

1174 King Henry II Confirms Tracy's Gift

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Language: Latin

Date: 1173/4

TEXT TRANSCRIBED & TRANSLATED

'Henry by the Grace of God, King of the English and Duke of the Normans and Aquitanians and Count of the Angevins to Archbishops Bishops Abbots Counts and Barons Justices Vicecounts & all his ministers and faithful of England Greetings Know [that] I have granted and by this present charter have confirmed to God and the blessed Thomas and the Church of the Holy Trinity of Canterbury the gift that William de Tracy made to them of a Hundred shillings rent which the charter of the same William bears witness that they have.

Wherefore, I will and firmly command that the aforesaid Church of Canterbury and the monks there shall have and hold to serve God and the blessed Thomas those Hundred shillings rent that the aforesaid William gave them as perpetual alms well and peacefully and freely and wholly and honourably as the same William gave them to them and his charter confirmed.

Witnesses G bishop Wigorn[iensis], R. elected {i.e appointed bishop} of Winchester, R. elected of Hereford, John Dean of Salisbury, Walter of the Island, Count William de Mand, William Fitz-Audel, Hugh of Cressi at Westminster.'

COMMENTARY

- Witnesses: suggestions for their identity;
- 1. G = Gilbert Foliot was Bishop of London 1163-1187. Had supported the king against Becket who excommunicated him and often acted as a royal judge.
- 2. Wigorn = Roger of Worcester {aka of Gloucester} was Bishop of Worcester 1163-1179 and cousin of Henry II

3. *R Winchester = Richard Toclive (aka of Ilchester) was elected Bishop of Winchester in May, 1173 ; confirmed and consecrated in October, 1174.*
 4. *R Hereford = Robert Foliot was elected Bishop of Hereford in 1173, and consecrated in October, 1174. Relative of Gilbert Foliot.*
 5. *John of Salisbury = John de Oxeneford (aka of Oxford) was Dean of Salisbury from 1165 until he was raised to the See of Norwich in 1175.*
 6. *Walter of the Island = Master Walter de Insula was a Royal official e.g. he carried out the Inquest of Sheriffs in 1170. His family originated probably on the Isle of Wight.*
 7. *William de Mand = William de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, 1126-1189. A loyal member of Henry II's court.*
 8. *William Fitz-Audel = 'son of Audelinus' in CCA catalogue. St. Thomas the Martyr, in Dublin 'Founded & endowed by William Son of Audelinus, Sewer to King Henry the II. by Authority of that King, and for him.' (Monasticon anglicanum, or, The history of the ancient abbies, and other monasteries, hospitals, cathedral and collegiate churches, in England and Wales with divers French, Irish, and Scotch monasteries formerly relating to England.). A Sewer was a member of the King's Household who served him with his food.*
 9. *Hugh de Creissi{or y} (aka Creissi) = Royal administrator who witnessed many documents.*
- Date: After the election in April 1173 but not before the consecration on 6 October 1174 of of Richard of Ilchester and Robert Foliot as bishops of Winchester & Hereford. In that period Henry II was briefly in England in July 1173 and for longer July (8th) & August 1174 when he made a pilgrimage to Canterbury (where the monks gave him 300 lashings on the Pope's order in front of Becket's tomb as part of his penance) before visiting London.
 - A nationally significant document: It was part of the actions of atonement carefully staged managed as referred to above. Also after 1174 Henry II issued numerous such charters confirming and warranting awards made by the 4 murderers. This was to emphasise that the murderers' lands, and whatever disposition they cared to make of the, were regarded as subject to royal control. Henry II was once thought to have taken no real action against the murderers, but this is an example of how he stepped into claim the lordship of all four estates, and only daughters, sisters and cousins were allowed to succeed to a limited share of the murderers' former lands.