

Archæologia Cantiana.

THE OWNERS OF ALLINGTON CASTLE, MAIDSTONE (1086—1279).

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THE desire to recover from the past some trace of the persons who lived and moved and had their being amidst the same surroundings as oneself, gazing on the same hills, protected by the same moat, sheltered within the same walls, is natural enough. To print the result for others who do not chance to possess the same personal interest may need some warrant. But these ghostly owners of Allington, 800 years ago, shared in a society so unlike our own, that any authentic, although most literal record of their daily lives, in some degree revives a vanished world.

For the owners of Allington after 1280, the year that Stephen of Penchester began to build the Castle as it exists in its essentials to-day, I would refer the reader to the Paper by Mr. Bellewes in the present volume, and to Sir Martin Conway's article in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XXVIII., p. 337.

Kilburne in his *Topographical Survey of Kent*, published in 1659, undertakes to give an account of the successive owners of Allington who preceded Stephen of Penchester. Although at every line he is contradicted by contemporary documents, successive Kentish historians have repeated his errors, not without embellishments of their own. Kilburne, Philipot, Hasted, reiterate the same sequence of the family of de Columbariis, Earl Warren, Lord Fitzhugh and Sir Giles Allington. After 1279 the Kentish historians are on firm ground, but for the earlier centuries, Kilburne, Philipot and Hasted must be disregarded; else no progress can be made.

It is however quite possible to account for the origin of their errors. The noted family of de Columbariis, who are said by Kilburne to have built the earliest Castle, had no connection with Allington till Avice, the daughter of Stephen of Penchester, born in 1269, married one of them. But Burke in his *Dormant and Extinct Peerage*, page 4, quoting an old pedigree in the possession of a Mr. Allington of Swinhope, says that Medwaycester Castle (Allington) belonged at the Conquest to Sir John de Columbariis, whose daughter Emlyn married Sir Hildebrand de Alyngton, undermarshall of William I. at the Battle of Hastings, and conveyed the Castle to him. He goes on to say that the grandson of this Sir Hildebrand, a certain Solomon, living in the reign of Henry I., built the Castle and Solomon's Tower. Since the tower was built by Stephen of Penchester about 1290 this story may have been invented to account for the name, the origin of which is unknown. The pedigree in Burke is continued to a certain Sir Giles Allington who died in 1522, from whom the Lords Alington descend; but the attempt to connect the family of Alington with Allington Castle is only an interesting specimen of seventeenth century pedigree-forging, which on the face of it can be discredited, even were it not contradicted by surviving contemporary statements.¹ Earl Warren, whose daughter is said by Kilburne to have transferred it to Lord Fitzhugh, owned Allington near Lewes in Sussex,² which doubtless was confounded with the Kentish Allington; and this, combined with Lord Alington's pedigree, suffices to account for the errors of Kilburne, Philipot and Hasted.

The present Paper is concerned with the building up *de novo* of the history of Allington Castle from Domesday Book to 1280, the year when Stephen of Penchester obtained a licence to fortify the Castle. Search has so far yielded no mention of Allington earlier than Domesday Book. It suffices here to quote a translation of that entry. For a

¹ Round, J. H., *Peerage and Family History*, p. 62, says: "Lord Alington no longer seeks his progenitor in Sir Hildebrand de Alington, a name that would have gladdened Sir Walter Scott."

² *Memorials of the Earls of Warren and Surrey*, vol. i., p. 97.

commentary on the agrarian facts see Sir Martin Conway's article (*Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XXVIII., p. 339):—

“Anschitel holds of the Bp. [Odo of Bayeux] Elentun. It answers for one solin. There is the arable land of 3 teams. In demesne there are two teams. And 15 villains with two bordars; they have one team and a half. A church there. And two slaves. And half a mill. And one dene of 15 shillings. Wood of 8 hogs. And one acre of meadow. In the time of King Edward it was worth 100 shillings. When he received it 60 shillings. Now 100 shillings. Ulric held it of Alnod Cilt.”

This Alnod Cilt,¹ a great Kentish thane who may have been a son of King Harold by his Canterbury consort, was still living in 1086, the year of the Domesday Survey, but with greatly diminished lands. After the Conquest, 184 manors in Kent were granted to Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, William I.'s half-brother, twenty of which had previously been held by Alnod Cilt; among these were Allington and Boxley. Anschitel, who is mentioned as holding Allington of the Bishop, was probably Anschitel de Ros, an ancestor of the family of de Ros who were overlords of Allington to the time of Queen Mary. This Anschitel de Ros is mentioned in Domesday Book as the holder of many Kentish manors, including that of Hortune in the hundred of Axstane, the same Horton which in 1254 was held with the barony of Ros by Gilbert Kirkeby² and afterwards called Horton Kirby. In 1346, when a feudal aid was paid at the knighting of the Black Prince, Allington is referred to as having been held of John de Ros by Margaret of Penchester as of his manor of Horton Kirby.³ As there is no doubt that the De Ros's were overlords of Allington for centuries, that Anschitel de Ros held Horton Kirby, which was always associated with Allington, and that an “Anschitel” at that time held Allington, it cannot be rash to assume that this Anschitel was Anschitel de Ros.

¹ For Alnod Cilt see Larking, *Domesday Book of Kent*.

² *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XII., p. 207.

³ *Feudal Acts*, vol. iii., p. 42.

In a full list of bequests to Rochester Cathedral, printed in the *Registrum Roffense*, the name of the next owner is found :—

“ Ansfridus vicecomes et dominus de Elintune.”

“ Vicecomes ” is the usual Latin term for sheriff, and a man who in the twelfth century was sheriff of Kent must have been an important personage.

“ The sheriff is the governor of the Shire, the captain of its forces, the president of its Court, a distinctly royal officer, appointed by the King, dismissible at a moment's notice, strictly accountable to the King's Exchequer. Already before the beginning of the 13th century the sheriff is losing some of his powers, but the sheriff of this century, still more of the 12th, is a great man with most miscellaneous functions, military and financial, executive and judicial.”¹

He paid to the King once a year the annual dues from the county, the so-called sheriff's “ ferm,” besides all fines and royal perquisites. In fact he accounted to the King for the profits of his county as a bailiff accounts to his master for the profits of a farm, and all communications from the King to his subjects in each county went through the “ Vicecomes.” One of the years when Ansfrid was sheriff is fixed by the following charter² :—

“ Henry, King of the English to *Ansfrid the sheriff*, and to all the barons of Kent, French and English, greeting. Know ye that I have given to the church of St. Andrew at Rochester on the occasion of the dedication of the same Church, where I was present, the church of Boxley and whatever appertains to it, in lands, in tithes and in oblations, with all customs, liberties and rights as my chaplain Geoffrey and Ansfrid the clerk had before him.”

The church of St. Andrew of Rochester was dedicated with ceremony on Ascension Day, May 8th, 1130, by William of Corbeuil, Archbishop of Canterbury, in the presence of Henry I., eleven English and two Norman bishops,³ and at that time undoubtedly a certain Ruallon de Valloines

¹ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, vol. i., p. 519, 1st edition.

² Thorpe, *Registrum Roffense*, p. 177.

³ *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XXIII., p. 227.

was sheriff of Kent. But, as the charter distinctly mentions Ansfrid as sheriff, there is a tangle here which must be unravelled.

The great Rolls of the Exchequer, Pipe Rolls as they are called, consisting of the sheriffs' returns for every county in England, exist at the Record Office in an almost unbroken series from 1155 onward. But the earliest, an isolated specimen, alone surviving from the wreck of all those previous to the second year of Henry II., has been shewn by internal evidence to belong to the year 1130. The fiscal year commenced on September 29th, and this Pipe Roll, as is shewn by its editor, dates from September 29th, 1129 to September 29th, 1130.¹ It proves Ruallon de Valloines to have been sheriff to the end of the year; therefore King Henry's charter of gift, which seems to refer to the ceremony of May 8th, 1130, as though it had only just taken place, must be at least six months posterior to the event, since it cannot be dated till after September 29th, 1130, when Ansfrid presumably succeeded Ruallon as sheriff of Kent.

I have been unable to find another charter addressed to Ansfrid as sheriff. We know that Hamo de Crêveceur was sheriff at the great conference held at Pennenden Heath in 1072,² that he was still sheriff in 1086, the year of the Domesday Survey, and again in 1111, when in a charter of that year he calls himself "Hamo, sheriff of Kent and dapifer of King Henry."³ In the *Textus Roffensis* printed by Hearne, which contains a number of Rochester charters, he is addressed once as vicecomes (cap. 204) by Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester 1076—1108; twice by Anselm, Archbishop 1093—1109 (caps. 93, 98); and by William Rufus once as dapifer (cap. 89) and once as vicecomes (cap. 203). Henry I. addresses him at least four times as dapifer and twice as vicecomes.⁴ I can find no mention of him later than 1111.

The next sheriff of Kent seems to have been William de

¹ See Introduction to Pipe Roll, 31 Henry I.

² *Registrum Roffense*, pp. 27, 28.

³ Larking, *Domesday Book of Kent*, p. 182.

⁴ *Textus Roffensis*, caps. 127, 128, 129, 133, and 130, 131.

Aynsford (Eynsford), to whom William, the son of Henry I., who was drowned on the White Ship in 1120, directed a writ.¹ "William vicecomes" is found again as witness with William, Archbishop of Canterbury, to a charter of Henry I. (*Registrum Roffense*, p. 35), and since William of Corbeuil became Archbishop of Canterbury in 1123 the duration of William de Aynsford's sheriffdom is fixed at a period beginning prior to 1120 and ending after 1123. It is probable that he bridged the whole gap between Hamo and Ruallon, whose tenure of the sheriffalty can only be fixed to the years 1129² and 1130, which must have been his last.

A man suitable for the office of sheriff was certainly a conspicuous person before his elevation to it. In the before-mentioned list of bequests to Rochester Cathedral, printed in the *Registrum Roffense*, we find the following entry:—

"Ralf, brother of Ansfrid the sheriff, a monk of Rochester, who was the first guardian of the manor of Lambeth, gave to the convent an alb of wool [pilo], with an amicte embroidered with precious stones. And whenever he came to Rochester he brought some ornament from among those of the Countess Goda, which he had found at Lambeth: namely, a pyx of gold and silver, a gospel of the evangelists adorned with silver and precious stones, '*Scampna ferrea plicancia et argentata*,' 4 palls, scapulas for the choir, silver crosses and candelabra of copper and gold."

The manor of Lambeth was first given to the Church of Rochester by Goda the Countess,³ before the Norman Conquest (*Registrum Roffense*, p. 2), at which time it seems to have been sequestrated; but William Rufus returned it to Gundulf as a recompense for the loss which his Cathedral had sustained by the King's siege of Rochester Castle in 1088.⁴ The gift of the manor cannot have been long after this, so we get the approximate date of 1089 as the year when Ralf, a brother of Ansfrid the sheriff, was of an age to administer the manor of Lambeth for the monastery.

¹ Philipot, p. 19, quoting from Cartularies of St. Augustine in Canterbury.

² For his tenure of the sheriffdom in 1129 see Pipe Roll, 31 Henry I., p. 66.

³ Goda Comitessa was the daughter of Ethelred, sister of Edward the Confessor, and wife of Eustace of Boulogne. Round, *Studies in Peerage and Family History*, p. 147.

⁴ *Teatus Roffensis*, cap. 202.

This probably implies that his brother Ansfrid was grown up at the time of the Domesday survey in 1086, and in that survey we do find a certain Ansfrid holding more land in Kent than Hamo the sheriff. The annual value of it was £44 15s. 0d., while that of Hamo was £42 6s. 6d. It is impossible to say for certain that this Ansfrid and Ansfrid the sheriff were one and the same person, especially as Allington is not among his lands in Domesday Book. Our Ansfrid may have been his son.

When Allington came into the possession of Ansfrid the sheriff is not known, but he must have been enfeoffed by Anschitel de Ros or his successor.

More information can be gleaned about the family of Ansfrid from their bequests to Rochester than from any other source. The following long entry is to be found in the *Registrum Roffense*, p. 119:—

“William of Elintune, son of Ansfrid the sheriff, on his death gave his furniture for a chapel; namely, an alb made of green velvet, a stole and maniple of purple black, a chasuble of green velvet, ampullæ and a silver censer, silver coins and silver shells, a reliquary partly of silver with relics, a golden chalice, many embroideries, and two enamelled candelabra, all of which are on the altar of St. Mary.

“This same William gave to the chapel of St. Mary in the infirmary, an alb made of silk, a stole and maniple of green velvet, a silk pall for an altar front, a silver chalice, silver ampullæ, a silver pyx and two enamelled candelabra.

“He had also a brother of the same name,¹ who, having just been made a knight [tyro] came by chance to Rochester. When he reached the bridge he preferred to cross it on horseback rather than on foot, and an accident to his horse throwing him off, he fell into the water and was drowned. A dalmatic was made of the tunic of the dead man which is used on the white feast days, and a pyx hanging over the high altar was bought with the proceeds of the sale of the horse.

“The mother of these two Williams gave our best pall, which is used in front of the high altar, in the absence of the silver altar-

¹ Probably a half brother with the same mother.

frontal and lovely silver cross which were sold for the ransom of King Richard [1192].

“Ansfrid the sheriff and lord of Allington on his death bed gave a third part of all his goods; but because he was not able to estimate them properly the lady Mabel, his wife, promised to give a reliquary to the church that should be even more valuable than a third part of the goods. The convent trusted her promise and were content. Soon afterward she had the great church and refectory measured but died before she had finished the hangings for the refectory.”

This piece of work is referred to on p. 118 of the same book:—

“Because that great hanging called after Mabel the wife of Ansfrid the sheriff was not finished, Paulinus the sacrist had it completed by a monk named Dunstan.”

In another entry it is recorded that Ansfrid the sheriff gave land at Stisted to the monastery.

This remarkable succession of rich gifts from father, mother and two sons seems to imply some peculiarly close personal association with the monastery of Rochester. We know that Ralf, a brother of Ansfrid, was a monk at Rochester and “custos” of Lambeth manor. It is tempting to associate him with “Ralf, nephew of Bishop Gundulf,” who witnessed a charter of Anselm’s in 1106¹ conveying the manor of Stisted to the monks of Christchurch, Canterbury. This manor of Stisted in Essex, which fills an important part in the history of Allington, must have been held by Ansfrid, because of his gifts of land there to Rochester. Later on it was held by his descendants, subject to a yearly rent to the monks of Christchurch, Canterbury. If Ansfrid was a tenant for life under Archbishop Anselm at the time Anselm gave the yearly rent to the monks of Christchurch, a witness to the charter of gift might very likely be Ansfrid’s brother Ralf, called nephew of Gundulf. But this relationship of Ansfrid to the great bishop must remain no more than an interesting possibility.

¹ Campbell MS., VII., 5, British Museum.

Another connection of Ansfrid the sheriff with Bishop Gundulf does admit of proof. In a charter printed in Hearne's *Textus Roffensis*, p. 173, at the end of a long list of witnesses, the following names occur:—

“Ralf, clerk of Bishop Gundulf.”

“Ansfrid, his dapifer.”

We have already seen that Hamo the sheriff was “dapifer” of the King in 1111, and it is certain that he witnessed charters sometimes as “vicecomes,” sometimes as “dapifer.” The dapifer after the Conquest was a great officer in the King's household, the equivalent of a steward, whose allowance corresponded in the reign of Henry I. with that of the chancellor.¹ But noblemen also and great ecclesiastics had dapifers; and as the King's dapifer early in the twelfth century was a great official of the realm, so the Bishop's dapifer or steward was an important person in the diocese, with something of the duties of a head bailiff. If it could be proved that Ansfrid the sheriff and Ansfrid dapifer were the same person, the extent of the Rochester bequests would be explained. Scattered throughout the *Textus Roffensis* are several charters witnessed by Ansfrid dapifer,² which can be dated within narrow limits. On p. 191, cap. 177, is a charter of Ernulf, Bishop of Rochester (1115—1123), where among the witnesses are the following:—

“Ansfrid dapifer and his knight William de Sancto Albano.”

“Ralf Picot de Stisted.”

This conjunction of a man from Stisted, a manor belonging to Ansfrid the sheriff, with a knight in the following of Ansfrid dapifer, looks on the face of it as though the two masters were the same person. When Archbishop Anselm died in 1109, no new Archbishop was appointed to Canterbury for five years, until Ralf, who had succeeded Gundulf at Rochester, was translated to Canterbury in 1114. During the five intervening years the see of

¹ Hearne, *Black Book of the Exchequer*, vol. i., p. 341. “Constitutio Domus Regis de procuracionibus.”

² Caps. 170, 178, 181.

Canterbury was administered by the Bishop of Rochester, and it is natural to suppose that the dapifer at Rochester undertook the duties of dapifer at Canterbury, and may have continued them when his Bishop became Archbishop.

After 1114, when Ralf was at Canterbury and Ernulf at Rochester, Ansfrid dapifer witnessed the charters of both Archbishop and Bishop, and this continues after 1123, when William of Corbeuil was at Canterbury and Bishop John at Rochester. Ansfrid is once called "dapifer of the Archbishop" in a charter of the time of William of Corbeuil, printed in the *Registrum Roffense*, p. 35.

The entries in the first Pipe Roll seem to point to the identity of the two Ansfrids. In the county of Kent Ansfrid dapifer appears as owning 100 shillings worth of land in Boxley, a parish immediately opposite Allington, on the north bank of the Medway.¹ Now, by the end of the twelfth century, when the records become fuller, it is clear that land in Boxley worth 100 shillings and held of the King was an appendage to the manor of Allington. Being held of the King it is accounted for on the Pipe Rolls, while Allington, which was held of the de Ros's, is not. Of this more will be said later, but if Ansfrid dapifer possessed 100 shillings worth of land in Boxley, and Ansfrid the sheriff owned Allington, there can be little, if any, doubt that they were the same person.

There are no charters witnessed by Ansfrid dapifer that can be definitely dated later than 1130, and it is unlikely that he held the two offices of sheriff and dapifer simultaneously; but in the first Pipe Roll, the year before he became sheriff, he is several times mentioned as dapifer.² I have been unable to discover the year of his death.

Thus Ansfrid, the early twelfth century owner of Allington, emerges as a man of importance. At Rochester his

¹ p. 64. "Ansfridus dapifer c solidate terre in Boxeleia."

p. 66. "Ansfridus dapifer reddit comotum de LX marci argenti pro terra Normanni de Wilreton." I cannot identify Wilreton.

² Pipe Roll, 31 Henry I., pp. 66, 67.

anniversary and that of his wife were honoured with the same celebrations as Bishop Odo of Bayeux, on the sixth Kalends of November (October 26th). The description of Odo's masses seems incomplete:—

“Cappa 1 missa ad minus altare 11 11 Signum grossum unum cum ceteris in parva turri.”¹

But whatever the observances were, Ansfrid and Mabel had the same,² and so in his turn had his son William, for in the same list of the anniversaries of benefactors (*Custumale Roffense*, p. 37) we read:—

“1111 Non: Februarii [Feb. 1st] pro Willelmo filio Ansfridi sicut pro Odone.”

This son William, who appears in the *Registrum Roffense* and in the Pipe Rolls as “Willelm de Elintona,” inherited Allington, and in his turn made the many gifts to Rochester already recorded. Another son John inherited his father's life interest in Stisted. This Essex manor had originally been given by King Canute to Godwin, Earl of Kent, who in 1046 gave it to the monks of Christchurch, Canterbury.³ It was one of the many manors stolen by Odo, Bishop of Bayeux, from Canterbury, which he was obliged to give back at the Conference at Pennenden Heath held in 1072.⁴ Odo had been granted a portion of Godwin's lands by the King, and it was probably because Stisted had belonged to Godwin that he had seized upon it. In Domesday Book Stisted is entered as held of the Holy Trinity (Christchurch, Canterbury), as a manor and half a hide, but the holder is not named. He may even then have been Ansfrid. After the death of Lanfranc, Anselm seems to have kept the rent of the manor in his own hands until 1106, when, in the charter already referred to as witnessed by Ralf, nephew of Gundulf, he gave it back to the monks of Christchurch, “because it is known to pertain and have pertained to their use.”⁵

¹ Thorpe, *Custumale Roffense*, p. 37.

² *Ibid.* “VI. Kal. Novembris pro Ansfrido et Mabilia sicut pro Odone.”

³ Wright, *History of Essex*, ii., p. 12.

⁴ Cave Browne, *Boxley Parish*, Appendix D.

⁵ Campbell MS. VII., 5.

The records of the manors belonging to Christchurch, Canterbury, are still kept in the library of the Cathedral, and among them, in a charter given by Archbishop Theobald (1139—1161), some information can be gleaned about the actual people who held Stisted, worked the manor, and paid the yearly rent to the monks of Christchurch.

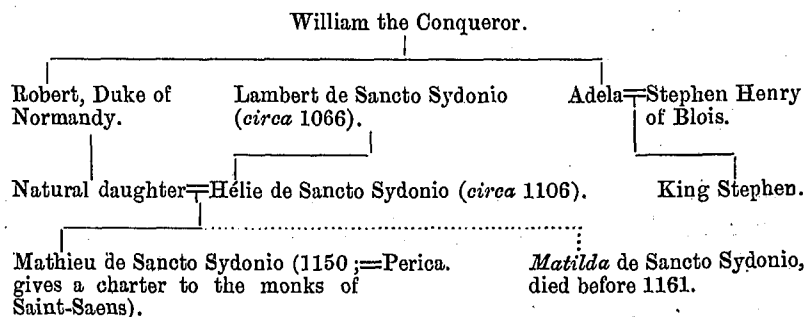
In this charter Theobald returns the manor of Stisted to the prior and monks of Christchurch, Canterbury, on the death of John, son of Ansfrid. He explains that Ansfrid never had more than a life interest in the manor, and no power of transmitting it to his descendants, but that before the death of Archbishop William of Corbeuil, in 1138, John had violently seized Stisted and been ejected by the Archbishop, who returned the manor to the prior and convent of Christchurch. Then Matilda de Sancto Sydonio was given Stisted for her life, paying £10 a year to the monks, but without any power of bequest.¹

The charter by which Matilda de Sancto Sydonio held Stisted still exists at Canterbury.² It was given her on the request of King Stephen, who refers to her as "Cognata mea." What relation, if any, she was as well to Ansfrid it is hard to say.³ In Theobald's charter Ansfrid's son John is represented as having seized and lost Stisted before Matilda had it for her life. But the occasion of that charter

¹ Canterbury MSS., S. 315.

² Register B.

³ Sanctus Sidonius is Saint-Saens in Normandy, a place a few miles north of Rouen, in the arrondissement of Neufchatel-en-Bray.



See *Mémoires de la Société Nationale des Antiquaires de France*, vol. iv., p. 123; Stapleton, *Magni Rotuli Scaccarii Normanniae*, vol. i., p. ciii; Freeman, *William Rufus*, vol. i., pp. 235—7.

is the restitution of the manor to the monks on the death of John, who then it seems must have held it for the remainder of his life after the death of Matilda de Sancto Sydonio. She was presumably King Stephen's first-cousin once removed, and possibly some relation as well of John the son of Ansfrid, but this cannot be proved. Although unlikely, it is not impossible, from the fact that although the holders of Stisted, as is affirmed over and over again, had no power of bequest, and although the manor reverted absolutely at the death of each tenant to the monks at Canterbury, yet nevertheless it continued, as we shall see later, in the hands of descendants of Ansfrid for 250 years, each of them being a tenant for life. Matilda de Sancto Sydonio would be the solitary case of a stranger entering that line of succession.

What other sons of Ansfrid, if any, inherited his other lands is not known, and need not concern a historian of Allington. William succeeded Ansfrid at Allington, as his name William of Allington implies. But further proof of his tenure, and of that of his overlord William de Ros, is afforded by an investigation into the number of knights' fees in England, which was undertaken by Henry II. in 1166. This complete list of knights' fees is published in Hearne's *Black Book of the Exchequer* and in the *Red Book of the Exchequer*,¹ and forms an invaluable contemporary account of the owners of land in England at that date.

Carta Willelmi de Ros.

Willelmus de Helinton.

feodum 1 militis.

William de Ros, the probable descendant of Anschitel de Ros, held seven knights' fees of the King, that is to say, he was responsible for providing seven fully armed knights to fight for the King on the outbreak of any war. He was his tenant-in-chief, holding of him without any intermediate overlord. In Domesday Book Anschitel de Ros held of the Bishop of Bayeux, but after his disgrace the King had

¹ H. Hall, vol. i., p. 196.

taken over his lands, and became the immediate overlord of his tenants. On the death of a tenant-in-chief leaving a grown-up heir, a sum of money called a "relief" was paid to the King to ensure the peaceful succession of the heir. In the event of his being a minor the King took over his custody and that of the land until his coming-of-age, and if the relative desired the care of the heir and the land a sum had to be paid to compensate the King. Allington as we have seen was not held of the King in chief, but of William de Ros. Nevertheless the Pipe Roll for the eleventh year of Henry II. has the following entries under Kent:—

"The wife of William of Elintone owes 100 marks for the custody of the land of her son. She pays 50 marks" [p. 105].

"Agnes de Elintone owes 30 shillings and six pence. And she is quit" [p. 107].

Whether Agnes was the name of the wife cannot be certainly said. The widow paid off 50 marks of her debt (£33 6s. 8d.) this year, £23 6s. 8d. the following year,¹ and £10 the year after,² making a total of £66 13s. 4d., the equivalent of 100 marks. A mark was (not an English coin, but a money of account, originally representing the value of a mark weight of pure silver) equal in the twelfth century to 13s. 4d., and accounts in the Pipe Rolls were often calculated in marks, but always paid in pounds, shillings, and pence.

To explain why this money was paid to the King and not to William de Ros it is necessary to look forward and backward. In 1236 there is an entry³ to the effect that the owner of Allington, a certain William de Longchamp, holds Ovenhill (in Boxley) which is a sergeanty of the King, worth 100 shillings a year, from which the service due is the personal attendance of the holder upon the King whenever he goes to a Welsh war, with a horse worth five shillings and a sack and fastening pin. The horse was a baggage horse and the sack and buckle for carrying armour. Tenure by sergeanty entailed as its essence some personal

¹ Pipe Roll, 12 Henry II., p. 112.

² Pipe Roll, 13 Henry II., p. 200.

³ *Testa de Neville*, p. 215.

attendance upon the monarch, which might be of a high or low nature, from bearing the banner of the King in battle to finding a truss of straw for his outer chamber when he stayed in Cambridge.¹ Another characteristic of a sergeanty was that the King claimed relief and wardship from the holders of all except "petty" sergeanties which held by trifling services. In Henry III.'s time a sergeanty worth 100 shillings like Ovenhill was a "grand" sergeanty and owed relief and wardship to the King.²

Although 1236 is the earliest year in which Ovenhill is described as a sergeanty held by the owner of Allington, there is a reference to land in Ovenhill in connection with Allington as early as 1195. The first time it appears by name is in a manuscript about the upkeep of Rochester Bridge contained in the *Textus Roffensis*, which was compiled by Bishop Ernulf (1115—1123):—

"Then is the fourth peere the Kinges and three yeardes and a halfe to planke, and three plates to laye, of Aylesford and of all that lathe that thereunto lyeth, and of Ovenhille and of Aclay, etc., etc. . . ."³

In Ansfrid dapifer's holding of 100 shillings worth of land of the King in Boxley in 1130 it is not difficult to see the earliest mention of Ovenhill held as a sergeanty. Now if in 11 Henry II., 1166, Ovenhill descended to William de Allington with the manor of Allington, when William's widow had to pay wardship, she paid for Ovenhill as well as for Allington. A quotation from Pollock and Maitland's *History of English Law* (vol. i., p. 302) will complete this digression:—

"Once more we see the King above the common rules. If a dead man held in chief of the Crown by Knights service or by grand sergeanty the King was entitled to the wardship of the heir's body and to his marriage no matter how many other lords there might be. But further, the King was entitled to the lordship of all the lands which this dead man held, *no matter of whom he held them*. Such was the right of prerogative wardship."

¹ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, vol. i., p. 262 (1st Edition).

² *Ibid.*, p. 304.

³ Lambarde, *Perambulation of Kent*, p. 348.

This means that the widow of William had to pay wardship to the King for Allington as well as for Ovenhill, and that William de Ros lost his feudal due from his tenant at Allington because that tenant happened also to hold of the King by grand sergeanty at Ovenhill.

Hard as this was for William de Ros, the fact proves a boon to the historian of Allington, because it ensured that the payment of wardship and relief should appear on the Pipe Rolls, on which alone payments to the King's Exchequer were noted. For the latter half of the twelfth century, when the Pipe Rolls are almost the only contemporary source of knowledge, information about a person who was not a tenant-in-chief of the King is almost impossible to get.

The historian's luck is even more apparent in the next piece of evidence taken from the "Rotulus de Dominabus" or Ladies' Roll of 1185. In that year Henry II., most indefatigable of monarchs in collecting financial information, undertook an enquiry into the extent and value of land in England held of him in chief by widows and orphans. It only exists for twelve counties, one of them being Essex¹ and, as chance would have it, is most relevant to our researches. The following is a complete translation of the entry:—

Essex.—Hundred of Hinckford.

"The daughter of William de Allington is in the custody of our Lord the King, and is 15 years old and the niece of Archdeacon Paris [of Rochester]. Stisted, which the aforesaid William held of the monks of Canterbury by a rent of £10, was after his death in the hands of the King with the daughter of the said William, and in the custody of the sheriff of Essex; who the first year received thence £4 less 4 shillings, the second year 4 marks and stock, namely 10 oxen and 5 horses. And if there were 16 oxen, 4 horses; 6 cows, 1 bull, 4 pigs, 1 boar, and 60 sheep there, the said vill would be worth £6 above and beyond the payment to the monks of £10.²

The first important piece of information to be derived from this entry is that Stisted, which had belonged for his

¹ Lincolnshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Bucks, Rutland, Huntingdonshire, Norfolk, Suffolk, Herts, Essex, Cambridge, Middlesex, *not* Kent.

² *Rotulus de Dominabus*, Stacey Grimaldi, p. 38.

life to Ansfrid's son John, had afterward come into the possession of William de Allington. That it should descend in the family in spite of the fact that the manor reverted absolutely to the monks at the death of each tenant, seems to be the normal proceeding. The heiress of William de Allington inherited Stisted as she inherited Allington and Ovenhill, and being a tenant-in-chief of the King through her ownership of Ovenhill he exercised "prerogative wardship," and had the custody of her person and of her manor of Stisted. If she had not been a ward of the King we should have heard nothing of her on the Ladies' Roll.

Returning to the same entry it is evident that the sheriff of Essex had received the proceeds of the manor for two years, which fixes William de Allington's death approximately to the year 1183. But the widow of William the elder, the son of Ansfrid, paid for the custody of the land of her son in 1165. He must have been named William too, and have grown up and married before 1169, since 1170 must have been the year of his daughter's birth if in 1185 she was fifteen years old.

On the Pipe Roll of the first year of Richard I., 1189 (p. 21), we read that the sheriff of Essex paid £4 to the King from Stisted, and that the prioress of Clerkenwell paid £4 for the care of the daughter of William de Allington. The name of the heiress is given in another place in the same Pipe Roll (p. 17).

"And to Avelina, daughter of William de Allington 60 shillings for (her) clothes"¹ [possibly a trousseau, see p. 20].

Of this William, the father of Avelina, I can find nothing personal, but it was during his lifetime that the first mention was made of any building at Allington. It occurs in the Pipe Roll for the year 1174-5 (20 Henry II., p. 212).

"Et in prosternendo castello de Alintona 60 solidi per breve regis."

The great rebellion against Henry II. stimulated by his

¹ "Et Aveline filie Willelmi de Elinton LX solidos ad Pannos, per breve Regis."

son Prince Henry, in which a large number of the barons and the middle class of the realm took part, occupied the years 1173 and 1174 with bloodshed. When King Henry was finally successful he ordered a great destruction of castles all over the country, of which Allington was one. The foundations and one small portion of the wall of this oldest Castle still exist. That William de Allington followed the rebels seems not unlikely. If so he was the precursor of a still greater rebel at the Castle 400 years later.

After 1174 Allington was not again the site of a castle till Stephen of Penchester obtained his licence to crenellate the existing house in 1280. In the only mention of the building that occurs between these years we shall see that it is referred to as a "house." A substantial portion of this building still exists. But although at the period which we are now approaching, Allington as a building was not important, its owners took a more prominent part in the affairs of their country. Around the heiress Avelina, brought up at the priory of Clerkenwell, throng echoes of stirring days, of which enough remain recorded to endow this first lady of Allington with character and life.

The feudal guardianship of a ward brought with it the right to dispose of her in marriage and reap the profits of the transaction. In 1189 Avelina was still a ward, approaching the age of twenty-one, and the King must have been anxious to bestow her upon a suitable husband. Richard I., in 1189, had just succeeded his father, and was preparing to start on the third Crusade. His essential needs were to leave England in the hands of men who would govern in his interest while he was away, and to raise as much money as he could for travelling expenses. Before his accession to the throne his right-hand man had been a certain William de Longchamp,¹ his chaplain, and afterwards Chancellor of Aquitaine.² When Richard came to England, William de Longchamp accompanied him and paid £3000 to be made Chancellor of the realm. As he was so entirely devoted to

¹ For the career of William de Longchamp see Stubbs, "Preface to the Chronicle of Roger of Hoveden" vol. iii,

² *Robert of Devizes*, p. 6.

the interests of the King he was given the Chancellorship, although the Bishop of Bath bid £4000 for it.

On the last day of the year Longchamp was consecrated Bishop of Ely. The King had departed for France a fortnight earlier on his way to Palestine, leaving Bishop Hugh of Durham justiciar, though the Chancellor was entrusted with certain other powers which clashed with those of Bishop Hugh. Divided authority gave rise to quarrels, which were carried to the King in France, and ended in Richard bestowing the sole justiciarship upon William de Longchamp for the whole of England south of the Humber. This was in March 1190, and for the next year Longchamp lived in regal state.

“A visit of a single night cost the house which received him three years’ savings. He entertained a train of a thousand horsemen.¹ He moved through the kingdom like ‘a flash of lightning.’”²

In June he was made Papal Legate in place of the Archbishop, who had gone on Crusade, and thus became Chancellor, Justiciar and Legate all in one. Such power achieved in one year by a Norman, hitherto unknown in England, was fated to draw down odium upon his head, and by October 1191 his fall was bitter indeed. All his offices were taken from him, and he was obliged to fly disgraced to France. But he had had his day. During that one year of omnipotence he procured for his six brothers offices of importance, preferments in the Church, or rich wards in marriage. His nearest brother Osbert, referred to by Giraldus Cambrensis (iv., p. 406) as “frater suus germanus,” married Avelina de Allington, and no doubt William obtained her for his brother during the height of his power.

In the Pipe Rolls of 3 Richard I. (1191), under Kent, stands the following entry:—

“— de Longchamp pays 20 marks to do service of the King, by writ of the Chancellor.”

¹ Stubbs, “Preface to Roger of Hoveden,” vol. iii., p. 223 (Historical Introductions to the Rolls series).

² *Robert of Devizes*, p. 14.

Unfortunately the Christian name is torn off, but as none of the Longchamps were associated with Kent except Osbert, through his wife Avelina, it seems probable that Osbert is the name lost, and that he was doing service to the King because of the land in Kent which had come into his possession when he married Avelina. At any rate, by 1194 we know that they were married, since both appear as parties in a suit,¹ but 1190 or 1191, when William was Chancellor and able to bestow the King's wards in marriage himself, seems the most likely year for the match to have taken place.

Through their association with William de Longchamp his six brothers, from 1189 onwards, were prominent on the political horizon: too prominent in the view of the contemporary chroniclers. One of the reasons for William's unpopularity which led to his fall, says Roger of Hoveden (iii., p. 142), was that he consistently advanced his own family:—

“His nephews and relations, no matter how distant and born in a peasant's Cottage, sought eagerly to unite themselves in matrimony with counts, barons, and magnates of the realm, thinking to acquire the greatest favour from him by any show of relationship.”

Already before the end of 1189 Osbert de Longchamp had been given the custody of the Fleet prison with an annual salary of £7 12s. 1d.,² and there are entries in the Pipe Rolls under London and Middlesex from 1190 onwards, shewing that he received £10 12s. 11d. every year for the custody of the King's house at Westminster.³

Early in 1190 William de Longchamp went north with two of his brothers, Henry and Osbert, to quell a rebellion which had broken out at York, and in April he made Osbert sheriff of Yorkshire, so as to keep his own influence over the county firm. He deposed the former sheriff, John Marshall, who accounted on the Pipe Rolls for the first half of the year.⁴ In 1190 and 1191 Osbert was also sheriff

¹ Palgrave, *Rotuli Curiae Regis*, ii., p. 49.

² Rymer, *Fœdera*, i., 50.

³ “Pro custodia domorum regis de Westmonasterium.”

⁴ Stubbs, *Roger of Hoveden*, iii., p. 34.

of Westmoreland, but hardly can he have been married to Avelina for more than a year, when the crash in the fortunes of the Chancellor brought him also to ruin. William de Longchamp had been consistently faithful to the interests of Richard against those of John, who was plotting to be recognized as heir to the throne in place of Prince Arthur. But the Chancellor's arrogance had offended everyone, and when he was known to be intriguing for his election to the see of Canterbury, just vacant, the discontented forces combined against him and were overpowering. At a great meeting in the fields around the Tower he was deprived of the justiciarship and made to give up all his castles except Dover, Cambridge, and Hereford. Osbert de Longchamp and Mathew de Cleres, castellan of Dover, his brother-in-law, were pledged that he would not escape¹ from the country. But when he reached Dover the temptation was too great, and dressed up as a woman he tried to board a ship. The attempt was unsuccessful, and he was banished instead, but his brothers suffered, Osbert being deprived of his sheriffdom and another brother Henry imprisoned at Cardiff.²

We are not here concerned with the remainder of the career of William de Longchamp, his fluctuations in favour at home, his help in the matter of Richard's ransom, and his faithful attendance abroad upon the King till his death in 1196. Witnesses to his past power in England remained in the territorial prominence of his relations. Osbert, it is true, disappears from view entirely till 1194 (6 Richard I.), when he emerges as sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk, which position he retained for several years. Meanwhile we may imagine that he lived quietly at home at Allington.

A type of document, novel except to the law-learned, now makes its appearance, helping us much in our search. It was a method of conveyance of land in the form of a fictitious lawsuit, arranged for the purpose of bringing the transaction into court and securing its authority in case the gift were afterwards disputed. Following a preliminary process in the courts,

¹ *Ralph de Diceto*, p. 664.

² *Giraldus Cambrensis*, p. 399.

the actual document began with the words "Haec est finalis concordia," and hence was called a fine. It was a triple document, one part, the "foot," being kept in the Treasury for reference, and each party keeping one of the others. The earliest fine is dated 1175, but the series of "Feet of Fines" taken from the Treasury begins in 1195 and throws light upon Allington from the very first year.

On November 14th, 1195,¹ Allington and Ovenhill are mentioned together in a fine, made as follows between Osbert de Longchamp and a certain Hamo Peverel:—

"Between Osbert de Longchamp and Hamo Peverel about one mill with its site in Ovenhill . . . namely Hamo recognizes this mill to be the right of Osbert and gives him besides 2 marks of silver. And for this agreement Osbert concedes to Hamo to hold the mill for himself and his heirs of Osbert and his heirs by the service of five shillings sterling to be paid at the following terms; 15 pence at Michaelmas, 15 pence at Christmas, 15 pence at Easter and 15 pence at the feast of St. John the Baptist."

The next fine, dated May 12th, 1196,² is here quoted (in a free translation) because of the light it casts upon the life of Allington:—

"Between R. the Abbot of Boxley and the Convent, and Osbert de Longchamp and Avelina his wife . . . About the land of Ovenhill . . . there was a suit between them in the above court, to the effect that the Abbot and Convent of Boxley quit-claimed to Osbert and Avelina all their right in the land of Ovenhill with its appurtenances. And in return for this fine and concord and quit claim, Osbert and Avelina his wife gave to the Abbot and Convent 6 marks sterling. And in addition they gave to them in pure and perpetual alms 2 shillings of rent from the mill of 'Cuciddemille' payable annually twice a year, half at Easter and half at Michaelmas. So that Osbert and Avelina and their heirs can claim nothing from the mill except the grinding of flour *for their own house at Helinton*. And if they claim more the Abbot can summon the millers to his court. Besides this they give annually to the Abbot and Convent 2 shillings from land at Oxefrid, from which the ancestors of Avelina annually gave 12 pence. They quit claimed

¹ Pipe Roll Society, vol. xvii., p. 60.

² Printed in Latin in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. I., p. 235.

to the Abbot and Convent from themselves and their heirs, all the right which they said they had in the house of Paris, Archdeacon of Rochester [Avelina's uncle] in London on the Thames, and also the claim and right which they said they had in the tenement of the Park at Boxley. In addition they conceded to the monks free and peaceful fishing in the Medway opposite their land [Allington]."

To this document some importance accrues from its confirmation of the supposition (p. 18) that Allington or Helinton was a house after 1174. Of interest too is the name "Cuciddemille." After a search made this year in Boxley parish where the sergeanty of Ovenhill was situated, the remains of three mills were discovered. Of one there are only slight traces left, but an old labourer in the place remembered when it was pulled down about forty years ago, and he called it "Cuddymill," clearly the very same "Cuciddemille" mentioned 700 years before. It may have been also the "half mill" of Domesday Book.

Of the holding of Avelina's ancestors at Oxefrid I have been able to find nothing. Archdeacon Paris, who appears here for the second time, becomes a familiar figure. As a witness of charters his name occurs twice to my knowledge, and in 1176 he went to Sicily with the Bishop of Norwich¹ on a legatine journey, but of his parentage nothing is noted. One is inclined to think him a brother of Avelina's mother, since the widow of William of Allington, senior, only mentioned her one son. But it is no guess which pictures the monks of Boxley fishing peacefully in the river flowing past the Castle walls of Allington.

Two other fines about Ovenhill are in existence, one dated November 21st, 1198,² but they are not of sufficient interest to quote. Osbert and Avelina appear side by side as benefactors to Rochester in a charter copied into a register of Rochester Charters preserved in the British Museum,³ but

¹ Leland, *Antiquarii Collectanea*, vol. i., p. 162.

² *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. I., p. 271.

³ Bibl. Cotton Domitian A.X., No. CXXIII.

unfortunately the original charter with its seals has disappeared from the Cathedral archives :—

“To all the faithful of Christ and to those whom the present writing concerns, Osbert de Longchamp and Avelina his wife give greeting. May your community know that I, Osbert de Longchamp, and Avelina my wife, with the consent of our heir, grant and confirm to the church of St. Andrew at Rochester and to the monks there serving God, the lands and rent in our vill of Stisted, which they had by the gift and concession of Ansfrid the sheriff In this year they have received us into the full society of their chapter and into participation in all the good things of their church. They have granted to us that after our death our names shall be written in the martyrology between the names of the brethren and that yearly a service shall be held for us. This grant and confirmation we give to the monks for the health of our souls and for those of our ancestors and successors.”

Unfortunately the martyrology with the names of Osbert and Avelina exists no longer. The charter quoted only confirms the gift already made to Rochester by Ansfrid, Avelina's great-grandfather, which hardly seems to warrant such a special favour as that of putting their names in the martyrology. However, if it was a pleasure to them we may be glad, for after 1198 their misfortunes gathered fast.

In accounting to the King as sheriff of Norfolk and Suffolk in 9 Richard I. Osbert was £24 11s. 3*d.* in debt from his tenure of the office two years before. This official debt, far from being paid off, increased each year that he held the sheriffdom till in 3 John it stood at £52 18s. 9*d.* Not content with this indebtedness, he committed an offence in 10 Richard I. for which all his goods and chattels were forfeited. In the Pipe Roll for Kent, 10 Richard I. (printed in Madox. Exchequer I. 514*d.*) is the following entry :—

“Osbert de Longchamp owes 500 marks to have grace of the King and seisin of all the lands and chattels from which he was disseised by order of the King, and to have seisin of the custody of the Gaol of London and of the house of the King at Westminster.”

What the nature of the offence was that called down upon Osbert a fine of £333 6s. 8*d.*, the equivalent of 500 marks,¹ can only be surmised. This sum must be multiplied by at least twenty to approximate to the modern value of money. On p. 119 of the printed Chancery Roll of 3 John, Gilbert Fitz Renfred is put down as owing £20 because "he went into the forest with Osbert de Longchamp." We must suppose that Osbert had been living in the forest as an outlaw defying the King's authority. But whatever he had done the penalty seems to have been reduced, for although there is no record of any payment in 10 Richard I., Osbert is put down in the Pipe Roll of 1 John, the year after, as only owing the King £140 for the seisin of his goods.

Perhaps it will not be without interest to follow closely the payment of this debt as it was recorded year by year upon the Pipe Rolls. In the first year, 1 John, there seem to have been two payments. On the Kent membrane it is written that Osbert paid £6 4s. 2*d.*, leaving an indebtedness of £133 15s. 10*d.* But on the Essex membrane he is recorded as paying a further £6 6s., which, being subtracted from the whole, is made to leave his debt at £127 15s. 10*d.*, six shillings too much.

The Pipe Rolls after 1181-2 have not yet been printed, but the writing is extremely clear and there is no doubt about this inaccuracy. Nevertheless considering that many thousands of entries were made on each Roll and that the methods of reckoning were primitive, the very small percentage of error is remarkable.

It will be simpler to account for the remaining years in tabular form:—

| Year. | Debt owing. | | | Payment. | | | Remainder of debt. | | |
|----------------------|-------------|----|----|----------|----|----|--------------------|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| 2 John. | 127 | 15 | 10 | — | | | 127 | 15 | 10 |
| 3 John. ² | 127 | 15 | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 122 | 15 | 10 |

This year his personal debt is added to the £52 18s. 9*d.*, which still remained to be accounted for from his tenure of

¹ 1 mark = 13s. 4*d.*

² Printed in Chancery Roll, 3 John, p. 218.

the sheriffdom of Norfolk and Suffolk, making a total of £175 14s. 7d. Of this he pays off another £15, leaving £160 14s. 7d. John de Corherde, who was associated with him in the sheriffdom in 8 Richard I., owes £2 11s. 9d. of this, which he received from Osbert, and thus Osbert's total remaining debt stands at £158 2s. 10d. The entry closes with the command that it is to be paid off at the rate of £30 a year.¹ How nearly this was complied with will be seen.

| Year. | Debt owing. | | Payment. | | | Remainder of debt. | | |
|---|-------------|-------|-----------|-------|-----|--------------------|------|--|
| | £ | s. d. | £ | s. d. | £ | s. d. | | |
| 4 John. | — | | No entry. | | | — | | |
| 5 John. | 158 | 2 10 | 15 | 0 0 | 143 | 2 10 | | |
| (Annual compulsory payment reduced to £20.) | | | | | | | | |
| 6 John. | 143 | 2 10 | — | | | 143 | 2 10 | |
| 7 John. | 143 | 2 10 | 20 | 0 0 | 123 | 2 10 | | |
| 8 John. | 123 | 2 10 | 20 | 0 0 | 103 | 2 10 | | |
| 9 John. | 103 | 2 10 | 10 | 0 0 | 93 | 2 10 | | |
| 10 John. | 93 | 2 10 | — | | | 93 | 2 10 | |

Thus far all went smoothly, though the payments were irregular; but after the end of the tenth fiscal year of John, *i.e.*, after September 29th, 1208, and before the beginning of the calendar year 1209, Osbert died, leaving poor Avelina to cope with the peculiar difficulties of a widow under the feudal system, burdened with debts and a son under age. The position is described in the Fine Rolls, 9 John (1208), Kent, p. 430:—

“Avelina, who was the wife of Osbert de Longchamp, gives 200 marks [£133 6s. 8d.] and two palfreys to have the land which joins her inheritance, of which she was disseised by order of the King, because of the death of her husband, and so that she may not be obliged to marry, and may be able to pay off the debts of Osbert, her former husband, at the times she ought to pay them. Her son and heir will remain in the custody of the King. And the sheriff is ordered to accept from her security for paying the fine, and to cause her to have seisin of her land.”

¹ Printed in Chancery Roll, 3 John, p. 222.

Before Osbert can have been much more than buried another man appeared upon the scene to buy Avelina in marriage, with her land; but Avelina seems to have been devoted to Osbert, or at any rate to have had a will of her own, and in spite of the advantages offered in her extremely hard position of a widow, refused to be party to any such transaction. The following are translations of the documents bearing on the case (Fine Rolls, 9 John, 1208, p. 432, Oxford):—

“Walter de Tywe gives 400 marks and 4 palfreys to have in marriage Avelina, who was the wife of Osbert de Longchamp, with her inheritance; namely 200 marks and 2 palfreys, which she herself promised to the King, to be allowed to marry according to her wish, and 200 marks and 2 palfreys over and above this. In addition he will answer to the King, at the Exchequer, for the debts which Osbert owed him, at the same times that Osbert ought to have answered. And the sheriff is commanded to take security for this from Walter, and to tell the sheriffs of Kent, Lincolnshire,¹ and Essex so that they may do the bidding of the King. And the sheriffs in whose bailiwicks Avelina has her inheritance are commanded to give her to Walter with her land. And even if she be unwilling, nevertheless they shall cause Walter to have the seisin of her lands.”

Here is poor Avelina, who has promised and given security to pay 200 marks and two palfreys for the possession of her lands, and not to be obliged to marry, forestalled and bought by Walter Tywe, who gives security for double that sum, in addition to a promise to pay all the debts. No wonder it was difficult for a widow to remain single, if a King only desired money, not justice.

The 7th and 8th Clauses of Magna Carta run as follows:—

“A widow after the death of her husband shall, straightway and without difficulty, have her marriage portion and her inheritance, nor shall she give anything in return for her dowry, her

¹ This is the sole reference to any Lincolnshire land belonging to Avelina or Osbert.

marriage portion, or the inheritance which belonged to her, and which she and her husband held on the day of the death of that husband. And she may remain in her husband's house after his death for forty days, within which her dowry shall be paid over to her.

“8. No widow shall be forced to marry when she prefers to live without a husband, so, however, that she gives security not to marry without our consent, if she hold from us, or the consent of the lord from whom she holds if she hold from another.”

Magna Carta was passed only seven years after this episode, and Avelina lived to see a law in operation under which she would not have been required to pay anything. Her plight may be taken as an instance of what tyranny and extortion led to the passing of Magna Carta.

The sequence is shewn in an entry on the Pipe Roll of 10 John for Kent:—

“Avelina, who was the wife of Osbert de Longchamp, owes 500 marks and the debts which Osbert owed to the King's Exchequer on the day of his death, to have custody of the land which bounds the inheritance of the heir of Osbert until he comes of age, saving the King's marriage of the heir, and so that she shall not be required to marry, but if she does marry it shall be by consent of the King. At the end of the 10th year of John, 300 marks shall be paid, at the end of the year following, 200 marks, and at the end of the third year, all the rest. She pays £100 and owes 350 marks.”

It was only Avelina's payment of 100 extra marks above and beyond the sum offered by Walter Tywe, that is 300 more than was at first required, that cancelled Walter's agreement. No doubt the sum really had to be paid rapidly; at any rate there was no delay. £100 was paid the first year, and the whole 350 marks the second,¹ which contrasts with the dawdling manner in which Osbert's debts were afterwards paid off. This £93 2s. 10*d.* now remained the

¹ Pipe Roll, 11 John, Kent.

sole burden upon Avelina, which must have seemed trifling after her own debt of £333 6s. 8d. For the next ten years she accounted for it on the Pipe Roll, her son being still under age. The first four years she accounted in Kent, the remainder of the time in Essex:—

| Year. | Debt. | | | Payment. | | | Remainder of Debt. | | |
|---|-----------------------------|----|----|----------|----|----|--------------------|----|--------------|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| 12 John (Kent). | 93 | 2 | 10 | — | — | — | 93 | 2 | 10 |
| 13 John. | 93 | 2 | 10 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 88 | 2 | 10 |
| (The payment of 13 John is repeated first.) | | | | | | | | | |
| 15 John. | 88 | 2 | 10 | 6 | 15 | 3 | 81 | 7 | 8 (1d. out). |
| 14 John (2 entries). | 81 | 7 | 8 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 74 | 7 | 2 |
| | 74 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 72 | 7 | 2 |
| (Somehow the payments of 14 and 15 John have got transposed to the wrong Pipe Rolls.) | | | | | | | | | |
| 16 John (Essex). | 72 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 10 | 6 | 69 | 16 | 8 |
| 17 John. | No entry. | | | | | | | | |
| 1 Henry III. | (Pipe Roll does not exist.) | | | | | | | | |
| 2 Henry III. | 69 | 16 | 8 | — | — | — | 69 | 16 | 8 |
| 3 Henry III. | 69 | 16 | 8 | — | — | — | 69 | 16 | 8 |
| 4 Henry III. | 69 | 16 | 8 | — | — | — | 69 | 16 | 8 |

Why Avelina paid nothing for five years it is impossible to say. Far from having paid off the whole debt by 1211 as was commanded, more than half of it remained unpaid in 1220. If fines were large in the thirteenth century, there was at any rate considerable laxity in the time of payment.

By the end of 5 Henry III., September 29th, 1221, William de Longchamp, the heir, must at last have come of age, for in the Pipe Roll of that year, under Kent, is the following entry:—

“William de Longchamp, son of Osbert de Longchamp, owes £46 11s. 2d. of the debts of his father, namely two-thirds of £69 16s. 8d., which debt was divided between himself and his mother Avelina, who answers for the third part in Essex.”

William paid his off as follows:—

| Year. | Debt. | | | Payment. | | | Remainder. | | |
|---------------|-------|----|----|----------|----|----|------------|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| 6 Henry III. | 46 | 11 | 2 | 17 | 15 | 4 | 28 | 15 | 10 |
| 7 Henry III. | 28 | 15 | 10 | 8 | 17 | 8 | 19 | 18 | 2 |
| 8 Henry III. | 19 | 18 | 2 | 8 | 17 | 9 | 11 | 0 | 5 |
| 9 Henry III. | 11 | 0 | 5 | 8 | 17 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| 10 Henry III. | 2 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 0 | — | | |

“And he is quit.”

Avelina continues thus:—

| Year. | Debt. | | | Payment. | | | Remainder. | | |
|----------------------------------|--------|----|--------|--------------|----|-------|------------|----|----|
| | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. | £ | s. | d. |
| 6 Henry III. | 23 | 5 | 7 | 8 | 18 | 2 | 14 | 7 | 5 |
| 7 Henry III. | 14 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 9 | 1 | 9 | 18 | 4 |
| 8 Henry III. } (2 payments) } | 9 18 4 | | 2 4 6 | 7 13 10 | | 2 4 6 | 7 13 10 | | |
| 9 Henry III. } (2 payments) } | 5 9 8 | | 3 4 10 | (4d. wrong.) | | 2 4 6 | 2 4 6 | | |
| | 2 4 6 | | 2 4 6 | | | | — | | |

“And she is quit.”

Both of them seem to have turned over a new leaf after William's coming of age. The Pipe Roll of 6 Henry III. states that William shall pay at the rate of £8 17s. 9½d. a year, and Avelina at the rate of £4 9s. 1d., and this they actually did.

When the dreary proceeding was at last over, Avelina was 55 years old, and had been burdened with Osbert's debts for 27 years. Nevertheless after his death she made another gift of land in Stisted to Rochester for the good of his soul. The original charter is in the library of the Cathedral with its seal torn off, and a copy exists in the British Museum.¹ The boundaries of the land in Stisted and three acres of wood called “Le Frid” are set forth in detail, but the total yearly value seems only to have amounted to five shillings, judging from the list of Rochester bequests in the *Registrum Roffense*, p. 118, where Avelina de Long-

¹ Bibl. Cotton Domitian A. X. CXCLII.

champ is entered as having given five shillings rent in Stisted.

“Redditus de Celario.

Item de Stisted ex dono Aveline, 5 solidi.”¹

One more very prettily-written charter of hers is preserved in the British Museum,² but again the seal has been torn off. It conveys 3½ acres of land to John the miller of Stisted, to be held at a rent of 15 pence, payable four times a year, 3½*d.* at Michaelmas, 3½*d.* at Christmas, 3½*d.* at Easter, and 4½*d.* at the Feast of St. John the Baptist.

It looks as though Avelina had spent her latter years at Stisted, since her payments of debt were made in Essex after 1215, and all her charters relate to Stisted. In the *Red Book of the Exchequer*³ she appears in a different light in 12 and 13 John, as a knight holding of the Archbishop of Canterbury.”

“Avelina de Longo Champo tenet dimidium feodum in Alintone.”

Now in 1166, as we have seen, Allington was one knight's fee held of William de Ros. How it became reduced to half a knight's fee in the next fifty years I cannot discover, but in the Library at Lambeth Palace, amongst the *Cartæ Antiquæ*,⁴ is the following original charter, shewing how Allington came to be held of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1201:—

“John, by the grace of God, King of the English, etc., to his Archbishops, Bishops, etc., greeting.

“Know ye that we for the health of our soul, etc., have returned and confirmed by this charter to God and Christchurch, Canterbury, and to our venerable Father in Christ, Hubert, Archbishop of this see, and to his successors, the service of the *whole fee of William de Ros*. Whereof there was contention between us and our ancestors, and the Archbishop and his predecessors Given by our hands on the 10th day of January in the third year of our reign.”

Concerning the “contention” about the fee of William

¹ Thorpe, *Custumale Roffense*, p. 16.

³ H. Hall, vol. ii., p. 472.

² Cart. Harl. 112, B. 7.

⁴ Vol. xi., No. 12.

de Ros I know nothing, and it had little to do with Allington. Whether William de Ros held of the King or the Archbishop of Canterbury cannot greatly have affected Avelina.

When the debts were all paid and her son was grown up Avelina drops into obscurity. Only once more does she appear as party to a fine in 20 Henry III., when she was 66 years old.¹ Let us hope this silence implies that nothing went wrong in her old age, and that it passed as peacefully as her youth in the Priory of Clerkenwell.

The year of her death was probably 1238, for in the library of Canterbury Cathedral there exists an indenture of that year between the Prior and Convent of Christchurch and William de Longchamp, son of Osbert, concerning two carucates of land in Stisted to be held by William and his heirs of the Prior by payment of £16 a year.² This must be the new agreement made with William de Longchamp when he entered upon his life tenure of Stisted on the death of his mother. But the conditions have altered; money is worth less, and at any rate £16 is the yearly rent instead of £10.

Stisted had certainly been Avelina's for her life, but William must have become possessed of Allington and Ovenhill when he came of age in 1221 and entered upon his payment of two-thirds of his father's debts. If she had not done so before, she would naturally on his coming of age have gone to live at Stisted. The first mention of his tenure belongs to the 20th year of Henry III. (1236). It is printed on p. 215 of the *Testa de Nevill*, a collection of royal inquisitions into the tenure of land, belonging to the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., but from internal evidence the Kentish portion has been assigned to the year 1236.³ In this document for the first time the full service due from the sergeantry at Ovenhill which I have already quoted (p. 14) is set forth. Unlike his mother, William

¹ Abstracted in Lansdowne MS. 267, p. 161, B. M.

² Register B and a fine among the *Cartæ Antiquæ*.

³ *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XII., p. 199.

de Longchamp does not fill a great place in the annals of Allington. The year of his death, 1256, is fixed for us yet again by an entry in Register B of the Canterbury manuscripts, settling the succession of Stisted. Osbert de Longchamp is to answer to the Prior of Christchurch about the fine made between William de Longchamp "pater predicti Osberti" and the former Prior in 1238. Osbert says he is the heir of William de Longchamp, his father, and that Stisted on William's death was given to his widow Alice as dower. Alice and Hugh, her present husband, pay to the Prior £16 a year. This marriage of the widow of William de Longchamp is corroborated by an entry in the Fine Roll of 40 Henry III., 1256,¹ giving the name of her second husband "Hugh, son of Richard de Stisted."

In the light of these certain facts, an entry in *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. XII., p. 224, is extremely puzzling. It is taken from a list of the holders of knights' fees in Kent in 38 Henry III., 1254:—

"Robert de Longchamp holds in Elyntone half a fee of the Archbishop of Canterbury."

Now William de Longchamp was alive till 1256, and Robert de Longchamp was not his heir when he died. As Allington was always held together with the sergeanty of Ovenhill, a possible explanation which occurs to me, if the name Robert² does not represent a scribe's mistake, is that before his death William was too feeble to do any personal service and so handed Ovenhill and Allington to his son Robert, who appears as the owner in 1254. But Robert must have died before 1256, leaving Osbert, another son of William, sole heir. At any rate Robert is never mentioned again, and Osbert continued to hold Allington and Ovenhill till 1279.

The year 1275 produces the next reference to his tenure. It comes from another inquiry into the land held of the

¹ *Excerpta e Rotulis Finium*, vol. ii., p. 218.

² Robert de Longchamp is mentioned in 1251 and 1255 as present in Northamptonshire. Selden Society, vol. xiii., pp. 99 and 34.

King in chief, printed in the Hundred Rolls, 3 Edward I., vol. i., p. 218. Osbert¹ de Longchamp is said to hold Ovenhill by the same sergeant service as William de Longchamp, and to have alienated 16 acres of it to Stephen de Cosington, which he holds by a payment of 4s. yearly. Two years later in the Parliamentary Writs for 1277²—

“Robert le Snoke offers for Osbert de Longchamp, who is said to be ‘infirm,’ the service of providing in his own person a horse, a sack, and a fastening pin.”

Osbert cannot have been very old in 1277, in fact he must be the same Osbert who in 1296, on p. 713 of the same volume of *Parliamentary Writs*, is enrolled pursuant to the ordinance for the defence of the sea coast as a knight holding lands in the county of Essex, but unfit for service (“impotens”).

He was then nineteen years older, and still “infirm.” It looks as though he had been a cripple, and this perhaps explains why William de Longchamp first passed Ovenhill to his son Robert, who was presumably able-bodied; but when Robert died, Osbert, who was perhaps the only other son, inherited on the death of his father.

If Osbert was permanently an invalid, unable in person to do the service incumbent upon him as holder of the sergeanty of Ovenhill, it would explain why he enfeoffed Stephen of Penchester to Ovenhill and Allington in 1279. I cannot discover that Stephen of Penchester was any relation to Osbert. He was a son of Sir Laurence de Cobeham, as is shewn on p. 114 of the Calendar of Bodleian Charters. His mother must have been a sister of that John de Belemeyns who, in a document dated 1240, is called—

“Vir venerabilis dominus Johannes Bellemeyns, canonicus Sancti Pauli Lond: et dominus manerii de Peneshurste.”³

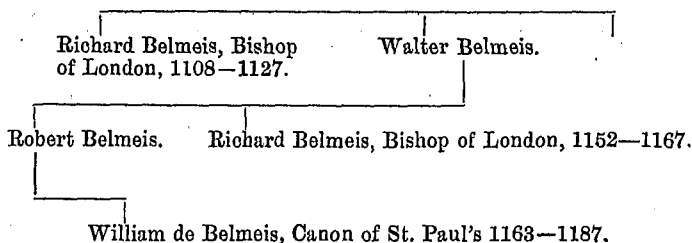
In the same book (p. 462) a charter of Stephen of Penchester confirms to the Chapel of Leigh near Penshurst lands given by “Johannes Belemeyns avunculus meus.”

¹ The scribe started to write Robert, but erased it.

² *Parliamentary Writs*, vol. i., p. 713.

³ *Registrum Roffense*, p. 461.

This John Belemeyns, uncle of Stephen of Penchester, who passed on to him the manor of Penshurst or Penchester, from which Stephen took his name, and which he owned, must have belonged to the family of Belemeyns so notably connected with St. Paul's Cathedral in the twelfth century.



I cannot place John Belmeis or Belemeyns in the pedigree,¹ but as he was a Canon of St. Paul's doubtless the connexion was not lacking. He left striking bequests to that cathedral,² and his anniversary was kept there on December 26th at an annual cost of £1 10s.³

Neither the Belemeyns family nor the Cobhams seem to have been associated at any time with the Longchamps.

Stephen of Penchester's first wife Roesia de Baseville, who died after 1271,⁴ came from Buckinghamshire, and was not connected. Who his second wife Margaret was, whom he had already married in 1279, I am unable to discover. She is generally said to have been the daughter of John de Burgh, who died in 1279, and had a daughter named Margery, but that lady was undoubtedly a nun.⁵ An analysis of Margaret of Penchester's inquisition post-mortem⁶ shews that very nearly all the land she owned had belonged to Stephen of Penchester, and went at her death to his children and not to hers. There is no clue to be found in it as to her origin or possible Longchamp connexion.

¹ Eyton, *Antiquities of Shropshire*, vol. ii., p. 208.

² Dugdale, *St. Paul's*, p. 197.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 29.

⁴ *Inquisitions post-mortem*, Hawis de Baseville, 54 Henry III. (vol. i., No. 737).

⁵ *Ibid.*, John de Burgh, 8 Edward I., vol. ii., No. 349.

⁶ *Ibid.*, Margaret of Penchester, 2 Edward II., vol. v., No. 134.

Whatever the cause may have been, Osbert de Longchamp made over Allington and other lands to Stephen and Margaret of Penchester and the heirs of his body in 1279 by the following fine¹ :—

“This is the final concord made in the Kings Court at Westminster on the day following the Ascension of our Lord, in the 8th year of the reign of Edward I., between Stephen of Penchester and Osbert de Longchamp, about one messuage and one carucate of land in Boxley and Aylesford with appurtenances, and about the manor of Allington with appurtenances and the advowsons of the Church of St. Peter and the Chapel of St. Laurence² of that manor. Namely that Osbert recognizes the aforesaid tenements to be the right of Stephen and that Stephen has them by the gift of Osbert, so that Stephen and Margaret his wife shall hold the messuage and land at Boxley and Aylesford of the King and his heirs for ever by the services which pertain to that messuage and land. And besides, Stephen and Margaret and the heirs of Stephen shall hold the aforesaid manor (Allington) with the advowsons of the Church and Chapel, of Osbert, and his heirs for ever; at a yearly rent of a chaplet of roses on the Nativity of St. John the Baptist, for every service, custom and exaction due to Osbert and his heirs; and by doing to the overlords of the fee, through Osbert and his heirs, all the other services which pertain to that manor. And Osbert and his heirs warrant to Stephen and Margaret and the heirs of Stephen, the Church and Chapel with appurtenances by the aforesaid services, against all other men for ever. And for this recognition, warrant, fine and concord, Stephen and Margaret gave 300 marks of silver [£200] to Osbert. And this concord was made by the assent and will of the King.”

Whenever this conveyance of Allington is mentioned, whether in Margaret of Penchester's inquisition post-mortem, or the record of a suit in the Assize Roll of 1293,

¹ Feet of Fines, 8-9 Edward I., Kent, No. 151. Abstracted in Lansdowne MS., vol. 268, p. 28.

² The Chapel of St. Laurence was suppressed in 1545, and Allington Parish Church is to-day called St. Laurence's, not St. Peter's. The Church must either have been rededicated to St. Lawrence after the suppression of the Chapel, which is almost impossible, or, what is much more likely, the old dedication to St. Peter was forgotten, and the memory of St. Lawrence surviving vaguely, his name became associated recently with the Church instead of the Chapel.

or elsewhere, the transaction is always referred to as a "gift."

Quoting from Pollock and Maitland again (vol. ii., p. 12) :—

"Every sort and kind of alienation in the 13th century is a 'gift.' In our eyes, it may be really a gift, or it may in substance be a sale or an exchange, since the so-called donee has given money or land in return for the so-called gift, or it may be what we should call an onerous lease for life; but in all these cases it will be described as a 'gift.'"

In this instance Osbert's transference of Allington to Stephen of Penchester was not a gift, but a sale; Stephen paid £200 and got the sergeanty of Ovenhill, which it is not difficult to recognize in the messuage and carucate at Boxley and Aylesford held of the King. For this of course he had to continue the sergeant service of providing a horse with a sack and a buckle for the King in the event of any Welsh war. This service is continually mentioned as due from the descendants of Stephen. But the £200 bought the manor of Allington and the advowsons outright, subject to the service due to the "overlords of the fee," namely the holders of the barony of Ros. The gift of a chaplet of roses to Osbert on Midsummer day is only a beautiful mediæval way of expressing a nominal rent :—

"The service which the tenant owes to his lord may be merely nominal: he has no rent to pay or has to give but a rose every year by way of shewing that the tenure exists . . . There may well have been what in truth was a sale of the land; in return for a gross sum paid down a landowner has created a nominal tenure. To have put the purchaser in the vendor's place might have been difficult, perhaps impossible, so the purchaser is made tenant to the vendor at an insignificant rent."¹

These charming nominal rents of "a rose in the month of roses," or a "chaplet of roses," a grain of pepper, a gilt spur, a clove, etc., are not uncommon, but one wonders whether Stephen of Penchester really rendered it.

¹ Pollock and Maitland, *History of English Law*, vol. i., p. 271, 1st edition.

Not because of lacking heirs did Osbert de Longchamp part with Allington.¹ Stisted still remained in his hands, as is proved by the Parliamentary Writ of 1296 already mentioned (p. 34), and it descended in his family till 1394.

Avice, the widow of Osbert de Longchamp, is referred to in Essex in 1327.² Unless she outlived her husband a very great many years, I should imagine this Osbert to be a son of "Osbert impotens," especially as the heirs of an Osbert Longchamp are mentioned as late as 1347.³

These heirs of Osbert, the younger, one of whom was probably Sir Henry de Longchamp, mentioned in the Close Rolls of 1338 at Wenham in Suffolk, must have bridged the gap at Stisted between their father and Sir Henry de Longchamp, who was granted the manor for his life in 1341 by the Prior of Christchurch. By this time the rent has risen to £20,⁴ double the earlier sum.

The companion half of the indenture is preserved in the Canterbury Library, and the seal of Henry Longchamp exists in perfect preservation.⁵ Henry died in 1352, and Stisted is next found in the possession of Thomas de Longchamp. He seems to have been the last descendant of the Longchamps of Allington, for after his death Stisted was let to a different family, and all records of the Essex Longchamps cease.

The fading fortunes of the early owners of Allington have now been lightly traced. This Paper must not shine with reflected light from the new Castle and its builder, Stephen of Penchester. With Allington manor and the Longchamps it may fitly close.

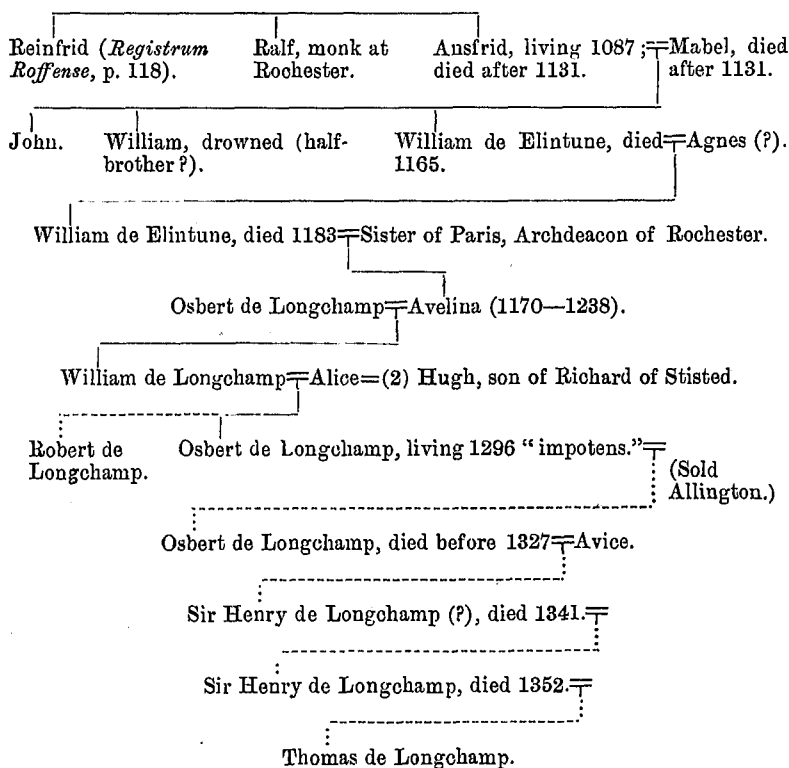
¹ In the Assize Roll of 21 Edward I. (Berewyok, No. 376) Stephen de Longchamp is said to have held Ovenhill before Stephen of Penchester. Unless this is a scribe's mistake for Osbert de Longchamp, Osbert must have handed it to Stephen after 1277 (see p. 34) and before 1279, when it was sold to Stephen of Penchester. Stephen de Longchamp does not appear again.

² Placita de Banco, 1 Edward III., Easter Term.

³ *Archæologia Cantiana*, Vol. X., p. 158.

⁴ British Museum, Add. Charters, 15,456.

⁵ British Museum, No. 11, 370.



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