

by his being one of the guarantors of the treaty of June, 1220.²

The possibility that the cause was more serious than some personal slight must be considered too. Denholm-Young has proposed that the count was a party to intrigues afoot in 1220-1221 aimed at removing Henry III and replacing him with another king, and that the uncovering of his part in these plots led him to leave the council so suddenly.³ About the time of the Christmas council, nine barons wrote the pope to prevent the return to England of Simon Langton and other clerics who had strongly supported Prince Louis's claim to the crown. Apparently, they feared new plots by the clerics in his favor.⁴ Other hints that something was afoot were the closing of the English ports to travelers in March, 1221, and the arrest of some royal officers for treason on Whitsunday.⁵ If there was a plot from overseas, William de Forz with his great holdings in the North would have been a valued ally, but any contacts between him and the plotters can only be "a matter of conjecture," as Denholm-Young himself admits. But he does demonstrate that there were fears of some kind of conspiracy in late 1220 and early 1221, possibly accounting for the strong action taken against the count.⁶

In explaining the count's revolt, his pride and ambition cannot be neglected. No doubt he felt that after his military service to the young king in the civil war he deserved higher honors in the kingdom than he was receiving. Possibly he had hoped to build up a great concentration of power in the North, something approaching a palatine lordship, but instead, he found himself forced to return the lands and castles that he had gained during the war. It must have been made clear to him at the Christmas council that he would not gain the privileged place he expected, either because he was threatened with loss of his gains in the North, because he was denied office in Poitou, because his advice about Scotland was not heeded, or because of something else. Of course, control of the government was falling into the hands of

men such as Hubert de Burgh and Stephen Langton, who opposed the concentrations of baronial power at which William aimed. William, young and new to England, was possibly unaware of the concept of "community" which showed other English barons how far they could go in resisting royal policies. As Lady Stenton has said of the native English barons, they "by tradition understood, if they could not express, the interlocking of rights and responsibilities by which society was held together."⁷

The justiciar and the archbishop had good reason for wishing to shut William out of high place in the councils of government. They could have felt that he was too young, too ambitious, too unwise politically. He had come to England from the Continent a young man, unfamiliar with the English government; and he had no opportunity to gain familiarity, for the kingdom was on the eve of civil war at the time he arrived. Whatever their reasons, their lack of confidence in him proved justified; yet at the same time, it seems to have provoked him into rebellion.

By the beginning of 1221, William de Forz was at Castle Bytham, gathering an armed band and plundering the surrounding countryside. According to Roger Wendover, he attacked the towns of Edenham and Deeping, carried away food supplies, and took prisoners to be tortured and held for ransom.⁸ According to the Dunstable annalist, he tried to take the castles of Newark, Sleaford, and Kimbolton, but his attack was repulsed.⁹ Then William turned south to Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire,¹⁰ where his men crossed the moat on ice, set fire to the gate, and took the garrison by surprise, killing two men in the attack and imprisoning the rest.¹¹ He then returned to Bytham to attempt to rule over these lands as an independent lord. The Barnwell chronicler describes his actions in a way that indicates that he had defied the king formally: "As if he were the only ruler of the realm, he sent letters sealed with his seal to the mayors of the towns of England,

² *Rolls of Justices for Gloucs., War., Shrops.*, Selden Society 59: p. liii.

³ Roger Wendover, 4: p. 66. Neither *Annales de Dunstaplia* nor Walter Coventry gives these details.

⁴ *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 63; cf. Norgate, *Minority*, p. 164.

⁵ *Patent Rolls* 1 (1216-1225): p. 272; *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 442, name Gregory de la Tour, a Gascon mercenary, as custodian. Walter Coventry, 2: p. 247, names Hubert de Burgh; and Roger Wendover, 4: p. 67, names Ranulf of Chester.

⁶ *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 63.

⁷ *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, third series, 1: pp. 251-255.

⁸ Noel Denholm-Young, "A Letter from the Council to Pope Honorius III, 1220-1," *Eng. Hist. Rev.* 60 (1945): pp. 88-96.

⁹ As late as 1222, rioting Londoners would shout in support of Louis, Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora* 2: p. 72.

¹⁰ *Patent Rolls* 1 (1216-1225): p. 284. Peter de Maulay and Engelard de Cigogné were arrested, Norgate, *Minority*, p. 169.

¹¹ Denholm-Young, *Eng. Hist. Rev.* 60: p. 96.

granting his peace to all merchants engaged in trade, and giving them leave to come and go freely through his castles."¹²

In mid-January the king and his council were holding discussions at London concerning measures against the count's rebellion.¹³ At first, some of the great men made an attempt at mediation between William and the royal government; and on January 15 William was given letters of safe-conduct.¹⁴ On January 22 Robert de Vipont, sheriff of Westmorland, and Geoffrey de Neville, sheriff of Yorkshire, were sent to speak to him on the king's behalf.¹⁵ But about the same time news arrived of William's attack on Fotheringay Castle, uniting the council in agreement to take strong measures. Even the earl of Chester, who had been one of those trying to reconcile the count with the king, now promised to aid in the campaign against him.¹⁶ The Church gave its spiritual support to the campaign when the papal legate and several bishops once more excommunicated the count and his followers at St. Paul's.¹⁷ Ranulf of Chester participated in the ceremony, dashing a lighted candle to the ground.¹⁸

The campaign against the count of Aumale quickly got under way. On January 23, a royal letter was sent to Geoffrey de Neville, informing him of the seizure of Fotheringay Castle and instructing him to raise an army and march to Northampton to meet the king.¹⁹ Similar letters followed shortly to other sheriffs.²⁰ On February 2, preparations were begun for a siege with a summons to Philip Marc to come to Castle Bytham with carpenters, crossbowmen, engineers, miners, and siege equipment.²¹ About this time, young William Marshal, now earl of Pembroke, wrote the king asking why he had not been summoned to the host being raised against the count of

Aumale.²² No doubt he was anticipating the seizure of William's lands, and he wished to be present for a share of the spoils.

The feudal levy summoned against the count must have consisted chiefly of those barons who were present at the council, with their knights, and some forces from neighboring counties. Nevertheless, a strong show of force was made by bringing a number of crossbowmen, siege engines, and the carpenters, stone-cutters, carters, and others needed for a siege.²³ Short as the siege proved to be, it still must have been expensive to collect all the men and their equipment; yet at the close of the campaign, when a scutage was levied to cover its costs, over 5,000 fees were exempted from payment.²⁴ Since not nearly all these fees could have sent knights, many of their holders must have sent supplies to earn their exemption from the scutage of Bytham.

When the royal force arrived at Fotheringay Castle, they found that William de Forz had left it empty, sending his men to Castle Bytham to strengthen its garrison and fleeing northward toward his castle of Skipton-in-Craven. William's flight was hasty, as Robert de Lexington, a royal officer keeping watch on his movements, reported to the justiciar. He wrote that the count had passed through Nottingham on Sunday night, stopping the next day at a house barely inside Yorkshire to wait until night. He had told his wife to eat something "because they would not eat again until they came to Skipton-in-Craven, neither would they rest again."²⁵ Robert feared that the count might try to take the royal castles of Bamburgh and Newcastle-on-Tyne, since he sent messengers to them. It was feared that the count was seeking foreign aid too, since messengers were sent to the king of Scotland and to Poitou.

The king's force followed the count's men to Castle Bytham, which they began to besiege on February 6. Once more the Church gave its sanction to strong measures against rebellious barons, for on the garrison's refusal to surrender, the legate renewed their excommunication.²⁶ The siege did not last long before the defenders sur-

¹² Walter Coventry, 2: p. 247.

¹³ *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 63, dates the meeting on Jan. 25; Walter Coventry, 2: p. 247, dates it on Jan. 13. It probably lasted for several days. See Norgate, *Minority*, p. 165.

¹⁴ *Patent Rolls* 1 (1216-1225): p. 278. The safe-conduct was good until Feb. 2.

¹⁵ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 446.

¹⁶ Walter Coventry, 2: p. 248.

¹⁷ Norgate, *Minority*, pp. 165-166.

¹⁸ *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 63-64; Walter Coventry, 2: pp. 247-248.

¹⁹ *Royal Letters* 1: pp. 168-169, no. 145.

²⁰ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 447; *Public Record Office Lists and Indexes* 15, Ancient Correspondence 2: nos. 34, 50, 78, 120.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p. 448b.

²² Shirley, *Royal Letters* 1: pp. 170-171, no. 147.

²³ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: pp. 448b, 453b-454, a list of the expenses of the siege of Bytham.

²⁴ S. K. Mitchell, *Studies in Taxation under John and Henry III*, Yale Historical Studies (New Haven, 1914), p. 138.

²⁵ *Royal Letters* 1: pp. 171-172, no. 148.

²⁶ Walter Coventry, 2: p. 249.

rendered, and the castle was burned along with all its outbuildings and supplies, destruction which the Dunstable annalist over-dramatically compares to that of Jericho. Some of the defenders fled into the forest, but the besiegers gave chase and captured them quickly.²⁷ Roger Wendover says that the siege lasted only two days, while the annalist of Dunstable says that it lasted six days.²⁸

The count of Aumale may have expected aid from other barons, but he was unable to find any who would support his rebellion, although some chroniclers state that others joined him.²⁹ The canon of Barnwell says that he acted "with the counsel of several of the great men of England, both native and foreign, who desired the disturbance of the kingdom more than they desired peace." He hints that the earl of Chester was one of this group until William's attack on Fotheringay Castle placed him in open rebellion against the king.³⁰ Roger Wendover says that Fawkes de Breauté, Philip Marc, Peter de Maulay, Gerard d'Athée, and others "secretly sent him armed men, that the peace of the kingdom might be disturbed."³¹ But this is part of Roger's preoccupation with discrediting the foreigners who had been in the English government since the time of King John, for other sources give a different picture of these men's attitudes toward William's revolt. Fawkes de Breauté was so trusted by the king that he was given custody of Fotheringay Castle once it came under royal control.³² Philip Marc was summoned to aid in the siege of Castle Bytham.³³ Robert de Vipont, whom Wendover elsewhere classed as one of the "disturbers of the peace" during the minority, also played an important part in the operations against William.³⁴ And the Barnwell chronicler had to admit that the earl of Chester gave the king and the legate aid against William once his attempt at mediation failed. The administrative records name several of the men captured at Bytham, but none of them was at all prominent except possibly the soldier Richard Siward.³⁵

²⁷ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 453b.

²⁸ Roger Wendover, 4: p. 67; *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 64.

²⁹ Turner, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, third series, 1: p. 256; Norgate, *Minority*, p. 164, note 3.

³⁰ Walter Coventry, 2: p. 247.

³¹ Roger Wendover, 4: p. 66.

³² *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 64.

³³ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 448b.

³⁴ Roger Wendover, 4: p. 54.

³⁵ *Patent Rolls* 1 (1216-1225): pp. 284, 300. He would again appear in conflict with Henry III as one of Gilbert

With the fall of Castle Bytham, William's rebellion fell to pieces, and he found himself a fugitive, unable to continue his fight. He first fled to sanctuary at Fountains Abbey in Yorkshire, then surrendered to the archbishop of York on condition that he be allowed to return to sanctuary if the king would not receive him mercifully.³⁶ The men who had followed him in his revolt were imprisoned in various royal castles, but they were all pardoned by the autumn of 1221.³⁷ William himself was pardoned much sooner. Because Pandulf, the papal legate, sought easy terms for him, he was pardoned on account of his past services to King Henry and to King John in time of war.³⁸ The terms given were almost as easy as they had been at the end of the crisis over Rockingham and Sauvey. Perhaps easy terms were given William because his claws had been clipped with the destruction of his castles, for the sheriffs of the northern counties had received commands during the rebellion to destroy his castles.³⁹ Yet it is unlikely that these commands were carried out, since references in royal records indicate that Skipsea Castle was still standing twenty years after this,⁴⁰ and the chronicles fail to mention the destruction of the castles. Indeed, Roger Wendover complained of the lenient treatment given the count; in his view, the king "gave to others the worst of examples that should they rebel against him they could have confidence in similar treatment."⁴¹ Later Joscelin, bishop of Bath and Wells, would express a similar view.

Aside from the threat to destroy his castles, William suffered no serious penalties for his rebellion. Perhaps he was expected now to carry out his crusader's vow, ridding the kingdom of him for a long time, but he did not set out for the Holy Land for another twenty years. He remained in England, where he soon saw signs that those in authority bore him little ill-will. His manor of Driffield was restored to him on May 16, 1221, and a few days later, on May 19, he was

and Richard Marshal's associates in 1233, Powicke, *Henry III and the Lord Edward*, pp. 128-129.

³⁶ *Annales Monastici* 3: p. 64.

³⁷ Turner, *Trans. Royal Hist. Soc.*, third series, 1: pp. 255-256.

³⁸ Roger Wendover, 4: pp. 67-68.

³⁹ *Rot. Lit. Cl.* 1: p. 474b.

⁴⁰ *Victoria County History, Yorkshire* 2: p. 39, note 81

⁴¹ Roger Wendover, 4: p. 68.