Hugh de Lacy,
First Earl of Ulster

Rising and Falling in Angevin Ireland

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HUGH DE LACY
FIRST EARL OF ULSTER

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Daniel Brown

For my wife, Gemma

Contents

Illustrations

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

AC	*Annála Connacht: the annals of Connacht, A.D. 1224–1544,* ed. A. M. Freeman (Dublin, 1970)
AClon.	*The annals of Clonmacnoise, being annals of Ireland from the earliest period to A.D. 1408,* ed. Denis Murphy, trans. Conell Mageoghagan (Dublin, 1896)
AD	Archives Départementales
AFM	*Annala rioghachta Eireann: annals of the kingdom of Ireland by the Four Masters from the earliest period to the year 1616,* ed. John O'Donovan (7 vols, Dublin, 1851)
AI	*The annals of Inisfallen (MS Rawlinson B 503),* ed. Seán Mac Airt (Dublin, 1951)
ALC	*The annals of Loch Cé. A chronicle of Irish affairs from A.D. 1014 to A.D. 1590,* ed. W. M. Hennessy, Rolls Series (2 vols, London, 1871)
Anal. Hib.	*Analecta Hibernica, including the reports of the Irish manuscripts commission* (Dublin, 1930–)
Ann. mon.	*Annales monastici,* ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (5 vols, London, 1864–9)
ANS	*Anglo-Norman studies,* ed. R. A. Brown, Christopher Harper-Bill, Marjorie Chibnall *et al.* (Woodbridge, 1978–)
Archiv. Hib.	*Archivium Hibernicum: or Irish historical records* (Maynooth, 1912–)
AU	*Annala Uladh. Annals of Ulster, otherwise annala Senait, annals of Senat; a chronicle of Irish affairs, A.D. 431–1131, 1155–1541,* ed. Bartholomew Mac Carthy (4 vols, Dublin, 1893)
Bib. Mun.	Bibliothèque Municipale
BL	British Library
Bréifne	*Bréifne: journal of Cumann Seanchais Bhreifne* (Cavan, 1958–)
Cal. Carew MSS	*Calendar of the Carew manuscripts preserved in the archiepiscopal library at Lambeth, 1515–74* [etc.] (6 vols, London, 1867–73)
Cal. papal letters	*Calendar of entries in the papal registers relating to Great Britain and Ireland: papal letters, 1198–1304* [etc.] (12 vols, London, 1893–1933)

CCHR	*Calendar of the charter rolls, 1226–57* [etc.] (6 vols, London, 1903–1927)
CCR	*Calendar of the close rolls, 1272–9* [etc.] (47 vols, London, 1892–1963)
CDI	*Calendar of documents relating to Ireland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London, 1171–1251* [etc.], ed. H. S. Sweetman and G. F. Handcock (5 vols, London, 1875–86)
CDS	*Calendar of documents relating to Scotland preserved in Her Majesty's Public Record Office, London, 1108–1272* [etc.], *ed. Joseph Bain (4 vols, Edinburgh, 1881–8)*
CPR	*Calendar of the patent rolls, 1232–47* [etc.] (London, 1901–16)
Chartul. St Mary's, Dublin	*Chartularies of St Mary's Abbey, Dublin: with the register of its house at Dunbrody and annals of Ireland, 1162–1370*, ed. J. T. Gilbert, Rolls Series (2 vols, London, 1884–6)
Christ Church deeds	*Christ Church deeds*, ed. M. J. McEnery and Raymond Refaussé (Dublin, 2001)
Chron. Houedene	*Chronica magistri Rogeri de Houedene*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series (4 vols, London, 1869–71)
Chron. maj.	Matthew Paris, *Chronica majora*, ed. H. R. Luard, Rolls Series (7 vols, London, 1872–83)
Chron. Mann	*Chronicle of the kings of Mann and the Isles*, ed. and trans. George Broderick and Brian Stowell (Edinburgh, 1973)
Early sources, ed. Anderson	Early sources of Scottish history, A.D. 500–1286, ed. A. O. Anderson (2 vols, Edinburgh, 1922)
EHR	*English Historical Review* (London, 1886–)
Éigse	*Éigse: a journal of Irish studies* (Dublin, 1939–)
Ériu	*Ériu: founded as the journal of the School of Irish Learning* (Dublin, 1904–)
Expug. Hib.	Giraldus Cambrensis, *Expugnatio Hibernica: the conquest of Ireland*, ed. A. B. Scott and F. X. Martin (Dublin, 1978)
Flores hist.	*Rogeri de Wendover liber qui dicitur Flores historiarum*, ed. H. G. Hewlett, Rolls Series (3 vols, London, 1886–9)
G.E.C. *Peerage*	G. E. Cockayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom*, ed. Vicary Gibbs, H. A. Doubleday, Duncan Warrand, Lord Howard de Walden, G. H. White and R. S. Lea (2nd edn, 8 vols, London, 1910–59).
Gir. Camb. op.	*Giraldi Cambrensis opera*, ed. J. S. Brewer, J. F. Dimock and G. F. Warner, Rolls Series (8 vols, London, 1861–91)

Gorm. reg.	*Calendar of the Gormanston register: from the original in the possession of the Right Honourable the viscount of Gormanston,* ed. James Mills and M. J. McEnery (Dublin, 1916)
Hist. Albigensis	Peter des Vaux-de-Cernay, *Historia Albigensis,* trans. W. A. Sibly and M. D. Sibly (Woodbridge, 1998)
Hogan, *Onomasticon*	Edmund Hogan, *Onomasticon Goedelicum: locorum et tribuum Hiberniae et Scotiae. An index, with identifications, to the Gaelic names of places and tribes* (Dublin, 1910)
HWM	*The history of William Marshal,* ed. A. J. Holden, Stewart Gregory and David Crouch (3 vols, London, 2002–6)
IER	*Irish Ecclesiastical Record* (Dublin, 1864–)
IHS	*Irish Historical Studies: the joint journal of the Irish Historical Society and the Ulster Society for Irish Historical Studies* (Dublin, 1938–)
Ir. cartul. Llanthony	*The Irish cartularies of Llanthony Prima and Secunda,* ed. Eric St. John Brooks (Dublin, 1953)
JLAS	*Journal of the County Louth Archaeological Society* (Dundalk, 1904–)
JRSAI	*Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland* (Dublin, 1892–)
MCB	*Miscellaneous Irish annals, A.D. 1114–1437 (MacCartaigh's book),* ed. Séamus Ó hInnse (Dublin, 1947)
Med. relig. houses	Aubrey Gwynn and R. N. Hadcock, *Medieval religious houses: Ireland* (London, 1970)
Mon. Ang.	William Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (6 vols in 8, London, 1846)
NA	*The National Archives*
NHI	T. W. Moody, T. D. Williams, J. C. Beckett and F. X. Martin (eds), *A new history of Ireland, under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy* (9 vols, Dublin, 1968–2008)
NLI	National Library of Ireland
NRS	National Records of Scotland
ODNB	*Oxford dictionary of national biography* (60 vols, Oxford, 2004)
Ormond deeds	*Calendar of Ormond deeds,* ed. Edmund Curtis (6 vols, Dublin, 1932–43)
Orpen, *Normans*	G. H. Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169–1333* (4 vols, Oxford, 1911–20; 1 vol. repr., Dublin, 2005)
Otway-Ruthven, *Med. Ire.*	A. J. Otway-Ruthven, *A history of medieval Ireland* (2nd edn, London, 1980)

Past & Present	*Past & Present: a journal of historical studies* (London, 1952–)
Pat. rolls	*Patent rolls of the reign of Henry III, 1216–25* [etc.] (2 vols, London, 1901–3)
Pipe roll 3 [etc.] *John*	*The great roll of the pipe for the third* [etc.] *year of the reign of King John*, ed. D. M. Stenton, P. M. Barnes, Sidney Smith (Pipe Roll Society, new ser., London, 1936–55)
Pipe roll Ire. 1211–12	'The Irish pipe roll of 14 John, 1211–1212', ed. Oliver Davies and D. B. Quinn, *UJA*, 3rd ser., 4, suppl. (1941), 53–69
Pont. Hib.	*Pontificia Hibernica: medieval papal chancery documents concerning Ireland, A.D. 640–1261*, ed. M. P. Sheehy (2 vols, Dublin, 1962–5)
PRIA C	*Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy, section C: archae-ology, Celtic studies, history, linguistics and literature* (Dublin, 1902–)
PRO	Public Record Office
PRONI	Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
Red bk Kildare	*The red book of the earls of Kildare*, ed. Gearóid Mac Niocaill (Dublin, 1964)
Reeves, *Eccl. ant.*	William Reeves (ed.), *Ecclesiastical antiquities of Down, Connor and Dromore* (Dublin, 1850)
Reg. St Thomas	*Register of the abbey of St. Thomas, Dublin*, ed. J. T. Gilbert, Rolls Series (London, 1889)
Rev. Celt.	*Revue Celtique* (41 vols, Paris and London, 1870–1924)
RLC	*Rotuli litterarum clausarum, 1204–24* [etc.], ed. T. D. Hardy (2 vols, London, 1833–44)
RLP	*Rotuli litterarum patentium, 1201–16*, ed. T. D. Hardy (London, 1835)
Rot. chart.	*Rotuli chartarum in Turri Londinensi asservati, 1199–1216* (London, 1837)
Rot. lib.	*Rotuli de liberate ac de misis et praestitis regnante Johanne*, ed. T. D. Hardy (London, 1844)
Rot. oblatis.	*Rotuli de oblatis et finibus in Turri Londinensi asservati tempore Regis Johannis*, ed. T. D. Hardy (London, 1835)
Rot. pat. Hib.	*Rotulorum patentium et clausorum cancellariae Hiberniae calendarium*, ed. Edward Tresham (4 vols, Dublin, 1828)
Rymer, *Foedera*	*Foedera, conventiones, litterae, et cujuscunque generis acta publica, inter regis Angliae et alios quosvis imperatores, reges, pontifices, principes, vel communitates*, ed. Thomas Rymer (4 vols in 7, London, 1816–30)

Scot. Hist. Rev.	*Scottish Historical Review* (Glasgow, 1903–28; 1947–)
Seanchas Ard Mhacha	*Seanchas Ard Mhacha: a journal of the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society (Armagh, 1954–)*
Speculum	*Speculum: a journal of medieval studies* (Cambridge, Mass., 1926–)
St A. lib.	*Liber cartarum prioratus Sancti Andree in Scotia, ed. Thomas Thomson, Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh, 1841)*
TDGNHAS	*Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society* (Dumfries, 1862–)
UJA	*Ulster Journal of Archaeology* (Belfast, 1853–)

(i) Rose of Monmouth = Hugh I = (ii) d. Ruaidrí Ua
†*ante* 1180   †1186   Conchobair

Hugh II, earl = (ii) Emelina de = Stephen   William = Gwenllian, d.   Robert   Gilbert   Alice = Roger Pipard   Walter = Margery   d. = William II
of Ulster   Ridilesford   Longespée   †1233   Llywelyn ap   †*ante* 1189   †1241   de Braose   fitz Alan
(†1242)   †*c*.1278   Iorwerth   †1210

= (i) Lescelina de
   Verdun
   †*post* 1226?

Walter   Roger   Matilda = David, baron   Avicia = Walter   d. = Miles de   (iii) Rose = Alan of   (i) d. Roger   Gilbert = Isabella
†*ante* 1242?   †*ante* 1242?   of Naas   Hose   Angulo?   Galloway   de Lacy   †1230   Bigod
                     †*c*. 1260   †1234
                                                                                           (ii) Margaret of   Walter = d. Rose de
                                                                                              Huntingdon   †1240   Verdun

William   Robert   Hugh   Matilda = John le   Lescelina   Rose
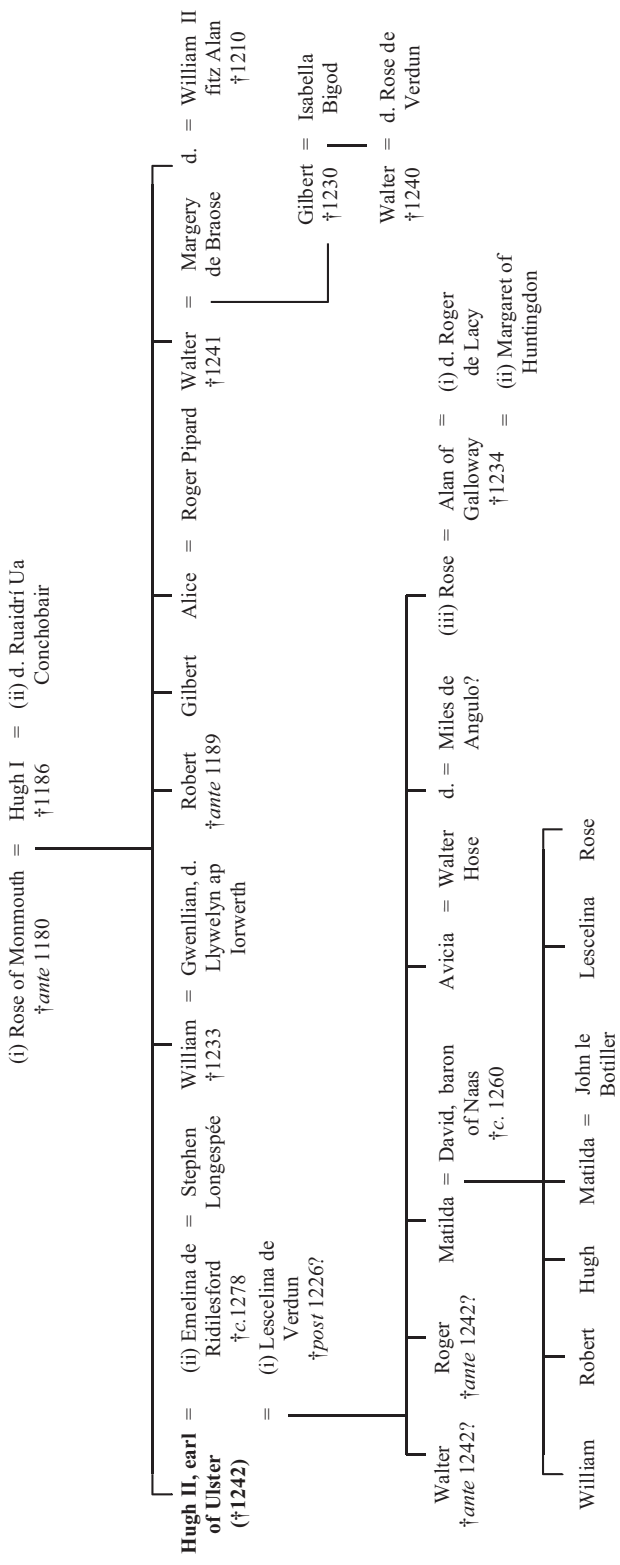   Botiller

Figure 1: the family of Hugh II de Lacy (I)

Figure 2: the family of Hugh II de Lacy (II)
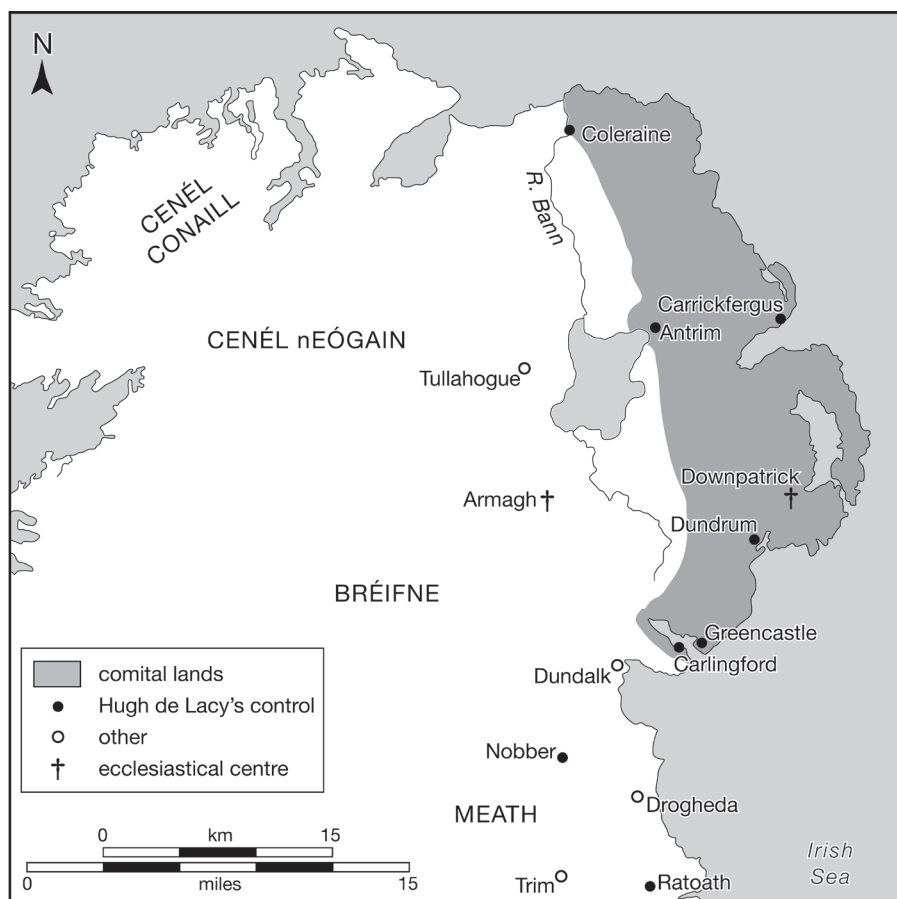
Map 1: The earldom of Ulster, c.1230

Map 2: De Lacy's French lands in context

Introduction

> Fellow soldiers, it is not a call to luxury and ease that has brought us to this land. Rather have we come to make trial of the vicissitudes of Fortune and to test the strength of our valour at the risk of our lives. For a while we were at the top of Fortune's wheel. Now we are sinking towards the bottom, but by reason of its very mutability we are destined to rise again to the top.[1]

A ubiquitous image in the Middle Ages, used by writers to make the course of events more intelligible, was the 'wheel of Fortune', raising men and women up to the apex of fame, wealth and power, or casting them back to earth and the terrestrial realities of ignominy, poverty and disgrace. Whether depicted in manuscript illustrations, narrative structures or literary trajectories, life was reduced to the three stages: ascent, supremacy and decline. All enjoyed highs and suffered lows, but it was the fates of the highborn which held most interest for a medieval audience. 'Nothing so interested the general populace, then as now, as to watch an individual fall, especially from great heights', writes James Bothwell.[2]

Few aristocratic lives in medieval Britain and Ireland displayed greater degrees of success and reversal than that of Hugh II de Lacy. Ascending from modest beginnings as a younger son of a celebrated Anglo-Norman adventurer, Hugh was the recipient of the first earldom in Angevin Ireland when he was created earl of Ulster by King John on 29 May 1205. But almost as swiftly as he had risen to prominence, Hugh fell foul of the crown and was banished from Ireland in 1210, joining the Albigensian crusade in southern France. Rise, supremacy and fall – except that de Lacy's story contained a fourth act. If the momentum of the *rota Fortunae* was beyond human control, on occasion the wheel could complete more than one revolution.[3] After two decades in the

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[1] Attributed by Giraldus Cambrensis to Maurice fitz Gerald (†1177) during the siege of Dublin (1171): *Expug. Hib.*, 80–1. For recurrences of the wheel of Fortune motif in Giraldus's work, see ibid., 26–7, 38–9, 86–7, 160–1, 224–7.

[2] James Bothwell, *Falling from grace: reversal of fortune and the English nobility, 1075–1455* (Manchester, 2008), 4. See also, William Cook and Ronald Herzman, *The medieval world view: an introduction* (Oxford, 2004), 117–18; Alexander Murray, *Reason and society in the Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1978), 98–101; R. T. Lambdin and L. C. Lambdin (eds), *Encyclopedia of medieval literature* (Westport, CT, 2000), 379; Leslie Ross, *Medieval art: a topical dictionary* (Westport, CT, 1996), 264–5.

[3] 'If you try to stop the force of her turning wheel, you are the most foolish man alive': Boethius, *The consolation of philosophy,* trans. Richard Green (Indianapolis, 1962), 21–2.

political wilderness, Hugh was restored to his earldom in 1227 and retained it until his death, in late 1242 or early 1243.[4]

Despite its unique quality, Hugh de Lacy's career has yet to be subjected to a thorough scholarly examination. The sole monograph on Anglo-Norman Ulster, by T. E. McNeill, is now over thirty years old. While it advanced understanding of the earldom's organisation and archaeology, a wide-ranging chronological span and narrow geographical scope allowed the detail of Hugh de Lacy's career to be largely glossed over.[5] The most comprehensive treatment of thirteenth-century Ulster has been found in G. H. Orpen's *Ireland under the Normans*, first published over a century ago and constrained by the relatively shallow investigation permitted by a wide-ranging survey.[6] Recently, Colin Veach has updated and extended the standard work on the eleventh- and-twelfth-century de Lacys, by W. E. Wightman,[7] with his impressive study of Hugh I de Lacy (†1186) and his son, Walter (†1241), successive lords of Meath and heads of the Herefordshire familial branch.[8] What little is said of the earl of Ulster is cogently presented, but framed in relation to his father and elder brother, a 'loose-end' highlighted by one reviewer, in calling for 'a separate account of Anglo-Irish-French relations in the first half of the thirteenth century built around the career and ambitions of this fascinating man'.[9] Veach's focus on the aristocratic *familia* as the source of effective lordship, I would argue, has also led to a misconception concerning the intimacy of the association between Hugh II and his elder brother, Walter. It was fraternal competition, rather than solidarity, which best contextualises the younger Hugh's relentless pursuit of power.

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[4] News of Hugh's death reached King Henry III by 8 February 1243: *Close rolls, 1242–7*, 60; *CDI*, i, no. 2600; below, 201.
[5] T. E. McNeill, *Anglo-Norman Ulster: the history and archaeology of an Irish barony* (Edinburgh, 1980). Other general surveys of the region include Ciaran Brady, Mary O'Dowd and Brian Walker (eds), *Ulster: an illustrated history* (London, 1989); J. P. Mallory and T. E. McNeill, *The archaeology of Ulster: from colonisation to plantation* (Belfast, 1991).
[6] G. H. Orpen, *Ireland under the Normans, 1169–1333* (Oxford, 1911–20), 153–60, 409–27; idem, 'The earldom of Ulster (i)', *JRSAI* 43 (1913), 30–46, 133–43; (ii) 44 (1914), 51–66; (iii) 45 (1915), 123–42; (iv) 50 (1920), 167–77; (v) 51 (1921), 68–76.
[7] W. E. Wightman, *The Lacy family in England and Normandy, 1066–1194* (Oxford, 1966).
[8] Colin Veach, *Lordship in four realms: the Lacy family, 1166–1241* (Manchester, 2014). See also, idem, 'A question of timing: Walter de Lacy's seisin of Meath, 1189–94', *PRIA C* 109 (2009), 165–94; idem, 'King and magnate in medieval Ireland: Walter de Lacy, King Richard and King John', *IHS* 37, no. 146 (2010), 179–202. For other valuable treatments of Walter de Lacy's career, see Joe Hillaby, 'Colonisation, crisis management and debt: Walter de Lacy and the lordship of Meath, 1189–1241' *Ríocht na Mídhe: records of the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society* 8, no. 4 (1992/3), 1–50; idem, 'Hereford gold: Irish, Welsh and English land', *Transactions of the Woolhope Field Club (Herefordshire)* (i) 44, no. 3 (1984), 358–419; (ii) 45, no. 1 (1985), 193–270.
[9] Brendan Smith, 'Review of Colin Veach, *Lordship in four realms: the Lacy family, 1166–1241* (Manchester, 2014)', *IHS* 39, no. 154 (2015), 338–9.

In historiography on the Angevin colony in Ireland the focus of scholarship has largely been trained on aristocratic adventurers other than Hugh II de Lacy, including John de Courcy, Ulster's first Anglo-Norman *conquistador*, under whom the fabric of the lordship was woven between 1177 and 1205.[10] The career of de Courcy's usurper, Hugh de Lacy, is hardly less intriguing: he had his own connections with the sea-going lords of the Irish Sea region; battled with heretics in southern France; joined rebellions in Wales and Galloway; and cultivated a network of allies and contacts from the Hebrides to the Pyrenees. Hugh's description in a fifteenth-century Scottish chronicle as 'the most powerful of the English in Ireland' (*potentissimus Anglorum in Hibernia*) was at least periodically fitting.[11]

De Lacy's immediate sphere of operation was Ireland, and his hand can be seen in many of the key set-pieces underpinning the history of the nascent colony: the baronial crisis of 1207–08; King John's Irish expedition of 1210; Hugh's rebellion of 1223–24; the 'murder' of Richard Marshal, earl of Pembroke, in 1234; and the re-conquest of Connacht in 1235–36. Hugh's activities beyond Ireland have also begun to be better understood.[12] An advantage of biography is that it can move through the geographical boundaries constricting regional-specific studies as fluidly as members of the thirteenth-century aristocratic elite itinerated through contemporary territorial limits. Historians of medieval Ireland have long been aware of Ulster's significance as a 'wedge' between the 'old Gaelic world of Erin and Alba',[13] but even after its conquest in the twelfth century and constitution as an earldom under Hugh de Lacy, the north-east of Ireland continued to form part of the 'maritime orbit'[14] encircling the Western Isles, Galloway, Man and parts of northern England.

Through the study of one magnate it is possible to bring a fresh perspective to the much-trampled themes of power and identity. The scholarly neglect of Hugh de Lacy's career may be partly explained by a lingering perception

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[10] Seán Duffy, 'The first Ulster plantation: John de Courcy and the men of Cumbria', in T. B. Barry, Robin Frame and Katharine Simms (eds), *Colony and frontier in medieval Ireland: essays presented to J. F. Lydon* (London, 1995), 1–27; M. T. Flanagan, 'John de Courcy, the first Ulster plantation and Irish church men', in Brendan Smith (ed.), *Britain and Ireland, 900–1300: insular responses to medieval European change* (Cambridge, 1999), 154–79; Steve Flanders, *De Courcy: Anglo-Normans in Ireland, England and France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries* (Dublin, 2008).

[11] *Scotichronicon, by Walter Bower*, ed. D. E. R. Watt (9 vols, St Andrews, 1994), iv, 460–1.

[12] See, for example, the recent survey of de Lacy's exile, in Paul Duffy, "*Ung sage et valent home*': Hugh de Lacy and the Albigensian crusade', *JRSAI* 141 (2014), 66–90.

[13] Edmund Curtis, cited in Keith Stringer, 'Periphery and core in thirteenth-century Scotland: Alan son of Roland, lord of Galloway and constable of Scotland', in Alexander Grant (ed.), *Medieval Scotland: crown, lordship and community* (Edinburgh, 1998), 82–113, at 87.

[14] Robin Frame, 'Lordship and liberties in Ireland and Wales, *c*. 1170–*c*. 1360', in Huw Pryce and John Watts (eds), *Power and identity in the Middle Ages: essays in memory of Rees Davies* (Oxford, 2007), 125–52, at 125.

of Ulster as a marginal constituent of the Angevin empire. Robin Frame's recent study of lordship in Ireland and Wales passes over the earldom of Ulster, 'which was remote from the main centres of royal power in Ireland'.[15] This may be true, but the earldom's exclusion from scholarly surveys can only lead to distorted, incomplete or inaccurate conclusions about the definition of royal and seigneurial power. One accepted paradigm is that baronial jurisdictions in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Ireland were being steadily eroded in competition with those of the crown. In being granted the earldom of Ulster in 1205, however, Hugh de Lacy was more liberally enfranchised than any of his peers. If the Irish colony was increasingly moulded by the 'politics of the metropolis',[16] the process of royal encroachment on private enterprise was not unbroken.

It is exactly Ulster's separateness which makes it so valuable for an understanding of crown/noble interaction. Lords of remote outposts in the Plantagenet dominions were unable to attend court regularly, and were often excluded from the 'golden circle' of men surrounding the king.[17] At the same time, a view of royal power atrophying as it rippled to geographical extremities ignores the fact that those closest to the king could be so enthralled in royal control that they were unable to pursue independent courses of action or forge their own fates. In 1224 the royal justiciar in Ireland was prevented from pursuing Hugh de Lacy into Ulster by 'densities of mountains and woods'.[18] This was a place where, by virtue of its topography and geography alone, mechanisms of royal control and discipline broke down. With no lands outside Ireland, a magnate such as Hugh de Lacy could not easily be subjected to distraint or financial exaction. As more strands making up the 'web of proprietorship' connecting noble families are uncovered,[19] we are reminded that landholding in mainland Britain was not a prerequisite for power. Indeed, it was partly the earl of Ulster's agitation beyond the reach of royal institutions that caused King John to cross to Ireland personally in 1210.

The crown remained the principal conduit for advancement in the Irish colony, but power also 'flowed along additional channels'.[20] Colonists usually acted in concert with royal policy, but the expansion or retraction of the Anglo-Norman conquest – the blood-spattered detail of its history – was dictated by individuals pursuing their own agendas and imposing their wills on others, whether *Hibernici*

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[15] Ibid., 125–38, at 125n.
[16] Robin Frame, 'England and Ireland, 1171–1369', in idem, *Ireland and Britain, 1170–1450* (London, 1998), 15–30, at 17.
[17] Bothwell, *Falling from grace*, 6.
[18] *Ann. mon.*, iii, 91 (Dunstable annals), and below, 159–60.
[19] Beth Hartland, 'English landholding in Ireland', in Michael Prestwich, Richard Britnell and Robin Frame (eds), *Thirteenth century England X: proceedings of the Durham conference, 2003* (Woodbridge, 2005), 119–29, at 119.
[20] Frame, 'Lordship and liberties', 138.

or *Anglici*. However highly someone was held in royal esteem, he or she could not be considered powerful unless they could make effective alliances, attract supporters, inspire loyalty, subdue opponents and impose military dominance. The expansion or retraction of Hugh de Lacy's influence depended on his ability to fulfil these criteria; despite his endowment with a comital title, Hugh's actual power in Ulster was hamstrung by local conditions, whether a scarcity of allies, the opposition of native Irish or the enmity of churchmen.

The 'postcolonial dilemma' has been defined as 'the inability of those hybrid beings who live in the aftermath of conquest to find a secure category of selfhood to which to belong'.[21] The extent to which such a crisis of identity existed among the settlers in Ireland is questionable. While conscious of different ethnic groupings, many of the early colonists clearly perceived themselves as English.[22] Nevertheless, if John Gillingham may be justified in calling for the idea of a 'Norman' conquest of Ireland to be consigned to the rubbish heap,[23] the career of Hugh de Lacy reminds us that in frontier zones and 'hybrid geographies' such as Ulster,[24] identity could be a fluid concept. In 1237 one of Hugh's charters, to Newry Abbey, referred to the 'coming of the English to Ireland'.[25] But de Lacy was also part of the northern French elite prosecuting the Albigensian crusade, and joined the faction of 'foreign' courtiers surrounding the young Henry III. How confidently could someone who held no land in England, and rarely attended court, identify himself as 'English'?[26]

The attention afforded to Hugh de Lacy in some English chronicles may be partly attributable to his perception as 'other'.[27] Those on the edges of society fascinated contemporary commentators, perhaps most visibly in the miraculous tales of Irish flora and fauna related by Giraldus Cambrensis,[28] but also to a lesser degree in Hugh de Lacy's appearances in 'monastic' chronicles. Bound up in conceptions of the native Irish as a *gens barbara* was the connection of the unfamiliar with immoral behaviour.[29] The same prejudice may be seen in

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[21] J. J. Cohen, *Hybridity, identity and monstrosity in medieval Britain: on difficult middles* (Basingstoke, 2006), 83.

[22] M. T. Flanagan, 'Defining nations in medieval Ireland', in Hirokazu Tsurushima (ed.), *Nations in medieval Britain* (Donington, 2010), 104–21.

[23] John Gillingham, 'Normalizing the English invaders of Ireland', in Pryce and Watts (eds), *Power and identity in the Middle Ages*, 85–97.

[24] Cohen, *Hybridity, identity and monstrosity*, 2.

[25] Appendix I, no. 29.

[26] In the absence of a more convincing taxonomy, I shall continue to use the problematic term 'Anglo-Norman', except where 'Hiberno-Norman' is used to differentiate the baronial community in Ireland from that in England.

[27] *Ann. mon.*, iii (Dunstable annals), 75, 91–3; *Memoriale fratris Walteri de Coventria*, ed. William Stubbs, Rolls Series (2 vols, London, 1872–3), ii, 202; *Flores hist.*, iii, 80–7; *Chron. maj.*, iii, 365.

[28] Cohen, *Hybridity, identity and monstrosity*, 77–109.

[29] *Expug. Hib.*, xxvii–xxxi.

Matthew Paris's association of Hugh de Lacy with the Gaelic nobility of Galloway and their blood-drinking rituals,[30] or the salacious report of the Dunstable annalist that de Lacy had cast aside his rightful wife in favour of an 'adulteress'.[31]

By the thirteenth century some of the unity of purpose felt by the early colonists in Ireland had begun to dissipate.[32] Competition for land intensified, exacerbated by the crown's encouragement of factional infighting and the recurring importation of royal *curiales*. The cohesiveness of the aristocratic community was also being undermined by the same factors threatening honorial integrity in England: divided landholding and multiple tenure.[33] As the initial impetus towards conquest subsided, the need for collective identity diminished and it became more important for individuals to fashion their own sense of self. For some living close to centres of culture, identity could be constricting, 'bringing with it immutable rules of behaviour and lifestyle'.[34] Conversely, those existing in cultural margins were at liberty to add layers to the 'self', creating, assuming and cultivating *personae*. Hugh de Lacy presented himself in ways which would connote authority to an Irish audience. A parallel might be drawn between Hugh's violent incursions into central Ulster in 1206–07, for example, and the 'first adventure' expected of inaugurated Irish kings.[35] It was as a member of the Angevin elite, however, that Hugh was most eager to present himself. One of the devices best suited to self-creation was the 'linguistic idiom', and Hugh underlined his comital rank through the conscious manipulation of charter diplomatic, in imitation of royal formulae and protocol.[36]

For the earl of Ulster's career we are unable to rely on the 'rich flotsam of documentation' available to the biographer of the younger Simon de Montfort.[37] Nonetheless, useful material is not in short supply. Hugh de Lacy's political maturity coincided with the proliferation of written records being produced and preserved by the English chancery and exchequer.[38] 'In 1199', writes Nicholas Vincent, 'the documentary floodgates burst, and we are swiftly overwhelmed by a torrent of rolls, registers, schedules and other such wonders'.[39] It is primarily

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[30] *Chron. maj.*, iii, 365.

[31] *Ann. mon.*, iii, 91–2.

[32] For the distinctive settler identity, see Flanagan, 'Defining nations', 104–21.

[33] See below, 20, 27, 34, 38–9, 49, 165, 184–7, 200.

[34] Miri Rubin, 'Identities', in Rosemary Horrox and W. M. Ormrod (eds), *A social history of England, 1200–1500* (Cambridge, 2006), 383–412, at 384.

[35] See below, 60.

[36] Rubin, 'Identities', 396. For the imitation of royal charter protocols, see below, 53–4.

[37] J. R. Maddicott, *Simon de Montfort* (Cambridge, 1994), xiv.

[38] D. A. Carpenter, 'The English royal chancery in the thirteenth century', in Adrian Jobson (ed.), *English government in the thirteenth century* (Woodbridge, 2004), 49–69; M. T. Clanchy, *From memory to written record: England, 1066–1307* (3rd edn, Chichester, West Sussex, 2013), ch. 2.

[39] Nicholas Vincent, 'Why 1199? Bureaucracy and enrolment under John and his contemporaries', in Jobson (ed.), *English government in the thirteenth century,* 17–49, at 17. For evidence pointing to

through synthesis of these records that interactions between crown and colonist are illuminated. Unfortunately, the fire which destroyed the Public Record Office of Ireland, in 1922, also consumed most extant records of the medieval administration in Ireland,[40] denying us recourse to documents which might have helped to fill the frequent and sizeable lacunae in the English rolls.[41]

Remaining aware of textual traditions, interpolations and inaccuracies, the Irish (as well as Welsh, Manx and Scottish) annals are invaluable in helping to trace de Lacy's military manoeuvrings and encounters with indigenous polities. While at times frustratingly silent, annalistic sources often provide details not found anywhere else. We would be entirely unaware of Hugh's expulsion from Ulster at the hands of the Irish in 1238 were it not for *Mageoghagan's book*, a seventeenth-century compilation probably based on earlier (now lost) material.[42] So-called 'Anglo-Irish' annals from the later colonial period are also useful, but the dubious tradition surrounding Hugh de Lacy's sojourn at the Norman abbey of St Taurin, in 1210, sounds a cautionary note about their authenticity.[43] Narrative sources are a colourful addition to the documentary corpus, but their value tends to be compromised by authors' subjectivity. Hugh's chivalric depiction in the contemporary biography of William Marshal, lord of Leinster and earl of Pembroke (†1219), owes much to the creativity of its chief informant, John of Earley, whom de Lacy rescued from royal forces in 1208.[44] Hugh is also a protagonist in one of the vibrant narratives of the Albigensian crusade, but his literary persona was at least partially constructed as a stylistic device, variously to criticise or advertise the ideals and motives of the crusaders.[45]

Perhaps the most valuable window onto de Lacy's activity is provided by his baronial *acta*. Outside Ireland collections of charters have long been recognised

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an earlier genesis for some of the rolls, see D. A. Carpenter, '*In testimonium factorum brevium*: the beginnings of the English chancery rolls', in Nicholas Vincent (ed.), *Records, administration and aristocratic society in the Anglo-Norman realm: papers commemorating the 800th anniversary of King John's loss of Normandy* (Woodbridge, 2009), 1–29. For a rebuttal of this argument, see Nicholas Vincent, 'The record of 1204', in idem (ed.), *Records, administration and aristocratic society*, xvi–iii.

[40] A notable exception is the Irish pipe roll from 1211–12, transcribed by Sir James Ware in the seventeenth century, which provides an invaluable snapshot of the Irish colony in the aftermath of King John's Irish expedition of 1210: *Pipe roll Ire. 1211–12*. The reconstruction of the lost records of the Irish chancery, by the CIRCLE project (https://chancery.tcd.ie), unfortunately begins in 1244, just after Hugh de Lacy's death.

[41] For King John's reign, the regnal years 1–5, 10–13 are missing in the close rolls; 1–2, 11–13 in the patent rolls; 3–4, 11–13 in the charter rolls; 4–5, 8, 10–14 in the oblate and fine rolls; 1, 4, 6–18 in the liberate rolls; 15, 18 in the pipe rolls; 2–9, 11–18 in the memoranda rolls; 1–6, 8, 10–11, 13 in the prestita rolls; 1–10, 12–13, 15–18 in the misae rolls.

[42] *AClon.*, 1238, and below, 199–200.

[43] See below, 117–18.

[44] *HWM*, ii, ll. 13763–85, and below, 97, 100, 112n.

[45] *The song of the Cathar wars: a history of the Albigensian crusade*, ed. and trans. Janet Shirley (Aldershot, 2000); see also, below, ch. 4.

as an invaluable tool for the researcher.[46] It is only through the ordering and comparison of these instruments that patterns emerge, shifting affinities can be traced, sub-tenancies mapped and strategies of lordship analysed. To date there has been no attempt to collate the charters of Hugh de Lacy (or any other earls and lords of Ulster).[47] None of Hugh's original *acta* is extant, but thirty such instruments can be reconstructed using transcripts preserved in ecclesiastical and lay cartularies, royal inspeximuses, records of military orders and the copybooks of antiquarians. These, with the earl's lost *acta*, are provided in an appendix, and represent the foundation upon which the following study is constructed.

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[46] *Earldom of Gloucester charters: the charters and scribes of the earls and countesses of Gloucester to A.D. 1217*, ed. R. B. Patterson (Oxford, 1973); *The charters of the Anglo-Norman earls of Chester, c. 1071–1237*, ed. Geoffrey Barraclough (Chester, 1988); *The acts of Welsh rulers, 1120–1283*, ed. Huw Pryce (Cardiff, 2005); *Charters of the honour of Mowbray, 1107–91*, ed. D. E. Greenway (London, 1972); *The acts and letters of the Marshal family: marshals of England and earls of Pembroke, 1145–1248*, ed. David Crouch, Camden Fifth Series 47 (Cambridge, 2015).

[47] In Ireland we are still 'behind in charter scholarship, and what might be called feudal prosopography', over two decades after the indictment was made: Robin Frame, 'Aristocracies and the political configuration of the British Isles', in R. R. Davies (ed.), *The British Isles, 1100–1500: comparisons, contrasts and connections* (Edinburgh, 1988), 142–59, at 144.

1

Beginnings

Birth, brotherhood and the burden of lineage

'Origins', stated Donnchadh Ó Corráin of the genealogical tradition in medieval Ireland, 'are not simply origins'. Once ignored or dismissed as antiquarian indulgences, this vast body of royal pedigrees, king-lists and poetic panygyric is now recognised as having served a very real service for its patrons as the proving documents of power. In a society where authority was largely based on dynastic credentials, 'an origin is the demand the present makes upon the past, not knowledge for its own sake – a much more recent historical pretence'.[1] This function of historical writing, as architect as well as record of the past, was also easily recognisable to the Anglo-Norman world which provided the incomers to Ireland after 1169, in which prestige and property descended in vertical lines, and for whom *lignage* was an equally pervasive preoccupation. National pseudo-histories gave roots to the authority of post-Conquest kings of England by connecting them with a legendary British past. Genealogies of noble families, fusing romance with record, claimed dignity for their sponsors by emphasising contiguity with their progenitors.[2]

If a burden could be placed on memory by the present, however, so too an origin could be a mandate of the past on the here and now. Individual agency in medieval Britain and Ireland was often shaped by a concern with living up to, or living down, one's ancestors. When inherent characteristics of nobility were believed to pass from generation to generation, consanguinity with an illustrious forebear was still the basic qualification of nobility, and 'no ceremony could make up for the lack of exalted blood-lines'.[3] The inheritance of moral as well as physical qualities was also accepted in Gaelic Ireland. In the first recension of the epic *Táin bó Cúailnge* ('The cattle-raid of Cooley'), the antagonist Medb, queen of Connacht, lists Maine 'Cotageib Uile' ('grasp them all') among her seven sons: *is éside tuc cruth a máthar & a athar & a n-ordan díb*

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[1] Donnchadh Ó Corráin, 'Creating the past: the early Irish genealogical tradition, Carroll Lecture 1992', *Peritia* 12 (1998), 177–208, quotations at 185.
[2] John Spence, *Re-imagining history in Anglo-Norman prose chronicles* (Woodbridge, 2013).
[3] Constance Brittain Bouchard, *Those of my blood: constructing noble families in medieval Francia* (Philadelphia, PA, 2001), 5.

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línaib ('he it is who has inherited the appearance of his mother and father and the dignity of them both').[4]

Membership of a noble family was in this way double-edged. Deference or allegiance could be claimed simply by virtue of one's name, and even before his leading role in Anglo-Norman intervention in Ireland, Richard de Clare (Strongbow) was already 'set apart by his ancestry, born of the noble stock of the Clare family'.[5] The encumbrance of *gentillece* as a birthright, however, was that an ancestor's characteristics and abilities were expected to be replicated by his progeny.[6] Nobility without works was stillborn, and it was partly the moral imperative of high birth that drove men like Strongbow – who before his acquisition of Leinster had 'a great name rather than great prospects'[7] – to risk their lives along the frontiers of the Angevin empire. Like the 'melodious bardisms' composed for Irish kings,[8] the Anglo-Norman *cantilenae*, immortalising the heroic deeds of fallen kinsmen, could be as much inspirational templates for future action as commemorations of past glories.[9] In light of his own pedigree as son of a major player on the twelfth-century stage, the early career of Hugh II de Lacy must also have been at least partly conditioned by the burden of lineage. The brief genealogical record of the de Lacys in Ireland preserved in the register of the abbey of St Thomas, Dublin, remembers Hugh I de Lacy as *primus conquestor* of Meath and Hugh II as conqueror of Ulster.[10] What the memorandum cannot tell us, however, is to what extent the achievements of the son were inspired by those of the father.

The English dimension of the de Lacys, deriving their name from Lassy in Normandy (dép. Calvados), was added by the brothers, Ilbert (†1093) and Walter (†1085), whose participation in the Norman Conquest of England saw them established with the respective honors of Pontefract (Yorkshire) and Weobley (Herefordshire). It was Walter's descendants who showed the greatest appetite for further conquest, extending their control in the Welsh march from their base at Ewyas (Lacy) and seeking additional rewards across

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4   Cecile O'Rahilly, *Táin bó Cúailnge: recension 1* (Dublin, 1976), 6, 129.
5   *Expug. Hib.*, 54–5.
6   David Crouch, *The birth of nobility: constructing aristocracy in England and France, 900–1300* (Harlow, 2005), 125–8.
7   *Expug. Hib.*, 54–5.
8   'At ale poems are chanted, fine [genealogical] ladders are climbed, melodious bardisms modulate through pools of liquor the name of Áed' (ninth-century poem in praise of a Leinster dynast): Whitley Stokes and John Strachan (eds), *Thesaurus paleohibernicus: a collection of Old-Irish glosses, scholia, prose and verse* (2 vols, Cambridge, 1901–10), ii, 295.
9   Georges Duby, 'Youth in aristocratic society', in idem, *The chivalrous society,* trans. Cynthia Postan (London, 1977), 113–22.
10 *Reg. St Thomas*, 419–20. A more chronologically extensive but inaccurate family genealogy was compiled at the priory of Llanthony Secunda (Gloucester): *Mon. Ang.*, vi, pt 1, 135–6.

the Irish Sea.[11] Head of the Herefordshire branch by 1166, Hugh I de Lacy joined the retinue of Henry II crossing to Ireland in 1171, where in the next year he was granted the Irish kingdom of Mide (anglicised Meath).[12] The success of Hugh's conquest in the Irish midlands and his preeminent position among the first colonists is reflected by his description, in 1184, as *tigearna Gall Eireann* – 'lord of the Foreigners of Ireland'.[13] Hugh's supremacy was fleeting, however, and in 1186, as he inspected one of his castles at Durrow (Co. Offaly), his head was cut off by an axe-wielding Irishman at the instigation of a disgruntled local king, 'and he fell, both head and body, into the ditch of the castle'.[14]

For those aspiring aristocrats without the means to commission genealogies, a link between the living and the dead could be made in that 'most ubiquitous Anglo-Norman document',[15] the Latin charter of property or privilege. Both Hugh II de Lacy and his older brother, Walter, dedicated grants for the souls of their father and mother in the *pro anima* clauses of their early charters.[16] An even clearer statement of contiguity was made by the younger sibling in his employment of the personal style, *Hugo de Lacy filius Hugonis de Lacy*.[17] But if Hugh II could claim distinction from peers by association with his father, the name they shared was also a yardstick against which the son's career would be measured.[18] 'When a man claimed noble lineage', notes David Crouch, 'he had to demonstrate the qualities which he claimed ran in his blood'.[19] Among the merits of the elder Hugh, estimated by Giraldus, were his steadfast and temperate character; careful handling of private and public affairs; and familiarity with *militaribus negociis* – the 'business of war'.[20] The chief currency of nobility was land, and the greatest challenge for Hugh II would be to emulate his father's success as a transnational magnate. Like his kinsman, Strongbow, Hugh 'had

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[11] The family's Norman estates were held from the bishop of Bayeux: Wightman, *Lacy family*, 136, 195–227.

[12] Veach, *Lordship*, ch. 1.

[13] *MCB*, 1184.

[14] *ALC*, 1186. The deed was apparently orchestrated by the king of Tethba: *AFM*, 1186. In 1195 Hugh's body was removed from Durrow to Bective abbey in Meath, while his head was interred at the abbey of St Thomas, Dublin, alongside his first wife, Rose of Monmouth (†before 1180): James Grace, *Annales Hiberniae*, ed. Richard Butler, Irish Archaeological Society (Dublin, 1842), *s.a.* 1195; *Chartul. St Mary's, Dublin*, ii, *s.a.* 1195. Following a lengthy dispute between Bective and St Thomas's, in 1205 Hugh's body was translated to Dublin and reunited with his head: *Reg. St Thomas*, 348–50.

[15] M. T. Flanagan, 'Strategies of lordship in pre-Norman and post-Norman Leinster', in *ANS 20*, 107–26, at 107.

[16] Appendix I, nos 2–3, 5–6; Veach, *Lordship*, 263.

[17] Appendix I, no. 2.

[18] The name also recalled Hugh, lord of Lassy (†1085), the family's Norman progenitor.

[19] Crouch, *Nobility*, 128.

[20] *Expug. Hib.*, 192–3.

succeeded to a name rather than possessions'.[21] In seeking the material evidence of nobility, however, he first had to circumnavigate the obstacle presented by his own family.

For three years after his death, Hugh I de Lacy's vast assemblage of estates in Normandy, England, Wales and Ireland was held in wardship by the crown, before descending to the eldest surviving son, Walter, c.1189.[22] By a circuitous route, the de Lacy succession conformed with what is often assumed to have been the dominant mode of inheritance in the twelfth-century insular Angevin dominions, whereby an eldest son took sole charge of his father's lands. In fact, recent scholarship has shown that the triumph of primogeniture was not assured until the late thirteenth century. Before then, it was quite common for property to be partitioned among multiple heirs, as noblemen weighed concerns for the integrity of their estates against the moral responsibility to provide for their children.[23] In 1219, shortly before his death, William Marshal, earl of Pembroke and lord of Leinster, divided the bulk of his transmarine hegemony among three of his five sons.[24] This kind of deathbed planning was a luxury not afforded to Hugh I de Lacy, whose assassination in 1186 disturbed any plans he may have had to provide generously for his younger sons.[25]

Contemporary legal theorists may have stressed the advantages of primogeniture in protecting the integrity of familial lands, but the most effective barrier to the fragmentation of estates remained the hesitation of living heads of aristocratic families to grant away land, and with it, power.[26] After his succession, it was Walter de Lacy's responsibility to allocate his possessions among his younger siblings. The relatively parsimonious manner in which he did so may challenge

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[21] Ibid., 54–5. Rose, mother of Hugh II, was a daughter of the Welsh marcher lord, Baderon of Monmouth (†1176). Her cousin, Richard de Clare (Strongbow), lord of Striguil, had been deprived of his earldom of Pembroke by Henry II in 1154.

[22] Veach, 'A question of timing', 165–94. An elder son, Robert, appears in two of Hugh I's early *acta*, but was presumably deceased before Walter succeeded in 1189: Veach, *Lordship*, 78–9. A younger son, Robert, was active in Meath before his death in 1206: *AClon.*, 1206 ('Robert delacie, son of Hugh delacie, died'). The witness to charters of Hugh II in 1207 must therefore have been the Robert de Lacy (of uncertain relationship to the family) granted Rathwire (Co. Westmeath) by Hugh I: appendix I, nos 12–13; *The deeds of the Normans in Ireland: la geste des Engleis en Yrlande*, ed. Evelyn Mullally (Dublin, 2002), ll. 3148–9; *The song of Dermot and the earl: an Old French poem from the Carew manuscript no. 596 in the archiepiscopal library at Lambeth palace*, ed. and trans. G. H. Orpen (Oxford, 1892), ll. 3150–1.

[23] Crouch, *Nobility*, 98–119.

[24] 'He then provided for his children, dividing up and bequeathing them, as his heart prompted him': *HWM*, ii, ll. 18136–9.

[25] Hugh's father, Gilbert, had divided his possessions among his three sons. The reassembling of the patrimony in Normandy, England and Wales under Hugh I was only made possible by the death of his elder brother, Robert, before 1162: Veach, *Lordship*, 22–5.

[26] K. B. McFarlane, *The nobility of later medieval England: the Ford lectures for 1953 and related studies* (Oxford, 1973), 63.

some existing scholarly presuppositions about the de Lacy fraternity, at least calling to mind McFarlane's observation that noblemen 'did not often fall into King Lear's error'.[27]

In elite Anglo-Norman society the family could be 'a solidarity, a group which co-operated for the benefit of its members, offering protection and the redress of wrongs, a set of conventions by which land could be transmitted from one generation to the next, and a focus for affective relationships'.[28] Hugh II de Lacy probably took his first political steps as an itinerant member of his elder brother's retinue, and the barons of Meath provided the military support for Hugh's early acquisitive forays in Connacht, Uriel and Ulster.[29] The de Lacys at times functioned as a cohesive political body, most transparently as part of the baronial faction in opposition to the king's justiciar, Meiler fitz Henry, in 1207–08.[30] An emotional bond can also be seen in the name Walter, given to one of Hugh II's sons.[31] This said, treatments of family as a 'self-evident unit' can lead to inattention towards individual agency and identity, and care must be taken not to overstress the depth of kin-feeling.[32] The recent assessment of the de Lacy brothers as 'almost inseparable politically'[33] strays perilously close to the 'vision of unity and cooperation' characterising fictional portrayals of brothers in the medieval period.[34] In the Middle English version of the popular romance, *Amis and Amiloun*, based on a lost Anglo-Norman poem, the physically identical protagonists express the depth of their friendship by entering into a covenant of blood-brotherhood, pledging mutual loyalty and fidelity:

> That bothe bi day and bi night,
> In wele and wo, in wrong and right,
> That thai schuld frely fond
> To hold togider at everi nede,
> In word, in werk, in wille, in dede.[35]

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[27] Ibid.

[28] J. A. Green, *The aristocracy of Norman England* (Cambridge, 1997), 329–30.

[29] See below, 33, 50, 59.

[30] Crouch, *Nobility*, 141–6. For joint appearances of Hugh and Walter in charters from the period before 1210, see *Ir. cartul. Llanthony*, 33–4, 110; *Ormond deeds*, i, 5–6, 42; *Reg. St Thomas, Dublin*, 42; *Chartul. St Mary's, Dublin*, i, 146–8; *Gorm. reg.*, 163. For appearances of Walter de Lacy in Hugh's *acta*, see appendix III. For Hugh's appearances in early charters of Walter de Lacy, see *Ormond deeds*, i, 359; *Reg. St Thomas*, 11–12.

[31] See below, 162, 167, 200–1.

[32] Bouchard, *Those of my blood*, 2.

[33] Veach, *Lordship*, 265.

[34] Matthew Howard, '"We are broderen"': fraternal bonds and familial loyalty within the fifteenth-century romance of Generydes', in Isabel Davis, Miriam Müller and Sarah Rees Jones (eds), *Love, marriage and family ties in the later Middle Ages* (Turnhout, 2003), 129–42, at 129.

[35] *Amis and Amiloun, Robert of Cisyle and Sir Amadace*, ed. Edward Foster (2nd edn, Kalamazoo, 1997), ll. 148–52.

When 'wele' turned to 'wo' for the de Lacys, the bond of brotherhood counted for very little. Blood could be thinner than gold or soil, and when his lordship of Meath came under threat of confiscation by the crown, in 1210, Walter de Lacy was prepared to offer up his younger brother in order to divert the king's anger from himself. Hugh's Irish rebellion of 1223–24, during which he and his half-brother, William *Gorm*, forcibly occupied Walter's lordship of Meath, goes little further in sustaining the idea of the de Lacys as an unchangingly cohesive kin-group.[36]

The real paradox of the fraternal relationship, looking to the House of Plantagenet ('the Atreides of the twelfth century'[37]) for an exemplar, is that brothers could be simultaneously one's closest kin and one's greatest competitors for prestige and property.[38] It has been suggested that the medieval fraternal ideal followed an antique model.[39] However, if Plutarch's *De fraterno amore* had celebrated the unique bond between brothers, it also devoted equal space to the fragility of the relationship, identifying the division of a father's property as especially traumatic for some fraternities, being in some cases the 'beginning of friendship and concord' but in others the origin of 'implacable enmity and strife'.[40]

For the de Lacys, it may have been somewhere in the middle. Walter did not overlook his siblings after 1189, but neither did he give them any significant territorial base of a kind to rival his own, reserving the most lucrative and prestigious familial estates in England and Wales for himself.[41] One brother, Gilbert, held the family's ancestral estates in Normandy, at Lassy and Campeaux, until the duchy's loss to Capetian France in 1204.[42] Until the 1230s, the only certain share of the de Lacy inheritance held by William *Gorm*, son of Hugh I by his unlicensed marriage to a daughter of the king of Connacht, Ruaidrí Ua Conchobair, c.1180, was a manor at Ballymagarvey, near Duleek (Co. Meath).[43] The largest share of the de Lacy possessions was

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[36] See chs 3–4.

[37] Martin Aurell, *The Plantagenet empire*, trans. David Crouch (Harlow, 2007), 35–47, at 35.

[38] Bouchard, *Those of my blood*, vii–viii.

[39] Nada Zečević, 'Brotherly love and brotherly service: on the relationship between Carlo and Leonardo Tocco', in Davis, Müller and Rees Jones (eds), *Love, marriage and family ties*, 143–56, at 146.

[40] *Plutarch's Moralia, VI*, ed. and trans. W. C. Helmbold (London, 1939), 277.

[41] The English honor included components in Shropshire, Staffordshire, Herefordshire, Wiltshire and Gloucestershire. In the *cartae baronum* survey of 1166 Hugh I de Lacy returned 57¾ fees (52¼ old feoffment, 5½ new feoffment) for all his English lands: Veach, *Lordship*, appendix 2, table 1.

[42] In 1203 Philip Augustus gave Richard de Garencières a fee subject to dispute with Gilbert de Lacy: *Cartulaire Normand de Philippe-Auguste, Louis VIII, Saint-Louis et Philippe-le-Hardi*, ed. Léopold Delisle (Paris, 1882), no. 72. In the next year Gilbert's Norman lands were granted by Philip to Andrew Propensée, maire of Falaise: ibid. no. 76.

[43] See below, 143. For a recent study of William's career, see Colin Veach and Freya Verstraten