

# The Devolution of the Honour of Wallingford, 1066–1148\*

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## SUMMARY

*This paper, based on a critical examination of the Inquest of 1212 that claimed that the honour of Wallingford devolved to the two husbands of Robert I d'Oilly's daughter, shows that in fact the lands of the pre-Conquest holder Wigod were reconstituted by, and devolved through, the marriages of his daughter, granddaughter and great-granddaughter.*

Nothing is known for certain of Miles Crispin's origins, but he is supposed to have been a relative of Gilbert Crispin, abbot of Westminster (1085–1114), something of whose family is known. Gilbert Crispin came of a Norman family which held land from Gilbert de Brionne, as well as land in Anjou. Our knowledge of this family in the late 11th century in large part derives from the fact that they were assiduous patrons of the abbey of Bec. Gilbert, previously a monk of Bec and friend of Anselm, wrote a life of Abbot Herluin,<sup>1</sup> and one Miles Crispin, precentor of Bec in the first decades of the 12th century, wrote a life of Lanfranc,<sup>2</sup> another of Bec's famous sons. Attached to a Bec chronicle are the *Miracula de nobili genere Crispinorum* which give a certain amount of genealogical information, from which it soon emerges that Gilbert and William were the commonest font-names of this family.<sup>3</sup> Miles of Wallingford, as the Abingdon Chronicle calls him, certainly shared the family's love of Bec, to which he gave the manor of Swyncombe (Oxon.) before 1086,<sup>4</sup> in the building of which it is believed that monks of Bec were actually involved.

Further confirmation that Miles Crispin did in fact belong to this family may well come from an entry in Domesday Book which refers to land in the borough of Wallingford held by Miles *Moli*, *Moli* being written suprascript.<sup>5</sup> This is probably to be explained, there being no other known Miles to whom it might refer, as a scribal attempt

\* It is with pleasure that I record here my debt to the Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society for inviting me to read an earlier version of this paper to one of their meetings, an occasion from which the version printed here benefited greatly. References to Domesday Book (DB) throughout are taken from the Phillimore Series (1976–86), with cross-references to A. Farley's 1783 folio edition.

<sup>1</sup> *Vita Herluini*, in *The Works of Gilbert Crispin*, eds. A.S. Abulafia and G.R. Evans (1986).

<sup>2</sup> *Vita Lanfranci*, ed. Migne, *Patrologia Latina*, cl (1854), cols. 29–58.

<sup>3</sup> *Miracula* etc., *Ibid.* cols. 736–44.

<sup>4</sup> *DB Oxfordshire*, 35.33 (159d).

<sup>5</sup> *DB Berkshire*, B 6 (56c).

to write *Milo de Molis*, or 'of Meules', referring to his family's holdings from the de Brionne family.<sup>6</sup> But if Miles's appearance in Domesday Book does little to clarify his family origins, it does make clear that Miles Crispin was the first castellan of Wallingford, and very likely the man who built the castle on William's orders after the Conquest.

It was accepted as fact by Hedges that Robert d'Oilly was the first post-Conquest lord of Wallingford, and the builder and castellan of Wallingford Castle.<sup>7</sup> In the light of this, he preferred to believe that d'Oilly also founded Wallingford's Holy Trinity Priory, a cell of St Albans, despite evidence to the contrary. In fact the evidence for the founding and endowing of the parish church of Holy Trinity (as the Priory originally was) by one Geoffrey the Chamberlain, who appears on f.49 of Domesday Book as the holder of a manor in Hampshire and is there described as chamberlain to the king's daughter Matilda, is incontrovertible. A charter of Henry I (Bodl. Berks. ch.1) directs Hugh de Buckland to see that the Priory has its tithes of Moulsoford as on the day that Geoffrey the Chamberlain was disseized of that land; Geoffrey's involvement with the Priory, for which he first bought and then gave land, is abundantly documented in the *Testa de Neville* return of 1212 (some of which incorporates an earlier Inquest of c. 1180) which twice states that he founded the church and lists many (or perhaps all) of his donations.<sup>8</sup> It is Matthew Paris who tells us that Geoffrey gave the church of Holy Trinity to St Albans in the time of Abbot Paul (d. 1094) who, in his turn, sent monks to make a priory of it,<sup>9</sup> and in view of the *Testa* there can be no dispute with his testimony.

The shade of Robert d'Oilly is thus ejected from the Priory, just as it is less rudely cast out from the castle by various remarks in Domesday Book. At the time this was compiled, in 1086, d'Oilly was one of a number of Oxfordshire thegns who had held land in Wallingford but no longer did, his holdings there being in fact nothing more than a few dwellings valued at a few pence.<sup>10</sup> Significantly, it is Miles Crispin who is found with the lion's share of property in and around Wallingford, enough in itself to constitute a 'Crispin honour of Wallingford', and indeed in the Abingdon Chronicle for 1084 he is called *Milo de Wallingforda, cognomento Crispinus*.<sup>11</sup> Miles holds 'the lands where the housecarls lived',<sup>12</sup> presumably the defensible part of the town where the castle then stood, and, most significantly of all, he is found holding the two manors of Clapcote as one.<sup>13</sup> The hamlet (later the Liberty) of Clapcote surrounded the castle on the N. and E. sides, and its meadows were used to reward the castle servants, as the *Testa* and later charters demonstrate.<sup>14</sup> The situation is reversed in Oxford, where d'Oilly is the major landholder and Crispin has only a few dwellings paying a few pence,<sup>15</sup> but even in Oxfordshire Crispin's holdings have a numerical edge over those of d'Oilly.<sup>16</sup> All this seems to indicate that Miles was Wallingford's castellan, *de facto* lord, and most likely the castle's founder. That the castle was built by 1071 is shown by the Abingdon

<sup>6</sup> Baldwin de Meulles, sheriff of Devon in 1086, was a son of Count Gilbert of Brionne.

<sup>7</sup> J.K. Hedges, *History of Wallingford* (1881).

<sup>8</sup> *The Book of Fees, commonly called Testa de Neville*, ed. H.C. Maxwell Lyte (1920), 111, 113.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew Paris, *Gesta Abbatum Sancti Albani*, ed. H.T. Riley (Rolls Ser. 1867), 56.

<sup>10</sup> *DB Berkshire*, B9 (56c), B3 (56b), B6 (56c).

<sup>11</sup> *Chronicon Monaasterii de Abingdon*, ed. J. Stevenson, ii, (Rolls Ser. 1886), 12.

<sup>12</sup> *DB Berkshire*, B1 (56b).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 33.3-4 (61c).

<sup>14</sup> *Book of Fees*, op. cit. note 8, 118, and e.g. Bodl. Berks. charter 1.

<sup>15</sup> *DB Oxfordshire*, B9 (54a).

<sup>16</sup> cf. *Ibid.* sections 28 and 35 (158a-c; 159b-d).

Chronicle, which states that the abbot was imprisoned there in that year.<sup>17</sup> About this time Robert d'Oilly is found building Oxford Castle on the Conqueror's orders, and he founded the castle chapel canonry of St. George in 1074, according to the Oseney Register.<sup>18</sup> Wallingford Castle too had a chapel, of St. Nicholas, served by canons, which seem to be first directly referred to in a charter of Matilda and Henry in 1150.<sup>19</sup> Another castle chapel, of Holy Trinity the Less (unknown to Hedges) was confirmed to St. Frideswide's by Popes Honorius II (1124-30) and Adrian IV (1152-59).<sup>20</sup> St. Nicholas, if not Holy Trinity the Less, will have been provided for the castle by Miles Crispin, whose chaplain Warin and steward Gilbert Pipard are named in the Abingdon Chronicle entry for 7 Henry I which apparently refers to Miles's last illness before his death in 1107.<sup>21</sup>

Robert d'Oilly had died about fifteen years before, having acquired many lands in Oxfordshire and elsewhere, and having served as castellan of Oxford and sheriff of Oxfordshire and Warwickshire. The link between Robert - of Oxford - and Miles - of Wallingford - does not seem to have been Wallingford direct but through the person of Wigod, its one-time English lord. Wigod presided over the borough at least until the time William's army encamped at Wallingford, and received there the submission of Stigand, during his march to London following the Battle of Hastings. Apparently Wigod did not unduly suffer the effects of the Conquest, and may even have been allowed to remain *de iure* lord of Wallingford until his death. His nephews Alfred and Torold are found as minor landholders in Domesday Book,<sup>22</sup> his son Toki having died in 1077, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, valorously endeavouring to save the life of the Conqueror against the armies of his son Robert Curthose outside the walls of Gerberoi.<sup>23</sup> Perhaps he was trying to mend his fortunes: at any rate nine years later Domesday Book records the division of the bulk of Wigod's lands between Robert d'Oilly and Miles Crispin, with a balance in favour of Miles, the explanation of this being far from clear.

To look for elucidation we must return to the Inquest recorded in the *Testa de Neville*, which has been the subject of some controversy. In describing their history the burgesses swore that: 'Wigod of Wallingford held the honor of Wallingford in the time of King Harold, and afterwards in the time of King William the First, and he had by his wife a certain daughter whom he gave to Robert d'Oilly. This Robert had by her a certain daughter, by name Matilda, who was his heir. Miles Crispin married her and had with her the aforesaid honor of Wallingford. After the death of Miles, King Henry the First gave the aforesaid Matilda to Brien fitzCount together with her inheritance. He had no heir by her. The same Brien and the aforesaid Matilda his wife gave themselves to religion in the time of King Stephen, and the Lord Henry, son of the Empress Matilda, who was at that time duke of Normandy, seized the aforesaid honor'.<sup>24</sup> Note

<sup>17</sup> *Chron. Abingdon*, op. cit. n. 11, i, 486.

<sup>18</sup> *The English Register of Oseney Abbey*, ed. A. Clark (Early English Text Soc. 1907), 1; the charter is a forgery. Robert died soon after his last appearance as a witness to a document dated May 1092.

<sup>19</sup> *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, ed. H.A. Cronne and R.H.C. Davis, iii (1961), No. 88.

<sup>20</sup> *Cartulary of St. Frideswide*, ed. S.R. Wigram, i (Oxford Hist. Soc. xxviii, 1894), 13-29.

<sup>21</sup> *Chron. Abing.* op. cit. note 11, ii, 87; Miles's steward himself furnishes further corroboration of the view that Miles belonged to the family of le Bec-Crispin, for the Pipards took their name from (or gave it to) Manneville-la-Pipard, situated between Pont-l'Évêque and Blangy-le-Château; the Crispins were seigneurs of Blangy in the 12th century, as well as of Le Bec, and they held land in the vicinity of Pont-l'Évêque.

<sup>22</sup> cf. *DB Oxfordshire*, 43 (160a) (Alfred) and *DB Gloucestershire*, 27.1 (166c) (Thorold).

<sup>23</sup> *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, trs. G.N. Garmonsway (1972), 214.

<sup>24</sup> *Book of Fees* op. cit. note 8, 116.

that this Inquest does not call Robert d'Oilly lord of Wallingford, but implies that Miles Crispin was the immediate successor of Wigod, the date of whose death is unknown. Note also that the wife of Brien fitzCount was given to him 'together with her inheritance'.

This account of the early history of the honor of Wallingford is usually accepted, if with some misgivings, since it is difficult to challenge on the available evidence. A certain amount of confusion can be forgiven the jurors who were recalling from memory events that had taken place a hundred or more years before, in the period 1066–1150, yet, paradoxically, the jurors' account is the more satisfactory the more ancient the facts it recalls. Despite the difficulty of limited supporting evidence, I believe that objections can be successfully raised against it.

As we have seen, the Inquest's implication that the immediate successor of Wigod was Miles Crispin and not Robert d'Oilly may be accepted. It is not true, however, that Matilda d'Oilly was her father's heir. The bulk of his lands eventually passed, after his death in c. 1093, to his brother Nigel, who succeeded also to his brother's castellany of Oxford by permission of Henry I, many of whose charters both brothers witnessed. That Robert married Wigod's daughter, presumably in 1066 or 1067, is implied by his wife's English name Aldgitha, which is attested in the Register of Oseney Abbey, founded by Nigel's son Robert d'Oilly II in 1129.<sup>25</sup> Since Wigod's son Toki died heroically in 1077, and Wigod himself had died by the time Domesday Book came to refer to him in the past tense, it is unsurprising that Robert should be found holding some of his father-in-law's lands in 1086. That Miles Crispin and not Robert d'Oilly was castellan of Wallingford is probably most of the explanation for the fact that only part of Wigod's lands went to Robert, the bulk of them going to Miles, who was probably given these lands on Wigod's death as belonging to the 'honor' of Wallingford, of which he was already *de facto* lord by virtue of his castellany.

The entirely suitable marriage between the families of the castellans of Oxford and of Wallingford, which will have enhanced Miles Crispin's title to Wigod's honor, probably took place after Easter 1084, when an entry in the Abingdon Chronicle refers to a gathering organised by Robert d'Oilly, at which he lavishly entertained the future Henry I and Miles of Wallingford.<sup>26</sup> In view of the fact that many fees of the honor of Wallingford in 1166 had appeared as part of the d'Oilly and not the Crispin fief in Domesday Book, the statement in Bracton's Notebook (iii, 536) that Matilda d'Oilly was given the fees held by Ralph and Gilbert Basset under Robert d'Oilly as a marriage-portion is illuminating. The marriage had taken place by the time Great Domesday Book was actually written; but at the slightly earlier time to which it refers the Basset manors that formed Matilda's marriage-portion were still in d'Oilly's hands – and many of them can be shown to have been held earlier by Wigod. One of them, the Buckinghamshire manor of Iver, is explicitly stated to be of Robert d'Oilly's wife's holding; it had earlier been held by Wigod's son Toki, described as a thegn of King Edward. Furthermore, eight manors in Middlesex, seven of them associated either with Wigod or with Toki, were without an owner in 1086. By the early 1140s they were all in the hands of Brien fitzCount.<sup>27</sup> The implication of all this is clear: Aldgitha was the heiress to those lands of her father Wigod and of her brother Toki which had not already been given to Miles Crispin by the king. When Miles married Aldgitha's daughter and heiress, Matilda

<sup>25</sup> *Oseney Register* op. cit. note 18, 6.

<sup>26</sup> see note 11 above.

<sup>27</sup> *DB Buckinghamshire*, 19.1 (149b); *DB Middlesex*, 7 (129a–b).

d'Oilly, the two halves of Wigod's original fief were reunited. Matilda d'Oilly's marriage-portion, therefore, was in fact her mother's inheritance.

Miles Crispin died in 1107 leaving, it was claimed, a widow who bore the extremely common name of Matilda. This Matilda was given in marriage to a young protégé of Henry I, Brien fitzCount, who first appears as a witness to Henry's charters in 1114<sup>28</sup> (the probable date of this marriage) and with increasing frequency thereafter. Brien received other marks of Henry's favour, including the honor of Abergavenny and part of the office and lands of Nigel d'Oilly for which he paid a fine in 1130;<sup>29</sup> the former at least was not retained by the honor of Wallingford. The Inquest states that Matilda was given 'with her inheritance' to Brien, and if she was in fact Matilda d'Oilly, the widow of Miles Crispin, this inheritance can only refer to her *maritagium* from the d'Oilly fief, since the honor of Wallingford itself would have constituted only 'the lands which had been held by her one-time husband' — *terrae quas Milo quondam uir suus tenuit*; the records of the time are very insistent on these distinctions.

In Brien's lifetime Matilda gave the manor of Little Ogbourne (Wilts.) for the clothing of the monks of Bec, with Brien's consent,<sup>30</sup> and after his death she also gave to Bec the manors of Little and Great Ogbourne in about 1150/1, with the consent of the Empress and Henry of Normandy; she made both these gifts *de hereditate mea*.<sup>31</sup> In Domesday Book the manor of Great Ogbourne was held in demesne by Miles Crispin, his predecessor being Earl Harold.<sup>32</sup> Little Ogbourne was probably the small manor held by Harding, an Englishman, from the king, with a further hide being held by Thorkil from the king *in capite*.<sup>33</sup> Since Matilda could not have inherited this land either from Aldgitha or from Robert d'Oilly, who nowhere appears in the Wiltshire survey and certainly not as tenant-in-chief, she must have inherited the land from Miles Crispin. Her choice of the word 'inheritance' excludes the notion that these manors were originally a dowry settled on her by Miles, and she also allegedly inherited his honor of Wallingford. For this reason, an inheritance *per se*, one must assume that the burgesses erred in making two women of the same name into one, and that in fact the woman whom Brien fitzCount married was Matilda Crispin, daughter and heiress both of her father Miles Crispin and of her mother Matilda d'Oilly, and ultimate heiress of her great-grandfather Wigod. In the Hundred Rolls there is an apparent confusion between the Empress Matilda and Matilda the wife of Brien fitzCount, the remorseless regularity of this name's occurrence being sufficient excuse for both errors.<sup>34</sup>

Brien, then, married Matilda Crispin, Lady of Wallingford. If we accept the burgesses's account some amusing consequences follow. The 'Matilda' of the Inquest was married first to a man probably old enough to be her father and secondly to a man probably young enough to be her son, something that is not in itself impossible. But, if we then consider the number of gifts she made to Bec, we might suppose that Miles's 'widow' never quite got over him. Her last charter for Bec, confirming her earlier gifts, was given at Bec not long after the death of Brien fitzCount. She probably died soon afterwards, in the vicinity of Bec, and thus her end comported perfectly with what a Crispin might have expected of her. In itself, such behaviour might well have goaded

<sup>28</sup> W. Farrer, 'The Itinerary of Henry I', *English Historical Review*, xxxiv (1919), 373-4, No. 335.

<sup>29</sup> *Pipe Roll 31 Henry I*, 6.

<sup>30</sup> See Henry's confirmation in *Regesta* op. cit. note 19, ii, No. 1892.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.* iii, No. 80.

<sup>32</sup> *DB Wiltshire*, 28.11 (71b).

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.* 67.62 and 67.68 (74a).

<sup>34</sup> *Rotuli Hundredorum* (Record Comm. 1818), ii, 786.

Brien fitzCount into his courtly passion for the Empress. But such flights of fancy are unnecessary. Matilda was clearly a Crispin by birth and the evidence suggests that her husband Brien came to share her family's love for the abbey of Bec. It is likely that Brien entered religion at Bec and that he died there not long afterwards.

Of Brien fitzCount, natural son of Alan IV Fergant, duke of Brittany 1084–1112, A.L. Poole once wrote: 'Brien, a man of intelligence and education, was one of the better types of baron of the anarchy, a type more numerous perhaps than is usually supposed, whose honest purpose is lost sight of at a time when the majority of the class was making the very name of baron a byword for faithlessness, cruelty and lawlessness'.<sup>35</sup> These remarks deserve some consideration.

When, some time between September 1142 and January 1144, Brien received a letter of reproach from the perfidious (as he saw it) Henry of Blois, bishop of Winchester and brother of King Stephen, for his persistent resistance to the king, the exasperated Breton was provoked to a peppery reply, culminating in a formal challenge, of which the following is an extract: 'For even you yourself, who are a prelate of the Holy Church, have ordered me to adhere to the daughter of King Henry your uncle, and to help her to acquire that which is hers by right but which has been taken from her by force, and to retain what she already has . . . King Henry gave me land, but it has been taken away from me and my men because I am doing what you ordered me to do, and as a result I am in extreme straits and am not harvesting one acre of corn from the land which he gave me. It is not surprising that I take things from other people in order to sustain my life and the lives of my men, and in order to do what you commanded of me. Nor have I taken anything from anyone who has left my own possessions alone. You should know that neither I nor my men are doing this for money or fief or land, either promised or given, but only because of your command and the lawfulness of myself and my men. . . Know that I do not now deserve, on account of my ability and my intelligence, that I should be counted among the faithless. I pity the poor and their afflictions; for them the Church is now scarcely a refuge – and it too will quickly die in like case if peace is delayed. Let the faithful of the Church know therefore, that I, Brien fitzCount, whom the good King Henry nourished and to whom he gave arms and an honor, am ready to prove those things I have asserted in this letter against Henry, nephew of King Henry, Bishop of Winchester and Legate of the Apostolic See, either by armed combat or by judicial ordeal.' Brien thus did not trouble to hide his contempt for the temporizing bishop; he has suffered great loss and asked for no reward, and he will be hanged if he will now be criticized by a hypocrite!<sup>36</sup>

Now the most interesting thing about Brien's reply is not just its obvious sincerity, but the fact that his claims to have ruined himself in selfless devotion to the Empress's cause without seeking any reward can be shown to be more than simple self-defence, but actually the truth of the matter. That Brien had his back to the wall in the 1140s when Wallingford was twice besieged by Stephen, and that as a result, according to his account, he and his men went on raiding parties in order to provision themselves and the castle, can be read between the lines of the various chronicle reports that his bandits terrorized the countryside. They no doubt did terrorize the countryside belonging to those who supported Stephen. These included the lands of their twelve-mile distant neighbour Robert d'Oilly II of Oxford, who joined Matilda in 1141, one year before his death in 1142 when Oxford Castle was captured by Stephen, occasioning Matilda's

<sup>35</sup> A.L. Poole, *From Domesday Book to Magna Carta* (1951), 139.

<sup>36</sup> H.W.C. Davis, 'Brien fitzCount and Henry of Blois', *English Historical Review*, xxv (1910), 297 ff.



famous escape over the snow to Wallingford; and the lands of the Giffards and Bolbecs of Crowmarsh, at the foot of Wallingford Bridge. But Brien did not need actually to terrorize the countryside of his own honor, except insofar as it was controlled by Stephen's men. The dungeons where Brien fitzCount tortured his prisoners are also mentioned in these accounts, and there is no reason to dismiss these reports as false. Even for his age Brien was an enigmatic figure, with an apparently contradictory nature reflecting the virtues of loyalty and integrity while remaining capable of cruelty to his enemies.

From the moment the Empress landed in England in 1139 Brien, who was distantly related to her, was her staunch supporter. He had known her for some time; he was at one time one of only two men who were aware of Henry I's intention to marry Matilda to Geoffrey le Bel of Anjou, and had been one of the knights who accompanied her to the celebration of the marriage. The fact that Brien made the impregnability of his castle a byword of the chroniclers (often pro-Stephen, but they all, however begrudgingly, admired him), and yet allowed his honor to be eroded by the war, indicates the level of his personal commitment to the Empress. It was probably easier for Brien to court ruin with equanimity than most, since his great possessions were not his by hereditary right, but a gift of Matilda's father Henry I, and he and his wife were both without heirs, his honors thus being expendable in the cause to which he was wholeheartedly committed.

Brien himself knew how to show gratitude. When late in 1139 his castle was besieged by Stephen and saved by the astute generalship of Miles of Gloucester, whose diversionary tactics secured the Empress's whole northern position, Brien recognized the service by granting, with his wife's consent, the castle and honor of Abergavenny (itself given to him by Henry I, out of the forfeited lands of the previous holder Hamelin de Ballon) to Miles, a grant duly confirmed by the Empress herself.<sup>37</sup> Miles, who died on 24 December 1143, was further rewarded when in 1141 Matilda created him earl of Hereford, in recognition of his strength in the West, which Brien's gift enhanced; yet Brien received no rewards for his unswerving loyalty, and he says he asked for none, a remarkable state of affairs given that a mark of gratitude bestowed and received is one of the pleasantest forms of social intercourse. Yet such seems to be the case, and a couple of the Empress's charters for Reading Abbey, founded by her father, apparently provide the explanation. Matilda gave the manor of Blewbury to Reading Abbey, c. 1144-49, 'for the love and the lawful service of Brien fitzCount', confirmed by Henry of Normandy in the same terms.<sup>38</sup> It seems that when the Empress suggested a token of her esteem to Brien fitzCount, her courtly lover bade her make a grant to a religious foundation instead. I know of no other baron of this time who displayed selflessness to such a rare degree as did Brien fitzCount. Certainly one cannot avoid the conclusion that Brien, his torture-chambers and raiding-parties aside, was an arch-romantic of the kind more often associated with *chansons de gestes* than with the feudal baronage, even where we know enough about barons individually to judge. The phrase 'love is blind' springs to mind, however, in considering Brien's devotion to one whom all the sources suggest was one of the most difficult – and least loveable – women ever created!

In the light of Brien's unswerving devotion to the Empress, we can make sense of the Wallingford burghers' testimony that he and his wife gave themselves to religion in the time of Henry duke of Normandy. The charter of Matilda and Henry mentioned above implies that both Brien and his wife Matilda Crispin had died before Henry

<sup>37</sup> *Regesta*, op. cit. note 19, iii, 394.

<sup>38</sup> *Reading Abbey Cartulary*, ed. B.R. Kemp, ii (Camden 4th Ser. xxxiii, 1987), Nos. 667 and 668.

became count of Anjou on 7 September 1151; we have seen that Matilda of Wallingford issued two charters after her husband's death and after Henry had become duke of Normandy sometime between January and March 1150.<sup>39</sup> Brien must therefore have died by 1150. There is ample ground for believing that Brien's celebrated devotion to the Empress was personal, as much as it derived from a belief in her cause, and therefore that she personally was the inspiration and motivation of his actions. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that Brien's withdrawal into religion, together with the wife to whom he was no doubt also devoted, closely followed the departure of the Empress early in 1148, when she found she could no longer support herself or her party in England. He will have surrendered his castle to Henry fitz Empress of Anjou, rather than Henry duke of Normandy, at that time, having made caretaker appointments from his own officers until such time as the Angevin leader either made his own arrangements or arrived in England to conclude the struggle with Stephen. Although he did not live to learn of it, he had in fact given his honor into the hands of kings and princes, descendants of his beloved Empress.

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<sup>39</sup> The second was a grant of land to her relative Richard of Ogbourne; see W. Dugdale, *Monasticon Anglicanum* (ed. Caley, 1817-30), vi, 1016.