

Richard fitz Gilbert II in 1136. After his death, the honors of Clare and Tonbridge and the other estates passed to his elder son Gilbert fitz Richard II, who was created earl of Hertford by King Stephen. The exact date of the granting of the comital title is unknown, but it probably dates from 1138, the year in which his uncle, Strongbow's father, was created earl of Pembroke. Gilbert II was certainly earl by 1141, when he witnessed a charter of Stephen as "Comes Gislebertus de heortford."²⁹ Henceforth the earls used this title interchangeably with that of "Comes de Clare." It should be noted, however, that Gilbert, like some other earls created at this time, for example Aubrey de Vere, earl of Oxford, held few lands in the county from which he assumed the proper title.³⁰ Earl Gilbert seems to have deserted Stephen and sided with the Empress Matilda in the civil wars of the mid-twelfth century, although his activities were not especially noteworthy. He was probably unmarried, and died in 1152, when his younger brother Roger inherited the estates and the comital title. Roger's major activity was to resume the campaigns against the Welsh in Cardigan which had occupied his grandfather and father, but which his brother had neglected. After eight years of warfare he was finally defeated in 1165 and abandoned the effort.³¹ Earl Roger was thus unable to re-establish the senior branch of the Clare family in the Welsh march, but he did manage to add some lands and nine additional knights' fees to the inheritance in England through his marriage to Maud, daughter and heir of the Norfolk baron James de St. Hilary. Earl Roger died in 1173 and his widow conveyed the remainder of the St. Hilary barony to her second husband, William de Aubigny, earl of Arundel.³² The Clare estates themselves, along with the earldom, passed to Roger's son, Richard.³³

For over four decades until his death in 1217, Richard, earl of Hertford, was the head of the great house of Clare. He does not

²⁹ *G. E. C.*, VI, 498-9; Round, *Geoffrey de Manderille*, p. 173.

³⁰ "Comes de Clare" is used e. g. in the charter *ca.* 1148 cited above, note 24. I am grateful to Professor Fred A. Cazel, Jr., for pointing out the analogy with the earl of Oxford. A full discussion of this point is contained in Sir Frank Stenton, *The First Century of English Feudalism 1066-1166* (2nd ed.; Oxford, 1961), pp. 232-34.

³¹ Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, II, 506, 513-14.

³² *Red Book of the Exchequer*, I, 406-7; Sanders, *English Baronies*, p. 44.

³³ *G. E. C.*, VI, 501.

seem, however, to have played a part in national politics commensurate with his standing or potential importance. He was not active in the later years of Henry II's reign and took little part in politics during the absentee reign of Richard I. He did emerge as a leading figure in the opposition to King John, which culminated in Magna Carta, and was one of the twenty-five barons charged with enforcing its provisions; but as Painter has stated, Earl Richard's "position rather than his activity gave him importance in the baronial party."³⁴

Richard de Clare's major importance was the fact that he added immensely to the wealth, prestige, and landed endowment of his line. In 1189 he acquired half of the former honor of Giffard. Walter Giffard, earl of Buckingham, died in 1164 and his extensive lands in England and Normandy escheated to the Crown. King Richard I, in need of money for the Third Crusade, agreed to divide the estates between Earl Richard and his cousin Isabel, Strongbow's daughter and wife of William Marshal. Both the earl and Isabel based their claims on the fact that they were descendants of Rohese Giffard, Walter's aunt and wife of Richard fitz Gilbert I, the companion of the Conqueror. Both the English and Norman lands were divided equally. Longueville, the chief seat in Normandy, passed to the Marshals, while Earl Richard obtained Long Crendon in Buckingham, the *caput* of the Giffard honor in England, associated manors in Buckingham, Cambridge and Bedfordshire, and 43 knights' fees.³⁵ Long Crendon, however, must have been sold or alienated to William Marshal about this time, for it was in the possession of his heirs in 1229 and passed to the Mortimer family when the Marshal inheritance itself was partitioned in 1246.³⁶ In addition, Earl Richard acquired some of the former Giffard lands in Normandy, thus becoming the first head of the senior branch of the Clares to hold estates on both

³⁴ Sidney Painter, "The Earl of Clare," in *Feudalism and Liberty*, ed. Fred A. Cazel, Jr. (Baltimore, 1961), p. 225. The earl's career is briefly outlined in *ibid.*, pp. 220, 222-25.

³⁵ *Pipe Roll 2 Richard I*, ed. Doris M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Society, vol. XXXIX, new ser. I, 1925), pp. 102, 145; *Cartae Antiquae (Rolls 11-20)*, ed. J. Conway Davies (Pipe Roll Society, vol. LXXI, new ser. XXXIII, 1957), pp. 165-6. Each party offered 2,000 marks, but Richard had paid only about half the amount by 1200. See *Pipe Roll 1 John* and *3 John*, ed. Doris M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Society, vols. XLVIII, LII, new ser. X, XIV, 1933, 1936), pp. 265, 64.

³⁶ *Cal. Chart. Rolls 1226-57*, p. 142; PRO, Chancery Miscellanea, C 47/9/20.

sides of the Channel since Richard fitz Gilbert I in the late eleventh century. His position in Normandy was brief, however, for the estates were seized by Philip Augustus in 1204 and never restored.³⁷ In 1195 the earl made another substantial, although less important, addition to the Clare inheritance by obtaining the honor of St. Hilary on the death of his mother Maud, widow of Earl Roger. Maud's second husband, William de Aubigny, earl of Arundel, who had held St. Hilary *jure uxoris*, died in 1193, and despite the fact that he had a son and heir, the honor reverted to Maud and after her death escheated to the Crown. Earl Richard offered £360, in all probability far more than it was actually worth, to acquire it. The honor, which later became thoroughly absorbed in the honor of Clare and lost its separate identity, included lands in Norfolk and Northampton.³⁸

By far the most important act of Earl Richard, insofar as the future position of the family was concerned, was his marriage to Amicia, second daughter and eventual sole heir of William, earl of Gloucester. Possession of the vast Gloucester inheritance, which comprised the earldom and honor of Gloucester with over 260 knights' fees in England, along with the important marcher lordships of Glamorgan and Gwynllwg, represented great political as well as territorial power, and its descent was complicated by this fact.

William, earl of Gloucester, died in 1183, leaving three daughters. The eldest, Mabel, had married Amaury de Montfort, count of Evreux, while the second daughter Amicia was married to Earl Richard de Clare. Henry II arranged the marriage of the youngest, Isabel, to his son John, count of Mortain. They were married in 1189, and Isabel conveyed the inheritance to him. When John became king in 1199, he divorced her to marry Isabelle of Angoulême.³⁹ King John kept Isabel of Gloucester in his own custody however. In 1200, he created Mabel's son Amaury earl of Gloucester, granting him the normal comital privilege of the third penny of the pleas of the shire, but only the revenues of four

³⁷ Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, p. 336.

³⁸ *Pipe Roll 7 Richard I*, ed. Doris M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Society, vol. XLIV, new ser. VI, 1929), p. 225; Sanders, *English Baronies*, p. 44.

³⁹ *G. E. C.*, V, 689; Sidney Painter and Fred A. Cazal, Jr., "The Marriage of Isabelle of Angoulême," *English Historical Review*, LXIII (1948), 83-89; LXVII (1952), 233-35.

demesne manors in England. In addition, Earl Richard de Clare and his son Gilbert were given a few estates and 10 fees of the honor of Gloucester in Kent; otherwise John kept the bulk of the honor, along with the great lordships of Glamorgan and Gwynllwg, in his own hands.⁴⁰ Amaury died without issue in 1213, and the following January John gave Isabel of Gloucester in marriage to Geoffrey de Mandeville, earl of Essex. Shortly thereafter, Geoffrey was also created earl of Gloucester. Unlike Amaury de Montfort, he did obtain possession of most of the English estates and the marcher lordships, but John retained the valuable town and castle of Bristol, which had formed the *caput* of the honor of Gloucester in the twelfth century. The king also imposed a fine of 20,000 marks on Geoffrey for the marriage and the estates.⁴¹ John's exercises in financial extortion are well known and were a major cause of the baronial revolt in the last years of his reign, but although this fine was the largest he ever imposed on any of his barons, Earl Geoffrey managed to pay about two-thirds of it before his death in February 1216.⁴² After Geoffrey de Mandeville's death, custody of the inheritance was assigned to Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar in the last years of John's reign and for most of the minority of Henry III. Hubert married the Countess Isabel shortly before her death in October 1217.⁴³ He did not retain the estates, however, for with Isabel's death they passed to her sister Amicia, now recognized as countess of Gloucester, and her husband, Richard, earl of Hertford, despite the fact that Richard and Amicia had been separated since 1200.⁴⁴ Earl Richard himself did not live long

⁴⁰ *G. E. C.*, V, 692-93; *Chancellor's Roll 8 Richard I*, ed. Doris M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Society, vol. XLV, new ser. VII, 1930), p. 288; *Liberate Roll 2 John*, ed. H. G. Richardson, in *Memoranda Roll 1 John* (Pipe Roll Society, vol. LIX, new ser. XXI, 1943), p. 89; *Pipe Roll 2 John*, ed. Doris M. Stenton (Pipe Roll Society, vol. L, new ser. XII, 1934), pp. 126-27. Cf. also Painter, "The Earl of Clare," p. 223.

⁴¹ Sidney Painter, *The Reign of King John* (Baltimore, 1949), pp. 283-84.

⁴² See PRO, Pipe Roll 9 Henry III, E 372/69 r. 8-8d. I am indebted for this information to Professor Cazell.

⁴³ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, ed. H. R. Luard (Rolls Series LVII, 1872-84), VI, 71-72.

⁴⁴ *G. E. C.*, VI, 502 and note (1). The reason for the separation is unclear. Amicia claimed they were separated "per lineam consanguinitatis per preceptum summi pontificis." Both were related to the royal family (Amicia's grandfather Robert was the most important of Henry I's numerous illegitimate children), but no stigma was attached to the children of this marriage.

enough to obtain formal seisin of the estates and title, only out-living Isabel by about six weeks. By November 28, 1217, he was dead, leaving his elder son Gilbert, who was about thirty-eight years old, as the sole heir to both the Clare and Gloucester inheritances.⁴⁵

Shortly after his father's death, Gilbert de Clare assumed the title of earl of Gloucester and Hertford and obtained livery and seisin of his great patrimony. He was charged with £350 relief for the honors of Clare, Gloucester, and St. Hilary and his half of the old Giffard barony.⁴⁶ The addition of over 260 knights' fees appurtenant to the honor of Gloucester gave him control of some 456 fees, a total far greater than that of any other magnate of his day, and the figure does not include about 50 fees in Glamorgan and Gwynllwg as these were not liable to scutage or service to the Crown.⁴⁷ Gilbert's only failure was his inability to recover Bristol. The town and castle, having been separated from the honor of Gloucester by King John, were never restored to the Clares despite claims to them made by Gilbert's descendants later in the century.⁴⁸ As compensation, the regents for the young Henry III intended to give him the hundred of Barton-juxta-Bristol, but the constable of the castle, Hugh de Vivonne, resisted all orders to surrender it.⁴⁹ King Henry must have decided to

⁴⁵ *Rotuli Litterarum Clausarum 1204-1227*, ed. T. D. Hardy (Record Commission, 1833-44), I, 344b. Cited hereafter as *Rot. Claus.*

⁴⁶ PRO, Pipe Roll 2 Henry III, E 372/62 r. 7d.; PRO, Exchequer, KR Memoranda Roll 4 Henry III, E 159/3 m. 2d. No relief was charged for Tonbridge, as it was not held in chief of the Crown. Gilbert paid the sums for Clare, Gloucester, and Giffard, but there is no evidence that he paid anything for St. Hilary. PRO, Pipe Rolls 3 and 6 Henry III, E 372/63 r. 9, E 372/66 r. 15d. I owe these latter references to the kindness of Professor Cazel.

⁴⁷ The 456 figure is made up as follows: honor of Clare, 141 1/2 (including the 9 St. Hilary fees); honor of Gloucester, 261 1/2; honor of Gloucester in Kent, 10; and moiety of Giffard honor, 43. The next largest number of fees controlled by a single baron of Earl Gilbert's generation seems to be about 370, held by Ranulph de Blundeville, earl of Chester (d. 1232). See Sanders, *English Baronies*, pp. 18, 32, 61, 127, 140. The Marshals had over 80 fees in England (about half derived from their share of the Giffard honor), about 40 in Pembroke, 100 in Leinster, and over 65 in Netherwent. PRO, Chancery Miscellanea, C 47/9/20. No other magnates seem to have approached these totals: e. g., the Bigods, earls of Norfolk, had some 160 fees in England, and the Bohuns, earls of Hereford and Essex, almost 100 in 1245.

⁴⁸ Below, pp. 77, 127.

⁴⁹ *Rot. Claus.*, I, 211b, 305, 344, 350, 360b, 387, 405b, 429b, 448, 543b; *Patent Rolls 1216-25* (H. M. Stationery Office, 1901), pp. 275, 277, 306.

ignore the regents' action as well, for Barton remained in royal keeping until 1254, when he gave it, along with the town and castle, to his own son, the future King Edward I. In return, however, the Clares did receive an annual sum of £40 19s. 5d. for the farm of the hundred—or more precisely, had this amount credited against their numerous debts to the royal exchequer.⁵⁰

By a remarkable series of fortuitous marriages and rapid deaths, the Clares were left in 1217 in possession of an inheritance which in terms of social prestige, potential revenues, knights' fees, and a lasting position of great importance among the marcher lords of Wales, far exceeded the original East Anglian endowment they themselves had acquired and expanded since the days of Richard fitz Gilbert I. Painter, in discussing the fortunes of both the senior and cadet branches, has stated that "the Clares were the most successful family in developing their lands and power" in the twelfth century.⁵¹ But it was as earls of Gloucester and lords of Glamorgan that the members of the senior branch of the family were to achieve a prominence and importance that despite all the resources of royal favor and personal initiative, they had never enjoyed as lords of Clare or earls of Hertford alone. The failure to obtain the town and castle of Bristol was more than offset by what they did acquire. The addition of the earldom and honor of Gloucester and the lordships of Glamorgan and Gwynllwg to their already substantial inheritance made the Clares in many ways the most powerful noble family in thirteenth century England.

The Family, 1217–1317

In 1217, the acquisition of Gloucester and Glamorgan raised the Clares to a position of pre-eminence in the ranks of the English aristocracy. Almost exactly a century later, the male line of the family became extinct and the inheritance was partitioned. Between these dates, there were four generations of Clares. Relatively abundant information has survived to provide at least some

⁵⁰ PRO, Pipe Rolls 6 and 8 Henry III, E 372/66 r. 15d., E 372/68 r. 9; *Close Rolls 1227–31*, p. 427; *Cal. Liberate Rolls 1240–45*, p. 267; *ibid.* 1251–60, pp. 332, 450; PRO, Exchequer, KR Memoranda Roll 24–25 Edward I, E 159/70 mm. 14–14d.

⁵¹ Painter, "The Family and the Feudal System," p. 6.

indication of the careers of all the various members of the family. In addition, there is sufficient evidence to adduce specific examples of family co-operation and cohesion over the course of this century as well. In their concern for the solidarity and promotion of the family, the Clares were of course by no means unique, and both the motives for and methods of co-operation are to be found in their contemporaries on all levels of society. Apart from antiquarian or genealogical studies of individual families, however, there has been little or no investigation of the great baronial or comital houses along these lines, and it cannot always be readily determined if the activities of the Clares were in any way exceptional or if comparable patterns can be discerned elsewhere. After a summary of what is known about the members of each generation, the entire family will be treated more generally on a comparative basis.⁵²

In addition to his eldest son and heir (Gilbert, born around 1180) Richard, earl of Hertford, left by his wife Amicia, who died in 1225, a younger son Richard or Roger, who was unmarried, and a daughter Matilda. This Richard accompanied Henry III's brother, Richard of Cornwall, to Gascony in 1225-26, but nothing further is known of him beyond the report of his death in the Tewkesbury chronicle, the best-informed source for matters concerning the earls of Gloucester and their families from the twelfth to the mid-thirteenth century. The young Richard was apparently murdered in London in May, 1228, but the circumstances surrounding this act are obscure. The chronicler remarks cryptically that "in revenge many of the king's servants were slaughtered," but there is simply no other information to add anything further to the story.⁵³ The earl's daughter Matilda was married to William de Braose (d. 1210), eldest son of the great marcher baron

⁵² For a general discussion of this question for the twelfth century, along somewhat different lines, see *ibid.*, pp. 1-16.

⁵³ Tewkesbury, p. 70: "in cuius vindictam plures de servientibus domini regis trucidati sunt." The chronicle gives his name as "Richard," and this is followed in *G. E. C.*, VI, 503 note (d). The chancery documents recording his stay in Gascony mention sums allowed to the earl of Gloucester "ad opus Rogeri de Clar' fratris sui." *Rot. Claus.*, II, 16b, 98. There was another Roger de Clare or Clere in royal service at this time. He held lands of the first Earl Gilbert, but he was married and lived until 1241. *Ibid.*, II, 214b; *Cal. Liberate Rolls 1226-40*, pp. 1, 105, 177, 225; *Cal. Pat. Rolls 1232-47*, p. 38; *Excerpta e Rotulis Finium 1216-1272*, ed. Charles Roberts (Record Commission, 1835-6), I, 350, 361-62, 364. Henceforth cited as *Rot. Fin.*

William de Braose (d. 1211), lord of Brecknock, Abergavenny, Builth, Radnor, and Gower, who was exiled by King John. In 1210, the younger William and his mother were starved to death by John, and Painter has suggested that this atrocity may have been the major reason for the earl of Hertford's opposition to the king.⁵⁴ In any event, Matilda returned to her father after the younger William's death. In 1219 she and her eldest son John sued Reginald de Braose, second son and heir of the elder William, for the family lands. They only succeeded in recovering Gower and the Sussex barony of Bramber, while the other marcher lordships remained in Reginald's family.⁵⁵

Matilda seems to have been married a second time. According to the two printed versions of the Welsh "Chronicle of the Princes" (*Brut Y Tywysogyon*), the daughter of the "earl of Clare" was married in 1219 to Rhys Gryg, a son of Rhys ap Gruffydd of Deheubarth and a major figure in the Welsh wars of the early thirteenth century. Rhys Gryg died in 1233, and no further mention is made of his wife.⁵⁶ There is some uncertainty as to her proper identity. Earl Richard and Amicia of Gloucester were separated in 1200, and somewhat later the earl paid a certain Beatrice de Langele £10 per year "pro servicio suo."⁵⁷ If this Beatrice was his mistress, it is possible that the entries in the two versions of the *Brut* may actually refer to a different daughter, born illegitimately sometime shortly after 1200. Furthermore, if Matilda were intended, it is difficult to understand why the compilers of the *Brut* neglected to give her name or to mention her first marriage. On the other hand, it is also possible that Beatrice was employed as Matilda's companion when she returned to her father's household after 1210; and an argument *ex silentio*

⁵⁴ Painter, *The Reign of King John*, pp. 242-50; Painter, "The Earl of Clare," p. 224.

⁵⁵ *Rot. Claus.*, I, 405; *Royal Letters, Henry III*, ed. Walter W. Shirley (Rolls Series XXVII, 1862-6), I, 136; Sanders, *English Baronies*, pp. 7-8, 21-22, 108. For Gower, see also note 58 below.

⁵⁶ *Brut Y Tywysogyon: Red Book of Hergest Version*, ed. and trans. Thomas Jones (Board of Celtic Studies, History and Law Series, no. XVI, Cardiff, 1955), pp. 219, 233; *Brut Y Tywysogyon: Peniarth MS. 20 Version* [translation], ed. Thomas Jones (Board of Celtic Studies, History and Law Series, no. XI, Cardiff, 1952), pp. 97, 103. These two versions of the chronicle will henceforth be cited as *Brut Hergest* and *Peniarth*. They supersede the inferior edition by J. Williams ap Ithel (Rolls Series XVII, 1860).

⁵⁷ *Curia Regis Rolls 1219-20*, p. 62.

ranks of the higher nobility. The major factors in this development in the twelfth century were undoubtedly royal favor and shrewdly chosen marriages. The Clares prospered from their intimate connections with successive rulers of England, and the male members of the house were rewarded with a series of important fiefs and well-placed ladies. The power and prestige of the family reached their highest level in the thirteenth century, and the fortunes of its members help illuminate almost every aspect of the social and political life of the English baronage in this period.

The marriages of the sons and daughters of the earls of Gloucester exemplify the importance of personal and territorial considerations in the small and relatively homogeneous upper levels of society, and the network of social relationships that were both created and exploited in this way. The four successors of Richard, earl of Hertford were all married to the daughters of English earls, with the exception of Earl Gilbert the Red, who married first the daughter of a French count and then the daughter of the king himself. Many of the families thus married into, especially the Marshals, were already related to the Clares. Isabel Marshal, the wife of the first Earl Gilbert, was Strongbow's granddaughter and thus the earl's cousin, and her sister Eve was married to the marcher lord William de Braose (d. 1230), nephew of Earl Gilbert's sister Matilda. Maud de Lacy, the second wife of Richard, earl of Gloucester, was the daughter of the earl of Lincoln, whose own wife Margaret later married William Marshal's fourth son, Walter (d. 1245).¹⁰⁵ Whenever possible, the marriages of the heirs were arranged by their fathers, although Henry III and Edward I determined some. Richard, earl of Hertford married his son Gilbert to Isabel Marshal, and in 1253, Earl Richard of Gloucester arranged his son's marriage to Alice de Lusignan.¹⁰⁶ The Red Earl's second marriage to Joan of Acre may have originally been his own suggestion, but the terms of the marriage settlement of 1290 leave no doubt that King Edward was in full command of the arrangements. The minority of the young Earl Richard after 1230 created special circumstances in which Henry III in effect set aside the heir's secret marriage to

¹⁰⁵ Sanders, *English Baronies*, pp. 18, 63.

¹⁰⁶ Tewkesbury, pp. 61, 153-54; Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, V, 364, 366.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLS OF GLOUCESTER AND HENRY III, 1217-1262

The First Earl and the Minority

The first representative of the Clare family to assume the title of earl of Gloucester is also the least known, and, insofar as his public career is concerned, the least prominent. Before succeeding to the inheritance, Gilbert de Clare was associated with his father, Richard, earl of Hertford, in the baronial rebellion against King John. With Earl Richard he was among the twenty-five barons entrusted with the task of enforcing Magna Carta in 1215.¹ Despite sentences of excommunication issued against them by Innocent III in December,² both Richard and Gilbert remained in open opposition to the royalists, and the following March the king declared the earl's estates forfeited. After John's death in October, 1216, Richard and Gilbert were numbered among the supporters of Prince Louis of France, the son and eventual heir of King Philip Augustus, whom the rebels called over to England as the rival to the young Henry III. Efforts by the new regent William Marshal to reconcile the Clares to the royalists in March, 1217, proved fruitless, and in May Gilbert sided with Louis at the battle of Lincoln, which culminated in a royalist victory and effectively ended French intervention.³

After the battle of Lincoln, the Clares did return to the royalist side. In September, 1217, William Marshal, acting on behalf of Henry III, concluded a treaty at Lambeth with Prince Louis. The

¹ Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, II, 604-5. Cf. also Painter, *The Reign of King John*, pp. 291-92, and J. C. Holt, *The Northerners* (Oxford, 1961), pp. 83, 110.

² Matthew Paris, *Chronica Majora*, II, 643; *Foedera*, I, 139.

³ *Rot. Claus.*, I, 251; *Patent Rolls 1216-25*, p. 48. For the defeat of Louis, see Powicke, *King Henry III*, I, 10-17.

previous July Gilbert had conferred with the regent at Gloucester, undoubtedly to secure promises that he and his father would not be penalized for their allegiance to the prince.⁴ Shortly after the peace treaty, both Earl Richard and Gilbert were formally received into the king's peace, and the estates were restored.⁵ Gilbert's motives were both personal and political. He was willing to work with the new government in its efforts to rid the administration of John's foreign favorites, such as Faulkes de Breauté, who were still attempting to maintain their former positions of power.⁶ Furthermore, the ties of kinship with William Marshal, who was Earl Richard's cousin and Gilbert's father-in-law, must have proved major personal factors in the reconciliation. The most important reasons, however, were probably the advanced age of his father, who was at least sixty-five, and the death of Isabel, countess of Gloucester, in mid-October. Gilbert suddenly stood to inherit both the Clare and Gloucester estates, and he certainly did not wish to jeopardize his prospects by continued resistance. After his father's death in November, Gilbert obtained both inheritances and the comital titles and was quickly restored to royal favor. In January, 1218, he was one of the "dilecti et fideles" of the realm charged with ensuring the good conduct of the sons of William de Braose the younger, who had just been released from custody.⁷

The first Earl Gilbert was a major figure in the government of the kingdom during the minority of Henry III, but he did not assume the prominence or importance of such men as William Marshal, the papal legates Guala Biachieri and Padulph, or the justiciar, Hubert de Burgh. His own activities correspond closely to those of most of the other great magnates. In 1228 he was summoned for the campaign in Wales against Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, prince of Gwynedd, but there is little to indicate the actual part he played in the fighting.⁸ He also participated in various ceremonial functions, serving on diplomatic expeditions to Ger-

⁴ Cf. *Patent Rolls 1216-25*, p. 79. The text of the treaty is printed in *Foedera*, I, 148.

⁵ *Rot. Claus.*, I, 327b.

⁶ Cf. the remarks of Holt, *The Northerners*, pp. 251-52.

⁷ *Patent Rolls 1216-25*, p. 134. They were Gilbert's nephews. Their mother, Matilda, was the new earl's sister.

⁸ *Close Rolls 1227-31*, p. 115; Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, II, 667-69. Llywelyn and Henry III had concluded a peace treaty in 1218, shortly after the treaty of Lambeth, but it was often disturbed in the following decade. Lloyd, *Hist. Wales*, II, 653-67.

interests on the continent not shared by the other earls. John fitz Geoffrey and Peter de Montfort were relatively minor barons, not of comital rank, and they lacked the direct family connection that characterized Hugh Bigod.¹⁰³ The presence of Peter of Savoy indicates that in his case political considerations outweighed ties of kinship to the king, but it also reveals that initially at least, the xenophobia which later strongly marked the baronial movement was absent. In short, the only major factor which could link these disparate men together was a common feeling of opposition to the policies of the royal government; and it is possible to surmise that this very heterogeneity of social interests and standing was deliberately designed, so as to attract as much support as possible from the varied ranks of the English baronage.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of this grouping, however, is the emergence of Richard de Clare to a position of leadership in the ranks of the nobility. Hitherto the Clares, for all their wealth and territorial connections, had not assumed an overt, major role in national politics. It is true that his grandfather, Richard, earl of Hertford, was an important figure in the baronial opposition to King John, but his importance consisted more in being the focus of a complex pattern of marriage and tenurial ties among the barons than in any direct political or military actions of his own.¹⁰⁴ Earl Richard, however, was from the very beginning of the antiroyalist movement of 1258 among the very few great individuals whose activities shaped the course of the movement and determined its very success or failure. His motives are not immediately apparent. His presence might well indicate the widening of his own political experience, but too much should not be made of this. Richard was not the sort of man to engage in speculation on the theory or practice of government, and the grounds for his opposition must be sought in concrete personal or territorial considerations.¹⁰⁵ He certainly had his differences

¹⁰³ Earl Richard and John fitz Geoffrey were cousins. John's mother, Aveline, was the sister of Richard, earl of Hertford. *G. E. C.*, V, 433 and note (e). For the descent of the earldom of Essex to the Bohun family, see *ibid.*, pp. 124-35.

¹⁰⁴ Painter, "The Earl of Clare," pp. 220-25; *The Reign of King John*, pp. 287-99.

¹⁰⁵ For a somewhat different assessment, cf. R. F. Treharne, *The Baronial Plan of Reform 1258-1263* (Manchester, 1932), p. 71, and F. M. Powicke, "Some Observations on the Baronial Council (1258-1260) and the Provisions of West-

their wealth on a comparative basis with other great baronial houses in the period of this study. The results are far from satisfactory, and all that can be said with full certainty is that income tended to rise steadily throughout the entire thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, and that the Clares were easily among the two or three richest families in England in this period.

Very little evidence remains for the early thirteenth century. The fullest information derives from the Pipe Roll accounts for the period of Richard de Clare's wardship from 1230 to 1243, but these accounts, while helpful, are incomplete. The lordship of Glamorgan, the honor of Tonbridge and numerous other manors in England were held in custody at various times by Richard of Cornwall, Gilbert Marshal, Hubert de Burgh, the archbishops of Canterbury and other prominent men, and it is impossible to make any precise calculation of the value of the entire inheritance at any given time. The accounts rendered by the keeper, Richard de la Lade, for 1237-42 indicate a gross annual income of about £500 from some scattered estates in Dorset, Gloucestershire, and Oxford appurtenant to the honor of Gloucester and in royal custody during those years. A somewhat fuller but still incomplete account for the honor of Clare, including Clare and other manors in Essex, Hertford, Kent, Norfolk, Northampton, Suffolk, and Sussex, reveal a gross income of almost £750 in 1237-38 and about £600 per annum for the period 1238-42. Since these figures do not include all the demesne manors of the honors of Gloucester and Clare, there is no way of knowing their total value in the early decades of the thirteenth century.¹ Under Henry II and John, to judge from the Pipe Roll accounts dating from their reigns, the honor of Gloucester seems to have been worth between £450 and £600 a year, with Bristol supplying some 20-25 per cent of the total; and the lordship of Glamorgan brought in about £225 in 1184-85, when it came into Henry II's hands following the death of William, earl of Gloucester.² No estimate is possible for the honor of Clare in this period. No estate accounts have survived, and as Richard, earl of Hertford and the first Earl Gilbert were of full age when they succeeded to the honor, the

¹ PRO, Pipe Rolls 21 and 25 Henry III, E 372/81 r. 14, E 372/85 r. 4.

² Sidney Painter, *Studies in the History of the English Feudal Barony* (Baltimore, 1943), pp. 70 and note 159, 166; *Cartae de Glamorgan*, I, 170-73.

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