The Reign of William the Lion, king of Scotland

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I

Of the many political institutions which took shape during the centuries following the disintegration of the empire in the West, monarchy, or more specifically kingship, proved the most ubiquitous and the most enduring. Kingship survived, or was revived, or came to be established, not only in many different parts of western Europe, but also in many different forms. Certain basic characteristics were no doubt common to all monarchies, and others were shared by the greater number. If we make the rather large leap forward to a much later period, the twelfth century, we find kingship still flourishing, and still manifesting itself under many different forms. But it seems possible to distinguish, in this period, between two main types of monarchy, represented on the one hand by the Norman kings of Sicily, the Norman and Angevin kings of England and the Hohenstaufen kings of Germany, and on the other by the Capetian kings of France, the kings of Hungary and the small but up-and-coming kings of Castile, Aragon and Leon. It would not be possible to defend a thesis which made this distinction sharp and mutually exclusive. Monarchies were of very easy virtue, not objecting in the least to promiscuity if it helped them to feel socially or financially secure. On the contrary, they emulated and imitated and borrowed from one another with unashamed abandon. Nevertheless, it does not seem fanciful to discern an old-fashioned strain in kingship, deriving its power from atavistic roots in tribe and nation, in divine descent or at least in a special divine sanction, laying emphasis on the holiness of the king's person and on his role as protector and defender of his people. It is of the essence of such a concept that the king must be

lawfully descended from ancient and preferably native royal stock, that his accession and reception as king must have in some sense the free assent of his people, and that he must show in his own life the capacity for holiness which will demonstrate beyond contradiction the sacerdotal property of kingship. Although this concept drew readily upon the Old Testament for its conscious models and for much of its imagery, its unconscious historical roots were pagan and barbarian, and the ease with which scriptural echoes could be heard was due primarily to the cultural parallels between the Hebraic kingdoms and at least the more highly developed among the barbarian monarchies.

In contrast with this concept, or myth, if that term is preferred, was an idea which in the twelfth century may fairly be called 'modern', although it clearly derived some of its force from the revived study of the Roman law and of ancient history in general. This was the idea of the king as first and foremost 'lord' (*dominus*), then governor or administrator, a ruler whose vast and ever-accumulating mass of wealth and patronage and power exerted as it were an irresistible gravitational attraction. Monarchical rule of this kind had a logic of its own, independent of ancestral or tribal sanctions, independent even of divine sanction save in the remote sense that all lawful power was held to be God-given. The king was king because he ruled, and ruled because he was king. His *vis et voluntas* brooked no opposition; his grace could open the door to unlimited favour and advancement; to be in his mercy might be a terrifying experience which it was best—though often difficult—to avoid.

It should go without saying that no king of the twelfth century actually attained to either of these extremes of legitimacy and holiness or of secular absolutism; apart from any other consideration, all kings and monarchies of this period were too thoroughly permeated by the viscous *marée noire* of feudalism, which put a brake impartially on sanctity and tyranny. Yet our picture of the age would be notably incomplete if we did not see that both types of kingship existed as tendencies or aspirations, that one was old-fashioned and would not long survive, while the other looked prophetically to the 'new monarchies' and autocracies of the sixteenth century and after; that one was well represented by the Capetian kings of France, the other by their rivals and enemies, the Norman and Angevin kings of England. Professor Southern has recently been reminding us that in the eyes of contemporaries, who had not been brought up on Stubbs's *Charters* and Tout's *Chapters*, there was no question which was the superior civilisation, or which of the two monarchies embodied the attributes of

popular kingship. 'One of the most striking facts in English history towards the end of the twelfth century', Professor Southern writes, 'is a lack of any warmth of sentiment operating in favour of the crown. . . . Testimonies to royal unpopularity in the late twelfth century are too widespread to be ignored.' In contrast with this, Professor Southern points to the steady growth in the wealth and reputation of the French kings, 'borne along by a favourable current of public esteem', kings who could grow rich without becoming unpopular. He calls the Capetians, indeed, 'the sole heirs to the sacred kingship of the early Middle Ages'.[1]

It is my concern in this paper to see how, if at all, the character and the reign of William the Lion, king of Scots from 1165 to 1214, fit into this shifting pattern of monarchy. How did he compare with the ruthless, competent but unpopular Angevins or, on the other hand, with those less efficient, long-suffering, saintly French kings who possessed, as Louis VII humorously explained, 'nothing but bread, wine and happiness'? It is the special interest of King William's reign that in the man himself and in his government we have a striking illustration of both these main tendencies in kingship at work together or in conflict. In a small and peripheral kingdom we yet see, in accordance with traditions which were central to European development, the king acting out his part, now as knight and feudal lord, lawmaker and tax-gatherer, enlarging and defining the scope of royal authority in conscious imitation of his Angevin neighbours, now as representative of an ancient and sanctified royal house for whom God could still work miracles.

The reputed saintliness of William the Lion may seem surprising. Armies under his command had ravaged the northern counties of England with pitiless ferocity; his disobedience to Pope Alexander III over the choice of a bishop of St Andrews in 1179 led to his excommunication and an interdict throughout his realm; and his acknowledged bastards numbered at least half a dozen. These seem at first sight to be rather implausible components even of piety, let alone sanctity. So it must have appeared to the king's contemporary, William of Newburgh, who was not ill-placed to judge. King William, thought Newburgh, was more suited than his elder brother and predecessor, Malcolm IV, to worldly occupations. 'For a long time', he added tartly, 'he postponed the good gift of marriage either for offspring or for the relief of continence.'[2] But already by the turn of the

[1] *The Listener*, 13 April 1967, pp. 494–5.

[2] *Chronicles of the Reigns of Stephen, Henry II and Richard I*, ed. R. Howlett (Rolls Series, 1884–9), i. 148.

century there are signs that William was being seen in a different light. Newburgh himself concedes that after his wedding (1186) the king lived more virtuously. The prosaic Roger Howden, who retailed gossip but was not much given to canonising kings, tells how in 1199 William kept a night's vigil at the shrine of St Margaret at Dunfermline where, in a dream of divine inspiration, he was dissuaded from invading England.[1] Another story, handed down by what seems to be an early tradition, concerns a young boy who 'to the wonder and astonishment of all' was cured of a serious infirmity by William's touch and blessing when the king was conferring with King John at York in February 1206.[2] The act may have impressed King John, who combined in a marked degree the Angevin capacity for scoffing and superstition; for a few days afterwards John granted special trading privileges throughout England to the monks of Arbroath at the request of King William, their founder and patron.[3] Three years later, Gervase of Canterbury, admittedly not without bias in the matter, wrote that King John's troops advancing against Scotland were nervous because God would assuredly be with King William.[4] If the soldiers' unwillingness to fight for a king threatened with excommunication may sound a trifle suspect, there is conviction in the almost matter-of-fact way in which Gervase writes of William as a man distinguished for sanctity. His words, moreover, find confirmation from a source which can scarcely be suspected of flattery of royalty for its own sake, Gerald of Wales's treatise 'On the instruction of the ruler'. William the Lion, he thought, had not fallen away from the well-known goodness and holiness of his ancestors. Admitting the sowing of wild oats, Gerald writes of the king being changed into a new man: 'with lenity and mildness, with deep and lasting devotion towards God and holy church, liberal to the poor, pious, provident and peaceful, upholding the law with equity'.[5] Finally and perhaps most convincingly of all, two relatively remote and independent sources, the Icelandic annals and Alberic of Trois Fontaines, reported

[1] *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1868–71), iv. 100.

[2] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 279; *Chron. Bower*, i. 520–1. Fordun's statement that King William met King John at York in February 1206, is borne out by *Rotuli Litterarum Patentium*, p. 56.

[3] *Rotuli Chartarum*, pp. 162–3.

[4] *Historical works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1879–80), ii. 102–3.

[5] *Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer, J. F. Dymock and G. F. Warner (Rolls Series, 1861–91), viii. 138–9.

respectively the death of 'William the Holy, king of Scots'[1] and the fact that 'King William, a holy man, died in Scotland'.[2]

The impression that William the Lion may also have been an heir to the sacred kingship of the early middle ages must have gained verisimilitude from his survival to a ripe old age and from the sheer length of his reign, forty-nine years, less a few days. One is reminded of the late Robert Fawtier's shrewd remark anent the first three Capetians: 'They accomplished a difficult task, indispensable for the future of the dynasty and the kingdom: they *lasted*'.[3] William the Lion likewise had this important gift of sheer endurance, of which the frequent appearances of his physicians in the witness-lists of his later charters are a sombre reminder. Lengthy reigns, it is true, were not by any means exceptional in this period; Louis VII and Philip Augustus each reigned for forty-three years, and Henry III of England was king for fifty-six. But unlike Henry, William knew no minority. He plunged into the direct control of government in December 1165, at the age of twenty-two, and died in the same month of 1214 in his seventy-second year. He thus lived longer than any of the Angevins or Capetians who were in any way his contemporaries, long enough indeed for King John's chancery to style him 'venerable'.[4] Moreover, he was born into a family which enjoyed a European reputation for probity, for religious devotion, even for saintliness. Of his famous grandfather King David I, Professor Christopher Brooke has recently written: 'Many aspects of the twelfth century were summarised in the career of this cultivated and attractive man, son of the learned Margaret, patron and friend of Saint Ailred, founder and benefactor of over half the monasteries in Scotland, and patron of the bloodless Norman conquest of Lothian'.[5] Professor Fawtier considered that the Capetian royal house was exceptionally favoured in the matter of harmonious family relationships, especially in friendship between father

[1] *Islandske Annaler indtil 1578*, ed. G. Storm (Oslo [Christiania], 1888), pp. 23, 63.

[2] *Monumenta Germaniae Historica* (*Scriptores*), xxiii. 902. Trois Fontaines (dép. Marne) may have had some contact with its sister Cistercian house of Melrose. The same chronicle, *s.a.* 1134 tells a story of Saint Waltheof (Wasleus) abbot of Melrose (ibid., p. 831), and *s.a.* 1220 and 1229 respectively it reports the death of a nun and a lay-brother who were said to be children of King William of Scotland (ibid., pp. 911, 925).

[3] R. Fawtier, *Les Capétiens et la France* (1942), p. 21; in the translated edition by L. Butler and R. J. Adam (1959), p. 16.

[4] *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum*, i. 208b.

[5] C. N. L. Brooke, *Europe in the Central Middle Ages* (1964), p. 381.

and son.[1] In fact, the Scottish house of Malcolm Canmore also formed a 'benign exception', as I have elsewhere called it,[2] to the rule (if it was a rule) of unfilial treachery and brutality in royal families. There is no contemporary evidence of any quarrels among the three grandsons of King David. The careers of all of them show the same fascinating mixture of a Celtic and Anglo-Saxon past and receptiveness to Norman and Angevin innovation, although it is clear that Malcolm was closest to the older tradition of native, legitimate and holy kingship, while David, the youngest brother, was most completely absorbed into the dominant Anglo-Frankish *milieu*. Already in King Malcolm's reign of twelve years we begin to see the new, harsh and iconoclastic vigour of the Normans, even in the young king himself, whose ardour for knighthood was almost pathetic, who divided Clydesdale into knights' fees, and who overran Galloway and dumbfounded his enemies by means of mail-clad cavalry and motte-and-bailey castles.

But for William the Lion personal attachment to the old native traditions seems to have been slight or non-existent. It was of immense value to him that he was born in Scotland into an ancient monarchy, and had been raised to kingship, undoubtedly at Scone, *more regio*, 'in the royal manner'.[3] But he began his public career in 1152 as earl of Northumberland, bearing the name of his maternal grandfather, William de Varenne.[4] The Frankishness of the man, son of Ada de Varenne, grandson of Maud de Senlis, descended from kings of France and dukes of Normandy, was apparent throughout his life. It was not diluted by his marriage in September 1186, to Ermengarde (her name seems almost a caricature of the whole Frankish world and its *chansons de geste*), daughter of Richard, *vicomte* of Beaumont.[5] It was with particular reference to William and his brother that the remark was made by an anonymous writer of the early thirteenth century: 'The modern kings of Scotland count themselves as Frenchmen, in race, manners, language and culture; they keep only Frenchmen in their household and following, and have reduced the Scots to utter servitude.'[6] Jordan Fantôme said that King William held only

[1] Fawtier, op. cit., pp. 53–4 (translation, p. 52).
[2] G. W. S. Barrow, *Feudal Britain* (1956), p. 241.
[3] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 37; *Chron. Fordun*, p. 259.
[4] Cf. *Early Yorkshire Charters*, ed. C. T. Clay, viii, no. 101; Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, new edn., vi. 332.
[5] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 45 (the scribe writes the lady's name lovingly in rustic capitals); *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, ii. 309–10.
[6] *Memoriale fratris Walteri de Coventria*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1872–3), ii. 206.

foreigners dear and would never love his own people.[1] These palpable exaggerations were founded upon a truth, for no king of Scots did more than William to Normanise his country. Knighted by his brother at Périgueux in 1159, William had scarcely worn the crown three months before he was off across the Channel with his brother David, partly to attend Henry II's court and embark on what was to be his vain life's work, petitioning the Angevins for the restoration of the northern counties of England, but partly to demonstrate his prowess in jousting and, it may be, for he was present at the siege of Fougères, in actual warfare. Later in his reign he was to pursue and chastise his domestic enemies with a relentless zest which even Normans could respect, and we should remember that if he was 'William the Holy' to the Icelandic annalist, to the annalist of Loch Cé he was Uilleam Garbh, 'William the Rough' or 'the Harsh'.[2]

When he was surprised before the walls of Alnwick in July 1174, he and his knights fought fiercely, and the king never seems to have been ridiculed because he was captured. On the contrary, while he lay in prison at Falaise he was visited by numerous friends and admirers, and after his release they organised a large-scale international tournament to cheer him up.[3] Most significantly, it was during this period that he was able to attract to his service in Scotland many young men of good family not only from England but more especially from Normandy, men such as Humphrey de Adeville, ancestor of the Barclays of Mathers, Henry Bisset whose son John had acquired by the end of the reign or very soon after Lovat west of Inverness and Stratherrick and Abertarff south of it; and members of the families of Normanville, Mesnières (Menzies), de la Carneille (Guthrie) and de Landelles (Landells).[4]

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It is time to turn from personalities and to look at the reign in terms of its mere events. 'Facts,' wrote R. W. Eyton, with a faith and optimism one cannot help admiring, even if they cannot be shared,

[1] Jordan Fantôme, *La guerre d'Ecosse, 1173–4*, ed. P. A. Becker; *Zeitschrift für romanische philologie*, lxiv (1944), 494, ll. 638–40.
[2] *Annals of Loch Cé*, ed. W. A. Hennessy (Rolls Series, 1871), i. 251 (Uilliam Garm).
[3] *Radulfi de Diceto opera historica*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1876), i. 396; cf. *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xxix (1956), 7.
[4] Cf. *Annales de Normandie* (15e année, 1965), pp. 505, 511–13; *Beauly Chrs.*, pp. 17–28, 35–6.

'simple facts; where they were accomplished; when they were accomplished; who accomplished them; and what was said as to how they were accomplished at the time of their coming to pass; these are the primary and most essential elements of pure history.'[1] To work out even the most skeletal itinerary for King William is no easy matter. We have certain narrative sources, of which the Melrose Chronicle and the chronicles of Roger of Howden are far and away the most valuable. We have a few so-called 'assizes', some of which at least may fairly be regarded as authentic products of William's courts. We have above all the kings's surviving charters and brieves, some 525 or thereabouts, nearly all of which bear a date of place, and between a quarter and a third a date of time also, albeit in an inadequate form. From these sources it is possible to reach some general conclusions with regard to the main pattern of events, the nature of William the Lion's government, and even, but only to a very limited extent, the character of Scottish law and of Scottish society.

The reign may be divided fairly naturally into four parts. From 1165 to 1173 the peace which his brother Malcolm IV had established both at home and with the king of England prevailed unbroken, although William's apparent efforts to regain Northumberland and Cumberland met with a refusal which seems to have led him in 1168 to make diplomatic approaches to Louis VII at Chartres, an obscure event sometimes taken to mark the beginning of the Auld Alliances.[2] It may be that his mother, the Countess Ada, still exerted some influence over the young king in these years, and in any case he retained his brother's chancellor, Nicholas, until his death in 1171, and was guided by his father's old chancellor, Ingram, now bishop of Glasgow, who died in 1174 and was called by Jordan Fantôme 'the best of William's clergy'.[3] 1173 marks an obvious turning-point into the second and most unhappy phase of the reign, beginning with the king's crucial and foolish decision to invade England in support of the young King Henry's revolt against his father, and in undisguised alliance with the French. William's capture at Alnwick in the following year led at once to the so-called 'treaty' of Falaise or Valognes,[4] confirmed at York in every circumstance of publicity on 10 August

[1] R. W. Eyton, *Court, household and itinerary of King Henry II* (1878), p. iii.

[2] *Materials for the history of Thomas Becket*, etc., ed. J. C. Robertson and J. B. Sheppard (Rolls Series, 1875–85), vi. 458.

[3] *Zeitschrift für romanische philologie*, lxiv (1944), 489, l. 383.

[4] Now best edited by E. L. G. Stones, *Anglo-Scottish relations, 1174–1328: some selected documents* (1965), no. 1.

1175. The adjective 'humiliating' which modern writers use of this treaty is surely in this case not an anachronism induced by the faulty focusing of nationalist spectacles. The manner of William's journeying to Normandy and the terms of the agreement point unmistakably to the deliberate humbling of the Scottish king by his masterful overlord Henry of Anjou. The Melrose Chronicle, which down to about 1214 represents a strongly Anglo-Norman as opposed to a native Scottish point of view, nevertheless wrote of the 'heavy yoke of domination and servitude' laid upon the kingdom of Scotland by Henry II,[1] and its words are echoed by a royal charter of 1189, admittedly spurious, in which the king speaks of himself and his realm being bound in servitude to King Henry, and of the need to ransom himself and his servitude and restore his realm to its former liberty.[2] There is a note of annoyance in the wording of a charter[3] by which the king granted to Holyrood Abbey some demesne rents from the environs of Edinburgh 'in exchange for the alms they have lost through the *castellani*' (the phrase is repeated), until the king can restore those alms or provide elsewhere; the *castellani* were, of course, the English garrison occupying Edinburgh Castle. There is a note of more than annoyance in the king's seizure into his own hands of a hall which the monks of Melrose had built at Berwick on Tweed 'at the time Geoffrey de Neville had custody of my castle of Berwick',[4] Geoffrey and William de Neville being among the agents employed by Henry II to control Lothian and the Border between 1177 and 1189.[5]

The one solid achievement of the period of feudal subjection was William's marriage, though this itself was evidence of the degree to which he had placed himself under Henry's tutelage. At least it produced the first queen of Scots for fifty-five years,[6] and led in time to the birth of a son. On the debit side must be reckoned the Gallovidian attempt, which was very nearly successful, to undo all the work of David I and Malcolm IV to incorporate the province into their kingdom. As soon as William's capture was known, Gilbert and Uhtred, the two sons of Fergus of Galloway, returned to their own country to eject all the Scottish—that is, Anglo-Norman—royal officers and then

[1] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 47.

[2] Anderson, *Diplomata*, Pl. XXVI. Since this charter is in favour of the Cistercian Order, the echo may not be fortuitous. It cannot be authentic, but equally it cannot be a late fabrication.

[3] *Holyrood Liber*, no. 29.

[4] *Melrose Liber*, no. 25.

[5] *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, ii. 133.

[6] The last queen, Maud, wife of David I, had died in 1131; see A. H. Dunbar, *Scottish Kings*, 2nd edn. (1906), pp. 60–1.

fight each other for possession.[1] The foundations of a prolonged and embittered blood-feud were laid when Gilbert's son, Malcolm, besieged and captured his uncle apparently in St Mary's Isle beside Kirkcudbright, and having ordered his butchers to tear out his eyes, tongue and genitals, left him for dead.[2] It was the life's work of Uhtred's son, Roland (Lachlan), to avenge the fearful murder of his father and to recover his inheritance. Gilbert died early in 1185, whereupon Roland gathered an army and overran western Galloway with fire and sword, putting many leading Gallovidians to death, including two of their most prominent chiefs, Gillepatric and Gillecoluim.[3] He was taken to task for this conduct in the following year by Henry II, who came as far as Carlisle in order to see that Galloway was pacified; but Roland—one suspects with King William's connivance—was not in fact punished, but instead confirmed in possession of the eastern half of Galloway of which his father Uhtred had been lord.[4] It obviously became William's policy to build up Roland as a strong power in the south-west, and he was appointed a royal justiciar,[5] the first of what was to be a line of justiciars of Galloway responsible for law, order and administration in south-western Scotland until the fourteenth century, It was, moreover, fortunate for King William that Ralph, son of Dunegal, lord of Nithsdale (Strathnith), seems to have died *c.* 1185, in circumstances which enabled the king to seize hold of this strategically important valley as an escheat, grant out much of its land to new families or to the old families on new terms,

[1] *Gesta regis Henrici secundi Benedicti Abbatis*, ed. W. Stubbs (Rolls Series, 1867), i. 67–8, 79–80; *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, 63; William of Newburgh, in *Chron. Stephen*, etc., i. 186–7.

[2] *Gesta Henrici secundi*, i. 79–80. Stubbs's text has 'obsedit insulam de ', as though the author had omitted the island's name through ignorance or oversight. But the words may be a Latinisation of an original *innis Dé*, 'isle of Dee', referring to the isle of Trail (Inchtrail, now St Mary's Isle), the peninsula at the mouth of the River Dee, or even to the tiny Inch at its southern point. Kirkcudbright was no doubt Uhtred's principal seat.

[3] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 45.

[4] *Gesta Henrici secundi*, i. 348–9; *Chron. Stephen*, etc., i. 237.

[5] *Melrose Liber*, no. 18. King William's assize anent the royal *cain* (tribute) in Galloway was established at Lanark by the *judices* of Galloway before Roland son of Uhtred and other responsible men; *APS*, i. 378, no. XXIII. It appears from a letter of Bishop Christian of Galloway that King William had employed Roland's father, Uhtred, along with Roger of Minto, on a task typical of a justiciar's activities (B.M. Harleian MS. 3891, ff. 87–8; abstract in *Register and Records of Holm Cultram*, ed. F. Grainger and W. G. Collingwood, Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society Record Series, 1929, p. 49).

and retain for the crown the essential river-crossing and fortress at Dumfries, where he was able to establish a royal burgh and a major administrative centre.[1]

The treatment which Henry II accorded to William the Lion—however much one must acknowledge that the king of Scots had brought it upon himself through his own stupidity and disloyalty—led to a positive fever of insubordination along the fringes of the Scottish realm. The Gallovidian disturbance was still far from settled when King William evidently had warning of serious trouble in the north. In 1179, probably in the spring or summer, he and his brother David and a large force went to the Moray Firth area, presumably to overawe actual or potential opposition.[2] To strengthen the scheme of defence which since King David's time had depended on the royal burghs of Moray, Inverness, Auldearn, Forres and Elgin, all on the south side of the Moray Firth, King William now built two castles further west and north, one at 'Etherdouer' (now Redcastle) in the Black Isle, the other at Dunskeath, immediately north of the narrows at Cromarty.[3] Two years later, while the king and his brother were in dutiful attendance upon Henry II in Normandy, some 'powerful men of the kingdom' (their identity is not revealed) incited Donald Mac William to land in Scotland at the head of an armed multitude bent upon plunder and slaughter.[4] This invasion seems to have come to nothing, perhaps because the king returned to Scotland as soon as he had word of it, but within five years there were further outbreaks of violence. Eventually, in the summer of 1187, the king led another great army into Moray to deal with Donald Mac William.[5] While the king stayed at Inverness, his protégé, Roland of Galloway, scoured the neighbouring country looking for Mac William. He and his force were discovered in Ross, on a moor called 'Mam Garvia', which has never been located but may have been in the district of Strath Garve. Donald and many of his supporters were slain, and it was a quarter of a century before the Mac Williams presented any further danger to the royal house. It was evidently a consequence of these revolts that the burgh of Auldearn, whose castle had been betrayed to the rebels

[1] G. S. Pryde, *The Burghs of Scotland* (1965), p. 13; *SHR*, xxxiii (1954), 175–6.

[2] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 42.

[3] Ibid.; Anderson, *Early Sources*, ii. 301–2.

[4] *Gesta Henrici secundi*, i. 277.

[5] Ibid., ii. 7–9; *Chron. Melrose*, p. 46 (*prope Muref*); *Chron. Holyrood*, p. 171 (*apud Ros*). Together, *prope Muref* and *apud Ros* point to a location north or north-west of Inverness.

by one of King William's servants, Gillecolm the marischal,[1] was abandoned in favour of a completely new castle, with its accompanying burgh, at the mouth of the River Nairn, from which there was an easy sea crossing, much used in the middle ages, to Cromarty and the far north.[2] It cannot be a coincidence, moreover, that the development of the diocese of Moray under royal protection, and the establishment within it of a settled episcopal administration and eventually of a permanent bishop's see and cathedral church, did not begin until the time of Bishop Simon de Toeni (1172–84) and made no real progress until the time of his successor, the king's clerk, Richard, who was consecrated bishop of Moray in the same year as Donald Mac William was killed.[3]

Donald Mac William was a son of King David I's nephew, William fitz Duncan, whose father, as the eldest son of Malcolm Canmore, had in fact ruled for a few months as king of Scots before his murder in 1094. Why William fitz Duncan seems never to have put forward a serious claim to the throne when his son Donald did so persistently, or, to put it another way, why Donald pressed claims which had lain dormant for over sixty years, is one of the larger unsolved mysteries of twelfth-century Scottish politics.[4] During the first half of the century other pretenders loomed much larger than William fitz Duncan: Angus of Moray, grandson of King Lulach, the astonishing Wimund of Man, and the mysterious Malcolm Mac Heth, who was important enough to be given the earldom of Ross by Malcolm IV before 1162 and who survived into the third year of William the Lion's reign, leaving descendants none of whom, apparently, held the earldom after him. It can be assumed that Donald Mac William was not a son of William fitz Duncan's well-known marriage to Alice de Rumilly, heiress of Craven in Yorkshire. It might be conjectured that his mother, as yet unidentified, was a relative of the family of Mac Heth, in which case

[1] *Inchaffray Chrs.*, pp. 153–4; Pryde, *The Burghs of Scotland*, p. 12.

[2] Ibid., pp. 12–14; for an instance of the use of this crossing in 1290, cf. Stevenson, *Documents*, i. 184.

[3] None of the documents copied into the earliest cartularies of the bishopric of Moray is earlier than the episcopate of Simon de Toeni, and documents survive in significant quantity only from the time of his successor. The cathedral church of Moray was not finally established at Elgin until the episcopate of Master Andrew of Moray (1224).

[4] This mystery has been briefly touched on by R. L. G. Ritchie, *The Normans in Scotland* (1954), pp. 400–6. It has not been looked at with any thoroughness since the work of the nineteenth-century writers, E. W. Robertson, *Scotland under her early kings* (1862), and W. F. Skene, *Celtic Scotland*, 2nd edn. (1886–90).

Donald would have inherited a double claim to the Scottish throne.

Two further questions arise. Where did Donald Mac William and the Mac Heths obtain native Scottish, as distinct from Irish and Scandinavian, support? And what was the motivation behind the revolts of which Donald himself was obviously a principal leader but apparently not always the instigator? Some words of Professor Duncan and Dr A. L. Brown are relevant to the first question. 'Unfortunately, the sixty years after 1164 are a dark period in the history of the western sea-board. . . . The most striking feature of these ill-recorded years is the absence of any known intervention in western affairs by King William.'[1] Yet it seems to me that the clue to the extraordinary capacity of the Mac Williams and Mac Heths to raise troops and disturb the peace of the Scottish realm for some sixty years, from the 1170s to 1230, must be sought in the power vacuum created in the west after the death of Somerled of Argyll in 1164. It is not quite true to say that King William is not known to have intervened at all in western affairs. Before 1174, evidently before the death of Somerled's eldest son Dugald, who apparently supported William, the Scottish king deprived Iona of the churches it possessed in Galloway, and gave them instead to Holyrood Abbey.[2] The creation of the see of Argyll about 1192 must also have had William's assent and must be seen as a move to extend Scottish royal authority into a region where it had previously been feeble or unknown.[3] But north of Argyll there remained a large wild territory of islands and mountainous mainland, beyond the reach of the Scottish king's arm until well into the thirteenth century. It is here, I believe, in the Garbh Chriochan and in Wester Ross, perhaps also in Skye, that we must seek the local basis of chronic disaffection. The fact that every recorded expedition against the Mac Williams and the Mac Heths was based upon Inverness and its district shows that Moray beyond the Great Glen, together with Ross, formed the area where they could count on raising men to fight for them and where, it would not be rash to guess, they held lordship. As

[1] A. A. M. Duncan and A. L. Brown, 'Argyll and the Isles in the earlier middle ages', in *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, xc (1956–7), 197, 198.

[2] *Holyrood Liber*, no. 51.

[3] Duncan and Brown, art. cit., p. 209, attribute the founding of the see, 'probably between 1183 and 1189', to the instigation of Dugald or Reginald, sons of Somerled. Perhaps Dugald is the more likely, since he seems to have enjoyed good relations with the king of Scots. The new diocese, although poorly endowed, had to be carved out of Dunkeld, the third Scottish diocese in order of precedence. The only surviving record of a grant to the first bishop of Argyll is a charter of King Alexander II (*Moray Registrum*, no. 32).

to the motivation, we must surely add to personal or family claims some real fear and resentment as landowners and lesser men witnessed the encroaching tide of Normanisation, whose impetus was not likely to be slackened by King William's fifteen years of feudal subjection. Not that we can charge the king with racial discrimination as such in his undoubted policy of feudalising the nobility. Native Scots received their charters of land to be held by knight service and serjeanty, along with the new men from Flanders, Normandy, Brittany and England. The land which the king granted was strictly on the royal demesne, and the powerful native earldoms were left intact. This meant in effect that William could carve out knights' fees in Fife, Gowrie, Angus, Mearns and Moray; some ten of the king's surviving feudal charters, for example, deal with nearly all the land in the south of the Mearns not held by the church or kept in royal hands.[1] Elsewhere, in Lennox, Menteith, Strathearn, Atholl, Mar and Buchan, the native earls were left undisturbed, although there was a tendency to bring earls and earldoms into a quasi-feudal relationship with the crown. Even so, it was not until the very last years of the reign that a Scottish earldom came into the hands of a Norman incomer, William Cumin. His family had been settled in Scotland for eighty years, and he gained the earldom of Buchan by marriage, not by confiscation.

It was not particular examples of dispossession and persecution, but rather the unmistakable wind of change that struck chill into the hearts of native nobles and thanes, fear that if anyone was going to lose his land and rights it would not be the favoured newcomers, knowledge that their own language and customs were now depreciated, unfamiliarity with new law and administration in the church and with the new feudal law of land. In his last year, King William was required to judge a dispute between two brothers, Maurice the elder, earl of Menteith, and Maurice the younger. The elder brother surrendered his earldom to the king in a full session of the *curia regis* at Edinburgh, whereupon the king granted it to the younger brother, saving to the elder his life-interest in certain lands and a sufficient tocher for his daughters.[2] The legal issues behind this act of royal authority are not revealed in the documents, but it does not seem unreasonable to suppose that Maurice the elder was the son of a marriage which the church did not recognise, and that the king's court was en-

[1] *Newbattle Registrum*, app. I, no. II; SRO, Benholm Chrs., nos. 1 and 2; SRO, *ADC*, xxxi, ff. 66–7; *H.M.C., 5th report*, app., 629; B.M. Add. MS. 33245, f. 144; B.M. Add. MS. 24276, p. 53.
[2] *Cal. Patent Rolls, 1258–66*, pp. 175–6.

forcing the law of inheritance through legitimate descent. We may, perhaps, compare this case with that of Ness (Neish), son of William, one of the greatest native landowners in central Scotland, who is known to have been survived by at least two sons, presumably bastards, but whose large estates all passed with his daughter and sole heir at law to the Fleming, Robert de Quinci, one of the king's new men, and thus to their son, Saer de Quinci, earl of Winchester and sponsor of Magna Carta.[1] Or take the case of another large-scale native landowner, Orm, son of Hugh, secularised abbot of Abernethy. He and his family were not dispossessed, but they were forced to make sacrifices in favour of William's new Tironensian foundation of Arbroath, for it was not thought seemly that so much strictly ecclesiastical income should go to support a temporal lordship.[2]

All this did not amount to depression, let alone persecution, of the native landed class. The truth seems to be that a new order was being introduced and that in its introduction the king and the incomers held the initiative. But the process was sufficiently pacific and gradual to allow plenty of power and patronage to remain with those members of the native aristocracy who were prepared to adapt themselves. It is understandable that in large parts of the Highlands, especially in the west and north, the native aristocracy had little or no incentive to adapt and considerable incentive to support such symbols of the old order as the Mac Williams and the Mac Heths. But it is also against this background that we must view the phenomenon of the native Roland—or Lachlan—of Galloway, feudal constable of the king of Scots, overthrowing the native Donald Mac William and, a generation later, the native Fearchair Mac an t'Sacairt of Applecross, afterwards to be earl of Ross, overthrowing Donald's son and the native Kenneth Mac Heth, and presenting their heads as a coronation gift to Alexander II.[3]

3

The death of Henry II in 1189 gives us the starting-point of the third and to outward seeming most prosperous division of the reign, lasting for some twenty years. Within his own dominions, William had never

[1] *St Andrews Liber*, p. 291. The history of the de Quinci family has been ably dealt with by Dr G. G. Simpson in an unpublished Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis on 'Roger de Quincy earl of Winchester'.
[2] *Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research*, xxix. 24–5.
[3] *Chron. Melrose*, pp. 59–60; W. Reeves, 'Saint Maelrubha: his history and his churches', in *Proc. Soc. Antiq. Scot.*, iii. 258–96, especially p. 276.

been stronger. At Birgham on the Tweed, in 1188, he had refused to pay a penny towards the Saladin Tithe, although Henry II's envoys pressed him hard.[1] The king seems to have been glad to take refuge in his barons' point-blank refusal to have anything to do with it. Yet only a year later the Scottish kingdom, too poor to pay for the recovery of Jerusalem, was prepared to pay 10,000 merks for its own recovery.[2] Richard I was anxious to have the cash, and was in any case well-disposed towards William. The obnoxious treaty of Falaise was cancelled, and relations between the Scots and English crowns restored to what they had been in the time of Malcolm IV. The English garrisons were withdrawn from Roxburgh and Berwick on Tweed —Edinburgh had already been handed back to William on the occasion of his marriage in 1186. The ransom money was raised by means of a tax agreed upon in a great council held at Musselburgh at the end of 1189—possibly the first time that anything like a national tax was levied in Scotland.[3]

The restoration of the three south-country castles brought a shift in the centre of gravity of royal government. Denied the use for fourteen years of Edinburgh, Roxburgh and Berwick and compelled to pay attention to Moray and Ross, the king more often than not held his court north of the Forth. It is noteworthy that Perth and Forfar head the list of fifty-eight different places at which the king's surviving acts were issued, with Stirling a close third, while Edinburgh, which heads the list before 1165 and again in the following reign, takes only fourth place.[4] The king's coins seem to tell the same story as his charters. A mint was first established at Perth apparently in or after 1175, and Folbald, one of the chief royal moneyers in the earlier half of the reign, transferred his activity to Perth from Roxburgh.[5]

The shift back to the south after 1189 was not merely a matter of resuming old administrative habits. It went hand in hand with a renewal of William's efforts to recover the northern counties of England. From a friendly Plantagenet, towards whose own ransom in 1193

[1] *Gesta Henrici secundi*, ii. 44; a somewhat different account in *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, ii. 338–9. Curiously enough, the Melrose Chronicle, which reports Henry II's Geddington council where the Saladin Tithe was agreed upon, is silent on the Scottish attitude.

[2] *Chron. Stephen*, etc., i. 304; *Chron. Melrose*, p. 47.

[3] *Regesta Regum Scottorum*, i. 54 and notes.

[4] Information on place-dates is based on material collected for the forthcoming second volume of *Regesta Regum Scottorum*; cf. G. W. S. Barrow and W. W. Scott, *Handlist of the acts of William the Lion, 1165–1214* (RRS Committee, 1958).

[5] E. Burns, *The Coinage of Scotland*, i (1887), 54.

William subscribed personally 2,000 merks,[1] the king of Scots might hope to win what neither diplomacy nor war had won from Henry II. But a direct bid of 15,000 merks in 1194 produced only the offer of Northumberland without its castles, which William declined.[2] In the next year he met further failure, this time with a more ingenious proposal.[3] His daughter, Margaret, would marry Otto of Brunswick, King Richard's nephew, and the future Emperor Otto IV, on condition that Margaret would succeed to the Scottish throne. In the meantime, the young couple would be given Northumberland, Cumberland and Lothian while the two kings would have reciprocal control over the castles. We can only guess what strange results this scheme might have produced; in the event, the Scots nobles could not stomach the prospect of a woman married to a foreigner taking the throne while the king had a brother and he a son.

Neither from Richard nor from John did William ever obtain the wide territory in northern England whose acquisition had been a persistent objective of Scottish royal policy from David I to Alexander II. The Liberty of Tynedale was all that the Scots kings were allowed to hold, by a title which may go back to the time of Henry I of England but seems impossible to explain. However strong the arguments for this policy, partly expansionist, partly irredentist—and it must be admitted that they were strong—the historian can hardly avoid the conclusion that William's energies would have been better spent consolidating royal authority in the south-west and the far north. With hindsight, we can appreciate two things which we can hardly expect any twelfth-century Scottish king to have understood. First, the critical period in determining what share of the British island should be taken by England and what by Scotland came between 1093 and 1157.[4] After 1157 it was too late to put back the clock. Secondly, the relative neglect of the far west and north by the Canmore dynasty before the middle of the thirteenth century meant that the building up, on royal initiative, of a balanced and unified Scottish kingdom had also been left dangerously late. The Frankishness which enabled William the Lion to give his country a sufficient inoculation of Norman fever to save the patient from going under also prevented the king from following any policy towards the Highlands which was both consistent and constructive. It is true that in the 1190s he defeated the wholly independent earl of Orkney in his guise of rebellious

[1] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 48.

[2] *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, iii. 249–50.

[3] Ibid., pp. 298, 308.

[4] G. W. S. Barrow, 'The Anglo-Scottish Border', in *Northern History*, i (1966), 21–42.

earl of Caithness.[1] Yet instead of incorporating Caithness fully into Scotland he sold it to Reginald, king of Man, to be held for an annual tribute,[2] and rounded off this process by establishing Hugh Freskin, one of his Flemish military vassals, in a sort of buffer fief between the Dornoch Firth and Loch Fleet.[3]

The last six years of the reign form its fourth distinct phase because of three factors none of which was perhaps wholly new, but whose interplay could no longer be postponed or avoided. The first was the king's advancing age and more frequent illnesses. The effect of this is hard to assess, but it can scarcely be denied that in these years William had lost the initiative. Secondly, and in a manner complementary, were the growing power and ruthlessness of King John. Third and last, the Scottish king's only son and heir, Alexander, born at Haddington in 1198, had now survived to an age at which his future career seemed assured but nevertheless required careful planning. In these years King John came near to dominating a Scottish kingdom which its king was too old and its heir apparent too young to lead with energy and confidence.

Ill feeling between William the Lion and John was an old story, going back at least to Richard I's accession, and fortified by the secret agreement which William Longchamp had made with the Scottish king to ensure the succession to the English throne of Arthur of Brittany.[4] In 1209, relations, already strained, reached breaking-point over the Scots' destruction of a new castle at Tweedmouth which they regarded, not surprisingly, as a piece of unnecessary provocation and a threat to the important town of Berwick.[5] John summoned William to meet him at Newcastle in April, but in fact they seem to have met at Bolton near Alnwick and to have adjourned their actual discussion to a conference at Norham. They parted in disagreement about 25 April, and both countries prepared for war. After much hostile manoeuvring, in John's case clearly with a formidable army, the kings met again at Norham about 25 July. Their agreement—it would be truer to speak of William's submission—was expressed in a formal

[1] *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, iv. 10–12, *s.a.* 1196; *Chron. Melrose*, 49, *s.a.* 1197. Probably 1197 was the true year of the expedition against Earl Harold, although Howden's information is much fuller than that of the Melrose Chronicle. Perhaps there was an expedition in both years.

[2] *Chron. Rogeri de Houedene*, iv. 12, calls him 'Reginald son of Somerled, king of Man'. Presumably this is a mistake for Reginald son of Guthred, king of Man 1187–1226.

[3] *Moray Registrum*, pp. xxxii–iii.

[4] William of Newburgh, in *Chron. Stephen*, etc., i. 335–6.

[5] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 277.

treaty whose text is lost. We can accept from the contemporary Melrose Chronicle,[1] and from the description of a letter of King John still extant in 1282,[2] that one English concession was the demolition of Tweedmouth Castle. The treaty also provided that William's two daughters, Margaret and Isabel, were to be handed over to John for marriage. A bond by William dated at Norham on 7 August survives in an English exchequer copy, probably authentic.[3] It obliged William to pay 15,000 merks in four annual instalments, 'to have John's goodwill and in earnest of the agreement into which the two kings had just entered'. Half of this sum seems to have been duly paid, and the remainder remitted.[4] John Fordun correctly reports the details of this obligation and also the razing of Tweedmouth.[5] I believe we may accept his accuracy when he says that after nine years Margaret and Isabel of Scotland were to be married in such a way that one of them, presumably the elder, was to wed whichever of John's sons would succeed to the English throne. This statement is supported by Gervase of Canterbury,[6] and more cogently by a report of the charges made against Hubert de Burgh in 1239,[7] and by the fact that chapter 59 of Magna Carta, 1215, promised that right should be done to Alexander II of Scotland in the matter of his sisters.[8] Finally, King William agreed, 'against the will of the Scots' says the Melrose Chronicle, to hand over to John the sons of some fourteen of his nobles as hostages.[9]

Not only had William failed to recover the northern counties; he had been forced to pay a large peace offering, only part of which can be seen as his old debts to Aaron the Jew of Lincoln:[10] and he had lost, without sufficient guarantees, two of his daughters, neither of whom in the event was to marry into the English royal house. But worse was to come. In the summer of 1211 Guthred Mac William, one of Donald's sons, stirred up a northern rising more formidable than those his father had led in 1181 and 1187.[11] For a time the king suppressed

[1] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 54.

[2] *APS*, i. 108, 'littera r. Johannis quod non possit firmari castrum super portum de Twedmuth'.

[3] Rymer, *Foedera* (Rec. Com. edn.), I, i. 103; also in Lawrie, *Annals*, no. CCXXXIV.

[4] *APS* i. 108.

[5] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 277.

[6] *Hist. Works*, ii. 103.

[7] Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. Luard (Rolls Series, 1872–83), vi. 70–1.

[8] W. Stubbs, *Select Charters*, 9th edn., reprinted 1946, p. 300.

[9] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 54.

[10] Lawrie, *Annals*, p. 358.

[11] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 278–9; *Chron. Melrose*, p. 56, *s.a.* 1211.

the outbreak with a vigour astonishing in a man of his age and medical history. A number of charters issued in the north in August and October, apparently of this year, seem to bear out Fordun's statement that the king himself led an expedition against Guthred.[1] The summer, however, was followed by an exceptionally long, harsh winter, which gave respite to rebels as well as to royal troops.[2] Early in February 1212, the king of Scots came to Durham, possibly after a serious bout of sickness, and had a meeting with King John.[3] It may then have been agreed that John would furnish Brabantine mercenaries for a new summer campaign against Mac William;[4] it is certain that the Scottish king provided some sort of renewal or confirmation of the lost treaty of 1209 and the text of this renewal has also been lost. The undated letter, probably of February 1212, in which William grants to John the marriage without disparagement of his son and heir Alexander, and declares that he and his son have sworn to support John's son Henry, and, if John should die, to keep him on his throne 'against all mortal men', survives only in an English exchequer copy of *c.* 1240, and seems a little suspect.[5] One would expect a matter so important as Alexander's marriage to have been put before a council of the Scottish barons and not given away, almost in secret, by a document whose diplomatic credentials are dubious. But whatever its precise terms, we may be sure that the treaty of 1212 did not bring emancipation from Plantagenet overlordship.

Early in March, Alexander went south to receive the belt of knighthood from King John at St Bride's, Clerkenwell.[6] Thus fortified, he

[1] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 278; cf. *Chron. Melrose*, p. 56 (probably written not long after the event): 'sed et rex Scocie filium MacWillelmi Guthred, scilicet, persequendo propriosque seductores destruendo, multorum cadauera inanimata reliquit', implying King William's personal participation in the campaign, although this entry is tantalisingly laconic.

[2] *Chron. Bower*, i. 532. The chronology of the *Scotichronicon* is seriously confused for the period 1210–14 and in places hard to follow. But it seems to be the winter of 1211–12 that Bower describes as exceptionally severe, ibid., i. 529.

[3] *Chron. Fordun*, i. 278 (where 'Dunelmum' is to be accepted and 'Norhame' probably discounted); F. Liebermann, *Ungedruckte Anglo-Normannische Geschichtsquellen* (1879), pp. 150–1. For John's movements, see *Pipe Roll, 14 John* (Pipe Roll Soc., 1955), p. xii.

[4] *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey*, ed. T. Arnold (Rolls Series, 1890–6), ii. 20.

[5] Stones, *Documents*, no. 4; cf. *SHR*, xlvi (1967), 60–1.

[6] *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey*, loc. cit.; Roger Wendover, *Flores historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, ii (1886–9), 60.

returned to Scotland to take part in the operations which led eventually to Guthred's capture and execution. John paid his last visit to William of Scotland at the end of June, when the two kings rode across the country from Carlisle to Durham by way of Hexham.[1] It may have been then that the Brabanters were sent into Scotland; and both in this year and the previous year a leading military role may have been played by Saer de Quinci, earl of Winchester,[2] a major and trusted tenant-in-chief of the king of Scots and a baron of some importance but much less trust south of the border. How much one would give for the political memoirs of this man, who was to die in Egypt in 1219: grandson of a native Scots lord from north of Forth, son of a justiciar of Lothian, so high in the service of William the Lion that one of his sons was a Scottish hostage in England, though in his father's own custody,[3] and so close an associate of Eustace de Vesci and Robert fitz Walter that it is hard to believe that he knew nothing of their plot to murder John in this very summer of 1212. Within three years Earl Saer was to be a principal negotiator for the Great Charter,[4] while his lord, the young Alexander II, was to carry his grievances beyond Runnymede to the point of alliance with Louis of France.[5]

4

It would be a harsh verdict which held William the Lion responsible for the disastrous decisions of his reign and denied him any credit for its promise and achievement. What the king would have wished most ardently to be remembered for was his magnificent abbey church of Arbroath, upon which he himself, and the new men to whom he was patron and benefactor, and even some of the old deep-rooted families lavished lands and revenues and privileges.[6] Even in ruin, above the

[1] *Pipe Roll, 14 John*, p. xiii.

[2] *Curia Regis Rolls*, vi. 290, shows that Saer de Quinci had been sent to Scotland in King John's service in or before the spring of 1212. *Rotuli de liberate*, ed. T. D. Hardy (1844), p. 240, mentions 100 knights and 100 serjeants serving with Earl Saer in Scotland, but apparently as early as 1211.

[3] Lawrie, *Annals*, p. 392.

[4] J. C. Holt, *Magna Carta* (1965), p. 144 and ch. VI *passim*.

[5] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 63; *Histoire des ducs de Normandie et des rois d'Angleterre*, ed. F. Michel (Société de l'histoire de France, Paris, 1840), p. 179.

[6] *Arbroath Liber*, i. *passim* (including fifty-eight charters of King William, to which should be added the 'foundation charter' printed ibid., ii. app., no. I).

red stone burgh which from the very inception formed its complement, the abbey still remains unmistakably, even symbolically, the king's noblest monument.[1] This is not without irony, for despite William's great act of public devotion to the martyr of Canterbury, he had no intention whatever of allowing his own clergy to follow in Becket's footsteps. In comparison with royal treatment of the Scottish church in his time, the Constitutions of Clarendon read like a Gregorian tract.[2] Paternalistic and autocratic, impatient of opposition and obstruction, William upheld for nearly fifty years the proposition, self-evident neither to contemporaries nor to modern English historians, that there was such a thing as the kingdom of Scotland and that he was in charge of it. He emphasised and gave effect to royal authority with stubborn persistence, sometimes with harshness.[3] He determined causes assiduously in the *curia regis*, his *plenier parlement* as Jordan Fantôme called it in a phrase that was to become famous.[4] It is surely significant that we have many surviving records of the judgements thus pronounced.[5] He appointed justices or justiciars in numbers which suggest that for the first time royal justice and an embryonic common law were being enforced over much of the country.[6] There is evidence by the end of the reign for principal justiciars of the three regions of Scotia, Lothian and Galloway, and for subordinate

[1] See R. L. Mackie and S. Cruden, *Arbroath Abbey* (H.M.S.O., 1954), especially the drawing of the conjectural restoration.

[2] This is most easily seen in the protracted St Andrews election dispute (1178–88), an episode too large and involved to be dealt with here. But episcopal elections generally seem to have been under relatively strict royal control, and the crown possessed and exercised the right to seize the movable goods of bishoprics during vacancies. See *APS*, i. 108, for the existence in the Scottish treasury in 1282 of papal bulls showing that the king of Scots was not bound to restore the goods of any bishop before he had sworn fealty; and on this point generally, see G. Donaldson, 'Crown rights in episcopal vacancies', in *SHR*, xlv (1966), 29.

As in the case of Edward of Oldcambus, convicted (before 1198) of unlawfully appropriating wreck of the sea, and sentenced to death *contra justiciam*, as was alleged; he had to redeem himself with a large sum of money (Raine, *North Durham*, Appendix, nos. 177, 648).

[4] *Zeitschrift für romanische philologie*, lxiv (1944), 486, l. 286.

[5] These are widely scattered among the charters of the period, but a fairly large proportion should appear in the forthcoming second volume of *Regesta Regum Scottorum*.

[6] I have compiled a list of seventeen men who are called justices or justiciaries in the reign of King William, or who (in a minority of cases) may reasonably be thought to have acted in this capacity. This list will be published in *RRS*, ii.

justices in Scotia and Lothian. These officers, invariably earls or great magnates, were superimposed over the sheriffs, thanes and native *judices* in judicial and administrative matters.[1] Royal oversight over the criminal law was affirmed by a definition, as early as 1166, of the reserved pleas of the crown, treasure-trove, murder, premeditated assault, rape of women, arson and plunder;[2] and also by criminal assizes, one of which was possibly inspired by the Assize of Clarendon and another undoubtedly modelled upon Hubert Walter's *Edictum Regium* of 1195.[3] Slowly, without any revolutionary leaps forward, the king's conduct of his own business was made more efficient.[4] Clerks of the Provender and the Liverance were appointed in the 1170s to take charge of the provisioning of the household. There is evidence of a distinct cameral department, and of chamberlain's and sheriffs' accounts. The fact that whenever the king was at Stirling or Clackmannan, but not often when he was elsewhere, his charters tended to be witnessed by clerks of the Chamber suggests that the royal treasure was lodged physically in Stirling Castle. This practice may have been a result of the English occupation of Edinburgh, and perhaps did not outlast the reign. From the king's point of view, the burghs which he founded or fostered so assiduously throughout his reign and realm may be seen as out-stations of the Chamber, ensuring the king's share in the country's growing trading and even manufacturing prosperity. As for the king's written acts, there is no doubt that the Chapel formed a permanent 'professional' writing office, under a clerk of the Seal who was presumably responsible to the Chancellor. Among the many handwritings of William's 160 surviving original charters, about a dozen seem to belong to professional scribes of the Chapel, and in the second half of the reign they may be said to have achieved something like a genuine 'house style'. The form of brieves and charters remained conservative, and it was not until about 1195, in the chancellorship of Master Hugh of Roxburgh (the fourth of William's seven chancellors), that a date of time was added to the date of place. This was simply day and month, which suggests that copies were now being kept, presumably on rolls which were distinct for each regnal year.

[1] The superiority of the justice over sheriff and *judex* is well established in the surviving record, and is touched on in *RRS*, i. 49–51.

[2] *Nat. MSS. Scot*, i. Pl. XXXIX, King William's charter to Robert de Brus of Annandale, witnessed by, i.a., Uhtred son of Fergus and Roger of Minto, for whose role as justices see above, p. 30 n. 5.

[3] Lawrie, *Annals*, pp. 204–5, 311.

[4] This passage is based on evidence which will appear in *RRS*, ii, and receive comment in the introduction.

It seems appropriate that this small reform was made in a peaceful and constructive decade, the same year as the Scottish coinage, of short single-cross type, was renewed with a double-cross pattern, to bring it into line with the reformed coinage of Angevin England.[1]

At the time of William the Lion's accession the medieval kingdom of Scotland, the Scotland of Robert Bruce and James I, even of James VI, already existed in a recognisable shape. William was certainly not a match for any of those kings in intelligence or in political sense; but it was not required of him that he should innovate or pioneer. His duty was to preserve and consolidate, to protect and encourage. On occasions he failed to carry out his duty, but he never seems to have lost sight of it, and against his few startling failures we must set a larger though less dramatic record of unflagging achievement.

[1] *Chron. Melrose*, p. 49; cf. Burns, *Coinage of Scotland*, i. 50–51.

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Anglo-Irish Monetary Policies, 1172-1637

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This paper is not conceived as an exercise in numismatics as such. Indeed, it will eschew as far as practicable the technicalities proper to that discipline, those mysteries of die-identity and hoard-provenance, of trussel and of brockage, that appear to daunt if not to bewilder far too many among contemporary historians. Instead it is proposed to essay what is thought to be an entirely novel approach to the broader problems which are presented by the official Anglo-Irish coinages in silver. The basic question that will be asked is not when the coins were struck, nor where, nor in what quantity, but quite simply why. This is an inversion of the numismatist's ordinary, one had almost said proper, processes, but in the circumstances it may be deemed to be justifiable. During the last few years a very considerable body of work has been done on quite a number of the principal medieval coinages of this country, and a proportion of this is now beginning to appear in print. There has been, too, much informal discussion among those working on different facets of the various problems involved, and already one can predict with fair confidence that the next decade will see the way clear for that urgent desideratum, a definitive review of the role of coinage in Ireland over the last eight centuries.

The very first coins struck by the Anglo-Norman invaders are thought now to be some exceedingly rare halfpence with the name IOHANNES on the obverse but no title. The avoidance of the major denomination, the penny, seems to be both deliberate and significant, and it would appear that the coins were official issues of the new lordship but intended to circulate only within Ireland. Their rarity is such that one finds oneself asking whether they were intended to meet any genuine commercial need—only seven specimens have been recorded, six from a single find. The probability must be that the motivation