must end with an acknowledgement not only of the foundations laid

here locally in Reading by Jim Holt, but of the fact that for the past twenty-five years, ever since Jim passed me the ropes, my search for the charters of Henry II has been a truly Anglo-European affair. Shameful therefore, that our edition should appear in the same year that Britain severed its links to the ‘Erasmus scheme’. Shameful that the British government should paper over such ignominious fracture with an alternative named in honour of a wartime code-breaker, hounded to death by his chauvinist and small-minded countrymen ‘pour le vice anglais’. The *Letters and Charters of Henry II* would have been impossible without the help of colleagues in France, not to mention Ireland, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Austria and half a dozen other countries, in all of which places I am fortunate to have found those I consider not merely colleagues but friends. To that extent, it follows in a tradition that I have done my best to trace back beyond the prejudices of Böhmer or Arbois de Jubainville to a transnational scholarly community, to which Mabillon and indeed Erasmus himself were proud to belong. Certainly, for all of the years of Jim Holt’s and my particular odyssey, there was a dream that was Europe. May that dream never perish.

## Notes

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For the invitation from which this essay emerged, I am indebted to Lindy Grant and Rebecca Rist. Revised versions were thereafter tried out on audiences at the universities of Lancaster, Princeton, and Bristol. For subsequent assistance, I am especially indebted to David Bates, Nicholas Bennett, Judith Everard, George Garnett, John Gillingham, John Hudson, Graham Loud, and Jörg Peltzer.

- 1 *The Letters and Charters of Henry II King of England 1154-1189* (henceforth *LCH*), edited by Nicholas Vincent, with an Itinerary and Subject Index by Judith Everard and palaeographical notes by Teresa Webber, from a project first devised by J.C. Holt, 6 vols (Oxford, 2020).
- 2 For Jim Holt (1922-2014), the standard biography is now that by George Garnett: <https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-108765> (accessed 14.i.21). The interview with him recorded in 2008 [https://archives.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Holt\\_Ja](https://archives.history.ac.uk/makinghistory/resources/interviews/Holt_Ja)

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[mes.html](#) finds him not at his sharpest, but nonetheless still capable of some characteristic bayonet thrusts.

3 *LCH*, i, pp. vii-xxii.

4 For a chronology here, and reference to what had originally been intended as a task for Daniel Power, see *LCH*, i, pp. xv-xix.

5 For further remarks here, see N. Vincent, 'Magna Carta and the English Historical Review: A Review Article', *English Historical Review*, 130 (2015), 646-84, esp. pp. 665-73.

6 Above n.2.

7 N. Bennett, *Wonderful to Behold: A Centenary History of the Lincoln Record Society, 1910-2010*, Lincoln Record Society 100 (2010), 50-1.

8 <https://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins/projects/scbi/>.

9 *English Episcopal Acta*, 45 vols (Oxford, 1980-) <<https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/projects/academy-research-projects-english-episcopal-acta/>>, taking its cue from F.M. Stenton, 'Acta Episcoporum', *Cambridge Historical Journal*, i (1929), 1-14, appropriately enough the very first article to be published in what is still one of the UK's leading scholarly journals.

10 J.C. Holt, 'The Acta of Henry II and Richard I of England 1154-1199: The Archive and its Historical Implications', *Fotografische Sammlungen mittelalterlicher Urkunden in Europa*, ed. P. Rück (Sigmaringen, 1989), 137-40.

11 C.R. Cheney, *The Records of Medieval England: An Inaugural Lecture* (Cambridge, 1956), 10, reprinted in idem, *Medieval Texts and Studies* (Oxford, 1973), 7: 'If some great enterprises, under present conditions, will take many decades to complete, historians might at least get interim profit from unpublished work in progress. To illustrate my point: although the charters and writs of King Henry II may never be printed in full, one may reasonably hope for a *Regesta*, a calendar on the German model, of that king's acts; but not for many years. If this is undertaken, cannot the calendar, as it grows, be prepared with duplicate cards accessible to students in the British Museum or the Public Record Office? And cannot those cards be copied, by photography or other means, for deposit in libraries outside London? Such expedients are not unknown, but they are singularly slow in coming into fashion in England'.

12 C.N.L. Brooke, 'Christopher Robert Cheney 1906-1987', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 73 (1987), 440-3, at p. 441 noting that by the 1950s, apart from Cheney and Kathleen Major, the Wilkins committee 'consisted of a few young men being trained in the ways of collaborative enterprise, and a larger number of prima donnas, who had grown grey not re-editing Wilkins'.

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13 *Church and Government in the Middle: Essays Presented to C.R. Cheney on his 70<sup>th</sup> Birthday*, ed. C.N.L. and R. Brooke (Cambridge, 1976).

14 Below n.84.

15 This includes all 1,870 items in *LCH*, vi, appendices 3, 6-8 (figures here in *LCH*, i, p. viii), and of the 3,038 items in *LCH*, i-v, at least 393 items (figures here to be supplied in *LCH: Introduction*).

16 *LCH*, i, no.410 (text A2).

17 *LCH*, i, no.560.

18 For the four originals of 1215, respectively 1,705 (Cotton Charter xiii.31b), 1,734 (Cotton Augustus ii.106), 1,395 (Lincoln) and 1,505cm2, see the dimensions reported in N. Vincent, *Magna Carta: Making and Legacy* (Oxford, 2015), ch.8 nos.1-4.

19 Guidance here can be found in A. Gransden, *Historical Writing in England*, 2 vols (London, 1974-82), and M. Staunton, *The Historians of Angevin England* (Oxford, 2017).

20 The classic study here remains *Royal Writs in England from the Conquest to Glanvill: Studies in the Early Common Law*, ed. R.C. van Caenegem, Selden Society 77 (1959).

21 J.C. Holt, 'The Writs of Henry II', The History of English Law: Centenary Essays on 'Pollock and Maitland', ed. J. Hudson, *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 89 (1996), 47-64, at p. 49 castigating Van Caenegem for producing 'a vast phylogeny of writs' (from 'phylogenesis', the development and diversification either of species or of particular features of an organism).

22 R. Sharpe, 'Address and Delivery in Anglo-Norman Charters', *Charters and Charter Scholarship in Britain and Ireland*, ed. M.T. Flanagan and J.A. Green (London, 2005), 32-52, and cf. idem, 'The Use of Writs in the Eleventh Century', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 32 (2003), 247-91.

23 See here John Gillingham's essay in the present collection.

24 In general here, see N. Vincent, 'The Personal Role of the Kings of England in the Production of Royal Letters and Charters (to 1330)', *Manu propria. Vom eigenhändigen Schreiben der Mächtigen (13.-15. Jahrhundert)*, ed. C. Feller and C. Lackner (Vienna, 2016), 171-184.

25 William fitz Stephen, in *Materials for the History of Thomas Becket*, ed. J.C. Robertson, 7 vols, Rolls Series (London, 1875-85), iii, 114 ... et *Nigellum de Salcauilla eas scripsisse lacrymantem*.

26 For whom, see J. Janssen, *J.F. Böhmers Leben, Briefe und kleinere Schriften*, 3 vols (Freiburg 1868), and the article by G. Opitz, in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 2 (1955), 393-4, whence < <https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/sfz5017.html> >.

27 Böhmer, *Regesta chronologico-diplomatica regum atque imperatorum Romanorum* (Frankfurt 1831), and idem, *Regesta chronologico-*

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*diplomatica Karolorum* (Frankfurt, 1833), for whose speed of composition, see T. Sickel, *Acta regum et imperatorum Karolinorum digesta et enarrata*, 2 vols (Vienna 1867), i, 54.

28 For the Carolingian centuries, see Sickel, *Acta* (1867), whose second volume comprises a *Regesta* of charters from Pippin to Louis the Pious, itself in turn updated as Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Karolingern*, ed E. Mühlbacher (Innsbruck, 1889). For the post-Carolingian centuries, besides Böhmer's own attempts at revision and continuation, see Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter Philipp, Otto IV, Friedrich II, Heinrich, Conrad IV, Heinrich Raspe, Wilhelm und Richard: 1198-1272*, ed. J. Flicker, E. Winkelmann and F. Wilhelm, 3 vols (Innsbruck, 1881-1901); Böhmer, *Die Regesten des Kaiserreichs unter den Herrschern aus dem Sächsischen Hause: 919-1024*, ed. E. von Ottenthal (Innsbruck, 1893), with various subsequent updates and supplements, today carrying the series sporadically part way into the reign of Maximilian I (1483-1519). See also the modern online version, at <<http://www.regesta-imperii.de/en/home.html>>.

29 For the *Monumenta*, see H. Bresslau, 'Geschichte der *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*', *Neues Archiv der Gesellschaft für ältere deutsche Geschichtskunde*, 42 (1921), with useful English summary by M.D. Knowles, 'Great Historical Enterprises III: The *Monumenta Germaniae Historica*', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series 10 (1960), 129-50, reprinted in Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises* (London 1963), and more recently H. Fuhrmann, "Sind eben alles Menschen gewesen". *Gelehrtenleben im 19. und 20. Jahrhundert, dargestellt am Beispiel der Monumenta Germaniae Historica und ihrer Mitarbeiter* (Munich 1996), with a useful summary/review by Alexandre Escudier, in *Annales*, 53 (1998), 158-61, not least drawing attention to the tragic circumstances in which Philipp Jaffé, excluded from the *Monumenta*'s inner counsels, committed suicide in 1870.

30 'Diplomata regum Francorum e stirpe Merowingica', ed. K.G.F. Pertz, *Diplomatum imperii tomus I*, MGH *Diplomata* (in folio) (Hanover 1872); *Die Urkunden Konrad I, Heinrich I und Otto I*, ed. T. Sickel, MGH *Urkunden der deutschen Könige und Kaiser* i (Hanover, 1879-84), enthusiastically reviewed by Arthur Giry, in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 41 (1880), 396-405, with (at p. 396n.) details of the savaging of Pertz's edition, not least in a long review by Sickel himself. Pertz's fiasco is now entirely superceded by *Die Urkunden der Merowinger*, ed. T. Kölzer and others, 2 vols, MGH (Hanover 2001), and cf. T. Kölzer, 'Die Editionen der merowingischen Königsurkunden und Kaiser Ludwigs des Frommen', *Quellenforschung im 21. Jahrhundert: Vorträge der Veranstaltungen zum 200-jährigen Bestehen der MGH vom 27. bis 29.*

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*Juni 2019*, ed. M. Hartmann and H. Zimmerhackl, MGH Schriften 75 (Wiesbaden, 2020), 3-24.

31 See here, the brief necrology noticing his attendance at the École's classes (1850-2), in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 69 (1908), 526, and the edition of his correspondence from the 1850s in W. Erben, *Theodor Sickel: Denkwürdigkeiten aus der Werdezeit eines deutschen Geschichtsforschers* (Munich/Berlin, 1926), his Parisian memories dominated by politics and the rise of Louis Napoleon.

32 For Sickel, see Erben, *Theodor Sickel*, Bresslau, 'Geschichte', 400-3; Knowles, 'The Monumenta', 139, 142n.; Fuhrmann, "Sind eben alles Menschen gewesen", and the article by W. Stelzer, in *Neue Deutsche Biographie*, 24 (1910), 309-11, whence <<https://www.deutsche-biographie.de/gnd118797026.html#ndbcontent>>.

33 For an English summary here, see M.D. Knowles, 'Great Historical Enterprises II: The Maurists', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5<sup>th</sup> series 9 (1959), 169-87, reprinted in Knowles, *Great Historical Enterprises*.

34 Widely known, thanks to the *Mémoires* of the Duc de Saint-Simon, and occasioned by the Cardinal de Bouillon's determination to find proofs of his descent from the senior branch of the house of Auvergne, dragging both Mabillon and Baluze into a maze of forgeries, for which see most recently M. Wrede, 'Autonomie nobiliaire, mémoire familiale et pouvoir du souverain sous Louis XIV', *Revue Historique*, 315 (2013), 575-600, esp. pp. 586-93, and cf. A. Bruel, 'Essai sur la chronologie du cartulaire de Brioude', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 27 (1866), 450-1.

35 In general, see L. Delisle, *Le Cabinet des manuscrits de la Bibliothèque impériale*, 3 vols (Paris 1868-81), esp. vol.1, and for subsequent developments in the state patronage of historical studies, through to the Revolution of 1789, see X. Charmes, *Le Comité des Travaux historiques et scientifiques (histoire et documents)*, 3 vols (Paris, 1886), preface to vol.1.

36 For summaries here, see Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, with each of these individual collections now with its own printed catalogue. For Gaignières, see now A. Ritz-Guilbert, *La Collection Gaignières: un inventaire du royaume au XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle* (Paris, 2016).

37 For this and what follows, see M.-N. Baudouin-Matuszek, 'La Publication des ordonnances des rois de France: trois cent ans de travaux', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 167 (2009), 487-537, esp. pp. 487-98; Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, i, 557-75, esp. pp. 572-3; D. Gembicki, *Histoire et politique à la fin de l'Ancien Régime: Jacob-Nicolas Moreau* (Paris, 1975).

38 Baudouin-Matuszek, 'La Publication', 493-8.

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39 Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, i, 559, and cf. pp. 573-5 for further figures, suggesting a total collection of more than 300,000 items, including a distinct series of 3,000 drawings of seals, now Bnf mss. latines 9976-82.

40 For which, see H. Omont, *Inventaire des manuscrits de la collection Moreau* (Paris, 1891), now supplemented by an electronic search engine for the first 111 volumes of the series, extending to the year 1208: <<http://telma-chartes.irht.cnrs.fr/moreau/page/introduction>>, the work of Benoît-Michel Tock. For a detailed survey of which particular antiquaries gathered the charter materials, province by province, see Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, i, 558-66, at pp. 566-7 noting that work extended to Flanders, Rome under Francois-Jean-Gabriel de La Porte du Theil (1742-1815), and London, where Bréquigny himself resided for two and a half years from 1764 onwards, copying as many as 7,000 individual documents, for the most part from the British Museum and the Tower, now Bnf mss. Moreau 625-733.

41 *Table chronologique des diplômes, chartes, titres et actes imprimés concernant l'histoire de France*, 8 vols (Paris, 1769-1876), with a supplementary *Index bibliographique des ouvrages cités dans les cinq premiers volumes*, by Jean-Marie Pardessus (Paris, 1846).

42 *Table chronologique*, i (1769), with a preface by Bréquigny, at p. vi claiming that the calendar involved sifting more than 12,000 individual volumes, and at pp. xi-xiii acknowledging the difficulty, surely fatal to his enterprise, of arranging many thousands of undated charters in sequence, month by month and year by year.

43 *Diplomata, chartae, epistolae, leges aliaque instrumenta ad res gallo-francicas spectantia*, ed. J.M. Pardessus (Paris, 1843-9), with laborious facing-page Latin and French apparatus, and with a summary of the project as a whole by Arbois de Jubainville, in *Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier roi de France (1059-1108)*, ed. M. Prou (Paris, 1908), pp. ii-iii.

44 L. Delisle, *Catalogue des actes de Philippe-Auguste* (Paris, 1856); M.H. Arbois de Jubainville, *Histoire des ducs et des comtes de Champagne*, 7 vols (Paris, 1859-69), esp. vols iii (1861), 325-404; v (1863); vi (1866), 1-203, and cf. (from a non chartiste, but in similar mode) A. Luchaire, *Études sur les actes de Louis VII* (Paris 1885); idem, *Louis VI, le gros: annales de sa vie et de son règne 1081-1137* (Paris, 1890), continued in the work of F. Scéhna, *Catalogue des actes d'Henri Ier, roi de France (1031-1060)* (Paris, 1907), and in due course that of the francophile American, William Mendel Newman, *Catalogue des actes de Robert II, roi de France* (Paris, 1937).

45 A. Wauters and others, *Table chronologique des chartes et diplômes imprimés concernant l'histoire de Belgique*, 11 vols in 16 (Brussels, 1866-1971); *Regesta diplomatica historiae Danicæ*, 2 vols (Copenhagen, 1847-

1892); *Regesta Comitum Sabaudiae ... ad an. MDCCCLIII*, ed. D. Carutti (Turin, 1889); *Regesta regni Hierosolymitani (MXCVII-MCCXCI)*, ed. Reinhold Röhricht (Innsbruck 1893); *Regesta Norvegica*, ed. G. Storm and others (Oslo, 1898-).

46 As noted by Arbois de Jubainville, reviewing Sickel's *Beiträge zur Diplomatik*, in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 41 (1880), 88-9.

47 For the incorporation of the Moreau mss. within the so-called Bibliothèque de législation attached to the royal chancery, in 1790 transferred to the embryonic Bnf, see Delisle, *Cabinet des manuscrits*, i, 573-5, noting that part of this deposit remained lodged in the chancery and was only finally removed to the Bnf in 1861.

48 *Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier*, pp. vi-vii.

49 Ibid., p. viii. These collections remain consultable in the archives of the Institut de France and, thanks to Richard Allen, are drawn upon in my edition of *LCH*, nos. 238-41, 567-70, 847, 1356-7, 1838, 1857, 1860, 1862-4, 1872, 2363, 2393, 3978.

50 For the wider influence of the Franco-Prussian War over the writing of history in France, see P. der Boer, *History as a Profession: The Study of History in France, 1818-1914* (Princeton, 1998).

51 French reviewing of German books thinned to a trickle in the 1870s, a rare but necessary exception being the anonymous review of Röhricht's work on crusader sources, in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 36 (1875), 155-8. For notice of Sickel's work on the Carolingian and Saxon kings, see thereafter the generally favourable reviews by Arthur Giry and Arbois de Jubainville, in *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 41 (1880), 82-92, 396-405. By 1948, and entirely ignoring the credentials of his compatriots Delisle or Giry, Georges Tessier was describing Sickel as '(le) plus grand diplomate du XIXe siècle': *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 107 (1948), 97.

52 *Historia Diplomatica Friderici Secundi*, ed. J.-L.-A. Huillard-Bréholles, 6 vols in 12 (Paris, 1852-61); idem, *Vie et correspondance de Pierre de la Vigne* (Paris, 1865).

53 G. Bourgin, 'Comment les Archives nationales ont été sauvées en mai 1871', *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 99 (1938), 425-7.

54 *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 31 (1870), 582-4, esp. p. 582. For Huillard-Bréholles, school-master at the Lycée Charlemagne (1838-42), employed by the archaeologically-fixated 8<sup>th</sup> Duc de Luynes (1802-67) to translate the chronicle of Matthew Paris, attached to the Archives impériales from 1856, died in Paris, 23 March 1871, there is a bald list of offices and publications in C.F. Franqueville, *Le Premier Siècle de l'Institut de France*, i (Paris, 1895), 345 no.764.

55 *Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier*, pp. ix-xi.

56 *Die Urkunden Pippins, Karlmanns und Karls des Grossen*, ed. E. Mühlbacher, MGH Urkunden der Karolinger i (Hanover, 1906); *Die Urkunden Ludwigs des Fromme*, ed. T. Kölzer and others, 3 vols, MGH Urkunden der Karolinger ii (Wiesbaden, 2016), i, pp. ix-xii, for Kölzer's chronicle of earlier efforts here, beginning with Sickel's *Acta regum et imperatorum Karolinorum* of 1867. Remarkably, there seems to have been no chartiste review of Mühlbacher's edition, although Julien Havet had in 1880 reviewed, not entirely favourably, Mühlbacher's updating of Böhmer's listings of Carolingian diplomas, and his monograph on the charters of Charles the Fat: *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 41 (1880), 620-3.

57 Arbois de Jubainville, in *Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier*, pp. ix-xi.

58 *Recueil des actes de Charles II le Chauve, roi de France*, ed. A. Giry, M. Prou and G. Tessier, 2 vols (Paris, 1933-43).

59 *Recueil des actes de Philippe Ier* (1908); *Recueil des actes de Lothaire et de Louis V, rois de France (954-987)*, ed. L. Halphen and F. Lot (Paris, 1908); *Recueil des actes de Louis IV, roi de France (936-954)*, ed. P. Lauer (Paris, 1914).

60 For the circumstances, described in detail, see N. Vincent, 'Léopold Delisle, l'Angleterre et le Recueil des Actes de Henri II', *Léopold Delisle: Colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (8-10 octobre 2004)*, ed. F. Vielliard and G. Désiré dit Gosset (St-Lô, 2007), 231-57.

61 *Recueil des actes de Henri II, roi d'Angleterre et duc de Normandie, concernant les provinces françaises et les affaires de France*, 5 vols (Paris, 1909-27): 1 (Introduction); 2 (Atlas); 3-4 (Texts); 5 (Index), vols 3-4 completed by Élie Berger, the index compiled by an unknown hand.

62 The classic guide here remains D.C. Douglas, *English Scholars*, first published 1939 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., London, 1951).

63 See here V. Fouque, *Du Gallia Christiana et de ses auteurs, étude bibliographique* (Paris, 1857).

64 Bréquigny, *Table chronologique*, i (1769), p. iv: 'L'histoire d'Angleterre étoit demeurée dans le même état d'imperfection où semble encore languir la nôtre, lorsque le fameux Recueil de tous les actes relatifs à cette histoire fut publié au commencement de ce siècle, par les ordres de la Reine Anne, et par les soins du savant Rymer, dont une si grande enterprise a rendu le nom immortel'.

65 For the 1693 commission to Rymer as historiographer royal, see (Stephen Whatley), *Acta Regia or an Account of the Treaties, Letters and Instruments between the Monarchs of England and Foreign Powers, publish'd in Mr Rymer's Foedera*, i (London, 1726), front endmatter, also abstracted in the 1816 Record Commission edition of the *Foedera*, I part i, pp. ii-iii, amidst a wider introduction to Rymer's work.

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66 *Foedera, Conventiones, Literae et cujuscunque generis acta publica*, ed. T. Rymer, vol.1 (1102-1272) (London, 1704), 15-62, printing texts now *LCH*, nos.517, 686, 1026-7, 1259-60, 1669, 1779, 2049, 2446, 2996, 3020, and cf. nos.3887, 3892, every one of these texts already published in an edition of some sort, even before Rymer got to work. The ordinance on wreck that Rymer (pp. 36-7) attributes to Henry II is in reality of Henry III (cf. *LCH*, no.4244).

67 *LCH*, nos.62, 69, 100, 222, 436, 464, 935, 990, 1005, 1262, 1332, 1347, 1391, 1571, 1632, 1684, 1934, 1980, 2006, 2108, 2226, 2304, 2754, 2756, 2811, 2872, 3008, and cf. nos.1399, 2446a, 4106, where the *Foedera* (1816) printed evidence for texts of Henry II now missing. *LCH*, no.2286 was printed in the 1740 3<sup>rd</sup> extended edition of Rymer by George Holmes, but in a later part of the series never reached by the Record Commission edition.

68 *LCH*, nos.36, 43, 110, 178, 184, 202, 212, 217, 223, 225-7, 247, 256, 277, 279, 294, 300, 324-5, 330, 334, 348, 352, 430, 512, 514, 567, 575, 632, 636, 653, 691, 713, 734, 749, 751, 763, 777, 783, 786-8, 800, 802, 902-4, 935, 1028, 1044, 1103, 1120, 1213, 1230-1, 1238, 1289, 1373, 1376, 1395, 1403, 1407, 1414, 1456, 1464, 1473, 1477-9, 1482, 1484, 1519, 1529, 1532-3, 1544, 1546, 1555-6, 1560-1, 1568, 1576-7, 1579-80, 1589, 1646, 1672, 1695, 1762, 1765, 1772, 1788, 1804, 1826-7, 1845, 1853, 1886, 1914, 1916, 1920, 1929, 1946, 1950, 1957, 1966, 1976-7, 1988, 1994-7, 2069, 2073, 2102, 2111-12, 2152, 2185, 2226, 2240, 2286, 2325, 2331, 2342, 2349, 2375, 2390, 2405, 2412, 2474-5, 2484, 2488, 2510, 2541, 2549, 2555, 2557, 2559, 2561, 2574, 2578, 2581, 2583, 2591, 2593, 2600, 2643, 2673, 2705, 2753, 2765, 2780, 2792, 2794, 2813, 2827, 2875, 2877-8, 2887, 2890, 2907-8, 2912-13, 2920, 2925, 2934-5, 2950-1, 2957, and from the ducal charters a further eight, nos.3879, 3905, 3936, 3938, 3960, 3996-7, 4002. Stevens adds twenty to the tally, nos.323, 891-3, 896, 899, 1131, 1287, 1290, 1421, 1633, 1887-8, 2575, 2586-8, 2592, 2936, 2941.

69 *Sir Christopher Hatton's Book of Seals*, ed. L.C. Loyd and D.M. Stenton (Oxford, 1950), the source for eight entries in *LCH*, nos.277, 637, 977, 1003, 1769, 1823, 2006, 2558, in five instances (nos. 637, 977, 1003, 1769, 2006) supplying facsimiles of original charters otherwise lost during or after the Civil War.

70 *Monasticon Anglicanum sive pandectae coenobiorum Benedictinorum, Cluniacensium, Cisterciensium, Carthusianorum* (London 1655), front end matter, opening: 'Inter maxima Christianissimi nascentis miracula merito habendum est ecclesiae incrementum, quæ nec veritatis odio, nec persecutionis rabie oppressa, in ultimas terrarum orbis oras, etiam in alterum hunc nostrum orbem propagata est ...'. This follows Wenceslaus Hollar's engraved frontispiece, with its image of a gateway, at bottom left a

pious medieval king endows a monastery, on the right Henry VIII decrees the Dissolution ('sic volo'), between them a tag from Ovid (*Metamorphoses* 6: 28-9) entirely appropriate to any antiquary: 'Non omnia grandior ætas quæ fugiamus habet'. For John Marsham (1602-85), joined the King (and Dugdale) at Oxford, estates sequestrated under Cromwell, MP for Rochester in the Convention Parliament that restored Charles II, knighted 1660, see the *ODNB* entry by Shirley Burgoine Black.

71 Rymer, *Foedera*, i (1704), published address 'ad lectorem', for the 1101 Treaty, following an obsequious dedicatory epistle addressed to Queen Anne. For Rymer more generally, see the article by A. Sherbo in *ODNB*, and for the 1663 plot, A. Hopper, 'The Farnley Wood Plot and the Memory of the Civil Wars in Yorkshire', *Historical Journal*, 45 (2002), 281-303.

72 N. Vincent, *Norman Charters from English Sources: Antiquaries, Archives and the Rediscovery of the Anglo-Norman Past*, Pipe Roll Society n.s. 97 (2013), 25, and for Carte, see the entry by Stuart Handley in *ODNB*.

73 W.D. Macray, *Annals of the Bodleian Library* (Oxford, 1868), 134-7 (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 1890, pp. 186-9).

74 For various sidelights on the Record Commission, not least in its dealings with France, see Vincent, *Norman Charters*, 32, 41-2, 67-70; idem, 'The Kings of England and their Accounting Procedures (1100-1300): Theory and Practice', *De l'autel à l'écritoire: Genèse des comptabilités principales en Occident (XIIe-XIVe siècle)*, ed. T. Pécout (Paris, 2017), 107-30; idem, 'Enrolment in Medieval English Government: Sickness or Cure?', *The Roll in England and France in the Late Middle Ages: Form and Content*, ed. S.G. Holz, J. Peltzer and M. Shirota (Berlin, 2020), 103-46.

75 See here M.M. Condon and E.M. Hallam, 'Government Printing of the Public Records in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal of the Society of Archivists*, 7 (1982-5), 348-88.

76 Bréquigny, *Table chronologique*, i (1769), p. xiv, claiming that King John signed no less than 300 originals of Magna Carta, of which 17 were still extant.

77 Vincent, 'Enrolment'. Exceptions here were the Rolls series editions of the cartularies of Gloucester, Ramsey, Malmesbury, and Salisbury, the first of these published in 1863.

78 From Stubbs' editions of Howden, Ralph of Diss ('Diceto'), Gervase of Canterbury, and the Canterbury letter book, see *LCH*, nos. 62, 195, 432, 462, 474-5, 477-8, 480-1, 498, 517, 627-8, 686, 1094, 1124, 1259-60, 1262, 1327a, 1351, 1629a, 1669, 1779, 2049-50, 2224, 2446, 2709-11, 2805, 2965, 3002, 3008, 3014, 3016, 4502.

79 Here setting aside the King's assizes, only six charters of Henry II appeared in the first edition of Stubbs' *Select Charters* (1870): *LCH*, nos. 1, 1571,

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1980, 2868-9, 2965. To these two more were added by the time of the 9<sup>th</sup> edition (1913): *LCH*, nos.426, 2010.

80 For Kemble, see the *ODNB* article by J.D. Haigh, itself drawing on B. Dickins, 'J.M. Kemble and Old English Scholarship', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 25 (1939), 51-84, and cf. M.C. Dilkey and H. Schneider, 'John Mitchell Kemble and the Brothers Grimm', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, 40 (1941), 461-78. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the almost total indifference of French scholars to the Old English past, no part of the *Codex* was reviewed for the École des Chartes.

81 W. de Gray Birch, *Cartularium Saxonicum*, 3 vols (London, 1885-93), again without review by the École des Chartes, with no *ODNB* entry and minimal biographical information elsewhere.

82 *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*. i (1066-1100), ed. H.W.C. Davis, (Oxford, 1913), with a polite but comprehensively damning review by J.H. Round, *English Historical Review*, 29 (1914), 347-56.

83 *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*. ii (1100-1135), ed. C. Johnson and H.A. Cronne (Oxford, 1956), reviewed with equal politeness but no less critical acumen, by Christopher Brooke, *English Historical Review*, 72 (1957), 687-95. This despite the fact that as early as 1928, at the time of H.W.C. Davis' death, it was reported that volumes 2 and 3 of the *Regesta* were 'practically complete': F.M. Powicke, 'H.W.C. Davis', *English Historical Review*, 43 (1928), 578-84, esp. pp. 580-1, with Powicke's own trenchant criticisms.

84 *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*. iii (1135-1154), and iv ('Facsimiles of Original Charters and Writs of King Stephen'), ed. H.A. Cronne and R.H.C. Davis (Oxford, 1968-9), both reviewed by Christopher Brooke, *English Historical Review*, 84 (1969), 569-72; 88 (1971), 158-9, and note Brooke's conclusion to the former review (p. 572), that the series 'prompts one final, urgent question: who will now take up the baton left by the editors of the *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, and by Delisle, and give us the corpus of the charters, English as well as continental, of the first of the Angevins?'.

85 *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum: The Acta of William I (1066-1087)*, ed. D. Bates (Oxford, 1998), and cf. *Recueil des actes des ducs de Normandie de 911 à 1066*, ed. M. Fauroux (Caen 1961), this latter beginning as a 1951 thesis of the École des Chartes.

86 To appear with Oxford Scholarly Editions Online, together with an online version of the 1998 edition.

87 For Wales, following K.L. Maund, *Handlist of the Acts of Native Welsh Rulers, 1132-1283* (Cardiff, 1996), in the edition by Huw Pryce, with the assistance of C. Insley, *The Acts of Welsh Rulers: 1120-1283* (Cardiff, 2005). For Scotland following various handlists produced from the 1950s

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onwards, in the series *Regesta Regum Scottorum*, despite its title a full edition rather than a German 'Regesta', inaugurated with Geoffrey Barrow's edition of *The Acts of Malcolm IV, King of Scots, 1153-1165* (Edinburgh, 1960).

88 <<https://actswilliam2henry1.wordpress.com/>>.

89 The only real exception here was his edition of 'Willoughby Deeds', *A Medieval Miscellany for Doris Mary Stenton*, ed. P.M. Barnes and C.F. Slade, Pipe Roll Society n.s. 36 (1962), 167-87. For his occasional sorties into the world of manuscript scholarship, and their not always uncritical reception, see D. Corner, 'The Earliest Surviving Manuscripts of Roger of Howden's "Chronica"', *English Historical Review*, 98 (1983), 297-310; N. Vincent, 'A Roll of Knights Summoned to Campaign in 1213', *Historical Research*, 66 (1993), 89-97.

90 *LCH*, i, pp. xiv-xix.

91 *LCH*, i, p. xii.

92 Figures here from *LCH*, vi, 369-70 appendix 9, also noting Delisle and Berger's publication of 75 ducal charters issued by Henry before 1154.

93 *Acta of Henry II and Richard I: Hand-List of Documents Surviving in the Original in Repositories in the United Kingdom*, ed. J.C. Holt and R. Mortimer, List and Index Society Special Series 21 (1986).

94 *The Itinerary of King Richard I, with Studies on Certain Matters of Interest Connected with his Reign*, ed. L. Landon, Pipe Roll Society n.s. 13 (1935).

95 Cf. *LCH*, nos.2696-702.

96 *LCH*, no.1771.

97 *LCH*, no.2560.

98 *LCH*, nos.59, 60.

99 *LCH*, nos.1730, 2667.

100 For instance *LCH*, nos.1429-30. Even as I write these words (11 February 2021), Marie Therese Flanagan has emailed me an image of an original of Henry II (*LCH*, no. 1011), previously assumed lost with the Irish Public Record Office in 1922, in fact preserved as a glass lantern slide now in the collections of the Royal Irish Academy.

101 For a particularly vexed instance, see *LCH*, no.2678, whose textual notes occupy almost as much space as the text itself.

102 Sickel, introduction to his edition of Conrad and Heinrich I, admirably and for the most part admiringly summarized by Giry, in the *Bibliothèque de l'École des Chartes*, 41 (1880), 396-405.

103 They are, for example, more or less as employed by Delisle and Berger in their edition of the French charters of Henry II.

104 *LCH*, no.68 (acknowledging uncertainty at text notes 'a' and 'b'), and for the only other such writ, see no.32a.

105 *LCH*, nos.545, 1117, 2081, 2335, 2835.

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106 *LCH*, no.1679, with note also correcting the place of issue from Delisle's Chécy (near Orléans) to Chizé (200 kilometers to the south west).

107 *LCH*, no.583.

108 *LCH*, no.597.

109 A. Grafton, 'Jean Hardouin: The Antiquary as Pariah', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 62 (1999), 241-67.

110 Especially *LCH*, nos.134, 137-9.

111 N. Vincent, 'Henry II and the Monks of Battle: The Battle Chronicle Unmasked', *Belief and Culture in the Middle Ages: Studies Presented to Henry Mayr-Harting*, ed. R. Gameson and H. Leyser (Oxford, 2001), 264-8.

112 H. Prentout, 'De l'origine de la formule "Dei Gratia" dans les chartes de Henri II', *Mémoires de l'Académie Nationale des Sciences, Arts et Belles-Lettres de Caen* (1918-20), 341-93, republished in pamphlet form (Caen, 1920), at pp. 45-6 noting that the paper was first presented to the Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres on 22 October 1920, and cf. *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, Comptes Rendus des Séances* (1920), 368.

113 An argument developed at length in the forthcoming Introduction to *LCH*.

114 Figures here in *LCH*, i, pp. ix-x.

115 For all of these figures, see *LCH*, Introduction.

116 Figures here from a count of instances listed in *LCH*, vii (Indexes), *sub* 'Henry I', ignoring cases where these phrases are indexed to apparatus rather than texts.

117 *LCH*, vii (Indexes), *sub* 'Stephen King of England'.

118 Penetrating discussion here by G.J. White, *Restoration and Reform, 1153-1165* (Cambridge, 2000).

119 N. Vincent, 'The Murderers of Thomas Becket', *Bischofsmord im Mittelalter*, ed. N. Fryde and D. Reitz (Göttingen, 2003), 211-72.

120 See, for instance R.W. Eyton, *Court, Household and Itinerary of King Henry II* (London, 1878), 23, 254, for the same charter here dated both to January 1157 and to December 1183, in reality (*LCH*, no.237) almost certainly forged. For Delisle and Berger, see *LCH*, vi, 369-70.

121 Figures here in *LCH*, Introduction, and provisionally in N. Vincent, 'La Normandie dans les chartes du roi Henri II (1154-1189): archives, intentions et conséquences', *911-2011: Penser les mondes normands médiévaux: Actes du colloque de Cerisy-la-Salle (29 septembre-2 octobre 2011)*, ed. D. Bates and P. Bauduin (Caen, 2016), 405-28, esp. pp. 407-8.

122 Vincent, 'La Normandie', 410-11.

123 Ibid., 421-4.

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124 *LCH*, vi, appendix 5, no.4006.

125 *LCH*, no.261.

126 For what follows, see *LCH*, Introduction.

127 Charters issued at Norwich (*LCH*, nos.31, 1957), Thetford (no. 2600), and Bury St Edmunds (nos. 30, 367, 519, 673, 1313-15, 1372, 1776, 1954, 2441, 2650n.), and note a mere three charters issued in either Cambridgeshire or Huntingdonshire, at Brampton (nos. 510-11, 614, 2133, 2482, 2537, 2601) and at Cambridge (nos. 2630-1), only one or two of these after 1158 (nos. 2630-1, and cf. the suspected forgery no. 2537).

128 *LCH*, Introduction (forthcoming), and cf. charters issued at Shaftesbury (*LCH*, nos.1695, 2470), and at Cheddar (no.76), in only one instance (no. 2470) in the later half of the reign.

129 Vincent, 'La Normandie', 417-18.

130 T.A.M. Bishop, *Scriptores Regis* (Oxford, 1961), and for updated figures here, see N. Vincent, 'Scribes in the Chancery of Henry II, King of England, 1154-1189', *Le scribe d'archives dans l'Occident médiéval: formations, carrières, réseaux. Actes du colloque international de Namur, 2-4 mai 2012*, ed. X. Hermand, J.-F. Nieus and É. Renard (Turnhout, 2019), 133-62, esp. pp. 160-1.

131 Vincent, 'Scribes', 161.

132 *Acta of William I*, ed. Bates, nos.107, 180.

133 N. Vincent, 'Les Normands de l'entourage d'Henri II Plantagenêt', *La Normandie et l'Angleterre au Moyen Age*, ed. P. Bouet and V. Gazeau (Caen, 2003), 75-88.

134 Most significantly here, see D. Crouch, 'Normans and Anglo-Normans: A Divided Aristocracy?', *England and Normandy in the Middle Ages*, ed. D. Bates and A. Curry (London, 1994), 51-67.

135 N. Vincent, 'King Henry II and the Poitevins', *La Cour Plantagenêt (1154-1204): Actes du colloque tenu à Thouars du 30 avril au 2 mai 1999*, ed. M. Aurell (Poitiers, 2000), 103-35; idem, 'Jean sans terre et les origines de la Gascogne anglaise : droits et pouvoirs dans les arcanes des sources', *Annales du Midi*, 123 (2011), 533-66.

136 Details in *LCH*, Introduction.

137 See above n.19.

138 *Gerald of Wales: De Principiis Instructione*, ed. R. Bartlett (Oxford, 2018); *The Chronography of Robert of Torigny*, ed. T. N. Bisson (Oxford, 2020).

139 *Radulfi Nigri Chronica: The Chronicles of Ralph Niger*, ed. R. Anstruther (London, 1851), 167-9.

140 For the man, most recently and effectively by Archie Duncan, and John Gillingham: J. Gillingham, 'The Travels of Roger of Howden and his

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Views of the Irish, Scots and Welsh', *Anglo-Norman Studies*, 20 (1998), 151-69, reprinted in Gillingham, *The English in the Twelfth Century* (Woodbridge, 2000), 69-91; A. A. M. Duncan, 'Roger of Howden and Scotland 1187-1201', *Church, Chronicle and Learning in Medieval and Early Renaissance Scotland*, ed. B. Crawford (Edinburgh, 1999), 134-58.

141 D. M. Stenton, 'Roger of Howden and Benedict', *English Historical Review*, 68 (1953), 574-82, and more recently D. Corner, 'The "Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi" and "Chronica" of Roger of Howden', *Historical Research*, 56 (1983), 126-44.

142 *LCH*, nos. 62, 517, 686, 1259, 1669, 1779, 2049-50, 2446, 4502, esp. nos. 517, 1779, 2049, 2446, 4502.

143 Corner, 'The "Gesta"', 128-9 (cf. *LCH*, no.4377); idem, 'The Earliest Surviving Manuscripts of Roger of Howden's "Chronica"', *English Historical Review*, 98 (1983), 300, 303, merely glancing at the relationship between the *Chronica* and the two surviving *Gesta* manuscripts, BL Cotton Julius A xi and Vitellius E xvii. Here improving on Stubbs's suggestion (Howden, *Chronica*, i, pp. lii) that the expansions in the *Chronica*, not copied from the *Gesta*, are 'for the most part verbal only', with very few significant details newly introduced.

144 Amy Kelly, *Eleanor of Aquitaine and the Four Kings* (Cambridge Mass., 1950), here quoting from the first English edition (London, 1952), 387.

145 Huillard-Bréholles, *Historia Diplomatica; Die Urkunden Friedrichs II*, ed. W. Koch and others, 5 vols, MGH Diplomata (Hanover/Wiesbaden, 2002-17), to date publishing just under 2,000 charters for the period 1212-26, and now without its chief editor, Walter Koch (1942-2019).

146 Röhricht, *Regesta; Die Urkunden der lateinischen Könige von Jerusalem*, ed. H.E. Mayer and J. Richard, 4 vols, MGH Diplomata Regum Latinorum Hierosolymitanorum i-iv (Hanover, 2010).

147 D.M. Stenton, 'Frank Merry Stenton 1880-1967', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 54 (1969), 315-423.