

## King and magnate in medieval Ireland: Walter de Lacy, King Richard and King John

While the reigns of England's Angevin kings, Henry II, Richard I and John, have sparked centuries of historical interest, the verdicts rendered have been as diverse as the times that produced them.<sup>1</sup> Increasingly, historians have come to highlight the abrasiveness of Angevin kingship in general when discussing the great calamities of John's reign (including the loss of Normandy in 1204, Magna Carta, and the civil war of 1215–17), before recounting John's unique depravity. At the heart of each of these events lay a crisis of baronial loyalty, and, consequently, the king–magnate dynamic has been at the forefront of recent reinterpretations of the reigns of England's three Angevin kings.<sup>2</sup> While many of the more infamous characteristics of this relationship have their genesis in Henry II's era, the military and financial imperatives of his sons' reigns exacerbated the situation. Richard and John were both in chronic need of money in order to pursue their military objectives, and historians now portray them as being willing to push against the limits of medieval kingship in demanding the utmost service, or payments in lieu thereof, from their barons. As one historian vividly expresses it, 'the Angevin monarchs engaged in a gigantic shakedown of great landholders to extort excessive amounts of money, arbitrarily seizing barons' land without judgement if they failed to make payments or perform services.'<sup>3</sup> This description depicts a predatory kingship, and both Richard and John have been charged by proponents of such a view with overburdening their greatest subjects. Richard, a permanent absentee after 1194, has been portrayed by English historians of the modern era as a monarch who cared little for his kingdom, treating England as a cash cow for his Continental

<sup>1</sup> The reigns of Henry II and Richard have recently been the subject of excellent historiographical sketches. For Henry II, see Nicholas Vincent, 'Introduction: Henry II and the historians' in Christopher Harper-Bill and Nicholas Vincent (eds), *Henry II: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, 2007), pp 1–23. For Richard, see John Gillingham, *Richard I* (New Haven & London, 2002), pp 1–14. J. C. Holt, *King John* (London, 1963) contains a useful historiography of John's reign to 1963, but the period after is somewhat neglected. A short historiography of John's reign may be found under the heading 'the record of King John' in M. T. Clanchy, *England and its rulers, 1066–1307* (3rd ed., Oxford, 2006), pp 187–90, and in John Gillingham, 'John (1167–1216)' in H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (eds), *Oxford dictionary of national biography* (60 vols, Oxford, 2004), xxx, 169–70.

<sup>2</sup> Among others, see Harper-Bill & Vincent (eds), *Henry II: new interpretations*; Gillingham, *Richard I*; Ralph Turner and Richard Heiser, *The reign of Richard Lionheart: ruler of the Angevin Empire, 1189–1199* (Harlow, 2000); Ralph Turner, *King John* (London, 1994); S. D. Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations* (Woodbridge, 1999); Ralph Turner, *Magna Carta: through the ages* (Harlow, 2003); David Carpenter, *The struggle for mastery: Britain, 1066–1284* (London, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> Turner, *King John*, p. 16.

interests.<sup>4</sup> John Gillingham has done much to discredit the notion of Richard's neglect of England,<sup>5</sup> but his administrative organisation is still characterised by many as the means through which England was despoiled.<sup>6</sup> Historians – again, led by Gillingham – are also beginning to give more credence to the martial reputation that Richard forged on the battlefields of the Third Crusade and which he honed in his wars with King Philip Augustus of France. It is now posited that to discount this image of Richard 'the Lionheart' is to view his reign anachronistically.<sup>7</sup> One modern commentator sums up Richard by declaring: 'at turns affable and intimidating, depending on his audience, Richard was domineering in the council chamber and supreme in the field of war.'<sup>8</sup> To one who never made his way to Richard's council chamber, the king was the model of martial kingship and chivalry, of paramount importance to the aristocratic warrior class of Europe. As a recent study of Richard's reign argues, had the English baronage engaged in closer dealings with Richard, they may have seen past the chivalric façade to his 'prickly personality, readily roused to outbursts of anger.'<sup>9</sup> Indeed, when English petitioners did approach the king, 'Richard greeted [them] with glares, violent gestures and bullying demands for money.'<sup>10</sup> Had he not also held their respect as an indomitable general, Richard might have suffered a similar fate to John. In contrast to Richard's governance from afar, John's personal rule meant that his magnates would have been much more familiar with him and his volatile temperament. 'He [John] had betrayed his father and his brother and expected the same conduct from everyone else. In the end he was right, but partly because his suspicions, so openly displayed, became self-fulfilling.'<sup>11</sup> Had Richard likewise been confined to England, he might have fared no better. But Richard's absentee rule and crusading reputation meant that he was feared and respected, whereas John's personal style of kingship meant he was feared and loathed.

While these characterisations seem broadly accurate, they are necessarily general and may be misleading at times. Perhaps the best way to capture the essence of the relationship between Richard, John and their magnates is to focus on one such relationship and to analyse the changes it underwent over the twenty-seven years the two brothers ruled England. The career of Walter de Lacy provides an excellent opportunity for such an analysis. Before Normandy was lost to Philip Augustus in 1204, the de Lacys held lands in the west midlands of England and central march

<sup>4</sup> 'He [Richard] used England as a bank on which to draw and overdraw in order to finance his ambitious exploits abroad.' A. L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta, 1087–1216* (Oxford, 1955), p. 350. More examples of this verdict may be found in Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp 12–14.

<sup>5</sup> Gillingham, *Richard I*; idem, 'Conquering kings: some twelfth-century reflections on Henry II and Richard I' in Timothy Reuter (ed.), *Warriors and Churchmen in the high Middle Ages: essays presented to Karl Leyser* (London, 1992), pp 163–78.

<sup>6</sup> See, for instance, Carpenter, *Struggle for mastery*, pp 260–1.

<sup>7</sup> Gillingham, *Richard I*, esp. ch. 14, 'The character of a Lionheart', pp 254–68; idem, *Richard Coeur de Lion: kingship, chivalry and war in the twelfth century* (London, 1993); idem, 'Conquering kings'; Turner & Heiser, *Reign of Richard Lionheart*.

<sup>8</sup> Carpenter, *Struggle for mastery*, p. 245.

<sup>9</sup> Turner & Heiser, *Reign of Richard Lionheart*, p. 245. The authors go on to argue that the Aquitanian magnates were well acquainted with Richard's domineering personality.

<sup>10</sup> Carpenter, *Struggle for mastery*, p. 258.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 266.

of Wales for the service of at least fifty-one and a quarter knights,<sup>12</sup> in Ireland for at least fifty knights,<sup>13</sup> and in Normandy for the service of at least six knights.<sup>14</sup> The de Lacys's transmarine holdings aided their attendance of the king, but it also gave them the potential for intrigue. The Irish dimension is especially instructive as it allows for a much-needed examination of John's rule as lord of Ireland while Richard was king of England.<sup>15</sup> As this article will show, the relationship Walter de Lacy maintained with John as lord of Ireland exerted a heavy influence on Walter's relationship with the English Crown.

<sup>12</sup> A knight's fee was an administrative unit denoting the military service owed to the lord (in this case, the king) of a territory. Theoretically, one armed knight had to be provided for each knight's fee. The precise number of knight's fees the de Lacys held in each realm is difficult to ascertain. In England, Hugh de Lacy returned fifty-and-three-quarters fees of old feoffment (with a further three and a half not acknowledged as his by their holders) and five and a half of new feoffment in the *cartae baronum* returns of 1166. However, from then until 1215 he and his son Walter were routinely assessed scutage on fifty-one-and-a-quarter fees (Hubert Hall (ed.), *The red book of the Exchequer* (3 vols, London, 1896), i, 74, 86, 114, 281–3; *The great roll of the pipe for the fourteenth year of reign of Henry II* (London, 1890), p. 116; D. M. Stenton (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the second year of the reign of King Richard the first, Michaelmas 1190* (London, 1925), p. 49; eadem (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the sixth year of the reign of King Richard the first, Michaelmas 1194* (London, 1928), p. 140; eadem (ed.), *The chancellor's roll for the eighth year of the reign of Richard I, Michaelmas 1196* (London, 1930), p. 92; cf. W. E. Wightman, *The Lacy family in England and Normandy, 1066–1199* (Oxford, 1966), pp 195–200). However, while the de Lacy inheritance was in wardship (1186–9) following the death of Hugh de Lacy, its custodian paid scutage on the five-and-a-half fees of new feoffment as well (*Red book of the Exchequer*, i, 66). After John's reign, Walter continued to be assessed for fifty-one-and-a-quarter-fees by the sheriff of Herefordshire but was also assessed for seven fees by the sheriff of Shropshire (see, for example, E. P. Ebdon (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the second year of the reign of King Henry III, Michaelmas 1218* (London, 1972), pp 6, 92).

<sup>13</sup> For the de Lacy's Irish lands, see the charters of Henry II, Richard and John, which state that Meath was to be held for the service of fifty knights (James Mills and M. J. McEnery (eds), *Calendar of the Gormanston register* (Dublin, 1916), pp 6–7, 177–8). The de Lacys likely had other lands in Ireland prior to 1189, with the seven fees in Fingal, County Dublin, confirmed to Walter de Lacy in 1208 being likely hold-overs from Hugh de Lacy's term as Henry II's *custos* of Dublin (T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli chartarum in Turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1837), p. 178; H. S. Sweetman and G. F. Handcock (eds), *Calendar of documents relating to Ireland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London* (5 vols, London, 1875–86), i, no. 382)).

<sup>14</sup> In Normandy, the de Lacy honour was held of the bishop of Bayeux for the service of two knights. Walter's father Hugh de Lacy had purchased the honour of le Pin-au-Haras (Orne, canton Exmes) in 1172 from Robert II de Beaumont, count of Meulan, for the service of a further two knights held directly of the duke of Normandy (Wightman, *Lacy*, pp 215–26). Walter seems to have also held two knight's fees of Count Robert in the honour of Pont-Audemer (Eure, canton Pont-Audemer) prior to 1204 (Joseph-Noël de Wailly, Leopold Delisle and Charles-Marie-Bréchillet Jourdain (eds), *Recueil des historiens des Gaules et de la France, tome vingt-troisième* (Paris, 1894), p. 711a).

<sup>15</sup> Historians even disagree on whether or not Richard paid any attention to Ireland. John's biographer, W. L. Warren, has written of the anarchical effects of Richard's complete lack of interest in Ireland, while Marie Therese Flanagan has described Richard as wielding an 'over-riding lordship over John as lord of Ireland'. W. L. Warren, *King John* (London, 1961), p. 194; M. T. Flanagan, *Irish society, Anglo-Norman settlers, Angevin kingship: interactions in Ireland in the late twelfth century* (Oxford, 1989), p. 281.

## I

Walter's father Hugh de Lacy took a speculative grant of the ancient Irish kingdom of Mide – given to him by Henry II in the wake of the king's expedition of 1171–2 – and built himself up to an almost unassailable position in Ireland.<sup>16</sup> Indeed, when Henry II sent his son John to Ireland to be crowned its king in 1185, the failure of the expedition was blamed on de Lacy's lack of co-operation.<sup>17</sup> When Hugh de Lacy was murdered by an Irishman the following year, 1186, Henry II is said to have rejoiced at the news.<sup>18</sup> Walter de Lacy, Hugh's eldest surviving son,<sup>19</sup> was apparently underage at the time of his father's murder because the de Lacy lands were taken and remained in the king's hand until Henry II's death. From the records of the English Exchequer, it appears that Walter de Lacy received seisin, or lawful possession, of his English lands in June or July 1189 – that is, at about the time of Henry II's death and the accession of his son Richard.<sup>20</sup> Because a tenant-in-chief could only succeed at the nod of the king,<sup>21</sup> the timing of Walter's inheritance raises the possibility that King Henry had been withholding Walter's inheritance. De Lacy's case was not unique: one is reminded of the predicament of William Marshal, who received Isabel de Clare, the heiress of Striguil and Leinster, only after the old king's death. This famous episode is preserved in the thirteenth-century *History of William Marshal*, which also asserts that Richard

<sup>16</sup> Hugh de Lacy's career can be traced in G. H. Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans* (4 vols, Oxford, 1912–20), i, 279–86, ii, 51–90; idem, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169–1333* (Dublin, 2005 ed.), pp 103–6, 171–86; Flanagan, *Irish society*; A. J. Otway-Ruthven, *A history of medieval Ireland* (London, 1980), pp 52–70; W. L. Warren, *Henry II* (2nd ed., London, 1991), pp 200–5, 599; F. X. Martin, 'Allies and an overlord, 1169–72' in Art Cosgrove (ed.), *A new history of Ireland*, ii: *Medieval Ireland, 1169–1534* (Oxford, 1987), pp 96–7; idem, 'Overlord becomes feudal lord' in *ibid.*, pp 98–126. The circumstances surrounding the grant of Meath have been discussed most recently in Colin Veach, 'Henry II's grant of Meath to Hugh de Lacy in 1172: a reassessment' in *Ríocht na Míde*, xviii (2007), pp 67–94.

<sup>17</sup> For the expedition, see Seán Duffy, 'John and Ireland: the origins of England's Irish problem' in Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations*, pp 221–45; Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 91–108 (new ed., pp 187–93).

<sup>18</sup> *Gesta regis Henrici secundi Benedicti abbatis. The chronicle of the reigns of Henry II and Richard I, AD 1169–1192, known commonly under the name of Benedict of Peterborough*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1867), i, 350.

<sup>19</sup> Walter was not Hugh de Lacy's eldest son. In an undated charter in the cartulary of St Guthlac, Hereford, Hugh makes a grant with the assent of 'Robert de Lacy, my son and heir (*Roberti de Lacy filii mei et heredis mei*)', Balliol College, Oxford, MS 271, f. 47v. Many thanks to Prof. David Crouch for drawing my attention to this source. For another grant made in conjunction with Robert, see William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum*, ed. John Caley, Henry Ellis and Bulkeley Bandinel (new ed., 6 vols, London, 1846), iv, 597.

<sup>20</sup> Pipe roll 1 Richard I, which concerns the Exchequer year 1188/9, has a custodian accounting for the de Lacy honour for three-quarters of a year, which would put the approximate date of Walter's seisin at the end of June 1189. Joseph Hunter (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the first year of the reign of King Richard the First, 1189–1190* (London, 1844), p. 145; see also J. H. Round, 'The dating of the early pipe rolls' in *E.H.R.*, 36, no. 143 (1921), pp 321–2. King Henry died on 6 July 1189.

<sup>21</sup> Ralph Turner, 'John and justice' in Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations*, p. 322; see also J. C. Holt, *Magna Carta* (2nd ed., Cambridge, 1992), pp 152–3.

likewise made good his father's unrealised promises to several others.<sup>22</sup> The well-positioned court chronicler Roger of Howden goes further by stating that many disinherited under Henry found immediate redress under Richard.<sup>23</sup> A grant of land in Normandy that autumn proves that de Lacy had also succeeded to his family's Norman fees shortly after the opening of Richard's reign.<sup>24</sup>

The situation in Ireland is less clear. While King Richard could allow Walter entry into his inheritance in England and Normandy, Ireland had been granted by Henry II to his youngest son John as early as 1177, which placed it outside the new king's direct inheritance.<sup>25</sup> Although Richard seems to have been able to exert a degree of authority in the settler community of Ireland – due, no doubt, to his tenurial hold on its most prominent figures (including Lord John himself) – he was usually prepared to admit his brother's prerogative there.<sup>26</sup> For instance, the *History of William Marshal* records that even though the Marshal had legal right to Leinster through his marriage to Isabel de Clare, he had to petition King Richard for seisin because of John's refusal to part with the lordship. However, instead of issuing his own charter to William for Leinster, or granting him seisin of Leinster himself, Richard put pressure on his brother, who eventually relented.<sup>27</sup> Moreover, in a scene to be discussed shortly, the *History* records that King Richard applauded William when the latter refused to perform homage to him for Leinster in 1194, because that right was reserved for John as lord of Ireland.<sup>28</sup> Walter de Lacy was therefore beholden to John, as lord of Ireland, for seisin of Meath. Whether or not Walter, like the Marshal, was forced to call upon the king in order to obtain his Irish inheritance, he appears to have secured seisin of Meath along with his

<sup>22</sup> A. J. Holden, Stewart Gregory and David Crouch (eds), *History of William Marshal* (3 vols, London, 2002), i, ll 9361–408; Gillingham, *Richard I*, p. 101; David Crouch, *William Marshal: knighthood, war and chivalry, 1147–1219* (2nd ed., London, 2002), p. 67. It is perhaps worth noting that, if the chronology of the *History* be believed, these gifts were made before Richard was officially made duke of Normandy (20 July 1189) or king of England (3 Sept.).

<sup>23</sup> *Gesta regis Henrici secundi*, ii, 75. 'Praeterea idem dux omnes quos rex pater suus exhaeredavit, in pristina jura restituit.'

<sup>24</sup> J. H. Round (ed.), *Calendar of documents preserved in France, illustrative of the history of Great Britain and Ireland, AD 918–1206* (London, 1889), no. 618. The grant can be dated to between 15 September and 31 December 1189 by the designation of William Longchamp as 'bishop elect' of Ely in the witness list. The appearance of Richard's chancellor in the witness list may indicate that Walter de Lacy had a strong ally at the new king's court. William's father, Hugh de Longchamp, held a knight's fee of the de Lacy honour in Herefordshire (Colin Veach, 'A question of timing: Walter de Lacy's seisin of Meath, 1189–94' in *R.I.A. Proc.*, cix (2009), sect. C, pp 173–4). There is also a possibility that William's mother was a Herefordshire de Lacy, and therefore related to Walter de Lacy (David Balfour, 'The origins of the Longchamp family' in *Medieval Prosopography*, xviii (1997), pp 84–5).

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Flanagan, *Irish society*, pp 281–4.

<sup>26</sup> While an historical consensus has yet to be reached on the existence or extent of Richard's hegemony over Ireland, notable instances of his assertion of authority there came in 1194–5, in the wake of John's rebellion; see pp 7–9 below.

<sup>27</sup> *History of William Marshal*, i, ll. 9581–618; Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 70.

<sup>28</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll. 10295–320. For discussions of this episode, see Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 79; Painter, *William Marshal: knight-errant, baron, and regent of England* (Baltimore, 1933), pp 106–7; and see below, pp 6–7.

English and Norman lands in 1189.<sup>29</sup> Walter duly exercised his lordship in Meath by granting land to his younger brother, Hugh II, before 1191.<sup>30</sup>

The security of Walter's position in Meath was clearly based upon King Richard's indomitable will, for once Richard left on crusade his brother John was quick to assert his authority. Two grants by John within Meath prove that he had usurped Walter's lordship by 1192.<sup>31</sup> The reasons behind John's new position of strength and its manifestation in Ireland have been dealt with elsewhere, but, in short, by the time of his first grant in Meath, John had emerged victorious in a political duel over control of England during Richard's absence; by February 1192 he had been formally acknowledged as heir apparent by the English nobility.<sup>32</sup> Although his attempt to intrigue with Philip Augustus was thwarted soon thereafter,<sup>33</sup> this only stoked John's desire to assert his authority elsewhere.

A second chance to take the crown of England soon presented itself to John when King Richard was taken prisoner in December 1192.<sup>34</sup> John and Philip Augustus again formed an alliance, and orchestrated a rebellion in Richard's far-flung dominions. Walter de Lacy's activities are lost in the confusion of the civil war that followed, but future events show that he remained a loyal Ricardian. When Richard finally returned to England on 14 March 1194, only Nottingham held out for John.<sup>35</sup> De Lacy was in the royal army as it besieged the castle in a siege lasting from 25 to 28 March. This in itself does not mean much as all but the most ardent of John's supporters flocked to the king to show their loyalty, steadfast or newly found. However, while at Nottingham, Richard demanded that Walter de Lacy and William Marshal render him homage for their Irish lands. This was an outright affront to John's prerogative as lord of Ireland, and provides a more reliable barometer of loyalty to the English king.<sup>36</sup> The Marshal famously refused, asserting that he could not do homage to Richard for lands which he

<sup>29</sup> This topic is dealt with more fully in Veach, 'A question of timing', pp 165–94.

<sup>30</sup> *Gormanston reg.*, pp 143, 190. The territories granted were: Ratoath (parish Ratoath, barony Ratoath, County Meath), *Treuthd* (*Treóit*, parish Trevet, barony Skreen, County Meath), *Mackergaling* (*Machaire Gaileang*, barony Morgallion, County Meath), the tuath of *Fithdwinterwod* (?), land of *Knelene* (*Cenél n-Enda*, near hill of Uisnech, Kinalea, County Westmeath?), and the land of *Knelecwre* (*Cenél Láegaire*, baronies Upper and Lower Navan, County Meath?).

<sup>31</sup> Grant of land in Durrow on 13 May: Gearóid Mac Niocaill, *Notitiae as Leabhar Cheanannais, 1033–1161* (Dublin, 1961), pp 38–9; *Cal. pat. rolls, 1388–92*, p. 300. Grant of a carucate of land in *Molloghune* on 21 July: *Cal. pat. rolls, 1334–38*, pp 415–16; see also Duffy, 'John & Ireland', p. 235. *Molloghune* is most likely a rendering of Mag Cuillinn, Anglicised Moygullen, now Cooksborough, parish of Rathconnell, barony of Moycashel, County Westmeath.

<sup>32</sup> Kate Norgate, *England under the Angevin kings* (2 vols, London, 1887), ii, 314–16.

<sup>33</sup> *Gesta regis Henrici secundi*, ii, 236; Norgate, *Angevin kings*, ii, 314; Gillingham, *Richard I*, p. 229.

<sup>34</sup> Norgate, *Angevin kings*, ii, 323.

<sup>35</sup> *Chronica magistri Rogeri de Hovedene*, ed. William Stubbs (4 vols, London, 1868–71), iii, 236–8; *Radulfi de Diceto decani Lundoniensis opera historica*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1876), ii, 112–13; *Radulphi de Coggeshall Chronicon Anglicanum*, ed. Joseph Stevenson (London, 1875), p. 62 (where his release is dated to 2 Feb.).

<sup>36</sup> Lionel Landon, *The itinerary of King Richard I, with studies of certain matters of interest connected with his reign* (London, 1935), p. 86, places this on 29 Mar.

held of John,<sup>37</sup> but de Lacy took a different view. Disseised as he was by the lord of Ireland, strict adherence to the king must have appeared the best way to ensure the return of Meath. On 8 April Richard rewarded Walter's homage with a confirmatory charter for Meath.<sup>38</sup>

## II

De Lacy wasted little time, and by 5 July 1194 was once again in Ireland, when he granted a charter of liberties to his town of Drogheda.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, Marleburgh's chronicle records under 1194 that 'Walter de Lacy recovered the lordship of Meath and arrested the justiciar, Peter Pipard, with his soldiers'.<sup>40</sup> While it is possible that de Lacy had a personal grudge against John's justiciar, Peter Pipard, relating to his expulsion from Meath in 1192, Marleburgh's statement, combined with Walter's subsequent actions in Munster and with the king of Connacht (discussed below), suggest that de Lacy had an official commission from Richard in 1194–5.<sup>41</sup> His presence was certainly needed. Presumably before his forfeiture to Richard, John had made a speculative grant of the entire kingdom of Connacht to the Munster baron William de Burgh.<sup>42</sup> De Burgh had also married a daughter of Domnall Mór Ua Briain, king of Thomond, by 1193,<sup>43</sup> and upon the latter's death in 1194, John's man was gifted the city of Limerick by Domnall's sons.<sup>44</sup> Combined with the grant of Connacht, this elevated de Burgh to a position of considerable consequence in the west, which must have alarmed Ireland's established powers.

The king of Connacht, Cathal Crobdearg Ua Conchobair, was the first to strike when he mounted an expedition against the settlers of Munster in 1195.<sup>45</sup> The

<sup>37</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 10295–320. For discussions of this episode, see Crouch, *William Marshal*, p. 79; Painter, *William Marshal*, pp 106–7.

<sup>38</sup> B.L., Hargrave MS 313; *Gormanston register*, pp 6, 177–8. Although the dating clause in B.L., Hargrave MS 313 states that the charter was issued at Nottingham, Lionel Landon has argued that this is most likely a mistake, and should be Northampton: Landon, *Itinerary of King Richard I*, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup> Gearóid Mac Niocaill, *Na buirgéisí, XII–XV aois* (2 vols, Dublin, 1964), i, 172–3.

<sup>40</sup> 'Walterus de Lacy recepit dominium de Media et Petrum Pipard justiciarium cum suis militibus deprehendit': Bibliothèque Municipale de Troyes, MS 1316, f. 39. Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 112 n. (new ed., p. 195 n.).

<sup>41</sup> Flanagan, *Irish society*, p. 282.

<sup>42</sup> Helen Perros [Walton], 'Crossing the Shannon frontier: Connacht and the Anglo-Normans, 1170–1224' in T. B. Barry, Robin Frame and Katharine Simms (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland: essays presented to J.F. Lydon* (London & Rio Grande, 1995), p. 126; R. D. Edwards, 'Anglo-Norman relations with Connacht, 1169–1224' in *I.H.S.*, i, no. 2 (1938), p. 145; W. L. Warren, 'King John and Ireland' in James Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later Middle Ages: essays in honour of Jocelyn Otway-Ruthven* (Blackrock, 1981), p. 30.

<sup>43</sup> Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 48 (new ed., p. 210); Edwards, 'Anglo-Norman relations with Connacht', p. 145.

<sup>44</sup> For a narrative, see F. X. Martin, 'John, Lord of Ireland, 1185–1216' in Cosgrove (ed.), *A new history of Ireland*, ii: *Medieval Ireland, 1169–1534*, p. 129.

<sup>45</sup> John O'Donovan (ed.), *Annála Ríoghachta Éireann: Annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters, from the earliest period to the year 1616. Edited from MSS in the library of the Royal Irish Academy and of Trinity College Dublin with a translation and*

Annals of Inisfallen record that he demolished many castles on his way, and raised hopes that he might drive out the Anglo-Normans altogether. The castles were simply renovated, however, and although Ua Conchobair made arrangements for a return expedition, nothing materialised.<sup>46</sup> Cathal's failure to return may have been down to the intervention of Walter de Lacy and the lord of Ulster, John de Courcy. The annals record that the two men made a circuit of Leinster and Munster that year in order to bring the settlers there to heel.<sup>47</sup> While the targets of these assaults were undoubtedly John's henchmen, 'whose successes at land-grabbing in the south-west of Ireland were beginning to challenge the older ascendancy',<sup>48</sup> the more specific destabilisation of the region caused by de Burgh's recent aggrandisement was perhaps the immediate cause.

The Irish king of Connacht and the Anglo-Norman lords of Meath and Ulster shared a common interest in seeing de Burgh's grant of Connacht go unrealised, and were quick to grasp the advantages of an alliance. The three met at Athlone that same year, where it seems that a *modus vivendi* was reached that preserved the peace between them while the threat in Thomond was dealt with.<sup>49</sup> If Orpen is correct that the agreement included an official acknowledgement by Richard's government of Cathal Crodberg as king of Connacht in return for Ua Conchobair's promise to launch no further incursions into Munster,<sup>50</sup> this would explain Cathal's failure to mount his return mission.

The conference at Athlone may have been Walter's final act as Richard's representative, for John had been officially reconciled with the king, and soon began exercising his authority in Ireland once again. It is apparent from a mandate John sent to his men in Ireland that King Richard acted on Walter's behalf, compelling John to accept de Lacy's peaceful seisin of Meath. In the mandate, John states that 'at the instance of King Richard' he has remitted to de Lacy and his heirs the 'jeopardy, anger and indignation' that he had conceived against them, and also that he has received Walter into favour and restored to him his rights in Ireland for a fine of 2,500 marks.<sup>51</sup> Given that Walter's harassment of John's men in

*copious notes* (7 vols, Dublin, 1848–51), iii, 101, s.a. 1195; W. M. Hennessy (ed.), *The Annals of Loch Cé. A chronicle of Irish affairs from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590* (2 vols, Oxford, 1871), i, 191, s.a. 1195; Seán Mac Airt (ed.), *The Annals of Inisfallen (MS, Rawlinson B. 503)* (Dublin, 1951), p. 321, s.a. 1195; Séamus Ó hInnse (ed.), *Miscellaneous Irish annals, AD 1114–1437* (Dublin, 1947), p. 75 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1195). Cathal Crodberg was also married to a daughter of Domnall Mór Ua Briain, which gave him an added interest in the affairs of Thomond.

<sup>46</sup> *Ann. Inisf.*, p. 321, s.a. 1195. R. Dudley Edwards asserts that this was a direct result of de Burgh's grant of Connacht (Edwards, 'Anglo-Norman relations with Connacht', p. 144), while Orpen links it with the powerful position of de Burgh in Munster as he played the sons of Domnall Mór against one another in Thomond's disputed succession (Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 154 (new ed., p. 213)). On the balance of evidence, both are probably right.

<sup>47</sup> *A.F.M.*, iii, 100–1, s.a. 1195; *A.L.C.*, i, 191, s.a. 1195; Bartholomew MacCarthy (ed.), *Annala Uladh. Annals of Ulster, otherwise annala Senait, Annals of Senat; a chronicle of Irish affairs A.D. 431–1131: 1155–1541* (4 vols, Dublin, 1893), ii, 223, s.a. 1195; Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 134, 155–6 (new ed., pp 204, 213).

<sup>48</sup> Duffy, 'John & Ireland', p. 237.

<sup>49</sup> *A.L.C.*, i, 191, s.a. 1195.

<sup>50</sup> Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 156 (new ed., pp 213–14).

<sup>51</sup> Bodl., Rawlinson MS B 498, f. 63, loose leaf. Translated in Charles MacNeill, 'The de Verdons and the Draycots' in *Louth Arch. Soc. Jn.*, v, no. 3 (1923), p. 170.



Munster that year likely had royal backing, it is little wonder that King Richard forced the settlement. This meant that John's resumption of power ushered in a period of reconciliation between himself and Walter, which appears to have grown eventually into genuine favour. On 15 June 1195 the first step was taken when John issued his own charter to Walter for Meath,<sup>52</sup> which officially recognised Walter's lawful tenure of his Irish inheritance.

William de Burgh, the primary target of Walter's Munster expedition in 1195, followed John's lead by granting ten cantreds<sup>53</sup> of Connacht to Walter's brother Hugh.<sup>54</sup> Walter de Lacy seems to have responded to de Burgh's grant to Hugh by making grants in Meath to William and his brother Hubert de Burgh (John's future justiciar of England).<sup>55</sup> What is more, when the rogue baron Gilbert de Angulo was driven from Ireland by the justiciar,<sup>56</sup> John ultimately bestowed his confiscated lands in Bréifne upon Gilbert's former lord, Walter de Lacy. While informing the justiciar of this grant in about 1197, John also granted Walter a messuage in the town of Limerick and three knight's fees in a neighbouring cantred.<sup>57</sup>

All was not well for de Lacy, however, for while he and the lord of Ireland were reaching their rapprochement, his relationship with King Richard – the man who had done so much to re-establish Walter in Ireland – was beginning to come

<sup>52</sup> B.L., Harley 1240, f. 27, no. 26, calendared in Herbert Wood (ed.), 'The muniments of Edmund de Mortimer, third earl of March, concerning his liberty of Trim' in *R.I.A. Proc.*, xl (1932), sect. C, p. 330; *Gormanston reg.*, p. 178 (which does not include the dating clause).

<sup>53</sup> A cantred (from the Welsh 'cantref') was an administrative unit of land akin to (but not necessarily coextensive with) modern baronies. Unlike knight's fees, there was no military service implied in the unit.

<sup>54</sup> *Gormanston reg.*, pp 143–4, 191–2. This amounted to a third of the province, and, depending on when John, Lord of Ireland, issued his own grant of six cantreds in Connacht to Hugh, was either a confirmation of John's grant (which William's own grant of the entire province of Connacht would have superseded) or the template for it. Reference to John's grant is in *Rot. chart.*, pp 139–40; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 241. Further analysis of the grants may be found in Helen Walton, 'The English in Connacht, 1171–1333' (Ph.D. thesis, Trinity College, Dublin, 1980), pp 22, 25.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth Nicholls, 'A charter of William de Burgo' in *Anal. Hib.*, no. 27 (1972), p. 121. The lands were Muiaimé (Moymet parish, barony Upper Navan, County Meath), Clunmor (unidentified), and Clunfadan (Clonfane in Moymet parish, barony Upper Navan, County Meath). The existence of these grants is known from de Burgh's later bestowal of them upon William le Petit. That charter may be dated to Apr. 1204 till winter 1205–6 – that is, between the arrival of one of the witnesses, John Marshal, in Ireland (David Crouch, 'Marshal, Sir John (d. 1235)' in Matthew & Harrison (eds), *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, xxxvi, 812–13) and William de Burgh's death. Walter de Lacy's absence from Ireland from 1199 to 1201, and frosty relations with de Burgh from then on, make it all the more likely that Walter's grant came around this period of amity, 1195–8.

<sup>56</sup> 'The Dublin Annals of Innisfallen' (T.C.D., MS 1281, s.a. 1196); *A.F.M.*, iii, 107 n.; Richard Butler, *Some notices of the castle and of the ecclesiastical buildings of Trim* (3rd ed., Naas, 1978), p. 10.

<sup>57</sup> *Gormanston reg.*, pp 7, 179. Although the editors of the Gormanston register favour a date of c.1196, the dating of this letter is problematical due to the deterioration of the dating clause. It is clear that it was granted on the 22nd of a certain month between the years 1196 and 1198 at Verneuil. The grants may, perhaps, have occurred about the year 1197, when John granted the town of Limerick a charter of liberties based upon those granted to Dublin, and when his justiciar, Hamo de Valognes, began granting burgages within the town and lands in the surrounding territories to the established powers in the region: Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 156–8 (new ed., p. 214); Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 73.

under strain. In the fiscal year 1195/6, Walter incurred a fine of 1,000 marks.<sup>58</sup> The reason for this enormous fine is not explained, though its appearance under the accounts for that year's scutage for Normandy – which recorded payments made in lieu of service – may indicate that it was concerned with Richard's campaigns in the duchy. Furthermore, there is evidence to suggest that Walter's Norman lands had been confiscated by about this time. An undated entry on the Norman memoranda rolls under the heading of Vaudreuil reads: 'The bailiff is to take into the king's hand all the lands of Walter de Lacy, and answer for them. And Geoffrey the Exchanger (*Cambitor*) is to answer for the profits of the same land from the previous year.'<sup>59</sup> W. E. Wightman contends that the accounts probably refer to Michaelmas 1195 to Michaelmas 1197,<sup>60</sup> which, if correct, would correspond well with the 1,000-mark fine recorded in the fiscal year 1195/6. This theory is also congruent with what we know of King Richard's war in Normandy. From 1194 to 1195, while Walter de Lacy had been reasserting his rights and performing the king's will in Ireland, Richard was busy reasserting his own position on the Continent. By January 1196 Richard had manoeuvred King Philip Augustus into a truce that restored much of the territory lost during Richard's absence on crusade. Richard, however, once again began preparing for war when, in April, he wrote to his justiciar in England asking for knights to be sent to Normandy by 2 June.<sup>61</sup> At about the same time, Richard also ordered that the barons of the Welsh march should man the march for fear of the Welsh Lord Rhys.<sup>62</sup> Walter is not mentioned by name, and his Irish activities make it unlikely that he heeded the king's call to Wales.<sup>63</sup> It is also clear from the assessment of scutage that de Lacy did not journey to Normandy. The 1,000-mark fine and possible Norman sequestration could therefore have been the result of Walter's determination to remain in Ireland so as to capitalise on his position following his rapprochement with John. Such a penalty is less surprising given the circumstances. The chancellor's roll for 1195/6 is replete with new entries, as the English justiciar strove to bring in old and new debts for the king.<sup>64</sup> A similar situation occurred in December 1196 when the bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury refused to join Richard's Continental campaign. The king ordered their lands to be confiscated immediately, though the political realities of the time meant that his order was only carried out for the bishop of Salisbury, who had to pay a heavy price for restoration.<sup>65</sup>

Whatever its genesis, Walter did nothing to pay off his debt when it was recorded, and it remained undiminished on the next year's pipe roll (1196/7). This evidently provided more than enough motive for Richard, who was in constant

<sup>58</sup> D. M. Stenton (ed.), *The chancellor's roll for the eighth year of the reign of Richard I, Michaelmas 1196* (London, 1930), p. 92. The pipe roll for this year has not survived.

<sup>59</sup> 'Vicecomes habet capere in manu Regis totam terram Walteri de Laci et repondere. Et Gaufridus Cambitor h.r. de exitu eiusdem terre de anno (preterito)': S. R. Packard (ed.), *Miscellaneous records of the Norman Exchequer, 1199–1204* (Northampton, 1927), p. 18.

<sup>60</sup> Wightman, *Lacy*, p. 225.

<sup>61</sup> For the situation in Normandy, see Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp 297–8.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 280.

<sup>63</sup> Indeed, although the Welsh *Brut* lists Mortimer, de Sai and de Braose as being active in the march, it says nothing of Walter de Lacy: Thomas Jones (ed.), *Brut y tywysogyon or the chronicle of the princes, red book of Hergest version* (Cardiff, 1955), p. 177, s.a. 1196.

<sup>64</sup> *Chancellor's roll 8 Richard I*, pp xx–xxi.

<sup>65</sup> Norgate, *Angevin kings*, ii, 349–50; Gillingham, *Richard I*, pp 280–1 (where the author mistakenly dates the episode to Dec. 1197).

need of money, to take action. In 1197, the year in which John granted Walter lands in Bréifne and Limerick, de Lacy's English and Norman lands were confiscated by King Richard for his failure to make any payment on his fine. The fact that Walter's Irish lands were not similarly sequestrated, and were, instead, augmented by John, suggests the limits of Richard's hegemony over Ireland by 1197. Walter's English lands had been seized by Christmas 1197, when the custodian (*custos*) of de Lacy's castle of Ludlow was changed by the justiciar.<sup>66</sup> Confirmation that de Lacy's lands were in the king's hands appears in the corresponding English Exchequer documents.<sup>67</sup> The Norman pipe roll of 1197/8 records the proceeds from de Lacy's lands for the full year previous, which means that Walter's Norman territories had also been in the king's hands since at least 1197.<sup>68</sup>

After his forfeiture in 1197, Walter was with the king at Vaudreuil on 7 January 1198, where he witnessed a royal charter.<sup>69</sup> It is not clear how long Walter remained with the king on the Continent but his personal attendance likely involved negotiations over terms for his restoration. The entry on the pipe roll for the following year (1197/8) is clear in its presentation of the reason for the confiscation and the terms for Walter's restoration. Under the third scutage of Normandy – which concerned the 1196 expedition mentioned above – Walter's fine of 1,000 marks remained. However, the account goes on to state that in remission of that fine, Walter personally made a fine of 3,100 marks. The account for that fine is made under the heading 'new offers', and states that it was made 'so that he [Walter] might have the king's pleasure and seisin of his land.'<sup>70</sup> Thus, after their proceeds had filled Richard's coffers for at least a year, and upon the proffer of a substantial fine, Walter's English and Norman lands were restored to him, and the debt that prompted their sequestration was cancelled. It may not be a coincidence that shortly after Walter's reconciliation with Richard, in December 1198, John once again displayed his support for the de Lacys in Ireland, and finally admitted the legitimacy of the tenure of Meath that Walter had obtained from King Richard in 1189 by issuing a confirmation charter for the lands Walter granted to his brother Hugh before 1191.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>66</sup> The custodians of Hereford and Bridgnorth castles were also changed. *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedene*, iv, p. 35; Norgate, *Angevin kings*, ii, 351 n. Although Ludlow was a frequent target of seizure by the king of England, it does not seem to have been in the king's hand immediately prior to de Lacy's general forfeiture on this occasion.

<sup>67</sup> D. M. Stenton (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the tenth year of the reign of King Richard the first, Michaelmas 1198* (London, 1932), p. 212.

<sup>68</sup> Thomas Stapleton (ed.), *Magni rotuli scaccarii Normanniae sub regibus Angliae* (2 vols, London, 1840–4), ii, pp lxx, 368–9.

<sup>69</sup> T.N.A., MS E 40/5924. That charter granted Alan Basset permission to allow his dogs to hunt foxes, hares and wild cats in all the king's land.

<sup>70</sup> Pipe roll 10 Richard I, p. 213.

<sup>71</sup> The charter is dated 4 Dec. 1198 at L'île d'Andely, though the editors of the Gormanston register incorrectly identify it as Angers. *Gormanston reg.*, pp 142–3, 190–1; G. H. Orpen (review), 'Calendar of the Gormanston register. Prepared and edited by James Mills, late deputy-keeper of the Public Records, Ireland, and M. J. McEnery, deputy-keeper (Dublin: printed for the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1916)' in *E.H.R.*, xxxi, no. 123 (1916), p. 488. This is also a possible occasion for John's grant of six cantreds in Connacht to Hugh de Lacy mentioned above (p. 9n.).

## III

King Richard died on campaign in France on 6 April 1199, and subsequently there was great uncertainty throughout his extensive dominions. Suffice to say that two potential heirs provided the opportunity for dissension and intrigue. So it transpired that while Richard's brother John was accepted by the English and Norman realms,<sup>72</sup> his nephew Arthur of Brittany was recognised as heir to Anjou by its magnates.<sup>73</sup> From its beginnings, then, the reign of King John was plagued by the task of securing Richard's inheritance against an alternative heir and, of course, the king of France. It is important to understand and appreciate the significance of John's Continental preoccupations from the outset as they acted as a driving force for many of his – and his magnates' – actions that might otherwise appear to have occurred in a vacuum.

John was crowned king of England on 27 May 1199, and received the requisite general oath of homage from his English magnates the following day.<sup>74</sup> He wasted little time in exploiting his new position, calling out the feudal host to embark for France. The expedition sailed on 20 June, and with it went the majority of the English aristocracy.<sup>75</sup> It is little surprise, therefore, that Walter de Lacy went as well. If nothing else he had learned in 1196 what non-attendance could bring. Joe Hillaby, followed by others, has argued that his presence was instead due to King John's specific suspicions of de Lacy: 'De Lacy was kept on a tight leash in the royal retinue from autumn 1199 until the spring of 1201.'<sup>76</sup> However, as well as being unlikely given their recent relationship, an inspection of the relevant evidence shows this to be an overstatement at best; the leash, for instance, was not so tight as to prevent de Lacy from remaining in Normandy while the king journeyed to Anjou, Aquitaine and England.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>72</sup> Richard is supposed to have made a deathbed pronouncement in favour of John. *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedene*, iv, 83. Cf. Maurice Powicke, *The loss of Normandy, 1189–1204: studies in the history of the Angevin Empire* (Manchester, 1961), appendix i; Sidney Painter, *The reign of King John* (Baltimore, 1949), p. 7; 'Annales de Margan (A.D. 1066–1232)' in H. R. Luard (ed.), *Annales monastici* (5 vols, London, 1864–9), i, 24.

<sup>73</sup> Aquitaine remained in the hands of Richard's aged mother Eleanor, which effectively made it John's as well: Painter, *Reign of King John*, pp 1–2.

<sup>74</sup> *Ralph of Coggeshall*, pp 99–100; *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedene*, iv, 89–90; *Mathaei Parisiensis chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard (7 vols, London, 1872–83), ii, 454–5; Adam of Eynsham, *Magna vita sancti Hugonis episcopi Lincolnienensis*, ed. J. F. Dimock (London, 1864), p. 293; Kate Norgate, *John Lackland* (London, 1902), p. 65; Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 15.

<sup>75</sup> *Ralph of Coggeshall*, p. 100; Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 68; Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 16.

<sup>76</sup> Joe Hillaby, 'Colonisation, crisis-management and debt: Walter de Lacy and the lordship of Meath, 1189–1241' in *Ríocht na Míde*, viii, no. 4 (1992–3), p. 9.

<sup>77</sup> Walter was with John on 3 and 6 Sept. 1199 at Rouen (*Rot. chart.*, pp 23–4; *Gormanston reg.*, p. 163), but is absent from royal charters on the king's subsequent journey to Anjou, Aquitaine and England: T. D. Hardy, 'Itinerary of King John' in T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli litterarum patentium in Turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1835). When John returned to Normandy, Walter reappeared in royal witness lists on 3 June 1200 at Caen (*Rot. chart.*, pp 66–7), and twice on 4 June at Falaise (B.L., Lansdowne MS 229, f. 23; *Rot. chart.*, p. 69, calendared in *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 121). It should be noted that Walter is totally absent from the witness lists of John's pre-1199 charters. See the useful table in Nicholas

When the conflict with France was put on hold by the treaty of le Goulet in May 1200, John was free to concentrate his efforts on the consolidation of his authority throughout his imperium.<sup>78</sup> Indeed, it seems that he decided upon a new strategic stance regarding the frontier regions of Wales and Ireland that was to have a direct impact upon Walter de Lacy. Perhaps the first step had been taken in April 1200, when the king made Henry de Bohun earl of Hereford, a title that had lain dormant for some time.<sup>79</sup> Historically, the de Lacys's relationship with the earls of Hereford had been ambivalent at best, the latter having gone so far as to procure a royal grant of the de Lacy honour in pursuit of the destruction of Walter's grandfather, Gilbert de Lacy, during the turbulent days of King Stephen's reign (1135–54).<sup>80</sup> At the very least, in 1200 the resurrection of the comital title would have served to impair Walter's influence in Herefordshire and the central march of Wales.

While Walter's influence was thus being constrained, that of his fellow marcher baron, William de Braose, was being amplified. In a charter witnessed by de Lacy on 3 June at Caen, the king extended William's authority through a speculative grant in the march.<sup>81</sup> In addition, William's son Giles was made bishop of Hereford that autumn, bringing to the family the power, status and territorial holdings of that see.<sup>82</sup> It is interesting to note, however, that William de Braose was removed from the shrievalty of Herefordshire shortly thereafter, an office he had held since 1191.<sup>83</sup> The king confirmed the marriage of William's daughter Margaret (or Margery) to Walter de Lacy the following month, so William's removal may perhaps be explained by John's desire to attenuate the influence of the power bloc created by the marriage alliance between the two marcher families.<sup>84</sup> The alliance was a coup for de Lacy, who could now call upon the aid of a man who was not

Vincent, 'Jean, comte de Mortain: le futur roi et ses domaines en Normandie 1183–1199' in Anne-Marie Flambard Hélicher and Véronique Gazeau (eds), *1204: la Normandie entre Plantagenêts et Capétiens* (Caen, 2007), pp 57–9.

<sup>78</sup> *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedene*, iv, 148–51; Thomas Rymer (ed.), *Foedera, conventiones, litterae, et cujuscunq[ue] generis acta publica, inter reges Angliae et alios quosvis imperatores, reges, pontifices, principes, vel communitates* (4 vols, London, 1816–69), i, pp i, 79–80. For more on the treaty and its far-reaching consequences, see Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp 134–8; John Gillingham, 'Historians without hindsight: Coggleshall, Diceto and Howden on the early years of John's reign' in Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations*, pp 22–3. For a more optimistic view of the treaty, see Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 74; Warren, *King John*, pp 54–5.

<sup>79</sup> *Rot. chart.*, pp, 53, 61. Henry was also granted £20 a year and the third penny of Herefordshire.

<sup>80</sup> R. H. C. Davis, 'Treaty between William earl of Gloucester and Roger earl of Hereford' in P. M. Barnes and C. F. Slade (eds), *A medieval miscellany presented to Doris Mary Stenton* (London, 1960), pp 139–46; Wightman, *Lacy*, pp 185–8.

<sup>81</sup> *Rot. chart.*, pp 66–7. The de Lacy lands in Herefordshire lay just east of the grant.

<sup>82</sup> Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 44; Julia Barrow, 'Briouze, Giles de (c.1170–1215)' in Matthew & Harrison (eds), *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, vii, 672–3. This also made Giles the lord of Walter de Lacy for land in Hamme (Holme Lacy) and Onibury, Herefordshire. *Red book of the Exchequer*, i, p. 279; H. M. Colvin, 'Holme Lacy: an episcopal manor and its tenants in the 12th and 13th centuries' in Veronica Ruffer and A. J. Taylor (eds), *Medieval studies presented to Rose Graham* (Oxford, 1950), pp 15–40.

<sup>83</sup> Ralph Turner, 'Briouze, William (III) de (d. 1211)' in Matthew & Harrison (eds), *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, vii, 674–7.

<sup>84</sup> *Rot. chart.*, p. 80.

only one of the most powerful men of the Welsh march but also a royal favourite.<sup>85</sup> De Lacy's status at court had never been higher.

The significance of the marriage for Ireland was soon made apparent when, on 12 January 1201, King John granted de Braose the honour of Limerick, excepting the service of William de Burgh and the city of Limerick.<sup>86</sup> With this, King John appears to have been attempting to create a transmarine balance of power in the frontier regions of Wales and Ireland. Munster and the west of Ireland already had a dominant Anglo-Norman lord, for, as we have seen, John had promoted William de Burgh to a position of great authority and influence there in the 1190s. De Burgh did much to consolidate that power through a number of diplomatic ties with the native Irish of the region, the Uí Briain in particular. Similarly, William de Braose was now being elevated in the march of Wales, and his own diplomacy saw him standing secure in his position. From late 1200 to early 1201, King John seems to have used the two families of de Burgh and de Braose as blocks against one another in their respective strongholds, with Walter de Lacy an integral part of this equation. Although the grant of Limerick excluded de Burgh's territories, it insinuated a royal favourite into the politics of Munster with the territorial prestige, if not the regional familiarity, to match de Burgh.

Meanwhile, de Braose's removal as sheriff of Herefordshire that autumn had seen him replaced by William de Burgh's brother: John's chamberlain, Hubert de Burgh. In addition, Hubert also received custody of the castles of Grosmont, Skenfrith and Llantilio, which lay just north-east of the de Braose lordship of Abergavenny and south-west of the de Lacy lordship of Ewias Lacy, serving as a wedge between the magnates' territories.<sup>87</sup> The shrievalty of Herefordshire was also an excellent vantage point from which to monitor William's son-in-law, Walter de Lacy, and son, Giles, bishop of Hereford. The Shropshire castle of Ludlow was probably taken into the king's hand at this point, further limiting de Lacy's power in the region.<sup>88</sup> Finally, when the king departed to quell rebellion in his Continental

<sup>85</sup> The importance of the agreement to de Braose is clear from the stipulation that Walter should not alienate any of his English or Norman lands without de Braose's consent, and his proffer of twenty marks and a palfrey so that King John might confirm Walter's charter. T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de oblatiis et finibus in turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1835), p. 81; *Rot. chart.*, p. 80; D. M. Stenton (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the third year of the reign of King John, Michaelmas 1201* (Lincoln, 1936), p. 87.

<sup>86</sup> It also excluded the gift of bishoprics and abbeys, the Ostmen's cantred, the Holy Island, and 'the Irish and those that are with them'. *Rot. obl. et fin.*, pp 94, 99 (quote p. 99); *Rot. chart.*, p. 84; pipe roll 3 John, p. 8. Corresponding entries in *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, nos 145–7, 165.

<sup>87</sup> Thomas Duffus Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli de liberate ac de misis et praestitis, regnante Johanne* (London, 1844), p. 19; H. G. Richardson (ed.), *The memoranda roll for the Michaelmas term of the first year of the reign of King John (1199–1200), together with fragments of the originalia roll of the seventh year of King Richard I (1195–96), the liberate roll of the second year of King John (1200–01) and the Norman roll of the fifth year of King John (1203). With an introduction by H.G. Richardson* (London, 1943), p. 19 (liberate roll); Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 45.

<sup>88</sup> Hillaby, 'Colonisation, crisis-management and debt', p. 10. For the status of Ludlow castle, see Nicholas Vincent, *The Lucys of Charlecote: the invention of a Warwickshire family, 1170–1302*, Dugdale Society occasional papers, 42 (2002); Sidney Painter, 'English castles in the early middle ages: their number, location, and legal position' in *Speculum*, x, no. 3 (1935), p. 329; R. W. Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire* (12 vols, London, 1854–60), v, 270–1.

holdings that May, he entrusted Hubert de Burgh with the office of warden of the Welsh march, giving him a force of a hundred knights to support his increased responsibilities.<sup>89</sup>

By this point, Walter de Lacy had been absent from Ireland for a period of at least two years, and it seems he was content to allow his brother Hugh to act as seneschal of Meath for the time being. Political manoeuvring in Ireland had, of course, continued unabated during his absence, and Connacht gradually emerged as the battleground upon which the struggle for pre-eminence was to be fought, with a protracted succession dispute providing the catalyst. The progress and factional breakdown of the dispute have been dealt with elsewhere and need not be reproduced.<sup>90</sup> Suffice to say that, as King John's transmarine balance of power would suggest, William de Burgh and Hugh de Lacy (along with Walter's ally from 1194–5, John de Courcy) supported rival claimants. William de Braose was too preoccupied in Limerick to assist de Lacy in Connacht, and was soon called away to royal service in France.<sup>91</sup>

To aid in the effective exploitation of their far-flung holdings, de Braose and Walter de Lacy took up position in separate realms, and each acted as custodian for the other's lands there; consequently, once in Normandy, de Braose was granted custody of the de Lacys's Norman honours of Lacy<sup>92</sup> and le Pin.<sup>93</sup> Walter then travelled to Ireland, and de Braose's custody of Walter's English honour is recorded on pipe roll 5 John (1202/3).<sup>94</sup> In Ireland, Walter's role as custodian of Limerick quickly embroiled him once more in the politics of the colony.

In 1203 William de Burgh incurred the wrath of the Irish justiciar, Meiler fitz Henry, for his continued involvement in Connacht.<sup>95</sup> On 7 July 1203 de Burgh was

<sup>89</sup> *Chronica Rogeri de Hovedene*, iv, 163; Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 80; Painter, *Reign of King John*, pp 48, 84.

<sup>90</sup> Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 185–6 (new ed., pp 225–6); Martin, 'John, Lord of Ireland', p. 131; Edwards, 'Anglo-Norman relations with Connacht', p. 148; Walton, 'The English in Connacht, 1171–1333', pp 27–8; Peter Crooks, "'Divide and rule": factionalism as royal policy in the lordship of Ireland, 1171–1265' in *Peritia*, xix (2005), pp 279–80.

<sup>91</sup> Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 28; Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 141.

<sup>92</sup> This was centred on the manors of Lassy (Calvados, canton Condé-sur-Noireau) and Campeaux (Calvados, canton Le Béný-Bocage). T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli Normanniae in turri Londinensi asservati* (London, 1835), p. 59. This led W. E. Wightman mistakenly to conclude that Walter's lands had been sequestered by John in 1202. Wightman, *Lacy*, pp 223–4.

<sup>93</sup> *Rot. Norm.*, p. 74 (Feb. 1203).

<sup>94</sup> D. M. Stenton (ed.), *The great roll of the pipe for the fifth year of the reign of King John, Michaelmas 1203* (London, 1938), pp 63, 70. It is unclear whether the elder William or his son of the same name is meant in the entry. At least some of de Braose's English and Welsh holdings had been demised to his son by this point. See Ifor Rowlands, 'William de Braose and the lordship of Brecon' in *Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies*, xxx (1982), pp 123–33; Brock Holden, 'King John, the Braoses, and the Celtic fringe, 1207–1216' in *Albion*, xxxiii, no. 1 (2001), pp 11–13.

<sup>95</sup> Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 191–2 (new ed., pp 227–8); Walton, 'The English in Connacht, 1171–1333', p. 32. For the relevant events of 1202–3, see *A.L.C.*, i, 23–7, 229, s.a. 1202, 1203; *Ann. Inisf.*, pp 331–3, s.a. 1202, 1203; Denis Murphy (ed.), *The Annals of Clonmacnoise being annals of Ireland from the earliest period to A.D. 1408*, trans. Conell Mageoghagan (Dublin, 1896), pp 217–18, s.a. 1202; *A.F.M.*, iii, 129–33, s.a. 1202; *Misc. Irish annals*, p. 83 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1202).

called to appear before the king's court to answer the charges laid against him, and the following day his stronghold of Limerick city (excluded from de Braose's grant of the honour of Limerick in 1201) was finally granted to William de Braose during pleasure.<sup>96</sup> De Braose's new custodian, Walter de Lacy, thereupon joined the justiciar in his march to receive the submission of de Burgh and possession of the town.<sup>97</sup>

While the extent to which de Lacy had official licence for his role in the removal of de Burgh is uncertain, from February 1204 he was clearly an instrument of governmental policy. His first assignment was one vital to the king's Continental interests. King John had fled from Normandy at the end of 1203, and his position there was grave.<sup>98</sup> Above all, the king needed money to sustain his mercenary forces, so he ordered a committee, which included Walter de Lacy, to levy an aid in Ireland and to advise the justiciar on the imposition of fines on the escheats of Ireland.<sup>99</sup> After counselling an emissary to the king of Connacht the following month,<sup>100</sup> on 26 March 1204 Walter and his fellow committee members were called by King John to adjudicate on the dispute between the justiciar and William de Burgh that had caused William's removal from Limerick the previous year.<sup>101</sup> De Burgh was desperately needed for the king's war in Normandy, however, so he was granted respite on 29 April 1204, and had all of his lands – save Connacht and those given to de Braose – returned to him.<sup>102</sup> A measure of the king's control over his Irish justiciar was the order that Walter and his associates were to enforce the king's will if Meiler fitz Henry refused to comply.<sup>103</sup> It was during this respite that King John gave Walter his share in the task of dealing with the lord of Ulster, John de Courcy.

While Walter was busy in Limerick, his ambitious brother Hugh had set upon their erstwhile ally in Ulster. The downfall of one of the colony's most enigmatic figures has naturally elicited comment from several quarters.<sup>104</sup> What is most important for the present discussion is the fact that in the year following John

<sup>96</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, pp 31–2; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, nos 181–2.

<sup>97</sup> A submissive de Burgh delivered hostages to Meiler, who then departed; *A.L.C.*, i, 229–31, s.a. 1203; *Ann. Clon.*, p. 219, s.a. 1202; *Ann. Inisf.*, p. 333, s.a. 1203. De Burgh may subsequently be seen in the company of King John by Oct. 1203. *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 187; Walton, 'The English in Connacht, 1171–1333', p. 33.

<sup>98</sup> Hardy, 'Itinerary of King John'; Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 99.

<sup>99</sup> *Rot. chart.*, pp 133–4; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, i, nos 199, 201. The committee was composed of Walter de Lacy, Geoffrey Luterel, Henry archdeacon of Stafford (Henry of London, the future archbishop of Dublin) and William le Petit.

<sup>100</sup> *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 205.

<sup>101</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 39; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 209.

<sup>102</sup> Walton, 'The English in Connacht, 1171–1333', p. 33; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 187.

<sup>103</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, pp 39–41; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, nos 213–15.

<sup>104</sup> Seán Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation: John de Courcy and the men of Cumbria' in Barry, Frame & Simms (eds), *Colony & frontier in medieval Ireland*, pp 1–27 remains the best source for the career of John de Courcy. For his downfall in particular, see the section entitled 'The downfall of John de Courcy' in Orpen's chapter on the baron. Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 134–44 (new ed., pp 204–8); Martin, 'John, lord of Ireland', p. 135; Warren, 'King John & Ireland', p. 34; R. A. McDonald, *Manx kingship in its Irish Sea setting: King Rognvaldr and the Crovan dynasty* (Dublin, 2007), pp 125–9; Crooks, "'Divide & rule'", pp 281–2.



de Courcy's defeat by Hugh de Lacy at Downpatrick, County Down, in 1203,<sup>105</sup> Walter was given an official role in his destruction. Preferring to eschew Hugh's more blunt (if effective) tactics, King John entrusted Walter de Lacy and Meiler fitz Henry with the task of pursuing legal proceedings against de Courcy. On 31 August 1204 the two were ordered to summon de Courcy to the king's service, make conditions for his attendance, cause judgment to be taken in the king's court should he fail to meet those conditions, and effect his forfeiture if that be the judgment of the court. King John inserted the further stipulation that in the event of de Courcy's forfeiture, the eight cantreds of the lordship of Ulster closest to Meath would be transferred to the de Lacy brothers.<sup>106</sup> The trial's outcome was therefore a foregone conclusion. Normandy had by this point been taken by Philip Augustus,<sup>107</sup> and it is difficult to view this final clause as anything but compensation for the de Lacys's lost Norman honours. Independent of this mandate, and perhaps as a reward for his attack on de Courcy the previous year, King John granted Hugh de Lacy a fee in Ireland worth sixty marks a year.<sup>108</sup> Having turned magnate against magnate, King John then issued a menacing letter to the barons of Ulster ordering them to cause de Courcy to come to the king's service lest the king 'betake himself to their hostages and their lands.'<sup>109</sup> Rumours of King John's involvement in the murder of his captive nephew Arthur of Brittany the previous year, 1203, would have been firmly set in the minds of those whose children the king had just threatened.<sup>110</sup>

With his men under pressure from the Crown, Hugh de Lacy having been rewarded for his aggression, and Walter de Lacy playing a leading role in his prosecution, John de Courcy was in dire straits. Nonetheless, he remained defiant, and had finally to be defeated in battle by the de Lacys at Dundrum, County Down.<sup>111</sup> The final stipulation of King John's mandate of 21 August was carried out on 13

<sup>105</sup> *A.F.M.*, iii, 137, s.a. 1203; *A.L.C.*, i, 233, s.a. 1203; *Ann. Clon.*, p. 220, s.a. 1203; *Misc. Irish annals*, p. 83 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1203); *A.U.*, ii, 241, s.a. 1204 [rect. 1203]. Walter Bower claims that John de Courcy was Hugh de Lacy's lord, which, though not unlikely, is far from certain. Walter Bower, *Scotichronicon: in Latin and English*, vol. iv: *books vii and viii*, ed. D. J. Corner, A. B. Scott, W. W. Scott and D. E. R. Watt (Aberdeen, 1994), p. 461.

<sup>106</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 45; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 224.

<sup>107</sup> Wightman, *Lacy*, p. 215.

<sup>108</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 45b; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 227.

<sup>109</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 45; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 225 (quote).

<sup>110</sup> Powicke, *Loss of Normandy*, pp 456–7; Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 27; Norgate, *Angevin kings*, ii, 408; Norgate, *John Lackland*, pp 90–1.

<sup>111</sup> The progress of the dispute may be followed in *A.L.C.*, i, 233–5, 235, s.a. 1204, 1205; *A.F.M.*, iii, 139–41, s.a. 1204; *A.U.*, ii, 241, 243, s.a. 1204, 1205; *Misc. Irish annals*, pp 83, 85 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1203, 1204); *Ann. Clon.*, p. 220, s.a. 1204; Richard Butler (ed.), *Jacobi Grace, Kilkenniensis: annales Hiberniae [Grace's annals]* (Dublin, 1842), pp 21–3, s.a. 1204; Bernadette Williams (ed.), *The annals of Ireland by Friar John Clyn* (Dublin, 2007), p. 138, s.a. 1204; J. T. Gilbert (ed.), *Chartularies of St Mary's abbey, Dublin; with the register of its house at Dunbrody, and annals of Ireland* (2 vols, London, 1884), ii, 308–10, s.a. 1204; Joseph Stevenson (ed.), *Chronica de Mailros [chronicle of Melrose]* (Edinburgh, 1835), p. 105, s.a. 1204; George Broderick (ed.), *Cronica regum Mannie & Insularum* (Belfast, 1979), f. 41v; *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 47; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 234. This original safe conduct was later extended (on 8 Feb.); *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 50; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 253.

November, when Walter and Hugh were granted eight cantreds of de Courcy's forfeited lordship of Ulster.<sup>112</sup> At the same time, the king also confirmed a grant of six cantreds in Connacht, which John had originally made to Hugh prior to 1199.<sup>113</sup> As we have seen, Hugh de Lacy already held a grant of these and other cantreds in Connacht from William de Burgh.<sup>114</sup> John's confirmation meant that Hugh was to hold a substantial portion of Connacht as a tenant-in-chief, which did not bode well for de Burgh. However, the situation was changed on 5 May 1205. These two grants in Ulster and Connacht were apparently rescinded, and in their place Hugh de Lacy received a grant of the entire lordship of Ulster.<sup>115</sup> On 29 May he was further elevated to the title of earl.<sup>116</sup> It is unclear whether Walter then returned to his commission regarding the justiciar's dispute with de Burgh for by that winter William de Burgh was dead.<sup>117</sup>

#### IV

At the beginning of 1206, de Burgh was gone from Munster, de Courcy driven from Ulster, and the lord of Leinster, William Marshal, a perpetual absentee. The de Lacy brothers – holding the lordships of Meath, Ulster and Limerick – therefore occupied an unrivalled position within the colony. While Walter may have taken advantage of his standing to enjoy a relatively quiet year in 1206, his prominence afforded him no such luxury in 1207; indeed, it was his position as custodian of Limerick that embroiled de Lacy in a feud with the justiciar and, through him, King John. The trouble began in the winter of 1206–7 when Meiler and his son (also named Meiler) launched an offensive and took Limerick by force. The reason for this seemingly unprovoked assault is unclear, and the king ostensibly sided with de Lacy. He issued a mandate on 12 February 1207 reprimanding the justiciar, but added that 'the justiciary shall till further orders retain to the King's use the city of Limerick, if it has been taken into the King's hand.'<sup>118</sup> Walter apparently balked at the justiciar's attempts to retain the city, which led to further conflict.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>112</sup> *Rot. chart.*, p. 139; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 240. The price of the grant is recorded as 550 marks (*Rot. obl. et fin.*, p. 227; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, i, no. 239).

<sup>113</sup> *Rot. chart.*, pp. 139–40; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 241.

<sup>114</sup> See above, p. 7.

<sup>115</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 54; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 260. The entries on the charter rolls are cancelled with the explanation that the charters were brought back by Ralph of Cirencester, and torn at a manor of the English justiciar, Geoffrey fitz Peter. *Rot. chart.*, p. 140; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 241.

<sup>116</sup> *Gormanston reg.*, p. 142; *Rot. chart.*, p. 151; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 263.

<sup>117</sup> *A.L.C.*, i, 235, s.a. 1205. The Annals of Clonmacnoise record his death in rather colourful terms under 1204. *Ann. Clon.*, p. 220, s.a. 1204. Empey contends that he did not die until the early months of 1206. C. A. Empey, 'Burgh, William de (d. 1206)' in Matthew & Harrison (eds), *Oxford dictionary of national biography*, viii, 794–5.

<sup>118</sup> T. D. Hardy (ed.), *Rotuli litterarum clausurarum in turri Londinensi asservati* (2 vols, London, 1833–44), i, 77; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 310; *A.F.M.*, iii, 147–9, s.a. 1205; *Ann. Clon.*, p. 221, s.a. 1205. Although both sets of annals place the assault in 1205, it is much more likely to have been over the winter of 1206–7 because King John's response to it is dated 12 Feb. 1207.

<sup>119</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 69; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 315.

It was probably at this point that Walter and his brother Hugh marched on Meiler's castle of Ardnurcher, County Westmeath, expelling the justiciar from it and the nearby territory of Fir Cell, County Offaly.<sup>120</sup> In this, de Lacy had made a fatal mistake: by attacking Meiler as he attempted to carry out the king's order to retain the city of Limerick, Walter left himself open to royal reprisals. John immediately abandoned his policy of support for de Lacy, and began to fortify the justiciar's position in Ireland. Crossbowmen were sent from England, and the communities of Meath and Leinster were instructed to aid the justiciar in his fortification of Dublin.<sup>121</sup> Walter also suffered direct sanction, having the custody of his strategic castle of Ludlow again taken from him.<sup>122</sup> Finally, on 14 April 1207, Walter was called to judgment in the king's court in England,<sup>123</sup> while Meiler sent witnesses to prove de Lacy's trespasses.<sup>124</sup>

William Marshal, upon whom the settlers' violent quarrel with the justiciar has often been blamed,<sup>125</sup> only arrived in Ireland in February or March 1207 – that is, while fitz Henry was already at war with de Lacy. Unsurprisingly, the king sought to delay William's voyage.<sup>126</sup> William had his own claims against Meiler for the latter's seizure of Uí Failge (Offaly) in north Leinster,<sup>127</sup> and his arrival only heaped pressure on the embattled justiciar. Walter de Lacy then answered John's summons to court, while William Marshal and Meiler fitz Henry carried on their more famous dispute in Ireland.<sup>128</sup> No evidence of a trial or its outcome exists, but on 13 July King John ordered the custody of Ludlow castle and town to be given to his 'dear and faithful William de Braose', effectively restoring Ludlow to Walter's preferred custodian.<sup>129</sup> Walter then kept in contact with John,

<sup>120</sup> *A.L.C.*, i, 237, s.a. 1207; *A.F.M.*, iii, 157, s.a. 1207; *Ann. Clon.*, pp 221–2, s.a. 1207.

<sup>121</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 77; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 312 (crossbowmen). *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 69; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 315 (letters to Meath and Leinster).

<sup>122</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, pp 69–70; *Rot. litt. claus.*, pp 79–80.

<sup>123</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 70; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 324.

<sup>124</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, p. 81; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 325.

<sup>125</sup> For this view, see Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 146; Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp 102–5; Crooks, "Divide and rule", pp 282–3. Sidney Painter, however, acknowledges that fitz Henry had been at odds with the vassals of the Marshal and de Braose, 'supported by the lord of Meath', from the end of 1206. Sidney Painter, *William Marshal: knight-errant, baron, and regent of England* (Baltimore, 1933), pp 145–6.

<sup>126</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 13349–423. See also: Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 208–9 (new ed., p. 234); Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp 101–2.

<sup>127</sup> For an excellent analysis of the Marshal's dispute with Meiler and the underlying issues involved, see M. T. Flanagan, 'Defining lordships in Angevin Ireland: William Marshal and the king's justiciar', in Frédéric Boutouille (ed.), *Les seigneuries dans l'espace Plantagenêt (c. 1150–c. 1250): Actes du colloque organisé à Bordeaux et Saint-Emilion les 3, 4 et 5 mai 2007* (Bordeaux, 2009), pp 44–59. For the dispute over Uí Failge in particular, see Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 209–10 (new ed., p. 235); Painter, *William Marshal*, pp 153–5; Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp 102–3.

<sup>128</sup> For the progress of William Marshal's dispute with the justiciar, see *A.F.M.*, iii, 155, s.a. 1207; *Ann. Clon.*, p. 221, s.a. 1207; *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 13429–574; Flanagan, 'Defining lordships in Angevin Ireland'; Orpen, *Normans*, ii, p. 210 (new ed., p. 235); Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, pp 77–8; Painter, *William Marshal*, pp 155–6; Crouch, *William Marshal*, pp 102–5.

<sup>129</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 74.

witnessing the king's charters at regular intervals.<sup>130</sup> Although reconciliation between the two was hinted at by the king, he waited until the recall of William Marshal and Meiler fitz Henry that autumn before conducting a general review of the Irish situation.<sup>131</sup> The Anglo-Norman barons of Ireland gathered at Woodstock, Oxfordshire, in mid-November, with a number of royal grants being made to those in attendance.<sup>132</sup> Walter, however, received nothing until 5 December, when the king granted him the cantred of Ardmayle, barony Middlethird, County Tipperary, during pleasure.<sup>133</sup>

This bestowal of favour is instructive for while the lords of Meath and Leinster met peaceably with the king in England, their conflict remained violent in Ireland. The justiciar, Meiler fitz Henry, had returned to Ireland and that winter was combating the Marshal's representatives in Leinster, who were reinforced by Hugh de Lacy, earl of Ulster.<sup>134</sup> Perhaps John's grant to Walter was made before Hugh de Lacy rode against Meiler for it was unlikely to have been made with knowledge of Hugh's attack. Historians have generally accepted the testimony of the *History of William Marshal* that inclement weather halted all communication with Ireland that winter,<sup>135</sup> and it may have been this lack of word from Ireland that eventually drove the king to take drastic measures. On 20 February 1208 King John forbade the mariners of the Welsh coast to cross to Ireland for anyone, and ordered them to be ready for a royal expedition to Ireland at mid-Lent.<sup>136</sup> While the first part of this mandate may have had something to do with the impending proceedings against William de Braose (to be discussed below), the latter part indicates the importance that the successful assertion of royal authority in Ireland held for the English king. However, just as this Irish expedition was taking shape, news reached England that the justiciar had suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of the Anglo-Norman barons of Ireland,<sup>137</sup> forcing John to reconsider his position. From this point, the king changed tack, and reconciliation came quickly. On 7 March, the Marshal was received back into favour, the rapprochement being made manifest by a revised charter for Leinster on 28 March.<sup>138</sup> The situation for Walter

<sup>130</sup> They were together at Winchester on 23 May, Worcester on 23 Aug., Bristol on 17 Sept., and Windsor on 25 Oct. *Rot. chart.*, pp 167, 169–71, 173; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 330.

<sup>131</sup> Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*, p. 78.

<sup>132</sup> *Rot. chart.*, pp 171–4; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, nos 339–48, 353–4, 356. The witness lists of the majority of these grants contain an irregular order, in which the Irish barons precede the great earls of Chester and Winchester.

<sup>133</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, p. 98; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 363. For identification, see G. H. Orpen, 'Motes and Norman castles in Ireland' in *E.H.R.*, xxii (1907), p. 452.

<sup>134</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 13745–86; *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 103; *A.F.M.*, iii, 155, s.a. 1207; *Ann. Clon.*, p. 221, s.a. 1207.

<sup>135</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 13672–5.

<sup>136</sup> *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 79; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 374. This is independent of John's later mandate to the mariners of the Cinque Ports to muster on 1 June (Trinity Sunday), which was later postponed to 21 September (St Matthew's day). *Rot. litt. pat.*, pp 80, 81b, 83b–86.

<sup>137</sup> *History of William Marshal*, ii, ll 13867–88. The *History* says that the news arrived 'not before Lent', which would place it between 11 Feb. and 29 Mar. 1209. However, as Orpen contends, it most likely arrived before John's settlement with William Marshal on 7 March (discussed presently): Orpen, *Normans*, ii, p. 216 (new ed., p. 237).

<sup>138</sup> Rapprochement: *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 105; *Cal. doc. Ire.*, 1171–1251, no. 375. Charter for Leinster: *Rot. chart.*, p. 176.

was less straightforward, however, because his father-in-law, William de Braose, was by now a target of royal displeasure. The origins and progress of the dispute are better discussed elsewhere,<sup>139</sup> but their impact on the king's relationship with Walter de Lacy was great. On 9 April a hostage was taken for Walter's good behaviour.<sup>140</sup> This may have been part of the Crown's general demand for hostages following Pope Innocent III's imposition of the interdict on England on 23–24 March 1208,<sup>141</sup> but it also ensured that de Lacy did not interfere in the actions taken against de Braose about this time. That same month, a royal force was led against de Braose's marcher lands, ostensibly distraining them as a result of de Braose's massive debt to the Crown owed from his purchase of the honour of Limerick in 1201.<sup>142</sup> De Braose eventually negotiated a settlement with the king at Hereford, at which conference, on 24 April, Walter de Lacy received his new charter for Meath.<sup>143</sup> De Lacy wasted little time in crossing to Ireland in May or early June 1208.<sup>144</sup>

## V

No sooner had de Lacy touched Irish soil, however, than he once again risked the ire of the king. This is because Walter was soon joined by his wife's family, the de Braoses, who had just cut a path of destruction through the Welsh march, firing the royal town of Leominster, Herefordshire, as they fled. What is truly remarkable in this episode is the faith in the power of the de Lacys displayed by the de Braose family, believing that Walter could provide refuge from the king. Perhaps even more significant was de Lacy's self-confidence: the harbouring of fugitives was not to be taken lightly, yet Walter received his in-laws and proceeded

<sup>139</sup> The fall of de Braose is commented on in almost every study of King John or medieval Ireland, but for more on the dispute in particular, see Holden, 'King John, the Braoses, and the Celtic fringe'; Melissa Pollock, 'Rebels of the west, 1209–1216' in *Cambrian Medieval Celtic Studies*, 50 (2005), pp 1–30; Rowlands, 'William de Braose'. I also hope to examine the conflict elsewhere.

<sup>140</sup> *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 110. The hostage named was 'Hugh de Lacy', but this was almost certainly not Walter's brother, the earl of Ulster. The mandate lacks the comital title, and, more importantly, such an order regarding an earl would have been tantamount to Hugh's arrest.

<sup>141</sup> This was for King John's role in the disputed succession to the archiepiscopal see of Canterbury. For more on the interdict, see Norgate, *John Lackland*, pp 127–30; Painter, *Reign of King John*, pp 151–202; Warren, *King John*, pp 154–73; C. R. Cheney, 'King John and the papal interdict' in *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library*, xxxi, no. 2 (1948) pp 295–317; idem, 'King John's reaction to the interdict on England' in *R. Hist. Soc. Trans.*, 4th ser., xxxi (1949), pp 129–50.

<sup>142</sup> *Foedera*, i, pp i, 107–8; *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 81; *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 112–13; Roger of Wendover's *flowers of history. Comprising the history of England from the descent of the Saxons to A.D. 1231 formerly ascribed to Matthew Paris*, ed. J. A. Giles (2 vols, London, 1849), ii, 49. See also Holden, 'King John, the Braoses, & the Celtic fringe', p. 15.

<sup>143</sup> Walter's charter: *Rot. chart.*, p. 178; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 382. De Braose's settlement: *Foedera*, i, pp i, 107–8. The dates of John's presence at Hereford may be found in Hardy, 'Itinerary of King John'.

<sup>144</sup> Protection while there: *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 84; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 383. He was granted licence to construct a mill at Drogheda on 3 June. *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 84; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 384.

to negotiate with King John on their behalf. These were not the only negotiations in which the de Lacys were involved, however, for evidence suggests that Walter and Hugh went so far as to involve themselves in a plot to overthrow the English king. Knowledge of their apparent treason comes in the form of a letter from King Philip Augustus addressed to a 'J. de Latiaco' in which the French king writes about how he had been informed that the latter planned to launch a co-ordinated rising, with friends, in England and Ireland. The French king goes on to promise that once he is sure of the addressee's rebellion he will consider irrefutable council regarding the land that the latter's ancestors had in England (presumably with an eye towards their restoration).<sup>145</sup> At first glance, 'J. de Latiaco' would seem to indicate John de Lacy, and in his study of the reign of King John, Sidney Painter struggled to reconcile the letter's contents with the actions of the seventeen-year-old son of Roger de Lacy, constable of Chester.<sup>146</sup> J. C. Holt did much to discredit this interpretation, and A. A. M. Duncan has provided a convincing argument for identifying the addressee of the letter as either Walter or Hugh de Lacy, favouring the former.<sup>147</sup> One further piece of evidence not cited by Duncan is that the addressee's intermediary with the French king, Roger des Essarts, was soon to be Hugh de Lacy's companion on the Albigensian Crusade.<sup>148</sup> This fact is all the more striking when one considers the testimony of the Dunstable annalist who records, under 1210, a rumoured plot to drive John from his throne and set up the leader of that crusade, Simon de Montfort (d.1218), in his stead.<sup>149</sup> Even the monastery to which the de Lacys supposedly fled after their expulsion from Ireland in 1210, Saint Taurin, had a strong connection with the de Montforts.<sup>150</sup> Thus, it seems

<sup>145</sup> M. J. Monicat and M. J. Boussard (eds), *Recueil des actes de Philippe Auguste roi de France publié sous la direction de M. Charles Samaran membre de l'institut, tome III, années du règne XXVIII à XXXVI [1er Novembre 1206–31 Octobre 1215]* (Paris, 1966), no. 1079, pp 161–2. The original letter is now in the Vatican Library, MS Ottobon 2796, f. 74v. It was first edited in *Archives des missions scientifiques et littéraires*, 3rd series, vi (1880), p. 334.

<sup>146</sup> Painter, *Reign of King John*, pp 253–5. The letter forms *t* and *c* are very similar for this period, so 'Latiaco' should likely be 'Laciaco'.

<sup>147</sup> J. C. Holt, *The northerners: a study in the reign of King John* (Oxford, 1961), pp 207–8; A. A. M. Duncan, 'John king of England and the kings of Scots' in Church (ed.), *King John: new interpretations*, pp 258–9.

<sup>148</sup> *Recueil des actes de Philippe Auguste*, iii, no. 1079, pp 161–2; William of Tudela and anonymous, *The song of the Cathar wars: the history of the Albigensian Crusade*, ed. and trans. Janet Shirley (Aldershot, 1996), p. 28; Nicholas Vincent, 'England and the Albigensian Crusade' in Björn K. U. Weiler and Ifor W. Rowlands (eds), *England and Europe in the reign of Henry III (1216–1272)* (Aldershot & Burlington, 2002), p. 73. The pair remained on the crusade even after their crusading vows had been completed. Roger des Essarts held half a knight's fee at Tronchay beside Rouen (*Troncheium juxta Rothomagum*), of the fee of Breteuil. Les Essarts (Eure, canton Damville) was part of Simon de Montfort's demesne. *Recueil des historiens, tome xxiii*, p. 714 e, f; Lucien Merlet and Auguste Moutié (eds), *Cartulaire de l'Abbaye de Notre-Dame des Vaux de Cernay de l'Ordre de Cîteaux au diocèse de Paris, tome premier, 1118–1250* (Paris, 1857), p. 188. For more on Roger des Essarts, see Melissa Pollock, 'Franco-Scottish politics: Crown and nobility, 1160–1296' (Ph.D. thesis, University of St Andrews, 2005) pp 22–3, 24, 30, 47; Painter, *Reign of King John*, p. 254.

<sup>149</sup> 'Annales prioratus de Dunstapilia (A.D. 1–1297)' in H. R. Luard (ed.), *Annales monastici* (5 vols, London, 1864–9), iii, 33–4, s.a. 1210.

<sup>150</sup> Pollock, 'Rebels of the west', p. 13. De Montfort was also titular earl of Leicester: Norgate, *John Lackland*, p. 252.

that only months after Walter's reconciliation with King John following his war against the Irish justiciar, the de Lacy brothers were harbouring a known fugitive and negotiating rebellion with the king of France.

The question of what might have driven Walter de Lacy to treason is a difficult one. Having been used by the king against de Burgh in Munster and de Courcy in Ulster, perhaps John's treatment of de Braose, with all its implications for Walter's own standing and security, was too much for him to countenance. Rumours of conspiracy, both foreign and domestic, were rife in the wake of the interdict and in anticipation of King John's excommunication, which may have been reason enough for de Lacy's sedition. Whatever Walter's motivation, the king is likely to have got wind of the plot. Evidence of John's insecurity and the possible extent of the conspiracy in which de Lacy was involved came in the spring of 1209, when negotiations between the kings of Scotland and France over a marriage alliance were probably betrayed.<sup>151</sup> King John marched north almost immediately, and the Scottish king only narrowly avoided invasion by repeatedly denying that such an alliance had been mooted and by agreeing to a harsh settlement.<sup>152</sup>

After dealing with Scotland, John extracted oaths of homage from the Welsh princes,<sup>153</sup> before turning to Ireland. The underlying issues of 1207 were plainly unresolved, with the de Lacy brothers' conduct in the ensuing years being an affront to the king's authority on the island. It is little surprise, therefore, that although he claimed to be in pursuit of de Braose as a debtor to the Crown, the king all but ignored him when William crossed the Irish Sea to treat for peace, leaving him behind in Wales as he sailed against his true quarries, the de Lacys.<sup>154</sup> When John landed with the royal army at Crook on 20 June 1210,<sup>155</sup> he ignored Limerick (the supposed *casus belli*) and instead marched north through Leinster towards Meath and Ulster. Whatever conspiracy had been contemplated the previous year was not activated, and the de Lacy brothers found themselves facing an impressive royal army alone.<sup>156</sup> Faced with total disaster, the manoeuvre that Walter then performed was adroit, if not immediately successful. On 28 June Walter's messengers approached the king at Dublin, offering their lord's total submission and setting up Hugh de Lacy as a scapegoat.<sup>157</sup> The confiscation of all of Walter's lands and castles was by this point a foregone conclusion, so his submission was academic. By blaming his brother, however, Walter likely hoped to avoid the sentence of treason, which might at least result in permanent disinheritation and exile. One set of annals asserts that the king banished Walter from

<sup>151</sup> Duncan, 'John king of England & the kings of Scots', pp 260–1.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 260; Norgate, *John Lackland*, pp 133–4; *Roger of Wendover's flowers of history*, ii, 249 (quote); *Matthaei Parisiensis, monachi sancti Albani, historia Anglorum, sive, ut vulgo dicitur, historia minor. Item, ejusdem abbreviatio chronicum Angliae*, ed. Frederic Madden (3 vols, London, 1866–69), ii, 119; *The historical works of Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. William Stubbs (2 vols, London, 1879–80), ii, 103.

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*, ii, 49; *Matthaei Parisiensis historia Anglorum*, ii, 119.

<sup>154</sup> *Foedera*, i, pp i, 107; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 408.

<sup>155</sup> Martin, 'John, Lord of Ireland', p. 140.

<sup>156</sup> Unless one counts William de Braose's supposed burning of a mill and three cottages ('*unum molendinum, & tres bordell' combussit*') while the king was in Ireland (*Foedera*, i, pp i, 107–8; Joseph Bain (ed.), *Calendar of documents relating to Scotland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London* (4 vols, Edinburgh, 1881–8), i, no. 480)).

<sup>157</sup> *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 402.

Ireland while at Dublin,<sup>158</sup> and whether or not the lord of Meath actually took ship there and then, the effect was the same: Walter's transmarine lands in Ireland, England and Wales were forfeited to the Crown.

With Meath at his feet, King John sent his fleet north to wait at Carlingford while he took the opportunity to make a progress of his new midland lordship with Walter's most trusted barons in attendance.<sup>159</sup> The psychological effect of this triumphal march should not be underestimated, and through it the king once again displayed his priorities. While he marched through Meath, Hugh de Lacy and the de Braoses were still at large, and once the king finally turned towards Ulster, the fugitives were able to escape to Scotland. According to a colourful, though not implausible, account, the de Lacy brothers were subsequently reunited as exiles in France.<sup>160</sup> The success of Walter's handling of matters in 1210 was ultimately shown in 1213 when he re-entered royal service and quickly regained the confidence of the king.<sup>161</sup> Terms for the restoration of both Meath and Ulster had been agreed by 1215,<sup>162</sup> and when King John died the following year, Walter de Lacy was by his side. Walter was even chosen as an executor of the king's will.<sup>163</sup>

From the death of King John, England was ushered into the extended minority of his nine-year-old son Henry III, in which the governance of a regency council meant that the traditional king–magnate dynamic ceased to operate. The fact that Walter then experienced a period of unprecedented security in his tenure says much about what had transpired. Although he had succeeded to lands in England, Ireland and Normandy, for roughly nineteen out of the first twenty-seven years of his career, Walter was denied seisin in at least one of these realms. Whether because of the animosity of the lord of Ireland in 1192–4, Walter's failure to appease King Richard in 1196–8, or the final loss of Normandy in 1204, Walter's relationship with the English king underpinned each confiscation. As perilous as it might have been, this relationship was nonetheless of great benefit to de Lacy. Patronage was still forthcoming, and official commissions enabled Walter to raise his family's profile in both England and Ireland. In the end, the best assessment of Walter's relationship with the king may be his own. From his reconciliation with John in 1213, de Lacy remained a staunch royalist, serving the Crown well in the dark days of the Magna Carta civil war (1215–17). Whether born of heartfelt loyalty or of a more political pragmatism, his decision displays the strength and importance of the king–magnate dynamic in thirteenth-century England and Ireland.

COLIN VEACH

*Medieval History Research Centre, Trinity College Dublin*

<sup>158</sup> *Misc. Irish annals*, p. 87 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1210).

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87 (Mac Carthaigh's book, s.a. 1210). For the king's progress, see Orpen, *Normans*, ii, 247–50 (new ed., pp 249–51). A list of the barons of Meath who submitted to King John in 1210 is reprinted, with a photographic reproduction of the original document, in *Handbook and select calendar of sources for medieval Ireland in the National Archives of the United Kingdom*, ed. Paul Dryburgh and Brendan Smith (Dublin, 2005), pp 269–71.

<sup>160</sup> *Grace's Annals*, p. 24, s.a. 1210; *Chartularies of St Mary's*, ii, 311, s.a. 1210; 'The book of Howth' in *Cal. Carew MSS, 1600–23*, 121; 'Collectanea de rebus Hi[ber]nicis ab ann: 1131 ad ann 1537' (B.L., Add. MS 4792, ff 160–2, s.a. 1210).

<sup>161</sup> Orders for the restoration of his English lands: *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 99; *Rot. litt. claus.*, i, 134.

<sup>162</sup> Meath: *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 191; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, no. 596. Ulster: *Rot. litt. pat.*, p. 134; *Cal. doc. Ire., 1171–1251*, i, no. 550.

<sup>163</sup> *Foedera*, i, pp i, 144.