

**Feeding the Poor to
Commemorate the Dead:
The *Pro Anima* Almsgiving
of Henry III of England,
1227-72**

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Ph.D Thesis

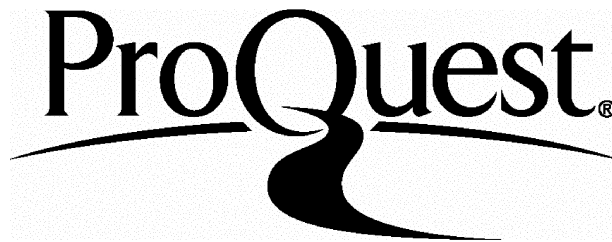
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THESIS ABSTRACT

Henry III regularly fed thousands of poor for the souls of the dead to commemorate a whole range of individuals: holy ancestors, immediate family, Savoyard and Lusignan in-laws and fallen yeoman soldiers. My research investigates the vast wealth of English chancery records, and the details it gives of *pro anima* practices, in the light of German writing on the phenomenon of *memoria*. (liturgical commemoration of the dead).

Caring for and honouring the dead was a continuation of the bonds of loyalty, reward and gift-exchange which bound individuals in life. Good kingship was epitomised by the virtue of *largesse*, and almsgiving was an extension of this culture of generosity and reciprocity.

The primary aim of *pro anima* acts was to reunite the living and the dead, making them once again present to each other as members of one spiritual community in Christ. Henry III used both masses and the feeding of the poor to achieve this mystical link across the grave. Christ was believed to be present in the poor, just as in the hagiography of the saint-king Edward the Confessor, St John appeared to him as a poor pilgrim seeking alms. In feeding the poor, the rich nourished the body of Christ: hence almsgiving can be seen as an extension of Henry's eucharistic devotion. Almsgiving also 'harvested' prayers for the dead individual, as the poor were expected to pray in exchange for their meal.

This thesis discusses the theology behind *pro anima* feeding, how it was organised (for instance when Henry III fed 102,000 poor for the soul of his sister), and an analysis of who was remembered in this way. Henry III used a combination of liturgical rite and extended domestic hospitality to strengthen and re-affirm kinship ties and social bonds with the dead who were important to him.

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Examiners: Professor David Carpenter (KCL) and Dr. Eamon Duffy (Cambridge)

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I first came across writs for feeding the poor to commemorate the dead when I was looking for documentary evidence for the lay-out and decoration of Henry III's great halls

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>CLR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Liberate Rolls</i>
<i>Close Rolls</i>	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls</i>
<i>CM</i>	<i>Chronica Majora</i>
<i>CPR</i>	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls</i>
<i>Charter Rolls</i>	<i>Calendar of the Charter Rolls</i>
<i>DNB</i>	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
<i>HBC</i>	<i>Handbook of British Chronology</i>

INTRODUCTION

The theme of *memoria*, the liturgical commemoration of the dead, has been brought to the attention of medievalists by the German historians of the Munster school.¹ Whilst studying the charters of foundation and endowments for religious houses they realised that there was a crucial link between the gifts of land given by laymen to religious houses and the commemoration of the dead. It was Otto Gerhard Oexle who made the imaginative leap, and applying anthropological theory, especially Mauss' model of gift-exchange, he presented prayers as a form of gift given in response to an endowment. Land was given in exchange for prayers offered by the community in perpetuity for the benefactor and anyone else the benefactor specified, usually family members. Although this process expressed a corporate identity between all Christians alive and dead, a great emphasis was laid on writing down, preserving and then reciting the names of dead individuals. Religious houses also exchanged lists of the dead so that they could pray for each other's dead, increasing the number of times an individual's name would be recited during commemorative ceremonies.² The second major insight of the Munster school

¹ David L d'Avray, *Death and the Prince: Memorial Preaching before 1350* (Oxford, 1994), 1-7, 177-184.

² O G Oexle, 'Memoria und Memorialüberlieferung im früheren Mittelalter,' *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 10 (1970), 70-95; K Schmid and O G Oexle, 'Voraussetzungen und Wirkung des Gebetsbundes von Attigny', *Francia: Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte*, ii. (1974), 71-122; Joachim Wollasch, 'Les moines et la mémoire des morts', *Religion et Culture autour de l'an mil: Royaume capétien et Lotharingie. Actes du colloque Hugues Capet 987-1987. La France de l'an mil. Auxerre, 26 et 27 juin 1987. Metz, 11 et 12 Septembre 1987*, eds. Dominique Iogna-Prat and Jean-Charles Picard, (Picard, 1990), 47-54; Patrick J Geary, 'Chapter 4: Exchange and Interaction between the living and the dead in early medieval society,' 77-92 in his *Living with the Dead in the Middle Ages* (Ithaca & London, 1994), draws on the writings of the

was that through the liturgical commemoration of the dead the living and the dead became present to each other. They realised that *memoria*, the performance of prayers and masses to re-unite the community of the living and the dead and acknowledge the link between them as members of the same spiritual community bound together by Christ, was one of the great phenomena of medieval society.³ The insights of Oexle and the Munster school in the study of *memoria* aroused a great deal of interest and burgeoned into a very fruitful collaborative study, although, despite the scale and originality of this endeavour, this school of work has been largely ignored by British historians.

The *pro anima* feeding of the poor is the central interest of this thesis. This theme was discussed in Schmid and Wollasch's large volume on *memoria* which appeared in 1984, as well as in the writings of Borgolte on the medieval church and Rexroth's study of the Savoy hospital under the early Tudors.⁴ The study of *memoria* has shown the great importance laid on gathering as many prayers as possible for a named individual, and,

Munster school, discussing how the dead can be viewed as an 'age group' in medieval society, and the way in which land was given to the church to provide prayers for those who had bequeathed the land to the current holder, a form of 'revenging the gift'. Marcel Mauss, *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies, with an introduction by Mary Douglas*, W D Halls trans. (London, 1990).

³ O G Oexle, 'Die Gegenwart der Toten' in *Death in the Middle Ages*, ed. Herman Braet and Werner Verbeke (1983), 19-77; O G Oexle, 'Die Gegenwart der Lebenden und der Toten. Gedanken über Memoria,' in *Gedächtnis, das Gemeinschaft stiftet*, ed. Karl Schmid (Freiburg, 1985); Michael Borgolte, 'Memoria: Zwischenbilanz eines Mittelalterprojekts,' *Zeitschrift für Geschichtswissenschaft*, 46/3 (1998), 197-210.

⁴ K Schmid and J Wollasch, eds., *Memoria: Der geschichtliche Zeugniswert des liturgischen Gedenkens im Mittelalter*, Münstersche Mittelalter-Schriften, 48 (Munich, 1984), 666-726. Michael Borgolte, *Die Mittelalterliche Kirche* (Munich, 1992), 119-222; O G Oexle, 'Mahl und Spende in mittelalterlichen Totenkult,' *Frühmittelalterliche Studien*, 18 (1984), 401-415; Frank Rexroth, 'Armut und Memoria im

since the poor were expected to pray in exchange for their meal, this was one method of 'harvesting' prayer. Although the involuntary, indigent poor, unlike the voluntary, religious poor, were not in any way prayer specialists, the prayers of the poor were viewed as especially efficacious because of the belief that Christ himself was present in the poor. In liturgical commemoration, the living and the dead were made present to each other not only through the prayers of the living but through the mass. Christ's body, in the form of the bread of the altar, was the means of uniting all the souls of those who believed in him whether they be on earth or in heaven. Likewise, since Christ was believed to be present in the poor, the poor were another physical manifestation of his body on earth. In this way, feeding the poor was not just a means of eliciting prayer, but also of nourishing the mystical body of Christ. By eating the body of Christ during the mass, and feeding the body of Christ in the form of paupers, the living could express their identity with the dead as members of the same spiritual community. One of the advantages of the *memoria* school's approach to the commemoration of the dead as a means of making the living and the dead present to each other through Christ is that it relativises the importance of Purgatory, which other studies have seen as the be all and end all, in the development of Christian death beliefs.⁵

spätmittelalterlichen London,' *Memoria in der Gesellschaft des Mittelalters.*, ed. Dieter and O.G. Oexle Geuenich (Göttingen, 1994), 401-415.

⁵ An exception to this is Eamon Duffy, who discusses both Purgatory and the concept of community as factors in the commemoration of the dead in England in the century before the Reformation. Like the Munster school, Duffy sees this idea of community between the living and the dead as a long-term and deep-seated medieval phenomenon. He writes: 'the cult of the dead...was also in an important and often overlooked sense a cult of the living, a way of articulating convictions about the extent and ordering of the human community, and hence of what is was to be human. In this perspective, the Reformation attack on the cult of the dead was more than a polemic against a 'false' metaphysical

This thesis examines the *pro anima* practices ordered by Henry III on behalf of others during the forty-five years of his personal rule, from 1227-1272. Henry III came to the throne in October 1216, weeks after his ninth birthday, and although the pope declared him of age in 1223, it was not until January 1227, at the age of nineteen, that the king truly began his personal rule.⁶ In 1236, through his marriage to Eleanor of Provence, he acquired Provençal, Savoyard and Flemish in-laws.⁷ The other group of foreign relatives, were the king's Poitevin half-siblings, the Lusignans, who were the children of Isabella of Angouleme by her second marriage. The English king was deeply involved in the politics Poitou and Gascony from the early 1240s, and in 1247 some of his half-siblings came to England. These foreign relatives and their servants, commonly referred to as 'the aliens', had a great impact on the politics on the reign,⁸ and the deaths of some key players were

belief: it was an attempt to redefine the boundaries of the human community, and, in an act of exorcism, to limit the claims of the past, and the people of the past, on the people of the present.' Eamon Duffy, *The Stripping of the Altars: Traditional Religion in England c.1400-c.1580* (New Haven and London, 1992), 8. For the role of the poor at funerals and the exchange of food for prayers for the dead see *ibid.* 221, 354-366.

⁶ Henry III was born 1 October 1207 and took the crown on 28 October 1216 following his father's death on 19 October. Sir Maurice Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century 1216-1307*, 2nd ed., Oxford History of England (Oxford, 1962), 1-5, 24-25, 38-40; M T Clanchy, *England and its rulers 1066-1272: foreign lordship and national identity*. Oxford: Blackwell in association with Fontana, 1983, 199-209. Dr. David Carpenter is the expert on the reign as a whole, and he has examined this period in great depth in *The Minority of Henry III* (London: Methuen, 1990).

⁷ For the choice of bride, marriage and immediate impact of Savoyard relatives at Henry's court see Margaret Howell, *Eleanor of Provence: Queenship in Thirteenth-Century England*, (Oxford, 1998), especially 1-21, 25, 30, 33, 37.

⁸ For the rivalries between the 'king's men' (Poitevins) and the 'queen's men' (Savoyards) see *ibid.*, 49-70. Huw Ridgeway has written a series of articles about the role of these foreign relatives and their retinues, including: Huw Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens', 1236-1272,' *Thirteenth Century England II: Proceedings of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Conference 1987*, ed. P R Coss and S D Lloyd (Bury St Edmunds, 1988), 81-92, and 'Foreign Favorites and Henry III's Problems of Patronage, 1247-1258,' *English Historical Research*, 104 (1989), 590-610.

commemorated by the king through the feeding of the poor. As with his other pious acts, the king himself seems to have been very involved in ordering these commemorative feedings which reflect his regard for certain individuals and his sense of loss.

The great wealth of chancery records left from the reign Henry III, which were produced by what was probably the most bureaucratic government in Europe, give an unparalleled source of information on how one thirteenth century king organised the feeding of the poor for the commemoration of the dead. Although the details of where, when, how and why the poor were fed can be found in the chancery records, this is to a certain extent incidental as the purpose of the records was to keep track of royal instructions and expenditure. The relationship between the Chancery, Exchequer and Treasury in the thirteenth century and the nature of the records they produced is complicated. Although the workings of the system will be familiar to a small number of specialists, the first section of this thesis will give a short guide to the various types of records used in this thesis and their production. The data gathered from these sources contributes information of a quite different character and order of magnitude to the framework provided by the German historians of *memoria*.

CHAPTER 1: THE CHANCERY SOURCES AND THE FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION OF ROYAL ALMSGIVING

I. THE ROYAL WRIT

The royal writ was a letter containing instructions in the king's name. The Chancery was the royal writing office which produced these letters. In the thirteenth century, the Chancery was not a physical place, but rather a team of clerks which moved around with the king, turning the king's will into writs. Carpenter states that, in the thirteenth century, the king and chancery were 'almost permanently together'.⁹ When the Chancery sent out certain types of writ, the clerks also made a copy on a roll which they kept for reference. The roll was constructed from sheets of parchment (membranes) sewn together to make it as long as was necessary to record the writs sent out in a regnal year. It is these Chancery rolls which have been published by HMSO and the Public Records Office. The most important thing to remember within the compass of this study is that the Exchequer, which controlled the purse-strings of the royal Treasury, could not spend money without the authorisation of a writ from the Chancery,¹⁰ so these chancery records are the key source for this thesis, and give a great deal of information about how, where and why the poor were fed as well as how it was financed.

⁹ David A Carpenter, 'The English Royal Chancery in the Thirteenth Century,' pp.25-53 in *Ecrit et pouvoir dans les chancelleries medievales: espace francais, espace anglais* (1997), 25.

II. THE LIBERATE ROLLS

II. a) Writs of *liberate*

The instructions in these writs start with the word *liberate* and order someone to release money to somebody else. Usually these writs are addressed to the Barons of the Exchequer and the king's treasurer (who from 1232 was head of the Exchequer)¹¹ and tell them to give money from the Treasury to named individuals, either to fund a certain job they have been given or to reimburse them for money they have already spent on the king's behalf.

In physical format, *liberate* writs were letters close - in other words the parchment of the writ that was sent out was folded up, so that the written instruction was on the inside, tied shut with a tongue of parchment cut from, and still attached to, the bottom of the sheet itself, and then sealed shut across the tying tongue with the great seal.¹² Hence, under King John, *liberate* writs, as letters close, were recorded on the Close Roll, which kept a copy of all writs sent out in this format. However, since more and more *liberate* writs were used, and because of the need to check the roll for amounts of money, from 1226 onwards the *liberate* writs were recorded on their own roll.

¹⁰ Ibid., 28.

¹¹ Pierre Chaplais, *English royal documents: King John to Henry VI, 1199-1461*, (Oxford, 1971), 47. The justiciar had been the head of the Exchequer but, following the fall of de Burgh in 1232, no new justiciar was appointed until 1258 when the reforming barons demanded the resumption of the post and Hugh Bigod was appointed. Michael Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century*, (1990), 24.

¹² Chaplais, *English royal documents: King John to Henry VI, 1199-1461*, 10; Carpenter, 'The English Royal Chancery in the Thirteenth Century,' 28.

As Westminster Palace was one of the main centres of royal commemorative feeding, many of the *liberate* writs regarding the feeding of the poor for the commemoration of the dead are letters of instruction ordering the Exchequer to release money to Edward of Westminster, also called Edward son of Odo the goldsmith or Edward the king's clerk. Since Edward was keeper of the king's works at Westminster, presumably, once the Exchequer had received a writ of *liberate* from the Chancery ordering the release of a certain sum of money to Edward for particular works or feedings, he could just walk to the Exchequer offices at Westminster and pick the money up.¹³

Other recipients were not so near at hand, and *liberate* writs often order the treasurer and the barons of the Exchequer to release money to a certain individual or his/her 'known messenger'. This was the case with money granted to the abbess of Fontevrault, in the county of Touraine, whose house was the burial site of Henry III's ancestors, the counts of Anjou, his grandparents, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, his uncle Richard I, his mother, Isabella of Angouleme, and, eventually, the hearts of King John and Henry III himself.¹⁴ The money given to Fontevrault in established/fixed alms (set annual payments of alms as set out in a charter) for the celebration of royal anniversaries there, could also

¹³ See note 296, p.130 for positioning of the Exchequer buildings during Henry's reign.

¹⁴ Elizabeth M Hallam, 'Royal burial and the cult of kingship in France and England, 1060-1330,' pp. 359-80 in *Journal of Medieval History*, 8 (1982), 366, 371; Paul Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets: Kingship and the Representation of Power, 1200-1400*, (New Haven and London, 1995), 92. King John's heart was initially buried with his body at Worcester but was removed 60 years later and given to Fontevrault (J Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy* (1993), 44). David Carpenter relates how the abbess of Fontevrault, risking shipwreck, came to England in 1291 to collect Henry's heart to take it back to the nunnery (D Carpenter, 'The Burial of King

be released by the Exchequer to another house to be transferred onwards within the order: for instance, for several years these alms payments went to the prior of La Grave, a Fontevrault house in Leighton Buzzard.¹⁵

Probably due to the large sums of money involved relative to other fixed alms payments, the Fontevrault alms were often in arrears. Henry III continued the annual alms payments set by his forebears, giving Fontevrault £70 per annum in fixed alms and 50s. p.a. for a chaplain celebrating for the soul of Eleanor of Aquitaine. From 1244 a further £10 p.a. was paid 'for the anniversaries of his ancestors, and of himself, his queen, his children and his successors, when by divine dispensation they shall pay the debt of nature',¹⁶ and from 1246 another £25 p.a. was granted to the king's relative, Alice de Bleys, formerly abbess, for the rest of her life.¹⁷ In 1249, the king was still trying to make up the payments due for 1245-1248.¹⁸ Three years later, the payments were still four years in arrears,¹⁹ and throughout the 1250s catch-up *liberate* writs were issued every two years.²⁰ In 1267, during the recovery period after the civil war, debts of £513 owed to the king were to be collected and passed on to Fontevrault. Despite this, the following year the

Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology,' pp. 427-61 in *The Reign of Henry III* (London, 1996), 428).

¹⁵ Examples: *CLR 1251-60*: 7 (writ of *liberate* to the abbess' known messenger), *CLR 1245-51*: 36 (to the prior of La Grave). La Grave/La Grove/Grovebury in Leighton Buzzard, Bedfordshire (David Knowles, CNL Brooke, and Vera London, *The Heads of Religious Houses in England and Wales 940-1216* (Cambridge, 1972), 103). *CLR 1240-45*: 157 (to the prior of Lecton, to be forwarded on to Fontevrault); *CLR 1226-40*: 241 (to clerk of prior of Lecton, for Fontevrault).

¹⁶ *CLR 1240-45*: 270.

¹⁷ *CLR 1245-51*: 36, *CLR 1245-51*: 220 - for reference to Alice as the king's kinswoman.

¹⁸ *CLR 1245-51*: 220.

¹⁹ *CLR 1251-60*: 7.

king was still attempting to make payments against an outstanding alms deficit of £509.10s.²¹ Henry III may have been big-hearted, but he could not always live up to his promises, even concerning alms to such a key royal burial site.

Other creditors could also spend a long time waiting for money to be released to them. Matthew Paris records the complaints made to the king at the parliament held in February 1248 about the seizure of goods including food, wine and clothes for the king, and wax, silk cloths and other necessaries for performing the king's alms, despite the fact, as he states, in line with Aquinas, that God does not appreciate gifts of stolen goods.²² He picks out fishermen and fish traders as especial victims of this practice: 'In all these ways the king behaves in so tyrannical and arbitrary a manner that he does not even allow the herrings or other fish of the poor fishermen on the coast to be disposed of in the way they want, nor do they dare appear along the coast or in the towns for fear of being robbed, considering themselves safer in crossing the stormy waters to the farther shores.'²³ This is certainly one interpretation of the impetus behind the international herring trade, but the rolls do indeed show that the bread and herrings needed for the large-scale feeding of the poor were often 'put on the slate', with writs of *liberate* finally appearing months or even years after the food had been taken and distributed in alms. Twelve years before the

²⁰ *CLR 1251-60*: 139, 228, 404.

²¹ *CLR 1267-72*: 6: writ 45; *ibid.*, 53 writ 490.

²² *Mathaei Parisiensis, monachi Sancti Albani, Chronica Majora*, ed. H R Luard, (7 vols., Rolls Series, no. 57, 1872-83), vol. v. 5-8 (this will be referred to in future as *CM*). Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Charity 2a 2ae*, ed. R J Batten, vol. 34 (London, 1975), 259-263, Question 32: almsgiving: article 7, can ill-gotten goods be used for almsgiving?

complaints at the parliament, the sheriffs of London were ordered to pay without delay for herrings used for alms so '*ne rex amplius inde querimoniam audiat*' (the king does not hear further complaint about it)²⁴ Despite these remonstrations, the practice continued: in January 1271 a writ was issued to pay for 142,600 herrings 'bought' in Hilary 1268.²⁵

Although the king was often somewhat lackadaisical when it came to paying for the foodstuffs used for alms, sometimes the royal officials responsible for organising the feeding of the poor on certain key days were given money before the event to cover the costs, with writs of *liberate* being issued containing both the initial instructions for the event and the release of funds. For instance, a writ of *liberate* was tested at Westminster on 9 December 1243 to release 25 marks [4,000d] to Edward of Westminster and William de Haverhull to feed 4,000 poor on Monday 14 December for the second anniversary of the death of the king's sister, the Empress Isabella.²⁶ However, like fish-merchants, the king's agents themselves could be paid for feeding the poor long after the event, and it seems logical to assume that the figures given in these post-payments reflect more accurately the cost of the event, and the number of poor who actually turned up and were fed, as when Edward of Westminster was reimbursed in June 1245 the rather more awkward figure of £19.5s.6 ½ d. [4226 ½ d.] for feeding the poor in the Great and Lesser Hall in February 1244 for the anniversary of the death of another of the king's sisters,

²³ Richard Vaughan, ed., *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris: Observations of Thirteenth-Century life*, (Cambridge, 1993), 52; *CM*, v. 6-7.

²⁴ *Close Rolls 1234-37*: 347.

²⁵ *CLR 1267-72*: 153: writ 1357.

²⁶ *CLR 1240-45*: 204.

Joan of Scotland.²⁷ Presumably, even without upfront funds, the organisers did not encounter too many problems since, as we have seen, they could acquire foodstuffs without making immediate payment and as, in addition, large quantities of herrings (salted or smoked) were ordered up and stored against future alms needs, particularly at the Tower and the Temple in London.²⁸ When ready cash was necessary, officials responsible for collecting royal revenue used some of that money and were later reimbursed via writs of *computate* or *allocate*.

II. b) *Computate* and *Allocate* writs

Writs of *computate* and *allocate* were also 'letters close' in format, and, since they were also primarily concerned money, were recorded by the chancery clerks on the *Liberate* roll. Writs of *computate/allocate* were addressed to people who were responsible for collecting money for the king who would have a fund of money which they owed to the crown, waiting to be given in at the next Exchequer session. The writ told the person with the money to spend some of it, stating that this amount would be 'allowed' them when they produced their account at the Exchequer. In other words, this was a form of borrowing against expected revenue. Generally writs of *computate/allocate* are addressed

²⁷ *CLR 1240-45*: 306. The writ mistakenly gives her name as Eleanor, also sometimes used in error for the Empress Isabella, but given the anniversary celebration in the octave of St. Matthias (i.e. the week after 24 February) a common date in the instructions for the anniversary celebrations of Joan, who died 5 March 1238, it seems certain that this is the anniversary of Joan rather than Isabella, who died in December, and is usually commemorated around St. Lucy (13 December).

²⁸ Examples of herrings ordered up to be delivered to the king's larder at London, the larder at the Tower of London and the use of the New Temple: *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 10. For the larder at Westminster and the Temple: *CLR 1240-45*: 91; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 152-3. Herrings to be salted or dressed and stored until further notice: *CLR 1226-40*: 410.

to sheriffs. The sheriff was responsible for collecting certain dues for the king. The king sent a writ of *computate/allocate* telling him to spend some of that money. When the sheriff came to the Exchequer at Easter or Michaelmas, he would give in the money he had gathered, and produce his writs of *computate/allocate* to account for the shortfall due to spending in the interim between Exchequer sessions. These writs can be called either writs of *computate* or *allocate* since after the instruction to spend money the writ went on to promise that this amount would be reckoned or allowed when the sheriff came to give his account. Earlier in the reign *computabitur tibi* was the common phrase, gradually replaced by *allocatabitur tibi*.²⁹

This system could break down if the local royal official had no money waiting to be handed over to the royal Exchequer. This was the case during the Christmas period of 1269, when a writ of *allocate* was sent to the mayor and bailiffs of Winchester who were to provide 150 pairs of shoes to be delivered to the king's almoner, John de Colecestre, by the Sunday before Christmas, for the seasonal distribution to the poor. The shoes evidently did not appear. A second *allocate* writ, tested on 26 December, orders the sheriff of Hampshire to 'let the king's almoner have 150 pairs of shoes out of the issues of the county without delay for the king's and queen's maundy, since the mayor and bailiffs of Winchester have not fulfilled the king's command to do so out of the farm of their city, because at the time of receiving the command they were not indebted to him in any part thereof.'³⁰

²⁹ Carpenter, 'The English Royal Chancery in the Thirteenth Century,' 28, n.12.

³⁰ *CLR 1267-72*: 109: writ 944; *CLR 1267-72*: 112: writ 970.

When the Chancery sent out a *compute/allocate* writ, three versions were written: the first, to be sent to the sheriff with the instruction; the second, the copy recorded on the Liberate roll in the Chancery and the third, a copy referred to as a *contrabreve*, which was sent to the Exchequer. The *contrabreve* or counterfoil copy sent to the Exchequer notified them of the money the sheriff had been allowed, so that when the sheriff gave his Exchequer account and produced both the money he had collected and his writs of *compute/allocate* to account for the money he had been 'allowed' and had spent, the Barons of the Exchequer could check the sheriff's *allocate/compute* writs against their own *contrabreve* copy. This comparison was done to ensure accuracy and prevent fraud, as it was possible on parchment to scratch off the surface writing and replace the words with some other instruction or amount of money. The Exchequer personnel copied the *contrabreve* copy-writs onto their own Exchequer Roll.³¹

II. c) *Faux amis* in the printed Calendar of the Liberate Rolls: *contrabreve* and dating clauses

In the twentieth century, when the Calendar of the Liberate Rolls was being produced, the editors and translators at the Public Record Office compared the *Liberate* rolls in manuscript with the Exchequer Rolls to make the most complete record for publication. Hence, in the published Liberate Roll, writs do start with the word *contrabreve*. As Carpenter has pointed out, this is misleading and inaccurate as *contrabreve* is not an

³¹ Not to be confused with the *Originalia* Roll - the Exchequer's copy of the Chancery Fine Roll.

instructive verb such as *liberate*, but a noun meaning that the writ is the counterfoil copy sent to the Exchequer. Confusion may have arisen because the word *contrabreve* is written at the end of writs recorded on the Liberate Rolls to show that a copy had been made for the Exchequer. In the printed volumes of the Liberate Rolls writs starting *contrabreve* are in fact writs of *allocate/computate* giving instructions which should be carried out at the expense of the town or county farm.

The dating of writs, as published in the Calendar of the Liberate Rolls, is also misleading. In the originals, the dating clause was at the end of the writ and gave the date and place where the writ was *tested* or witnessed. It does not necessarily follow that the date a writ was witnessed was the date the instructions were first given, nor the date the writ was sent out, or indeed the date the money was actually released to the beneficiary.³² In the Calendar of the Liberate Rolls, the meaning of the date is further obscured by the fact that, in an effort to save space, the editors have transferred the date and place to the beginning of the writ as, say, 'Clarendon, 5th June: *Liberate* to...'. In the Calendar of the Close Rolls, published in Latin, the dating clause remains at the end of the writ, reading '*teste apud n., y. die juni*' (witnessed at n. on the y. day of June).

III. THE CLOSE ROLLS (*ROTULI LITTERARUM CLAUSARUM*)

After the Liberate Roll was created in 1226 to record all writs giving instruction for money to be released either from the Treasury (*liberate* writs) or from funds collected on

³² My thanks to Dr. David Carpenter and Dr. Paul Brand at the IHR Later Medieval Seminar for pointing this out to me.

the king's behalf by sheriffs (*compute/allocate* writs), the Close Roll continued to record any other letters which were sent out in the 'letters close' format (i.e. sealed shut). The letters on the Close Roll are also writs - they are letters of instruction and start '*mandatum est n. ...*' (n. is ordered to...). However, they are not standard letters of instruction and do not have a key instructive word like *liberate*. Often initial orders for the feeding of the poor are found on the Close Roll, (it is highly unlikely that a sheriff would have spent any money from the king's revenue without a written order to back him up), and the payment or allowance on the Liberate roll.

IV. THE PATENT ROLLS (*ROTULI LITTERARUM PATENTIUM*)

This recorded all letters sent out in the 'letters patent' format: a sheet of parchment from which two parallel tongues were cut, one to tie it shut, and one on which the seal was attached. So, when the letter was opened, the seal did not need to be broken as on letters close, but remained intact and hung from the tongue at the bottom of the sheet.³³ The intact seal indicated the authority and authenticity of the document, which could be produced in public to prove that an individual was following the king's orders or had a certain right. Some writs of *liberate* and *allocate* were sent out in this format, but given the financial nature of the instruction were also recorded on the Liberate Roll with the notification after the text that 'these letters are patent'. Chaplais shows that the three types of document drawn up and issued by the Chancery under the great seal, were, in descending order of lasting importance, charters, letters patent and letters close (i.e. the writs whose contents were recorded on the Close and Liberate Rolls under Henry III), and

that the quality of the materials employed, the handwriting, the level of abbreviation used, and the methods of sealing reflect this hierarchy.³⁴ Whereas charters gave instructions which, unless overturned or altered by another charter, should continue in perpetuity and letters close were used for immediate, more or less day to day instructions, letters patent recorded orders that would hold for fixed period of time, whether directly specified or given 'for life' or 'during pleasure'. They were used to register royal confirmation of other people's charters and land transactions, to grant rights for life, pardons, royal protection to individuals and institutions for a set number of years, and to entrust royal castles to named individuals during pleasure.³⁵ Often a great deal of the administration regarding the transfer of rights to a new office holder, for instance a new sheriff, is recorded on the Patent Rolls.

The Patent Rolls records the change over of fixed alms payments from one individual to another (although there are also plentiful writs on the Liberate and Close Rolls pertaining to the management of fixed alms pensions). Evidently, each county or town had a certain sum set aside for fixed alms to be given daily, for life, to support elderly and sick royal retainers. When somebody died, the fixed alms which they received were redirected to

³³ Chaplais, *English royal documents: King John to Henry VI, 1199-1461*, 6.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 12, 15, 19, 50.

³⁵ For example, *CPR 1258-66*: 20, showing letters patent from April 1259, includes: a type of letter of recommendation to the prior of Dunstable that he should allow the Dominicans to purchase land and found a house in the town; a pardon for a man accused, incorrectly, of murder; protection for a year from Midsummer for a man going to Ireland on the king's service; five years' protection for the wardens and brethren of various lazarehouses; ratification of a transfer of hereditary lands and rights between two men; grant during pleasure of the lands in England of the abbot of Caen to a clerk who must

somebody else. There was a waiting list. In November 1259, the Patent Rolls record that the king has promised that the 4 ½ d. a day which the sick Richard le Normand, the king's carter, receives will go, on his death, to William de Meleford, the queen's serjeant, assuming William outlives Richard.³⁶ By June 1261, Richard had died, and his daily alms went to William, as promised, 'in consideration of his service'.³⁷ In 1265, William de Melford's son Ellis was also a fixed alms pensioner, receiving the 1 ½d. 'by the hands of the sheriff of Gloucester' that Robert de Warle used to receive.³⁸ On the death of the pensioner, the fixed alms could also be passed to another member of the family, often the man's widow, as in 1261 when Agnes, the widow of Gilbert de Rue, was granted the 100s. a year which he used to receive.³⁹ One pensioner could receive money from several different royal officials, and, although the alms were given precisely because the recipient was old and debilitated, the gift 'for life' could continue for many years.⁴⁰ William Portjoie, serjeant of the rolls of Chancery, was granted, or rather promised, in December 1261 that he would receive 4 ½d. a day 'for life out of the first money which falls void of the king's appointed alms'. By June 1262, he was receiving twopence a day, one penny from the town of Winchester and one from the county of Wiltshire, and at the start of 1263 he was granted the full promised 4 ½d. a day, comprising twopence from the sheriffs of London, a penny from the bailiffs of Havering and 1 ½ d. at the Exchequer.

account for them at the Exchequer; appointment during pleasure of a guardian for an abbey whose abbot has died. *Ibid.*, p.29: Grant of wardship of land and marriage of heirs.

³⁶ *CPR 1258-66*: 61.

³⁷ *CPR 1258-66*: 158, although the figure given is 3d. a day.

³⁸ *CPR 1258-66*: 412.

³⁹ *CPR 1258-66*: 135.

⁴⁰ *Close Rolls 1251-53*: 401 (fixed alms to William la Weyte '*serviens regis senex est et debilis*').

This continued until his death in 1271.⁴¹ It is a testimony to the importance of the system supporting old retainers and the efficiency of royal bureaucracy that all these examples, of the many hundreds throughout the reign, come from the civil war period.

V. THE ALMONER AND ALMONER'S ROLLS

The earliest documentary evidence for an almoner at the English court comes from the reign of Henry I.⁴² Almoners could be significant figures beyond their office: under Henry II, Froger, archdeacon of Derby and bishop of Seez served as almoner.⁴³ The *Dialogue of the Exchequer*, written under Henry II and dedicated to the king records that Thomas Brown, the king's almoner, was appointed to keep a roll of the 'laws of the realm and secrets of the king' which he kept with him. He is described as 'no inconsiderable person at the Exchequer' where his clerk sat behind the Treasurer's scribe at the Exchequer table during sessions keeping a third record of proceedings.⁴⁴ Almoners in the thirteenth century continued to be involved in other aspects of royal government. Brother

⁴¹ *CPR 1258-66*: 195, 239; *Close Rolls 1261-64*: 56; *CLR 1267-72*: 161, writ 1432.

⁴² Lawrence E Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners 1100-1957,' pp.72-83, *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, XX-XXI (1957/8), 74, cites Johnson, *Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum*, II, p.xi, for William the Almoner in office c.1103-c.1130. Only the almoners who were responsible for day to day almsgiving will be discussed here, but there was also a hereditary Grand Almoner who was responsible for feeding the poor at coronations. For example, William Beauchamp performed this role at the coronation of Queen Eleanor in 1236 (Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 17; *CM*, iii. 338). Although an honorary office, it was not a sinecure: Beauchamp's responsibilities included 'jurisdiction over the quarrels and faults of the poor and the lepers, to the point, that if one leper strikes another with a knife, he may adjudge him to be burnt.' (Hilda Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households of Thirteenth Century England,' pp. 147-67 in *Speculum*, 4 (1929),156, citing the *Red Book of the Exchequer*, II, 759).

⁴³ Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 74, served 1159-?1177.

Geoffrey de Sutton (almoner 1229-40) also tested writs and was keeper of the wardrobe, acting-keeper of the seal, and keeper of Ospring hospital.⁴⁵ Brother John de Leukenor (almoner 1228-45) was also in charge of Ospring, and in 1253 Brother Roger de Cramfield, the almoner, was keeper of the king's hospitals.⁴⁶ Not only was the almoner involved in financial administration, but also was used as a messenger and diplomat.⁴⁷ La Selle links the institution of the office of almoner at the French royal court to the diplomatic mission by Henry II's almoner, Roger the Templar to Philip Augustus in 1187.⁴⁸ The English royal almoners were Templars until 1255 when the royal chaplain, Simon of Offam, was given the office, succeeded a year later by another chaplain, John de Colecestre.⁴⁹ At the French court, Templars continued in the office until 1285/6 when the royal treasury was transferred from the Paris Temple to the Louvre and the office of

⁴⁴ C Johnson, F E L Carter, and D Greenway, eds., *Dialogus de Scaccario [The Course of the Exchequer]* by Richard Fitz Nigel, Revised Edition ed., Oxford Medieval Texts (Oxford, 1983), xxxiv, xlii, 18, 35.

⁴⁵ Brother Geoffrey testing writs: *CLR 1226-40*: 256 (Feb 1237), 308 (Jan 1238). Brother Geoffrey as keeper of wardrobe: *CLR 1226-40*: 241, 248, 249, 250, 274, 275, 276, 282, 371. See note 54 (below, p.34) for Geoffrey as keeper of wardrobe and seal.

⁴⁶ John de Leukenor, or Le Arker, the Templar was almoner from 1228-1245 and keeper of Ospring hospital (Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 74). Brother Roger de Cramfield, mentioned as almoner in 1242, was keeper of the king's hospitals in 1245, and his dismissal in 1253 is recorded by Paris (*CM*, v.354-5; Tanner, *idem.*, and David Baldwin, *The chapel royal: ancient and modern* (Worcester, 1990), 375). See Appendix 3: List of Almoners.

⁴⁷ As messengers: *CLR 1226-40*: 160 (Geoffrey de Sutton going abroad); 235 (Geoffrey to Llywelyn); *Patent Rolls 1232-47*: 136 (John de Leukenor sent to prohibit a tournament.). In 1241, according to Paris, the king sent 'brother J. a Templar, his almoner' (*fratrem J. Templarium, elemosinarium suum*) to call off a tournament organised by Peter of Savoy which had aggravated those who opposed the influence of the queen's foreign relatives (*CM*, iv. 88).

⁴⁸ Xavier La Selle, *Le service des âmes à la cour: confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France du XIII^e au XV^e siècles*, Mémoires et documents d l'École des Chartes (Paris, 1995), 35.

almoner was given to secular clerks, as in England.⁵⁰ With their expertise in finance, members of the Temple order were evidently a popular choice for this office: in 1229 the count of Flanders also had a Templar almoner.⁵¹ In England, the Temple in London was used as a site for storing the fish needed for feeding the poor.⁵²

Although there was a tradition of appointing Templars, the relationship between the king and his Templar almoners was undermined by arguments about money for the king's foreign relatives. When Brother Geoffrey de Sutton, who had been almoner since 1229, was appointed as keeper of the wardrobe in 1236, the king issued a letter patent to the master of the Knights Templars in England promising that 'whatever may happen touching the said Geoffrey in the said office, the said house of the Temple shall not be bound to answer the king and his heirs....and neither the king nor his heirs shall have power at any time to move an action or question on that account against the house.'⁵³ This was an attempt to ward off any possible arguments between the order and the king over the behaviour of a Templar royal official. In February 1240, after eleven years in office, Geoffrey was dismissed from the court (where he had acted as an adviser to the king, and keeper of the seal as well as keeper of the wardrobe and king's almoner) after he refused to issue a warrant to allow the queen's uncle, Thomas of Savoy, count of

⁴⁹ Marguerite Edna Lack, 'The Position and Duties of the King's Almoner, 1255-1327' (MA (unpublished), London, 1949), 3, 122, 135-51.

⁵⁰ Xavier de La Selle, 'La confession et l'aumône: confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France,' *Journal des Savants* Juillet-Décembre 1993 (1993), 257-8. He notes that several of the Templars interrogated when the order was dissolved under Philip the Fair had previously held the office of royal almoner.

⁵¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 123.

⁵² see note 28 above on p.24.

Flanders, to impose a tax on each English sack of wool which passed through his domains.⁵⁴ Despite this major disagreement and, as far as Henry was concerned, insubordination, Templars continued to serve as king's almoner, with Brothers Walter le Butiler, Robert, Richard, Roger de Cramfield and Giles acting in the period up to 1253. In this year, Roger de Cramfield was dismissed from the office, after another dispute over Henry's financial demands on behalf of his foreign relatives. Despite the king's threats, the Templars and Hospitallers had refused to give the king the money he needed to provide his niece, Alice de Lusignan, with a dowry on her marriage to Gilbert de Clare, and, as a result, Roger the Templar lost his place at court.⁵⁵ So, in the end, it was not the actions of a Templar in royal service which soured relations between the king and the order as had been feared in 1236, but the arguments between the king and the Templars in general which led to the dismissal of the last Templar almoner.

⁵³ *Patent Rolls 1232-47*: 161, dated 24 October 1236.

⁵⁴ Paris records the dismissal at the end of 1239 (*CM*, iii.629, under heading: *Quomodo ejecti sunt ignominiose a consilio regis magister Simon Normannus et frater Galfridus*). Matthew was pleased about this dismissal '*quod multi desiderabant*'. In 1237, he had described Geoffrey, along with Simon de Montfort and John, earl of Lincoln, as three royal counsellors who were '*infames et suspectos*' and hateful to the English nobles even though they were natives and not aliens (*CM*, iii. 412). In 1238, Paris records that the king took the seal away from Ralph de Neville, bishop of Chichester, and gave it to Geoffrey and John of Lexington (*CM*, iii.495). Tout gives Geoffrey and William Cantilupe as temporary chancellors in 1238 (T F Tout, *Chapters in the Administrative History of Mediaeval England: the Wardrobe, the Chamber and the Small Seals*, 6 vols., vol. 6 (Manchester, 1933), 4). Tout gives the dates for Geoffrey as keeper of the wardrobe as 28 October 1236-3 February 1240 (Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 25). As Paris says Geoffrey had to leave the court in 1239, it seems likely that Geoffrey also ceased to be almoner at the same time, and this is the date given by Tanner for the end of his term in office. In December 1241, Geoffrey is described in a writ as 'formerly king's almoner' (*CLR 1240-45*: 96).

⁵⁵ *CM*, v. 364-5. See Appendix 3: Table of Almoners.

The first secular clerk to become king's almoner was Simon of Offam, (1255-56), a royal chaplain, who Lack shows entered royal service in 1235 after serving as a chaplain to Hubert de Burgh. Before his short term as almoner, Simon was a chaplain at St. Stephen's, Westminster, and at Windsor castle, where he also served as one of the keeper of the works in 1251.⁵⁶ In 1256 John de Colecestre, another royal chaplain, was appointed as almoner and he served until the end of Henry's reign. The chaplain Robert de Anne is also mentioned as almoner in 1264-65.

It is clear that although there were some men who served as almoner over a long period of time, there were also sub-almoners, also described simply as almoners in the sources, who worked alongside them. It was useful to have more than one man on the staff since sometimes an almoner was sent ahead of the king's party to arranged to feed the poor in a location before the king's arrival, and at other times the chief almoner could be away from the king, travelling on diplomatic business.⁵⁷ The almoners also used their own messengers to pick up money or goods, and in November 1241 reference is made to John Leukenor's 'attorney', brother Hugh de Stokton, another Templar, who is to receive 60 lasts of herring at the New Temple to be 'spent in alms'.⁵⁸ Besides making use of facilities at the Temple under the Templar almoners, other facilities were provided in

⁵⁶ Lack, 'The Position and Duties of the King's Almoner, 1255-1327', 122, 135-40.

⁵⁷ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 281; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 390-1, and see pp. 91-2 below for examples of almoners going ahead of the king to feed the poor before his arrival. See note 47 above (p.32) for almoners working as messengers and diplomats.

⁵⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 91. Delivery to John's 'known messenger' *ibid.*, p.106. Lack, 'The Position and Duties of the King's Almoner, 1255-1327', 83, shows that in 1282 there was a yeoman (*valletus*) attached to the almonry, and the 1318 Household Ordinance set out that the almonry staff should comprise a clerk, a yeoman and a groom.

Henry III's castles and palaces. In July 1244, as part of the works at Geddington (Northants.), a chamber with a wardrobe was to be provided for the king's almoner.⁵⁹ The king's castles and palaces throughout the country were equipped with almonries. Many of these seem to have been left in a state of disrepair since being built under Henry II. Henry III used and maintained almonries already in existence at Marlborough, Westminster, Kempton, Winchester, Windsor, Nottingham, Havering, Clarendon, Guildford and Woodstock, and built new almonries at Hereford, Nottingham, Ludgershall, Rochester and Gillingham.⁶⁰ These were sizeable buildings: Henry III's almonry at Nottingham

⁵⁹ *CLR 1240-45: 249.*

⁶⁰ Clarendon: March 1244, almonry mentioned as point of reference for other buildings/repairs instructions (*CLR 1240-45: 223*); Feb.1245, orders 'to make a penthouse from the great gate of the manor of Clarendon, within the wall, unto the chambers on the north, for the use of the poor'(*CLR 1240-45:291*); July 1256, repairs ordered (*CLR 1251-60: 311*).

Gillingham: 10 Dec 1252, bailiff of Gillingham to 'roof the entire hall; build a sufficient almonry-house, with a privy chamber....to build a chamber for the use of the chaplains under the same roof with the almshouse.'(*CLR 1251-60: 92-3*). Guildford: 1222-3 built and altered in 1238 (H M Colvin, R Allen-Brown, and A J Taylor, eds., *The History of the King's Works: The Middle Ages*, 2 vols. (1963), 952; *CLR 1226-40:341*); Feb. 1246, orders refer to almonry at Guildford (*CLR 1245-51: 24-25*); Aug. 1272: 'let brother John, the king's almoner have 2 marks to repair the king's almonry at Guldeford' (*CLR 1267-72: 291*, writ 2453). Havering: March 1253: 'to make a new almonry in the court of Havering where the old one was' (*CLR 1251-60: 117*); April 1253: 'to make...an almonry 50ft. by 22ft., a saucery adjoining thereto, with an oven.' (*CLR 1251-60:119*); also Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 163 n.3. Hereford: built in 1233 with timber from the king's woods (*King's Works*, 675 n.7); May 1265: 'To the sheriff of Hereford. Contrabreve to...repair the king's and queen's halls, chambers, and kitchens, the knights' chambers...to repair the king's hall belonging to the almon[ry - the membrane is perished], the halls where the county courts are wont to be held, the Exchequer chamber in the castle...' (*CLR 1260-67: 175*). Kempton: April 1246: 'The bailiff of Kennington is ordered to and to prop up (*suppodiar*) the almonry.' (*CLR 1245-51:39*); Johnstone p.163 n.3. Ludgershall: March 1246, orders for new almonry at Ludgershall 'of 6 pairs of rafters...the walls being made of cob and plaster' (*CLR 1245-51: 32*). Marlborough: March 1244, works on almonry at Marlborough (*CLR 1240-45: 220*). Marlborough almonry had been re-built in 1241-2 (*King's Works*, 736 n.6; Johnstone 163 n.3). Nottingham: mention of 'a house in the bailey to store the king's

measuring 40ft x 25ft and that at Havering 50ft x 22ft. They could be used for storing the necessaries for the king's alms, such as herrings, and those with ovens could also bake bread for this purpose.

Almoners were responsible for collecting leftovers from the table for distribution to the poor.⁶¹ One source of income for the royal almonry was the money made from the sale of felon's goods and of deodands, items which had caused someone's death, profits from which were assigned to the chief almoner on his appointment.⁶² The evidence of the *Liberate Rolls* shows that a great deal of almsgiving was paid for either direct from the Exchequer or from county funds. These payments show the almoners involved in the purchase and delivery of fish, clothes and shoes for alms, buying chalices for various churches under the king's patronage, and organising the feeding of the poor.⁶³

alms' in 1179/80 (*King's Works*, 79, cites Pipe Roll 26 Henry II, p.137). Henry III's almonry at Nottingham: c.1236 'A new almonry 40ft x 25ft was erected in the castle' (*King's Works* p.758). Rochester: Oct 1248, orders to build a 'domum elemosinum' (*CLR 1245-51*: 202; also *King's Works*, 809). Rochester almonry mentioned later in the reign (*CLR 1260-7*: 202). Westminster: almonry mentioned in 1240 as point of reference for the crenellation of a wall (*King's Works*, 547). Gervase Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540* (Oxford, 1989) 296, cites *Close Rolls 1231-34*: 114, for the building of the almonry. Winchester: Nov. 1238: 'make...a penthouse (*appenticium*) beside our almonry, for the use of the poor.' (*CLR 1226-40*: 350). Windsor: Johnstone p.163 n.3 . Woodstock: *King's Works*, 1013.

⁶¹ See pp.82-91 below for discussion of the almsdish and daily distributions.

⁶² Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 72 and 74 for assignment of deodands to Geoffrey de Sutton.

⁶³ Fish: *CLR 1226-40*: 200, 257, 258, 259, 313, 360, 447; *CLR 1240-45*: 91,106. Clothes for poor: *CLR 1226-40*:215, 233, 251, 262; *CLR 1240-45*: 296; *CLR 1245-51*: 46, 173, 184, 214, 223-4, 231, 267. Clothes and food for friars: *CLR 1226-40*: 233, 234. John de Leukenor buying chalices: *CLR 1240-45*: 50 (for Ankerwyck), *CLR 1240-45*: 268: 10 Oct 1244 (for hospitals at Oxford, Ospring and London Converts).

Although some payments on the *Liberate* Rolls are ordered for stated acts of almsgiving, others are made to the almoners for ‘the king’s alms’ in general.⁶⁴ The almoner accounted for this spending on his own roll, but unfortunately only two king’s almoner’s rolls survive for the whole of the reign of Henry III. The roll for 1238-9 is two membranes long and not in good condition. The first membrane is the worst: it has two holes in it and both sheets have what looks to be water damage so that the parchment itself is dark and the ink washed out and illegible in sections.⁶⁵ The second surviving roll covers 1264-5, including the battle of Evesham, and the roll is in much better condition, with the ruled parchment still a creamy colour and the ink clear.⁶⁶ Perhaps surprisingly, there is very little feeding of the poor listed on any of these rolls, and certainly it is not something that is recorded as a daily event. The bulk of the information on these rolls relates to chaplain’s wages and the king’s oblations - the coins which the king put on the altar after mass as offerings. Trivet’s assertion that Henry heard at least two masses every day is certainly backed up by the 1264-5 roll, which for each day records two sets of oblations, one for the day (presumably given in the chief church of wherever the king was) and one the oblations given after the mass in his private chapel.⁶⁷ Henry’s special

⁶⁴ e.g. *CLR 1240-45*: 143, 160, 166; *CLR 1245-51*: 22, 44.

⁶⁵ PRO C/47/3/44 Almoner’s roll 23 Henry III, 2m. For comment on the place-dates in the roll and the interchangeability of London and Westminster, see D Carpenter, ‘King Henry III and the Tower of London’, *The Reign of Henry III*, (London: Hambledon, 1996), 211-213, Appendix 1: Henry III’s Itinerary.

⁶⁶ PRO E101/349/30 King’s alms and oblations 49 Henry III.

⁶⁷ *F. Nicholai de Treveti, de ordine frat. praedicatorum, annales sex regum Angliae, qui a comitibus Andegavensibus originem traxerunt, A.D. MCXXXVI-MCCCVII*, ed. T. Hog (English Historical Society, 6, London, 1845), 280; *Willelmi Rishanger, quondam monachi S. Albani, et quorundam anonymorum, Chronica et Annales, regnantibus Henrico tertio et Edwardo primo, A.D. 1259-1307*, H T Riley, ed., *Rolls Series*, vol. 28 ii, 1865), 74-75. For a discussion of these and other accounts of Henry’s piety see

devotion to the Confessor is clear: on some occasions the roll specifies that the king heard a 'mass of St Edward' or a 'mass of St John the Evangelist' in his private chapel.⁶⁸ The roll also notes on which days the king travelled and gives an amount spent in alms, showing that the almoners were responsible for distributing money to the poor encountered along the road.⁶⁹ The queen also had an almoner, and the separate account for the queen's alms survives for the regnal year 1252-3, in an excellent condition, and tells a similar story, recording oblations at mass and distributions of alms along the road, but no other feeding of the poor.⁷⁰

However, simply because the feeding of the poor is not recorded regularly on the almoners' rolls that still survive, does not mean that it did not happen. We have already seen that orders for feeding the poor, and for paying for the meals, were addressed to people other than the royal almoners. The household roll which survives for 1259-60, gives a day by day account of expenditure by the royal household as the king travelled from London to Paris and back again. This shows that both in England and in France a certain number of friars and others were fed daily, but this daily feeding was accounted

Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster blood relic*, (CUP, 2001), 36 n.18.

⁶⁸ e.g. PRO E101/349/30 m.2: Saturday 4 January 1265, solemn mass of St John the Evangelist. Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday, 7-10 January 1265, (but oddly not on the feast of Edward himself, 5 Jan), solemn mass of St. Edward. St. John was a key figure in the hagiography and iconography of the Confessor. See below pp.56-62.

⁶⁹ PRO E101/349/30 m.2 Saturday 3 January, travelled from Kenyton (Kempton, Middx.) to Westminster, 4s.2d in alms.

⁷⁰ PRO E101/349/24 'oblationibus Regine et elemosina per viam', 28 October 1252-24 June 1253. E101/349/17 is the queen's alms account from 24 June 1253-27 October 1253. It accounts for 2s.1d [25d.] distributed in alms on days when the queen was travelling.

and paid for along with all the other household expenses rather than by the almoners on their own rolls.⁷¹

Equally, although neither of the surviving king's almoner's rolls makes any reference to feeding the poor for the commemoration of the dead, the *Liberate* Rolls show that almoners were involved in this, along with other royal officials. Brother Richard the almoner organised the funeral and feeding following the death of Eleanor of Brittany in 1241.⁷² John Leukenor was responsible for feeding 52,000 poor in 1242 to commemorate the Empress Isabella (with the treasurer responsible for feeding a further 50,000). Leukenor received £7. 6s. 10d. [1762d] for feeding 1,000 poor on the anniversary of the death of King John in 1242, and he also fed the poor on the feasts of Edward in October 1242 and January 1243.⁷³ Roger de Cramfield was issued money to feed 1,000 poor and the Franciscans and Dominicans of Oxford on the anniversary of the death of the Empress Isabella in 1244, and he also organised the anniversary of the death of Isabella of Angouleme at Marlborough in 1250.⁷⁴ John de Colecestre, the chaplain and almoner arranged the funeral of Katherine the king's daughter in 1257, and in 1260, along with Imbert de Pugeys, the king's steward, organised the feeding of 20,000 poor on the death of Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester.⁷⁵ Robert de Anne ordered up two cloth of

⁷¹ E101/349/127, Household Roll 44 Henry III, 18 membranes. On ordinary days the roll specifies that 100 or 150 friars were fed, although the payments vary suggesting that the number given was an approximate figure. See Appendix 4: Daily feeding 1259-60.

⁷² *CLR 1240-45*: 68.

⁷³ *CLR 1240-45*: 106, 151 (writ tested 21 Oct. anniversary of King John's death 19 Oct), 148, 166.

⁷⁴ *CLR 1240-45*: 281; *CLR 1245-51*: 288.

⁷⁵ *CLR 1251-60*: 373; *CLR 1260-67*: 12.

gold tomb cloths for the funeral of Katherine the king's granddaughter in 1264, and made £40 in offerings on the day.⁷⁶ However, there are many other examples of feast-day and funeral feeding which did not involve the king's almoners.

It is important to remember that the organisation of almsgiving was not the exclusive domain of the royal almoners, and that the largescale feeding of the poor for the commemoration of the dead which is of interest here often involved the castellans, sheriffs and bailiffs in charge of the sites used for the distributions. Also, the surviving almoners' rolls only account for a very narrow aspect of the king's total almsgiving, focusing for the most part on the oblations made daily at mass. Thankfully, considering the very poor survival rate of almoners rolls from the reign of Henry III, a great deal of information about almsgiving, and the feeding of the poor in particular, is to be found in amongst all the other information on the Close, *Liberate* and Patent Rolls.

⁷⁶ CLR 1260-67:143.

CHAPTER TWO: KINGS, MONKS AND MEMORIAL FEEDING

Feeding the poor for the dead was a continuation of the culture of generosity and reciprocity which expressed social bonds among the living. This chapter will show that almsgiving, which Christian theology taught was essential in attaining salvation, was just as much a staple of aristocratic life as the distribution of largesse, which was seen as equally essential in attaining and maintaining respect and power in the temporal world. By adopting St Edward the Confessor as his patron and model, Henry III dedicated himself to the memory and imitation of an English king who was presented as successful politically, bringing peace and good law to his kingdom, and had achieved the ultimate in spiritual success: a canonised saint, whose key act of almsgiving was emblematic of his sanctity. Just as St John the Evangelist appeared to the holy-king in the guise of a pauper, it was believed that Christ was present in the poor, and that through giving alms to the needy the rich could encounter and serve their Saviour. Much of the alms practice of the king and the moneyed classes (such as the daily distribution of leftovers from the lord's table, the maintenance of paupers within the household, and Maundy footwashing) was borrowed from monastic practice, and sprang from firstly, this key belief in the presence of Christ in the poor, and a secondly, the concept of almsgiving as an exchange of material goods for prayers and spiritual benefit. Since feeding the poor was one method of 'reaping' prayer, itself central to the commemoration of the dead, and, as almsgiving was crucial for salvation, it is not surprising that the poor were fed in commemoration of the dead. Indeed, in older monastic houses, the daily distribution to the poor was derived from alms given in memory of dead members of the community. The living and the dead

were part of one single spiritual community in Christ, albeit a community separated in the short-term by the nature of time and mortality. Through food rituals involving the physical manifestations of Christ's body on earth, whether it be the consecrated bread in the mass or the hungry body of a pauper, the living and the dead could be made present to each other and express their true union. The ideas of feeding the poor to make the living and the dead present to each other and the giving of alms to aid souls in Purgatory are in no way contradictory or mutually exclusive. It was precisely because the living and the dead were united in Christ that the acts of the living could benefit the dead, just as the intervention of the saints could help the living. Since the poor were a manifestation of the body of Christ, Henry's almsgiving can be seen as an extension of his eucharistic devotion

I. LARGESS AND CHIVALRY

I. a) Kingship and Ring-Giving

As the highest leader in society, and a military leader at that, the obligations of giving were particularly pertinent for a king as a means of rewarding and maintaining loyalty. In the Middle Ages free and happy giving to the worthy was the hallmark of good kingship and strong leadership, and was deeply ingrained in the aristocratic imagination.

Even in pre-chivalric times, it was expected that the king would share his wealth with his people, giving gifts to those who were loyal to him, and rewarding his warriors with a share of war-booty. In the Anglo-Saxon poem *Beowulf*, set in sixth century Scandinavia but composed in Anglo-Saxon England and preserved in a c.1000 manuscript, this vision

of the good king is made clear.⁷⁷ The king, Hrothgar, is described by one of his men as: 'The friend of the Danes, the prince of the Scyldings, the giver of rings, the renowned ruler'.⁷⁸ The giving of rings and treasure in the poem is integral to kingship: the king is 'the loved lord, the bestower of rings'; 'the giver of treasure'; 'gold-friend of men'.⁷⁹ These gifts reward loyalty and cement social bonds. When Beowulf mortally wounds the monster Grendel who has been terrorising Hrothgar's people, the king rewards him by holding a great banquet in his honour and giving him war-gear and horses.⁸⁰ However, the greatest and most prestigious gift is formally bestowed on Beowulf by the queen: a great gold ring with a famous history.⁸¹ It is 'Heorot, the treasure-decked hall'⁸² which represents Hrothgar's generous kingship and is the site of gift-giving. Generosity was the express purpose for building the hall: 'It came into [Hrothgar's] mind that he would order men to make a hall-building, a mighty mead-dwelling, greater than ever the children of men had heard of; and therein that he should part among young and old all which God gave unto him except the nation and the lives of men....He broke not his pledge, he bestowed bracelets and treasure at the banquet'⁸³ One of the minstrel's songs in the hall describes a bad king: 'He gave out no rings to the Danes according the custom; joyless he dwelt, so that he reaped the reward of his hostility, the long evil to his people.'⁸⁴ Ring-giving is the act which binds this society together, and rings represent strength and

⁷⁷ R K Gordon, *Beowulf*, R K Gordon trans. (1992 (reprint of 1926)), iii.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 7.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 1, 11, 29.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 22-23.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 4.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 2.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 31.

honour. Prestigious possessions are marked with rings: when Beowulf attacks Grendel's mother 'the sword adorned with rings, sang out a greedy war-chant on her head', a king's funeral ship is 'ring-prowed' and the people even refer to themselves as the 'Ring-Danes'.⁸⁵ It is these gifts which hold the warrior society together, with the king's great 'gift-hall' with its 'lofty gold-plated roof' as the centre of social life, feasting and royal generosity.⁸⁶ The strong theme of gift-exchange entrenched in a loyalty-honour system no doubt reflects the ideals of the society in which the poem was recited and written down: Anglo-Saxon England, where King Alfred himself was described as a ring-giver by bishop Wulfsige.⁸⁷

It is interesting to note that, far away from the heroic age of *Beowulf*, in the real world of thirteenth-century factional family politics, royal ring-giving was still a mark of great esteem and signalled an expectation of continued loyalty. In 1258, Queen Eleanor gave her Flemish cousin 'thirty-six or more rings... 'for the knights and ladies of Flanders''.⁸⁸ Indeed, her 'ring-account' survives from 1263 when she gave rings to those loyal to the Lord Edward.⁸⁹ After looking at the royal jewel accounts, Carpenter is reminded that: 'the Plantagenets, like their Anglo-Saxon predecessors, were still very much the givers of rings. In the two years between February 1238 and February 1240 Henry dispensed 409

⁸⁵ Ibid., 28,1, 3, 23.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 16,17.

⁸⁷ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 134.

⁸⁸ Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens',' 83.

⁸⁹ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 198.

rings and 103 brooches.⁹⁰ As in *Beowulf*, this royal ring-giving was a symbol within an honour society of a pact between man or woman and their lord, a reward for loyalty and a bond of continued friendship. By this date, however, this politically necessary palm-greasing was romanticised as the chivalric virtue of *largesse*.

I. b) Chivalry as a code of honour and largesse as a form of gift-exchange

In the words of Keen: 'From a very early stage we find the romantic authors habitually associating together certain qualities which they clearly regarded as the classic virtues of good knighthood: *prouesse*, *loyauté*, *largesse* (generosity), *courtoisie*, and *franchise* (the free and frank bearing that is visible testimony to the combination of good birth with virtue).'⁹¹ *Largesse* was a form of generosity specifically moulded to a social contract based on vassalage and reinforced the bond between lord and man.

Largesse can be seen as a system of gifts whereby the *potens* (the powerful one) gives to the *pauperes* in the sense of those less powerful. In medieval Latin, the adjectives *potens* and *pauper* were seen as the opposites of one another. The person described as *pauper* was not necessarily materially poor or destitute, but lacked power and status relative to someone described as *potens*.⁹² In terms of the anthropological analysis of gift-

⁹⁰ Carpenter, 'The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology,' 429. He notes that Anglo-Saxon 'rings' were arm-bands rather than finger rings. In *Beowulf* some of the 'rings' are neck-torques (Gordon, *Beowulf* 39, 50).

⁹¹ Maurice Keen, *Chivalry*, (1984), 2.

⁹² Bronislaw Geremek, *Poverty: A History*, Agnieszka Koolakowska trans. (1997), 21; Michel Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: an essay in social history*, Arthur Goldhammer trans., (New Haven & London, 1986, [original French, Hachette 1978]), 32-33.

exchange, the act of giving designates the giver as more powerful than the recipient, and puts the recipient in a position of inferiority. From this springs the desire on the part of the recipient to 'revenge the gift'. In other words, to give back as much as s/he can in the hope of achieving a parity of status, or, if possible, to give a more mighty gift to gain social superiority, setting off the cycle once more. Gift-giving and conspicuous consumption as a means of proclaiming social superiority was, of course, especially important for a king looking to safe-guard his position and the respect due to him. The king might give to someone who was nominally his social inferior but who in practice had greater power than the king in a particular domain or jurisdiction, in order to, firstly, proclaim his royal superiority and, secondly, as a form of palm-greasing to incite 'revenge gifts' of loyalty or a particular service. The system of gift-exchange in an honour society is based around a stream of gifts back and forth and with it an oscillation of power, status and honour. The code of chivalry itself, is self-evidently a system of beliefs in an honour society, and *largesse* was its system of gift-exchange although it can appear to be simply gift-giving.

The giving of a gift, however it may appear, is never altruistic. There is always the expectation of repayment, whether in kind or in more ephemeral 'gifts' such as the loyalty of the recipient and the respect and honour given to the benefactor by the recipient or by others who have witnessed the gift. Even secret, anonymous or unrequited gifts are witnessed by God, and so there is here an expectation of God's blessing upon the giver. Of course, these underlying motivations are not always made explicit or spoken of, but the givers and recipients operating within their system of gift-exchange and honour tacitly

understand how receiving a gift makes the recipient indebted to the giver, and gains the respect of the audience. We do talk of altruism, and yet respect for altruism is itself a type of social reward for self-sacrifice. For example, the altruistic act of Captain Oates in giving his life so that the others on the Scott's Antarctic expedition might have some chance of survival, is remembered and spoken of in terms of great respect by those who share the same system of beliefs about honour and friendship. It would be extremely unfair to say that Captain Oates gave his life with the primary aim of receiving a revered place in history, but it shows the strength of his own adherence to a system of honour that he chose to give up his life because he wanted to help his friends and would not have been able to live with himself or respect himself if he had not taken this step. He is the more revered since even those who do understand this particular honour system know that in his position they would not necessarily be able to over-ride their desire for self-preservation in order to act as he did. Oates' self-sacrifice would no doubt seem baffling, stupid or even sinful to those who adhere to a system of belief which is not compatible with the school of Boy's Own-style heroism. The purpose of all such honour codes is to make the individual who lives in an honour-society subvert his or her most personal desires and so act in a way which benefits the community as a whole, or at least maintains the status quo. The system itself is constantly evolving and the rules of behaviour may be dropped, replaced, revised, or, as with Magna Carta, given a symbolic status, as they become obsolete in practice. However, those who break the rules live in obloquy until they are able or, indeed, allowed, to make some form of reparation. In addition, various forms of punishment and exile, or rites of expulsion, (in the case of the medieval church,

excommunication) are practised by the majority to exclude rule-breakers from the community, often permanently .

Mauss contends that all communities, from the family or friendship group up to whole populations, have some common code of honour or shared beliefs and equally, a system of gift-exchange.⁹³ Mauss and his followers see the particular system of each community as key in trying to understand that community and why people within it act the way they do, which may appear deeply bizarre to the outsider who, perhaps unconsciously, holds a totally different set of beliefs and social norms. Looking at the aristocratic society of thirteenth century England, chivalry (or proto-chivalry as the early fourteenth century is generally regarded as the era when the code of chivalry was set) can be seen as the code of honour, and royal *largesse* the system of gift-exchange masquerading as gift-giving.

In the age of chivalry, good leaders were respected for their *largesse* which rewarded their knights and people for loyal service, and, in turn, increased their esteem for their leader. This circle of reciprocity continued to revolve and held the promise of future loyalty and reward. It is probably not too far-fetched to see the rings given out by kings as a physical symbol of this circle of reciprocity. From ancient times, the type of arm bands and neck torques referred to in *Beowulf* as rings were worn by those in thrall to represent their servitude and distinguish who was their lord. In gold, the most precious metal known in the middle ages, this body jewellery, as can be seen in the poem, indicated

⁹³ Mauss, *The gift: the form and reason for exchange in archaic societies, with an introduction by Mary Douglas*, 3-7 (summary), 17-18 (alms), 39 (leadership).

not servitude, but honour, and represented a form of service and reward based on love, honour and obedience. In the same way, wedding rings, circles of gold which are in themselves images of perfection and continuity, to this day are worn to signify a bond of loyalty and love, just as in the middle ages the rings worn on the wedding finger of nuns showed them to be brides of Christ, and the bishop's ring, his bond with his community and God. When someone was given a ring or a (circular?) brooch by Henry III and Eleanor of Provence, it is pretty certain that they wore it, much like a medal of honour, and that the ring on their finger showed everyone where their loyalties lay.

The great importance of *largesse* in good kingship is shown in stark relief when a king is the object of hatred. The stereotypical image of King John as a 'bad' king, a money-grabbing miser with few redeemable features and little loyalty to or respect for those he 'should have' rewarded and, adding insult to injury, an ill-conceived pattern of giving power and money to those who were seen as completely undeserving in the eyes of both his contemporary and later 'audience', gives an impression of the pejorative way in which a leader who did not fulfil the age-old duty of generosity and rightful reward is described.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Interestingly, John's arch-rival, Philip Augustus of France, although much more successful politically, was also criticised for his parsimony, which according to Bourin-Derruau, 'rompt avec l'idéal seigneurial de largesse'. He didn't like hunting or tournaments, and, although courageous in battle was beset by other fears, particularly about being poisoned - a fear which probably sprang from his own intrigues against the Plantagenets and his own barons. For some contemporaries and later historians he was the very incarnation of 'l'antithèse du chevalier'. Monique Bourin-Derruau, *Temps*

It was evidently very important for a king to be seen to practice the virtue of *largesse* and associate himself with the tradition of a gift-giving monarchy. In the decoration of the castles and palaces of Henry III, images of *largesse* and gift-giving hold a key place. As Henry III is particularly famous for his interest in art and architecture, and the documents show that he was personally involved in choosing the images which decorated his houses, looking at the evidence which survives for art-work can give an insight into what the king considered important and how he chose to represent himself and the monarchy.

The use of the story of Alexander as decoration in Henry's castles, gives an indication of the emphasis on the chivalric virtue of *largesse*. The king chose the story of Alexander the Great to adorn the 'chamber of Alexander' at Clarendon, first mentioned in 1237, and in 1252 the story was to be painted round the Queen's chamber in Nottingham castle.⁹⁵ Alexander was one of the great military leaders given a place among the Nine Worthies, an honoured group of those whose *prouesse* made them *preux*. As far as I am aware, there was no full scheme of the Worthies in any of Henry's palaces. Interestingly, according to Keen, within this scheme, 'Alexander was the special exemplar of *largesse*', who, according to the *Romance of Alexander*, had been advised by Aristotle to win loyal service by giving generously to his men.⁹⁶ Although it is impossible to know what exactly was involved in 'the story of Alexander' as depicted on the walls of Henry's

d'équilibres, temps de ruptures: XIIIe siècle, Nouvelle Histoire de la France Médiévale (Paris, 1990), 177-8

⁹⁵ CLR 1226-40: 304; CLR 1251-60: 18.

⁹⁶Keen, *Chivalry*, 123, 10. The Nine Worthies were: three great military leaders from the Old Testament, Joshua, David and Judas Maccabeus; three from the classical age, Hector of Troy, Alexander the Great and Julius Caesar; and three from more recent history, Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godfrey de Bouillon, the leader of the first crusade.

palaces, given Alexander's particular reputation as someone who had earned the loyalty of his men through his *largesse* and more generally as one of the greatest of military leaders, it seems reasonable to see these as aspirational images, put up in the more private chambers of the royal quarters to inspire the king and queen.

The figure of *largesse* itself, personified as a woman, was painted on the walls of Henry III's Painted Chamber at Westminster, the king's bedroom and audience chamber.⁹⁷

Unlike the Nine Worthies, the virtues were depicted in cycle, and *Largesse* was one of the series of chivalric Virtues depicted trampling their opposite Vice, painted on the splays of the chamber's windows. In addition, the splay of the window directly opposite the king's bed were painted with St. Edward the Confessor offering his ring of St John the Evangelist - the event from Edward's hagiography which defined Henry's representation of the English royal saint. Here it was not Alexander the Great, but an English saint-king who represented royal *largesse*. The first splay of the next window down saw the figure of *Largesse*⁹⁸ pouring money into the ever-demanding claw of *Covetise*, so defeating her enemy through her own magnanimity. In Binski's analysis of the relationships between the images of St. Edward the Confessor both beside and opposite the king's bed, and the series of Virtues: 'the iconography of the Virtues extended the moral qualities of the royal audience out beyond the structure of the royal bed into that area of lower status towards the west end of the room.'⁹⁹ (see Plate 1, p.53

⁹⁷ for a more detailed description of the paintings in the Painted Chamber see below under pp.138-44, including Plan of Painted Chamber, p.139.

⁹⁸ Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, (London, 1986), 37 fig. 3, 116.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 38.

Plate 1: The figure of *Largesce* crushing *Covoitise* in the Painted Chamber at Westminster



**Copy by Charles Stothard, 1819.
Photograph: Society of Antiquaries
Illustration taken from Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, 1986,
Colour Plate II.**

and Plan 2, p139). In this hierarchical design scheme, *Largesse* was the most highly placed and highly valued virtue, personifying the holy generosity of St. Edward the Confessor, the king's personal role model and mentor. The image of Edward himself, proclaimed not only the royal and chivalric virtue of *largesse* but the Christian virtue of *elemosina* (alms).

Largesse could, and in Christian terms should, involve self-sacrifice. This seems to be the meaning of probably the most enigmatic image commissioned by Henry III, the chequerboard and verse which adorned Woodstock great hall.¹⁰⁰ In 1240, orders went out for 'A chequer (*scaccarium*) to be made in the same hall to contain the verse *Qui non dat quod amat non accipit ille quod optat.*' (He who does not give what he loves does not receive what he desires). There is debate as to whether this was actually a chessboard or even an Exchequer table as Johnstone has suggested,¹⁰¹ although the lack of evidence for any Exchequer activity at Woodstock undermines the second supposition.¹⁰² Whether it was an object or a painting, it is the symbolism that is important here. The most obvious reading of the chequer and verse would be as a direct reference to the game of chess, where in order to win it is necessary to sacrifice pieces. A chequer had several meanings. As a chessboard, it could represent the field of fictive battle and analogies with chess were often used by the clergy to describe the struggle between the forces of good and

¹⁰⁰ Nov. 6th 1240, *CLR 1240-45*: 4.

¹⁰¹ Hilda Johnstone, 'The Queen's Exchequer under the three Edwards,' pp. 143-53 in *Historical essays in honour of James Tait*, ed. J G Edwards, V H Galbraith, and E F Jacob (1933), 145 & n.4.

¹⁰² conversation with Dr. David Carpenter.

evil.¹⁰³ Equally, the use of the word *scaccarium* to indicate both a chessboard and the royal Exchequer would give the chequer a financial connotation to those with some Latin learning. This double meaning of a chequer, as both an abstract image of mental and spiritual warfare and a visual pun on the Latin word for the Exchequer, emphasises the need to sacrifice money in order to win in the end.

The verse itself is also polyvalent. In the context of politically motivated direct reward-giving, the verse, '*Qui non dat quod amat non accipit ille quod optat*' (He who does not give what he loves, does not receive what he desires), can be seen an expression of the need for the king to distribute his revenue among his loyal retainers to gain what he desires - their continued loyalty. However, this verse has also been interpreted by both Tristram and Binski as an 'exhortation to charity.'¹⁰⁴ The verse echoes Christ's teachings on renunciation: just as the verse extols giving what one loves, Christ stressed a sacrifice is not worthy unless you are renouncing something dear. Christ's words in Luke emphasise to what extent his disciples must reject the world and put Christ before any other loved ones: 'If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters - yes, even his own life - he cannot be my

¹⁰³ Jane Turner, ed., *Dictionary of Art*, 34 vols. (New York, 1996) entry on Chess, Vol.6, 555-7.

¹⁰⁴ Tancred Borenius, 'The Cycle of Images in the Palaces and Castles of Henry III,' pp.40-50, *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 6 (1943), 47 n.6 for Tristram, and Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 32 for quotation. The Anglo-Norman text used in the west gable of the Painted Chamber at Westminster is slightly different: '*Ke ne dune ke ne tine ne prent ke desire*', and is translated by Binski as 'whoever does not give up what he possesses shall not receive what he desires'.

disciple.¹⁰⁵ On the question of wealth, three out of the four gospels record the famous conversation between Christ and a rich young man, identified in Luke as a ruler, who asked how to be perfect.¹⁰⁶ Christ replied: 'Sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven. Then come, follow me.' On seeing the dismal look on the face of the young 'man of great wealth', Christ continued: 'How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God! Indeed it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.'¹⁰⁷ This conflict between riches and spiritual salvation was thick in the air of thirteenth century Europe as the new Mendicant Orders, and in particular the Franciscans, embraced 'Lady Poverty', a chivalric personification of a spiritual goal, as their guide to salvation. How could a king, who was not in a position give up all his lands and goods to adopt a life of poverty, attain salvation? The verse solves this conundrum by emphasising the worth of *heart-felt* giving and points towards the example of a king who did manage to make it through the eye of the needle. Giving was not only a political necessity but a spiritual one too.

I. c) The Example of Edward the Confessor: ring-giving as alms

As we have seen, since time immemorial, the giving of rings typified royal *largesse*, and was still practised with this meaning in the thirteenth century. In the hagiography of Edward the Confessor, the king gives a ring not as a marker of political loyalties, but as an expression of his pious devotion to God, and the story of the ring, and the miraculous circumstances of its return, epitomised his sanctity.

¹⁰⁵ Luke 14:26, NIV.

¹⁰⁶ Matt. 19: 16-30; Lk 18: 18-25; Mk. 10: 17-31.

The story of St. Edward the Confessor, king of England, giving his ring, the only possession he had with him, in alms to pilgrim, was the story from his hagiography which caught the imagination of Henry III and became the standard means of depicting the saint in art.¹⁰⁸ This story was first introduced into the canon of holy literature regarding Edward the Confessor in the first hagiography of the saint written by after the Edward's

¹⁰⁷ Luke 18: 22-25.

¹⁰⁸ See Plate 2, p.60 for the depiction of the scene in Henry III's Painted Chamber. There was also a large painting of the coronation of St. Edward at the head of the king's bed in the chamber, see Plan 2, p.139. L E Tanner, 'Some representations of St. Edward the Confessor in Westminster Abbey and Elsewhere,' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, 15 (1952), 1-12; Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 48-9, 74-5, for the sculpture of Edward offering his ring to John in the triforium of the south transept at Westminster Abbey, and the ring as Edward's attribute in art. Orders for images of St Edward in the castles and palaces of Henry III: 1233 King's Round Chapel, Woodstock, the Majesty of the Lord and the four evangelists with figure of St.Edmund on one side and St.Edward on the other (*CLR 1226-40*: 196-7); 1235 Chapel of All Saints, Clarendon, history of St. Edward painted in chancel (Borenius, 'The Cycle of Images in the Palaces and Castles of Henry III,' 50); 1240, Chapel of St. John Evangelist, Tower of London, St.Edward giving ring to St. John (probably sculpture, *CLR 1240-45*:14); 1246, Chapel of St. Thomas Becket, Winchester, image of St. Edward (*CLR 1245-51*:30 see also 1252 & 1256 below); 1248, All Chapels at Evereswell, panel paintings of St. Edward and the stranger (*CLR 1245-51*:186); 1248, Queen's chapel, Winchester, St. Christopher bearing Christ and St. Edward giving his ring to the pilgrim, painted in western gable (*CLR 1245-51*:177); 1250, orders for building a chapel of St. Edward in upper storey of queen's new chamber at Woodstock (*CLR 1245-51*:292); 1251, King's chapel, Clarendon, images of St. Edward, Blessed Virgin Mary and cherubim (*CLR 1245-51*:362); 1252, King's Chapel Gillingham, Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Edward and St Eustace (stained glass, *CLR 1251-60*: 92) and Queen's Chapel, Gillingham St. Edward and St. Edmund king and confessor (stained glass, *ibid.*); 1252, White Chapel, Nottingham, Edward on one side, St. John on other, Virgin in middle painted on the front of the chapel. (*CLR 1251-60*:17); 1252, King's Chapel, Nottingham, altar reredos of story of St. Edward (*CLR 1251-60*:11); 1252, Chapel of St. Thomas Becket, Winchester: St. Edward with ring (stained glass *CLR 1251-60*: 95) and 1256, window of Majesty of the Lord and under it St. Edward offering a ring (*1251-60*: 308); 1261, Guildford Hall, St. Edward and St. John holding ring on wooden screen (*CLR 1260-7*: 21); 1261, Chapel, Guildford, St. Edward and St. John on wall beside king's seat (*ibid.*); 1269, King's Hall, Winchester, St. Edward carved and painted by door to hall (*CLR 1267-72*: 89, writ 784).

canonisation in 1161. This work, written by the Cistercian Aelred of Rievaulx, at the request of his kinsman, Abbot Laurence of Westminster, and finished in c.1163, drew heavily upon pre-canonisation works, notably that of Osbert de Clare, a monk of Westminster more famous for his forged charters. Aelred's work, however, introduced new stories and elaborated on old ones. His *Vita Sancti Edwardi* became the basis of future works (notably the thirteenth century Anglo-Norman *Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* dedicated to Queen Eleanor of Provence) and the central text for the cult encouraged at Westminster Abbey.¹⁰⁹ Aelred recounts how, after the dedication of a church to St. John the Evangelist, King Edward:

‘was walking in procession, surrounded by a numerous guard, [when] someone dressed as a pilgrim shouted to the king, begging that he be given some alms for the love of Saint John.

The king put his hand at once into his purse, but he had already dispensed all that it had contained in similar good works. The pilgrim insisted and begged all the more. The king called for his treasurer, but he could not be found because of the crowd. The saint was much distressed, and wondered what to do. At length he remembered the ring that was about his finger, pulled it off at once and offered

¹⁰⁹ Paul Binski, ‘Reflections on *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*: hagiography and kingship in thirteenth century England,’ *Journal of Medieval History*. 16 (1990), 333-350, argues that the text was written by Matthew Paris and copied at Westminster, and discusses whether the book was dedicated to Queen Eleanor of Provence or her daughter-in-law, Eleanor of Castile (p. 339-40).

it to the pilgrim. The latter thanked him for such generosity, and moved off, or rather disappeared.¹¹⁰

This gift was of great importance, not only because it was the story of a rich king who gave the only possession he had literally 'at hand' to give to a poor pilgrim, but also because it transpired that the recipient of this alms-gift was St. John the Evangelist in disguise. The king was not aware of this at the time, but later, English pilgrims lost in the back streets of Jerusalem as night closed in, were guided to safety by an old man who declared:

'I am John, the Apostle and Evangelist, the disciple whom Jesus loved. I hold your king in great affection for the sake of his chastity, and I would ask you to greet him from me. Lest he doubt what you say, return to him this ring which he gave me when I appeared dressed as a pilgrim at the dedication of my church.'¹¹¹

John also instructed the Englishmen to tell their king to prepare for his imminent death - foreknowledge of death was a topos in lives of the saints and showed that they were especially blessed. That the pauper was not whom he appeared to be also glossed the contemporary belief that through giving to the poor, the rich were in fact giving to Christ himself. Edward the Confessor's sapphire ring, the great alms-gift whose return signalled his salvation, became an indulgenced relic.¹¹² This ring had been removed from the tomb of the Confessor either at the time when it was opened to show the incorrupt state of the saintly corpse (1102), or when the body was translated from the first grave near the high

¹¹⁰ Aelred of Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, FSA Fr Jerome Bertram trans. (1997), 83.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 84.

¹¹² Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 54-55, 63, 134.

**PLATE 2: ST. EDWARD OFFERING HIS RING TO ST. JOHN
FROM THE PAINTED CHAMBER AT WESTMINSTER**



St. John the Evangelist as a ragged pilgrim begging for alms



St Edward the Confessor, with his dove-headed sceptre. The text of his speech beside him shows he is offering his ring to the poor pilgrim.

These paintings were on the splays of the window opposite the king's bed in the Painted Chamber. See Plan of the Painted Chamber, p. 140

Copies of the paintings by Charles Stothard.

Photographs: Society of Antiquaries

From Paul Binski, *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*, © 1986, Plate 4

altar to a shrine in Westminster Abbey (1163). It is likely that this led Aelred to invent the story itself to heighten the importance of the relic. The sapphire reflected the saint's own thurmaturgical powers, since sapphires were believed to have curative properties. This was evidently a belief current in the thirteenth century, as in the early part of Henry's reign, Philip d'Aubenev, who had been a royalist commander during the Barons' war, sued in vain for the return of sapphire rings he had lent to a sick woman in Rye to help relieve her ailments.¹¹³ Sapphires were particularly valued for their efficacy against eye-complaints,¹¹⁴ so for anyone meditating on the image of the ring-story, the sapphire ring would also remind them of the number of sight-restoring miracles performed by the saint-king, as well as his other healing miracles.¹¹⁵ It seems extremely likely that Henry III was the first Plantagenet king to 'touch for the king's evil', laying his hands on the sick to cure a nasty skin complaint just as Edward the Confessor had done.¹¹⁶

¹¹³ F M Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward: the community of the realm in the thirteenth century*, 2 vols. (1947), 26-27.

¹¹⁴ J Chevalier and A Gheerbrant, eds., *The Penguin Dictionary of Symbols, translated from the French by John Buchanan-Brown*, (London, 1996), 826.

¹¹⁵ Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 65,67,68-69,70-71, 98-99,102. Aelred tells of 6 blind men and one with sight in one eye cured by the Saint during his life in four separate miracles, and of 7 blind men and one with sight in one eye cured at his tomb in two separate miracles.

¹¹⁶ F Barlow, 'The King's Evil,' *English Historical Review*, 95 (1980), argues (p.1) that Bloch was rather bold to state that the custom of touching for the king's evil, in imitation of Edward the Confessor and Robert the Pious of France, was established in England and France from the reigns of Henry I (1100-1135) and Philip I of France (1060-1108). He shows that there is no firm documentary evidence for touching for the king's evil in England before 1276 (pp.14, 24) although 'by 1272 some people thought that the kings of France and England were curing the king's disease by their touch' (p.13). He thinks it is unlikely that Edward I established the custom and argues that despite the fact 'there is no textual evidence that Henry III touched... it is almost certain that he did.' (p.25). Barlow suggests that the custom was established 'in imitation of the French, but with a native antecedant' after 1259, when Henry spent the winter with Louis IX, for the confirmation of the Treaty of Paris.

Although, in light of the dedication and mythical foundation of Westminster Abbey, St. Peter would be the obvious choice of a saint to feature in such a miracle, here Aelred presents St. John as the holy interloper, probably to reflect the fact that Edward the Confessor was a saint of the same typology as 'the disciple that Jesus loved.'¹¹⁷ Both were regarded as saintly due to their chastity and neither suffered martyrdom, but were confessor-saints who were blessed by Christ and received holy wisdom. Just as St. John was the only apostle to witness the crucifixion and was blessed by the dying Christ, at mass, itself a ritual re-enactment of the Crucifixion, Edward sees Christ appear on the altar stretching out his hand to bless him.¹¹⁸ St. John the Evangelist was thought to be not only the author of his gospel-account, but also the writer of the Book of Revelation or the Apocalypse, the most powerful and mystical work of the New Testament, which tells of the Second Coming of Christ, the end of time and the Heavenly Jerusalem. Edward the Confessor was presented as a mystic for the monarchy: he had visions of the downfall of his enemies the King of Denmark, the sons of Earl Godwin and the Earl himself; he foresaw seventy years of trouble in Christendom, and the punishment of English nobility and church under a new regime.¹¹⁹ As befits a hagiography written during the reign of Henry II, when the monks at Westminster were trying to cultivate royal interest in this newly canonised royal saint, Edward's final prophecy on his deathbed regards the future

¹¹⁷ Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 81.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 60.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Chapter 21: What the King foretold of the two Sons of Earl Godwine' (pp.72-73); Chapter 22: Of the miserable death of Earl Godwine (pp. 74-75); Chapter 23: What the Lord in the spirit revealed to him about the Seven Sleepers (pp.77-79).

of the monarchy and the return of good kingship once the Anglo-Saxon line is re-established. Edward reveals a prophecy given to him in a vision that:

‘A certain green tree was cut from its stump, and removed three furlongs from its own roots; when it returns to its stump, with no hand of man to urge, or necessity to drive, and sets itself on its ancient root, when the sap flows again, and it blossoms once more and produces fruit, then there will be some hope of comfort in this sorrow, and a remedy for the disaster we have predicted.’¹²⁰

Aelred explains this riddle in terms of the re-establishment of the Anglo-Saxon royal blood line in the person of Henry II:

‘The tree symbolises the Kingdom of England, resplendent in glory, fertile with wealth and delights, honourable in the dignity of its royalty. The root from which all this honour derives was the royal blood, which descends in a true line of succession from Alfred, the first of the English, they say, to be anointed and consecrated as king by the Supreme Pontiff, down to Saint Edward.

The tree was ‘cut from its stump’ when the kingdom was taken from the royal family and given to another stock; it was ‘removed three furlongs from its own roots’ when during the time of three kings there was no mixture of the new and ancient royal lines. For Harold succeeded Edward, and William, Harold, and William the second his father William. The tree ‘returns to its stump’ when the glorious King Henry [I], in whom was concentrated the whole honour of the Kingdom, took for his wife Matilda, the great-niece of Edward, neither driven by necessity nor urged but the hope of gain, but out of pure love for her. Thus he

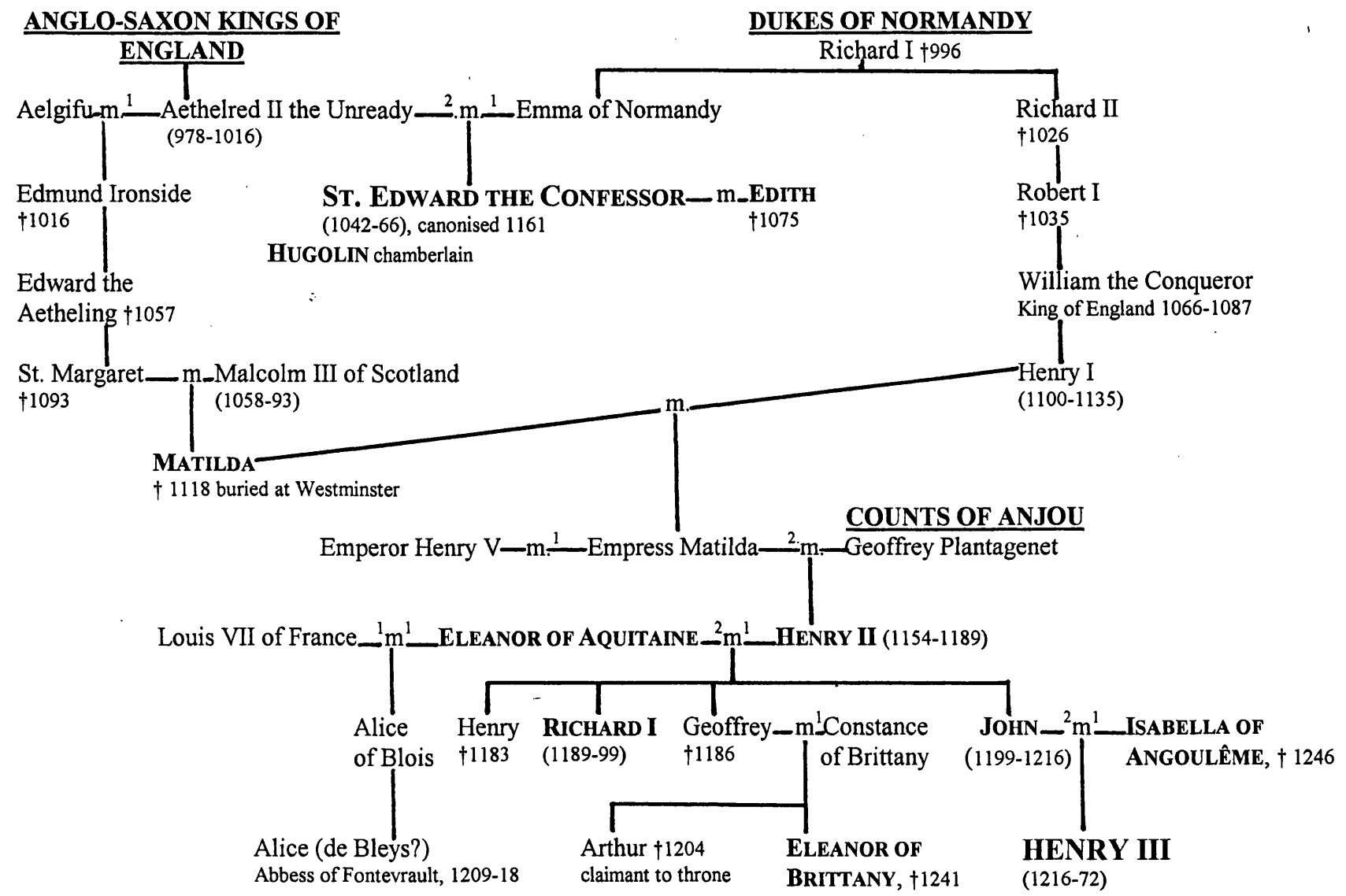
joined the English and Norman lines, and by the consummation of his marriage made the two one.

The tree 'blossomed' when the Empress Matilda [daughter of Henry I and Matilda] was born from the two lines, and it 'bore fruit' when from her arose our own Henry [II], like the morning star, like the corner stone joining together the two nations. Now indeed England has a king of English race; of the same stock she has bishops and abbots, barons as well, and perfect knights who, begotten by the mingling of both races, give honour to one and consolation to the other.'¹²¹

Although Henry II, unlike his predecessors, had backed Westminster's efforts to have Edward the Confessor canonised at Rome, this praise of him as a pre-ordained saviour of the English did little to encourage him to dedicate himself, and, more importantly, his money, to the royal cult. After all, within a few short years, he was caught up in the cult of another saint, also, less happily, of his own making: the martyred St. Thomas Becket, the very man who had presided at the translation of Edward as a saint in 1163. However, his grandson and namesake Henry III could equally claim that royal Anglo-Saxon blood ran in his veins, and was deeply devoted to the cult of the Confessor. This ancient Anglo-Saxon blood line enabled Henry to hold his head high in the light of both imperial and Capetian legitimisation propaganda. It is interesting to note that at the time Aelred was writing, the kings of France were struggling to thwart the doom predicted for their royal line in the Valerian prophecy. The prophecy held that unless the usurper Capetian blood was reunited with the original Carolingian royal line, the line would die

¹²⁰ Ibid., 89.

¹²¹ Ibid., 91.



GENEALOGICAL TABLE 1: THE UNITING OF THE ANGLO-SAXON AND NORMAN BLOOD LINES
IN BOLD CAPITALS: PEOPLE COMMEMORATED BY HENRY III

out within six generations of Hugh Capet. This emphasis on the need for *reditus regni ad stirpem Karoli Magni* (a return to the *stump* of the family tree of Charlemagne) was one of the motivations behind the disastrous marriage of Philip Augustus and Ingeborg of Denmark, who could claim Carolingian blood, and also informed Louis IX's repositioning of the tombs of his Carolingian, Merovingian and Capetian forebears at Saint-Denis in the 1240s.¹²² In the *Vita Sancti Edwardi*, Aelred proclaimed that a similar severance in the blood line of the kings of England had been overcome already, and the new blood line grafted onto the old. Henry III certainly interested himself in his Anglo-Saxon heritage. According to Matthew Paris, Henry could rattle off the names of Anglo-Saxon saint-kings.¹²³ Indeed, when Henry's sister Isabella was married to the Emperor Frederick II in 1235 her crown 'had been most elaborately constructed out of pure gold

¹²² Elizabeth A R Brown, 'Burying and Unburying the Kings of France,' pp. 241-266 in *The Monarchy of Capetian France and Royal Ceremonial*, Collected Studies (1991), 244, 246-7, for the repositioning of the tombs at St. Denis under Louis IX to reflect the rejoining of the Capetian and Carolingian lines. Elizabeth A R Brown, 'La notion de la légitimité et la prophétie à la cour de Philippe Auguste,' pp. 77-110 in the same collection, 80, for how rival families in the Empire and Flanders made use of the Valerian prophecy to undermine the legitimacy of Philip Augustus. For discussion of the *reditus*, see Gabrielle M. Spiegel, 'The *Reditus Regni ad Stirpem Karoli Magni*: A New Look,' *French Historical Studies* vii. (1971-2), 145-74, and Gabrielle M Spiegel, 'The Cult of St. Denis and Capetian Kingship,' pp.141-168 in *Saints and their cults: studies in religious sociology, folklore and history*, ed. Stephen Wilson (1983). U Bennert, 'Art et propagande politique sous Philippe IV le Bel: le cycle des rois de France dans la Grand'salle du palais de la Cité,' *Revue de l'Art* 97 (1992) also discusses the *reditus* and the reorganisation of the tombs at St Denis (with illustrative plans), in the light of the the statuary cycle of kings descended from Pharamond the Trojan, in Philip the Fair's Great Hall in Paris.

¹²³ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 54. Henry listed them on a visit to St Albans in 1257, along with the names of the baronies: '*Nomina regum sanctorum in Anglia - Albertus* (King Ethelbert of Kent, †616, first English Christian king, a.k.a., St. Albright), *Edwardus martir* (†979), *Kenelmus* (a Mercian prince, †post 811), *Oswaldus* (of Northumbria, †642), *Oswinus* (†651 cousin of Oswald), *Neithan*, *Wistan*(†849

adorned with jewels, and on it were carved likenesses of the four martyr and confessor kings of England, to whom the king had especially assigned the care of his sister's soul.¹²⁴ The English bride could claim a lineage as holy and as ancient as the Emperor's own.

This ancient lineage, which was central to aristocratic self-projection, and its holy legitimising power, was no doubt politically useful and important in attracting Henry III to the cult of the Confessor. Yet Henry drew his greatest inspiration from the Confessor in the realm of alms-giving. The confessor was consistently depicted giving his ring in alms, and the message that alms was essential in salvation was set in sharp relief by the story of Dives and Lazarus which was also present in some of the king's great halls. As I have discussed elsewhere, the story of Dives and Lazarus was specifically sited in the lower gable end of great halls, so that it was not only in the eye-line of the rich on the dais, but those entering the hall would see the image of the miser and his damnation and

Mercian prince), *Fromund, Edwulf, Edmund* (†979), *Edward* (†1066)' (*CM*, v. 617; Alan Smith, *Sixty Saxon Saints* (1994)).

¹²⁴J A Giles, ed., *Roger Wendover's Flowers of History*, vol. II.ii, 1215-1235 (London, 1849), 608; *Flores Historiarum*, H G Hewlett, ed., (Rolls Series no. 84, 3 vols., 1886-89), iii. 109: 'nam ad ipsius imperatricis dignitatem fabricata est corona opere subtilissimo ex auro purissimo et gemmis pretiosis, in qua sculpti fuerunt reges quatuor Anglorum martyres et confessores, qui a rege ad suae sororis animae custodiam sunt specialiter assignati.' *CM*, iii. 319, mentions the gold crown with gems but not the decoration of saint-kings. Three of the four 'martyr and confessor' kings would in all likelihood be: Edmund the Martyr, Edward the Martyr and Edward the Confessor. The fourth is less certain (see previous footnote for Henry's list of the holy kings of England, *CM*, v. 617). However, in the extant manuscript of *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*, an updated version of Aelred's *Life* written in Anglo-Norman verse usually ascribed to Matthew Paris, and dated to the 1240s or 1250s, it is Kings Alfred (†899), Edgar (†975) and Aethelred (†1016) who are depicted as the holy kings of England (Binski, 'Reflections on *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*,' 336, fig. 1.).

then turn towards the image of Edward the Confessor at the high end, representing the holy generosity of the English monarchy.¹²⁵ The New Testament taught that it was extremely difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of Heaven. The only hope for the rich was that they could serve Christ by performing acts of mercy towards the poor. St Edward provided a compelling example of a rich and pious king whose act of almsgiving not only led to his salvation but also revealed his own sanctity.

II. ALMSGIVING: DEFINITIONS AND PRACTICE

II. a) The theology of alms and Christ's presence in poor

The feeding of the poor to commemorate the dead is the centre of interest in this study. Both giving food to the needy and burying the dead were separate forms of almsgiving, two of the seven corporal works of mercy. The feeding of the poor in association with funerals and *memoria* seems to have been a cross over activity, a combination that is not suggested in the listing of types of almsgiving. Before going any further, it is necessary to give a brief description of the definition and obligations of alms-giving, the belief in Christ's presence in the poor, and role of alms in salvation.

The English word 'alms' is a contraction of the Latin 'elemosina' which is in turn derived from the Greek word for mercy. According to Aquinas, almsgiving is an act of mercy

¹²⁵ Sally Dixon-Smith, 'The Image and Reality of Alms-Giving in the Great Halls of Henry III,' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, CLII (1999), 83, 84-85.

‘whereby something is given to the needy out of compassion and for God’s sake’¹²⁶.

Since man can be needy both spiritually and physically there are two forms of gift. The seven kinds of spiritual alms are listed as: ‘instructing the ignorant, giving advice to those in doubt, consoling the sorrowful, reproving sinners, forgiving offences, putting up with people who are burdensome and hard to get on with and finally, praying for all’ The forms of material alms, also called the seven corporal works of mercy, are: ‘feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, giving hospitality to strangers, visiting the sick, ransoming prisoners, and burying the dead’.¹²⁷ The first six corporal works were taken from Christ’s words in the New Testament, and the seventh from the book of Tobit in the Old Testament. As Aquinas points out, the seventh work is something of an odd man out as all the others respond to the needs of the living, whereas ‘burying our neighbour is of no help to him.’¹²⁸ Thomas bows to social conventions about burial, countering that ‘what happens to his body is not a matter of complete indifference to the dead man, for he lives on in the memory of men, and to remain unburied is a slur on his honour.’¹²⁹ Overall, he argues that although spiritual alms are preferable to material alms, since a spiritual gift is of a higher order, the alms-giver should respond to

¹²⁶ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, 2a 2ae, Vol. 34 Charity, ed. R. J. Batten, (Blackfriars 1975), 239, Question 32: Almsgiving, article 1: is alms-giving an act of charity? reply.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 241, Q.32 art.2: is the traditional enumeration of the different kinds of almsgiving suitable?

¹²⁸ idem.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 245.

the greatest need in the recipient: 'a man dying of hunger needs to be fed, not to be instructed'.¹³⁰

The belief in Christ's presence in the poor came directly from Christ's discourse on the Last Judgement (Matt. 25:31-46) which was the source of the first six of the corporal works of mercy which are the centre of interest here. Christ addresses the righteous who are to receive the kingdom of Heaven as their inheritance saying: 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me'. The righteous ask him when did they see him and do these things for him and Jesus replies: 'I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.' He goes on to accuse the damned of not responding to his needs and the damned, equally bemused, ask Jesus when it was that they ignored him and receive the same answer: every time the needy asked them for help, it was in fact Christ himself, and, unlike the righteous, they had rejected him to the peril of their immortal souls.

This passage is explicit about the critical role of almsgiving in salvation. Clearly, while performing alms could bring spiritual benefits to the giver, ignoring the poor could lead to damnation. Almsgiving was a matter of precept, in other words, it was one of the things Christians were obliged to do. The precise commandment according to Aquinas is: 'to

¹³⁰ Ibid., 247, Q32 art. 3: are corporal works of mercy of more account than spiritual ones?

give alms out of our superfluous wealth; and to give alms to those in extreme need'.¹³¹

Failure to give alms in these two cases would lead to Hell. Anybody who could help someone dying of hunger, and instead ignored them, committed a mortal sin, since their neglect was in effect murder and broke the commandment to 'love thy neighbour'.¹³² In fact, when presented with someone in dire need it was even lawful to steal to give them alms and save their life.¹³³ So, even someone without financial means should do their utmost to relieve potentially fatal need. However, the separate obligation to give out of 'superfluous wealth' was not defined by the recipient's level of need but, on the contrary, by the giver's level of need. It was the differential between the giver's wealth, on the one hand, and his own requirements, on the other, which defined 'superfluous wealth'. Unlike the clear meaning of 'dire need', the definition of 'superfluous wealth' was debatable and relative. Aquinas gives two levels of necessity: firstly the basic amount required to keep a man and his dependants alive, which should not be used for alms, and secondly, the amount required to maintain his social rank and business commitments, as 'no-one should live unbecomingly'.¹³⁴ Whatever is left over after these two commitments must be given in alms as a matter of precept or absolute Christian obligation. Beyond this, since 'there is nothing so fixed and final' about what is necessary to maintain social standing, 'it is well to use such necessaries for almsgiving, though it is not a matter of precept, but of counsel'.¹³⁵ In other words it is something which those who wish to follow

¹³¹ Ibid., 255.

¹³² Ibid., 253, 255, 259.

¹³³ Ibid., 265.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 253, 257, 259.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 259.

Christ and become more like him are advised to do. Aquinas says piety comprises ‘every sort of almsgiving’.¹³⁶

Although the corporal works can only bring bodily relief to the recipient, they could bring spiritual benefits to the giver, in the form of prayers for his soul. According to Aquinas, if material things were given for the ‘love of God and neighbour’ the gift would produce spiritual fruits ‘in the shape of the prayers our neighbour offers for us in return for the material assistance we have given him’.¹³⁷ As Thomas points out, this exchange of the material for the spiritual smacks of ‘the vice of simony, the least suspicion of which must be avoided’.¹³⁸ However, he counters, somewhat weakly, that the alms-giver does not intend to buy spiritual things, which he knows to be beyond price, but intends ‘to deserve some spiritual fruit through his love of charity’.¹³⁹

In this exchange of the material for the spiritual, the quantity given in alms did not relate to the quality of the spiritual benefit. Despite the fact that if alms were given to a large number of paupers, then presumably, an equally large number of prayers would be offered up by the poor for the soul of their benefactor, it does not ‘follow that the greater the alms the greater the spiritual benefit.’ The relationship depended on the size of the alms relative to the giver’s wealth, as illustrated by the example of the poverty-stricken widow who gave only two coins to the temple, and yet, in Christ’s view, gave more than anybody

¹³⁶ Ibid., 257, Q32 art. 5.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 251. Q32 art. 4: do the corporal works of mercy have a spiritual effect?

¹³⁸ Ibid., 249, Q. 32 art. 4, objection 2.

¹³⁹ Ibid., 251, Q. 32 art. 4, reply to objection 2.

else.¹⁴⁰ Alms could be described as abundant from the giver's point of view 'if what he gives is much in proportion to his means.'¹⁴¹

Practising alms-giving could also help the rich develop a spiritually healthy attitude towards their wealth. Aquinas states that 'liberality frees us from that exaggerated love of riches which makes us unwillingly to part with them.'¹⁴² Cupidity, or the attachment to wealth and worldly goods, could bar entry to Heaven. Members of the Christian community who had any 'riches', whether intellectual, spiritual or material, had an obligation to use their abilities to help other members of the community.¹⁴³ Through the charity or love which bound the Christian community together, the inequalities of this world could be evened out, as Christians were expected to 'Bear one another's burdens'¹⁴⁴ This idea justified the existence of both the rich and the poor: riches were given by God so that the rich could support the poor, and the poor could help the spiritually needy rich by offering a path to salvation through almsgiving.

Alms was not only essential in salvation in general, but could also atone for specific sins.

Aquinas cites the book of Daniel: 'Atone for your sins by good deeds and for your

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 249; Luke 21:2.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 271.

¹⁴² Ibid., 239.

¹⁴³ Ibid., 241 cites Gregory: 'If a man has a good understanding of things, let him not keep it to himself; if he has plenty of this world's good let him be on his guard not to grow slack in works of mercy; if he has ability in directing affairs, let him be very careful to share the benefit of it with his neighbour; if he has the ear of a rich man, let him be afraid of damnation for hiding his talent if, the chance offering, he fails to please the cause of the poor.'

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 243; Galatians 6:2.

misdeeds by kindness to the poor'¹⁴⁵. He explains that 'alms can be counted as a work of satisfaction, in the sense that our compassion for the wretched is taken up and serves to satisfy our sins.' By performing alms to appease God, the penitent Christian also presented a sacrifice to God, an act of *latría*, the supreme worship due to God alone.¹⁴⁶ King John evidently took the idea that alms could cover sin quite literally, and routinely fed one hundred poor on the regular occasions when he broke the Friday fast and ate meat or went hunting.¹⁴⁷ Since alms could act as a form of atonement, almsgiving was a regular part of the process of penance and in monastic and royal households almsgiving increased during the penitential season of Lent.¹⁴⁸

Alms could also have an apotropaic power: 'Shut up alms in the heart of the poor: and it shall obtain help for thee against all evil.'¹⁴⁹ This idea can be seen in the almsgiving of Henry III when he fed the poor 'for the preservation of the health of the king, the queen, and their children.'¹⁵⁰

However, despite all these advantages and interpretations of almsgiving, the whole object of it was 'to help our neighbour',¹⁵¹ and having the right frame of mind was absolutely key if the alms were to have a spiritual benefit. Aquinas points out that is perfectly

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 237.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 239.

¹⁴⁷ Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 153; Charles R Young, 'King John of England: an Illustration of the Medieval Practice of Charity,' *Church History*, 29 (1960), 265-66.

¹⁴⁸ see below pp.96-99.

¹⁴⁹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Charity 2a 2a*, 251.

¹⁵⁰ *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

possible to perform an act of virtue (say feeding the hungry) without actually possessing the virtue (compassion for the poor for God's sake), but being motivated instead by 'natural good sense, by fear, or by hope of getting something out of it.' Although the giver would be acting in a just manner, feeding the poor without the correct motivation was not a true act of alms, and would not bring spiritual benefits, as 1 Corinthians makes clear: 'If I should distribute all my goods to feed the poor but have not charity (*caritas*), I gain nothing'¹⁵² In practice this might require a fairly sophisticated grasp of doublethink, to which it seems King John, at least, did not aspire.

Just as largesse can be seen as a form of gift-exchange where material goods are given as both a reward for, and in expectation of continued loyalty, almsgiving was also an exchange of material goods for more ephemeral returns, in this case to thank Christ for his help, and in hopes of his continued blessing. This cycle of hope and gratitude can be seen in Henry's distribution of alms during the later stages of the queen's pregnancies in hope that she would have a good delivery and also in thanks after the birth, at the queen's purification and for the continued health of the child.¹⁵³

¹⁵¹ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Charity 2a 2ae*, 241.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 239, 237 (1 Corinthians 13: 3).

¹⁵³ Feeding in both Westminster halls shortly before the birth of Margaret, and at queen's purification after her birth: *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 217, 233. For Edward's health after his birth in 1239 and in thanks for his recovery from the illness which struck him in September 1247: *CLR 1226-40*:435; *CLR 1245-51*:169. For a fuller examination of the prayers, oblations, almsgiving and gifts given before and after the births of the king's children see Margaret Howell, 'The Children of King Henry III and Eleanor of Provence,' *Thirteenth Century England IV: Proceedings of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne conference*,

The disdain of wealth and encouragement to give freely, propounded in the doctrine of almsgiving, also overlapped with the social conventions of nobility and largesse. As Webb notes in her discussion of money and sainthood in the thirteenth century: ‘the capacity to reject wealth totally was seen as psychologically more closely related to the capacity to distribute largesse than to the tightfistedness of the tradesman.’¹⁵⁴ Aquinas accepts that maintaining a certain standard of living in keeping with one’s social status is a form of necessity and that it is possible to fulfill the obligations of almsgiving without living ‘unbecomingly’. A saintly level of almsgiving, in line with Christian counsels of perfection, did, however, involve breaking with social convention. Joinville shows how the future saint, Louis IX, gave alms to the poor and ignored the demands of his social status, shunning conspicuous consumption, never ordering special dishes ‘as men of wealth and standing do’, and wearing clothes which were of much poorer quality than those worn by Joinville, as was his right as a noble, and Robert de Sorbon, a commoner.¹⁵⁵ Nevertheless, this adoption of relative poverty on the part of a king was almost as exceptional to the socially stratified mindset of the thirteenth century as the total renunciation of money on the part of the son of a merchant, although, in the end

1991, ed. P R Coss and S D Lloyd (1992), 57-72, and Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 30, 118.

¹⁵⁴ Diana M Webb, ‘A Saint and His Money: Perceptions of Urban Wealth in the Lives of Italian Saints,’ pp.61-73 in *The Church and Wealth: Papers read at the 1986 Summer meeting and the 1987 Winter meeting of the Ecclesiastical History Society*, ed. W J Sheils and Diana Wood (1987), 70.

¹⁵⁵ Jean de Joinville, ‘The life of Saint Louis,’ *Joinville & Villehardouin: Chronicles of the Crusades* (London, 1963). Louis’ alms: 330, 337, 342-343; never ordering special dishes: 167; the debate between Louis, Joinville and Sorbon about dress: 171. Nicole Bériou examines different contemporary approaches to living in this world without being worldly in her discussion, with reference to the conversations recorded in Joinville, of a

relative poverty in practice was adopted as the orthodox approach to wealth and was imposed on Francis' followers too. The canonisations of both Edward the Confessor and Louis IX showed that it could be just as holy to be a rich alms-giver as an apostolic pauper dependent on alms.

Christ had some very harsh words to say about the prospects of the rich entering Heaven, presenting the idea that the rich could be saved as quite ridiculous. In addition, as Garrison shows, the contradiction between, on the one hand, the teaching that Christ's sacrifice atoned for all sin and so opened the gate of Heaven to all believers, and on the other, that it was necessary (and possible) to cover sin through almsgiving to be saved, was hotly debated in the early church. The idea that alms could be redemptive was developed and acted as a counter-balance to the New Testament injunctions against wealth. Garrison summarises the development in Christian attitudes to wealth arguing that whereas 'the economic status of the individual was, at one time, a condition which either guaranteed or virtually prohibited entrance into the kingdom....this eventually gave way to an accommodation of the wealthy and a 'readjustment' of kingdom standards.'¹⁵⁶ The rich could enter Heaven by performing alms, and Christ's presence in the poor offered them that path. Perhaps surprisingly, in the light of the thirteenth century emphasis on the holy pursuit of poverty, Aquinas shows that, as long as the rich gave

sermon by Robert de Sorbon (Nicole Bériou, 'Robert de Sorbon: Le Prud'homme et le Bégain,' *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres Comptes Rendus*, (1994), 469-510.

¹⁵⁶ Roman Garrison, *Redemptive Almsgiving in Early Christianity*, ed. Stanley E Porter, *Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series*, no.77 (Sheffield, 1993), 9.

alms in the right spirit, they could enjoy their wealth, maintain their social status, and still fulfill their Christian obligations.

II. b) Fixed alms and daily distributions to the poor

Almsgiving, much as largesse, was an intrinsic part of the image of noble living, and was seen as a particularly appropriate activity for a king. In the preface to the *Dialogue of the Exchequer*, where Richard FitzNigel dedicates his work to King Henry II, he emphasises the importance of royal almsgiving as the duty of devout kings during peacetime. He writes: 'Money is no less indispensable in peace than in war. In war it is lavished on fortifying castles, paying soldiers' wages and innumerable other expenses ...for the defence of the realm; in peace, though arms are laid down, noble churches are built by devout princes, Christ is fed and clothed in the persons of the poor, and by practising the other works of mercy mammon is distributed'.¹⁵⁷ FitzNigel is evidently aware of the belief that Christ is present in the poor and goes on to link almsgiving to glory and nobility: 'The glory of princes consists in noble actions in war and peace alike, but it excels in those in which is made a happy bargain, the price being temporal and the reward everlasting.'¹⁵⁸ Here again, the twelfth-century author is well aware of the teachings surrounding almsgiving as an exchange of material gifts for spiritual benefits, and the key

¹⁵⁷ Johnson, Carter, and Greenway, eds., *Dialogue de Scaccario [The Course of the Exchequer]* by Richard Fitz Nigel, 2.

¹⁵⁸ Idem.

role of almsgiving in salvation. In this sense, he sees regal glory in almsgiving as better than martial glory.

Since, according to theological teachings, a failure 'to give alms out of our superfluous wealth' would lead to damnation, it is not surprising to find that almsgiving was a routine part of life for landholders. Hilda Johnstone sees the idea that 'because he had property, he must as a matter of course make charity a charge upon it' as a basic concept ingrained on 'the mind of the ordinary man of position in the thirteenth century'.¹⁵⁹ Royal writs pertaining to the management of the land of deceased or disseised barons support her argument and show that aristocrats did give alms to a range institutions and people¹⁶⁰.

¹⁵⁹ Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 150.

¹⁶⁰ Customary alms maintained while land in royal possession: writs regarding the alms of Ranulph, formerly earl of Chester: Windsor, 20 Oct. 1239, £22.3s.4d for alms & tithes (*CLR 1226-40*: 423); Westminster, 7 Feb. 1240, £6.10s from Michaelmas in 1239 to Tues after Epiphany in 1240 (*ibid.*, 448); Windsor, 14 Feb. 1240 to maintain three beds at St. John's hospital, Chester as under the late earl (*ibid.*, 451); 8 May 1241 as previous (*CLR 1240-45* p.49); Windsor, 17 Nov. 1241, 1d. per day to Amice de Constantin, a leper (*ibid.*, 90). The alms of 'W. formerly earl of Warenne': Woodstock, 1 Mar. 1241, 4 marks to abbot of Blanchelond (*CLR 1240-45*: 34); Reading, 8 Mar. 1241, 9 ½ marks to sick of house of All Saints, Belencomb (*ibid.*, 36); Westminster, 23 Oct. 1242, to pay his widow Maud two-thirds of former alms as long as she holds the lands of the king at farm (*ibid.*, 151); Westminster, 22 Nov. 1243, prioress of Kirkele to receive alms (*ibid.*, 199); Hodstock, 22 July 1244 payments to the abbots of Citeaux and Blanchlond (*ibid.*, 254); Westminster, 19 Apr. 1246, payment to canons of Blanchelond (*CLR 1245-51*: 40); Dereham, 14 Mar. 1248, payment to prior of St. Winwaloe (*ibid.*, 171). The alms of 'the late J. de Lacy, earl of Lincoln in Yorks and Lanc.s': Windsor, 13 May 1243, to pay tithes of mills and fixed alms (*CLR 1240-45*: 181); The alms of the late Maud de Lucy, Westminster, 4 Apr. 1244, payment to prior of Latton (*ibid.*, 226). The alms of H. de Albiniaco, late earl of Arundel: Kingston, 17 June 1243, to pay fixed alms as customary (*CLR 1240-45*: 183). Alms of 'G. formerly earl of Pembroke': Reading, 2 Nov. 1246, maintain annual payment and pay arrears to lepers of St. Mary Magdalene of Little Haverford (*CLR 1245-51*: 91). Alms of 'William de Keu, a Norman': Westminster, 26 Mar. 1247, payment to monks of Longvilliers and Humberstayn (*CLR 1245-51*: 113-4); Woodstock, 25 Apr. 1247, money to canons St. Mary's in Hastings Castle and bacon for

Whether these writs prove that charity was so integral a part of land-holding that it was unthinkable for the king to hold lands of the late earl of Chester without continuing 'to maintain three beds at St. John's hospital, Chester, as under the late earl'¹⁶¹ is more ambiguous. The existence of these writs might indicate that this continuation of alms was not taken as read, but required a special order, although the instructions in several of these writs to pay both 'alms and tithes'¹⁶² would suggest that almsgiving from property revenues was as well-established as tithing. Certainly, almsgiving was regarded as one of the most basic foundations of respectable living. According to Matthew Paris, in 1232 when confronted with the need to curb the incursions of the Welsh under Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, Henry III complained that poverty prevented him acting, since: 'all the revenues of the Exchequer are barely sufficient for my mere food, clothing and accustomed alms'¹⁶³ Indeed, it is these three things which form the core of Henry's provision for his cousin Eleanor of Brittany, who, as the grand-daughter of Henry II, and

Lauretta the recluse of Hakinton (ibid., 118); 25 Mar. 1251, money to prior of Wausingham (ibid., 343). These writs also prove that Johnstone ('Poor Relief in the Royal Households', 166) was right to speculate that the aristocracy followed the lead of the king in their charity, since these nobles, like the king, supported a range of people and institutions including religious houses, hospitals and individual hermits.

¹⁶¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 251; *CLR 1240-45*: 49.

¹⁶² *CLR 1226-40*: 423, *CLR 1240-45*: 181.

¹⁶³ *CM*, iii. 219: 'rex respondit: 'Audiui a thesaurariis meis, quod redditus omnes de scaccario meo vix mihi sufficiunt ad simplicem victum et vestitum et elemosinas consuetas, unde paupertas non permittit ut bellicas expediam actiones.' (Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii., 553, gives 'usual bounties' rather than 'accustomed alms'). The king's advisers tell him that if he is poor he must blame himself for alienating so much of his wealth. In response, the king demands a full account of his treasure and replaces Ralph le Breton with Peter Rivaux as treasurer (*CM*, iii. 219-20). This change of personnel leads on to the fall of the justiciar Hubert de Burgh (*CM*, iii. 220-230, 232-4). Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 150, gives the king's words citing Roger of Wendover's *Flores Historiarum*, RS 95 (should be RS 84), iii, 30, which gives exactly the same

the sister of Arthur, who had challenged King John's right to the throne, spent her life in royal custody. At the time of her death in August 1241, the king paid 210 marks each year for her maintenance, whilst her annual alms allowance was 25 marks.¹⁶⁴ Almsgiving was such a staple of noble living that even a princess in captivity, totally dependent on the king, would be provided with money for alms.

The alms given directly from land revenue was spent on imitating the alms practices of monastic houses, as well as supporting religious foundations themselves. As can be seen on the Pipe Rolls, fixed alms, that is to say regular alms payments, were paid out of county funds to religious houses (in accordance with charters of foundation or endowment) or in oblations given to churches. However, there was another form of fixed alms which directly involved feeding the poor. It was common practice for lay households, in imitation of monastic practice, to support a number of paupers within the household. In monastic houses these people were called *corrodians* and this was such a staple of noble life that even students of means would support paupers within their household, as Thomas de Cantelupe (the future royal chancellor, bishop and saint) and his

speech as Paris. RS 95, Matthew of Westminster *Flores*, H R Luard ed.(1890), ii, 203, does mention the circumstances but does not give the king's speech.

¹⁶⁴ *CLR 1240-45*: 41; *CLR 1226-40*: 128, 253. Eleanor and Arthur of Brittany were the children of Geoffrey, one of King John's older brothers. Since Geoffrey was already dead when Richard I died without heirs, the two claimants to the throne were Arthur of Brittany and John. After a bitter struggle in France, John kept his throne, but was suspected of having Arthur murdered in 1204 when he was still in the king's custody following his capture at the battle of Mirabeau (1202) (M T Clanchy, *England and its rulers 1066-1272: foreign lordship and national identity* (Oxford, 1983), 186-8, 296; Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 92 n.2).

elder brother did when they were students in Paris in the late 1230s and early 1240s.¹⁶⁵

That the king supported corrodians from fixed alms is clear in the royal accounts from the entries showing Henry III regularly gave daily support to various sick or elderly royal servants or their dependants until such time as they could be incorporated into the system of pensioners supported by the king's fixed alms organised by the king's sheriffs at county level.¹⁶⁶

Besides these 'in-house' paupers, daily distributions of food were made to the poor. One method was the distribution of leftovers from meals. This was also an adoption of monastic practice, where at each meal the monks' leftovers were put in an alms-dish and were distributed to the poor. In the Gilbertine order this was known as 'the Lord's dish' indicating the belief in Christ's presence at the table and also in the poor who would receive the food.¹⁶⁷ In the *Constitutio Domus Regis*, the list of servants of the royal household, their duties, rights and wages, drawn up in c. 1136, the pantry staff, who were responsible for providing bread and laying the table, includes a *portator scutelle elemosine* or bearer of the alms-dish.¹⁶⁸ Although in the *Constitutio* the bearer of the alms-dish is the lowliest of the pantry staff, this practice of gathering waste food for a daily distribution to the poor led to the institutionalisation of the office of royal almoner,

¹⁶⁵ *DNB*, iii. 900: Cantelupe, Thomas de by T F Tout. The brothers supported at least 2 poor scholars within the household and fed between 5 and 13 poor each day.

¹⁶⁶ as already discussed above, pp.29-31.

¹⁶⁷ Barbara Harvey, *Living and Dying in England 1100-1540: the monastic experience*, (Oxford, 1993), 13.

¹⁶⁸ C Johnson, F E L Carter, and D Greenway, 'Constitutio Domus Regis [The Royal Household],' in *Dialogus de Scaccario [The Course of the Exchequer]* (Oxford, 1983), 131.

an office-holder not listed in the *Constitutio*.¹⁶⁹ Young shows that when the Templar brother Roger was appointed as almoner in 1177, he was responsible for hearing petitions and received one tenth of all the food and drink consumed in the royal household to distribute to the poor.¹⁷⁰ The thirteenth century royal household maintained this custom: in 1229 payment was made for the repair of the king's alms-dish, and in 1255, the king's goldsmith was commissioned to make a new silver alms-dish for the queen.¹⁷¹ Although a great deal of ordinary, or regular, alms were paid for by 'standing order' and presumably did not involve the king very directly, filling up the almsdish at each meal must have been a very direct and visible way of giving from superfluous wealth.¹⁷² When the king dined in the great halls at Northampton, Guildford and Ludgershall, where the story of Dives and Lazarus was depicted opposite the dais in his direct line of view, he would be reminded of the rich man who was damned for ignoring the leprous pauper who

¹⁶⁹ Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 74, shows that William the Almoner was in office from c.1103-c.1130 although no almoner is listed in the *Constitutio*.

¹⁷⁰ Young, 'King John of England: an Illustration of the Medieval Practice of Charity,' 266, citing Benedict of Peterborough, *Gesta Regis Henrici Secundi*, Stubbs ed, (RS,1867), i.169. Also Baldwin, *The chapel royal: ancient and modern*, 374. The duty of the almoner to 'fragmente diligenter colligere' was repeated in the thirteenth century *Fleta* (Lack, 'The Position and Duties of the King's Almoner, 1255-1327', 98).

¹⁷¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 118; *CLR 1251-60*: 234. In 1237, payment was made for various silver dishes and platters which were delivered to the wardrobe which at the time was under the almoner Geoffrey de Sutton (*CLR 1226-40*: 257: Dover, 22 Feb. 1237). The writ does not specify if these were alms dishes but two of them had leather cases suggesting that they would be carried around with the king.

¹⁷² It was one of the duties of the almoner under Philip Augustus of France to collect the leftovers for the poor, and Peter the Ceremonious of Aragon's almoner stood before the king's table holding out the basket for the king's to put his leftovers in (La Selle, 'La confession et l'aumône: confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France,' 259). Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages: an essay in social history*, 48-49, for almoner and almsdish practices in monasticism from tenth century.

was 'longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table.'¹⁷³ This feeding of the poor was also personalised in that if the king himself ate less, then the poor would receive more, which accords well with the teaching that gifts to God are only worthy if they involve self-sacrifice.

Feeding a set number of paupers was also a daily event. In a writ issued in 1242, making arrangements for the king's absence on the Gascon campaign, Walter Gray, archbishop of York, the regent, and William Cantilupe, the steward of the king's household,¹⁷⁴ were ordered that along with the 500 poor which the king was accustomed to feed each day, as organised by John the almoner, they were to feed a further 250 each day from the 9 May, when the king's ships left until the day when he returned.¹⁷⁵ Writs of payment issued to the almoner over the period of the king's absence do suggest that this daily feeding really

¹⁷³ Luke 16:21. Image of Dives and Lazarus in the gable end opposite the dais: 1246, Ludgershall (*CLR 1245-51*: 32); 1253, Northampton (*CLR 1251-60*: 97); 1256, Guildford (*CLR 1251-60*: 262-3).

¹⁷⁴ Gray as regent during the king's absence 8/9 May 1242-24/27 September 1243: E B Fryde, D E Greenaway, S Porter, and I Roy, eds., *Handbook of British Chronology*, 3rd ed. (1986), 38. William de Cantilupe, the younger, was steward of the king's household Aug. 1238-1251 (Tout, *Chapters*, 39). His father, William Cantilupe I (d.1239), had held the same position under King John, and William II (d. 1251) was the father of Thomas Cantilupe the chancellor, bishop and saint (David A Carpenter, 'St Thomas Cantilupe: His Political Career,' pp. 293-307 in *The reign of Henry III* (London & Rio Grande, 1996), 293).

¹⁷⁵ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 497: '...mandatum est eis quod, cum de quingentis pauperibus quos singulis diebus rex pascere consuevit, majorem partem pascendam in Anglia, pascendam reservavit per fratrem Johannem elemosinarium, pasci faciant singulis diebus cc. et l. pauperes, ita quod elemosina regis incipiat fieri a nono die Maii, videlicet a die Veneris quo rex naves suas ascendit apud Portesm', et sic de die in diem quousque dominus regem reduxerit in Angliam cum prosperitate. Teste rege apud Xancton', viij. die Junii.' (1242).

took place.¹⁷⁶ In 1248, Robert de Muscegros, the queen's household steward, was instructed that in addition to the 100 poor he fed at the king's instruction wherever the queen happened to be, he was to feed twenty-five each day for the salvation of the king's children.¹⁷⁷ It is not specified in the 1242 writ whether the five hundred poor fed daily by

¹⁷⁶ Michael Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I', *England in the thirteenth century: proceedings of the 1984 Harlaxton Symposium*, ed. W M Ormrod, (Boydell Press, 1984), 121, doubts the figure of 500 a day under Henry III as 'there are no accounts by which this assertion can be tested.' It is true there is no almoner's or household rolls for this period, but a series of unusual payments are made to John the almoner, who was responsible for feeding 500 poor each day, to cover his expenditure on the king's alms from 9 May 1242 until 28 September 1243, coinciding exactly with the period of the king's absence from the realm. *CLR 1240-45*: 160, Westminster, November 8th 1242: 'Liberate to brother John, the king's almoner, £263. 9s. 10 ½ d. (63,238 ½ d.) to complete the king's (fixed - cancelled) alms from 9 May in the 26th year [1242] to the morrow of St. Martin in 27th year [12 November 1242, as 27 Henry III starts 28 October 1242], both days included.' (188 days - c. 336d. a day. To feed 500 at a penny a head for 188 days would have cost 94000d. or £391.13s. 4d.). *CLR 1240-45*: 169, Westminster, 3 February 1243: 'Liberate to brother J. the king's almoner £206.13s. 4d. [49,600d] to complete the king's alms from the morrow of St. Martin [12th November] to Ash Wednesday in the 26th year [should be 27th year, Weds 25 Feb 1243], including the latter day.' (105 days, c. 472d. a day). *CLR 1240-45*: 180, Westminster, 18 May 1243: 'Liberate to brother John the king's almoner £.61. 17s. 8 ½ d. [14,852 ½ d.] to perform the king's (fixed - cancelled) alms from Easter [April 12] to 9 May in the 27th year [1243], thus completing a year from the king's crossing into Gascony.' If we exclude 9 May as paid for below this is 27 days at just over 550d. a day. *CLR 1240-45*: 184, Westminster, 25 June 1243: 'Liberate to brother John the king's almoner £102 16s. 3d. [24,675d.] to complete the king's alms from 9 May to the Nativity of St. John the Baptist in the 27th year [24 June 1243], both days included.' [47 days = exactly 525d. a day]. *CLR 1240-45*: 187, Kempton, 23 July 1243: 'Liberate to brother John the king's almoner £113. 7 s. 10 ½ d. [27,214 ½ d.] to complete the king's alms from St. John the Baptist's day [24th June] to Saturday, the Assumption of St. Mary [15th August] in the 27th year [24 June-15 August 1243], both days included.' (53 days. c. 513 d. a day). *CLR 1240-45*: 192 Waltham, September 1st 1243: 'Liberate to brother John the king's almoner £101. 14s. 4 ½ d [24,412 ½ d.] to complete the king's alms from the morrow of the Assumption [16th August] to Michaelmas [28th September] in the 27th year [16 August-28 September 1243], both days included'.(44 days so c. 554d. a day).

¹⁷⁷ *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 34: Mandatum est R. de Muscegros quod preter illos c. pauperes quos singulis diebus, ubicumque regina regis fuerit, rex pasci precepit, pasci faciat singulis diebus ibidem xxv-que pauperes pro salute liberorum regis, sicut pasci consueverant. Teste rege apud Cogesford' xvij. die Marcii.

the king's almoner included corrodians, or the poor fed through the distribution of leftovers, but the qualification that 'the larger part' of the five hundred are fed 'in England' implies that some were fed abroad. Six months into the Gascon campaign, in December 1242, the king ordered that the sheriff of Norfolk, 'as he loves the king and his honour and his own safety' was to find 15 lasts of the best herring for the king and his entourage and another 60 lasts of herring for the king's alms to be sent from Portsmouth to Gascony by the end of January 1243 at the latest.¹⁷⁸ Evidently, Henry was also feeding the poor during his military campaign and brothers Walter and Roger, referred to as the king's almoners, and probably acting as sub-almoners under John de Leukenor, did travel back and forth between England and Gascony in 1243; the king had also taken the ornaments from his chapel with him so he could continue his liturgical devotions while abroad.¹⁷⁹ This does not necessarily explain the portion of the five hundred daily poor fed abroad: firstly, the feeding of five hundred poor in England and abroad is described as 'customary' in a writ issued before the campaign has even begun, and so does not refer to the poor Henry fed during his time in Gascony, and secondly, the feeding of the five hundred is organised by John the almoner, who clearly was not in Gascony with the king since he was paid for feeding of 4,000 poor at Westminster in January 1243 at the feast of St. Edward.¹⁸⁰ One possible explanation for the customary feeding of some poor each day outside England is the termly payments to the hospital of St Anthony in Vienne

¹⁷⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 166.

¹⁷⁹ *CM*, iv.220 relates how Henry lost the ornaments of his chapel in his flight from the defeat at Saintes. *CLR 1240-45*: 172 (25 February 1243) gives orders for the bailiffs of Southampton to provide passage for brother Walter returning to the king in Gascony. *CLR 1240-45*: 181, 16 May 1243, grants 40s. expenses to brother Roger doing the same.

¹⁸⁰ *CLR 1240-45*: 166.

specifically for maintaining the poor.¹⁸¹ This raises the question of whether those fed in England were also the poor fed daily at various hospitals and lazarehouses supported by the king, rather than paupers fed directly by the royal household. However, an alternative explanation is that the poor fed outside England were the recipients of daily distributions at the king's castles in Wales or Ireland: Dublin castle was certainly used as a site for feeding the poor on saints days.¹⁸² What is clear is that the five hundred was a composite figure, made up of poor fed at least two different sites, in distributions paid for by the almoner, who was then reimbursed.

If the figures are accurate, then Henry III's daily feeding of five hundred poor for himself (1242), and a hundred and twenty-five for the queen and children (1248), compares very favourably with the daily distributions made by contemporary rulers and later his son Edward I. On ordinary days at the papal court in the thirteenth century, 25 paupers were fed each day in the Lateran palace itself and a further 100 in the papal almonry, giving a total of 875 a week in comparison to the 3,500 fed on Henry's behalf and 875 fed each week for the queen and children.¹⁸³ Jean de Joinville, probably writing shortly after Louis IX's death states that the king fed 120 poor each day with the numbers increasing during Lent and Advent.¹⁸⁴ In the more detailed description of Louis' good works in Guillaume de Saint-Pathus's hagiographical *vita* written in c. 1302/3 Guillaume states that every day throughout the year even when the king was overseas, Louis fed 122 poor who received a

¹⁸¹ *CLR 1240-45*: 299/300.

¹⁸² *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 227.

¹⁸³ Agostino Parvicini Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle*, (Paris, 1995), 173.

¹⁸⁴ Joinville, *The life of St Louis*, 342.

quart of wine, two loaves, fish, meat or eggs and a penny each. A further sixty each day were given two loaves and four-pence each.¹⁸⁵ Another thirteen poor were fed daily in closer proximity to the king: three of the thirteen, 'the most disgusting poor that he could find', sat at a table near the king, eating the same food as Louis, and received 40 d. each; the other ten ate in another room and received 12 d. each.¹⁸⁶ So, on an ordinary day, 195 poor in total received some form of meal and money distribution from the French king. Every Friday, the fast-day in memory of the Crucifixion, the king fed a further thirteen poor in his chamber or garderobe, giving them 12 pence each and serving them himself. This brings the weekly total fed to 1,378, although on top of that twice a week throughout the year the king's almoner organised a general feeding to however many would come using leftovers from the table and as much other food as was needed. Louis was certainly feeding larger numbers each week than the papacy, but apparently quite substantially less than Henry III. Prestwich has shown how the weekly distributions to the poor in the household of Edward I fluctuated during his reign: in the 1270s Edward fed 206 a week; in 1283-4, 296 a week; at the end of the 1280s, 1,066 a week and at the end of 1290s, 666 a week.¹⁸⁷ These figures were made up of a daily thirteen or twenty-three with additional numbers fed on specific days of the week. Taylor's analysis of the alms-roll for 1283-4 shows that, like Louis, Edward fed more poor on Fridays in honour of the Holy Cross, but also that the weekly feeding of the poor under Edward represented an abbreviated version of the high points of the liturgical year, with fifty fed on Tuesdays in honour of Becket

¹⁸⁵ Guillaume de Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, Marie-Claude d'Espagne trans. (Paris, 1971), 59.

¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 58-59.

¹⁸⁷ Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I', 120-121.

(who was martyred on a Tuesday), the Friday fifty, fifteen on Saturdays in honour of the Virgin and forty on Sundays in honour of the Trinity.¹⁸⁸

As Prestwich has shown in his discussion of the daily alms distributions of Edward I, even 'ancient custom' could vary greatly when it came to feeding the poor, and although this very impressive daily feeding of 500 is described in 1242 as 'customary' there is evidence to suggest that this did not reflect practice throughout the reign.¹⁸⁹ In 1250 Matthew Paris comments that the king ordered the reduction of the expenses of his household, reductions which were implemented by the household marshal Geoffrey of Langley, and at the same time, in a cost-cutting drive, 'he also ordered the usual gifts in alms and the number of candles in the church to be reduced.'¹⁹⁰ Although Paris admitted that it was 'praiseworthy' that Henry freed himself from his debts to various merchants, he still saw the reduction in the king's hospitality as an act which could 'incur the reproach of inexcusable avarice'.¹⁹¹ Certainly the household roll ten years later, in 1259/60, when the king was under even greater pressure to curb his spending, records that

¹⁸⁸ Another fifty were fed on Mondays but no specific reason is given for this. Arnold Taylor, 'Royal Alms and Oblations in the later 13th century: an analysis of the alms roll of 12 Edward I (1283-4),' pp.93-125 in *Tribute to an Antiquary: Essays presented to Marc Fitch*, ed. F Emmison and R Stephens (1976), 96-99. C R Cheney, ed., *Handbook of Dates for students of English history*, (Cambridge, 1996 reprint), 112-113, Table 15 showing 29 December 1170 was a Tuesday.

¹⁸⁹ Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I', 120-121.

¹⁹⁰ Vaughan, ed., *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 141; *CM*, v. 114. Later in 1250, Paris reiterates his comments on the reduction of hospitality and is also astonished to note that at Christmas that year Henry gave no presents of clothing etc. to members of his household. He describes how the king took to imposing himself on others, demanding board, lodging, entertainments and gifts for himself, his immediate family, and his courtiers (*CM*, v. 137, 199).

¹⁹¹ Vaughan, ed., *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 141; *CM*, v. 114.

on an ordinary day the king's household was feeding 100 or 150 friars, rather than the 500 poor a day in 1242. This roll gives a day by day breakdown of the expenses of the household while he was in England and in France, as the king was out of England from 14 November 1259 until 23 April 1260, travelling to and from the court of Louis IX for the completion of the Treaty of Paris. Although the entries specify that 100 or 150 friars ('fr' in the roll) were fed each day, the cost given varies.¹⁹² Feeding 150 people at a penny a head would cost 12s.6d. [150d] but the payments for 'feeding 150 friars' vary from 9s.4d [112d.] to 21s.10d [262d.]¹⁹³ In just over a week at the beginning of January 1260 the cost of feeding 100 friars is listed as both 6s.3d [75d.] and 12s.11d. [155d].¹⁹⁴ Each of the entries for feeding the poor not only gives a total spent but itemises how much was spent by the spensary, buttery and kitchen. Certainly, in some cases, the variation in price is due to the fact that one of these offices has not charged, but used either stores already paid for or another source of money. However, this is far from always the case and does not explain all the variations in cost, which probably reflect the number actually fed. Some entries, where the cost is higher than expected do have an 'etc.' after the stated number of friars fed,¹⁹⁵ although the 'etc.' is not always present when a much greater

¹⁹² See Appendix 4: Daily feeding 1259-60.

¹⁹³ E101/349/27: 9s.4d. on 4 December 1259 (m.2). 21s 10d. on 17 and 24 Nov. 1259 (m.1).

¹⁹⁴ E101/349/27: 6s.3d. for 100 friars on 1 & 2 January 1260 (m.3), 12s.11d. for 100 on 13 January 1260 (m.4).

¹⁹⁵ E101/349/27 entries for feeding '150 fr etc': 21 Nov 1259, 25s.5d [305d.], 23 Nov 1259, 26s.10d [322d]; 6 Dec. 1259, 114s.9d [1377d] (all m.2); 29 Jan 1260, 44s.2d. [530d.]; 30 Jan 1260 26s.2d. [314d.] (m. 5); 14 Mar 1260, 18s.4d [220d.] (m. 7); 26 & 27 April 1260 25s.11d. [311d.] and 17s.1d. [205d.] (m.9). 200 friars 'etc': 13-18 June and 22, 24 June 1260, 5-7 August 1260. See Appendix 4.

amount of money was spent on feeding.¹⁹⁶ On some special days, the stated number fed, as well as the cost, is also increased: on 10 November 1259, when the king was at Canterbury on his way to Dover to leave for France, 220 friars were fed at a cost of 33s.3d. [399d.]; '450 friars etc.' were fed on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 1259, 1500 were fed on 5 January 1260, the death-feast of the Confessor which the king spent in France, and 5016 friars at the October feast in 1260 when Henry was back at Westminster.¹⁹⁷

Travelling was also an occasion for alms distributions to the poor and the king's arrival in a town was often hailed by almsgiving.¹⁹⁸ The king specified in the foundation charter of St John's Hospital outside the east gate of Oxford (1233) that the brethren were to feed one hundred poor each time he came to the town, and in 1239 the new hall at Dover was

¹⁹⁶ E101/349/27, entries for feeding '150 fr' no etc.: Thurs 11 Dec 1259, £4.-s.2d.[962d.]; Tues 23 Dec 1259, 49s.2d [590d]; 7 July, 25s.11d. [311d.]; 8 July. See Appendix 4.

¹⁹⁷ E101/349/27 m.2 for 6 December 1259; m. 3 for 450 friars etc. on Christmas Eve and Christmas day at a cost of £4.7s.5d. [1049d] covering both days; m.4 for 1500 fr on January feast of Edward at cost of £7.7s.2d. [1766d.] and 5,016 on 13 October for £12.-s.19d [2899d.] (m.15). Other feast days which saw a rise in the number fed: All Saints (1 Nov), St. Nicholas (6 December), Maundy Thursday (1 April 1260), Easter (3-4 April), Pentecost (22/23 May), vigil of Assumption (14 August), and Nativity of Mary (8 Sept). See Appendix 4.

¹⁹⁸ PRO E101/349/24 and 17 (queen's alms 1252-3), C/47/3/44 (1238-9 almoner's roll) and E101/349/30 (king's alms 1264-5) show that the queen distributed 2s.1d. on days on which she was travelling and the king, 4s.2d. The 1259-60 Household Roll, E101/349/27, shows larger numbers of poor fed on the king's arrival, for instance, in Canterbury on his way to and from France (10 November 1259, 26 April 1260), on his return to London (30 April & 1 May 1260), on his arrivals when going to and from Merton and Westminster in June/July 1260 and on his arrivals at Windsor and Winchester during August 1260. See Appendix 4: Feeding the poor in 1259-60.

to be filled with poor on the day before the king's arrival.¹⁹⁹ Henry also gave instructions for the poor to be fed at a castle or town in the days approaching his arrival there, and even sent an almoner ahead of him. For instance, at the end of December 1244, brother Robert the Templar was sent from Windsor down the river to Westminster to feed 250 poor a day and 25 poor daily for the king's children until the king arrived, and in a similar exercise, at the end of January 1246, brother Robert, described this time as the king's almoner, was sent to from Guildford to Windsor to feed 100 each day until the king's arrival, over a month later.²⁰⁰ Besides feeding the poor in anticipation of the king's arrival, it was also common practice for the powerful to distribute money to the poor they encountered as they were travelling. For the pope, this was one of the roles of his almoners, who were instructed to give out deniers to the poor who approached his entourage, and almoner's rolls surviving for 1264-65 shows amounts given in alms on the days the king was travelling.²⁰¹ The ring-story, introduced into the hagiography of Edward the Confessor by Ailred of Rievaulx, suggests that this was also a common royal practice which would be familiar to his twelfth century audience: King Edward was in a procession returning home from the dedication of a church when the pilgrim approached

¹⁹⁹ *CM*, iii. 263, for founding of hospital and *CLR 1251-60*, 269, for feeding there in accordance with the charter. *CLR 1226-40*, 477, for Dover hall.

²⁰⁰ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 281 tested 30 December 1244 at Windsor - the king probably arrived at Westminster by 5 January, the feast of the deposition (death) of Edward the Confessor. *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 390-1, tested 30 January 1246 at Guildford. The dating clauses of the following writs show that the king travelled from Guildford via Reading, Winchester, Ludgershall, and Marlborough and no writ is tested at Windsor until 15 March.

²⁰¹ Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle*, 173. The Almoner's roll for 1264-65, E101/349/40 shows 4s.2d. distributed in alms on the days the king travelled.

him begging for alms, and since he had already emptied the purse of money set aside to give to the poor approaching him, the king gave the ring from his finger to the pilgrim.²⁰²

II. c) Alms and the liturgical year

None of the information about daily feeding suggests that Henry, like his son Edward I or his brother-in-law Louis IX, fed a greater number of poor on Fridays in memory of Christ's crucifixion.²⁰³ However, the king did perform other rituals involving the feeding of the poor which commemorated and re-enacted events from the life of Christ. Under Henry III 'maundies' were organised for up to three hundred poor on Maundy Thursday and also at Christmas and Whitsun. Maundy ceremonial was derived from Christ's acts the day before he died. Before they sat down for the Last Supper, Christ washed and kissed the feet of his disciples and said 'A new commandment I give you: love one another as I have loved you.' The word maundy is a corruption of the Latin *mandatum* (commandment), the first word of Christ's instruction to his followers.²⁰⁴ In ecclesiastical practice, on Maundy Thursday, the anniversary of the Last Supper, twelve or thirteen paupers, representing the disciples, had their feet washed and were given food, money and clothing. This rite was first recorded in England by St. Augustine in c. 600 AD. and the *pedilavium* or *lavenda* (ritual footwashing) is recorded as taking place after mass on Maundy Thursday in the fifth century in Roman churches.²⁰⁵ Foot washing itself derived from ancient hygiene and hospitality customs in the East, where guests feet would be

²⁰² Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 83.

²⁰³ Prestwich, 'The Piety of Edward I', 120-21; Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 57-8.

²⁰⁴ *mandatum novum do vobis*. John 13: 34.

washed by a servant when they arrived at someone's home. When performed by the host, it was an act of great humility, as when the sinful woman came to the Pharisee's house and washed Christ's feet with her tears and dried them on her hair.²⁰⁶

These maundy practices were adopted by kings and in the thirteenth century maundy distributions are recorded in royal financial documents, although it is likely that ritual footwashing had been a royal practice earlier. In 1210, there are payments for garments to be made up for thirteen poor, and also for girdles, knives and breeches distributed to the thirteen by the king on Maundy Thursday at Knaresborough, with a further one thousand poor receiving a meal including fish. Three years later at Rochester Castle the records show that King John took part in another royal maundy, giving 13d. each to thirteen poor.²⁰⁷

Under Henry III, distributions called 'maundies' were made at Easter, Whitsun and Christmas. In 1237, three hundred poor received tunics and shoes at Easter and Whitsun, and two hundred at Christmas. It does seem that despite the numbers, and the distributions on days other than Maundy Thursday itself, all the poor had their feet washed as the 1238-9 almoner's roll, when accounting for the cloth taken to make tunics for the Christmas distribution says these are for the 'three hundred poor whose feet the

²⁰⁵ P A Wright, *The Pictorial History of Royal Maundy*, (Andover, 1966), 3.

²⁰⁶ Luke 7: 37-39.

²⁰⁷ Baldwin, *The chapel royal: ancient and modern*, 374; Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 153.

king washed and to which he gave tunics and sandals.’²⁰⁸ Henry apparently had something of a reputation for foot-washing: in Joinville’s account of the life of St Louis, when the king reprimands his seneschal for failing to wash the feet of the poor on Maundy Thursday because he finds it ‘unbecoming’, Louis comments to Joinville: ‘I suppose you would be very unwilling to follow the example of the King of England [Henry III], who washes the feet of lepers and kisses them.’²⁰⁹ The two passages which record the conversation certainly have a spin, with Joinville presenting himself with a haughty attitude to contrast with the humility of his king. Louis may be making a self-effacing reference to his own practices, but that he cites Henry shows that the English king did have a reputation for such acts. There is no specific reference in the Liberate and Close Rolls writs to lepers as participants in the maundy ceremony, but the orders for maundy tunics and shoes sometimes specify they are ‘*ad opus pauperum conversorum*’ instead of ‘*ad opus pauperum*’ suggesting that converted Jews were the recipients of maundy distributions.²¹⁰ In 1233 Henry had founded a house for Converted Jews in London, near the Old Temple, whereas Louis favoured the blind poor, founding the ‘Quinze-Vingts’ house for the blind in Paris, and specifically choosing them for his own foot-washing activities.²¹¹ The numbers of poor tended to at Henry’s ‘maundies’

²⁰⁸ PRO C/47/44 Almoner’s Roll 23 Henry III (1238-39), membrane 2 ‘ad tunicas c.c.c. paup[eres] quib[us] d[omi]n[us] Rex lavit pedes et dedit tunicas et sotulares’.

²⁰⁹ Joinville, ‘The life of Saint Louis,’ 169, 336.

²¹⁰ Christmas 1255, Christmas 1256, Easter, Whitsun and Christmas 1257, Easter and Whitsun 1258. See table of Maundy distributions, Appendix 5, for references.

²¹¹ *CM*, iii. 262; Joinville, ‘The life of Saint Louis,’ 337; Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 58, 62. Although Louis did not perform maundies at Whitsun and Christmas, he did wash the feet of three paupers, blind people if possible so that they would not recognise him, every Saturday in a special room in the Palais de la Cité. The number three probably reflects practice in Benedictine houses, where every day

decreased in the 1250s when Paris comments on the reduction in the king's alms,²¹² but it is evident that not only the king, but also the queen and the royal children participated in the ceremony. From 1255, the number of tunics and pairs of shoes ordered for each of the thrice-yearly distributions is often 171, with 150 ordered for the king and queen, and twenty-one for their children.²¹³ In 1253, when the king spent Christmas in Gascony, eighty pairs of shoes were ordered for the queen to distribute at Westminster, and fifteen for the Lord Edward.²¹⁴ At Easter 1262, shoes were ordered specifically for distribution by Edmund, the king and queen's second son.²¹⁵ By contrast, Louis IX also asked his sons Philippe, Jehan and Pierre to perform the *pedilavium* if they were with him on Maundy Thursday, but each of them, including the king, washed the feet of the customary thirteen poor, rather than the much higher numbers under Henry III.²¹⁶

a 'maundy' was performed for three poor pensioners of the house, who, as set out for English houses by the *Regularis Concordia*, were to receive accommodation and a living within the house. As on Maundy Thursday itself, the poor received food and money after their feet had been washed and dried. There was a rota for the whole community including the abbot to perform these acts, so Louis was in fact performing this small-scale *pedilavium* more often than the average Benedictine monk, whereas Henry III was washing the feet of far larger numbers at one go. Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 12; Dom David Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England: a history of its development from the times of St. Dunstan to the Fourth Lateran Council, 943-1216* (Cambridge, 1249), 482.

²¹² As discussed above p.89.

²¹³ See Appendix 5: Table of 'Maundy' distributions.

²¹⁴ *CLR 1251-60*: 155.

²¹⁵ *CLR 1260-67*: 83.

²¹⁶ Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 49. Taylor records the money spent on Maundy Thursday 1284 under Edward I, showing that 4s.3d., 2s.6d., 20d. and 12d. (total: 113d) was given 'by or in the names of the king, queen, Princess Joan and Princess Elizabeth' and that 64 ells of cloth and 114 pairs of shoes were bought for distribution during Holy Week (Taylor, 'Royal Alms and Oblations,' 116).

The poor also benefited from the rhythms of fast and feast throughout the liturgical year. Although Christianity, unlike the other religions of the book, had no food taboos or food restrictions *per se*, the amount and type of food eaten by both monks and laymen in the thirteenth century varied with the sacred status of the season, and more was given to the poor on feast days and during the seasons when the well to do ate less for religious reasons.

The two chief contemplative seasons were accompanied by dietary restrictions. Lent, the forty days leading up to Easter, was a fast which marked Christ's forty days in the desert tormented by the Devil. During Lent, the staple foods were fish and bread, with all red meat prohibited. In the cloister, more observant monks would start this fast at Septuagesima, the third Sunday before Ash Wednesday, the official start of Lent.²¹⁷ The Lenten fast was also kept in lay society with many traditions based on Lent still in evidence today. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 decreed that all adult Christians were

²¹⁷ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 12. Benedictine monks were not supposed to eat red meat at any time of year - this was part of the sacrifice of various freedoms and common practices of normal life which a monk undertook in order to dedicate himself to Christ. According to the rule of St. Benedict, only sick monks in the infirmary were permitted to eat meat, to help them re-gain their strength. However, by the thirteenth century, many Benedictine houses in England did serve meat in the refectory. This lapse was evidently a cause for discussion in the thirteenth century and in 1237 the council of the legate Otto praised the decision of the Benedictine general chapter to return 'to their limits....according to the rule of St. Benedict, they will abstain from eating flesh, except the weak and sick' (Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, i. 86; *CM*, iii. 432-3). In the following year, the legate met with the heads of the Benedictine houses in England to inform them of the pope's decrees regarding the reform of the order, which included the pope's instruction that: 'in order that all occasion and matter for discontent amongst those monks who have been accustomed by an abuse to eat meat, may be removed, [we] order abbots and priors to procure, according to the means of their house, and supply to the

to go to confession once a year. Shrove Tuesday is named for the practice of being confessed or shriven before the beginning of Lent so as to enter the fast forgiven with various penances to carry out. The word 'carnival' comes from the Latin for meat, *carne*, and were parties where meat was eaten for the last time before the forty days' fast. For laymen, the renunciation of the flesh in Lent meant not just giving up meat but also forgoing sex. Whether or not the average person observed this is a matter for speculation, but marriages were not performed during Lent, as under these ecclesiastical Lenten laws they could not be consummated. Advent, the four weeks prior to the celebration of the Incarnation of Christ at Christmas, was also a contemplative season accompanied by fasting in the cloister and outside amongst the particularly pious.

Whilst those of means deprived themselves of certain types of food during Lent and Advent, conversely, larger numbers of poor were fed by religious houses and princes in these two seasons dedicated to contemplation and penance. For example, in the mid-twelfth century at St. Augustine's Canterbury, Abbot Silvester instituted the practice of feeding as many poor as there were brethren in the house every day during Lent.²¹⁸ It is clear that members of the royal household ate fish during Lent, and a schedule recorded in the Close Rolls in 1260 gives a list of 32 religious institutions, (comprising thirteen monastic houses, nine communities of canons, three hospitals and seven mendicant houses) which 'customarily' received forty-four thousands of herring between them for

monks, some other suitable food instead of the food forbidden to them.' (Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, i. 142; *CM*, iii. 501-2).

²¹⁸ Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 484.

Lent as part of the king's alms.²¹⁹ However, unlike Louis IX, who fed an extra thirteen poor in his garderobe every Wednesday, Friday and Saturday during Lent and Advent,²²⁰ Henry does not seem to have organised any special almsgiving throughout Lent for the indigent poor, although in Lent 1248 he fed the prisoners in Newgate for a day, and on Good Friday 1241 fed the poor in the halls at Windsor and Dublin castle, in addition to his usual distributions on Maundy Thursday.²²¹ The Christmas season did see daily distributions to the poor, with two hundred poor fed each day from 6 December 1238 to 6 January 1239.²²² In 1246, the king fed the poor at Westminster during Christmas week, and at Windsor on every day from Christmas to the Circumcision (1 January).²²³ Other than that, the king fed the poor on specific feast days which fell within Advent, just as he fed the poor on saints days throughout the year.

On major saints days, in monasteries the poor, like the monks themselves, received more food. The monks, who spent the day celebrating the saint in their church, would receive extra food in additional dishes called pittances.²²⁴ Pittances were dishes of higher quality

²¹⁹ Payments for herrings used in the queen's household during Lent: *CLR 1251-60*: 284; *CLR 1251-60*: 299. Examples of other orders for herring during Lent not specifically for alms: *CLR 1260-67*: 203, 206, 208. Orders for herrings for the king not for alms: *CLR 1226-40*: 410; *CLR 1240-45*: 12 (showing concern to deliver as much fish as possible to the king, salted and in pies, during Advent); *CLR 1240-45*: 166; *CLR 1267-72*: 153; writ 1357. Schedule of religious houses to receive herrings from the king for Lent: *Close Rolls 1259-61*: 238-9.

²²⁰ Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 57-58. This was in addition to the total of 195 paupers who were provided with food each day by the king's household.

²²¹ *CLR 1245-51*:168-9; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 227; *CLR 1240-45*: 37.

²²² *CLR 1226-40*: 356.

²²³ *CLR 1245-51*:109; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 18-19.

²²⁴ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 11.

than the basic fare of the generals (the cooked dishes served to all the monks), accompanied by pottage or pulmenta (a dish concocted from vegetables and cereal foods).²²⁵ On these feast days it was also common for wine to be served instead of the normal ale.²²⁶ This was an exchange of food for prayers and as the celebration of saints days involved the singing of long offices, extra allowances of drink were no doubt appreciated.²²⁷ Lay benefactors could and did sponsor these monastic feasts. In October 1247, when Matthew Paris attended the feast of the translation of Edward the Confessor at Westminster, and witnessed the procession carrying the newly-acquired relic of the Holy Blood to the Abbey, he notes that the king: 'ordered all the monks who had come there to be sumptuously entertained in the refectory at the royal expense along with the monks of Westminster and some others.'²²⁸ On feast days, by default, the poor were likely to receive more food from the alms-dish leftovers, since the monks themselves were served several pittances as well as the usual generals, and so, since the pittances

²²⁵ The food that monks themselves ate each day was directly related to the liturgical year which marked a series of commemorations of acts of the life of Christ and the deaths and martyrdoms of the saints. The basic fare in Benedictine houses was one main meal a day served at about 11-11.30 am, which was made up of a starter of pottage, and two cooked dishes called generals (*generalia*) served with bread and ale. Each meal was accompanied by prayers and contemplation of the scriptures. Grace was recited at the beginning and end of the meal which was supposed to be conducted in complete silence with one reader reciting from the Bible or homiletic texts. From Easter until 13 September (the vigil of the Exultation of the Holy Cross) supper was also served. The rest of the year was subject to various dietary restrictions, and the amount and nature of daily food fluctuated in accordance with the spiritual importance of the day and the events it commemorated (ibid., 10, 12, 43, 45).

²²⁶ Ibid., 44.

²²⁷ Ibid., 58.

²²⁸ Vaughan, ed., *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 40; *CM*, iv. 645.

were of a higher standard and more appetising, the generals were less likely to be eaten and so would be given to the poor in the almoner's distribution of leftovers.²²⁹

Besides giving food to monks in exchange for prayer on saints days, Henry III fed the involuntary poor. For example, at the feast of St. Edmund, king and martyr in November 1247, Henry III fed the poor in the Great Hall at Westminster Palace and gave a pittance to the monks of Westminster who sung mass in honour of the saint.²³⁰ The king regularly fed the poor on the feasts commemorating the lives of Christ, the Virgin Mary and SS. Peter and Paul, the death days of the apostles John and Thomas, pope Gregory, as well as the English saints King Edmund, King Edward and Thomas Becket.²³¹ The numbers fed

²²⁹ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 11, 13.

²³⁰ *Close Rolls 1247-1251*: 4.

²³¹ Pope Gregory (12 March): *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 399. Peter and Paul (29 June): *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 311; *CLR 1240-45*: 84, 307; *Close Rolls 1242-7*: 199, 434; *CLR 1245-51*: 106, 169. St Peter in Chains (1 August): *Close Rolls 1237-42*, 319; *CLR 1240-45*: 307; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 446. Pope Stephen (Beatus rather than Sanctus in writ, 2 August) *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 448. BVM Assumption (15 August): *CLR 1226-40*: 490; *CLR 1240-45*: 66. BVM Nativity (8 September): *CLR 1240-45*: 306. Edward the Confessor, Translation (13 October): *CLR 1240-45*: 148; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 331; *CLR 1251-60*: 187; *Close Rolls 1254-56*: 222; *CLR 1260-67*: 60, 110; *CPR 1258-60*: 281. All Saints (1 November): *Close Rolls 1237-43*: 233; *CLR 1240-45*: 6; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233. All Souls (2 November): *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 233; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233. St Edmund, king and martyr (20 November): *Close Rolls 1247-1251*: 4; *CLR 1245-51*: 151. St Thomas, apostle (21 December): *CLR 1226-40*: 356; *CLR 1240-45*: 284. Christmas Eve: *C/47/44*; *CLR 1226-40*: 356; *CLR 1226-40*: 435; E101/349/27. St Stephen, martyr (26 December), St John, Apostle and Evangelist (27 December), Holy Innocents (28 December) Thomas Becket (29 December), Epiphany (6 Jan) : *CLR 1226-40*: 356, 366, 433; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 227; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 493; *CLR 1245-51*: 106; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 18-19. Circumcision (1 Jan): *CLR 1226-40*: 356; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 150; *CLR 1240-45*: 306; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 491; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 18-19. Death of Edward the Confessor (5 Jan): *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 382/3; *CLR 1240-45*: 166; *CLR 1245-51*: 21; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 493; *Close Rolls 1251-53*: 10; *CLR 1251-60*: 31, 520, 522; *CLR 1260-67*, 130. Conversion of St Paul (25 Jan): *Close Rolls 1242-7*: 152; *CLR*

on saints days were often in the thousands, with the largest number being 15,000 poor fed in St Paul's churchyard on the feast of the Conversion of St Paul in 1244.²³² Once again, this compares favourably with contemporary practice. In Rome, saints days were marked by feeding anywhere between 10 and 400 extra poor in addition to the daily 125.²³³ Under Edward I, the 1283-84 almoner's roll shows that 30 to 300 poor were fed on most saints days, with 500 fed on Christmas day.²³⁴ The largest number of poor which Saint-Pathus records that Louis IX fed on a single occasion is 300.²³⁵

The scale of Henry's distributions to the poor suggest that Johnstone was quite right in seeing the reign of Henry III as 'a new chapter in the history of almsgiving'.²³⁶ However, it is not surprising to find that royal almsgiving mimicked monastic practice towards the poor, or that the rhythms of sacred time should structure these distributions. The monastic strain in royal generosity is distinct from the heroic and chivalric tradition of largesse, but there was a high degree of compatibility between them. The royal feeding analysed here links the ancient secular noble ideal of generosity with equally ancient monastic practice.

1240-45: 306; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 199; *CLR 1245-51*: 111. BVM Purification (2 Feb): *CLR 1226-40*: 446; *CLR 1240-45*: 306; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 390-1.

²³² order: *Close Rolls 1242-7*: 152. Payment: *CLR 1240-45*: 306. This is the largest number of poor explicitly stated in instructions for feeding on a saint's day - many of the orders for feeding the poor involve feeding as many poor as can get into various halls and chambers, a question which will be discussed in the next chapter.

²³³ Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle*, 173.

²³⁴ Taylor, 'Royal Alms and Oblations,' 99-103.

²³⁵ Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 61. He says that when the king visited a region he did not go to very often, for instance Normandy or Berry, he gathered 300 poor to eat in his hall.

²³⁶ Johnstone, 'Poor Relief in the Royal Households,' 153.

It is, of course, closer to the latter: in fact royal and monastic almsgiving are two manifestations of the same spirit.

III. MEMORIAL ALMS

We have seen how closely feeding the poor correlated with the medieval Church's liturgical life. Against this background, the link between the liturgical commemoration of the dead and feeding the poor seems perfectly natural, all the more so in the light of other links between food and death.

Evidently, feasting and feeding the poor on saints days was one use of food for the commemoration of the dead, but, although masses and almsgiving were performed on death anniversaries as well as on saints' day, there was a difference in the meaning of the acts. Voragine follows Augustine in saying that 'whoever prays for a martyr wrongs the martyr' as they have gone straight to heaven and praying for those who are already in Heaven is an 'insult'. He draws the distinction between the two kinds of death celebrations, arguing that 'as we celebrate the anniversary of the saints to their honour and our own profit, we mark the anniversary of the departed to their benefit and our own devotion.'²³⁷ Devotion to the saints was a form of praise for God, as what was admirable and praiseworthy in a saint was the extent to which he or she had imitated the life of Christ and lived by his teaching.²³⁸ Remembering the ordinary dead was a different

²³⁷ *The Golden Legend by Jacobus de Voragine c. 1260*, William Granger Ryan trans., 2 vols. (Princeton, 1993), 287, 289.

²³⁸ Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition, A History of the Development of Doctrine, volume 3: The Growth of Medieval Theology (600-1300)*, (Chicago, 1978), 176.

matter. Nevertheless, the use of food in the celebration of the lives and holy deaths of the saints, and the meals given to the poor to remember the ordinary dead have common origins.

III. a) Early Christian *agapes*

From the earliest times, Christians expressed their community with each other and with God by gathering together to share a meal. In the early church the mass, itself a type of meal, was followed by a dinner for the congregation. The commemoration of the dead was also expressed through funeral meals. The Greek word *agape*, translated into Latin as *caritas*, meaning both the love of Christ for humanity and the spiritual love binding the members of the community of believers, was applied to meals celebrated by believers in close association with masses held on saints days and at funerals and marriages.²³⁹

Although calling these meals *agapes* gave these funeral meals a specifically Christian interpretation as an expression of a social bond based on the love of Christ, in practice there was little to differentiate a Christian *agape* from the type of funeral meals which took place among Roman pagans, who held a meal at the grave on the day of burial in honour of the deceased, and held meals to mark the seventh and fortieth days after death and on the birthday of the deceased.²⁴⁰ In the late fourth century, both St Ambrose and St Augustine were critical of the graveside feasts held by Christians even though the practice had been given Christian overtones, for instance feasting on the anniversary of death,

²³⁹ F L Cross, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, 3rd ed. (Oxford, 1958), 23; Canon Léon Bouchage, 'Les repas funèbres en Savoie,' pp.190-220, *Mémoires de l'Académie des Sciences, Belles-Lettres et Arts de la Savoie*, 11 (1909), 190.

which marked the beginning of a new life, rather than on the day of the dead individual's earthly birthday.²⁴¹ Augustine, in a letter to the bishop of Carthage, suggested that rather than holding these funeral feasts, which he saw as essentially pagan, Christians should feed the poor. In his view 'if anyone for the sake of religion should wish to offer something of money, let it be paid out directly to the poor'.²⁴² According to Paxton: 'thus [Augustine] expressly linked care for the dead with care for the poor, bringing together, in a sense, two 'invisible' ends of the community and transforming a private, familial matter into a public, communal one'.²⁴³

Perhaps the natural descendants of agapes were the 'charities', 'help-ales' or 'scot-ales' of the thirteenth century. These were meals and drinking sessions at which people would pay exaggerated prices for the food and drink in order to raise money for a good cause, whether to bail out someone in financial straits, who would brew the beer for the help-ale and then sell it at a profit, or to provide money for a newly-wed couple at a bride-ale. This format was also regularly used by parishes, guilds and corporations to raise money for poor-relief. Although the drunkenness inherent in such enterprises was condemned by the bishop of Salisbury and the bishop of Bath and Wells in 1258-59, annual church-ales were popular and according to Bennett were 'a central focus of piety and popular culture,

²⁴⁰ Frederick S Paxton, *Christianizing death: the creation of a ritual process in early medieval Europe*, (Ithaca, 1990), 23.

²⁴¹ Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity*, (Chicago, 1981), 26.

²⁴² Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 26-7.

²⁴³ *Ibid.*, 27.

charity and play, co-operation and community.²⁴⁴ She notes that at these occasions the distinctions between the givers and the receivers were blurred as the poor also took part in the festivities. Guilds and fraternities, which have been described as ‘funeral-clubs’ also held feasts to commemorate their dead brethren and as an expression of the fraternity among the members both dead and alive.

III. b) Monastic Practices

Although agapes and the controversy they aroused are important in the development of Christian ritual and the conceptual links between food, community and death, the more proximate origins of the phenomenon studied in this thesis should be sought in monastic practices. The link which Augustine made between commemorating the dead and feeding the poor in his efforts to quash *agapes* was incorporated into the liturgical commemoration of the dead by ninth century monks.²⁴⁵ It is essential to examine the practices of monastic communities in relation to the poor, the use of food in celebration of saints days and the commemoration of the ordinary dead, as it was from these that laymen took their cue for their own food centred rituals. Religious houses were naturally centres of liturgical commemoration, celebrating the feasts of the church and the death-anniversaries of members of their own communities and lay benefactors either buried in their church or who had requested and provided endowments to support their own

²⁴⁴ Judith M Bennett, ‘Conviviality and Charity in medieval and early modern England,’ pp.19-41, *Past and Present*, 134 (1992), 26.

²⁴⁵ Paxton, *Christianizing Death*, 136-7. This was agreed at a Bavarian council in 805, which, following in the wake of the prayer union of Attigny (762) and other similar initiatives, decided that alms as well as masses and the singing of the psalms should be part of the commemoration of the dead.

commemoration. Whereas laymen, by definition, could not perform the mass or the offices for the dead, they could and did mimic the forms of poor relief provided by monks and the commemorative use of ordinary, everyday food.

III. b) i. *Pittances*

The idea of the living members of a community eating in remembrance of dead brethren was not only used in medieval fraternities but in monasteries, which they were probably imitating. In Cluniac tradition, on the anniversary of the death of a monk, the community would be served an extra dish in memory of their brother. According to Duby: 'The dead, it was believed, gave nourishment to the community and ate with their brothersthe dead thus shared once more in the life of the monastery, for the common meal was the essential ritual of communal life.'²⁴⁶ This type of anniversary pittance for the monks could also be served in honour of important laymen buried in the abbey. At Saint-Denis in the early twelfth century, the monks' elaborate celebration of the anniversary of King Dagobert concluded with a banquet which provided the brothers with double portions, including, apparently, roast meat, accompanied by good wine and patisseries.²⁴⁷ Barroux says Abbot Adam (abb. 1099-1122) was particularly concerned to celebrate royal memory with '*rejouissances gastronomiques*'.²⁴⁸ These anniversary meals rewarded the monks for

²⁴⁶ G Duby, ed., *A History of Private Life: Revelations of the Medieval World*, vol. 2 (1987), 53-54.

²⁴⁷ Robert Barroux, 'L'anniversaire de la mort de Dagobert à Saint-Denis au XIIe siècle: Charte inédite de l'abbé Adam,' pp.1-21, *Bulletin philologique et historique*, 1942-3, 13-14.

²⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 11.

the liturgical services they had provided that day and were not aimed at the poor, although, as usual, the poor would receive any leftovers.

III. b) ii. *Corrody Meals*

Food was not only used to unite living members of a community in memory of the dead, but also to mark their absence from the common table. In Benedictine houses a deceased monk's meal would be served as usual at table every day for no less than 30 days after their death (the month's mind) and often for up to a year, as though the monk were still physically present. Once the living had finished their meal, the food of the absent monk would be given to a pauper, who would not only receive food for the period of memory but also clothing.²⁴⁹ This served meal which signalled both the stark absence of the monk from the table and his continued presence in the memory of the community was called a *corrody*, and those poor receiving this meal were called *corrodians*.

It is evident that in many instances, *corrodians* were a year-round fixture, rather than a fluctuating group made up of individual paupers, each brought in for the month's mind of a dead monk. In-house *corrodians* were pensioners in both senses: they were elderly and were given board and lodging. It was common practice for Benedictine houses to support a number of poor in this way, who in return were asked to pray for their benefactors, or, as at St. Albans, for the king and all Christian men.²⁵⁰ It seems likely that, depending on the mortality rate, there was still a link made between the food the

²⁴⁹ Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 484.

²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 483.

permanent corrodian received each day and the deaths of specific monks. As it was standard practice to ask the poor to pray in exchange for the food given to them in alms it would be logical that when a monk died, the corrodian would be asked to pray for that specific individual, no doubt someone they knew from the community.

Anniversaries of monks' deaths and the death-days of lay benefactors could also be marked by the serving of an 'absentee' meal in the refectory which would then be given to a pauper. Harvey points out that this corrody meal which went to a pauper was often not as full as the dinner served to the monks. This was for financial reasons, especially in older houses, where the population of the dead far exceeded the community of the living and so the cost of these anniversary meals could become a heavy burden. At Cluny, Peter the Venerable limited the anniversary-meals given to the poor to fifty on any one day, illustrating that the accumulation of annual death-day distributions to commemorate named individuals had in practice become a daily feeding of the poor.²⁵¹ Hence, the monastic practice of supporting in-house paupers and feeding the poor each day, both of which were adopted by kings, were linked to the commemoration of the dead.

It is clear from all this that both eating food and feeding others could be used to express both presence and absence. In the light of the feeding of the poor in other liminal situations, (travelling, arriving, absence abroad) commemorative almsgiving can be seen as one expression of the journey from this world to the next, serving to mark the

²⁵¹ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 13, 14.

continued presence of the deceased as part of the community, despite their physical absence, and so smooth over the rupture in social bonds wrought by death.

III. b) iii. *Anniversaries*

In addition to the corrody system, which operated at a ratio of one pauper fed per commemorated individual, (and at a lower ratio following the limits set due to economic pressures), the anniversaries of more socially important individuals could be marked in monasteries by the feeding of a group of paupers. According to Knowles: 'at Glastonbury in the early twelfth century thirteen poor men were entertained on the obits of kings, abbots and other benefactors: a century later it was usual for a hundred poor to be fed on the funeral day of a monk....At St. Augustine's Canterbury, thirty of the poor were entertained on the commemoration day of benefactors and as many on the anniversaries of abbots.'²⁵² Again, the ever increasing numbers of important people to be commemorated in this way, financial restraints and the inconvenience numerous separate feedings, could lead to a simplified group anniversary. This was the case at the Papacy, where, in 1259, Alexander IV instituted a general day of commemoration for all dead popes and cardinals on which the incumbent pope was to feed 200 poor and each cardinal 25. These numbers of poor were the same as for the anniversary alms commemorating a recent death of a cardinal.²⁵³ These group feedings were financed by the religious institution itself from its revenues, some of which, naturally, came from the endowments made by those commemorated.

²⁵² Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 484.

²⁵³ Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle*, 173.

Specific endowments for the celebration of post-mortem anniversaries could be set up by the individual before his or her death, or by the executors of the will or other interested parties after death. Barbara Harvey's studies of Westminster Abbey show that by the late twelfth century it was common for the feeding of the poor to be ordained as part of high status anniversary celebrations. Abbot Laurence of Westminster (d. 1173) founded an anniversary for himself at the Abbey including the distribution of 4s.8d in alms to the poor. The Westminster anniversary of Abbot Walter of Winchester (d.1190) specified that bread was to be distributed to the poor, as did the provisions for the anniversary of Prior Robert de Molesham (d.c.1197).²⁵⁴ Thirteenth century abbatial anniversaries provided a fuller meal for the poor or involved the feeding of larger numbers of people: Abbot William de Humez (d.1222) wanted a 'refection for 100 poor'; the anniversary established in 1231 for Hugh de Welles, bishop of Lincoln, provided one hundred poor with bread, *companagium* (i.e. some other food to accompany the bread), and drink, whilst Abbot Richard de Berking of Westminster (d.1246) stipulated that one hundred poor should receive bread, ale, pottage, and a dish of meat or fish on his anniversary for his own soul and those of his parents.²⁵⁵ Abbot Richard de Crokesley (d.1258) established for himself a much grander anniversary involving the feeding of a total of 4,000 poor: 1000 poor were to be fed on the anniversary and 500 each day for the six

²⁵⁴Barbara Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, Confraternity, Perpetual Anniversaries and Chantries, and Other Forms of Spiritual Benefit (at Westminster Abbey), 388-389.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 389-391.

following days, at a cost of 1d. a head.²⁵⁶ Harvey's list of Westminster anniversaries, shows that a penny per head provision remained standard up to the fifteenth century.

Equally, specifically endowed anniversaries which involved both requiem masses and the feeding of the poor were established for lay people buried at Westminster Abbey. As on saints days, the monks would receive 'pittances', higher quality dishes served in the refectory in addition to their usual fare, as a form of reward for their special prayers and spiritual efforts for the soul of the deceased. This exchange of prayers for food was also imposed on the poor who were received alms on the same day. Edward I's endowment for the weekly and annual remembrance of his queen, Eleanor of Castile, who was buried at Westminster, specified the poor were to recite the Lord's Prayer, the Creed and the Hail Mary before and after receiving their doles.²⁵⁷

III. b) iv. *Prayer Unions*

Evidently, one purpose of feeding the poor in commemoration was to incite prayers for the dead individual in exchange for food. Methods of multiplying the numbers of prayers said for a named individual had occupied monks in the West since the eighth century, when at the Synod of Attigny (762) the bishops present entered into a prayer union involving the exchange of lists of the dead between communities so that they could pray for each others' dead.²⁵⁸ As part of the undertaking to adopt the *Regularis Concordia*, the

²⁵⁶ Ibid., 391.

²⁵⁷ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 26.

²⁵⁸ Rev. Joseph A. Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite: its origins and development (Missarum Sollemnia)*, Rev. Francis A. Brunner trans., 2 vols. (New York, 1953), i. 218;

chief policy-document produced by the tenth century monastic reform, English monastic houses in the locality of one another agreed announce the deaths in their communities to one another and perform suffrages for each others' dead.²⁵⁹ Following from this, groups of houses entered into private agreements, forming commemorative prayer unions. Knowles notes a growth in this type of bond following the Conquest, incorporating houses in England and Normandy, with intercession for the king and queen added alongside the traditional duties of reciprocal prayers for the dead.²⁶⁰ The memory of the dead could be expressed verbally at both the altar and in the refectory. Dead people other than Christ could also be remembered during the ritual of the mass: the original sense of 'canonisation' was the reading of a list of the names of the dead during the canon of the mass, acknowledging their presence as part of the congregation.²⁶¹ In a religion where the central ritual took the form of a meal it is not surprising to see the transfer of notions of food and memory from the altar table to the common table. The mass itself was both a re-enactment of the Last Supper and a re-creation of Christ's body and death. By saying grace before any meal, those at table gave thanks to God for their food and drink just as Jesus had done at the Last Supper before sharing the wine and bread with his disciples. Words and prayers could evoke and perpetuate the memory of the dead during the mass and during meals, and naming the dead was still important in the commemoration in the

K Schmid and O G Oexle, 'Voraussetzungen und Wirkung des Gebetsbundes von Attigny,' *Francia: Forschungen zur Westeuropäischen Geschichte* ii. (1974), 71-122.

²⁵⁹ Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 473.

²⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 473-4.

²⁶¹ L Delisle, 'Des monuments paléographiques concernant l'usage de prier pour les morts,' pp. 361-411, *Bibliothèque de l'Ecole des Chartes*, 8 (1846), 362; Jungmann, *The Mass of the Roman Rite*, ii., chapter 2:16 'The memento of the dead' (p.237-47) for more on this.

thirteenth century. In 1256, at St. Albans, the monks of the abbey and its daughter houses had a *crise de conscience* about their regrettable lack of commemorative acts for their founder King Offa. In recompense, the general chapter agreed 'by unanimous consent, that at the end of each canonical hour in the choir, after grace was said at dinner, and after the prayers and family prayers and psalms, in the infirmary as well as in the abbot's chamber, the words 'May the soul of King Offa rest in peace', should be repeated aloud and with one voice, and that this should be observed inviolably and forever.'²⁶²

IV. REASONS FOR FEEDING THE ORDINARY POOR FOR THE DEAD

With all this infrastructure already in place to elicit as many prayers as possible for the dead from communities of specifically trained prayer specialists living a holy life, why was it important to spend even more money to get the illiterate, worldly, poor to pray too? The answer to this lies in the belief in Christ's presence in the poor. For Henry's contemporaries, Christ was at the centre of the human race, living and dead. The primary aim of the commemoration of the dead in the Middle Ages was to re-create the community between the living and the dead, and this could only be achieved through Christ's mystical body. In requiem masses, prayers were said for the soul of the deceased, and the privileged ate Christ's body in the form of the bread on the altar to create this link. By feeding the poor, the king was able to nourish Christ's body in the form of paupers and accrue prayers, again making the living and the dead present to each other.

²⁶² *CM*, v. 562.

Through both eating and feeding Christ's mystical body, the living could express their identity with the dead as members of the same spiritual community.

A second reason for *pro anima* almsgiving was that not only did it make the living and the dead present to each other, but it could benefit the dead. Asking why suffrages for the dead help them, Voragine gives three reasons: 'The first is unity. The dead are one body with the Church militant, and the goods of the latter must be common to all. The second is their dignity....The third reason is their need.'²⁶³ This third reason was the belief that almsgiving was one of the four sacrifices which could benefit souls in Purgatory, the other three being the prayer of the faithful, fasting and masses.²⁶⁴ As we have seen, alms could cover sin, and those in Purgatory were held in torment until they had been purged of all the sins for which they had not performed suitable penance while they were alive, so that they could be made pure for Heaven. By giving alms to aid these souls in torment, the living giver was redirecting the spiritual benefits of almsgiving to aid the souls of the dead. This idea that the good works of one Christian could help another ties in with the teaching on the Treasury of Merits, the belief that the extreme holiness of the saints could aid other Christians, as the goodness of the saints could make up for the spiritual deficits of other believers. This exchange of good works could only work because all Christians were part of one corporate Church, united in Christ. These were secondary benefits of the re-uniting of the community of believers through the body of Christ. Purgatory is never mentioned in the writs for feeding the poor for the dead, the formulae used being either

²⁶³ Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 289.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 284.

feed the poor 'for the soul of' somebody, or to use money 'to commend the soul of x. to the poor.'²⁶⁵ Henry III continued to feed the poor on the death anniversary of Richard I, despite the announcement in a sermon preached in 1232 by the bishop of Rochester in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury that Richard's release from the 'places of torture' had been revealed in several visions, suggesting that aiding souls in Purgatory was not the sole aim of his memorial almsgiving.²⁶⁶ The great variation in the numbers of poor which Henry III fed for the souls of different people depending on blood ties and their social status, rising from the four hundred poor fed for John Salinis and the yeomen who died in Wales to the incredible 102,000 fed for his sister, the Empress Isabella, in 1242, indicates that Henry's *pro anima* alms were influenced more by Voragine's second reason for commemorating the dead, respect for their dignity.²⁶⁷

V. CONCLUSION

Why did feeding the poor so appeal to Henry III? As a devotee of Edward the Confessor, he must surely have been aware of the teachings surrounding alms-giving and the belief that the poor might not be who they appeared to be. The hierarchy of images in the Painted Chamber, and the positioning of the ring-story and *Largesce* presents almsgiving as a holy expression of the royal duty of largesse. The idea that the poor were a physical manifestation of Christ's body may have particularly appealed to him. Henry III's eucharistic devotion is well known. Rishanger records that the king heard at least three

²⁶⁵ *Pro anima* is much more common. *Erogare* and commending: *Patent Rolls 1225-32*: 347; *Close Rolls 1227-31*: 363; *CLR 1267-72*: 65, writ 589.

²⁶⁶ *CLR 1245-51*: 168-9; *CM*, iii. 212: 'exierunt de purgatorio...ad conspectum divinae Majestatis....de locis poenalibus exierunt'.

sung masses each day, and, on occasion, attended private masses as well, kissing the hand of the priest at the elevation, the moment when, through the grace of God, the bread was transformed into the body of Christ. The chronicler recounts the famous conversation between Henry III and Louis IX, where the French king suggested that Henry should attend more sermons, and Henry replied that he would rather see a friend than hear him spoken of.²⁶⁸ The king also acquired, in 1247, the relic of the Holy Blood, believed to be the actual blood which Christ shed at the Crucifixion.²⁶⁹ Two years later, the Holy Footprint arrived at Westminster Abbey, the stone bearing the imprint left by Christ's foot at the Ascension, a reminder of the moment which displayed beyond doubt the dual nature of Christ as both a human being and a god.²⁷⁰ Henry was fervent in his devotion to the body of Christ, and if he could 'see' his Lord in the bread of the altar, could he also

²⁶⁷ *CLR 1240-45*: 124; *CLR 1245-51*: 8.

²⁶⁸ Rishanger, *Chronica et Annales*, (RS 28), 75: 'Contigit autem aliquando Sanctum Lodowicum, Francorum Regem, cum eo super hoc conferentem, dicere, quod non semper Missis, sed frequentius Sermonibus, audiendis esse vacandum. Cui faceta urbanitate respondens, ait, se malle amicum suum saepius videre, quam de eo loquentem, licet bona dicentem, audire.' This exchange is also recorded in a c. 1262 newsletter that also says that because of Henry's habit of stopping to hear mass whenever he encountered a priest, he was often extremely late for the sessions of the *parlement*, so Louis made sure there were no priests in the vicinity of the English king's route, and when Henry arrived he asked Louis if the country was under an interdict, which led to the conversation about the merits of masses and sermons. Apparently, the two kings became so caught up in their 'piety contests' that the *parlement* continued without them (Elizabeth M Hallam, *Capetian France, 987-1328* (London & New York, 1980), 205, citing M. Champollion-Figeac, *Lettres des rois, reines et autres personnages des cours de France et d'Angleterre*, i (Paris 1839), 140-42). See also Nicholas Vincent, *The Holy Blood: King Henry III and the Westminster blood relic* (Cambridge, 2001), 36 n.18, for the references to this story in Nicholas Trivet's chronicle, an anonymous account, and later sermon *exempla*.

²⁶⁹ Although some did doubt its authenticity. For a study of the relic, its history, and the Westminster relic in the context of the cult as a whole see Vincent, *The Holy Blood*.

²⁷⁰ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 142-3, 144.

see him in the poor?²⁷¹ Perhaps the scale of Henry III's feeding the poor for the commemoration of the dead can be seen as an extension to his devotion to the body of Christ. Feeding the poor was charged with a special significance when linked with *memoria*, and Henry III performed these special alms on an astonishing scale, underpinned by impressive logistical achievements, as we shall see in the next chapter.

²⁷¹ St. Francis likened kissing the feet of the poor to taking the host in his mouth, see Joseph Moingt, 'Polymorphisme du corps du Christ,' *Le Temps de la Reflexion*, 7 (1986). My thanks to Prof. Nicole Bériou for telling me about this.

CHAPTER THREE: THE LOGISTICS OF FEEDING THE POOR

The organisation of the feeding of thousands of poor on feast days and death anniversaries must have required a great deal of organisation. This chapter will examine the nature of the sites and spaces which the documents show were used for feeding the poor, and try to make some educated guesses about the information not elucidated in the sources: who exactly was a pauper and how were they gathered together. Finally, the cost of feeding the poor will be set in the context of wages, other spending, and royal income.

I. PHYSICAL SITES USED FOR FEEDING THE POOR

I. a) Royal castles and Palaces

Henry III used his network of royal palaces and castles to feed the poor. The poor were fed in the great hall, the largest indoor space in the castle and the most public. In writs giving instructions for the large-scale feeding of the poor, almonries are never specifically mentioned as a site of feeding and it is likely that they were more commonly used for the daily feeding of the poor. Certainly, for the 'extraordinary' alms feedings of interest here, it is halls which were the chief site of feeding. These halls were opulently decorated with images of luminous monarchy and also had thrones, the ultimate symbol of royal power.²⁷² By far the most popular sites for the feeding of large numbers of poor on both anniversaries and saints days were Windsor Castle and Westminster Palace, both of which had two halls which could be used simultaneously.

²⁷² Dixon-Smith, 'The Image and Reality of Alms-Giving in the Great Halls of Henry III,' 80-81.

I. a) i. *Westminster Palace*

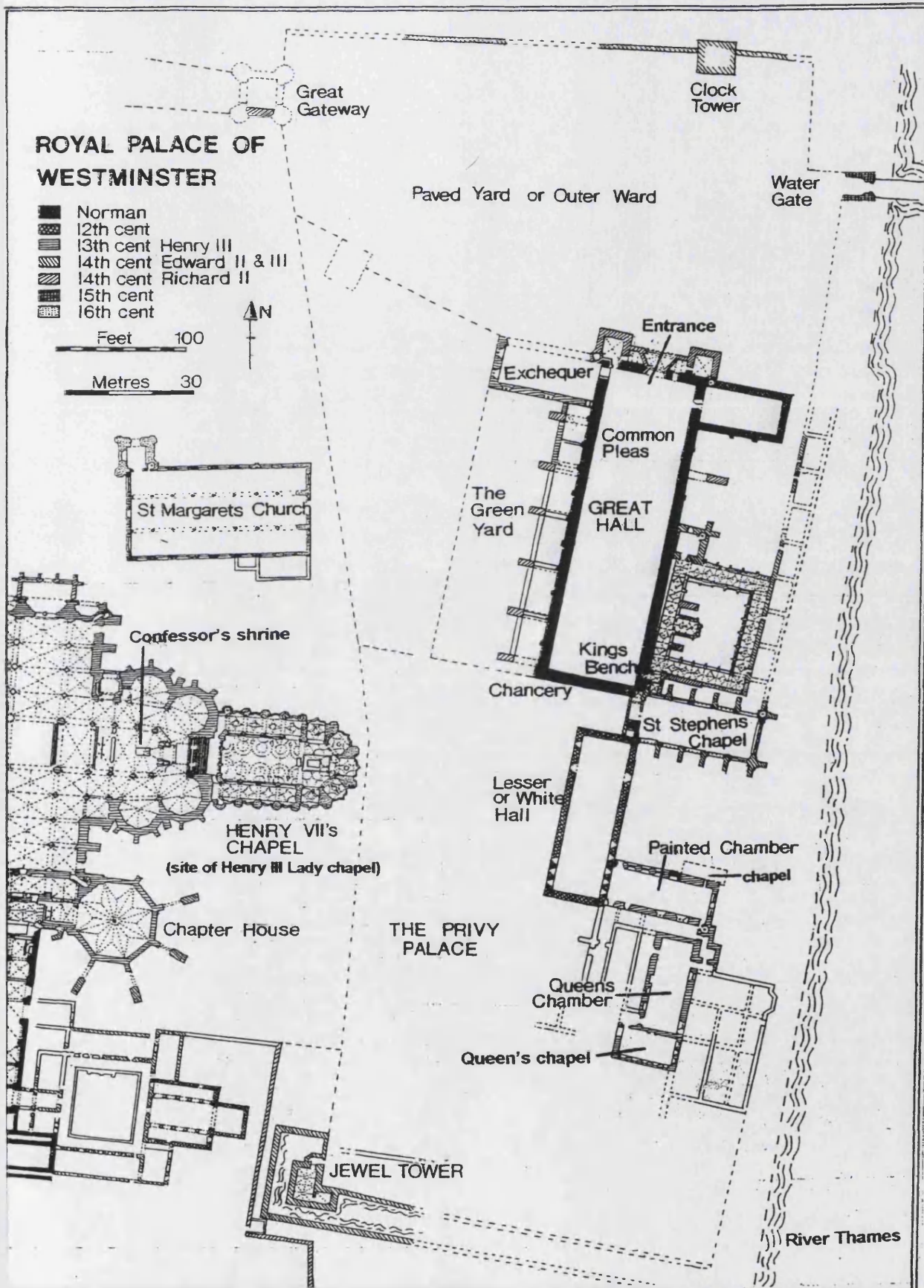
At Westminster, the king's greatest and most prestigious seat, the Great Hall, Lesser Hall and, on occasion, the king and queen's chambers, were used for feeding the poor. It was Henry's chosen patron, the saint-king Edward the Confessor who had established a palace at Westminster in the shadow of Westminster Abbey which he had endowed and rebuilt. The saint-king's shrine was in the Abbey church, the coronation church of William the Conqueror and his successors, although, due to circumstances beyond the boy-king's control, Henry himself had had to wait until Whitsun 1220 to be formally crowned in the church which he later undertook to re-build in the Confessor's honour²⁷³. It is likely that the Lesser Hall at Westminster, which was re-modelled or re-built in the twelfth century, was the original royal hall in the Confessor's palace.²⁷⁴ At the end of the eleventh century, the Conqueror's son, William Rufus, built Westminster Great Hall, which is still standing.

Westminster Palace was frequently used as a site of feeding, although not all the

²⁷³ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 18. The day before his coronation Henry laid the foundation stone of the new Lady Chapel at the East end of the Confessor's Abbey, the beginning of his lifelong dedication to building work at the Abbey.

²⁷⁴ Christopher Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers: Richard II's remodelling of Westminster Hall, 1393-99,' pp. 33-39 in *The Regal Image of Richard II and the Wilton Diptych*, ed. Dillion Gordon, Lisa Monnas, and Caroline Elam (London, 1997), endnote 4, p. 294.

PLAN 1: WESTMINSTER PALACE



PLAN OF WESTMINSTER PALACE

after Brown, Colvin & Taylor, *History of the King's Works: Plans*
 from J. Steane, *Archeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, © 1993, p.74,
 with additions.

instructions give details of which indoor spaces were used to accommodate the poor. A remarkable writ of *liberate*, tested on June 4th 1245, to reimburse Edward of Westminster for a great list of different feedings, gives an idea of the range of events marked by feedings at Westminster, some of which are explicitly given as in the Great and Lesser Halls, and others either at Westminster or simply organised by Edward of Westminster, the keeper of the king's works:

'*Liberate* to Edward de Westm' £51 13s. 6d for wax for 15 tapers of the king's size placed round the shrine of St. Edward all the time the king was in Gascony till his return to England [8/9 May 1242 - 24/27 September 1243];...£62 10s. [15,000d] spent in feeding 15,000 poor in the churchyard (atrio) of St. Paul's on the day of his conversion last year [25th January 1244 - last year is the regnal year October 1243-October 1244]; 25 marks [4,000d] to celebrate the anniversary of the king's sister, formerly empress of Almain in the church of Westminster, and to feed the poor for her soul; 62s. 8d [752d] spent in feeding 500 poor for the soul of Griffin [Gruffydd] son of L[lewelyn]; £27. 10s. [6,600d] spent in feeding 6,000 poor on the day of the Circumcision [1st January] for the preservation of the health of the king, the queen, and their children; £21. 2s. 6d. [5,070d] spent in feeding poor persons in the king's two halls at Westminster at the Purification last year [2nd February 1244]; £19. 5s. 6 ½ d. [4626 ½ d] spent in feeding poor persons for the soul of Eleanor [should be Joan] the king's sister, formerly queen of Scotland, on the Friday after St. Matthias [25 February] last year [probably Friday 4 March 1244, or possibly Friday 26 February 1244] as many as could get into the king's greater and smaller halls at Westminster; £16 [3840d.] spent in feeding poor

persons at the Nativity of St. Mary last year [8th September 1244]; £9 13s. 5d. [2321d.] spent in feeding 1,000 poor on All Saints' day in this year [1st November 1244 - this regnal year starts 28th October 1244] for the soul of W[illiam] formerly elect of Valence, and the like number on All Souls Day [2nd November 1244] for the faithful departed; £6. 18s. for 315 pairs of shoes for the poor delivered to P[eter] Chaceporc this year [keeper of the Wardrobe]; £14 17s. 8 ½ d. [3572 ½ d] spent in feeding the friars preachers, friars minors, nuns, lepers and all the poor of all the hospitals of London, on the Friday before Christmas in this year [23rd December 1244] for the soul of the countess of Flanders. £7. 4s. 11d for 332 pairs of shoes for the poor delivered in the wardrobe against this Easter [1245]; £28. 10s. 1d [6,841d] for feeding the poor on the day of the Passion of St. Peter and St. Paul [29th June 1244 - in Westminster Great Hall and *curia regis* according to Close Rolls] and the day of St. Peter's Chains [1st August 1244] last year [October 1243-October 1244]; and 118s. 9d for 300 pairs of shoes for the poor against this Whitsuntide [1245].²⁷⁵

Besides the feasts and anniversaries here, Westminster Palace was also used for feeding the poor on the feasts of the Confessor.

²⁷⁵ *CLR 1240-45*: 306-307. *HBC*, 38, for dates of king's absence in Gascony. Cheney, ed., *Handbook of Dates*, 19, for regnal years of Henry III, pp. 43-64 for saints days and festivals used in dating and pp. 84-155 for calendar of years for all dates of Easter. Peter Chaceporc was keeper of the King's Wardrobe from 28 October 1241-24th December 1254 (Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 25). Orders for these feedings and distributions: conversion of St Paul, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 152; anniversary of Joan of Scotland, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 164; All Saints for William of Savoy, elect of Valence, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233; All Souls, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233; Countess of Flanders, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 279; Shoes for Easter 1245, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 296; Passion of

The two feasts of Edward the Confessor were customarily marked by feeding the poor in Westminster Palace, the singing of *Christus Vincit*, and the presentation of oblations at the shrine.²⁷⁶ According to Carpenter: 'It was devotion to the Confessor which tied Henry above all to Westminster and in fostering that devotion the 1230s were the decisive decade. Before 1238 Henry never managed to spend both the Confessor's feast days - 13 October and 5 January - at Westminster. From 1238 onwards he was always there, unless prevented by dire necessity, in which case elaborate services were carried out by proxies. Even in 1261, as we have seen, he braved the disorders to attend on 13 October.'²⁷⁷ The feast of the 'deposition' of Edward on 5th January was the anniversary of his death in 1066. The second feast was the anniversary of the translation of his body from his initial grave in the Abbey to a shrine which was presided over by Archbishop Becket on Sunday 13 October 1163 following Edward's canonisation as a saint in 1161. Although Edward had been canonised by the pope, it was not until 1237 that the feast of the Translation was added to the calendar of the Roman church²⁷⁸ after petitions by Henry, meaning that from

Peter and Paul, 1244, *Close Rolls 1242-47*:199; Shoes for Whitsun, 1245, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 311.

²⁷⁶ Feeding the poor/alms: *CLR 1226-40*: 306, 356; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 382-3; *CLR 1240-45*: 148, 166; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 331; *CLR 1245-51*: 21, 84; *CLR 1251-60*: 31,187, 520, 522; 528; *Close Rolls 1251-53*: 10; *Close Rolls 1254-56*: 222; *CLR 1260-67*: 60; *CLR 1260-67*: 109, 110;130; *Close Rolls 1261-64*: 174; *CPR 1258-60*: 281; *CLR 1267-72*: 92. Examples of *Christus Vincit*, oblations, wax, ordering food for the royal feast, knightings etc.: *CLR 1226-40*: 234; 243, 364; 441, 501 (emerald ring); *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 91; 374; *CLR 1245-51*: 81, 170, 174, 251, 376; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 331, 390; *CLR 1245-51*: 174; *CLR 1245-51*: 170, 251; *Close Rolls 1251-53*: 503; *Close Rolls 1253-4*: 97, 267; *CLR 1251-60*: 269, 509; *CLR 1260-67*: 15, 139, 143, 162,163, 252, 292; *CLR 1267-72*: 19, 92, 97, 98; *CLR 1267-72*: 93; *CLR 1267-72*: 97; *CLR 1267-72*: 97.

²⁷⁷ D A Carpenter, 'King Henry III and the Tower of London', 208 and 206 for October 1261.

²⁷⁸ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 24. According to Binski, Gregory IX declared the translation a ferial feast in 1236 (*Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 52).

then on, the feast was to be kept in all Roman churches across Europe. Powicke comments that: 'The Confessor's day, 13 October, became for [Henry III] the great day of the year, and the more so because it comes conveniently a fortnight after Michaelmas, the beginning of the financial year, when the exchequer was busy, Westminster crowded, and a great council of parliament was generally held. On 13 October Henry was wont to gather about him the members of his household in the new robes which he had provided for them, to knight young nobles and protégés, and to hold a great feast.'²⁷⁹ In 1248, the king established a fortnight long fair to be held at Westminster in October. Paris reports that: 'In consequence of this, innumerable people flocked thither from all quarters, as to the most famous fair, and the translation of St. Edward was celebrated, and the blood of Christ worshipped to an unexampled degree by the people there assembled.'²⁸⁰

By using the October feast as an occasion for bestowing knighthoods, which was traditionally done at Whitsun, and giving out 'liveries' (clothes for royal servants marked with some form of heraldic device also distributed at New Year), Henry drew attention to the feast and made it the focus of the calendar of his court. In terms of the king's administration, October did mark the start of a new royal year, since Henry's regnal year was counted from 28th October 1216 when the boy-king was crowned in haste at Winchester following the death of King John on 19th October.²⁸¹ Henry did not mark the feast day on which he was crowned, (the day of the apostles Simon and Jude, 28th

²⁷⁹ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 18, and 159 for the knighting of John of Brittany and the sons of de Montfort on St. Edward's Day, 13 October 1260.

²⁸⁰ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 273; *CM*, v. 29.

October), with any great pomp and ceremony: his energies were directed into the celebration of the October feast of his patron saint and king, Edward.²⁸² Paris' account of the feast of the deposition/death of Edward in January 1249 shows that this feast was also marked by a gathering of the court and the personal devotions of the king: 'As the feast of St. Edward, which fell on the eve of the Epiphany [5th January], drew nigh, the king, by his letters, summoned a large number of nobles to celebrate that feast together with him in St. Peter's church, at Westminster [the Abbey]; and he himself, on the eve of that feast, which was Monday, fasted on bread and water, according to his usual custom, and clad in woollen garments.'²⁸³

Although many writs simply give 'apud Westmonasterium' as the site of feeding, others do specify where within the Palace the poor were fed. It is worth examining the decoration and ceremonial use of the Great Hall, Lesser Hall and royal chambers at Westminster, all of which welcomed the poor on certain feast days, to gain a fuller understanding of Henry III's alms-giving at the Palace.

²⁸¹ *CM*, ii. 667-669; *CM*, iii. 1-2. The chronicle says John died on the feast of St. Luke, i.e. 19th October.

²⁸² *CLR 1240-45*: 22: payment for tapers ordered for the feast of Simon & Jude in 1239.

²⁸³ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 288; *CM*, v. 47-48: 'Veruntamen festo beati Aedwardi, quod est in vigilia Epiphaniae, appropinquante, vocavit dominus rex per literas suas copiosam magnatum multitudinem; ut simul cum eo, qui in vigilia sancti, videlicet die Lunae, in pane et aqua et in vestibus laneis jejunaverat prout de more solet, ipsum festum magnifice celebrarent in ecclesia Sancti Petri apud Westmonasterium.'

Westminster Great Hall is a vast and awe-inspiring space, 16,200 square feet²⁸⁴ (just over 1500m²). At the time it was built, under William Rufus, it was by far the largest hall in Europe. As Colvin states: 'the vast size of the hall gave to Westminster an architectural pre-eminence which it was never to lose, and which marked it out as the ceremonial centre of the Anglo-Norman kingdom.'²⁸⁵ Although Henry III used the hall for feeding the poor, unlike most palace halls, Westminster Great Hall was never intended as a general refectory for the king and his court but was a prestigious space reserved for what would now be called state dinners, resplendent court feasts held at coronations, crown-wearings and the highest holy days.²⁸⁶ Wilson shows that the Great Hall was prominent in the coronation ceremonial following the anointing of the king in Westminster Abbey. He says: 'The ruler's exaltation as 'the figure and image of Christ' on these occasions was not dissipated when he left the church and returned to the Palace, for by presiding over a feast wearing his crown and kingly robes he and his hierarchically marshalled guests became an earthly counterpart of the royal court of Heaven.' Thrones were installed at the high (south) end of Westminster Great at coronations, and this is where the king was seated to be acclaimed by his peers on the morning of the coronation.²⁸⁷ In 1245 Henry chose to build the greatest of his thrones, a permanent white marble seat, on this site at the high end of Westminster Great Hall which was to be completed by Easter that year.²⁸⁸ The combination of the white marble, which itself had imperial connotations, the step or steps up to the throne, and the Plantagenet leopards positioned to either side of the seat

²⁸⁴ Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 45

²⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 491

²⁸⁶ Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 1, n.7

²⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 36

show that the basic design and iconography of the throne borrowed from contemporary descriptions and depictions of the throne of Solomon which have been analysed by Wormald: 'Solomon's throne...was made of ivory and gold. There were six steps up to it. On each step were two lions, twelve in all; and on either side of it, near its stays and supports, were two lions....The throne is of ivory because of its strength and whiteness...the steps signify good works...the twelve lions on the steps are the apostles..the two lions near the throne are identified with the Angel Gabriel and St. John the Evangelist'²⁸⁹ The importance of the great hall and its accoutrements in royal display are illustrated in Wilson's translation of *Prospice*, the prayer used after the first anointing in the coronation *ordo* which was in use at the time of Henry III:

'Look down, Omnipotent God, with favourable gaze on this most glorious king....Grant him....that, while he reigns, there may be healthiness of body in the fatherland and unbroken peace in the kingdom. Grant that the glorious dignity of the royal hall may shine before the eyes of all with the greatest splendour of

²⁸⁸ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 292, 293.

²⁸⁹ Francis Wormald, 'The Throne of Solomon and St. Edward's chair,' pp.61-69 in *Francis Wormald Collected Writings II: Studies in English and Continental Art of the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J J G Alexander, T J Brown, and J Gibbs, (London, 1988), 61, 63, 67. St. Edward's chair which survives in Westminster Abbey was commissioned by Henry III's son Edward I to house the Stone of Destiny or Stone of Scone. Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 36, argues that the throne constructed in 1245 by Henry III was the throne described later as made of white marble with steps leading up to it. The contemporary writs (*Close Rolls 1242-47*: 292,293) show changes in design, but mention at least one step of carved stone, a seat of carved marble (although the colour isn't specified - *sedes regis marmorea, facere ex marmore inciso vel sculpto*) and bronze leopards to be placed either side.

kingly power and that it may seem to glow with the brightest rays and to glitter as if suffused by illumination of the utmost brilliance.²⁹⁰

Here the significance of the royal *palatium* as a luminous symbol of the power and glory of the monarchy is explicit. It was intended to dazzle the eyes of all: all included the poor who were invited by Henry III to take their meals in the hall on holy days.

Wilson comments that it is hard to gauge 'how continuously and to what extent

Westminster Hall was thought of by medieval English rulers as a sacred space.'²⁹¹

Although this is no doubt true, Matthew Paris' account of the events which took place at

Westminster on the feast of the Translation of St. Edward the Confessor in 1247 give a good indication of the ceremonial use of Westminster Great Hall and palace in

conjunction with Westminster Abbey under Henry III. In October 1247, Henry

summoned his nobles and prelates to gather at Westminster on the eve of the feast, no

doubt in the Great Hall, and gave them the news of the his acquisition of the greatest of

all relics, 'a portion of the blood of our Lord, which he shed on the cross for the salvation of the world, inclosed in a handsome crystalline vessel.'²⁹² On the morning of the feast of

Edward, all the priests of London assembled at the king's request at St. Paul's 'dressed as

for a festival, in their surplices and hoods, attended by their clerks, becomingly clad, and

with their symbols, crosses, and tapers lighted.' The king, who had spent the vigil 'fasting

on bread and water, with a number of tapers lighted..in devout prayer,' took possession of

²⁹⁰ Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 33-34, n. 8 & 9. Wilson translates *palatium* as royal hall in line with contemporary usage.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 34.

²⁹² Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 239; *CM*, iv. 641.

the holy relic and processed on foot from St. Paul's to Westminster 'wearing a humble dress, consisting of a poor cloak without a hood' holding the holy relic aloft.²⁹³ He was greeted at Westminster by the abbey clergy who processed out to meet him, and then he carried the Holy Blood in a 'circuit of the church, *the palace and his own chambers*' and finally 'presented and made an offer of it, as a priceless gift, and one which had made England illustrious, to God, the church of St. Peter at Westminster [the Abbey], to his beloved [St] Edward [the Confessor], and the holy brethren who at that place minister to God and his saints.'²⁹⁴ After this, the king changed out of his lowly penitential clothing, and, while the solemnities continued in the Abbey, 'the king, clothed in a garment made out of the most costly baudekin cloth, and worked in gold, and wearing a small crown, commonly called a garland, took his seat on his royal throne' (that is to say the white marble throne in Westminster Great Hall) and summoned his Lusignan half-brother, William of Valence, and 'a great number of his associates' to come before him to be knighted.²⁹⁵ Although it would be hard to state categorically that this episode shows that Henry considered his palace a 'sacred space' the fact that Henry processed through his

²⁹³ Giles, ii. 240; *CM*, iv. 641.

²⁹⁴ Giles, ii. 240-241. *CM*, iv. 642: '...circuire[t] ecclesiam, regiam, et thalamos suos. Demum illud quasi donum impretiabile, et quod totam Angliam ditando illustraverat, donavit et optulit Deo et ecclesiae Sancti Petri Westmonaterii, et caro suo Ae[dwardo] et sacro conventui, qui ibidem Deo et sanctis suis ministrant.' Vincent, *The Holy Blood* 7-30, discusses the acquisition of the relic, and the ceremony of 1247 in the political context of the time. He observes that: 'In processing the relic of Christ's blood around the Abbey and the royal apartments, walking beneath a pall borne on four spears, Henry was also, either deliberately or subconsciously, re-enacting the pious ceremony of his own coronation, in which the King processed to Westminster walking beneath a pall carried on four spears.' (p.19).

²⁹⁵ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 242; *CM*, iv 644: '..dominus rex veste deaurata facta de pretiosissimo baldekino, et coronula aurea, quae vulgariter garlanda'

palace holding the relic of the Holy Blood is significant. The acquisition of the Holy Blood, the most precious of all relics, was seen as a blessing on England and on King Henry himself, who chose to take the relic into the palace of Westminster, which represented his royal power, before presenting it to the Abbey. Equally, Henry's change of dress is interesting: during the whole of the relic procession he is dressed as a humble Christian penitent, but when he enters the Great Hall to bestow knighthoods in his power as king, he is dressed sumptuously in the same way as a king entering Westminster Great Hall for his coronation feast.

This palace which was used for feeding the poor, was not only of great symbolic and ceremonial importance but was also fast becoming the centre of royal government and a permanent seat of justice. King John had transferred the Treasury from Winchester to a split site arrangement between Westminster and the Tower of London, and since the time of Henry II the Exchequer had been based at Westminster Palace, with offices provided by Henry III on either side of the north end of the Great Hall built by William Rufus.²⁹⁶ In

dicitur, redimitus, sedens gloriose in solio regio..' The throne of St. Edward in Westminster Abbey was built under Edward I (see note 289, p.127 above).

²⁹⁶ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 5; Rosser, *Medieval Westminster 1200-1540*, 20, for treasury; Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 539-541. Instructions under Henry III suggest that the Exchequer and Receipt were initially housed in a two storey building on the east side of the great hall with the Exchequer of the Jews against the west side. In 1243, the Lord Edward's chamber at Westminster was referred to in an instruction for decoration as the chamber in which the Exchequer used to be held. (*Close Rolls 1242-47*: 45: 1 Oct. 1243). By 1244, due to this provision of chambers for the Lord Edward and the building of the Knights' Hall along the most of the length of the west side of the Great Hall, the Exchequer moved to a building on the west side at the very north end of the Great Hall, built at right angles to the hall itself (see Plan 1, p.120, for the Exchequer in this position). It appears that the Receipt stayed in its old

the early years of the reign of Henry III, Westminster Great Hall had become the permanent site of the Court of Common Pleas (in adherence with Magna Carta) and during the course of the thirteenth century the sessions of the King's Bench and the Court of Chancery also took up residence in the hall.²⁹⁷ During legal term-time, temporary stands and wooden enclosures were erected in the hall, and by 1290, if not earlier, there were also stalls for various merchants supplying the needs of the law court and those who came to present their pleas, creating what Wilson has described as an indoor shopping space.²⁹⁸ When the court was not in session, the stands and stalls were dismantled so that the whole of the hall could be used for the celebrations marking the feast days concentrated around Christmas and Easter.

Several thousand poor could be fed in a day at Westminster Great Hall alone, although the writs of instruction and payment rarely give explicit numbers. One of the few exceptions is in 1243, when William de Haverhull, the king's treasurer, and Edward son of Odo the goldsmith, the keeper of the king's works at Westminster, were ordered to feed 4,000 poor in the great hall for the second anniversary of the death of the king's sister the Empress Isabella. This feeding was to take place on the Monday after the feast of St. Lucy the Virgin, that is to say on 14th December 1243, which was outside legal term time, and so the whole of the space could be used as the stands and stalls would not be there. The writs instructing and providing payment for this event were tested on 9th

quarters until sometime later in the reign when it moved to the building on the east side of the north end of the Great Hall.

²⁹⁷ Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 543.

²⁹⁸ Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 37.

December. The advance payment was 25 marks, i.e. 4,000d., or a penny a head.²⁹⁹ In the majority of cases William and Edward are simply told to ‘fill’ the great hall and there is no number of poor specified. However, if, as when the 4,000 were fed, the payment reflects the cost of feeding the poor at a rate of a penny a head, it is possible to work out from the payments how many poor were fed in Westminster Great Hall. Some instructions for feeding do indeed specify that it is to be done at a cost of 1d. per head. This costing is given when 102,000 poor were to be fed for the soul of the Empress Isabella and also when 100 poor were to be fed for the soul of the huntsman Robert de Mares, suggesting that the per capita payment was not influenced by economies of scale.³⁰⁰

Under the assumption that payments reflect the number of poor fed at a rate of a penny a head, at first glance it seems possible that the Great Hall at Westminster hall could accommodate up to 7,000 poor in a single day. In February 1248 a writ of *liberate* was issued to Edward of Westminster paying him £30.12s. 3d (7347d.) for feeding the poor in the Great Hall ‘for him who has made the king’s son safe and sound’³⁰¹ This is one of several payments in the writ, all of which are payments for feedings which had already taken place in 31st year of Henry’s reign (i.e. in the year ending 27th October 1247), which ties in with Matthew Paris’ account of the Lord Edward’s serious illness in September 1247 and the letter the king wrote on 20th asking for all ecclesiastics in the London area to

²⁹⁹ *CLR 1240-45*: 204; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 140.

³⁰⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 124; *CLR 1251-60*: 346

³⁰¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 168 -9. It does not state that the poor were fed in one day, so the suggested figure of over 7,000 may reflect a feeding over two days.

pray for his son's recovery.³⁰² But, the writ does not specify that this feeding took place on one single day, and with the putative capacity of c.4000, it seems likely this feeding was spread over two or more days, especially as other instructions for feeding 6,000-10,000 poor at Westminster show that such numbers could only be accommodated by using other areas of the palace in addition to the Great Hall. A further complication in trying to determine the capacity of the hall is presented by a number of other writs reimbursing Edward of Westminster for simply filling the Great Hall with as many poor as could get in. These writs of *liberate* grant him between 2,000d. and 3,000d., suggesting that this number of poor were fed at a penny a head when the hall was at full capacity. For example, Edward received in payments after the event, £8.20s. (1940d.) for feeding the poor in the great hall on All Saints day, 1st November 1240, £8.18s. (2136d.) for feeding on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul, 26th January 1247, and £12.2s.2d (2906d.) for doing the same on the feast of Peter and Paul, 29th June 1246.³⁰³

This apparent inconsistency in the capacity of the hall, able to cater for 4,000 poor in a single day on one occasion, and 2,000-3,000 at full capacity at other times, can be explained by taking into account the fact the smaller payments were for feedings on feast days and anniversaries which fell during the legal term when, if no special arrangements were made to remove the law court's paraphernalia, the space available in the hall for the poor would have been limited. Naturally, another factor is how many poor decided to come for a free meal, an issue which will be discussed later. Legal terms usually ran as

³⁰² *CM*, iv. 639.

follows: Michaelmas term from 6th October (the octave of St Michael) to 25th November (the quindene of St. Martin); Hilary term from 20th January (the octave of St. Hilary) until 2nd February (the feast of the Purification of the Virgin) or up to two weeks after the feast; Easter term from the quindene of Easter, (in practice starting seventeen days after Easter Sunday), and ended almost four weeks later on the day after the feast of the Ascension; following a three week break, Trinity term started in the week beginning nine Sundays after Easter (the octave of Trinity Sunday) until 8th July (the quindene of St. John the Baptist).³⁰⁴ It can be seen that the payments above which suggest that 2,000 to 3,000 poor could fill Westminster Great hall were for feeding events which did indeed fall within legal term, and those which suggest that the hall could cater for 4,000 poor in one day are for events in the Advent/Christmas, Lent/Easter or summer breaks.

It is tempting to see a symbolic connection between the use of the same royal hall to dispense secular justice, which was both a royal obligation and the prime attribute of a good king, and to perform almsgiving, defined in the theology of the day as an act of spiritual justice which the powerful owed the weak.³⁰⁵ Although a connection may have been made by contemporaries between the two types of justice which were the embodiment of Christian kingship, it should be noted that since the courts did not sit on

³⁰³ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 233; *CLR 1240-45*: 6; *CLR 1245-51*: 106, 111; Cheney, ed., *Handbook of Dates*.

³⁰⁴ Cheney, *Handbook*, 67-68. Octave means eight days after a feast including the feast day itself, i.e. one week later. Quindene means fifteen days after a feast including the feast itself, i.e. a fortnight later.

³⁰⁵ Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: Charity 2a 2ae*, 239, 241. Almsgiving was primarily an act of charity but also an act of justice, sacrifice and praise to God (*latria*).

Sundays and feast-days, secular justice and spiritual justice were not dispensed in the hall at the same time.

The poor were fed in Westminster Great Hall in conjunction with a great variety of saints days, anniversaries and votive acts. In November 1240 orders were issued to fill the hall with poor on the three days leading up to the feast of St. Martin (11th November) and although it appears this was cancelled, the poor were fed in the hall on All Saints Day (1st November) and on All Souls Day (2nd November) for the first anniversary of the death of the queen's uncle, William of Savoy, bishop of Valence.³⁰⁶ On the feast of St. Peter in Chains in August 1241 the poor were fed in the hall whilst candles burned in Westminster Abbey.³⁰⁷ The Great Hall was filled with poor on Christmas Day 1241, on the feast of St. Edward in October 1245, for the commemoration of the soul of the king's sister Joan of Scotland in March 1246 on the eighth anniversary of her death, the feast of St. Gregory in the same month, for the soul of the king's sister Isabella in the December, on the day after the feast of the Conversion of Paul in January 1247, for the soul of Edward the Confessor's chamberlain Hugolin in March, and the feast of Edmund the Confessor in November.³⁰⁸ William de Haverhull, the treasurer, and Edward son of Odo, the keeper of the king's works at Westminster, were instructed in December 1247 to fill the Great Hall with poor on Christmas Day and on every day up to and including the feast of the

³⁰⁶ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 248; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233; *CLR 1240-45*: 6.

³⁰⁷ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 319.

³⁰⁸ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 374; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 331; *CLR 1245-51*: 35; *CLR 1245-51*: 106; *CLR 1245-51*: 111; *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 4.

Circumcision (1st January 1248).³⁰⁹ The feeding over this period meant that the poor were invited into the palace on the feasts of St. Stephen (26th December), St. John the Evangelist (27th December), the Holy Innocents (28th December) and St. Thomas Becket (29th December) which corresponds with feedings in other years around Christmas when the saints days are specified.³¹⁰ These are the occasions on which the Great Hall was used on its own.

Other indoor spaces in Westminster Palace were also used in conjunction with the Great Hall for feeding the poor. The second, smaller, hall at Westminster, called the Lesser Hall or White Hall, is first mentioned in 1167, when it was repaired.³¹¹ The interior measured approximately 36m by 11m giving it a floor space of just under 400m² compared with the c. 1500m² of the Great Hall.³¹² Like the Great Hall, the Lesser Hall was on a north-south axis lying along the same line to the south of its larger neighbour. Unlike the Great Hall which was on ground level, the Lesser Hall was on the first floor, although the two were linked by a passageway and stairs leading from the high end of the Great Hall to the low end of the Lesser Hall.³¹³ The only indication of the decoration of this hall is the

³⁰⁹ *Close Rolls 1247-51*: 18-19.

³¹⁰ e.g. 1239-40 Christmas feeding at Windsor: *CLR 1226-40*: 433.

³¹¹ Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 492; Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 274, n.4. There was also a third space at Westminster which was sometimes called a hall - the Knights' chamber or hall which Edward of Westminster was instructed to build in 1244 along the west side of Westminster Great Hall (*King's Works*, 504).

³¹² Measurements for the Lesser Hall are based on the scale map of Westminster Palace in the Middle Ages which accompanies the *King's Works*, which follows antiquarian and excavation information. I have given areas in square metres using imperial to metric conversion tables.

³¹³ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 9.

reference in Sir Horace Walpole's *Anecdotes of Painting in England* which claims that the windows of the Lesser Hall were painted with the verse '*qui non dat quod amat non accipit ille quod optat*' (he who does not give what he loves shall not receive what he desires) in the regnal year 1240-1241.³¹⁴ This verse, the significance of which has already been discussed, seems to have served as a motto for Henry III and was inscribed around a chequerboard in Woodstock Hall in 1240 and in Anglo-Norman in the king's Painted Chamber at Westminster in 1236.³¹⁵ Tristram associates this verse extolling renunciation with Henry's devotion to the Confessor who was invariably depicted performing an act of alms-giving which ensured his place in Heaven. If the verse was indeed present on the windows of the Lesser Hall, its connection with the Confessor is appropriate as it is likely that this hall was a remodelled form of the original hall in the Confessor's palace.³¹⁶

The Lesser Hall does not appear to have been used on its own for feeding the poor, but only in conjunction with the Great Hall and other areas of the palace. The poor were fed in both halls on 29th June 1241 (feast of Peter and Paul), on the 4th March 1244 on the sixth anniversary of the death of Joan of Scotland and on 2nd February 1244 (the feast of

³¹⁴ H Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England*, R N Wornum ed., (rev. edn. London 1888), iii, 7, gives the year as 25 Henry III. It is not in the *CLR* for this year and I have not yet found it in the other rolls. Walpole has been followed by other writers including J G Rokewode, in 'A Memoir on the Painted Chamber at Westminster,chiefly in illustration of Mr. Charles Stothard' series of Drawings from Paintings upon the Walls of the Chamber, read 12 May 1842', pp. 1-37, *Vetusta Monumenta*, 6 (1885), 8 n.3, and E W Tristram, 'An English mid-fourteenth century picture', *Burlington Magazine*, 83 (1943), 161.

³¹⁵ Painted Chamber: *Close Rolls 1234-1237*: 270-1; Woodstock: *CLR 1240-45*: 4. This verse has been discussed, pp.54-56 above.

³¹⁶ Wilson, 'Rulers, Artificers and Shoppers,' 294, n.4.

the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary).³¹⁷ The number of poor fed on these occasions is not specified, but assuming the payments reflect a cost of a penny a head, the money figures suggest that the combined capacity of the halls was c.4,500 - c.5,500. In the Christmas period 1246-47 both halls were used for feeding the poor on Christmas Day and the following four days, that is to say the feasts of saints Stephen, John the Evangelist, Holy Innocents and Thomas Becket.³¹⁸

At the south end of the Lesser hall there was access at first floor level into the king's chamber, more famously known as the Painted Chamber, which ran west-east at right angles to the Lesser Hall. In turn, the Painted Chamber was linked at its east end via a newel staircase in the corner of the south and east walls to the Queen's Chamber. On 29th December 1243 a writ was tested giving instructions for the feeding of 6,000 poor on the feast of the Circumcision (1st January 1244) for the health of the king, the queen and their children using the Great and Lesser halls for the old and debilitated, the Painted Chamber for the less debilitated and *mediocres*, and the Queen's Chamber for boys.³¹⁹

³¹⁷ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 311; *CLR 1240-45*: 84; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 164; *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

³¹⁸ *CLR 1245-51*: 106.

³¹⁹ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 150: 'Mandatum est W. de Haverhull', thesaurio regis, quod hac die Circumcisionis Domini pasci faciat apud Westmonasterium sex milia pauperum pro statu regis et regine et liberorum suorum. Pascantur autem omnes debiles et senes in magna aula et minori, minus debiles et mediocres in camera regis, et pueri in camera regine. Et cum rex costum sciverit, illud reddi faciet. Teste rege apud Bistlehem, xxix. die Decembris (1243)'. Mollat, *The Poor in the Middle Ages*, 1-11, discusses the vocabulary used to describe the poor, and says that *debilis* was used to indicate feebleness due to ill health (p.3).

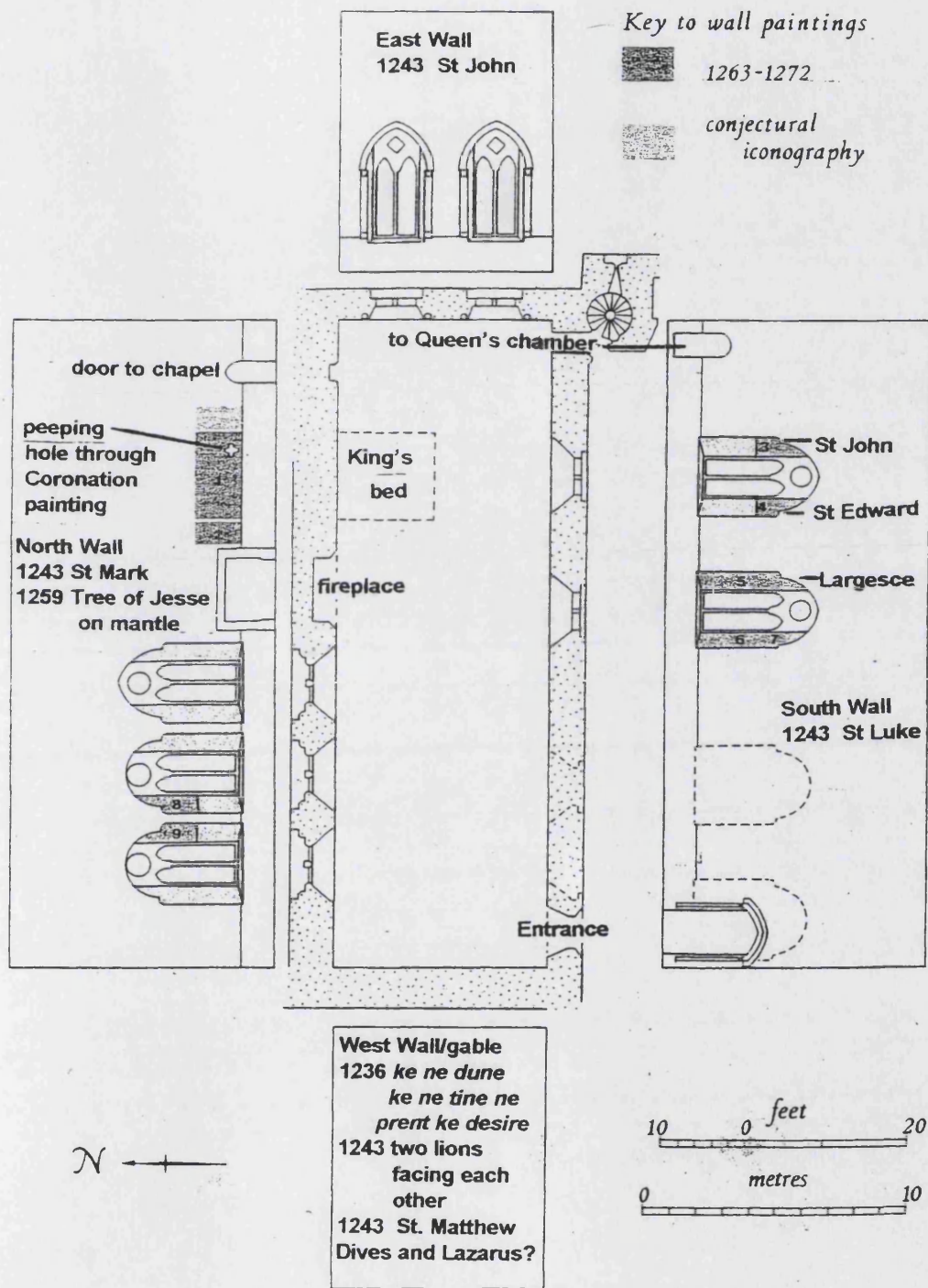
PLAN 2: THE PAINTED CHAMBER AT WESTMINSTER

1236 whole chamber painted with green drapery and bestiary images of animals and plants, below unspecified 'magna historia' already in situ.

By 1243 Mappa Mundi

1249 chamber paved

1263 Fire



Paintings uncovered in 1819, numbered on plan:

- | | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Coronation of St Edward | 4. St Edward offering ring | 7. Angel holding crown |
| 2. Guardian of Solomon's bed | 5. Largesce/Covoitise | 9. Verite |
| 3. St John as pilgrim | 6. Debonerete/Ira | 10. Fortitude (?) |

These two royal chambers used for feeding the poor were at first floor level and also sizeable spaces. The king's chamber or Painted Chamber measured 80ft 6in. by 26ft width (2093 square feet), with a 31ft 9in. high ceiling.³²⁰ With a floor area of approximately 194m², the Painted Chamber was used from the fourteenth century up until its destruction by fire in the nineteenth century as a parliament chamber.³²¹ It is worth describing the decoration and lay-out of the Painted Chamber to give an indication of the importance and symbolism of this audience chamber, which also welcomed the poor. The king's chamber was known as the Painted Chamber from the early fourteenth century, but it was already sumptuously decorated under Henry III. It was oriented east-west with the entrance in the lateral south wall at the west end and the king's bed at the east end against the lateral north wall. After a campaign of alterations in the 1220s the room had three double lancet and oculi windows in the north lateral wall in the lower, western half of the room, two windows in the lateral south wall in the upper half of the room and two windows in the wall at the far east end overlooking the Thames. The earliest decoration explicitly mentioned is the inscription of the verse *ke ne dune ke ne tine ne prent ke desire* (he who does not give what he has shall not receive what he desires) which was executed on the west wall by the main entrance in 1236.³²² In the same year, the whole chamber was painted so that it appeared to be covered with green hangings, and the artists also executed bestiary style images of animals and plants, below the unspecified *magna*

³²⁰ Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 495; Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 9, gives the internal dimensions as 24.5m x 7.9m, height 9.7m.

³²¹ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 3, 9, 35.

³²² In modern French, *qui ne donne ce qu'il tient, ne prend ce qu'il désire*. Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 497; Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 13, 16.

historia already painted in the room.³²³ A fragment of wall-painting from the chamber recorded in the nineteenth century depicting the feet of a pauper being licked by dogs, led Rokewode to think that the story of Dives and Lazarus was also present in the chamber. The positioning of this parable on the wall opposite the king's seat in the king's halls at Ludgershall (1246), Northampton (1253) and Guildford (1256), suggests that in the Painted Chamber Dives and Lazarus may have been on wall opposite the king's bed, that is to say on the west wall inscribed with the verse.³²⁴ The verse on this west end wall was joined in 1243 by two lions facing each other, and an image of St. Matthew. The Evangelists Mark, Luke and John were also painted at the same time on the north, south and east walls respectively. By this time a *mappa mundi* was also present in the room.³²⁵ A tree of Jesse was painted on the mantel of the refurbished fireplace next to the king's bed in 1259. The bed itself, which was evidently ornamented, lay within a canopied enclosure which could be closed with green curtains. The wall at the head of the bed was furnished with a quatrefoil peeping hole so that the king could see the altar in his private chapel.³²⁶ In February 1263 a fire started in the Chamber and evidently damaged the paintings, leading to another campaign of works from the end of the year up until Henry's death in 1272. It is not clear if the series triumphant Virtues crushing Vices on the

³²³ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 17; *King's Works*, 497.

³²⁴ Ludgershall: *CLR 1245-51*, 32. Northampton: *CLR 1251-60*, 97. Guildford: *CLR 1251-60*, 262-3. Fragment: J G Rokewode, 'A Memoir of the Painted Chamber,' 15. This fragment belonged to L N Cottingham, whose collection was sold in 1851, see J Myles, *L.N. Cottingham 1787-1847: Architect of the Gothic Revival* (London 1996), 28. See also Dixon-Smith, 'The Image and Reality of Alms-Giving in the Great Halls of Henry III,' 81-83.

³²⁵ Binski, *The Painted Chambe*, 44; Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 497.

³²⁶ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 13-15.

window splays, the coronation of Edward the Confessor at the head of Henry's bed, the guardian of Solomon's bed painted alongside it, and the images of the Confessor giving his ring to St. John on the splays of the window opposite the bed, which were uncovered in the nineteenth century, and all of which have been attributed to Henry's reign by Paul Binski, were new commissions following the fire or replacements of earlier paintings.³²⁷ The large wall painting of the Coronation of St. Edward (1.7m high x 3.2m long), which was itself framed by fictive green drapes, would only have been visible to visitors if the green curtains of the king's bed were open, although the bed-guardian figure was painted on the wall outside this enclosure.³²⁸ The peeping hole through to the altar of the king's chapel pierced through the Coronation wall painting on the lower right side. The splays of the window on the south wall, directly opposite the king's bed, were decorated with the ring story from the hagiography of Edward the Confessor. On the left hand splay, St. John was painted wearing clothes with stylised tatters, carrying a pilgrim's staff and with his hand begging for alms, extended towards St. Edward on the right hand splay. The text beside him still visible in the nineteenth century gave his words to the king: 'Sire dubie[z] me/donez. por lam[ur]/Deu q[ui] bie[n] amez'. The Confessor, crowned and holding his dove-headed sceptre, faced St. John across the window and offered his ring in alms, saying: 'Pelerin, p[re]nez cest a[nel]...' ³²⁹ (See Plate 2, p.60). On the left hand splay of the window to the west of the Edward window, the crowned female personification of the

³²⁷ Ibid., 22, 33-34.

³²⁸ Ibid., 13-14.

³²⁹ Ibid., 114-115 and plates IV & V. John is asking the king to give to him 'for the love of God whom we love' and Edward addresses him saying 'Pilgrim, take this ring...' The rest of the inscription beside the figure of Edward was lost by the time the painting was recorded. See Plate 2, p.60 above.

Virtue of *Largesse* (Largesse/Generosity) stood in victory over the prone figure of *Covotise* (Covetousness/Greed), who had money bag tied round his neck. The Virtue pours coins into the mouth of the Vice and stabs down with a spear. This image had a border with the arms of England and the Empire, which might indicate that this image was present before the 1263 fire since it was the marriage of Henry's sister Isabella (d. 1241) to the Emperor Frederick II in 1235 which confirmed the link between the two realms, or indeed the election of the king's brother Richard as king of the Romans in 1257, also pre-fire.³³⁰ (see Plate 1, p.53). On the right hand splay of the same window, the Virtue *Debonereté*, armed with the three lion shield of England and a swatch of twigs tramples *Ira* (Anger). The border shows the arms of England, St. Edward the Confessor, and St. Edmund king and martyr.³³¹ Unlike the figures of St. John and St. Edward, who faced each other in dialogue across the window, the Virtues turn to face towards those entering the chamber via the great door at the lower end. The three windows on the north wall (the same side as the king's bed), also had images on their splays, no doubt continuing the cycle of Virtues, but by the time the decoration was uncovered and recorded they were damaged. What was left showed another Virtue, possibly Fortitude, painted on the right hand splay of the window opposite the great entrance to the chamber, and *Verité* (Truth) on the left hand splay of the middle window.³³² Suffice to say, the king's Painted Chamber, both before and after the 1263 fire, was the most opulently adorned and high status area in the Palace of Westminster. It was the king's great

³³⁰ The shield of the Empire was carved at the east end of the north passage besides the monastic choir in Westminster Abbey in a scheme which certainly planned and probably executed before 1264 (Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 78).

³³¹ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 41, 115 and Colour Plate II.

chamber, where he received visitors and slept on his green draped bed surrounded by exquisite images extolling the glory, power and saintly protection of the English monarchy. It was used for occasions of great symbolic and political importance: it was in the Painted Chamber in October 1260 that the bishop of London, in the presence of the Lord Edward, the archbishop of Canterbury, John Mansell and Robert Walerund, broke up the king's old seal following the Treaty of Paris.³³³ Nevertheless, this sumptuous chamber welcomed the *mediocres* and *minus debiles* during the feeding of the poor in the January 1243, whilst the poor boys must have passed through the Painted Chamber to be fed in the Queen's chamber.

The Queen's Chamber, which was built along with her chapel in c. 1237-8,³³⁴ was on a north-south axis at right angles to the high east end of the Painted Chamber, and connected to it via a small door leading onto a newel stair. The interior measured approximately 30m x 9 ½m (c. 285m² or c. 3067 square feet) and so had a greater area than the king's Painted Chamber.³³⁵ The programme of works on this chamber in 1238-42 included paintings of the Four Evangelists, the Lord and Angels and a personification of Winter on the mantel of the fireplace.³³⁶

³³² *Ibid.*, 115.

³³³ *Close Rolls 1259-61*: 130.

³³⁴ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 12.

³³⁵ Measurements for the Queen's Chamber are based on the scale map of Westminster Palace in the Middle Ages which accompanies the *History of the King's Works* which follows antiquarian and excavation information. I have given areas in square feet using metric to imperial conversion tables.

³³⁶ Binski, *The Painted Chamber*, 17, 44.

The linking of the Great Hall, Lesser Hall, Painted Chamber and Queen's Chamber meant it would have been possible to enter Westminster Great Hall at the main door, walk up the immense hall towards the dais end and the great white marble throne (1245), pass through a corridor, which allowed a view into St. Stephen's chapel and the image of Mary on the back of the king's seat,³³⁷ and up to the Lesser Hall at first floor level, walk through that hall to the connecting oriel leading to the great door at the lower end of the Painted Chamber, walk up the room to the king's bed and beyond to the door connecting the high end of the king's chamber to the queen's chamber. It seems likely that this was the route Henry took in 1247 when he performed a circuit of the palace and his own chambers with the relic of the Holy Blood of Jesus. This journey through the palace accords well with the ideas of access theory which emphasises that, in buildings where one has to pass through one room to reach the next, the most private and high status areas of palaces are those positioned at the furthest 'step' from the main entry to the complex. Given this articulation of spaces which appears as almost a processional route to inspire awe in those permitted to approach the king and queen in their apartments, it is all the more striking that not only the Great and Lesser halls but also the Painted Chamber and the Queen's Chamber were used for feeding the indigent poor.

It is likely that the feast of the Circumcision in 1243 was not the only time when all these spaces were used to accommodate the poor. At some time between the testing of the writ of instruction on 28th December 1243 and the issuing of a writ of *liberate* to pay for it on

³³⁷ Ibid., 44 and n.95: 'In 1245 Henry ordered that St. Mary should be painted on the outside of the king's seat in St. Stephen's Chapel, in such a way that her image could be

12th January 1244, 10,000 poor were fed in Westminster Palace for the soul of the saintly Edith, Edward the Confessor's queen, who was also buried in the Abbey. On 15th January 1244, another 10,000 were to be fed in one day in the Palace for the salvation of the king, queen and their children.³³⁸ On both occasions the number of poor is specified and a payment of £41 and 1 mark (10,000d.) is issued. In order to accommodate such numbers, even out of legal term time, it would be necessary to use both halls and both chambers.

In addition to Edward the Confessor and his wife Edith, other people who were buried in Westminster Abbey were commemorated by feeding the poor next door in Westminster Palace. As we have seen, the Confessor's chamberlain, Hugolin, who was buried in the Abbey, was commemorated in March 1247 by feeding the poor in Westminster Great Hall. Queen Edith was commemorated individually by feeding in the Great Hall, and chaplains kept the anniversary of 'the three queens buried in Westminster Abbey', that is to say Edith herself, Queen Matilda, the first wife of Henry I (both of whose tombs were evidently visible in the Abbey as in 1245 gold cloths were ordered to cover them) and Aethelgotha, queen to King Saeberht of the East Saxons, who was associated with the original foundation of the Abbey in the seventh century.³³⁹ In this way, the celebration of the anniversary of the death of an individual, which was intended to create a mystical union between the living and the dead, involved both requiem masses in the Abbey,

seen by the king as he came down from the Great Hall.'

³³⁸ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 145; *CLR 1240-45*: 210.

³³⁹ Feeding for Edith alone: *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 145; *CLR 1240-45*: 210. Anniversary of the three queens: *CLR 1245-51*: 19. Gold cloths: *CLR 1240-45*: 286. Burial list of Westminster Abbey used to confirm the identity of the three queens: Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 372, 373, 388.

where these individuals were buried, and the feeding of the poor in the Palace. In the Abbey, this spiritual link between the living and the dead was made via Christ's body in the form of the bread of the altar during the requiem mass. In the Palace, the king fed the poor, who were regarded as another form of the Body of Christ, since it was believed that Christ was present in the poor. In this way, by both eating and feeding the mystical body of Christ, the king hoped to create a link between himself and the dead he was commemorating. In addition, these ceremonies involving the body of Christ took place in the Palace, where Henry had processed with a relic of the true blood of Christ, and in the Abbey, where the relic remained.

However, a number of relatives who were not buried in the Abbey were also commemorated in various ways at Westminster. The anniversaries of the king's sisters, Joan of Scotland (d.1238), who was buried at Tarrant Crawford in Dorset, the Empress Isabella (d.1241), whose body lay at Andria in Southern Italy, and also the anniversary of the queen's uncle, William of Savoy, bishop-elect of Valence, who died in 1239 at Viterbo, were all marked by feeding at Westminster Palace.³⁴⁰ Equally, after the death of Raymond Berengar, count of Provence, the king's father-in-law, who died in Provence in 1245, 10,000 poor were to be fed in the Palace, a requiem mass was performed for him in

³⁴⁰ Joan, queen of Scotland: *CM*, iii. 479; *HBC*, 37; Alison Weir, *Britain's Royal Families: the complete genealogy* (1996), 199. Empress Isabella: *HBC*, 37; Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 71; *CLR 1240-45*: 204; *Close Rolls 1242-7*:140; *CLR 1240-45*: 306. *CM*, iv. 175-6, for the Emperor's letter announcing her death. William of Savoy, bishop-elect of Valence (the queen's uncle): *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 233; *CLR 1240-45*: 6, 306; *CM*, iii. 623. Often referred to as William of Valence but not to be confused with Henry's Lusignan half-brother, also William de Valence, lord of Pembroke by marriage, who died in 1296 and was buried under the feretory floor at Westminster Abbey.

the Abbey and a stipend was provided for a chaplain to pray for his soul in the Abbey in perpetuity.³⁴¹ A chantry chaplain was established at Westminster Abbey in 1246 for the soul of the king's mother, Isabella of Angouleme, who had died and been buried at Fontevrault.³⁴² The same year, the king founded a chantry of one chaplain in the Abbey for John Halengrett and all the faithful departed.³⁴³ It should be remembered that it was not until 1247 that Henry decided that he and Queen Eleanor would be buried in the Abbey, and buried his first relative, Fulk de Castro Novo, in the house.³⁴⁴ In 1261, Henry endowed an anniversary to be kept at the Abbey (which probably entailed a requiem mass and almsgiving) for the soul of Sanchia, queen of Almain, who was buried at Hailes Abbey and was the king's sister-in-law twice over, being the sister of Queen Eleanor of

³⁴¹ *CLR 1240-45*: 324; *CLR 1245-51*: 21; Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its estates*, Appendix II: Burials' 391, cites *Calandar of Charter Rolls*, i. 289 (where for Richard read Raymond Berengar); *CM*, iv. 485.

³⁴² Harvey, *Westminster Abbey*, 391.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 391. She states that Henry III provided an endowment of £2 in rents and a further endowment was promised by Halengrett's father, who she identifies as perhaps the royal serjeant and crossbowman of that name mentioned under Henry III. This man, called Halengrat, Halengret the Balister or Alengeritus, citizen of Bordeaux, was involved in money lending. In 1235 the king repaid him for a loan he had made to Henry de Trubleville, at the time seneschal of Gascony (*CPR 1232-37*: 113). During the 1242-43 Gascon campaign, he continued to advance money to the king and his servants (*CPR 1232-47*: 320, 328, 341, 367, 387). Henry evidently made a land grant to him during this period (*ibid.*, 345, 346), and, in February 1244, granted him 20 marks a year at the Exchequer, until he was provided with land of the same value, to maintain himself in the king's service and promised to grant him a house in London (*ibid.*, 419, and grant of 20 marks, reiterated 1254, *CPR 1247-58*: 264-5). He continued to lend money to the king, (£400 in August 1246, £320 the following January, *CPR 1232-47*: 486, 496) and in October 1246 was awaiting payment on a loan he had made to another royal money-lender, Aaron the Jew of York (*ibid.*, 492). He is described as the 'king's serjeant, Halengret the Balister' in 1247 (*CPR 1247-58*: 3), and the king twice pardoned him for deaths which had caused him to 'abjure the realm' (Sept. 1243, *CPR 1232-47*: 396, and Sept. 1248, *CPR 1247-58*: 28). He was still lending money to the crown in 1254 (*CPR 1247-58*: 275).

³⁴⁴ *CM*, iv. 604.

Provence and the wife of the king's brother, Richard of Cornwall.³⁴⁵ The performance of all these spiritual benefits at the expense of the king was, of course, in addition to any arrangements made by the deceased themselves, or in the case of Sanchia, Richard of Cornwall, for anniversaries, chantries and alms-giving for their souls.

In this way, even before Westminster Abbey became a regular and expected site for royal burials, both palace and abbey were used by Henry III as a virtual mausoleum - a site used for the commemoration of his family and friends. Although his family were buried at sites scattered across both the realm and Europe, they were brought together at Westminster through *memoria*.

I. a) ii. Windsor Castle

Windsor had two halls which were used for feeding the poor. The first is referred to as 'the hall in the upper bailey', 'the hall within the tower'³⁴⁶ and the 'smaller hall'.³⁴⁷

Windsor was the royal 'nursery castle' and this smaller hall was part of the complex of buildings in which the children were housed, as is made clear in instructions in 1256 for the repair of 'the hall and chambers in the upper castle of Windesores where the king's children are brought up.'³⁴⁸ In 1239/40 works were in progress to provide the king's newborn children with what were apparently two storey half-timbered buildings around

³⁴⁵ CPR 1258-66: 195; Harvey, 'Westminster Abbey and its estates: Appendix II: Burials,' 392.

³⁴⁶ CLR 1226-40:472; CLR 1240-45: 37.

³⁴⁷ Close Rolls 1237-42: 382/3; CLR 1226-40: 433.

³⁴⁸ CLR 1251-60: 268.

an open courtyard to the west of the queen's lodgings in the upper bailey which were also arranged around a herb garden.³⁴⁹

The second hall used was a newer and larger hall called the 'greater hall', 'the hall of the castle'.³⁵⁰ More is known about this hall which was on the north side of the lower bailey enclosure opposite the main gate to the castle on the south side. It was oriented north-south, measured 71ft x 41ft (2911 square feet or c. 270m²), was equipped with a kitchen from 1227, had a stone lion set up on its gable end in c. 1236-7, was to be supplied with spring water in 1256 and was glazed with stained glass.³⁵¹ In 1250, Henry ordered the construction of a throne in the hall to be ornamented with gold and paint and adorned with the image of a king holding a sceptre, thus emphasising the throne as a permanent symbol of the king's presence and authority in the hall.³⁵² It is likely that, of the two halls, this was the more frequently used for public business being the larger of the two and more accessible from the main gate. At times it was evidently busy enough for pickpockets to operate undetected: on 18 January 1256, William of Sancta Ermina, the king's

³⁴⁹ Colvin, Allen-Brown, and Taylor, eds., *King's Works*, 867. The Lord Edward was born in June 1239 and his sister Margarent in June 1240.

³⁵⁰ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 382/3; *CLR 1240-45*: 37.

³⁵¹ *King's Works*, 866-868. See *CLR 1251-60*: 289, for the spring water to be directed to the entrance of the hall and to a bath at the end of the hall on the east side. By this date Henry had built new apartments for himself and the queen in the north east corner of the lower bailey at the east end of the hall.

³⁵² *CLR 1245-51*: 296.

chamberlain,³⁵³ announced publicly that his seal had been stolen in the hall the same day by a purse-cutter.³⁵⁴

Orders for alms-giving at the castle in the Lord Edward's infancy were sent to the Savoyard, Walter de Dya, and the Englishman Hugh Giffard who were appointed as the Lord Edward's guardians. Giffard, whose wife Sibil was rewarded the help and support she gave to Queen Eleanor at Edward's birth,³⁵⁵ was particularly prominent in the organisation of alms-giving at the castle. The birth of the Lord Edward in August 1239 led to various alms-events at Windsor in his first year. On Christmas Eve, a mini-maundy was performed for the baby-prince: fifteen paupers were fed, given shoes, tunics and 1d. each for his 'good estate'.³⁵⁶ In December 1239 a chaplain was to be found at Windsor 'who can celebrate the mass of the Virgin all his time for the good estate and health of Edward'³⁵⁷ and the feeding of the poor at feasts of the Virgin in the following year were accompanied by gifts on Edward's behalf. On the feast of the Purification of the Virgin in February 1240, 'the hall' was to be filled with poor whilst a candle was offered for the Lord Edward in the king's chapel, and on the feast of her Assumption in August 1240, Giffard and Dya distributed £6.3d in alms on Edward's behalf.³⁵⁸ When the January feast of the baby-prince's name saint, St. Edward the Confessor, was celebrated at Windsor in

³⁵³ William was a Poitevin knight who received grants of land in England (Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens', 84, 90).

³⁵⁴ *Close Rolls 1254-56*: 386.

³⁵⁵ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 29, 32.

³⁵⁶ a mini-maundy because the 'maundies' organised by Henry III at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun involved the distributed of shoes and clothing to between 150 and 300 paupers.

³⁵⁷ *CLR 1226-40*: 435.

1242, Hugh Giffard was to use both halls, putting the old poor in the larger hall and the young poor in the smaller hall.³⁵⁹

In addition, although not specifically linked to the Lord Edward, during the Christmas period of 1239/40 there was a concentration of feeding in the Windsor halls, when the bailiffs were ordered: 'to cause the king's great hall at Windles[ovre] to be filled on Christmas day with poor folk by the view of Hugh Giffard, and in the like manner to cause the smaller hall of the castle to be filled on St. Stephen's day (26th December) and on the day of the Epiphany (6th January), and to cause the said [smaller?] hall to be filled on the day of St. Thomas (29th December) with poor chaplains and clerks, and to cause it to be filled on Innocents day (28th December) with poor children, and to feed them on the said days by the view of Hugh in honour of the Lord and of the saints aforesaid'³⁶⁰ Here the type of people who were fed reflected the nature of the people whose deaths were being commemorated through these gifts of food: poor clerics fed in commemoration of the murder of Archbishop Thomas and poor children in memory of the 'holy innocents', the babies under two slaughtered by Herod in his desire to be rid of the infant Jesus.

Not only were the poor tailored to the event when they were fed in memory of the saints, but when acts of alms were performed for the bodily and spiritual health of the living, the amount of alms given, as well as the type of poor gathered together, could be directly related to physical size of the people for whom the poor were fed. On the Friday after the

³⁵⁸ *CLR 1226-40*: 435; 446; 490.

³⁵⁹ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 383.

Epiphany in January 1244, Hugh Giffard was to arrange to feed 'poor and needy children' in the 'Windsor hall', as many as could get in, so that the hall would be filled if enough children came. The same writ gives instructions that the king's own children, the four year old Edward, his three year old sister Margaret and their eighteen month old baby sister Beatrice, were to be weighed and measured and in some way these figures were to be related to the amount given to the physically needy children for the spiritual health of the royal children.³⁶¹ In the spring of 1255, instructions were issued to weigh the ten year-old Edmund Crouchback and give his weight in bread and meat to the poor.³⁶²

This direct correlation between someone's vital statistics, their own individual physicality, and the gifts made for their soul was not limited to the feeding of the poor. In 1245, Henry paid Edward of Westminster for '15 tapers of the king's size placed round the shrine of St. Edward all the time the king was in Gascony till his return to England', referring to his time overseas from May 1242 to September 1243 on the ludicrously ill-

³⁶⁰ *CLR 1226-40*: 433.

³⁶¹ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 150: Mandatum est Hugoni Giffard et Magistro Willelmo le Brun quod die Veneris proxima post Epiphaniam pasci faciant in aula de Windes' ad bonum focum omnes pueros pauperes et egenos quot invenire poterint, ita quod aula impleatur, si tot inveniantur; et pueros regis ponderari et mensurari et pondus et mensuram pro earum salute dari faciant. Teste rege apud Westmonasterium, vij. die Januarii (1244). Births of children: Edward, 17/18 June 1239; Margaret, 29 June 1240; Beatrice, 25 June 1242 (Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 27, 30, 35).

³⁶² *Close Rolls 1254-56*: 71: Mandatum est Matheo Bezyllles quod ponderari faciat Edmundum filium regis et pondus suum in pane et carnibus erogari pauperibus faciat. Teste rege apud Westmonasterium xxviiij. die Aprilis' (1255). Edmund Crouchback was born 16 January 1245 (Howell, 'The Children of King Henry III,' 57, 58).

managed Gascon campaign.³⁶³ Given the Windsor example, the 'king's size' (*promensuris nostris*) may have been both his height and his weight in wax. Another of the gifts given for Edward in his first year was a silk tunic, made to measure the prince, given at the church of St. Mary's in Southwark.³⁶⁴

I. a) iii. *Other castles and palaces used for feeding the poor*

Many other castles across the country were also used for feeding the poor and the building record shows adaptations for this use. In 1238 orders were issued for a penthouse (covered walkway) to be built alongside the almonry at Winchester for the use of the poor,³⁶⁵ probably the penthouse described as running from the great gate of Winchester castle to the almonry which was to be roofed with slate in 1252,³⁶⁶ whilst at Clarendon Palace in 1245 another penthouse to shelter the poor was built, running between the main gate and the north side of the enclosure, where the hall was situated.³⁶⁷ Evidently queues of poor were a common sight. Dublin Castle, Marleborough castle, and

³⁶³ *HBC*, 38; R C Finucane, 'Sacred Corpse, Profane Carrion: Social Ideals and Death Rituals in the Later Middle Ages,' pp.40-60, in *Mirrors of Mortality: Studies in the Social History of Death*, ed. Joachim Whaley (London, 1981), 41, lists the various solutions sought by people desperate for a cure or a talisman to ward off death including measuring sick people who were believed to be fatally ill with a string which was then incorporated into a candle offered in church. Howell, 'The Children of King Henry III,' 66, describes how, in August or September 1252, 'the queen showed her concern of the mortal illness of the son of her friend Maud de Lacy by ordered a *mensura*, a votive candle of the child's own height.' See Appendix 2: Tapers.

³⁶⁴ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 28; *CLR* 1226-40: 442; *CLR* 1260-67: 292.

³⁶⁵ *CLR* 1226-40: 350.

³⁶⁶ *CLR* 1251-60: 57.

³⁶⁷ *CLR* 1240-45: 291.

the king's halls at Cambridge and Oxford were all used to feed the poor to commemorate the dead.³⁶⁸

I. b) Towns with concentration of population and caritative institutions :

London, Oxford and Cambridge

London was used as a site of feeding in association with saints' days, particularly those celebrating St. Paul. In 1244, Edward of Westminster and William de Haverhull, the treasurer, organised the feeding of 15,000 poor in the churchyard of St. Paul's in London on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul on 25th January. In June of the same year, they fed a further 1,000 divided between St. Paul's and Westminster Palace for the feast of Peter (the patronal saint of Westminster Abbey) and Paul.³⁶⁹ Old St Paul's was the largest church in London and also had a hospital for the poor within its precincts.³⁷⁰ In 1248, Edward of Westminster was paid in advance for feeding all the prisoners at Newgate gaol in London on the Monday after Ash Wednesday.³⁷¹ A prison is hardly a caritative institution, but visiting prisoners and paying ransoms to release captives, were, like the feeding of the poor, corporal works of mercy which Christians were expected to perform out of the love of Christ and so it is probably for this reason that the king chose to feed these prisoners.

³⁶⁸ Dublin: Good Friday 1241: *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 227. Marlborough: 1249 anniversary of Isabella of Angouleme, *CLR 1245-51*: 288. Oxford & Cambridge for Isabella of Angouleme in 1246: *CLR 1245-51*: 71.

³⁶⁹ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 152, 199; *CLR 1240-45*: 306-7.

³⁷⁰ D Knowles and R Neville Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses in England and Wales* (1971) 326, 374. Founded c.1190 by one of the cathedral canons with the support of the dean and chapter.

³⁷¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 168.

Henry III also fed the poor of London for the commemoration of dead members of his family. In 1245, on the death of the queen's father Raymond Berengar, count of Provence, 10,000 poor were fed at Westminster Palace, as well as the Dominicans, Franciscans, sick in hospitals and anchoresses of London who were all fed for his soul. At this time, the Dominican friary was at Holborn, outside the city, the Franciscan convent within the city walls by Newgate.³⁷² Besides the hospital already mentioned at St. Paul's, London and its immediate surroundings had seven other hospitals in 1245 catering for the poor and sick: St. Bartholemew's at Smithfield (Augustinian), the hospital of the military order of St. Thomas of Acon/Acre, St Mary without Bishopsgate (Augustinian), St Katherine's by the Tower, the hospital of the order of St John of Jerusalem (the Hospitallers), St Thomas at Bermondsey (Cluniac), St. Thomas at Southwark (Augustinian) and the hospital of St Mary Rouncivall/Roncevaux, another crusader/hospitaller order, which was near St Martin in the Fields.³⁷³ The previous year, on the death of the queen's aunt, Joan of Constantinople, countess of Flanders and wife of Thomas of Savoy, Edward of Westminster, in a similar exercise, organised the feeding of the Franciscans, Dominicans, poor in hospitals, lepers and nuns of London.³⁷⁴ There were four leprosariums in the vicinity: the hospital of St. Giles at Holborn, St Mary and St Leonard at Southwark, St Mary Magdalene at Stratford-at-Bow and St. James' hospital

³⁷² Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 214, 217, 222, 226. The Dominicans moved to Ludgate after 1275, and so lent their name to the later Blackfriars Bridge. In a Franciscan context, convent does not mean a female house, but a friary.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 165, 314, 325, 326, 336, 342, 372, 373, 374, 393, 402. The order of St. Thomas of Acon (Acre) was an Augustinian brand of Hospitallers dedicated to St. Thomas Becket and this London house was founded by Becket's sister and her husband. The other hospitals of St. Thomas in this list are also dedicated to Thomas Becket rather than St. Thomas the Apostle.

Westminster.³⁷⁵ The nunneries to benefit from this *pro anima* feeding were probably the Priors of St. Mary's Clerkenwell and St. John the Baptist Haliwell (Shoreditch), St. Helen's at Bishopsgate, the nunnery within Cripplegate, SS. Mary and John the Baptist at Kilburn (which had been founded by an abbot of Westminster and whose prioress and warden were still appointed by the abbot), and SS. Mary and Ethelburga at Barking, founded by St. Erkenwald, bishop of London.³⁷⁶ At the same time that all this feeding was going on in the hospitals, lazarehouses, nunneries and friaries, the bells of the whole vill of London were to ring out for the soul of the countess. Considering that in the late twelfth century, William Fitzstephen counted 126 churches within and without the wall, this must have been quite something, not to say, deafening.³⁷⁷

In the same way, the king used the concentration of charitable foundations and friaries at Oxford and Cambridge to commemorate the dead. Both towns had the full gamut of Mendicant houses. The Dominicans (Black Friars) and Franciscans (Grey Friars) were established in both towns by 1238, while the Carmelites, Augustinian/Austin friars, friars of the Penance of Jesus Christ (friars of the Sack), friars of St. Mary of Areno (Pied friars) and friars of the Holy Cross (Crutched friars) were present in both towns by the end of Henry's reign.³⁷⁸ Their houses acted as study centres for the orders' brethren. On

³⁷⁴ *Close Rolls 1242-7*: 279; *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

³⁷⁵ Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 323, 334, 336, 365, 393, 402.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 254, 256, 260, 259, 278, 281, 288.

³⁷⁷ Jonathan Kiek, *Everybody's Historic London: A History and Guide* (London, 1984), 29.

³⁷⁸ Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 239, 241, 233, 234, 214, 222, 224, 249, 250. The Austin friars at Cambridge were well established by 1289 but there is no foundation date. Cambridge Blackfriars was on the site now occupied by Emmanuel

the Friday after Michaelmas in 1233, Henry fed the Oxford Dominicans and gave them clothes and shoes.³⁷⁹ In 1244, 1,000 poor scholars at Oxford were fed on the death-anniversary of the king's sister, Joan of Scotland.³⁸⁰ Shortly after Joan's death in 1238, two prisoners were released from Oxford prison for her soul.³⁸¹ In August 1246, three months after the death of the king's mother, Isabella of Angouleme, the sheriffs of Oxford and Cambridge were both instructed to feed 'all the poor clerks of the university' in the king's hall and the Dominicans and Franciscans in their own houses'.³⁸² This feeding was to take place on the same day that liturgical commemoration was performed for Isabella's soul. Henry had given financial support to his half-brother, Aymer de Valence, when he was a student at Oxford in 1240s.³⁸³ When Aymer died in December 1260, Henry asked the Franciscans, Dominicans, Carmelites, friars of the Penance of Jesus, brethren of St. John's hospital in Oxford and the nuns at nearby Godestow to celebrate divine service for Aymer's soul. The king also granted their houses money to pay for their food on the day of commemoration.³⁸⁴ In addition, the bailiffs of Oxford provided the almoner with money to feed 20,000 poor for Aymer's soul.³⁸⁵ The king also

College and Cambridge Greyfriars on that of Sidney Sussex. Oxford: *ibid.*, 214, 218, 223, 227, 233, 236, 240, 243, 247, 248. The church of the Austin Friars at Oxford was used as the School of Theology until the late fifteenth century. The Bethlehemite friars were recorded in Cambridge by Matthew Paris in 1257 (*CM*, v. 631) but Knowles says it seems they did not establish a house.

³⁷⁹ *CLR 1226-40*: 234.

³⁸⁰ *CLR 1240-45*: 220.

³⁸¹ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 32.

³⁸² *CLR 1245-51*: 71.

³⁸³ A.B. Emden, *Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500*, ii, 1180 (Clarendon Press, 1958) under Lusignan, Aymer de. *CLR 1245-51*: 172, 174, for examples of writs to supply the student Aymer with fire wood and money.

³⁸⁴ *CLR 1260-67*: 12, 14.

³⁸⁵ *CLR 1260-67*: 12.

maintained tapers burning constantly at the shrine of St. Frideswide in Oxford and two chaplains there to pray for his own soul and those of his predecessors.³⁸⁶ St. Frideswide, an Anglo-Saxon noblewoman and virgin saint, was famous for laying her curse on kings, and on one occasion, Edward I did not enter Oxford town, supposedly out of fear of her.³⁸⁷ However, Henry III seems to have been more circumspect, and in 1264, at the height of the baronial rebellion, according to Rishanger, Henry 'went to Oxford to offer up his prayers, and visited the tomb of St. Fredeswith, which none of the king's of England before him had ever dared to do; and thus he showed that he did not fear the superstitious opinion of those who think that it is unlawful for the English kings to enter that city, and that the Virgin [St.Fredeswide rather than Mary] visits them with her vengeance.'³⁸⁸

I. c) Religious institutions under royal patronage used for feeding the poor:

Ospring Hospital, Ankerwycke nunnery, Bromholm Priory and St. John's hospital, Oxford.

Although Westminster Palace could cater for up to 10,000 poor on one day, when Henry ordered the feeding of even larger numbers, several sites were used at the same time. At the end of April 1242, the king ordered the feeding of a grand total of 102,000 poor for the soul of his sister Isabella, who had married Emperor Frederick II seven years earlier,

³⁸⁶ *CLR 1260-67*: 144, 248; *CLR 1267-72*: 2, 73.

³⁸⁷ Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century*, 17.

³⁸⁸ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, iii. 343; Rishanger, *Chronica et Annales*, (RS 28), 20: 'Henricus Rex, Oxoniam veniens personaliter, orationis gratia, Sanctam adiit Fredeswydam, quod nullus regum Angliae ante ipsum audere praesumpsit; non veritus

and had died at Foggia in Italy, the previous December.³⁸⁹ Two writs were issued, the first to brother John the almoner, who received £208.6s.8d (50,000d) in advance to feed 50,000 poor at a penny per head, half at Oxford and half at Ospring. The hospital of St. Mary at Ospring was founded by Henry III shortly after 1230 and was possibly modelled on, or at least inspired by the Maison Dieu at Dover set up by Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar, in c.1221. Ospring hospital was in Kent on Watling Street, the main thoroughfare from London to Dover, and so would have been passed by people coming to and from the port and also pilgrims travelling along Watling Street before taking the road to Canterbury. The fact that the hospital also housed a *camera regis* and royal quarters to provide a stop-over point on royal journeys shows how well used this route was by the king and his messengers. The royal foundation stipulated that the master and brethren were not only to tend to lepers, and provide hospitality for the poor and pilgrims, but also to pray for the king, his predecessors and successors³⁹⁰ - the same combination of commemorative prayer that the king asked of the nuns at the royal burial site of Fontevrault. Ospring was also used for the commemoration of individuals within the royal affinity. In January 1240, two years before the hospital was used as one of the sites for the mass feeding of the poor for the soul of the king's sister, Henry provided a stipend for a chaplain to celebrate for a year in the chapel at Ospring for the soul of the queen's uncle, William of Savoy, bishop-elect of Valence, who had died the previous

superstitiosam opinionem illorum qui putant illicitum Anglorum regibus villam intrare, ultionem in illos virgine exercente.'

³⁸⁹ *CLR 1240-45*: 124.

³⁹⁰ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 193, 196. Ospring also known as Ospringe and Ofspring in the financial documents.

December in Viterbo.³⁹¹ Brother John Leukenor/Le Arker, the Templar, who was instructed to feed the poor for the soul of the Empress Isabella, was the warden of the Ospring as well as being a royal almoner from 1228 until his death in 1245.³⁹² No doubt John's double role meant that it was administratively convenient to use the hospital for the feeding of the poor. Since the hospital was already used for the liturgical commemoration of the royal family it was also a fitting site for commemorative feeding, whilst its situation on such a key route for travel and communication would mean that it would be relatively easy to pass on news announcing the forthcoming feeding and for the poor themselves to reach the hospital.

In addition to being responsible for feeding 50,000 poor for the soul of the Empress Isabella at Oxford and Ospring Hospital, Brother John the Templar also received a further £8.6s.8d [2000d.] to feed 1,000 poor at Ankerwic or Ankerwyke, a Benedictine nunnery near Runnymede in Buckinghamshire dedicated to Mary Magdalene,³⁹³ and 1,000 at Bromhul, or Bromholm, a Cluniac house on the Norfolk coast.³⁹⁴ Bromholm achieved international fame after it acquired a relic of the true cross brought from the Eastern

³⁹¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 440; *CM*, iii. 623. Often referred to as William of Valence but not to be confused with Henry's Lusignan half-brother, also William de Valence, lord of Pembroke by marriage, who died in 1296 and was buried under the feretory floor at Westminster Abbey.

³⁹² Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 74

³⁹³ Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses*, 207; Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 253, 255. Ankerwyke was founded in 1160 by Gilbert de Muntfichet. The site is now kept by the National Trust.

³⁹⁴ Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses*, 116; Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 96, 98.

Emperor's relic collection by a cleric fleeing Constantinople, in 1223.³⁹⁵ In 1234, Wendover records that Henry III visited the Bromholm to 'perform his devotions'³⁹⁶ and the king also granted the monks the right to hold a three day fair on the feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (14th September) each year. He made several other visits in the period up to 1251 and gave oblations of gilt images and wax to the priory.³⁹⁷ In 1242 when the priory was used to feed the poor for Empress Isabella, the house was at the height of its popularity as a pilgrimage site and also favoured by the king.

The second writ giving instructions for the commemoration of the Empress, released another £208.6s.8d [50,000d], to William de Haverhull, the treasurer,³⁹⁸ who was instructed to feed 50,000 poor 'at London, Windsor and elsewhere, by the counsel of the abbot of Evesham as shall seem best to him.' Richard le Gras, abbot of Evesham, is recorded as the king's vice-chancellor in 1241,³⁹⁹ and so would have been known to Haverhull and would also have been familiar with royal administration as well as both royal and monastic facilities which could be used for feeding the poor. London had a whole range of caritative institutions which the king used for the feeding of the poor and Windsor, in addition to the facilities at the castle itself, also had a leprosarium nearby which received royal alms.⁴⁰⁰ The town of Evesham had a hospital by the bridge as well

³⁹⁵ *CM*, iii. 80-81; Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 189.

³⁹⁶ *Flores*, (RS 84) iii. 77; *CM*, iii. 271.

³⁹⁷ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 189.

³⁹⁸ He was treasurer from March 1240 until 23 August 1252 when he died (Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 19).

³⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, vi. 4.

⁴⁰⁰ Hospital of St Peter without Windsor, for female lepers, founded in 1168 and granted royal protection in 1232 (Knowles and Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 337, 405).

as the great Benedictine monastery.⁴⁰¹ Neither of the writs for the feeding for the soul of the Empress specify that the poor are to be fed on a specific day, and it seems likely that, even using the sites both mentioned and unspecified, it would be necessary for the poor to be fed over several days.

St John's Hospital at Oxford, like Ospring, was used for both the liturgical commemoration of the royal dead and *pro anima* feeding organised by the king. In 1231 Henry III gave the existing Hospital of St. John a new site outside the East Gate of the town (where Magdalen College is now) on a former Jewish burial ground. In 1239, when the king set up a chantry chaplain at Ospring hospital to celebrate for the soul of the queen's uncle, William of Savoy, bishop-elect of Valence, Henry provided stipends for a further fifteen chaplains to provide the same service for a year at Oxford, and a chaplain at St. John's hospital was still commemorating the queen's uncle in 1245.⁴⁰² When the king's half-brother, Aymer de Valence, a former Oxford student, died in 1260, the brethren of St John's hospital were fed on the day which they celebrated for his soul.⁴⁰³ In the new foundation charter which Henry granted to the hospital he stipulated that the brethren of the hospital were to feed 100 poor at the king's expense, each time he came to

Examples of alms to Windsor lazarus from revenues of manor of Windsor: *CLR 1240-45*: 25, 47, 48.

⁴⁰¹ Knowles & Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses*, 320, for hospital founded before 1206.

⁴⁰² *CLR 1226-40*: 436; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 164; *CLR 1245-51*: 9.

⁴⁰³ *CLR 1260-67*: 12.

Oxford.⁴⁰⁴ So much for the physical settings in which the feedings took place. It is now time to look more closely at the people who were fed.

II. WHO WERE THE POOR AND HOW WERE THEY GATHERED TOGETHER?

By extracting writs ordering the feeding of the poor and writs authorising payment from the Close and Liberate Rolls it is possible to discover when, where and why the poor were fed. However, there is a great deal of information which these documents do not give about the actual organisation of the events and which remains a matter of speculation. The function of the writs was to order and pay for the feeding of the poor - they do not specify the means by which the royal officials organising the feeding announced the event, gathered the poor together, distributed the food or how exactly they decided who qualified as a 'pauper', although some possible solutions to these questions will be put forward below.

It is one thing to have the space in which to feed such large numbers of poor and another thing to gather such large numbers together on a certain day. One easy option was to feed poor who were already gathered together in religious houses, hospitals and leprosariums. As we have seen, Henry III did do this, but these poor were not included in the number to be fed - in other words the king ordered the people in such establishments to be fed *in addition* to however many poor he had specified. Voluntary poverty was viewed as the most spiritual type of poverty as it sprang from the renunciation of wealth in order to

⁴⁰⁴ CLR 1251-60: 269.

follow Christ. Although all members of religious orders took a vow of poverty, and lived in personal but not necessarily communal poverty, the great exponents of real living religious poverty in the thirteenth century were the new mendicant orders. Henry III did a great deal to help with the establishment of the Franciscans and Dominicans in England, and regularly fed their brethren as part of his *pro anima* alms. He also fed them at other times and provided them with clothes and shoes. The 1259-60 Household roll records that friars were fed daily in the royal household over that period.⁴⁰⁵ When Henry bought footwear for the Franciscans (sic), he provided them with shoes worth 12d. the pair, whereas, for the thrice yearly royal 'maundies' at Christmas, Easter and Whitsun the shoes given to 'the poor', that is the involuntary, indigent poor, were worth 4 ½ d., 5d., and 6d. according to their size. Even the most ragged of the voluntary poor were still a different class of pauper.

If those in religious orders were the voluntary poor, then the sick were the temporary poor - people rendered powerless by their illness. As Jean-Claude Schmitt points out, the sick were unable to work, even unable to go out and beg and so were reliant on others to not only support and feed them, but also put up with their moans, groans and putrid smells. In their dependence and their suffering, the sick took on the role of a pauper, a physical embodiment of Christ, and, by helping the sick, the able could perform an act of alms.⁴⁰⁶

⁴⁰⁵ PRO E101/349/27.

⁴⁰⁶ Jean-Claude Schmitt, 'Corps malade, corps possédé,' pp. 319-343 in *Le corps, les rites, les rêves, le temps: Essais d'anthropologie médiévale*, Bibliothèque des Histoires (Paris, 2001), 324: 'le malade était renvoyé devant la société tout entière pour y assumer un rôle social déterminé à l'avance et idéologiquement nécessaire: le rôle du *pauper* qui

These two categories, members of religious orders and the sick, were predefined as paupers, by the fact they were members of a particular community, whether a religious house or a hospital. It was how to identify deserving paupers beyond these groups which excited debate. In the second half of the twelfth century, canonists discussed the importance of identifying the deserving poor when giving alms. The Decretists argued that when resources were scarce, it was only right to judge the poor in this way to ensure that alms were given to those with the greatest need.⁴⁰⁷ Much of the organisation of royal almsgiving took its cue from monastic practice, so it is interesting to note how such matters were judged at Westminster Abbey and other houses. Harvey shows that three main groups of poor benefited from monastic alms of various kinds: poor pilgrims and travellers; the destitute at the abbey gate or living in the locality; and institutionalised poor.⁴⁰⁸ The Rule of St. Benedict stipulated that the abbot's table should be for pilgrims and guests. As a result, monasteries provided board for pilgrims, who were more likely in fact to be fed in the almonry than at the abbot's table, and who were given a gift of food before they took to the road again.⁴⁰⁹ One of the roles of the almoner, as set out by Lanfranc, was to seek out and visit the poor and the sick in the vicinity of the house, who could not or would not come to the abbey gate for alms.⁴¹⁰ Papal almoners also did this and operated a type of luncheon-voucher system, giving *sigilla* (tokens) to the so-called

fait son salut en souffrant comme le Christ et offre aux autres l'occasion de se sauver eux-mêmes en lui faisant la charité.'

⁴⁰⁷ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 9.

⁴⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁴⁰⁹ Knowles, *The Monastic Order in England*, 482; Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 16.

⁴¹⁰ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 18.

shame-faced poor (usually nobles who had fallen on hard times) which entitled them to claim money from the almonry to buy food.⁴¹¹ Other monastic alms went to institutions: other religious houses, hospitals and leprosariums or the poor who lived in the house itself.⁴¹² At the Cistercian house of Beaulieu, which was founded by King John and consecrated under Henry III, almsgiving during harvest time was limited to those unable to undertake manual labour: pilgrims, the old, the young and the weak.⁴¹³

In the instructions for the feeding of the poor under Henry III, the word used is 'pauperes' and more precise definitions are few and far between. In December 1239, the bailiffs of Windsor were instructed to pay for the poor to be fed over the Christmas period 'by the view of Hugh Giffard', including feeding 'poor children' on Holy Innocents, and 'poor clerks' on the day which commemorated Becket's martyrdom.⁴¹⁴ Poor clerks also featured as a group to be fed after the death of Isabella of Angouleme, when besides the members of various Mendicant orders in Oxford and Cambridge, the 'poor clerks of the university' were also to be fed.⁴¹⁵ The writs for the thrice-yearly 'maundy' distributions in the later part of the reign sometimes specify that the shoes and tunics are '*ad opus conversorum*' rather than '*ad opus pauperum*' suggesting that another type of institutionalised pauper, the Converted Jews, who lived in quasi-religious houses under the king's protection, were specifically chosen as recipients of alms.⁴¹⁶ In 1241, Hugh

⁴¹¹ Bagliani, *La cour des papes au XIIIe siècle*, 173.

⁴¹² Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 17, 19.

⁴¹³ *Ibid.*, 22.

⁴¹⁴ *CLR 1226-40*: 433.

⁴¹⁵ *CLR 1245-51*: 71.

⁴¹⁶ See p. 95 above and Appendix 5: Table of 'Maundy' distributions.

Giffard was sent instructions for feeding in celebration of the January feast of Edward at Windsor castle, where he was to feed the old poor in the larger hall and poor children in the smaller hall.⁴¹⁷ The most revealing writ as to the make-up of the ordinary poor who sought a meal, is the writ to William de Haverhull, the treasurer, instructing him that on the feast of the Circumcision (1 January 1244) he is to feed 6,000 poor at Westminster, and feed '*omnes debiles et senes in magna aula et minori, minus debiles et mediocres in camera regis, et pueri in camera regine.*'⁴¹⁸ This instruction mirrors the rules at Beaulieu which favoured the old, the young and the weak as alms-recipients. It also shows that the larger part of those who turned up for a meal at the king's expense were the sick and the old, since they are to be accommodated in the Great and Lesser Halls, which other evidence shows could cater for up to 5,000 in one day.⁴¹⁹ Considering the numbers which Henry III fed, it was probably not possible to be fastidiously selective about who received a meal. Harvey shows that post-obit almsgiving at Westminster Abbey was non-discriminatory, and usually simply distributed to whoever turned up on the anniversary in question.⁴²⁰ Also it seems that those who organised the king's almsgiving were to use their discretion and local knowledge. In December 1260, Nicholas de Haudlo, guardian of the see of Winchester, was ordered to 'feed up to 10,000 men in the manors of the

⁴¹⁷ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 382/3: 4 Jan 1241, Westminster: *De pauperibus pascendis* - Mandatum est Hugon Giffard' quod teneat festum Sancti Edwardi, ita quod faciat magnam aulam impleri pauperibus senioribus et parvam aulam pauperibus infantibus et eos competenter pasci faciat.

⁴¹⁸ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 150: 29 December 1243, orders to feed all the debilitated and old in the great and lesser halls, the less debilitated and the *mediocres* in the king's chamber and boys in the queen's chamber.

⁴¹⁹ See above pp.137-8.

⁴²⁰ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 23.

bishopric where there is most need, for the soul of A. bishop of Winchester the king's brother'⁴²¹ It is assumed that Nicholas would know which areas were the poorest.

The site chosen for feeding the poor, the relative poverty of the area and its accessibility would also have an impact on how many poor came for a meal, who they were, and how they found out about the free meals. Westminster Palace was in a good position to welcome the poor. Its scale and possibilities have already been discussed in detail. It had large enough indoor spaces to accommodate 10,000 poor on one day and of all the king's castles and palaces, Westminster could accommodate the largest number of paupers at one go. The only other single site to welcome such large numbers was St. Paul's churchyard in London, where 15,000 poor were fed on the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul (25th January) in 1244.⁴²² Besides having space it was in a good situation to attract the poor. Westminster Abbey's almonry, and the hospital of St James next door, both tended to the poor. In addition, Edward of Westminster was on site as master of the works at Westminster, with his own pot of money to draw on and, as Westminster was also the site of the Exchequer and Treasury, the treasurer was also able to help in the organisation of mass-feedings. However, at this time, the town of Westminster itself is estimated to have had a stable population of 2,000-3,000,⁴²³ most of whom were in the service of the abbey or the king, and so it is logical that large numbers of poor would have to have come to Westminster from somewhere else.

⁴²¹ *CLR 1260-67: 12.*

⁴²² *Close Rolls 1242-7: 152; CLR 1240-45: 306.*

Although London and Westminster were separate entities at this date, Westminster was certainly close enough to attract the poor from the city. In his account of the procession carrying the Holy Blood from Old St. Paul's in 1247, Matthew Paris says the king himself 'going on foot...proceeded without stopping to the church of Westminster, which is about a mile distant from St. Paul's church'.⁴²⁴ Of course, the Thames provided the quickest route between Westminster, London and all other towns along the river, but river transport cost money, and so was probably not an option for most poor. Nevertheless, the main road into London from the west (now Oxford Street) was at the edge of the estates of the Abbey. Any canny pauper would surely know that Westminster was a good place to go in hopes of a square meal, with the combination of daily almsgiving and special commemorative meals organised on a large scale by both the abbey and the palace.

There were evidently effective ways of spreading news through London. During the 1222 wrestling matches when the citizens of London challenged all comers from the district round the city, both the Londoners and the people of Westminster, who demanded a rematch, with disastrous results, 'sent word throughout the district' to arrange the bouts.⁴²⁵ London also had a common bell which could be rung to assemble the citizens, although it is likely, as in 1232, when the bell was rung by the mayor to summon the citizens of London to listen to the king's letter asking for a body of men to hunt down Hubert de

⁴²³ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 5.

⁴²⁴ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 240; *CM*, iv. 641.

⁴²⁵ *Flores*, (RS 84) ii. 265-7. '...denuntians per provinciam' (p.266); *CM*, iii. 71-73 (with marginal additions by Paris about the rabble-rouser Constantine shouting 'Montis gaudium, Montis gaudium, adjuvet Deus et dominus noster Ludowicus'. Montjoie was the battle cry of the French).

Burgh,⁴²⁶ that this was used more to summon brawn in times of necessity than hungry people looking for a meal. It is probably this same bell that Stubbs referred to as ‘the great bell which is rung for the folkmoot at St. Paul’s’ and which, according to Clanchy, was used to summon people to the court of Hustings.⁴²⁷ As we have seen, bell-ringing was part and parcel of events on the days when commemorative meals took place in London.

Another option was to use criers or heralds. Matthew Paris records that Henry used this method to great effect to advertise the forthcoming feast of St Edward in October 1248: ‘The king then declared it at his pleasure, and ordered it to be proclaimed by herald throughout the whole city of London, and elsewhere, that he instituted a new fair to be held at Westminster, to continue for a fortnight entire....In consequence of this, innumerable people flocked thither from all quarters, as to the most famous fair, and the translation of St. Edward was celebrated, and the blood of Christ worshipped to an unexampled degree by the people there assembled.’⁴²⁸ Clanchy shows that Henry used criers to disseminate all sorts of information through all the cities of England, from publicising his edict against the castration of adulterers, forbidding anyone in London to lend money to the abbot of Westminster, promulgating re-issues of Magna Carta, to banning Jews from lending money within the royal demesne.⁴²⁹

⁴²⁶ *CM*, iii. 224 and n.3 referring to the marginal drawing of a bell labelled ‘Campana de communa Londoniarum’.

⁴²⁷ M T Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record, England 1066-1307*, 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1993), 273, giving this citation from Stubbs.

⁴²⁸ Giles, *Matthew Paris’ English History*, ii. 273; *CM*, v.29.

⁴²⁹ Clanchy, *From Memory to Written Record*, 264.

Although I have not found direct references to the use of criers by Henry III to announce meals for the poor, it seems likely that those responsible for organising the feeding of the poor used this method. Certainly, Westminster Abbey in the early fourteenth century, employed a crier to go to London and call the poor to Westminster for the abbey's own commemorative alms-giving. Harvey says that these anniversaries were advertised by bell-ringing on the day before the event, and that many of the foundations specified that either a certain number should be fed, or gave an amount of money designated for anniversary alms. Some thirteenth century anniversary endowments stated that that the poor had to present themselves by a certain hour to qualify, as in the anniversary foundation for Eleanor of Castile (d. 1291), where Edward I gave instructions that all the poor who presented themselves by the third hour (about 8-9 am) on the anniversary of her death should be fed.⁴³⁰

This way of organising the feeding of the poor in the morning was used by Henry III during his stay in Paris in 1254. On his arrival in Paris, Louis IX offered to lodge the king of England and his large retinue either at the Palais de la Cite or at the Old Temple, outside the city, which was more spacious as it was used by the Templars to accommodate all the brethren who came to their general chapter. According to Matthew Paris: 'The king of England, having selected the Old Temple for his abode, gave orders that early on the following morning, as many poor people as the rooms of that building

⁴³⁰ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 24-29; Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 393.

could hold should be feasted there; and although the number of those entertained there was immense, they all and each of them were supplied with an abundance of meat, fish, bread, and wine.’ The poor were fed in two sessions at about seven and nine o’clock in the morning, whilst Louis himself gave Henry a guided tour of the Sainte Chapelle and showed him the Crown of Thorns and other passion relics.⁴³¹ Henry returned to Paris a few years later for the ratification of the Treaty of Paris and a household roll survives which gives details of expenditure for 1259-60, including the costs of feeding the poor during this second visit. It shows that on Saturday 6 December 1259, the tenth day after Henry’s arrival in Paris, 114s.9d.[1377d.] was spent on feeding ‘150 friars etc.’, and a further £4.-s.2d. [962d.] was spent feeding ‘150 friars’ (sic) on Thursday 11 December.⁴³² Henry stayed in Paris for Christmas, spending 49s.2d. [590d.] on feeding ‘150 friars’ on 23 December and £4.7s.5d. [1049d.] for feeding ‘450 friars etc’ on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day itself.⁴³³

Although it was possible to organise and announce in advance the almsgiving which took place on saints days and death anniversaries which had a fixed and known date, it was

⁴³¹ Giles, *Mathew Paris’ English History*, iii. 107; *CM*, v. 248-9: ‘*Quid praeceperit rex Angliae primo. Rex igitur Angliae, cum elegisset Vetus Templum pro hospitio, praecepit ut in crastino summo mane omnes domus ejusdem curiae, scilicet Veteris Templi, pauperibus replerentur reficiendis. Quorum singuli, licet eorum numerus esset infinitus, carnis ac piscibus cum pane et vino abundanter sunt refecti. Dominus rex Angliae visitat loca sancta civitatis Parisiaca. Et dum in crastino hora prima et tertia pauperes reficerentur, dominus rex Angliae, rege Francorum ducente, visitavit capellam illam pulcherrimam, quae in curia est ejusdem domini regis Francorum, et reliquias ibidem existentes orans regalibus oblationibus honoravit.*’

⁴³² PRO E101/349/27 Household Roll 44 Henry III m.2. Entries for weeks starting Sunday St. Andrew Apostle (30 Nov 1259) and Sunday the day after St Nicholas (7 December 1259). See Appendix 4.

more tricky to gather large numbers of paupers at short notice immediately after someone died. This is clear from the instructions for feeding the poor sent out after news arrived of the death of Raymond Berengar of Provence, the king's father-in-law, in 1245.

According to Paris: 'The king of England, on hearing of the count's death, urged by feelings of affection, performed his funeral obsequies with great splendour, amidst bountiful almsgiving, devout prayers, with tapers lighted and bells ringing',⁴³⁴ Henry himself was on campaign in Wales, and sent writs tested at his camp in Deganwy in late September ordering the sheriffs of London to feed 10,000 poor as well as the Dominicans, Franciscans, sick in hospitals and the anchoresses of London, for the soul of the count. The king sent a further instruction to William de Haverhull, the treasurer, and Edward of Westminster, who were expert in organising such events, instructing them that: 'as it may not be possible to find so many poor at once, to enjoin the sheriffs to feed them by turns from day to day till the number is completed.'⁴³⁵

III. THE COST OF FEEDING THE POOR

Royal meals for the poor tended to consist of bread and herrings, although on at least one occasion salt beef was ordered up to be given to the poor.⁴³⁶ At this time quarter of a penny would buy 2lbs of coarse bread and 1 penny could buy four loaves of good bread fit to be served to the king at Christmas, the feast of St. Edward or at the wedding banquet

⁴³³ Ibid., m.3, entries for week starting Sunday Thomas the Apostle (21 December 1259).

⁴³⁴ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 113-114; *CM*, iv. 485: 'Rex autem Angliae, de morte comitis Provinciae certificatus, elemosinarum largitione et orationum devotione, cum multorum cereorum accensione et campanarum strepitu, exequias pio affectu prosequatur.' Also, Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 46.

⁴³⁵ *CLR 1240-45*: 324.

of Edmund Crouchback, the king's second son.⁴³⁷ One penny was enough to provide food and drink for a day,⁴³⁸ and this was the daily amount Henry III customarily gave in alms to support recluses, monks, prisoners, lepers and sick royal servants.⁴³⁹ Presumably a penny a day was enough for a day's worth of bread, fish and ale but not a great deal of red meat, since the king's lion and lioness in the menagerie at the Tower of London both had initially a penny and a half and then twopence a day to meet their dietary requirements.⁴⁴⁰ To put this in the context of wages paid to those in the king's service, the wages of a carpenter varied between 3d. and 9d. a day depending on his skill, a blacksmith earned 4d. a day, serjeants 7 ½ d., crossbowmen 12d. a day and garrisoned knights 2 shillings (24d.) a day.⁴⁴¹ Royal chaplains in various castle chapels received stipends of 50 shillings (600d.) a year, which works out at over a penny and a half a day.⁴⁴²

⁴³⁶ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 479.

⁴³⁷ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 28; *CLR 1240-45*: 97; *CLR 1260-7*: 109; *CLR 1267-72*: 71: writ 646 (good bread).

⁴³⁸ Harvey, *Living and Dying*, 28.

⁴³⁹ A penny a day to Peter the recluse in the Tower of London and to the female recluse at Fredesham: *CLR 1226-40*: 258, 314; *CLR 1240-45*: 70. Prisoners at Flete: *CLR 1240-45*: 148. Sick Robert de Pateshull: *CLR 1251-60*: 59. Female leper at Chester: *CLR 1240-45*: 90. The two monks dwelling in the rock under Nottingham castle: *CLR 1240-45*: 2.

⁴⁴⁰ *CLR 1240-45*: 226, 271.

⁴⁴¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 24, 94; *CLR 1240-45*: 7: 20.

⁴⁴² A few examples of 50s. per annum stipends for chaplains: *CLR 1226-40*: 303, 305 (chaplain celebrating divine service for the dead in the Queen's Chapel, Winchester castle), 403 (chaplains in general), 421 (chaplain celebrating for soul of Eleanor of Aquitaine at Fontevrault), 435 (chaplain at Windsor celebrating mass of Virgin for good estate of new-born Lord Edward), 436 (chaplains for soul of William de Valence); *CLR 1240-45*: 44 (chaplain at St Peter's chapel in bailey of Tower of London, mass of Virgin, & chaplain in St John's chapel there); *CLR 1245-51*: 21 (Westminster Abbey chaplain for soul of Raymond of Provence), 54 (chaplain singing *Salus populi* to preserve the king and his household from sudden death), 172 (2 chaplains at Orford, one in honour of Becket, other for faithful departed); *CLR 1251-60*: 474 (chaplain at Scarborough castle 'as the king wishes service to be celebrated there daily as in the chapels of his other castles

When the king fed large numbers of poor, the cost was generally a penny a head to provide each pauper with bread and herrings. As illustrated above, some but not all writs specify that the poor are to be fed at this *per capita* cost, and in others where the initial order specifies the number to be fed, the cost when broken down into pennies does suggest this costing. What did each pauper get to eat when the king organised these grand scale feedings? In 1260, when 10,000 men were to be fed in the manors of the bishopric of Winchester, following the death of the king's half-brother, Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester, each pauper was to receive 'a half-penny loaf and three herrings'.⁴⁴³ Given the price of both coarse and good bread, this half-penny loaf was probably pretty large. The king regularly ordered large amounts of herrings for alms-giving, which were no doubt salted or smoked and so could be stored relatively easily. These herrings were normally bought from suppliers in East Anglia and delivered to the king's representatives. For example, in 1241, the sheriff of Norfolk was to arrange for the carriage of 100 lasts of herrings, 60 to be delivered to the New Temple in London for brother John the Templar, the king's almoner, and the other 40 to be delivered to Edward son of Odo, at Westminster, who was involved in the organisation of the feeding of the poor at Westminster Palace. A last was a measure of capacity which, in the case of herrings, usually comprised about 12,000 fish.⁴⁴⁴ In 1248 a similar writ specifies that 50 'great

throughout England.'; *CLR 1267-72*: 43: writ 394 (at Lincoln for souls of king's predecessors).

⁴⁴³ *CLR 1260-67*:12.

⁴⁴⁴ Ronald Edward Zupko, *A Dictionary of English Weights and Measures from Anglo-Saxon Times to the Nineteenth Century* (Madison, Milwaukee and London, 1968), 96.

lasts' of herrings were delivered to the king's larder and a further 57 stored in the New Temple.⁴⁴⁵

In 1242, when Henry fed 102,000 poor for the soul of his recently deceased sister, the Empress Isabella, it cost him £205.⁴⁴⁶ To put this into some kind of context, Henry spent £202.13s.2d. feeding the nuns of Canterbury for a year from the end of June 1246 'on account of their poverty.'⁴⁴⁷ In 1243, the year after the grand feeding for the soul of the Empress Isabella, the king's almoner received a payment for alms of £82 in March, and then a grand total of £379.16s.2d. to pay for alms performed on the king's behalf between 12 April and 28 September 1243.⁴⁴⁸ However, since many of the large scale feedings of the poor were organised by the king's sheriffs, or people other than the king's almoner, and paid for out of county funds, and equally, since the almoner himself was responsible for providing money given as oblations at shrines etc., these payments probably do not give an accurate impression of the money spent exclusively on feeding the poor during the six months from March to September 1243. To feed 10,000 poor at a penny a head would cost £41.13s.4d. In comparison, the total cost of the celebration of the January feast of St. Edward in 1262, which was evidently lavishly celebrated despite the fact that the king and queen were holed up in the Tower in fear of the baronial forces, was £54.12s.1d.⁴⁴⁹

⁴⁴⁵ *CLR 1240-45*: 91; *CLR 1245-51*: 160.

⁴⁴⁶ *CLR 1240-45*: 124 - £208.6s.8d x 2 plus £8.6s.8d.

⁴⁴⁷ *CLR 1245-51*: 54.

⁴⁴⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 174 (£82); 180 (£61.17s.8 ½d.); 184 (£103.16s.3d.); 187 (£103.7s.10 ½d.); 192 (£101.14s.4 ½d.).

⁴⁴⁹ *CLR 1260-67*: 110.

Henry III also spent great sums on architectural and artistic commissions. Binski calculates that from the 1240s until his death in 1272, Henry spent somewhere between £40,000 and £50,000, or roughly two year's royal revenue, on the building of his new Westminster Abbey, including the new gold shrine for the Confessor.⁴⁵⁰ In 1257, Matthew Paris notes a valuation of the wealth of Richard, earl of Cornwall, Henry III's brother, who was a contender for the imperial throne and had just been elected King of the Romans. Richard was generally assumed to be the richest man in England, and perhaps even more wealthy than the king himself. Although his figures may be spurious, the chronicler gives a good impression of what was considered fantastic wealth in the period. Paris says that Richard's wealth 'was found to amount to such a large sum of money that he could furnish a hundred marks daily for ten years, without including his daily increasing profits arising from his revenues in England and Germany.'⁴⁵¹ A mark was two-thirds of a pound sterling or 160 pence giving a 'daily' revenue in Paris' calculation of 16,000d. or, an annual revenue of just over twenty-four thousand pounds. Paris' account suggests that Richard's total wealth, the money which could provide him with 16,000d. a day for ten years, was a grand total of £243,333.6s.8d. (365,000 marks).

Although the amounts Henry spent on feeding the poor in the context of his annual revenue, the vast sums he lavished on his building enterprises or even the amounts he paid for the up-keep of the lions, polar bear and elephant in the Tower of London, may

⁴⁵⁰ Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 1.

⁴⁵¹ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, iii. 213; *CM*, v. 607.

seem reasonably small, the number of poor he fed was evidently impressive in terms of the alms-giving of contemporary rulers. As we have seen, Henry III was apparently feeding 500 poor each day, and a further 125 for the queen and children, in comparison with 195 fed each day by Louis IX, and 125 a day at the Lateran.⁴⁵² Louis certainly seems to have been more hands-on in his feeding of the poor than Henry, and gave them more food and money, but he does not seem to have fed such large numbers at one go. Four times a year Louis fed 200 poor in an area he felt was particularly poor, and whenever he visited a territory he did not go to very often, and so did not benefit from his alms, he fed 300.⁴⁵³ Louis increased the number of poor he fed during Lent and Advent, and at the papal court in the thirteenth century, on important saints days, 58 a year, anywhere from ten to four hundred more poor were fed in the almonry in addition to the daily poor. However, once again, there is no indication of anything like the numbers of poor Henry fed on the feasts of St. Edward or other major saints days, and, although an extra 100 or so poor were fed at Rome on the death of a cardinal, it does not seem to have been the practice, either at the Lateran or at the court of Louis IX, to feed thousands of poor to commemorate the ordinary dead in the way that Henry chose to.

⁴⁵² For Henry III in light of other rulers' almsgiving, see above p.87-88.

⁴⁵³ Saint-Pathus, *La Vie et les Miracles de Monseigneur Saint-Louis*, 59, 61.

CHAPTER FOUR: WHO WAS REMEMBERED?

Henry III fed the poor in remembrance both of ancestors who died before his time and members of his family and court who died during his reign. He commemorated his immediate Plantagenet ancestors, his own father and the monarchs buried at Fontevrault. He also fed the poor to mark the anniversaries of those buried at Westminster Abbey who connected him to the older, Anglo-Saxon royal line through which he could claim blood as well as spiritual kinship with his chosen patron saint, Edward the Confessor. In terms of those who died during his reign, they fall into three main groups: firstly, his immediate family, his sisters, daughter and granddaughters; secondly, his relatives by marriage, his Lusignan half-brothers and the relatives of Queen Eleanor, and, thirdly members of his household. (See Family Tree 2, p.184) Beyond these groups, Henry also fed the poor to for the souls of those whose deaths were to a greater or lesser extent his responsibility: Richard Marshal, Gruffydd son of Llywelyn, and the men who died on Welsh campaigns.

The poor were fed by Henry III at funerals, when he received news of the deaths of those close to him and on the anniversaries of their deaths. What happened on these occasions? A great deal of what has been written giving details of death, funeral and commemorative practice in medieval England draws on fourteenth and fifteenth century material.⁴⁵⁴

Although this is very useful in explaining many of the practices and showing their later

⁴⁵⁴ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*; Christopher Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England, 1066-1550* (1997); Clive Burgess, 'Longing to be prayed for': death and commemoration in an English Parish in the later Middle Ages,' pp. 44-65 in *The Place of*

development, what is actually shown in the thirteenth century documents, must, of course, be examined first. The chancery rolls used here show that people were often buried at places distant from the site of their death and that in order to preserve the body for the journey their intestines were removed and buried first (King John). In the case of Joan of Scotland, on the long journey from Essex, where she died, to Dorset, where she was buried, her body rested overnight in various religious houses and the king paid for luxurious cloths and oblations given to these churches. Also, the heart could be removed, in some cases long after the body had been buried, and interred at some other resonant site (King John, Richard I, Henry de Trubleville, Aymer de Valence). On the day of the funeral itself, the body was laid in the church of burial, surrounded by lit candles, usually four large candles at the corners of the hearse or the tomb and other smaller tapers surrounding it (Augustine, bishop of Laodicea, Osbert de Maidenstan, Richard de Dovor). The contemporary account of the funeral of William Longspee, earl of Salisbury, the king's (illegitimate) uncle in 1226, shows that lighted tapers were carried alongside the body on the way to the burial church.⁴⁵⁵ Even where the requiem masses were not part of an actual burial, since the person had died and been buried elsewhere, lights were kept burning during the requiem mass celebrated for their soul (Raymond Berengar, John de Salinis et al). On the same day as the liturgical commemoration, the poor were fed either at the site where the requiem masses were held (Richard Marshal), or in the vicinity (Eleanor of Brittany), or both (Aymer de Valence, William of Savoy, Empress Isabella, Robert de Mares etc.). On the day of burial, or for those who died and were buried

the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe, ed. Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall (2000).

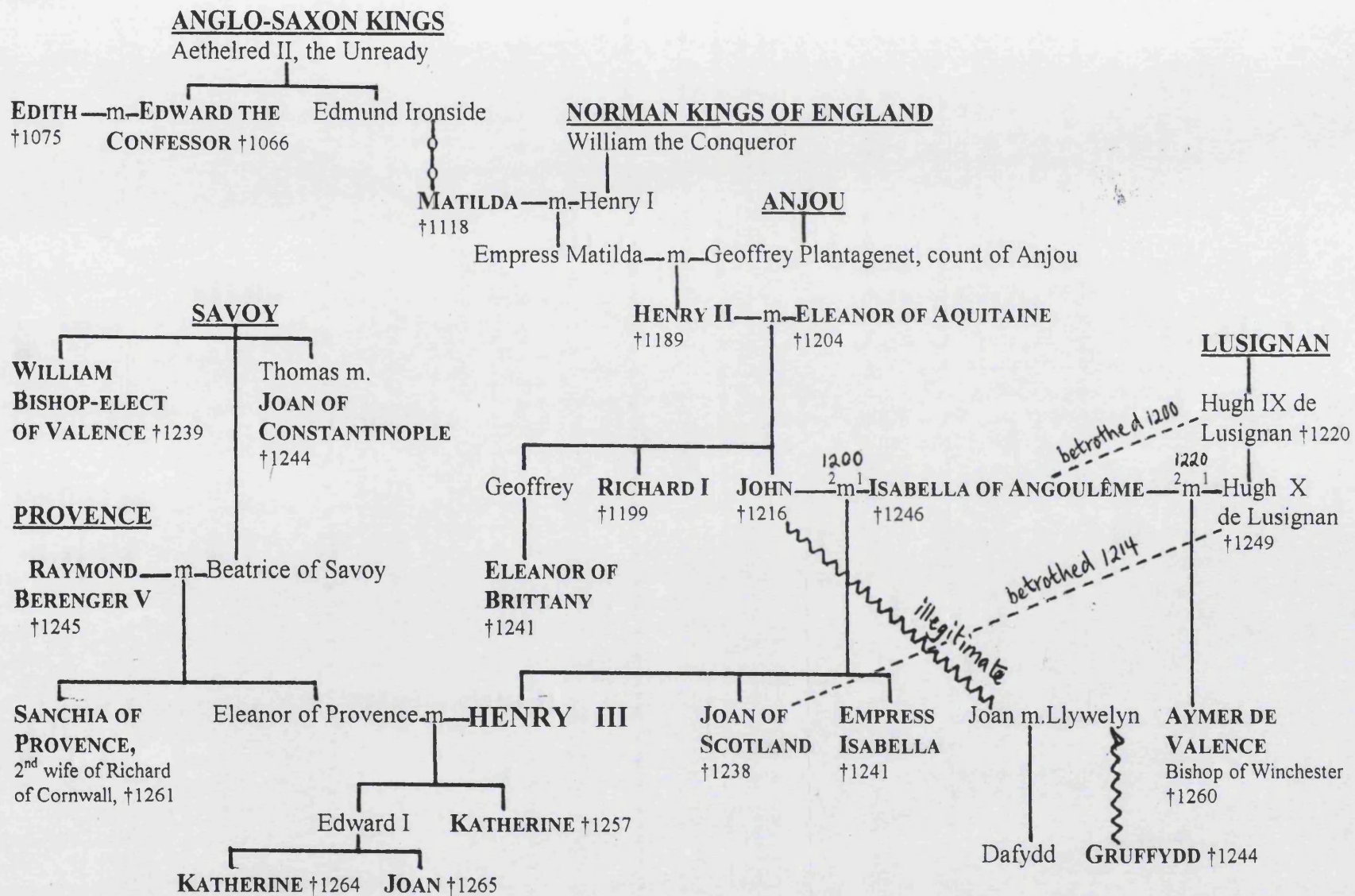
abroad, the day nominated for obsequies, requiem masses could be held at several sites and so the poor were also fed at these various sites on the same day (Aymer de Valence, William of Savoy, Isabella of Angouleme, Joan of Constantinople, Empress Isabella). The poor could also be fed in the days shortly after the requiem mass (John de Salinis et al, Raymond Berengar). Large scale liturgical commemorations and feedings were accompanied by the ringing of church bells (Joan of Constantinople, Raymond Berengar).

The death anniversaries organised by Henry III were to a large extent a re-enactment of the funeral. Once again, tapers were lit, requiem masses were sung, the poor were fed and the bells rang out. Given this combination of acts organised by Henry III himself to commemorate anniversaries, it seems likely that this was also the format of the anniversaries at religious houses which he financed by specific endowments (ancestors at Fontevrault, King John at Croxton, Isabella of Angouleme at Ivychurch, Joan of Scotland at Tarrant, the three queens at Westminster Abbey). Certainly, Harvey's studies show that, from the last quarter of the twelfth century, the anniversaries which abbots and priors founded for themselves at Westminster Abbey involved the feeding of the poor with either a given number of paupers to be fed or a certain sum of money to set aside for this purpose.⁴⁵⁶

⁴⁵⁵ *CM*, iii. 104.

⁴⁵⁶ Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 388-391. See above, pp.110-111, for abbatial anniversaries.

ABBREVIATED FAMILY TREE SHOWING ALL RELATIVES COMMEMORATED
THOSE IN BOLD CAPITALS WERE COMMEMORATED BY HENRY III



GENEALOGICAL TABLE 2: ABBREVIATED FAMILY TREE SHOWING ALL RELATIVES COMMEMORATED

TABLE 2: ABBREVIATED FAMILY TREE SHOWING ALL RELATIVES COMMEMORATED
THOSE IN BOLD CAPITALS WERE COMMEMORATED BY HENRY III

I. COMMEMORATION OF HENRY III'S ANCESTORS AND FOREBEARS

I. a) Plantagenet ancestors commemorated at Fontevrault

I. a) i. *Richard I, died 1199, Henry III's uncle*

Richard, the crusading king of England, was buried at Fontevrault, where his father Henry II and ancestors, the counts of Anjou, lay. Richard was not only count of Anjou, but also Duke of Normandy and Duke of Aquitaine, and, although his body was buried at Fontevrault, his heart was buried at Rouen Cathedral, and his entrails in at Charroux in Poitou,⁴⁵⁷ expressing dynastic and territorial ties to those regions.

In a sermon preached at Sittingbourne in 1232 in the presence of the Archbishop of Canterbury and a large group of clergy and people, the bishop of Rochester announced that it had been revealed to him and to others in visions 'that on one and the same day lately, Richard, formerly king of England, and Stephen [Langton] late archbishop of Canterbury in company with a chaplain of the said archbishop, went out of the places of torture and appeared before the divine majesty, and only those three left purgatory on that day; and you may put sure confidence in my words, for this has been revealed by a vision to me or some one else three times, so plainly that all doubt is removed from my mind'⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁷ Hallam, 'Royal burial and the cult of kingship', 364, 366.

⁴⁵⁸ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 547; *CM*, iii. 212: '..quod uno et eodem die exierunt de purgatorio rex quondam Anglorum Ricardus et Stephanus Conatuariensis archiepiscopus, cum uno capellano ejusdem archiepiscopi, ad conspectum divinae Majestatis. Et eadem die non nisi tres illi de locis poenalibus exierunt. Et ut his dictis meis fidem adhibeatis plenissimam et certam, quia mihi et cuidam alii tertia jam vice hoc per visionem revelatum est ita manifeste, quod ab animo meo omnis dubitationis ambiguitas removetur'.

Wendover follows the announcement that Richard has left Purgatory for Heaven, with an account of two miracles which occurred during Richard's life illustrating the king's goodness. The first concerns Richard's justice and mercy towards a knight who had been caught poaching deer in the king's forest. Rather than condemning the man to the usual punishment, putting out his eyes and cutting off his limbs, the merciful king banished the knight instead. Some time later, the knight, wishing to be restored to his lands, entered a church in Normandy where King Richard was about to hear mass. The knight, too frightened and ashamed to approach the king, went before the Crucifix, sobbing and prostrating himself, beseeching 'the Crucified one, through his unspeakable grace, to make his peace with the king'. Richard was watching the knight, and saw that each time the knight bowed before the image of Christ, the image responded by bowing its head and shoulders towards the knight. After mass, the king questioned the knight, and asked him if he had ever performed an act out of reverence for Christ. The knight replied that he had forgiven his father's murderer. The knight had come across the man on his way to church on Good Friday. The murderer, seeing that the knight intended to kill him, hugged a cross standing beside the road and promised to appoint a chaplain to perform mass every day for the soul of the knight's father, upon which the knight forgave him out of respect for Christ. After seeing the miraculous gestures of the Crucifix and hearing this story, King Richard forgave the knight and reinstated him.⁴⁵⁹ Wendover goes on to describe the goodness of King Richard, his reverence for the clergy and how he did not profit from, or try to force elections to vacant bishoprics etc. but allowed the clergy to hold free elections. The king wanted to die as a martyr for Christ in the Holy Land, and

⁴⁵⁹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 548; *CM*, iii. 213.

spent a great deal of his own money financing his struggle to recapture the Holy Land for Christendom. When his money ran out, he arranged a three year truce with Saladin, and gained his consent to allow a chaplain to perform mass in the Holy Sepulchre every day during the truce. He also redeemed four chests worth of saints relics from Saladin, 'on the understanding that those saints should in his extreme necessity assist him by their intercessions in gaining God's favour.' Clearly, in the view of this monastic chronicler, Richard was an ideal king: he was just to his subjects, reverential to the church and churchmen, patient in adversity (when he was captured and ransomed on his return from the Holy Land), and was willing to lay down his life for Christ. It is this life of goodness, justice and works of mercy which made him worthy of a place in heaven where 'rejoicing in company with him are those saints whose relics he redeemed.'⁴⁶⁰

This view of Richard as a model king seems to have been shared by Henry III. Besides St. Edward the Confessor, Richard I was the only king of England whose image and glorious acts were used as decoration in the palaces of Henry III. Richard's exploits during the third crusade, described in the writs as 'the story of Antioch and the duel of King Richard', were painted on the walls in Antioch chambers at Westminster Palace (1250), the Tower of London (1251) and Clarendon Palace (1251).⁴⁶¹ Henry himself had taken the cross in March 1250,⁴⁶² and given the correspondence between the king's intention to

⁴⁶⁰ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 550-51; *CM*, iii. 215-7.

⁴⁶¹ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 107; Borenius, 'The Cycle of Images in the Palaces and Castles of Henry III', 44, 45; *CLR 1245-51*: 362 (Clarendon).

⁴⁶² Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 106. Matthew Paris records that Henry took his vow to crusade at Westminster in March 1250, and repeated his public vows two years

crusade and the commissions for the representation of the heroic memory of his uncle, it seems safe to assume that Henry was adopting Richard, the paradigm of a holy crusading king, as a role model for his own proposed expedition.

Henry continued alms to Fontevrault to maintain the 'year's mind' or annual anniversary of Richard and other relatives buried there (see below). The king also fed the poor in England for the soul of king Richard. Despite Richard's well-publicised release from Purgatory in 1232, in 1248 Henry spent £14.11s. 8d [3,500d] feeding the poor on two successive days for Richard's soul.⁴⁶³

I. a) ii. *King John, died 1216*

King John died on campaign in the midst of the barons' war against him. Shortly before his death, John had crossed the Wash and lost much of his baggage and part of the royal regalia. In Paris' account, it is the king's anxiety over the property he lost which leads to his initial illness, which, he apparently deeply aggravated by his 'pernicious gluttony, for that night he surfeited himself with peaches and drinking new cider'. He struggled on, and managed to reach Newark on the second day, by which time he was in excruciating pain, and so 'confessed and received the Eucharist from the abbot of Croxton.' The abbot asked him where he would wish to be buried if he died, and the king replied 'To God and

later in the presence of the citizens of London (*CM*, v. 101, 196 (1250), 281-2 (1252); Vincent, *The Holy Blood*, 16 n. 32). A letter to the archbishop of Dublin, tested 16 June 1250, records that Henry was wearing the cross on his shoulder (*Close Rolls 1247-51*: 358). In 1252, Henry promised to leave for the Holy Land in June 1256, but in 1255 pope Alexander IV commuted this vow to crusade to a vow to aid the church in Sicily, that is to say to take Sicily with papal benediction on behalf of his second son Edmund.

St Wulfstan I commend my body and soul.’⁴⁶⁴ On his death, the abbot, who was ‘a man well skilled in medicine...opened the king’s body that it might be better carried to the grave, and having well salted his entrails had them carried to his abbey [Croxton], and honourably buried there.’⁴⁶⁵ The chronicle reports that John left Croxton lands worth ten pounds. Following his stated choice of burial site, his body ‘dressed in royal robes’ and carried to Worcester Cathedral, where he was buried between the shrines of St Wulfstan and St. Oswald.⁴⁶⁶ Sixty years later, John’s heart was removed from his tomb at Worcester and carried to Fontevrault,⁴⁶⁷ the traditional burial house of the dukes of Anjou, where his father and mother, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, his brother, Richard I, and his own wife Isabella of Angouleme, were buried. Although it was evidently impossible for John to be buried at Fontevrault, since the nunnery was in Touraine, one of the territories he had lost to Philip Augustus, John’s choice of Worcester Cathedral as his burial site seems to have been something of a surprise. John had founded a house of Cistercian monks at Beaulieu, and, in 1228, with the support of Henry III who had just declared his majority and begun his personal rule, the house petitioned the pope in vain asking that John’s body be transferred from Worcester and buried with them.⁴⁶⁸

⁴⁶³ *CLR 1245-51*: 168 -9.

⁴⁶⁴ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 378; *CM*, ii. 667-8.

⁴⁶⁵ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 379; *CM*, ii. 668 (addition to Wendover by Paris).

⁴⁶⁶ Powicke, *King Henry III and the Lord Edward*, 1. For a discussion of the different types of royal robes used in Plantagenet burials and their significance see Carpenter, ‘The Burial of King Henry III, the *Regalia* and Royal Ideology’.

⁴⁶⁷ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 44.

⁴⁶⁸ Hallam, ‘Royal burial and the cult of kingship’, 363-4.

King John's grant of land worth ten pounds to the canons of Croxton (whose abbot had heard his final confession and where his entrails were buried) was no doubt intended to support liturgical service for his soul and probably some kind of death anniversary celebration. In the late 1220s, the Exchequer was paying 100 shillings (£5) a year to Croxton 'in place of 100s. yearly of land that were assigned to them in the manor of Thingden for the soul of King John, until the king shall assign to them land of this value elsewhere.'⁴⁶⁹ In 1244, the king ordered a chasuble (a sleeveless vestment worn by a priest celebrating mass) 'adorned with a good wide orphrey' (a richly embroidered border) to be sent to the abbot of Croxton 'to celebrate the anniversary of King John in the church of Croxton'⁴⁷⁰ Although it was not until after the death of Henry III that King John's heart was sent to Fontevrault, and so there was no actual burial site of any kind at the nunnery, John was commemorated throughout Henry's reign at Fontevrault with his Angevin ancestors. In 1234, Henry confirmed by charter that Fontevrault was to receive forty pounds Tours each year, twenty at Christmas and twenty in the summer at the feast of St John the Baptist to carry out '*anniversarium regis et anniversarium domini J. regis, patris sui*'.⁴⁷¹ It is not clear what is meant by 'the anniversary of the king' but this may have been a celebration marking Henry's regnal year. It would seem likely that, given this explicit reference to an anniversary for King John at Fontevrault, John was included in the group of 'the king's ancestors and predecessors' whose commemoration at Fontevrault was funded by Henry III's fixed alms to the nunnery (see below). In 1236,

⁴⁶⁹ CLR 1226-40: 24, 109.

⁴⁷⁰ CLR 1240-45: 250.

⁴⁷¹ Close Rolls 1231-34: 470.

Henry made a gift to Worcester for the soul of King John (whose body was buried there) and in 1242 the king's almoner fed 1,000 poor on the anniversary of his death.⁴⁷²

**I. a) iii. *Those buried at Fontevrault: Henry II (d. 1189), Richard I (d. 1199),
Eleanor of Aquitaine (d. 1204) and Isabella of Angouleme (d. 1246)***

Fontevrault nunnery in Touraine, was the burial house of the Plantagenet counts of Anjou who had founded the house. King Henry II, the first count of Anjou also to be king of England, was buried there on his death in 1189. His son, Richard I, was also buried there ten years later, as was Eleanor of Aquitaine, Henry II's queen, in 1204. It is likely that Fontevrault would have continued as the burial house of the Angevin kings of England, but Anjou, Touraine and Maine were lost to Philip Augustus of France by King John. Henry III, who, at least until 1259, hoped to regain the Angevin heartlands lost by his father, maintained links with Fontevrault, and paid for the nuns to keep the anniversary of his father, although John was buried at Worcester.

Henry III granted Fontevrault £70 a year in fixed alms, that is to say alms established by tradition and charter. These payments were some form of continuation of the payments set out in the charters which Henry II, Richard I and Eleanor of Aquitaine had granted to the nunnery when they decided to be buried there. In August 1199 King John, for the salvation of his own soul and those of his ancestors, confirmed the charter of Henry II and the will of his brother Richard I, both of which granted the abbey the tenure in frank

⁴⁷² *Close Rolls 1234-1237*: 341; *CLR 1240-45*: 151.

alms of various lands and gave exemption from dues.⁴⁷³ John also granted, for the salvation of his own soul and those of his parents, a payment of £100 (Poitevin) to be paid in two instalments each year at St John the Baptist (29 August) and Christmas to provide for the anniversary of Eleanor of Aquitaine who died in 1204.⁴⁷⁴ Under Henry III, £70 (English) was granted annually to Fontevrault in fixed alms and Henry also issued a further 50 shillings a year to maintain a chaplain celebrating for the soul of Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, his grandmother, referred to in 1249 as 'a chaplain celebrating for ever in the chapel of St. Laurence at Fontevrault', that is to say the chapel Eleanor herself had provided at the Abbey for her own chaplain while she was living there.⁴⁷⁵ Fifty shillings a year was the stipend Henry consistently provided for various chaplains celebrating divine service daily for dead relatives. In 1241, the king sent three silk baudekin cloths to Fontevrault 'to cover king Richard and other predecessors of the king who are buried there.'⁴⁷⁶ 'Baudekin' has two senses: it could be used to refer to a cloth canopy, or the rich embroidered silk and gold thread cloth from which these canopies were made. Here it probably means a cloth canopy to be erected over the Fontevrault gisant-tombs, which presumably, were not *ciborium* tombs, and had no permanent 'roof'

⁴⁷³ *Rotuli Chartarum*, ed. T Duffus Hardy (Record Commission 1837), 13.

⁴⁷⁴ *Rotuli Chartarum*, 72. This charter is dated 25 June 1 John (i.e. June 1199) yet Eleanor of Aquitaine did not die until 1204. Her donation to the nunnery to provide for her anniversary was evidently made before she died and possibly at the time when she entered the nunnery and so expected to be buried there.

⁴⁷⁵ *CLR 1226-40*: 241, 296, 421, 500. *CLR 1240-45*: 80, 157. *CLR 1245-51*: 87, 220. T S R Boase, 'Fontevrault and the Plantagenets,' pp.1-10 in *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, xxxiv (1971), 6.

⁴⁷⁶ *CLR 1240-45*: 86.

over them.⁴⁷⁷ That he provided only three cloth canopies implies that by ‘predecessors’ Henry meant Richard, Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine and was particularly concerned that their tombs, among the tombs of his other ancestors, the counts and countesses of Anjou, should be especially visible and ornamented. From 1244, the *liberate* rolls record an increase in the payment to Fontevrault, with an additional £25 ‘which the king has granted the abbess for life’ and £10 ‘for the anniversaries of his ancestors, and of himself, his queen, his children, and his successors, when by divine dispensation they shall pay the debt of nature’.⁴⁷⁸ The abbess in question, is referred to in later writs as Alice de Bleys, ‘formerly abbess’ and ‘the king’s kinswoman, nun of the said house.’⁴⁷⁹ This is probably Alix, daughter of Alix de Blois, and so a granddaughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and Louis VII, who was abbess from 1209-18.⁴⁸⁰ Alice must have died between October 1249 and October 1250, as the 1250 writ omits the payment to ‘Alice, formerly abbess’, but the ‘£10 for the year’s mind of the king, his predecessors and successors’ continues.⁴⁸¹ As we have seen, in 1234 Henry had established by charter an annual payment to Fontevrault

⁴⁷⁷ The gisants do survive but they have been moved around so much during their history it is hard to tell what the original tombs were like. The abbey was sacked by Huguenots in 1563, and in 1638 the thirteenth century gisants were incorporated into one big monument, twelve years after the tomb of Robert of Arbrissel, the founder, had been dismantled and used as a chimneypiece (!). During the Revolution the nunnery was vandalised and turned into a prison, but in 1816, Stothard, one of the antiquaries who recorded the decoration of the Painted Chamber at Westminster, went to Fontevrault and found the Plantagenet gisants hidden in a cellar. They were taken to Paris for restoration in 1846, returned a few years later and have been rearranged several times since then. Boase, ‘Fontevrault and the Plantagenets,’ 8-9.

⁴⁷⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 270.

⁴⁷⁹ *CLR 1245-51*: 36, 220.

⁴⁸⁰ Boase, ‘Fontevrault and the Plantagenets,’ 6, and p.10 family tree. Another relative called Alix, who was, via her mother Mary of Burgundy, a great-granddaughter of Adela, the sister of William the Conqueror, was abbess from 1208-9. (*idem*).

of £ 40 (Tours) to finance the anniversary of himself and his father King John. Clearly, Henry also linked the commemoration of the annual death anniversaries of his relatives ('the year's mind') with some liturgical celebration for himself, the queen, and their children. In return for these payments, the nuns at Fontevrault were expected to pray for members of the family alive, dead, and 'successors' as yet unborn.

I. a) iv. *The importance of commemorating a dynasty: past, present and future*

The charter rolls show that this request for the liturgical celebration for the souls of members of a family past, present and future is so common as to be banal in grants of land in alms to religious houses. However, the idea of performing masses for the souls of a group of people, some dead, some living and others as yet unborn is interesting in itself. This was not simply a commemoration of the dead who were buried at Fontevrault, but of the whole family line as one continuous and linked group. Commemoration of family dead and atoning for the sins of the fathers were key to the continuing success of a dynasty as can be seen in the contemporary interpretation of the extinction of the Marshal male line. In 1245 Matthew Paris records how, after the death of William the Marshal in 1219, the king had begged his sons to restore to the bishop of Fernes lands which the Marshal had taken in warfare in Ireland. Despite the king's entreaties, the sons refused, and the bishop who had gone to the Marshal's tomb in the Temple church 'and in the presence of the king and many other persons' excommunicated the dead man, confirmed the punishment with the added biblical curse that ' 'In one generation his name shall be

⁴⁸¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 310. For the difficulties Henry had in fulfilling these promised payments see pp.21-22 above.

destroyed' and his sons shall be without share in that benediction of the Lord 'Increase and multiply.' Some of them will die by lamentable death and their inheritance will be scattered; and all this, my lord king, you will see in your lifetime.'⁴⁸² According to Matthew, the Marshal's widow also foresaw the deaths of her sons, and the chronicler shows how by 1245 this terrible prophecy had been fulfilled. William Marshal, *films*, died in 1231, Richard in 1234 as a rebel against the king, Gilbert in a freak horse-riding accident at a tournament in 1241, Walter and Anselm within weeks of each other in December 1245.⁴⁸³ The Marshal inheritance was split up among their sisters. Also, in what was seen as confirmation of the eternal damnation of their father and a corporal reflection of the corruption of his soul, the great Marshal's body was found to be 'entire, but rotten and loathsome to the sight' despite the fact that the body had been buried sewn up in an oxhide, a method of burial which suggests that the entrails had been removed as this was how Louis VIII was buried in 1226 following post mortem evisceration.⁴⁸⁴ It was precisely this disastrous failure of the male line which was most feared in royal families.

The Marshal curse shows how the physical health, fecundity and the continued high status of a family was explicitly linked to the spiritual health of members of the dynasty. Heirs

⁴⁸² *CM*, iv. 493-4.

⁴⁸³ William *films*: *Flores*, (RS 84) iii.10; *CM*, iii. 201. Richard, earl Marshal: *Flores*, iii. 86-7; *CM*, iii. 288-9. Gilbert, earl Marshal: *CM*, iv. 135-6. Earl Walter and Anselm: *CM*, iv. 491.

⁴⁸⁴ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii.122; *CM*, iv. 495: '...inventum est corpus saepedicti comitis, quod erat insutum corio taurino, integrum; putridum tamen, et prout videri potuit, detestabile.' Louis VIII: *CM*, iii. 117: 'Corpus autem defuncti regis fecerunt

had a moral responsibility to provide for the care of the souls of their ancestors and a vested interest in so doing. A good death involved seeking the forgiveness of both God and man, and heirs were expected to do their utmost to this end after the death. At the deathbed, the dying were forceful in their attempts to extract promises from heirs and relatives that they would provide masses and anniversaries for their souls, and this was also part of the demands made in testaments. In 1228, the *Flores Historiarum* records the conversation between the knight Ralph de Theoney and his younger brother Roger at the latter's death bed, in which Roger affirms that the pains of Purgatory can be lessened by 'good works, masses and alms' and his brother promises that 'I will, for the salvation of us and our ancestors, build a religious house, and when I have filled it with monks, they shall continually call of the Lord to release your spirit as well as those of our ancestors'⁴⁸⁵ In the discussion of the Marshal curse, Paris notes disapprovingly that Earl Walter Marshal broke his promise to his own dead brother, Gilbert, to maintain an alms payment to the house in which Gilbert's entrails were buried, so proving himself 'a manifest deceiver and transgressor'⁴⁸⁶ Through his payments to Fontevrault, Henry III was continuing the promises made by his own ancestors for the salvation of their souls,

multo sale condiri, et in abbata illa viscera tumulantes, reliquum corpus lintheaminibus ceratis coriisque taurinis jusserunt involvi.'

⁴⁸⁵ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 498-9; *Flores* (RS 84), ii. 333-334; *CM*, iii. 143-45.

Flores, ii. 334: 'Cui Radulfus: 'Nunquid supplicia, quibus addictus es, ut dicis, operibus bonis, Missis, et elemosinis poterunt mitigari?' Ad haec Rogerus: 'Poterunt quidem.' 'Et ego', ait Radulfus, 'tibi in veritate promitto, me pro salute nostra et antecessorum nostrorum domum religionis facturum, quam cum monachis religiosis implevero, pro liberatione animae vestrae et praedecessorum nostrorum Deum aeternaliter invocabunt.''

⁴⁸⁶ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii.122; *CM*, iv. 495: 'illusor est et transgressor manifestus.'

whilst linking this commemoration with liturgical celebrations for the spiritual health of current and future generations.

Besides these payments to Fontevrault, the king founded other religious institutions to perform similar family group commemorations. Masses and prayers were also offered for the whole dynasty, past, present and future, by the master and brethren of Ospring Hospital in Kent, founded by Henry soon after 1230.⁴⁸⁷ This hospital was also used for the commemoration of members of the family as they died. In 1240, a stipend was provided for a chaplain to celebrate for a year for the soul of William, bishop-elect of Valence 'the king's uncle' (one of Queen Eleanor's Savoyard uncles) and Ospring was one of the sites at which the poor were fed for the soul of Henry's sister Isabella in 1242.⁴⁸⁸ Ospring was not the only foundation at which Henry expressly linked pious acts for himself with the commemoration of other members of his family. In 1233, the king established a house for converted Jews at London, near the Temple, 'for the redemption of the souls of himself, king John his father, and his other ancestors'⁴⁸⁹ In 1243 Henry III returned land which had belonged to a former bishop of London to the dean and chapter of St Paul's in order to maintain an anniversary at St Paul's for Henry II.⁴⁹⁰ In 1265, the king re-established annual alms for the maintenance of the sick at St Giles' Hospital in Salop, which had been interrupted by the troubles of the realm, for the salvation of Henry

⁴⁸⁷ Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 193.

⁴⁸⁸ *CLR* 1226-40: 440; *CLR* 1240-45: 124.

⁴⁸⁹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii, 580; *CM*, iii.262: 'pro redemptione animae suae et regis Johannis patris sui et omnium antecessorum suorum.' This whole account of the founding of the house is an insertion by Paris, not present in *Flores* (RS 84).

⁴⁹⁰ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 96: 27.

II's soul and those of his successors.⁴⁹¹ Angevin anniversaries were also kept in England as well as at Fontevrault. As we have seen, Henry III fed the poor in England on the anniversaries of the deaths of King John and King Richard.

I. b) Those buried at Westminster Abbey

I. b) i. *The three queens: Aethelgotha, the Empress Matilda and Queen Edith*

In January 1246 money was released to the chaplain Thomas and other chaplains of London for celebrating the anniversary of 'the three queens buried at Westminster'.⁴⁹² Although the writ does not specify who these women were, the Westminster Abbey burial list established by Barbara Harvey shows that only three queens were buried, or at least believed to be buried, in Westminster Abbey by 1246: the seventh century Aethelgotha of the East Saxons (d.c. 615); the saintly Edith (d. 1075), queen to Edward the Confessor, and Queen Matilda (d. 1118), the first wife of Henry I of England.⁴⁹³ Although Queen Aethelgotha and her husband Saebert, early royal patrons of the Abbey, continued to be included in burial lists, and various tombs were attributed as their resting places, in Harvey's view 'the tradition that Saebert and his wife were buried at Westminster Abbey is worthless.'⁴⁹⁴ On the other hand, the burial of the two other queens is well-attested in the sources, and in 1245 their tombs were still visible since the king paid 8 marks for two cloths of gold 'to cover the tombs of queens Edith and Maud'.⁴⁹⁵ Both these queens were important in the hagiography of the Confessor. In Aelred of Rievaulx's *Vita*, written

⁴⁹¹ *Close Rolls 1264-68*: 49.

⁴⁹² *CLR 1245-51*: 19.

⁴⁹³ Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 372-373.

⁴⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 372 n.1.

shortly after Edward's canonisation in 1161, the 'saintly' Edith, unlike the rest of her Godwin family, is a paragon of virtue who enters into a chaste marriage with Edward and is his partner in sanctity.⁴⁹⁶ This image of Edith as meek and pious was reproduced in the thirteenth century *Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* which was dedicated to Henry III's queen, Eleanor of Provence.⁴⁹⁷ Queen Matilda also features in Aelred, her life a testimony to the prophetic powers of the Confessor. The marriage of Matilda to Henry I of England was presented in Aelred as part of the fulfilment of the Confessor's deathbed prophecy regarding the English royal family and the return of the ancient royal blood line descended from Alfred the Great. Matilda, daughter of the king of Scotland, was descended, via her mother St Margaret of Scotland, from Edmund Ironside, the elder son of Aethelred II and half-brother of Edward the Confessor. Matilda is described by Aelred as the Confessor's great niece. Through his marriage to Matilda, the Norman Henry I 'joined the English and Norman lines, and by the consummation of his marriage made the two one.'⁴⁹⁸ Their daughter Matilda was the mother of Henry II, the first king since the Conquest to have Anglo-Saxon blood.

Queen Edith was remembered not only in this group anniversary but also individually when the poor were fed for her soul. Edith died on 18/19 December 1075 at Winchester

⁴⁹⁵ *CLR* 1240-45: 286.

⁴⁹⁶ Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 12, 34-36.

⁴⁹⁷ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 91; Binski, 'Reflections on *La Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei*,' 333. Howell describes it as 'known to have been written for Eleanor of Provence' and thinks it was probably written and presented in 1245, although Binski, (p. 340), argues for a little later, in the decade 1250-60.

⁴⁹⁸ Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 91.

and her body was then carried to Westminster Abbey for burial.⁴⁹⁹ At some point between 28 December 1243, when the order was tested, and 12 January 1244 when Edward of Westminster was re-imbursed the money he spent, 10,000 poor were fed in Westminster Palace '*pro anima regine quondam uxoris Sancti Edwardi*'.⁵⁰⁰

I. b) ii. *Hugolin, chamberlain to Edward the Confessor*

The poor were also fed for the soul of Hugolin, the Confessor's chamberlain, who was also buried at Westminster Abbey. Hugolin features in Aelred's *Vita* as a witness to Edward's generosity and miraculous healing powers. When the king watches a penniless boy stealing money from a treasury chest, he warns the boy to make off with what he had already taken because Hugolin would be returning soon. When Hugolin finds that the money has been stolen he is livid but the king tells him to be calm, saying 'perhaps the one who took it needed it more than we: let him keep it, we have enough with what remains.'⁵⁰¹ Hugolin later allows a cripple access to the king, who heals him by carrying him on his shoulders.⁵⁰² According to John Flete, writing in the fifteenth century, Hugolin had been buried in the cloister of the Confessor's Westminster Abbey, and during the building works undertaken at the Abbey by Henry III, his body, along with the body of the eleventh century Abbot Eadwin, was moved to a new tomb at the entrance to the chapterhouse.⁵⁰³ In March 1247 a writ of *liberate* was issued to release 16 marks

⁴⁹⁹ *DNB* vi. 389; Frank Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, (London, 1970), 335.

⁵⁰⁰ *Close Rolls 1242-7*: 145; *CLR 1240-45*: 210.

⁵⁰¹ Rievaulx, *Life of St. Edward the Confessor*, 32.

⁵⁰² *Ibid.*, 48.

⁵⁰³ Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 372 n. 5 & 7; Barlow, *Edward the Confessor*, 165-66.

[2560d] to Edward of Westminster to enable him to feed the poor in Westminster Great Hall for Hugolin's soul.⁵⁰⁴

I. b) iii. ***St Edward the Confessor, died 5 January 1066, canonised 1161,
translation 13 October 1163***

Although, since the Confessor had no children, no-one could claim direct descent from him, Henry III was related to the Confessor as they shared common ancestors. By his descent from Queen Matilda, the wife of Henry I, Henry III, as we have seen, was a direct descendent of the Confessor's father, Aethelred II, 'the Unready'. Naturally, as a descendent of William the Conqueror, Henry III could also claim joint Norman ancestry with the Confessor's mother, Emma of Normandy, in the person of Richard I duke of Normandy, who was Edward the Confessor's grandfather and the Conqueror's great-grandfather. (See Family Tree 1, p.65) This tracing back to a joint ancestor, or stem, was a standard method of describing kinship, used by the Church to establish degrees of consanguinity between marriage partners.

Henry III's devotion to the Confessor is well-known. From 1245 the king dedicated himself to rebuilding Westminster Abbey in honour of Edward. We have already seen in Chapter 2 the way in which the Confessor's image was depicted in the Painted Chamber at Westminster and how the *Vita Sancti Edwardi* and its followers proclaimed the Plantagenet line as the Confessor's true successors. St Edward was part of the king's everyday life: he heard the mass of St Edward in his chapels, which were decorated with

⁵⁰⁴ *CLR 1245-51*: 111.

images of the Edward giving his ring to St John.⁵⁰⁵ In 1247, Henry decided that he would be buried in Westminster Abbey and so abide with the Confessor in death. In 1272, Henry was initially buried in the Confessor's original tomb.⁵⁰⁶

Carpenter states that from 1238 both feasts of the Confessor were kept with great solemnity and that, if at all possible, the king was present at Westminster on 5 January and 13 October each year.⁵⁰⁷ These celebrations involved the feeding of the poor. In October 1242, when the king was in Gascony, John de Leukenor the almoner was reimbursed the £28.16s.8d. [6920d.] he had spent feeding the poor, and in the January he spent £29.-s.40d. [7000d.].⁵⁰⁸ The poor were fed at Westminster on both feasts throughout the reign.⁵⁰⁹

Henry's devotion to the Confessor also influenced his commemoration of the dead in general. Although Fulk was the only relative buried in Westminster Abbey during his reign, the king commemorated those buried in the Abbey with the Confessor who had been part of the saint's life, and used Westminster Abbey as a site for commemoration of other friends and relatives so that the commemoration of their deaths and new lives in Heaven was celebrated in the church of Edward.

⁵⁰⁵ PRO E101/349/30, Almoner's roll 1264-65. See above n.68, p.39 and n.108, p.57 for images of Edward.

⁵⁰⁶ David A Carpenter, 'King Henry III and the Cosmati Work at Westminster Abbey,' pp. 409-25 in *The reign of Henry III* (London & Rio Grande, 1996), 422-3: 'Henry himself was buried, not in his later Cosmati tomb, but in the place where the Confessor had lain before the high altar prior to his translation in 1269.'

⁵⁰⁷ Carpenter, 'King Henry III and the Tower of London,' 208.

⁵⁰⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 148, 166.

II. HENRY III'S IMMEDIATE FAMILY

II. a) Joan, queen of Scotland, d. 1238, Henry's sister

Joan, queen of Scotland, the sister of the king of England, died in March 1238 at the age of twenty-eight.⁵¹⁰ Like her sister, the Empress Isabella, Joan had made a politically important marriage. It was standard practice for royal princesses to be married to rulers or other powerful men, often as part of peace treaties. The three sisters of Henry III all performed this function: Isabella (b. 1214) married the Emperor Frederick II in 1235; Eleanor (b. 1215), who later married Simon de Montfort, was first married to William Marshal, earl of Pembroke (son of the famous William the Marshal who had protected the boy king Henry and his kingdom after the death of King John) and Joan, the eldest sister, married the King of Scotland in 1221 as part of a peace treaty between the two realms. However, this was not the marriage first envisaged for the princess. In 1214, when she was four years old, she was betrothed to Hugh X de Lusignan, count of La Marche, as part of King John's belated attempts to appease the nobles of Poitou and the Lusignan family in particular. When John married Isabella of Angouleme in 1200, the young heiress was already promised in marriage to Hugh IX de Lusignan count of La Marche, and John's failure to make any recompense to Hugh for stealing his bride led to rebellion in Poitou and the dispute was used by King Philip Augustus as the basis for the confiscation, and then invasion, of the English king's lands in France. The betrothal in 1214 of Joan, the eldest daughter of King John and Isabella of Angouleme, to Hugh X of

⁵⁰⁹ See note 276, p.123 above.

⁵¹⁰ *HBC*, 37.

Lusignan, the son and heir of Isabella's former intended, was an attempt to right these wrongs in the next generation. In 1217, the newly-widowed Isabella of Angouleme returned to Poitou. Three years later, Isabella herself, rather than her daughter, married Hugh X of Lusignan, the son of the man Isabella had been betrothed to in 1200. As a result of her mother's second marriage, the princess Joan was now once again on the marriage market, and a match was arranged with the king of Scotland. However, the newly-wed Hugh and Isabella were reluctant to send her back to England since keeping Joan with them put Isabella in a stronger bargaining position in her attempts to secure her own land and income rights as dowager-queen of England. In 1220 two of the king's men were sent to Poitou to retrieve the princess and Pope Honorius III, who had already expressed his consternation at Isabella's marriage and the problems of forbidden degrees which it raised, also intervened to make Isabella and Hugh give up Joan. Joan did return to England and on 19 June 1221 was married to Alexander II of Scotland.⁵¹¹

Joan died in 1238 whilst in England. The previous September, she and her husband, King Alexander, had met Henry and Eleanor at York to settle their dispute over the earldom of Northumberland, and once this was concluded, Joan continued south with Queen Eleanor and the two went on a pilgrimage to Canterbury.⁵¹² Joan stayed for the winter and was preparing for her journey back to Scotland when she fell ill. The king

⁵¹¹ Harold S Snellgrove, *The Lusignans in England 1247-58*, University of New Mexico Publications in History, no.2 (1950), 12-15; *HBC*, 37; Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 89, 585; Christopher Tyerman, *Who's Who in Early Medieval England (1066-1272)*, (1996), 310-311; M A Everett Green, *Lives of the Princesses of England from the Norman Conquest*, 3 vols., (London, 1849), i. 378-81.

⁵¹² *DNB*, x. 826.

feared for her life, as on 21 February he granted her the revenues of the manors of Staunton and Driffeld for two years so that she could make her will and bequeath this income, 'if the lot of mankind befall her.'⁵¹³ Joan died less than two weeks later on 4 March 1238⁵¹⁴ at Havering-atte-Bower in Essex.⁵¹⁵ She was buried at the Cistercian nunnery of Tarrant Crawford in Dorset.⁵¹⁶ Paris says that the nunnery was founded by 'Richard, the second bishop of Durham of that name'(i.e. Richard le Poore) and that he granted it to Queen Eleanor when she arrived in England in 1236.⁵¹⁷ According to Kate Norgate, Joan of Scotland was buried there at her own request, and in May 1238 the king was making arrangements for the transfer of the lands which Joan had bequeathed to Tarrant 'with her body', into the possession of the nunnery.⁵¹⁸

Within days of Joan's death, two writs were tested to provide for her burial and alms for her soul. The first ordered the sheriff of Wiltshire to transport the marble tomb Elias de Dereham was already making at Salisbury to Tarrant Abbey to be used for Joan's burial.⁵¹⁹ The second ordered the sheriffs of Oxford to release two prisoners held in the town gaol for breaking the Forest Law. These two prisoners were to be release *pro salute anime J., quondam regine Scotie* (for the salvation of the soul of J., formerly queen of

⁵¹³ *CPR 1232-47*: 210.

⁵¹⁴ *CM*, iii. 479.

⁵¹⁵ Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 199.

⁵¹⁶ or Wiltshire. Writs regarding the tomb and provisions for the nunnery are issued to either sheriff. Margaret Howell refers to it as Tarrant Keynes in Wiltshire, Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 282.

⁵¹⁷ *CM*, iii. 392, 479.

⁵¹⁸ *DNB*, x. 826; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 48.

⁵¹⁹ *CLR 1226-40*: 316.

Scotland).⁵²⁰ Like feeding the poor, freeing prisoners was one of the corporal works of mercy Christians were expected to perform out of the love of Christ. On 13 March 1238 a writ was tested to pay for 20 pieces of Arest (silk) cloth to be offered with the body of Joan, and another 6 pieces of silk cloth woven with gold offered with her body at Tarrant Abbey and at the Cathedral (in all likelihood Salisbury Cathedral).⁵²¹ According to Everett-Green these cloths were offered at the churches and monasteries en route to Tarrant where Joan's body rested during the journey.⁵²²

The anniversary of her death in March 1244 was marked by the feeding of 1,000 poor scholars at Oxford and as many poor as could fill the Great and Lesser Halls at Westminster.⁵²³ The instructions specify that the poor are to be fed on the Friday after the octave of St. Matthias, that is, Friday 4 March 1244, the day of her death six years earlier. In 1246, the bakers of London were paid for the bread which had been bought from them and distributed to the poor in Westminster Great Hall on 8 March 1246 (the Thursday before St Gregory). In the same writ, Edward of Westminster was also reimbursed for feeding the Dominicans and Franciscans of London and organising divine service and bell-ringing in the churches of London, all for Joan's soul.⁵²⁴ In addition, six hundred

⁵²⁰ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 32. 'For the salvation of the soul of J., sometime queen of Scotland.'

⁵²¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 316-317.

⁵²² Everett Green, *Lives of the Princesses*, i. 399.

⁵²³ *CLR 1240-45*: 220, *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 164; *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

⁵²⁴ *CLR 1245-51*: 35.

poor were also fed by Robert de Mucegros at Windsor castle on 19 March 1246 (the Monday after St Gregory) for the soul of the former queen of Scotland.⁵²⁵

Joan's death anniversary was also kept by the nuns of Tarrant Abbey where she was buried. In February 1245 the king instructed the bailiffs of Southampton to provide the abbess with 100lb. of wax for Joan's anniversary celebrations.⁵²⁶ There are regular writs to provide the nuns with an annual rent of £9 to keep 'two tapers continually burning day and night in [the] church of Tarent, one before the Lord's body and the other where the body of Joan the king's sister, formerly queen of Scotland, is buried'⁵²⁷ The wording of these writs varies: some put the instruction another way, and specify that the tapers are to burn at the altar and at the head of Joan's tomb. This arrangement of candles echoes the orders Henry gave in 1246 for tapers to be kept burning in his chapel at Dover 'one before the Lord's body and one before the relics' at the same time that he established a chaplain there to sing *Salus populi* daily 'while celebrating divine service, in order to preserve the king and his household from sudden death.'⁵²⁸ As well as keeping the two key areas of the church constantly illuminated, lit candles were regarded as a physical embodiment of votive prayers and an emblem salvation itself.⁵²⁹ In 1249, the king also arranged for the sheriff of Wiltshire, the county in which Joan was buried, to provide a stipend for a chaplain 'ministering in the queen's chapel at Marlborough' for Joan's soul, for as long as

⁵²⁵ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 398.

⁵²⁶ *CLR 1240-45*: 290.

⁵²⁷ *CLR 1245-51*: 62, 97, 201, 358; *CLR 1251-60*: 59.

⁵²⁸ *CLR 1245-51*: 54.

⁵²⁹ see Appendix 2: Tapers.

he was sheriff as his predecessor had done.⁵³⁰ In 1252 the king granted a charter to the abbey of Tarrant 'for the soul of Joan, sometime queen of Scotland' exempting the abbess and nuns from various dues and ensuring their right to freely elect their abbess.⁵³¹

In the 1250s additions were still being made to Joan's tomb. Elias of Dereham had supplied the marble tomb in which Joan was buried in 1238, but as Elias had already created this tomb at Salisbury, it would seem logical that it was not initially intended for the queen of Scotland, but was employed at short notice after her sudden death. The sheriffs of Somerset and Dorset were instructed in December 1252 to have 'an image of a queen' carved on a marble stone and delivered to Tarrant Abbey to go above the grave of the queen. This was probably Purbeck 'marble', a hard dark grey limestone which could be polished to a sheen, mined on the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset and used extensively in the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey. The following June, a writ went out to organise the feeding of 500 poor on the day on which this *gisant* was put in place.⁵³²

II. b) Eleanor of Brittany, d. August 1241, Henry's first cousin

Like Henry III himself, Eleanor of Brittany was the grandchild of Henry II. Eleanor's father Geoffrey was the son of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, the younger brother of Richard I, and the older brother of John.⁵³³ Geoffrey married Constance, the heiress to the duchy of Brittany and had two children, Arthur and Eleanor. Geoffrey himself died in

⁵³⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 242.

⁵³¹ *Charter Rolls 1227-1244*: 411.

⁵³² *CLR 1251-60*: 91; *CLR 1251-60*: 138.

1183. On the death of Henry II in 1189, Geoffrey's older brother Richard I acceded to the throne, but when Richard died in 1199 there was a dispute as to whether the crown of England should go to John, who was fourth son of Henry II, or should pass down the line of Geoffrey, the third son of Henry II, and go to John's nephew, Arthur of Brittany. Arthur pursued his claim to the English throne with vigour. The French king, Philip Augustus, realising the political potential of this dynastic dispute, granted the duchy of Aquitaine and the Angevin heartlands of Maine and Anjou to Arthur after he had confiscated these lands from King John in the ructions following the dispute over John's marriage to Isabella of Angouleme. John and Arthur met in battle at Mirabeau in 1202 and John's victorious forces captured the pretender. Arthur died in captivity two years later, and the allegations that John, in the fine tradition of dastardly royal uncles, had had him murdered, did not endear the English king to the people of Brittany, and the allegiance of the duchy remained an issue into the next generation and the reign of Henry III.⁵³⁴ Indeed, in 1227, diplomatic efforts were made to contract a marriage between Henry III and Yolande of Brittany, the grand-daughter of Constance of Brittany, but these plans were scuppered by the intervention of the dowager-queen of France, Blanche of Castile, who made a pact to secure the loyalty of the duchy and promised her own son Jean in marriage to Yolande. Jean died the same year, but the English plans were not

⁵³³ The sons of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine were in birth order: Henry the Young King (d. 1183), Richard I (d.1199), Geoffrey (d. 1186), John (d. 1216).

⁵³⁴ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 92 n.2; Clanchy, *England and its Rulers*, 186-188, 231, 296.

revived and Yolande married Hugh de la Marche, the eldest of Henry III's Lusignan half-brothers, in 1238.⁵³⁵

Eleanor of Brittany, as the sister of Arthur, the pretender to the throne, and, potentially, heiress to both Brittany and England in her own right, remained a political threat to the security of the English crown. As a result, she remained in captivity in England until her death in August 1241. Keeping her under close supervision was clearly seen as essential to the safety of the realm as one of the complaints made to Henry in 1234 by Richard Marshal about the overmighty Peter des Roches and Peter Rivaux was that they controlled the king's castles, treasury and 'hold under their control the princess of Brittany'.⁵³⁶ Margaret Biset, the god-fearing queen's lady whose late-night devotions had foiled the assassination attempt on Henry III's life at Woodstock in 1238, gained permission to visit Eleanor in Gloucester castle. Visiting prisoners was one of the corporal works of mercy and Howell sees this as further evidence of Biset's devotion to both God and royal service.⁵³⁷ Eleanor herself was also able to perform works of mercy as she was provided with an alms allowance by the king of 20 marks a year, which was

⁵³⁵ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 92-93. Geoffrey, the third son of Henry II, was the first husband of Constance of Brittany and they were the parents of Eleanor and Arthur. Constance remarried, and by her third husband, Guy de Thouars, had a daughter Alice. Since Arthur was dead and Constance's eldest daughter Eleanor was in captivity in England, Alice was heiress to the duchy, and in 1213 she married Peter of Dreux 'Mauclerc'. It was Yolande, the daughter of Alice and Peter who was approached as a potential bride for Henry III. Blanche of Castile, dowager-queen of France and mother to Louis IX, wanted her third son John to marry Yolande. She made a pact to this effect with Yolande's father Peter of Dreux, duke of Brittany, sabotaging the English marriage plans, but in fact John died in 1227.

⁵³⁶ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii., 584; *CM*, iii. 270.

⁵³⁷ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 22-23.

raised to 25 marks a year in 1230.⁵³⁸ This was over ten percent of the 210 marks recorded in 1239 as granted yearly to John FitzGeoffrey for her maintenance. That even a princess in captivity would have ten percent of her ‘income’ for almsgiving shows, as previously discussed, to what an extent alms was a staple of aristocratic life.⁵³⁹

Eleanor of Brittany died in August 1241 when Henry III was involved in a campaign in North Wales, and her death was recorded by Matthew Paris.⁵⁴⁰ Instructions were sent from Shrewsbury, charging the bailiffs of Bristol with making provision for ‘tapers and other lights and also alms as brother Richard, the king’s almoner, shall tell them on the king’s behalf, and to cause this to be done by his view with all possible solemnity and honour in the obsequies of the king’s cousin Eleanor, damsel of Brittany, and in no way to neglect (*dimittatis*) it.’ Later in the month, a writ of *computate*, tested at Rhuddlan, was sent to cover the £20.7s. spent on these obsequies.⁵⁴¹ Henry also established a chaplain to pray for her soul as in 1250 the instructions were renewed for ‘a chaplain whom the king has ordered to celebrate divine service all the days of his life in the chapel of the king’s tower there [Bristol] for the soul of Eleanor of Britannia the king’s kinswoman’.⁵⁴²

⁵³⁸ *CLR 1226-40*: 113, 128, 178, 253.

⁵³⁹ discussed p.80-81 above.

⁵⁴⁰ *CM*, iv. 163.

⁵⁴¹ *CLR 1240-45*: 68, 69.

II. c) Empress Isabella, died December 1241, Henry's sister

By far the largest feeding recorded in the financial documents of Henry III was the feeding 102,000 poor for the soul of the Empress Isabella, the king's sister. As already discussed, money was issued in advance to Brother John the almoner and the treasurer William de Haverhull in 1242 so that they could provide meals for 50,000 poor, half at Oxford and half at Ospring Hospital, 1,000 poor at Ankerwyke nunnery, 1,000 at Bromholm priory, and a further 50,000 at 'London, Windsor and elsewhere'.⁵⁴³

The only time this number was rivalled was in October 1263 when the king sent writs from Boulogne to London addressed to the justiciar Hugh le Despenser and the chancellor, the archdeacon of Ely, with instructions for the celebration of the feast of the translation of St. Edward the Confessor: 'as the king does not know whether he can reach Westminster for the celebration of the feast of St. Edward, they are to provide that the poor coming to Westminster at the said feast, to the number 100,000 if they should come, and also the poor of the hospitals of the neighbourhood partake of the king's alms at the feast as is accustomed to be done.'⁵⁴⁴ The king did make it back to England, landing on 7 October⁵⁴⁵ in time for the feast on 13 October and there are no writs of payment to show that this proposed feeding of 100,000 took place once the king had returned. This planned feeding was prompted by the king's fear that he would not be present in the kingdom on

⁵⁴² *CLR 1245-51*: 301.

⁵⁴³ see above in discussion of places used for feeding the poor, pp.160-63.

⁵⁴⁴ *CPR 1258-60*: 281; Michael Prestwich, *Edward I*, (1997), 4 n.9.

⁵⁴⁵ *HBC*, 38. Henry had been allowed to leave England for further arbitration between Simon de Montfort and himself at Boulogne under the aegis Louis IX on the

the feast of his patron saint at a key moment during a particularly difficult time in his reign. The mammoth feeding in 1242 for the soul of his sister may have been prompted by the fact that Henry had not learned of her death for some time, and the contemporary view that dying in childbirth, like any sudden or unprepared death, was inauspicious. Isabella had died in December 1241 at Foggia in Apulia (southern Italy), and this, her third child by Frederick II, had not survived.⁵⁴⁶ She was buried at Andria, but the letter from the Emperor to the king telling him of his sister's death is dated 30th January 1242,⁵⁴⁷ and the writs issuing money for the countrywide feeding are not tested until 30th April.

Although the letter from Frederick recorded that Isabella died on 1 December 1241, Henry III kept the anniversary of her death on 14 December. On 9 December 1243, writs were tested addressed to William de Haverhull, the treasurer and Edward son of Odo, the keeper of the king's works at Westminster, instructing them to feed 4,000 poor in the Great Hall at Westminster for her soul on 14 December 1243 (the Monday after the feast of St. Lucy the Virgin), the second anniversary of her death.⁵⁴⁸ The following year, the bailiffs of Oxford were to provide brother Roger the almoner with 10 marks [1600d] to feed 1,000 poor and all the Franciscans and Dominicans of Oxford on 14 December 1244 (the morrow of St Lucy).⁵⁴⁹ In 1245, Edward of Westminster was granted 25 marks

understanding that he would be back in England by October 6th for a parliament of the peers of the realm at Westminster. Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 178-9.

⁵⁴⁶ *DNB*, x. 499-500.

⁵⁴⁷ *CM*, iv. 176.

⁵⁴⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 204; *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 140.

⁵⁴⁹ *CLR 1240-45*: 281.

[4,000d] to feed the poor for the soul of the Empress. On 10 December 1246, a writ was tested instructing Edward of Westminster to celebrate the anniversaries of the empress and Queen Edith, the wife of Edward the Confessor, whose day of death was 19 December.⁵⁵⁰ In February 1247 he was reimbursed the £12.15s.5 ½ d. he had spent keeping the anniversary of 'J. formerly queen of Scotland, the king's sister' on 14 December 1246 and for feeding the poor in Westminster Great Hall for her soul.⁵⁵¹ The date ties in with Isabella's previous death anniversary commemorations, so it seems that the scribe has confused Isabella with her sister Joan of Scotland who died in March 1238. On 14 December 1247, a writ was tested instructing the sheriff of Wiltshire to provide Peter Chaceporc, the keeper of the wardrobe, with 50s. (600d.) 'without delay' to keep Isabella's anniversary, although the writ refers to her as 'Eleanor, formerly empress, the king's sister'.⁵⁵²

II. d) Isabella of Angouleme, Henry's mother, d. 31 May 1246

To rehearse some familiar facts: in 1200, when John married the young heiress Isabella of Angouleme, she was already promised in marriage to Hugh IX de Lusignan. John made no attempt to compensate Hugh for 'gazumping' him in this way, so Hugh took his grievances to King Philip Augustus of France who used this complaint to his great advantage. Theoretically at least, as count of Anjou, King John was a vassal of the French crown and so King Philip summoned King John to come to the French court to settle the dispute with Hugh de Lusignan. Not surprisingly, King John refused to acknowledge

⁵⁵⁰ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 491.

⁵⁵¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 106.

Philip's jurisdiction in the matter or submit to the arbitration of the French crown, upon which Philip confiscated John's lands in France for a year and a day as punishment for contempt of court. Philip then invaded and took Normandy and John's counties in the Loire so that he could keep them by right of conquest. In 1204, Isabella was crowned queen of England by the archbishop of Canterbury, and in the following years she and John had five children: Henry (1207); Richard (1209); Joan (1210); Isabella (1214) and Eleanor (1215). On the death of her father Aymer in 1213, Isabella inherited the county of Angouleme. She returned there after the death of King John, and married Hugh X de Lusignan, count of La Marche in 1220. Isabella had a second family with Hugh, the Lusignan half-siblings of Henry III, of whom William de Valence (†1296), Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester (†1260), Alice (†1256) came and settled in England after 1247 whilst Guy Lord of Cognac (†1264); Geoffrey of Jarnac (†before 1263) received large pensions from the king.⁵⁵³

Following the disastrous English campaign to retake Poitou in 1242-43, when she and her husband had deserted Henry III at the crucial moment, Isabella took the veil as a nun at

⁵⁵² *CLR 1240-45*: 306; *CLR 1245-51*: 156.

⁵⁵³ *HBC*, 37; Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 10, 16, 54; Tyerman, *Who's Who in Early Medieval England (1066-1272)* entry on Isabella of Angouleme, 310-311; Clanchy, *England and its Rulers*, 222. There seems to be some confusion over the exact extent of the Lusignan family. Snellgrove, *The Lusignans in England 1247-58* gives the children of Isabella and Hugh X as: Hugh XI de la Marche (†1250); Guy Lord of Cognac (†1264); Geoffrey of Jarnac (†before 1263), William de Valence (heir by marriage to the Pembroke lands, † 1296); Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester († 1260); Isabella (†1299); Agatha; Margaret (†1283) and Alice (†1256), who married John de Warenne of Surrey. Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 67, lists two others: Henry, count of la Marche after his brother Hugh († 1260) and Matilda who married Humphrey de Bohun of Hereford.

the Abbey of Fontevrault, the burial site of her first husband's family, the Plantagenet counts of Anjou. She died here on 31 May 1246⁵⁵⁴ and was buried as a nun in the cemetery. Matthew Paris linked the solemn dedication of the abbey of Beaulieu, founded by King John for the souls of his family, to the death of Isabella shortly afterwards, as in his view she was very much in need of such spiritual assistance. He caustically observed: 'The above-mentioned event is believed not to have taken place without the interposition of divine providence; for the countess of La Marche, the mother of the king of England and of the earl [Richard of Cornwall], Isabella by name, about this time yielded to fate, much in need of the spiritual benefit to be derived from the alms of the pious.'⁵⁵⁵ In 1254, Henry visited the Fontevrault on his way to meet Louis IX in Paris, and moved the body of his mother from the cemetery into the church where she was re-buried,⁵⁵⁶ as befitted her status as queen of England, alongside her in-laws, King Henry II of England and Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine.

As in the case of the death of the Empress Isabella, the king's sister, it would seem that the news of the death of the king's mother took some time to reach England. Although Isabella of Angouleme died at the end of May, it is not until the beginning of August 1246 that writs are tested to organise the commemoration of her death in England. On 7 August 1246 writs were tested ordering the sheriffs of Oxford and Cambridge: 'to feed all

⁵⁵⁴ Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 67; Clanchy, *England and its Rulers*, 222.

⁵⁵⁵ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 177; *CM*, iv. 563. At the time of Beaulieu's dedication, Richard of Cornwall transferred 13 monks from his father's house to his own new Cistercian foundation at Hailes, for the redemption of his own soul, in fulfillment of a vow made during a storm at sea.

⁵⁵⁶ *CM*, v. 475.

the poor clerks of the university in the king's hall, and all the friars preachers [Dominicans] and minors [Franciscans] of Oxford/Cambridge in their houses, out of the issues of the county, on the day when obsequies are to be performed in the town for the soul of I. formerly queen of England, the king's mother.⁵⁵⁷ Henry also granted lands to the canons of Ivychurch in August 1246 'for the soul of the king's mother, whose anniversary shall be celebrated yearly in the monastery'.⁵⁵⁸

In the year of her death, Henry established a chantry of one chaplain for Isabella's soul at Westminster Abbey with an endowment of £5 a year.⁵⁵⁹ The constable of Marlborough was also to find a chaplain, at a stipend of 50s. per annum, to celebrate divine service daily in the queen's chapel of the castle for Isabella's soul.⁵⁶⁰ As we have seen, there was already a chaplain established in this chapel, paid for by the sheriff of Wiltshire, celebrating for the soul of Joan, queen of Scotland, Isabella's daughter. It would appear that in following years, Marlborough was used as a site for the anniversary of Isabella's death as in 1250 the keeper of Marlborough manor was issued a writ of *computate* to account for the 50s. he had sent to the king's almoner at Marlborough to perform the anniversary in May 1249.⁵⁶¹ The leper hospital at Windsor was given six acres of land 'for the souls of King John, Queen Isabel, Queen Eleanor and the king's children' and

⁵⁵⁷ *CLR 1245-51*: 71.

⁵⁵⁸ *Charter Rolls 1227-1257*: 304.

⁵⁵⁹ Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 391; *Charter Rolls 1227-1257*: 304.

⁵⁶⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 78.

⁵⁶¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 288. He sent the money over in the quindene of Trinity. Trinity Sunday fell on 30th May 1249, the quindene was the fortnight following, and Isabella's death-day was 31st May.

were to provide a chaplain to celebrate daily in the hospital for the souls of Isabella and John.⁵⁶² Henry also provided two hospitals with incomes as gifts for the souls of both his mother Isabella and his father King John. The hospital of St. Anthony in Vienne, was given the right of advowson to a church and a chapel to support the poor in the hospital for the souls of the king's parents.⁵⁶³

II. e) Katharine, Henry's daughter, died 3 May 1257

Katharine was the youngest of the children of Henry and Eleanor of Provence. She was born in November 1253 when Eleanor was thirty.⁵⁶⁴ Paris's death notice describes Katharine as *muta et inutilis*. According to Margaret Howell: 'She was a pretty child and it may be that she seemed perfectly normal to begin with[Matthew Paris' description] has been taken to mean that she was deaf and dumb, but he does not say she was deaf and she may have been suffering from a degenerative disorder which only developed gradually.' Her parents were distraught at her illness, which was evidently already apparent in March 1256 when the king commissioned a silver image of Katharine to be placed on the Confessor's shrine at Westminster.⁵⁶⁵ Her death just over a year later, at the age of three and a half, sent Queen Eleanor into a dangerous illness, thought to be incurable, and the king contracted a fever in his worry for his wife and his grief for his

⁵⁶² *Charter Rolls 1227-1257*: 361 (1251).

⁵⁶³ *Charter Rolls 1227-1257*: 345 (1250).

⁵⁶⁴ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 117, 101.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 101.

daughter.⁵⁶⁶ According to Paris, Katharine died ‘about the feast of the Invention (finding) of the Holy Cross’, that is 3 May.⁵⁶⁷

Katharine was buried in Westminster Abbey, and on 16 May 1257 a writ released £51.12s.4d. to John the king’s almoner for the funeral expenses, which probably involved the feeding of the poor, as was customary.⁵⁶⁸ In the same month, Henry established by letters patent an annual payment of 50s. to go to brother Richard, the hermit of La Charring to maintain a chaplain in the hermitage chapel for Katharine’s soul.⁵⁶⁹ Payments were still being issued in 1268 to support the hermit and the chaplain.⁵⁷⁰ This hermitage was outside the city of London, where the later Charing Cross was erected by Edward I to mark the passage of the funeral cortege of his wife Eleanor of Castile in 1291. In 1258 Edward of Westminster was ordered to arrange for the construction of a tomb and gisant for Katharine in Westminster Abbey, and provide a cloth to cover it.⁵⁷¹ Simon of Wells had been summoned to Westminster in May 1257 to work on her tomb and make a bronze gilt image of the princess for the top of her tomb, but was sent home two months later when the commission was changed, and Henry ordered a silver image costing 70 marks.⁵⁷² The tomb was paid for in 1259.⁵⁷³

⁵⁶⁶ *CM*, v. 632; Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 101, 117. Katharine was born on 25 November 1253 and died on 3 May 1257.

⁵⁶⁷ *CM*, v. 632.

⁵⁶⁸ *CLR 1251-60*: 373.

⁵⁶⁹ *CLR 1251-60*: 375 (although in liberate roll, ‘these letters are patent’ is written after the writ).

⁵⁷⁰ *CLR 1267-72*: 18.

⁵⁷¹ *Close Rolls 1256-59*: 222.

⁵⁷² *CLR 1251-60*: 376, 385.

⁵⁷³ *CLR 1251-60*: 448.

II. f) Katharine and Joan, daughters of the Lord Edward, Henry's grand-daughters, died 1264 and 1265

This Katharine was the firstborn child of Lord Edward and Eleanor of Castile. She died as a baby and there has been confusion over her existence. The editors of the Calendar of the Liberate Rolls conflated her with Katherine, Henry III's daughter, and have on occasion 'corrected' the text from 'daughter of the Lord Edward' to 'sister of the Lord Edward'.⁵⁷⁴ She is not listed in the Handbook of British Chronology, and her birth date of 1264 has been given to her sister Eleanor. However, Prestwich lists Katherine on his family tree as the first born of the Lord Edward and Eleanor of Castile, who was born and died in 1264. He says their daughter Eleanor was not born until 1269.⁵⁷⁵

In October 1264 a payment was issued for 'two cloths of gold adorned with wheels, delivered to Robert de Anne the king's almoner to the use of Katharine the deceased daughter of Edward the king's firstborn; and £40 delivered to the said almoner to make offerings on the day of [the said Katharine's] burial.'⁵⁷⁶ The wheel was the emblem of the child's name saint, St Katharine, who was martyred by being broken on a wheel. These cloths were probably used either to cover her body or her tomb. As with the funeral expenses of Katharine the king's daughter, the £40 given to the almoner for 'offerings' on the day of burial of the king's grand-daughter may well have included money spent on feeding the poor. It is possible that Edward's Katharine was also buried

⁵⁷⁴ *CLR 1267-72*: 12.

⁵⁷⁵ Prestwich, *Edward I*, 125.

in Westminster Abbey since the king gave two tuns of wine to the abbot of Westminster and one to the house on the day of her burial.⁵⁷⁷ Just as Henry fed various Mendicants and other religious on the days when he had asked them to commemorate certain individuals, it was common to give the monks at Westminster wine or food when they carried out liturgical celebration of saints or other dead. For instance, the monks received wine from the king as a 'pittance' (an extra on top of their normal food and drink) on St. John the Apostle's day in 1239, and the king paid for the monks food on feasts of the Confessor.⁵⁷⁸

In January 1265, Eleanor of Castile gave birth to a second daughter, Joan, who like her elder sister, died within the year of her birth. At the beginning of September, Henry ordered Richard of Ewell, taker for the Wardrobe, to provide a '*bono et pulcro panno ad aurum ad cooperiendum inde tumbam Johanne, filie Edwardi, primogeniti regis, nuper defuncte et in ecclesia Westmonasterii sepulte.*' (a good and beautiful cloth of gold to go over the tomb of Joan, the daughter of Edward, the king's firstborn, recently deceased and buried in the church of Westminster.)⁵⁷⁹

⁵⁷⁶ CLR 1260-7: 142-143.

⁵⁷⁷ CLR 1267-72: 12, writ 105.

⁵⁷⁸ CLR 1226-40: 366; CLR 1245-51: 21; CLR 1251-60: 522; CM, iv. 645.

⁵⁷⁹ Close Rolls 1264-68: 70-71.

III. THE KING'S LUSIGNAN AND POITEVIN RELATIVES

III. a) Fulk de Castro Novo, the king's cousin, died 3 February 1247

At the time of his death in 1247, Fulk is described by Matthew Paris as 'a distinguished knight and relative of the king',⁵⁸⁰ although the exact family relationship is not clear.

Ridgeway identifies him as a Poitevin, who was used as part of Henry's policy of placing foreign relatives in charge of important lands or rights in borderland territories such as the Welsh Marches, Ireland and the Scottish borders. Fulk had custody and the rights over the marriage of Robert de Marisco's heiress.⁵⁸¹ In September 1246, Fulk was lying ill at London, and a writ of *liberate* was issued to provide him with 20 marks of the king's gift. He died on 3 February the following year and the king 'had his body solemnly and honourably buried in the church at Westminster, on account of his noble birth, after a magnificent funeral.'⁵⁸² Fulk was the first relative, indeed the first person, buried at Westminster Abbey under the auspices of Henry III. After his Fulk's death, it seems Henry attended to his affairs and protected members of Fulk's *familia*. In November 1247, the king was supporting one of Fulk's former clerks 'at the schools', and in 1253, the king reduced the sum Philip Basset owed to the crown by 10 marks in order to clear the debt which Fulk owed to Philip.⁵⁸³

⁵⁸⁰ Vaughan, ed., *Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 12; *CM*, iv. 604: 'miles eximius, domini regis consobrinus'.

⁵⁸¹ Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens'', 85.

⁵⁸² Vaughan, ed., *Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 12; *CM*, iv. 604.

III. b) Hugh XI le Brun de Lusignan, count of La Marche and Angouleme, half-brother of Henry III, died 1250

As the eldest son of Hugh X of La Marche and Isabella of Angouleme, Hugh was the heir to counties of Angouleme and La Marche and all the rest of his parents' lands not assigned to his siblings, which he inherited on the death of his father in 1249. As he was well established in his own right, and was already married, he did not come to England in 1247 with his younger siblings.⁵⁸⁴ In 1238, Hugh had married Yolande of Brittany, the daughter of Peter of Dreux, who had been put forward as a potential bride for Henry III himself in 1226/7.⁵⁸⁵ Hugh went on crusade with his father, who died at Damietta in 1249. He himself died in 1250, and from Michaelmas that year a chaplain was established at Windsor to celebrate divine service 'for the soul of Hugh le Brun the king's brother'⁵⁸⁶ Despite this liturgical commemoration, I have not found any reference to feeding the poor for his soul. Hugh's daughter, Alice, the king's niece, did come to England to find a husband, and in 1253 was married to Gilbert of Clare, earl of Gloucester. Presumably Alice was not very well provided for, as Henry's efforts to raise money for her dowry led him to threaten the Templars and Hospitallers who refused to stand surety for the 5000 marks he promised the bridegroom Gilbert, and in his anger the king dismissed brother Roger de Cramfield, a Templar, from the office of king's almoner and banished him from court.⁵⁸⁷

⁵⁸³ *CLR 1245-51*: 150; *CLR 1251-60*: 101.

⁵⁸⁴ Snellgrove, *The Lusignans in England 1247-58*, 21, 24, 25.

⁵⁸⁵ see n.535 p.210 above.

⁵⁸⁶ *CLR 1245-51*: 323

⁵⁸⁷ *CM*, v. 364-5, which describes her as 'filiae Guidonis comitis Engolismi, fratris mei uterini' rather than daughter of Hugh.

III. c) Aymer de Valence, Bishop of Winchester, d. 1260, Henry's half-brother

Aymer was the fifth son of Isabella of Angouleme by her marriage to Hugh de Lusignan, count of La Marche.⁵⁸⁸ He is variously referred to as Aymer de Lusignan, or Aymer de Valence, the name of the territory his family held near Bordeaux, 'the king's uterine brother' since Henry III and Aymer had the same mother, or 'the elect of Winchester' after he was elected to the see of Winchester in 1250 (he was not consecrated until shortly before his death in 1260).⁵⁸⁹ He arrived in England in 1247 with his older brothers William, Geoffrey and Guy and his sister Alice.⁵⁹⁰ In 1248 he was a student at Oxford, supported by the king.⁵⁹¹ According to Ridgeway, Aymer was one of eight Poitevin landholders in England, and in 1252 he was involved in an advowson dispute with the archbishop of Canterbury, the queen's uncle, Boniface of Savoy, which was the catalyst for the fracturing of the court into pro-Poitevin/Lusignan and pro-Savoyard camps.⁵⁹² Howell describes Aymer as 'the king's favourite half-brother'⁵⁹³ but his power and influence over the king and his high-handed attitude made him deeply unpopular with the reformers and in 1258 he chose exile rather than custody in England.⁵⁹⁴ However, Ridgeway argues that Aymer was in fact reasonably popular in Winchester, where he was

⁵⁸⁸ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, xiii; Snellgrove, *The Lusignans in England 1247-58*, 24.

⁵⁸⁹ *HBC*, 276, gives Aymer de Valence, bishop of Winchester, elected 4th November 1250, consecrated 16th May 1260, died 4th Dec. 1260 in Paris.

⁵⁹⁰ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 54.

⁵⁹¹ A B Ernden, *A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to AD 1500* (Oxford, 1958), 1180.

⁵⁹² Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens'', 84, 88; Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 66-68.

⁵⁹³ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 111.

bishop-elect: 'In 1258 the contemporary Winchester annalist bemoaned 'the cruelty and severity' of the barons in exiling Aymer, and when he died suddenly in exile in 1260, and his heart was brought back to be buried at Winchester cathedral, the annalist relates how miracles were wrought at the shrine.'⁵⁹⁵ Aymer died in exile in Paris and his body was buried there, but his half-brother Henry III fed the poor for his soul in Winchester and in Oxford where he had studied after his arrival in England.

Aymer died on 4 December 1260⁵⁹⁶ and by 18 December Henry had received news of his death. Three writs were tested on this day giving orders for the feeding of the poor for the soul of Aymer. The first orders to the guardian of the see of Winchester 'to feed up to 10,000 men in the manors of the bishopric where there is most need, for the soul of A. bishop of Winchester the king's brother, as the king has received sure news (*certos rumores*) of his death, distributing to each man a half-penny loaf and three herrings'⁵⁹⁷ Two other writs organised obsequies at Oxford. The Dominicans, Franciscans, Carmelite friars, brethren of St. John's Hospital at Oxford and the Benedictine nuns at nearby Godestow were all granted money to pay for their food and drink on the day when, at the king's request, they were to celebrate divine service for Aymer's soul.⁵⁹⁸ The friars of the Penance of Jesus Christ, or the friars of the sack as they are more commonly known, who had been omitted in the first writ, later received a separate payment to cover

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., 157.

⁵⁹⁵ Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens',' 87.

⁵⁹⁶ HBC, 276.

⁵⁹⁷ CLR 1260-67: 12.

⁵⁹⁸ CLR 1260-67: 12; Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses*, 211-212.

the cost of their food on their day of commemoration for Aymer.⁵⁹⁹ In addition the bailiffs of Oxford were sent a writ of *allocate* to cover the cost of the bread and herrings they had bought to feed 20,000 poor in the town under the supervision of Imbert Pugeys, the king's steward, and John of Colchester, the almoner.⁶⁰⁰ Towards the end of December 1260, orders went out for the bailiffs to pay £15 to the bakers of Oxford to reimburse them for the bread that had been taken from them to feed the poor for Aymer, presumably the feeding of 20,000 described in the writ of 18 December. Fifteen pounds would buy a lot of bread at this time as good bread was four loaves to the penny, and a penny would buy 8 lb. of course bread.⁶⁰¹ William Godiskals was also paid for the herrings which the bailiffs had taken from him for the mass feeding. Although Aymer was buried in France, his heart was removed and sent to England. In March 1262 the bailiffs of Winchester were ordered to feed 500 poor at Wulveseye for Aymer's soul on the day when his heart was buried in St. Swithin's priory.⁶⁰²

⁵⁹⁹ *CLR 1260-67*: 14.

⁶⁰⁰ *CLR 1260-67*: 12.

⁶⁰¹ see above, p.175, for bread prices.

⁶⁰² *CLR 1260-7*: 81.

IV. THE QUEEN'S RELATIVES: PROVENÇALS, SAVOYARDS AND FLEMISH

IV. a) William of Savoy, bishop-elect of Valence, bishop-elect of Liege, died 1239, Eleanor's maternal uncle

William of Savoy was the brother of Beatrice, Eleanor of Provence's mother. He promoted Eleanor as a potential bride for Henry III and came to England with his niece in 1236 for her marriage, bringing his clerk, Peter of Aigueblanche, the future bishop of Hereford, with him. According to Ridgeway, in 1236, Henry 'broke with the old factions of the minority, created an 'exclusive' council, and put William of Savoy at its head'. He became Henry's leading advisor, was granted custody of the earldom of Richmond, and the king also tried to have him elected as bishop of Winchester following the death of Peter des Roches in 1238. William was right at the heart of government, since in 1238, he and brother Geoffrey (probably brother Geoffrey of Sutton, the almoner) were testing writs of *liberate*.⁶⁰³ In 1239 the pope pushed William's election as to the archbishopric-principality of Liege.⁶⁰⁴ According to Paris, the pope wanted 'to make him the commander of his army in his war against the emperor...for he knew that.. he was master of the English king, a friend of the French monarch, ...uncle of their queens, a brother of the count of Savoy, and allied to many others by kindred or blood.' William was clearly a powerful and important figure on the international scene and his death was a great blow to Henry III personally, who, on hearing of William's unexpected death at Viterbo, 'could not restrain himself from grief, but tore his clothes, and threw them into the fire, and,

⁶⁰³ *CLR 1226-40*: 318.

giving vent to loud lamentations refused to accept consolation from any one; the queen, too, who was excited by a more familiar cause of sorrow, mourned his death for a long time.⁶⁰⁵

In the writs pertaining to his commemoration by Henry III, William is called 'the king's uncle' rather than the queen's uncle, another indication of the affection in which William was held by the king. According to Matthew Paris, William died in 1239 'as the feast of All Saints drew near.'⁶⁰⁶ At the end of December 1239, Henry established fifteen chaplains at Oxford 'ministering divine service for a year for the soul of W. the late elect of Valence'.⁶⁰⁷ In addition to these fifteen, he created stipends for two other chaplains, celebrating daily, at St. John's Hospital, Oxford, and Ospring Hospital in Kent.⁶⁰⁸

Although the fifteen chaplains at Oxford were commissioned to celebrate for a year, the chaplain at St. John's hospital was still receiving fifty shillings a year in 1245, six years after William's death.⁶⁰⁹

In the year following his death, William was commemorated at Westminster by divine service in the Abbey and the feeding of the poor in the Great Hall. In October 1240, the treasurer, William de Haverhull, was instructed to provide candles to burn during the service which would be performed in Westminster Abbey for the salvation (*salute*) of

⁶⁰⁴ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 25; Clanchy, *England and its Rulers*, 233; Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens'', 83, 84, 89.

⁶⁰⁵ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, i. 241; *CM*, iii. 623.

⁶⁰⁶ *Idem*.

⁶⁰⁷ *CLR 1226-40*: 436; *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 164.

⁶⁰⁸ *CLR 1226-40*: 436, 440.

'...nculi nostri' on the Monday following All Saints (Monday 5 November 1240). The writ is partially decayed but it seems likely that this was also the initial instruction for feeding the poor for his soul on the same day.⁶¹⁰ On 6 November, a writ of *liberate* was tested to pay for both the feeding of the poor in Westminster Great Hall on All Saints day, and pay £4.40d (1000d) to the treasurer's clerk for feeding 1000 poor for the soul of the elect of Valence 'formerly the king's uncle'.⁶¹¹ In 1244, Edward of Westminster fed 1,000 poor on All Saints Day (1 November) for the soul of William, elect of Valence, and a further 1,000 on All Souls Day (2 November) for the faithful departed.⁶¹²

IV. b) Joan of Constantinople, countess of Flanders-Hainault, and wife of Thomas of Savoy, the queen's maternal uncle, died 1244

Joan of Constantinople was the daughter and heiress of Baldwin count of Flanders who became Emperor of Constantinople. In 1237 she married Thomas of Savoy, another of queen Eleanor's Savoyard uncles, who ruled as count of Flanders until the death of Joan in 1244.⁶¹³ This link with Flanders was essential for English political ambitions at the

⁶⁰⁹ *CLR 1245-51*: 9.

⁶¹⁰ The writ gives instructions to for All Saint's Day (Thursday 1 November 1240), the following Sunday (4 November 1240) when the purification of the queen was celebrated following the birth of the Lord Edward, and the Monday following (Monday 5 November) when William of Valence was commemorated. The writ orders the feeding of the poor in on All Saints Day itself (1 November) in Westminster Great Hall and probably went on to give instructions for the feeding of the poor in the same place for William's soul as the last adjective before the break refers back to the hall: '....*lam nostram apud Westmonasterium in predicto festo Omnium Sanctorum pauperibus impleri et eos pasci faciatis, et pro anima predicti electi predicta.*' (*Close Rolls 1237-42*: 233).

⁶¹¹ *CLR 1240-45*: 6 - writ of payment tested on 6 November 1240.

⁶¹² *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 233, *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

⁶¹³ Eugene L Cox, *The Eagles of Savoy: the house of Savoy in thirteenth century Europe* (Princeton, 1974), 462-3.

time. Ridgeway emphasises the importance of Flanders as the source of many mercenaries for the English army, and Thomas himself was key in supporting Henry III's territorial ambitions. In 1242, Thomas came with men to fight alongside Henry in Poitou, and in 1244, when Henry was struggling to raise support among the baronage for his war against the king of Scots, Thomas again appeared, providing 60 knights and 100 serjeants for the cause.⁶¹⁴

Later in the same year, when Henry was at St Albans, he heard the news of Joan's death. The king arrived at the abbey on 21 December 1244 (St Thomas the Apostle) and stayed for three days. Paris recounts that: 'on this news he ordered, as was the custom with Christian kings, bountiful alms to be given to the poor on behalf of her soul, and solemn obsequies to be devoutly performed in the choir at St. Albans.'⁶¹⁵ Writs tested on 21 December 1244 instruct William de Haverhull, the king's treasurer to feed all the Dominicans, Franciscans and lepers of London on Friday 23 December (*die Veneris proxima ante Natalem Domini*) for the soul of the countess Joan.⁶¹⁶ Edward, son of Odo, (the keeper of the king's works at Westminster) was instructed to organise divine service on the same day for the soul of Joan, at Westminster Abbey and the London houses of the Dominicans and Franciscans, and to have all the bells of the town of London ring out.⁶¹⁷

In 1245, it was Edward who was the beneficiary of a writ of *liberate* reimbursing him for

⁶¹⁴ Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens',' 83.

⁶¹⁵ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 41; *CM*, iv. 402: 'Quod cum cognovisset, more regis Christianissimi, pauperibus elemosinas largas jussit erogari pro anima ipsius, et exequias sollempniter et devote in choro Sancti Albani propensius celebrari.'

⁶¹⁶ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 279.

⁶¹⁷ *Idem*.

the £14.17s.8 ½ d. he spent feeding ‘the friars preachers, friars minors, nuns, lepers and all the poor of all the hospitals of London on the Friday before Christmas in this year [i.e. December 1244] for the soul of the countess of Flanders.’⁶¹⁸

IV. c) Raymond Berengar V, count of Provence, the queen’s father, died

19 August 1245

Raymond Berengar was the father of queen Eleanor of Provence who married Henry III in 1236. Eleanor was the second daughter of Raymond and his wife Beatrice of Savoy. Their eldest daughter, Margaret, married King Louis IX of France in 1234, the third daughter, Sanchia, married Henry III’s brother Richard earl of Cornwall in 1243 and the youngest daughter, Beatrice, married Charles of Anjou, the brother of the King of France in 1246.⁶¹⁹

According to Matthew Paris, news came to England in January 1244 that Raymond ‘was struck with a mortal disease, and only waiting for a tomb’.⁶²⁰ His wife, the countess Beatrice, had arrived in England in November 1243 for the marriage of her third daughter Sanchia to Richard of Cornwall. Probably to mark this second marriage tie between the two families, Henry III presented to Westminster Abbey a gold-worked banner with the king’s arms and those of the count of Provence, which was commissioned in September

⁶¹⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

⁶¹⁹ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, xv, table of houses of Provence and Bearn.

⁶²⁰ Giles, *Matthew Paris’ English History*, i. 479; *CM*, iv. 284: ‘irremediabili morbo percussus, solum expectare sepulchrum’ (n.1 says this is written over an erasure, and at the bottom of the page is written ‘insanabili morbo languentum’).

and paid for in December 1243.⁶²¹ The countess Beatrice spent Christmas 1243 at Wallingford with the king, his brother and her two daughters. The party had moved to London around 1 January (feast of the Circumcision), the day on which 6,000 poor were fed in Westminster Palace for the health of the royal family,⁶²² to be in London in order to 'celebrate in the most splendid apparel, the feast of St. Edward [5 January] in the presence and before the eyes of the guests from Provence'⁶²³ After the feast, Henry accompanied Beatrice as far as Dover and it was here that they met with the messengers from Provence. Paris says that upon the news, Henry fell into an 'inconsolable grief, and invoked the mercy of God for the count by prayers and almsgiving to the extent of his capability'.⁶²⁴

In fact, Raymond lived another eighteen months and did not die until 19 August 1245.⁶²⁵ When the news reached England in September, Henry 'urged by feelings of affection, performed his funeral obsequies with great splendour, amidst bountiful almsgiving, devout prayers, with tapers lighted and bells ringing - at the same time strictly forbidding every one from announcing this event to the queen his wife, lest she should be overcome by grief.'⁶²⁶ The king was at the time on campaign in Wales and so his injunction to keep

⁶²¹ *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 42; *CLR 1240-45*: 205.

⁶²² *Close Rolls, 1242-7*: 150; *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

⁶²³ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, i. 478; *CM*, iv. 283.

⁶²⁴ Giles, *English History*, i. 479; *CM*, iv 284: 'Quod cum audisset dominus rex, inconsolabiter dolens, quod potuit in precibus et elemosinis, Dei misericordiam pro eo interpellavit.'

⁶²⁵ Maurice Agulhon and Noel Coulet, *Histoire de la Provence*, 4th updated ed., Que sais-je (Paris, 2001), 36.

⁶²⁶ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii.14; *CM*, iv. 485: 'Rex autem Angliae, de morte comitis Provinciae certificatus, elemosinarum largitione et orationum devotione,

the news from Eleanor might be due to his absence or this may suggest he thought Eleanor might be pregnant at the time as it was a common fear that bad news would affect the health of a pregnant woman and her child, after all, surely she would be distraught whenever she received the news and possibly more upset that she didn't hear as soon as the news arrived?⁶²⁷ She may also have been enraged to hear the news which accompanied the announcement of her father's death: Louis IX, as the husband of the count's eldest daughter, had declared the count's will null and void and had sent 500 knights who had taken control of Provence.

In any case, the 'bountiful almsgiving' recorded by Matthew Paris is attested to in the government records. Henry sent writs from his camp at Deganwy at the end of September instructing the sheriffs of London to 'feed 10,000 poor for the soul of the count of Provence besides the friars preachers and friars minors, the sick in hospitals and the anchoresses in and about London, who are to be fed, as William de Haverhull and Edward de Westminster will tell him from the king'. A second writ, addressed to William and Edward tells them that 'as it may not be possible to find so many poor at once, to enjoin the sheriffs to feed them by turns from day to day until the number is

cum multorum cereorum accensione et campanarum strepitu, exequias pio affectu prosequatur; summopere prohibens ne quis mortem comitis memorati reginae, ne contristaretur, nuntiaret.'

⁶²⁷ Eleanor had given birth to Edmund Crouchback in January 1245. Her next child, Katharine, was born in 1253 (*HBC*, 38). In her discussion of the children of Henry III and Eleanor of Provence, Howell gives greater credence to the possible existence of two sons born between 1245 and 1253 as 'a gap of almost nine years between the birth of Edmund in January 1245, when she was probably still only twenty-one, and the birth of Katharine in 1253' is surprising (Howell, 'The Children of King Henry III,' 71).

completed'⁶²⁸ They were also to arrange for 150 tapers to burn in Westminster Abbey during the service the king had ordered for the soul of the count.

In addition, the king established a chantry of one chaplain at Westminster Abbey. At the beginning of December 1245, Henry granted by charter to the monks of Westminster 100s. annually from the Exchequer to provide for a chantry chaplain.⁶²⁹ In January 1246, a writ of *liberate* was tested providing the Abbey with 100s. (£5) 'to find a chaplain to celebrate divine service daily for ever for the soul of Raymond, count of Provence, father of Eleanor the king's queen'⁶³⁰ Besides this perpetual commemoration at Westminster Abbey, Henry remembered the count in the decoration of his palaces. In 1247, the king ordered two stained-glass windows for the north gable of his great hall at Rochester Castle 'with the king's shield in one and the shield of the late count of Provence in the other, and to make two small glass windows on each side of the hall with the king's image in each'⁶³¹ It is interesting that the shield is referred to as Raymond Berengar's escutcheon and not simply the shield of Provence. It seems likely, given similar commissions elsewhere that the two windows on each side of the hall with images of kings were intended to cast light on the dais, to express luminous kingship, and it is notable that in the gable the king's shield and the counts shield would appear to have equal prominence in this embellishment designed to impress on visitors the power of the king. The count's shield was also installed in the windows of St Edmund's chapel at

⁶²⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 324.

⁶²⁹ *Charter Rolls 1227-1244*: 289.

⁶³⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 21.

⁶³¹ *CLR 1245-51*: 113.

Westminster Abbey,⁶³² where he was remembered daily in the requiem masses performed by the chantry chaplain, and in the king's upper chapel at Havering (1252).⁶³³ The count's body was in Provence, and hopefully his soul was in heaven, but he was also present to Henry in England.

IV. d) Sanchia of Provence, the queen's sister, died 9 November 1261

Sanchia, the third daughter of Raymond Berengar of Provence and Beatrice of Savoy, and the sister of Queen Eleanor of England and Queen Margaret of France, came to England in 1243 aged about fifteen to marry Richard, earl of Cornwall, the brother of Henry III.⁶³⁴ She was Richard of Cornwall's second wife, following the death of Isabella Marshal in childbirth in 1240. Richard and Sanchia were married in Westminster Abbey in great splendour on 23 November 1243, and the couple spent a family Christmas at Richard's seat at Wallingford with Sanchia's mother, Beatrice of Savoy, the king and the queen.⁶³⁵ In 1246, Sanchia gave birth at Wallingford to a son, named Richard after his father. This event was greeted with great joy and the king, queen and nobles gathered to celebrate Sanchia's purification forty days after the birth. Unfortunately, the young son died shortly afterwards.⁶³⁶ Her second son, Edmund, born in 1250 survived and became earl of Cornwall after his father's death in 1271. In May 1257, Sanchia, like her elder sisters, became a queen. She was crowned as Queen of the Romans and Queen of Germany

⁶³² Binski, *Westminster Abbey and the Plantagenets*, 77.

⁶³³ *CLR 1251-60*, 119.

⁶³⁴ *CM*, iv. 263; Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 2, for approximate date of birth.

⁶³⁵ *CM*, iv. 263, 283.

⁶³⁶ *CM*, iv. 568-9.

alongside her husband Richard of Cornwall, in Aachen Cathedral.⁶³⁷ After 1257 she is often referred to as the Queen of Almain or of the Romans in government records.

Sanchia died on 9 November 1261 and was buried at Hailes Abbey, a Cistercian house in Gloucestershire which her husband had founded in 1246 with monks from King John's house at Beaulieu, in fulfilment of a vow he had made when in peril at sea.⁶³⁸ Her Savoyard uncles, Boniface, Archbishop of Canterbury and Peter of Savoy attended her funeral, and Howell notes that 'the arms of Provence still mark the walls of the little parish church at Hailes'⁶³⁹

Sanchia evidently left a will, as shortly after her death the king granted by letters patent the right of her executors to dispose of the wardship of two manors for the benefit her soul, which implies the money raised from selling these wardships would be spent on spiritual services and alms.⁶⁴⁰ In addition to whatever provision Sanchia herself had made for masses and almsgiving, and any action taken by Richard of Cornwall, Henry established a series of chaplains to celebrate divine service daily for her, although, as with Hugh de Lusignan, I have not found any references to feeding the poor to commemorate her soul. In December 1261, he granted the master and brethren of St. Katherine's hospital without the Tower 50 shillings a year by letters patent to maintain a chaplain celebrating daily in the chapel of St. John within the Tower for his own soul and that of

⁶³⁷ Weir, *Britain's Royal Families*, 69.

⁶³⁸ *CM*, iv. 562; Steane, *The Archaeology of the Medieval English Monarchy*, 190.

⁶³⁹ Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 185.

⁶⁴⁰ *CPR 1258-66*: 193.

Sanchia.⁶⁴¹ The following year, a writ of *liberate* was issued to provide Robert de Hales, chaplain with his wages for celebrating for the Sanchia in St. Peter's chapel in the Tower.⁶⁴² In addition, the king established a chantry chaplain in Westminster Abbey, where Sanchia had married Richard of Cornwall and where another chaplain was daily remembering her father, Raymond of Provence.⁶⁴³

V. FRIENDS AND ENEMIES WHO DIED UNFORTUNATE DEATHS

Sudden deaths were viewed as highly inauspicious as they robbed the individual of the time to prepare properly for death and reconcile any differences with other men and with God, actions which belonged to the ideal of dying well.⁶⁴⁴ Those who died before their time were also mourned deeply. As we have seen, the largest scale feeding of the poor was following the death of the Empress Isabella who was not only close kin, but died a sudden death in childbirth along with her child. The people below also died sudden, unpleasant and untimely deaths and this may be why they were commemorated. In the case of Richard Marshal, Henry's grief at his death was probably just as much for the way in which Richard's death exacerbated an already difficult political situation as concern for Richard's soul, since the dying man the did have time to prepare for death, finally succumbing two weeks after being wounded in battle.

V. a) Raymond de Burgh, died 1230

⁶⁴¹ CPR 1258-66: 195.

⁶⁴² CLR 1260-7: 87.

⁶⁴³ CPR 1258-66: 195; Harvey, *Westminster Abbey and its Estates*, Appendix II: Burials, 392.

Raymond, the nephew of Hubert de Burgh, the justiciar, died during the abortive Brittany campaign in 1230. Raymond features in *Flores* in 1225-6, when William Longspee, the earl of Salisbury, (referred to as the king's uncle, he was an illegitimate son of King Henry II), was missing at sea presumed dead and Raymond tried his best to woo and marry the countess of Salisbury, who was not in the least interested.⁶⁴⁵ When the earl finally managed to return to England and his wife, he went to the king and lodged a complaint against Hubert de Burgh regarding Raymond's conduct towards the countess. Hubert confessed his guilt, and begged the earl's forgiveness, giving him horses and other gifts. Once reconciled, Hubert invited the earl to dinner and, in the view of the chronicler, it was here that the earl was poisoned as he died shortly afterwards.⁶⁴⁶ There is no mention of whether, after the earl's actual death, Raymond continued his hot pursuit of the countess, who held Salisbury in her own right.

According to the death notice: 'Raymond de Burgh, a brave and noble knight, nephew of Hubert de Burgh, chanced to be riding on the banks of the Loire, when his horse by unlucky chance got into the stream. On attempting again to climb the bank, which was very steep, he fell back with his rider, and both were drowned.'⁶⁴⁷ In July 1230, while the king was still in Brittany, writs were tested relating to Raymond's recent death. The first writ orders that the king's Exchequer is to provide 50 shillings a year for a chaplain in St

⁶⁴⁴ See Appendix 1: Contemporary attitudes to death.

⁶⁴⁵ *CM*, iii. 101-2, called king's uncle; *ibid.*, 93, called Richard of Cornwall's uncle. Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century*, 32, for William Longsword as illegitimate son of Henry II and earl of Salisbury by marriage, hence the attraction of his wife, countess in her own right, as a bride for Raymond de Burgh.

⁶⁴⁶ *CM*, iii. 104.

John's chapel at Westminster to celebrate every day for the souls of the king's ancestors and for Raymond de Burgh. The writ continues with instructions that all the sheriffs of the counties where Raymond held lands are to allow two named men to freely manage Raymond's goods in order to clear his debts and dispose of the rest for the good of his soul.⁶⁴⁸ At the end of July, writs were issued to this effect to the sheriffs but with a slightly different wording: Raymond's two companions (*sociis*) are to have free seisin without delay so they can use Raymond's goods to clear his debts and perform alms to recommend his soul.⁶⁴⁹ A second writ for the chaplain at St. John's mentions the commemoration of Raymond's soul alone.⁶⁵⁰ In this way, the king not only used his own money to provide masses for Raymond's soul but also smoothed the way for the executors to dispose of the dead man's goods in alms-giving.

V. b) Richard Marshal, died 1234

Richard Marshal was the second son of the great William the Marshal who had defended the boy king Henry and his right to the realm. On the death of their father, the eldest son William inherited the Marshal lands in the Welsh Marches and Ireland, and Richard received his father's lands in Normandy. However, in 1231, William Marshal *fiels* died and his lands were to pass to Richard. This inheritance caused problems in England since, initially, the king and the justiciar Hubert de Burgh were not willing to grant the Marshal inheritance to Richard who, as a landholder in Normandy, was also a vassal of

⁶⁴⁷ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, 538; *CM*, iii. 199.

⁶⁴⁸ *Close Rolls 1227-31*: 366, 417.

⁶⁴⁹ *Close Rolls 1227-31*: 363.

⁶⁵⁰ *Close Rolls 1227-31*: 366.

the French king, and so had a conflict of interests. Richard raised an army in Pembroke to defend his rights and, threatened with civil strife, Henry backed down. However, this was not the end of the problems between the king and the new earl Marshal. In 1232, in the 'Poitevin coup d'etat' Henry dismissed his English advisers, including de Burgh who was hounded from office, and replaced them with Poitevins. Richard was one of the English barons who opposed the new order. This was the beginning of the violent disputes between the king and various barons over whether the king should be free to appoint his own advisers to assist him in the governance the realm. Henry further alienated Richard when he disseised Gilbert Basset, one of Richard's vassals, from a manor in favour of another claimant. The situation deteriorated to such an extent that Richard, allied with Llywelyn ap Iorwerth, raised a rebellion against the crown in the Welsh Marches. The king was in an extremely difficult position: many of the greatest men in the realm sympathised with Richard, and so were not willing to fight against him. Henry was under a great deal of pressure at court to come to terms with the earl Marshal. Other barons, including Henry's own brother, Richard of Cornwall, who had married Isabella Marshal in 1231, were also opposed to the king's rejection of his 'natural' English advisers in favour of Poitevins such as Peter des Roches and Peter Rivaux. Nevertheless, following the attack on Shrewsbury by the Marshal and Llywelyn in January 1234, Wendover reports that Henry stated that he 'would never come to any terms with [Richard Marshal], unless he begged his mercy with a halter around his neck, and acknowledging himself a traitor.'⁶⁵¹ This was evidently a standard gesture indicating

⁶⁵¹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii, 581; *CM*, iii. 265: '..se nunquam in pacem convenire cum illo, nisi laqueum in collo gerens et se proditorem esse recognoscens ejus

both guilt and contrition, as earlier the chronicler reports that the dying earl of Salisbury before his final confession tied a rough cord round his neck and threw himself on the floor declaring himself 'a traitor to the Supreme King'.⁶⁵² At the great council held at Westminster in February 1234, the archbishop of Canterbury, Edmund Rich, advised the king that the only way to resolve the problems of the realm was to dismiss des Roches and Rivaux. After this council, the king went on a tour of the various shrines in East Anglia, giving himself time to consider his position in an atmosphere of pious contemplation. Meanwhile, the archbishop and bishops arranged a truce with Llywelyn and Richard Marshal. It seemed as though the situation had been defused and could be resolved, and at the April meeting of the great council the king agreed to dismiss the Poitevins and accept the truce arranged in his absence. However, Richard Marshal was not so convinced of the king's good faith and had retreated to his lands in Ireland. There, the supporters of the king, either unaware of the state of detente or maliciously ignoring the truce, entered into battle with Richard. The Marshal died on 16 April 1234 of the wounds he had received in battle a fortnight earlier. In the opinion of the archbishop, the king himself, despite his assurances, had sought the death of the Marshal.

According to the *Flores Historiarum*, when the news of Richard Marshal's death reached the king at Woodstock, the king 'to the astonishment of all present.. burst into lamentations for the death of such a distinguished knight, declaring that when he died he had not left his equal in the kingdom; then at once summoning the presbyters of his

miserericordiam impleret.'

chapel, he ordered a solemn funeral service to be chanted for his soul, and on the next day, after attending mass, he bestowed a large amount in alms on the poor. Blessed indeed must such a king be, who could love his enemies, and pray to God with tears for his persecutors.⁶⁵³ I have not found writs of payment for this in the chancery rolls, but, as in the case of the almsgiving performed by the king at St Alban's immediately following the news of the death of Joan of Constantinople in 1244, given that the obsequies and almsgiving for the Marshal took place when the king was *in situ*, they were probably paid for by the almoner and so accounted for separately in the almoner's roll which does not survive for this year.

V. c) Gruffydd, son of Llywelyn, died 1244

Gruffydd was the eldest son of Llywelyn ap Iorwerth (the Great), prince of Aberffraw and lord of Snowdonia. However, Gruffydd was illegitimate and Llywelyn, by his marriage to Joan, the illegitimate daughter of King John, had a second son, Dafydd. In 1220, contrary to Welsh custom which split the inheritance between sons, Llywelyn declared his legitimate son Dafydd his sole heir, and, with papal approval, disinherited Gruffydd. Llywelyn died in 1240, Dafydd succeeded him, and paid homage to Henry III for North

⁶⁵² Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii, 468; *CM*, iii.104: ‘..laqueum cica collum connectens.. summi Regis se esse proditorem contestans.’

⁶⁵³ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 592; *Flores* (RS 84), iii. 88; *CM*, iii. 289-90: ‘Unde rex, admirantibus cunctis qui aderant, in fleta et lamentationem prorumpens [*Flores*: in fleta prorumpens].. asserens constanter quod nullum sibi parem in regno moriens reliquisset. Et continuo vocatis presbiteris de capella sua, fecit solempniter decantari obsequium defunctorum pro anima ejus; et in crastino, completis missarum solennis, largas pauperibus elemosinas erogabat, [insert by Paris] consimilis in hoc David carum Saulis et Jonathae deplorantis [end insert]. Beatus ergo rex talis, quo novit offendentes diligere, et cum lacrimis pro suis persecutoribus Dominum exorare.’

Wales. On the death of their father, Dafydd had imprisoned Gruffydd⁶⁵⁴ and continued to hold his elder brother in captivity, but Henry III supported Gruffydd's claim to some form of inheritance in a classic example of the policy of involvement in local disputes with the intention of claiming jurisdiction over the matter to lay the foundations for a future claim to the land itself. In 1241, as part of a treaty with the king of England, Dafydd agreed to put the question before the king's court for judgement. The initial agreement was reached in Wales in August 1241 and in October Dafydd and Gruffydd came to London. Here Dafydd agreed to name Henry III as his heir if he should die without issue. As Gruffydd already had three sons, it became politic for Henry himself to deny Gruffydd his rights in North Wales, and although the lands to be allotted to Gruffydd were laid out in the final treaty this was a dead letter. In effect, Gruffydd passed from captivity in Wales at the hands of his brother to what Powicke describes as 'honourable captivity' in the Tower of London from 1241.⁶⁵⁵ According to Matthew Paris, as befitted his station, Gruffydd received half a mark a day for his maintenance in the Tower and his wife was allowed to visit him there.⁶⁵⁶

In 1244, on St. David's Day (1 March), Gruffydd attempted to escape from the Tower, by climbing down a rope he had made from his sheets, table cloths and tapestries.

However, according to Paris: 'when he had thus descended some distance, from the weight of his body, the cord snapped, and he fell from a great height; for he was a big man, and very corpulent; and in this way he broke his neck, and died; and his pitiable

⁶⁵⁴ *CM*, iv.8.

⁶⁵⁵ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 388, 393, 398, 399.

corpse was found in the morning near the wall of the Tower and afforded a lamentable spectacle to all who saw it, as his head, together with his neck, was almost buried in his breast between the shoulders.⁶⁵⁷ Paris says that the king was furious with the guards whose laxity had allowed this to happen. The *liberate* rolls show that Henry fed 500 poor for Gruffydd's soul.⁶⁵⁸ In 1248, the king gave permission to the Cistercian abbots of Strata Florida and Aberconway to take Gruffydd's body back to Wales to be buried in Aberconway Abbey alongside his father Llywelyn ab Iorwerth and his half-brother Dafydd who had died in 1246.⁶⁵⁹ So, in death, at least for a short while, Gruffydd was recognised as one of the legitimate rulers of North Wales: Aberconway Abbey was of enough symbolic importance to the Welsh that Henry III's son razed it in order to build Conway castle, expressing both the crushing of the old dynasty and his own rights to the principality.

V. d) John de Salinis and the others who died during the Welsh campaign in 1245

On his return from North Wales in 1245, Henry ordered the sheriff of Oxford to arrange for a service for those who had died on the campaign to be held at Oseney Abbey, a house of Augustinian canons in Oxfordshire.⁶⁶⁰ The sheriff was to provide 150 half pound wax tapers to burn throughout the mass to be held on Wednesday 22 November 1245 'for the soul of John de Salinis, formerly a yeoman of the king, and for the souls of the others who died on the king's service in the parts of Wales.' The sheriff was also instructed to

⁶⁵⁶ *CM*, iv. 295.

⁶⁵⁷ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 389-390, 400.

⁶⁵⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 306.

⁶⁵⁹ Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 400.

distribute 400 loaves of bread to 400 poor, after the king's arrival from Wales, 'for the souls of the same persons'

The Salines came from Burgundy and were one of the families associated with the queen's Savoyard relatives. Members of the family fought regularly for Henry, and it was Stephen de Salines, the king's valet, who brought Henry news of the birth of the Lord Edward in 1239. Another relative, William de Salines, was one of the queen's clerks and both Stephen and William served in the households of the queen and the Lord Edward.⁶⁶¹ The prominence of this family in the royal service explains why John de Salines, the king's yeoman, is named individually in this instruction for commemoration by feeding the poor.

V. e) Hugh Giffard, died 1246

The Englishman Hugh Giffard and the Savoyard Walter de Dya were in charge of Windsor castle in the late 1230s and 1240s. Hugh's wife Sibil was one of the queen's ladies and attended Eleanor during the birth of the Lord Edward, at Windsor, in August 1239. After Edward's birth, a household was established at the castle for the baby prince, and Hugh Giffard was appointed as the child's guardian. He was in charge of the day to day running of the prince's household and also organised the feeding of the poor within Windsor Castle.

⁶⁶⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 8; Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses*, 179.

Matthew Paris records Hugh's sudden death in the presence of the king and queen in Kent during Rogation week, the week starting on Rogation Sunday, 13 May 1246. He says that the king and queen had travelled to Dover and Canterbury on a 'hearts and minds' progress intended to gain the affections of the people of Kent. On the way back from Canterbury, 'a nobleman of his household named Hugh Giffard, the preceptor of his majesty's sons, was seized with a sudden fit of apoplexy, fell to the ground and expired. Many said that this event was brought on by the vengeance of St. Edmund the Confessor and archbishop of Canterbury [i.e. Edmund Rich/of Abingdon/of Pontigny] that by the sudden death of one at his side the king might be alarmed and aroused to make satisfaction for the many injuries he had inflicted on the church of Canterbury, chiefly, however, on account of his having rashly elevated Boniface to the archiepiscopal dignity, not permitting the monks of Canterbury, as was their just right, to have free power of electing whom they chose.' Here the chronicler is referring to Boniface of Savoy, one of Eleanor of Provence's uncles, who succeeded the sainted Edmund as archbishop. Whether or not Henry accepted this interpretation of events, it seems likely that Hugh Giffard's sudden death in the week beginning 13 May is linked to the king's writ to the sheriff of Kent tested on 19 May instructing him to provide a stipend of 50s. a year to establish a chaplain 'to sing *Salus populi* daily while celebrating divine service, in order to preserve the king and his household from sudden death'⁶⁶²

⁶⁶¹ Ridgeway, 'King Henry III and the 'Aliens',' 83; Howell, *Eleanor of Provence*, 45, 49, 51, 58, 145, 188.

⁶⁶² *CLR 1245-51*: 54, 19 May 1246.

At some time between Hugh's death in May and the end of July 1246 both the sheriff of Kent and Edward son of Odo, the keeper of the king's works at Westminster, distributed bread to the poor for Hugh Giffard's soul. Writs tested at the end July 1246 show that the sheriff of Kent had spent 40s. [480d] on bread distributed at Canterbury, and Edward was reimbursed the £9. 3s. [2196d] he spent on a distribution of bread, which in all likelihood took place at Westminster Palace or in London, although the site of distribution to the poor is not specified.⁶⁶³

VI. MEMBERS OF HENRY'S FAMILIA

Henry III also spent money in various ways following the deaths of other royal servants and members of his household. As has been noted again and again in passing, paying for meals to be given to the poor for the soul of the deceased was only one of the ways in which the king contributed towards the costs of burial and commemoration. Whereas the *pro anima* acts which the king financed for his relatives were in addition to the funeral and anniversary arrangements made in their own testaments or by members of their immediate family, evidently the king alone was responsible for the obsequies of some members of his household, and so the king provided more fully, although on a smaller scale, for the burial and commemoration of his servants.

For example, on the death of Osbert de Maidenstan, one of the king's chaplains, in May 1246, Henry spent 11 marks and 5 shillings on the burial itself (probably covering the cost of the preparation of the body for burial and a requiem mass), 5 marks for a

⁶⁶³ CLR 1245-51: 68, 69.

tombstone, 25 shillings for tapers to go round the tomb and 60 shillings on bread distributed to the poor.⁶⁶⁴ Although Osbert's name does not feature on Harvey's list of those buried at Westminster Abbey, nonetheless the chaplain was commemorated in the Abbey on the day of his burial (wherever that took place), as a payment for wax specifies that the king gave '100 pounds [of wax] for them to make tapers on the day of the burial of Osbert formerly the king's chaplain.'⁶⁶⁵ The following year in September, he paid for four twenty pound tapers for the arrival of Richard of Dover's body at Canterbury and ten marks for his funeral.⁶⁶⁶ Although Peter Chaceporc, who had served as keeper of the wardrobe since 1241 and treasurer, made a will shortly before he died at Christmas 1254, in which he founded a house of canons to celebrate daily for his soul, Henry 'caused the body of his favourite clerk, Peter Chaceporc, to be honourably buried, and a solemn funeral service to be performed over it' at St Mary's church in Boulogne before the king crossed to Dover.⁶⁶⁷ Robert de Mares, described by Carpenter as 'a much favoured huntsman, esquire and ultimately household knight,' died at Clarendon in 1256, and the king instructed the sheriff of Wiltshire 'to feed the friars preachers of Wilton, the friars minors of Salisbury, and 100 poor persons so that each poor person shall have 1d., for the soul of Robert de Mares...As the king has asked the dean and canons of Salisbury, being present, to bury the corpse in their cathedral, the sheriff is to find oblations and other

⁶⁶⁴ *CLR 1245-51*: 49.

⁶⁶⁵ *CLR 1245-51*: 48.

⁶⁶⁶ *CLR 1245-51*: 140, 141.

⁶⁶⁷ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, iii. 111; *CM*, v. 483-4: 'Fecitque honorabiliter sepeliri corpus dilecti clerici sui Petri Chaceporc, et fieri exequias solempnes.' For Chaceporc's dates in office, see Tout, *Chapters*, vi. 25.

things needful for the burial.⁶⁶⁸ During his stay at St Albans from 22-25 November 1258, the king heard of the death of John Fitzgeoffrey, former sheriff of Gloucester and justice of Ireland, and before he left St Albans, the king had a mass performed for John's soul.⁶⁶⁹ In 1259, the king paid for the carriage of the body of John Fitzgeoffrey to London (from Guildford where he died) and for his obsequies (no further details given), requiem mass and a gold-wrought cloth to cover his tomb.⁶⁷⁰

Besides paying for these funerals, the king made contributions towards the burials of various other servants. In 1239, sixty shillings was issued to the clerk Drew de Trubleville to buy a cup for the heart of his brother, Henry de Trubleville, a long-serving royal captain and former seneschal of Gascony, which was to be carried to Normandy for burial.⁶⁷¹ Two years later, the king ordered Edward of Westminster to send a silk cloth to cover the tomb of Steven Seagrave, the justiciar, who, according to Matthew Paris, died after making a will and receiving the viaticum at Leicester Abbey, where he had sought

⁶⁶⁸ David Carpenter, 'English Peasants in Politics, 1258-1267' pp. 309-48 in *The reign of Henry III*, 325. Granted ten librates of land out of escheats (1243) and example of instructions to him as a huntsman (1249): *Close Rolls 1242-47*: 23, *CLR 1245-51*: 252. Writ cited: *CLR 1251-60*: 346.

⁶⁶⁹ *CM*, v. 724, says he arrived on St Cecilia's day (22 Nov) and stayed for three days.

⁶⁷⁰ *Close Rolls 1256-59*: 345; *CLR 1251-60*: 451; *CM*, v. 724. References to John Fitzgeoffrey as sheriff of Gloucester and justice of Ireland: *CLR 1226-40*: 484; *CLR 1251-60*: 7; Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century*, 87; Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 130, 173-4.

⁶⁷¹ *CLR 1226-40*: 444. Trubleville had stayed loyal to King John and fought alongside de Burgh at the sea-battle of Sandwich, the royalist victory over the pirate Eustace the Monk in 1217. During Henry's reign, de Trubleville served as Seneschal of Gascony (1226-1231, 1234-1238) and in 1234 he was given the lordship of the Channel Islands. In 1238 the king sent de Trubleville with a body of knights to aid the Emperor Frederick in his campaign against the rebels in northern Italy (*DNB*, xix. 1250-51 as Turberville; Powicke, *The Thirteenth Century*, 98, 318.

refuge during his persecution by those who opposed the government of his Poitevin colleagues, Peter des Rivaux and Peter des Roches.⁶⁷² In 1245, the king paid five marks for a tomb by Master Richard of Paris for the burial of the Templar, John de Leukenor/Le Arker, who was the king's almoner from 1228 until his death and had also been the warden of Ospring hospital which had been used as a site for feeding the poor for the souls of William, elect of Valence and the Empress Isabella.⁶⁷³ The king provided a tomb cloth of gold, four tapers weighing six pounds and thirty smaller candles to be placed round the body of the Franciscan Augustine of Nottingham, bishop of Laodicea, who had been given newly decorated quarters at Windsor castle in 1260, the year before his death.⁶⁷⁴

Where the king owed back wages to the dead servant, he paid these to relatives and executors to finance burials and the feeding of the poor. Following the death of his son John in 1241, John de Stapellegh was given the forty shillings in wages owed to his son to distribute for his soul.⁶⁷⁵ In 1269, the executors of William de Nauntoyl, who had served in Gascony, were paid 100s. owed for his service abroad 'to bury his body and commend (*eroganda*) his soul to the poor.'⁶⁷⁶ Also, where members of the royal household had died in debt, the king made efforts to clear these outstanding expenses. The king paid the 18 mark debt left by Augustine of Nottingham, bishop of Laodicea,

⁶⁷² *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 339; *CM*, iv.169.

⁶⁷³ *CLR 1240-45*: 286: 24; Tanner, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners,' 74.

⁶⁷⁴ *Close Rolls 1259-61*: 332; *CLR 1251-60*: 514; *CLR 1260-67*: 14. My thanks to Stephen Priestley for identifying 'A. bishop of Laodicea' and giving me the references to his chamber at Windsor castle.

⁶⁷⁵ *CLR 1240-45*: 32.

⁶⁷⁶ *CLR 1267-72*: 65, writ 589.

who was living in Windsor castle at the time of his death in 1261.⁶⁷⁷ He also granted 10 marks to maintain Augustine's sister Cecily, for the soul of the bishop.⁶⁷⁸ Henry had done much the same for his cousin Fulk de Castro Novo, clearing his debts and making a contribution towards the support of his dependants. Clearing or forgiving debts could be a *pro anima* act and was one of the duties of executors where an individual left a will (see Raymond de Burgh). After the death in 1239 of Henry de Trumbleville, the king pardoned the debts which a man from Devon, Trumbleville's home county, owed to the crown, 'for God and for the soul of our dear and faithful Henry de Trublevill'⁶⁷⁹ In this way, Henry himself performed a Christian act of mercy, but directed the blessing he himself would accrue from this act of mercy to the benefit of the soul of Henry de Trumbleville.

⁶⁷⁷ *CLR 1260-67*: 18.

⁶⁷⁸ *CLR 1260-67*: 39.

⁶⁷⁹ *Close Rolls 1237-42*: 163.

CONCLUSION

Probably the most striking aspect of this study is the scale of the feeding of the poor for the commemoration of the dead which Henry III organised. Thousands, sometimes tens of thousands, of paupers were fed at numerous sites for a whole range of individuals from holy ancestors to fallen yeomen soldiers. The financial documents show only the tip of the iceberg in terms of organisation on the ground as they simply record the payments made for feeding the poor but do not detail how exactly the poor were gathered, or list all the people involved in both buying and transporting the necessary food, or those who were present controlling the crowds and handing out the food on the day itself. The execution of the king's pious demands must have required an enormous administrative effort by his servants.

Henry's daily feeding of the poor, in the 1240s at least, was extraordinary by contemporary standards and this focus on helping the needy is probably linked to the king's devotion to Edward the Confessor and his desire to imitate his holy almsgiving. Although the feeding of the poor *per se* was a commonplace activity for those of means, feeding the poor on this scale to benefit the souls of others seems to have been reasonably unusual among contemporary rulers. Clearly, for Henry III personally, it was imperative to remember and honour the dead who were of particular significance to him, whether members of his blood family or his *familia*. These death rituals were, paradoxically, a means of both marking the absence of the dead person and their day of death, whilst stating their continued presence as part of the community. Feeding the poor was an

intrinsic part of this commemoration. Despite the grave unpopularity of Henry and Eleanor's foreign relatives and their hangers-on, the king's reaction to their deaths provided meals for English paupers. Through feeding English poor and holding requiem masses at Westminster Abbey, the shrine church of the last holy Anglo-Saxon king, these foreign relatives were assimilated into a spiritual community of the realm.

Why did feeding the poor for the souls of others so appeal to the king? Alms given by the living for the souls of the dead were believed to help souls in Purgatory but this was not the sole aim, as the fact that the poor were fed to commemorate Richard I many years after his well-publicised release from Purgatory illustrates. Despite the growing strength and delineation of the doctrine of Purgatory, Jacobus de Voragine writing about the time of Henry III's death, put the consideration of Purgatory in third place in order of importance in the commemoration of the dead. Asking why suffrages offered for the dead are useful he stated 'There are three reasons for this. The first is unity. The dead are one body with the Church militant, and the goods of the latter must be common to all. The second is their dignity....The third reason is their need.'⁶⁸⁰ The idea of reuniting the living and the dead as members of one united spiritual community, making the living and dead present to each other through liturgical means, was the primary aim of *pro anima* acts.

It was the body of Christ which was the means of making this connection between the living and the dead. The belief in Christ's presence in the poor is of utmost importance in

understanding the feeding of the poor for the commemoration of the dead. By feeding the poor, the king was able to nourish Christ's body in the form of paupers and accrue prayers, as the poor were expected to pray in return for their meal. In requiem masses, prayers were said for the soul of the deceased, and the privileged ate Christ's body in the form of the bread on the altar to create this mystical link between the souls in Christ on earth and in heaven. Through both eating and feeding Christ's mystical body, the living could express their identity with the dead as members of the same spiritual community. Henry III's strong eucharistic devotion, and his habit of hearing at least two masses a day, is commented on by Trivet, and evident from the surviving almoner's rolls which record the oblations that the king made after each mass. The evidence for the king's *pro anima* almsgiving shows that Henry's devotion to the body of Christ in the form of the poor was just as strong as his eucharistic piety, and both found expression in the king's acts of *memoria*.

⁶⁸⁰ Voragine, *The Golden Legend*, 289.

APPENDIX 1:

CONTEMPORARY BELIEFS ABOUT DEATH AND ALMSGIVING WITH REFERENCE TO THE *FLORES HISTORICARUM* OF ROGER OF WENDOVER AND THE *CHRONICA MAJORA* OF MATTHEW PARIS

The subject of this enquiry is the feeding of the poor performed by Henry III for the souls of certain dead individuals. Without examining briefly the beliefs and practices surrounding death in thirteenth century England is difficult to see this practices in context and fully understand why Henry III was moved to do this, and what benefit he thought it would have. The chronicles of Roger of Wendover and Matthew Paris, are strewn with death notices recording the passing of bishops, abbots, barons and knights. Whether these are completely accurate or not is not the question here: for all their inherent 'bias' and theatricality, they certainly give a taste of contemporary beliefs and death practices as viewed by two monks of St Albans with an interest in the figures of Henry III's court.

All Christians wanted to be buried in consecrated ground. Criminals, suicides and excommunicants were excluded from church burial, and such exclusion was a sign of the utmost social and spiritual obloquy. Such was the importance which Christians laid upon being buried correctly in consecrated ground that churchman threatened people with exclusion from funeral rites to gain control over other aspects of their behaviour, including their sexual morality. In 1225, Roger Wendover records that the archbishop of Canterbury issued a warrant threatening that: 'the concubines of priests and clerks, who are in holy orders and endowed with benefices, shall not receive church burial, unless

they truly reform their lives...'⁶⁸¹ Besides enforcing clerical celibacy, the church at the time was also trying to extend their jurisdiction over marriage, at a time when for ordinary Christians, marriage was a lay matter. The church authorities in London, in statutes issued in 1245-59, denied burial to those who married without banns.⁶⁸²

Besides being buried in consecrated ground, the way in which you died was also of importance and seen as a possible indicator of salvation or damnation.⁶⁸³ Ideally, the devout thirteenth century Christian hoped to have time to prepare for death and perform various acts before dying to ensure a smooth passage into the hereafter. It was hoped that the individual would realise that s/he was dying and have enough time to be able to bid farewell to friends and family, ask their forgiveness for any wrongdoing and distribute their worldly goods before finally accepting death and passing away peacefully. Paris' account of the death of Richard le Poore, bishop of Durham in 1237, is a fine example of the 'good death':

⁶⁸¹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 459-60; *CM*, iii. 95: 'Concubinae sacerdotum et clericorum, qui infra sacros ordines constituti et beneficiati sunt, ecclesiastica careant sepultura, nisi sane se correxerint'.

⁶⁸² first and second statutes of London both dated 1245-59 (Daniell, *Death and Burial*, 104). Even though most people would still not actually marry in church, announcing the banns had several functions: it prevented secret marriages, which the church regarded as valid but illicit, and made other aware of the marriage so objections on grounds of pre-contract and forbidden degrees could be raised.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid.*, 71-86 on good and bad deaths. He says (p.71), that 'Sudden death was feared because the lack of preparation was possibly injurious to the soul in the afterlife..... Once the themes had been established - that foreknowledge of death was good, and sudden death was bad - there was only a very short logical step to assuming that good people would have fore-knowledge, and that bad people, or pagans, heathens or non-Christians, would die suddenly.'

'When the time of his dissolution drew nigh, the bishop, seeing that the hour was come for him to pass from this world preached a special discourse to the assembled people, and told them that his death was at hand; on the following day as his disease gained ground, he again assembled the people and repeated his discourse, bidding them all farewell, and asking pardon of whomsoever he had offended. On the third day he summoned his family, and those to whom he was bound particularly to afford protection, and divided amongst them whatever appeared necessary to be distributed to each on according to his deserts; and having arranged and completed all his affairs with proper deliberation, and taken leave of his friends one by one, and finally performing the midnight devotion, he uttered the verse, 'I will both lay me down in peace and sleep' and fell asleep in the Lord'.⁶⁸⁴

It was key to ask for forgiveness before dying not only from friends and family, but also from God, if the Christian hoped to be saved from eternal punishment. The dying person should confess his sins to a priest and receive the *viaticum*, consecrated bread from the altar, the very body of Christ, to die in a state of grace. As it was believed that God had the power to save lives both by restoring health on earth or by receiving the forgiven person into Heaven, it was pious practice to consult the priest before the doctor, as Richard Marshal did when dying from the wounds he received in battle in 1234:

⁶⁸⁴ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, i. 52-53; *CM*, iii. 391-2.

‘the marshal, like a true Christian, before he took any bodily medicine, prepared for death by confession and the viaticum, and by making a legal testament and then commended to the Lord the question of whether he should live or die’⁶⁸⁵

Those who were going into battle, where they knew they might die, did much the same as the Marshal. Hubert de Burgh confessed and received ‘the wholesome viaticum’ before going into the sea battle off Sandwich against Eustace the Monk, which he survived and won.⁶⁸⁶ The good Christian should be aware of the burden of sin and the great need for God’s forgiveness. In Wendover’s account of ‘the glorious death of the earl of Salisbury’, as the bishop enters the room to hear his final confession the earl ties a rough cord round his neck and throws himself on the floor declaring himself ‘a traitor to the Supreme King’.⁶⁸⁷ This was evidently a standard gesture, indicating guilt, humility and the desire for forgiveness, since the chronicler later reports that Henry III would not forgive the rebellious Richard Marshal ‘unless he begged his mercy with a halter round his neck, and acknowledging himself a traitor.’⁶⁸⁸

A sudden death robbed the individual of the time needed to seek forgiveness from God and man and for this reason sudden death was feared and could be seen as a form of

⁶⁸⁵ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 591; *Flores* (RS 84), iii. 87: ‘sed Marescallus, ut fidelissimus Christianus, ante omnium medicinam carnalem, in confessione et viatico ac legitimo testamento exitum suum munivit et suae mortis causam Domino commendant.’ *CM*, iii. 288, does not have this passage and the account of the Marshal’s death differs considerably from Wendover’s account; *Flores* (RS 95), ii. 212, is a highly abbreviated version.

⁶⁸⁶ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 401; *CM*, iii. 28: ‘viatico salutari’.

⁶⁸⁷ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 468; *CM*, iii. 104. See note 652 above, p.241.

⁶⁸⁸ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 581; *CM*, iii. 265. See note 651 above, p. 240.

divine judgement. The account of the death of Faulkes de Breuté is a fine example of a 'bad death':

'He died poisoned, having surfeited himself with strongly poisoned fish; after taking his supper he lay down to sleep, and was discovered dead, black, stinking, and rotten, and without receiving the viaticum, or any rites, and was at once ignobly buried; and thus reaping the fruits of his works, he miserably closed his sinful life, unlamented; or, if any tears were shed for him, they were dry ones'⁶⁸⁹

Here it is clear that the chronicler sees Faulkes' sudden death as a direct reflection of his evil life. His gluttony is fatal and he dies without knowing he is dying, and so does not prepare spiritually for his journey into the next life. Where sudden deaths are presented as expressions of Divine anger, it is pretty clear that this ties in with the chronicler's pre-ordained view of the sinfulness of the individual concerned, and tends to be linked in some way to one of the deadly sins. Ralph Breton, the king's avaricious chancellor who according to Paris impoverished others for his own gain, is struck down whilst watching a game of dice.⁶⁹⁰ Amongst others, Engelram de Coucy, 'the old persecutor of the Church', is reported to have died in a particularly nasty horse-riding accident, and here we can see hovering in the background the classic depiction of Pride in medieval art as a knight falling off a horse to his death.⁶⁹¹

⁶⁸⁹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 485; *CM*, iii. 121. This is an addition by Paris, not present in Wendover's account of Faulk's death (*Flores*, RS 84, ii. 316-7).

⁶⁹⁰ *CM*, iv. 588.

⁶⁹¹ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 7; *CM*. iv. 360-1. For the biblical and hagiographic precedents for falling as a bad death see Daniell, *Death and Burial*, 76.

Not all unexpected deaths or horse-riding accidents are presented with such a clear value judgement but certainly, dying without any prior warning was seen as inauspicious. In 1246 the *Chronica Majora* records that, during Henry's visit to Kent, Hugh Giffard had a seizure and dropped dead right there in the presence of the king. Paris records that some saw this a warning to Henry about his abuse of the see of Canterbury and his imposition of his uncle-in-law Boniface of Savoy as archbishop.⁶⁹² Although there is no way of knowing if Henry accepted this interpretation of events, it is interesting to note that Giffard died in Rogation Week, starting 11 May 1246, and on 19 May 1246 a writ was tested instructing the sheriff of Kent 'to find a chaplain to sing *Salus populi* daily while celebrating divine service, in order to preserve the king and his household from sudden death'⁶⁹³

Occasional news-flashes from the afterlife give an indication of contemporary beliefs surrounding Hell, Purgatory, repentance, and how almsgiving by the living could help souls in torment. Roger of Wendover's account of a monk's night-time vision of King John gives an idea of the punishments which awaited the wicked in the hereafter and how the living could avoid them. Sometime in 1224, the monk, who had been 'a familiar of the kings Richard and John', was sleeping on his pallet when King John came and stood before him. 'Recollecting that he was dead', the monk asked the king how he was. John replied: 'No one can be worse than I am, for these robes of mine, which you see are so burning and heavy that no living being could touch them on account of their heat or wear

⁶⁹² *CM*, iv. 553.

⁶⁹³ *CLR 1245-51*: 54.

them on account of their weight without being killed; but I nevertheless hope, by the clemency and unspeakable grace of God, at some time to obtain mercy.'⁶⁹⁴ These punishments are beyond what a mortal could bear without dying, but since John is already dead, he has no escape, although he still hopes for God's mercy at some point in the future. This combination of punishment by heat and weights, combined with some hope of salvation, suggests that King John is suffering in Purgatory. The king continues to address the monk telling him to warn Richard Marsh, bishop of Durham that 'unless before his death he alters his wicked life, and amends it by proper repentance and atonement, a place is prepared for him in hell' Here the ghost-king summarises the three ways in which people should reject sin in order to avoid hell: give up their sin; truly repent of it; make recompense for their wrongdoings, generally through penance. John continues: 'I now suffer unspeakable torments, which also await him.'⁶⁹⁵ Since the king has warned that Richard Marsh is going to hell, this passage has been used to claim that King John was himself in hell, as he is experiencing the same torments. However, that John is being punished but still has hope of salvation suggests that his torture will end at some point, in other words, he is in Purgatory - those in Hell had no hope.

Another conversation across the grave described in the 'Flowers of History', gives a fuller picture of Purgatory, and how the living can help the dead. In the year 1228, Roger of

⁶⁹⁴ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 477; *Flores* (RS 84), ii. 308. Matthew Paris makes a very interesting addition to the ghost-king's words, making John express his belief that the generous alms given by his son on his behalf will also help his petition to God for mercy: 'Sed tamen per Dei clementiam spero et gratiam ineffabilem, et filii mei Henrici largam elmosinarum distributionem, necnon servitii divini honorem quem Deo devotus impendit, me quandoque misericordiam adepturum (CM, iii. 112).

Wendover records a conversation between Ralph de Theoney and his younger brother Roger, who had just died. Ralph had raced to the deathbed but arrived too late. Being 'in great grief', Ralph 'then began with tears and cries to adjure his brother, although he was dead, out of brotherly affection to speak to him'.⁶⁹⁶ Ralph continued his pleas, and vowed never to take food again unless he could speak to his brother. At this:

'the dead man sat up in the bed, and severely reproached his brother for disturbing his spirit and having recalled him to the body again. 'I have already,' said he, 'seen the punishments inflicted on the wicked, and the joys of the blessed, and with my own eyes have I also beheld the great tortures to which I, wretch that I am, am doomed. Woe, woe is me, why did I employ myself in tournaments and loved them so devotedly?' His brother then asked him, 'And will you not be saved?' To this he replied, 'I shall be saved, for I have done one deed in honour of the perpetual virginity of the blessed Mary, by which I shall obtain salvation.' Ralph then said, 'Cannot the torments to which you are doomed, as you tell me, be lessened by good works, masses and alms?' To which Roger replied, 'They can.' 'Then,' said Ralph, 'I faithfully promise you that I will, for the salvation of us and our ancestors, build a religious house, and when I have filled it with monks, they shall continually call on the Lord to release your spirit as well as those of our ancestors.' Roger then said, 'I am in great need of what you promise, but I do not want you to promise any thing which you do not mean to fulfil;' and

⁶⁹⁵ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 477; *CM*, iii. 113.

⁶⁹⁶ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 498; *Flores* (RS 84) ii. 333; *CM*, iii. 144 (differs slightly from *Flores*).

then, taking leave of his brother and the others who stood by, he again breathed forth his spirit.⁶⁹⁷

The story ends with Ralph doing as he has promised and building a Cistercian house in the west of England. Although, once again, the word Purgatory is not used, the dead man's words suggest that that is where he is. He says he is 'doomed' to 'great tortures', and yet knows he will be saved eventually, due to his devotion to the Virgin while he was alive. The dead brother's account of his situation ties in with Jacques le Goff's comments on time spent in Purgatory as 'an anxious time, but also one tinged with hope'.⁶⁹⁸ The living brother thinks that 'good works, masses and alms' can help his dead brother, and the dead man confirms this. Here is one of the key beliefs about almsgiving for the dead - the actions of the living can affect the condition of the dead in Purgatory.

These stories from the 'Flowers of History' show a belief that the torment of purgatory would ultimately end in salvation. Roger also records the announcement in 1232 by Henry, bishop of Rochester, that he and others had had visions which revealed that King Richard, Archbishop Stephen Langton and one of Langton's chaplains recently 'went out of the places of torture and appeared before the divine majesty, and only those three left purgatory on that day'.⁶⁹⁹ The story of the brothers Theoney, shows the belief that alms performed by the living could help lessen the punishments of those in purgatory. As stressed above, the fact that a bishop reports King Richard's release from purgatory in

⁶⁹⁷ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 498-99; *Flores* ii. 333-4; *CM*, iii. 144.

⁶⁹⁸ Jacques Le Goff, *The Birth of Purgatory*, Arthur Goldhammer trans. (1981, English translation 1984), 17.

⁶⁹⁹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 547; *CM*, iii. 212. See above n. 458 (p.185).

1232 and yet in 1248 King Henry III was still performing alms for the soul of King Richard, by feeding the poor on two consecutive days,⁷⁰⁰ suggests that it was not only the desire to release souls from Purgatory which inspired relatives and friends to commemorate their dead through almsgiving.

⁷⁰⁰ *CLR 1245-51: 168 -9.*

APPENDIX 2: TAPERS

Henry III was evidently somewhat extreme in his desire to fill churches with light on special days and funerals. In Matthew Paris' catalogue of complaints against the king's rapacious ways and overspending made at the 1248 Parliament, he comments that: 'in order that he may bestow alms indiscreetly, and may make immoderate illuminations, [the king] forcibly seizes wax, silk stuffs and other things, without making any terms of pacification.'⁷⁰¹

These 'immoderate illuminations' were also part of the commemoration of the dead. Tapers were used in funeral ceremonies to accompany the body to the place of burial and provide light around the tomb itself. Tapers were 'according to custom' carried in the funeral procession of the earl of Salisbury in 1226.⁷⁰² In 1247, the king ordered tapers to be made for the arrival of the corpse of his servant, Richard de Dovor, at Canterbury.⁷⁰³ One hundred pounds of wax was used to make tapers to surround the tomb of the king's chaplain Osbert de Maidenstan at his burial in Westminster Abbey in 1246.⁷⁰⁴ On anniversaries, once again the burial church would be illuminated by tapers: in 1245 the

⁷⁰¹ Giles, *Matthew Paris' English History*, ii. 256; Vaughan, ed., *The Illustrated Chronicles of Matthew Paris*, 52, 'excessive illuminations'. *CM*, v. 6-7: '...ut elemosinas indiscretas et luminaria immoderata facit, ceram, pannos sericos, et alia rapit violenter, sine pacationis retributione'.

⁷⁰² *CM*, iii. 104.

⁷⁰³ *CLR 1245-51*: 140.

⁷⁰⁴ *CLR 1245-51*: 48, 49.

king gave Tarent Crawford abbey 100 pounds of wax to celebrate the anniversary of the death of his sister Joan,⁷⁰⁵ who had died and been buried there seven years earlier.

Equally, tapers would burn in a church during the mass for the souls of the dead, even when it was not the burial church of those being commemorated. This was the case in 1245 when 150 tapers of half a pound of wax each were to burn in Oseney abbey⁷⁰⁶ while the Augustinian canons⁷⁰⁷ of the house said mass for the souls of the yeoman John de Salinis and the others who had died on Henry's Welsh campaign. In the same year, at Westminster, 150 tapers burned during the solemn mass for the soul of Raymond Berengar of Provence, the king's father-in-law, who had just died.⁷⁰⁸ In both these cases, those commemorated had died and been buried elsewhere.

The king also used tapers as a form of perpetual commemoration. He set up an annual payment of £9 to Tarent Crawford to provide for 'two tapers continually burning day and night in the said abbey, one before the Lord's body, and one where the body of Joan, formerly queen of Scotland, the king's sister is buried.'⁷⁰⁹ This two taper arrangement, illuminating two areas of importance in the church is mirrored elsewhere. In the chapel at Dover castle, Henry provided for two tapers burning perpetually, one at the high altar (as at Tarent) and one by the chapel relics.⁷¹⁰

⁷⁰⁵ *CLR 1240-45*: 290.

⁷⁰⁶ *CLR 1245-51*: 8.

⁷⁰⁷ Knowles, Brooke, and London, *Heads of Religious Houses*, 179.

⁷⁰⁸ *CLR 1240-45*: 324.

⁷⁰⁹ *CLR 1245-51*: 62, 97, 201, 358; *CLR 1251-60*: 59.

⁷¹⁰ *CLR 1245-51*: 54.

Just as anniversaries accompanied by tapers took place at sites other than the burial church, these 'perpetual' tapers could be used to remember people at places other than their tomb. Henry maintained 'four tapers burning day and night' before the shrine of St. Frideswide at Oxford for his own soul and those of his predecessors.⁷¹¹ Besides commemorating his ancestors, these candles also illuminated the shrine of an Anglo-Saxon saint, and were possibly intended to appease her as she did not have a reputation for being a royalist: according to Prestwich, on one occasion Edward I, being reminded of the curse St. Frideswide 'had laid on kings who approached her shrine', did not enter the city of Oxford.⁷¹²

St. Frideswide was not the only saint whose shrine was honoured with perpetual tapers. At Westminster Abbey, Henry initially provided 100 shillings annually to keep four tapers burning day and night at the shrine of Edward the Confessor, increasing the annual payment to £10 a year, and ultimately £20 per annum. This increase in cost reflected a growth in the size of the candles Henry ordered to burn round the shrine. The initial sum of 100s. was to maintain 'great tapers' at the shrine.⁷¹³ In 1239 Henry ordered the sheriff of Middlesex to 'supply any lack there may be if the 100s. (£5) a year...be insufficient for their maintenance.'⁷¹⁴ The following year the grant was doubled to £10.⁷¹⁵ In 1241, the king ordered five tapers, instead of four, 'of 15 pounds each, only that the one to be in the

⁷¹¹ *CLR 1260-67*: 144, 248.

⁷¹² Prestwich, *English Politics in the Thirteenth Century*, 17.

⁷¹³ *CLR 1226-40*: 374.

⁷¹⁴ *CLR 1226-40*: 399.

⁷¹⁵ *CLR 1226-40*: 460.

middle of the others is to be greater and more excellent'.⁷¹⁶ The number and size of the tapers kept increasing. In 1245, Henry paid Edward of Westminster for '15 tapers of the king's size placed round the shrine of St. Edward all the time the king was in Gascony till his return to England', referring to his time overseas from May 1242 to September 1243.⁷¹⁷ By 1267, the four tapers at the shrine are still 'of the king's height'⁷¹⁸ and a writ the following year shows that the payment had risen to £20 a year⁷¹⁹ for their maintenance.

At this time tapers were seen as a physical representation of votive prayers and a symbol of salvation. This is clear from Roger of Wendover's account of the intervention of the Virgin to save the earl of Salisbury from a terrible sea storm during his return to England from Gascony in 1225. The chronicler attributes the Virgin's actions to the fact that the earl, 'on the day when he was first made a belted knight, had assigned a wax taper to be kept constantly burning before the altar of the blessed mother of God, during the mass which was usually chanted every day at the hour of prayer, in honour of the said virgin, and that he might receive an eternal in exchange for a temporal light.'⁷²⁰ According to Roger, the earl succeeded in attaining salvation, as signalled to the living by events during his funeral. After his death from poison at the hands of Hubert de Burgh, the tapers carried in the cortege from Old Sarum to Salisbury (about a mile) continued burning

⁷¹⁶ *CLR* 1240-45: 71-72.

⁷¹⁷ *HBC*, 38.

⁷¹⁸ *CLR* 1260-67: 292.

⁷¹⁹ *CLR* 12 67-72: 27 writ 247.

⁷²⁰ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 460; *CM*, iii. 96: 'pro lumine temporali lucem commutaret aeternam'.

despite the rain and wind, 'thereby plainly showing that the earl...belonged to the number of the sons of light.'⁷²¹

This account shows that continually burning tapers not only represented the votive prayers of the people who gave them, but also symbolised salvation. It was appropriate that the shrines of the saints, who were already in Heaven, should be surrounded by light, and that the tombs of the dead should also have tapers representing prayers and hopes for eternal life. In addition, according to Duffy, these 'blessed candles had apotropaic power to banish demons.'⁷²² One fourteenth century guild called the four tapers it placed around the tombs of its members 'soul-candles'.⁷²³ At high status funerals, cortege tapers were often carried by the poor who were given liveries to wear which bore the heraldry of the deceased.⁷²⁴ They were given these robes to take away with them, an act of alms-giving that was in itself a suffrage for the soul of the deceased. In exchange the paupers were expected to pray for the dead person, and the tapers they carried highlighted their role as prayer-carriers. As Duffy says, 'the practice of paying poor men to stand around the corpse with candles in their hands...was an extremely dramatic gesture....with profound resonances' as the candles were understood as 'particularly eloquent examples of a whole vocabulary of light and darkness.'⁷²⁵

⁷²¹ Giles, *Flowers of History*, II.ii. 469; *CM*, iii. 104.

⁷²² Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 361.

⁷²³ Daniell, *Death and Burial*, 42.

⁷²⁴ *Ibid.*, 52.

⁷²⁵ Duffy, *Stripping of the Altars*, 361.

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF ALMONERS UNDER HENRY III, EXPANDED FROM TANNER'S LIST

- Baldwin, David, *The chapel royal: ancient and modern* (Duckworth, 1990).
 Johnson, C, F E L Carter, and D Greenway, ed., *Dialogus de Scaccario [The Course of the Exchequer] by Richard Fitz Nigel*, revised edn, *Oxford Medieval Texts* (Clarendon Press, 1983).
 Lack, Marguerite Edna, 'The Position and Duties of the King's Almoner, 1255-1327,' MA (unpublished), University of London, 1949.
 de la Selle, Xavier, *Le service des âmes à la cour: confesseurs et aumôniers des rois de France du XIII^e au XV^e siècles, Mémoires et documents d l'École des Chartes* (Paris, École des Chartes, 1995).
 Tanner, L E, 'Lord High Almoner and Sub-Almoners 1100-1957,' *Journal of the British Archaeological Association*, xx-xxi (1957/58), 72-83.

Dates	Name	References
c. 1103-c. 1130	William the Almoner	Tanner, 74, cites Johnson, <i>Regesta Regum Anglo-Normannorum</i> , II, p.xi
1159-77 (?)	Froger , Archdeacon of Derby, c. 1155, Bishop of Seez, c. 1160	Tanner 74 cites R.W. Eyton, <i>Itinerary of King Henry II</i> , 215, 294; <i>Rolls Series Gesta Henrici II</i> , vol. 1, 169; <i>Rolls Series Memorials of Richard I</i> , vol. II, 282
c.1160 - 1177?	Thomas Brown , the king's almoner, appointed to keep a roll 'laws of the realm and secrets of the King' which he kept with him. He was important in the Exchequer where he and his clerk sat during sessions. Had been an important counsellor at the court of Roger II of Sicily. Died c. Easter 1180.	<i>Dialogue</i> p. xxxiv. p.18, 35-36.
c. June 1177- 1189	Brother Roger the Templar Baldwin on his responsibilities on appointment were to: 'hear claims and to receive one-tenth of all food and drink consumed in the royal household for distribution to the poor' 1187 sent on diplomatic mission to Philip Augustus of France 1190 went on crusade with Richard I	Baldwin, 374 La Selle, 35, cites <i>Gesta Henrici secundi</i> , Stubbs vol.1 p.169, <i>Recueil des actes de Henri II d'Angleterre</i> , Paris 1909, vol. 2, p.344, 215, 243
1210/11	Thomas the Almoner mentioned	Tanner, 74 cites <i>Rot. Lib. 1210-11</i> pp.227,242,244-5
? – 1228	John Braz , died 1228	Tanner, 74 cites <i>Close Rolls 1227-31</i> : 39

1228-1245	John de Leukenor(or Le Arker), Templar , Warden of Ospringe Hospital. Tomb paid for on death in 1245. CLR 1240-45: 286: 24 Jan 1245 pay for tomb 1241 Hugh de Stokton Templar acting as John's attorney. CLR 1240-45: 91	Tanner 74, <i>Close Rolls 1227-31</i> : 39. Sent to prohibit tournament in Strigoil in 1236, <i>CPR 1232-47</i> : 136. <i>CLR 1240-45</i> : 286: 24 Jan 1245 pay for tomb Tout, i. 245.
1229-1240	Geoffrey de Sutton, Templar given custody of Ospring Hospital 31 July 1234 <i>Close Rolls 1234-37</i> : 488 Keeper of the Wardrobe 28 October 1236-3 February 1240 Keeper of the seal with John of Lexington, 1238-137. Tout gives Geoffrey and William Cantilupe as temporary chancellors in 1238 <i>CLR 1240-45</i> : 96: Reading, 12 Dec. 1241 - payment into wardrobe to Geoff 'formerly the king's almoner' 1239 king banishes Simon the Norman and Geoffrey the Templar from his counsels because they would not consent that Thomas, count of Flanders, should have a tax on every sack of wool taken from England through his dominions. <i>CM iii</i> .629 Last mentioned as almoner in 1240.	<i>CLR 1226-40</i> : 160 Dec. 1229 ref as almoner, going abroad as messenger Tanner 74, cites Foedera 1 part i, pp.219-20 - (warrant for deodands which were issued on appt. of new chief almoner) Tout, i. 244-5, vi.25
1236, 1240-42, 1243	Walter le Butiler mentioned as almoner in 1236 and 1243 (brother Walter)	Tanner 74 <i>Close Rolls 1237-42</i> : 533 <i>CLR 1240-45</i> : 172 (Feb 1243)
1241	Brother Richard 'the king's almoner' mentioned	Tanner 74 <i>CLR 1240-45</i> : 68 (Aug. 1241)
1244, 1246	Brother Robert the Templar, feeding the poor in Dec 1244 and described as almoner in Jan 1246.	<i>Close Rolls 1242-47</i> : 281, <i>Close Rolls 1242-47</i> : 390-1
1242, 1245-53	Brother Roger de Cramfield , mentioned as almoner 1242. Appointment in 1245 recorded in CM. 1253 'keeper of king's hospitals' Dismissed after Henry threatens the Templars and Hospitallers who refuse to give him money to provide a dowry so that his niece Alice de Lusignan can marry Richard de Clare. <i>CM v</i> . 364	Tanner, 74, <i>CPR 1232-47</i> :316 (17 Aug. 1242). <i>CM v</i> . 364. Baldwin, 375 <i>CPR 1247-58</i> : 189, Apr. 1253 'sometime almoner' and former keeper of the king's hospitals.
1248	Brother Robert the queen's almoner	<i>CLR 1245-51</i> :184
April 1253	Brother Giles (Egidius) mentioned	<i>Close Rolls 1251-53</i> : 339
April 1255	Hugh the chaplain , queen's almoner	<i>CLR 1251-60</i> : 214
1255-56	Simon of Offam, the chaplain	Lack p.122, 135-140. cites

	<p>in office as almoner 3 May 1255 died before 8 Dec. 1256 when referred to as 'sometime the king's almoner'. Lack shows Simon's career: 1232 chaplain to Hubert de Burgh 1235 entered king's service, described as chaplain of king. 1235-41 chaplain at St Stephen's Westminster between 1241 and 48 left Westminster for Windsor - 1248 described as chaplain at Windsor. 1250 & 1251 keeper of works at Windsor Presented to livings at Harrow & Otford (1242), Peckham nr. Tunbridge (1251). Dean of Stafford (1247)</p>	<p><i>Close Rolls</i> 1254-56:77, <i>Close Rolls</i> 1234-7:114. <i>CLR</i> 1226-40: 241,263,296,307, 308, 329, 359, 377, 432, 471, 495, 500. <i>CLR</i> 1247-51: 207, 328, 405.. <i>CPR</i> 1232-47: 316, 332,333. <i>CPR</i> 1247-58: 66, 121, 174, 533. <i>Close Rolls</i> 1247-51: 405, 487, 492. Tanner, 74</p>
1256 - at least 1272	<p>John de Colecestre, chaplain to the king, and almoner. Described as almoner 5 Nov 1256 John de Colecestre important at court. After Evesham, in Aug 1265, he vouches that Nicholas le Espigornel never withdrew his fealty from the king and the Lord Edward, and so Nicholas gains royal protection for his men, land and goods. (<i>CPR</i> 1258-66:442). The almoner also received a share of the spoils of victory. When the king was granting to loyal friends the houses in the city of London confiscated from his enemies, John de Colcestre, 'almoner and chaplain to the king' received the houses which used to belong to William Dible on the Thames near Castle Baynard.(<i>CPR</i> 1258-66: 464) Lack describes his career as almoner: Livings: Barton Episcopi (1257), Crantock in Cornwall & Kirby Misperton (1258), Ebbisbourn Wake in Wilts. & Kilmoon in Armagh (1261); Burgh Castle, Suff. (1269), Mayfield, Sussex (1270), Monk's Eleigh, Suff (Mar 1272). Jun 1274 he was keeper of Hospital of Holy Innocents without Lincoln. Lack says he does not seem to have served as almoner under Edward I although alive in 1283-4.</p>	<p>Lack p.135, 143-151 <i>Close Rolls</i> 1256-9:13 Tanner 74 cites <i>CPR</i> 1272-80: 381, June 1280 when described as 'sometime Almoner of Henry III' when buying a house in London for use of the Franciscans.</p>
1264-65	<p>Robert de Anne, the chaplain, king's almoner</p>	<p><i>CLR</i> 1260-67: 143 (Oct 1264) 168 (Mar. 1265)</p>

**APPENDIX 4: TABLE SHOWING DAILY FEEDING IN E101/349/27
HOUSEHOLD ROLL 44 HENRY III.**

The household roll runs from Tuesday 28 October 1259 until Wednesday 27 October 1260, that is to say the regnal year 44 Henry III. The roll is constructed of 16 membranes sewn end to end.

I have left a blank row in the table to indicate the gaps between paragraphs on the roll. The paragraphs usually begin the week on Sunday, other than when Saturday is the vigil of an important feast, or, as a Christmas and St. John the Baptist, a break is made to give totals of all expenditure up to that date. Each Sunday is dated by feast days. The place is given for each day.

Every day the expenses of the various household offices, wax, stabling horses and feeding the poor are given. The entries for feeding the poor give a breakdown of the spending, showing that it was paid for by the spensary, butlery and kitchen. The variation in the cost of feeding the poor is sometimes due to one or more of these offices not 'invoicing' for that day, using either stores or other payments to cover the cost.

100 fed at penny a head would cost: 8s.4d. [100d]

150 fed at penny a head would cost: 12s.6d.[150d]

Day	Dating in roll	Place	Date (not given in document)	In feeding	Cost
m.1	m.1	m.1	m.1	m.1	m.1
Tues	Simon and Jude	Westminster	28 Oct 1259	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Wed		ib.	29 Oct 1259	150 friars	14s.6d. [174d.]
Thur		ib.	30 Oct 1259	150 friars	17s.6d. [210d.]
Fri		ib.	31 Oct 1259	150 friars	17s. [204d.]
Sat	All Saints Dispns.xvi s.iii d. But. ii s.x d. ob. coqa v.s v d.	ib.	1 Nov 1259	390 friars	24s.6d. [294d.]
Sun	day after All Saints Dispns vi s. iii d. But ii s. x d. ob Coq. x s. x d.	Westminster	2 Nov 1259	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Mon			3 Nov 1259	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Tues			4 Nov 1259	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Wed			5 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.6d. [174d.]
Thur	St Leonard		6 Nov 1259	150 friars	17s.5d. [209d.]
Fri		Lesenes	7 Nov 1259	100 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sat		Roffon'(Rochester)	8 Nov 1259	150 friars	12s.4d. [148d.]

Sun	day after St. Leonard	Fav[er]sh[a]m	9 Nov 1259	150 friars	17s.11d. [215d.]
Mon		Canterbury	10 Nov 1259	220 friars	33s.3d. [399d.]
Tues			11 Nov 1259	150 friars	24s.7d. [295d.]
Wed		Dover	12 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.4d. [172d.]
Thur			13 Nov 1259	150 friars	19s.10d. [238d.]
Fri		'Wytsond' acc. to HBC this is day left kingdom	14 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		Bonon	15 Nov 1259	150 friars	12s.8d. [152d.]
Sun	d[o]m[eni]ca in festo bi Edmundi [Con]fessor (feast 20 Nov)	Bonon	16 Nov 1259	150 friars	17s.- [204d.]
Mon		Mustrul (Montreuil?)	17 Nov 1259	150 friars	21s.10d. [262d.]
Tues			18 Nov 1259	150 friars	19s.4d. [232d.]
Wed		Sanctus Richer	19 Nov 1259	150 friars	15s.7d. [187d.]
Thur			20 Nov 1259	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
m.2	m.2		m.2	m.2	m.2
Fri		Ambian	21 Nov 1259	150 friars etc.	25s.5d. [305d.]
Sat		Bructul (Breteuil)	22 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	St. Clement	Beluac	23 Nov 1259	150 friars etc.	26s.10d. [322d.]
Mon		Bettmontem	24 Nov 1259	150 friars	21s.10d. [262d.]
Tues		Sanctus Dionis (St Denis)	25 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.2d. [170d.]
Wed		Paris	26 Nov 1259	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Thur		ib	27 Nov 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Fri		ib	28 Nov 1259	150 fr	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		ib	29 Nov 1259	150 fr	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	St. Andrew Apostle	Paris	30 Nov 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib	1 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib	2 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Wed		ib.	3 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9s. [177d.]
Thur		ib	4 Dec 1259	150 fr	9s.4d. [112d.]
Fri		ib	5 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		ib	6 Dec 1259	150 fr etc	114s.9d. (sic) cxiii s. [1377d.]
Sun	day after St Nicholas	Paris	7 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib	8 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib	9 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Wed		ib	10 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d [177d.]

Thur		ib	11 Dec 1259	150 fr. (no etc)	£4.-s.2d.[962d.] (Breakdown: Dispns 66s.3d., But. 3s 3d., Coq. 10s.10d. - total actually £4.-s.4d.
Fri		ib	12 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d.[177d.]
Sat		ib	13 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d.[177d.]
m.3	m.3		m.3	m.3	m.3
Sun	day after St Lucy	Paris	14 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib	15 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib	16 Dec 1259	150 fr.	17s.6d. [210d.]
Wed		ib	17 Dec 1259	150 fr.	21s.9d. [261d.]
Thur		ib	18 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d [242d.]
Fri		ib	19 Dec 1259	no entry	no entry for feeding
Sat			20 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	Thomas the Apostle	Paris	21 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d [242d.]
Mon		ib	22 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s 2d [242d.]
Tues		ib	23 Dec 1259	150 fr (no etc)	49s.2d. [590d.]
Total of all expenditure given £1762.13s.11d. Pounds of wax: 3489.					
Wed	Christmas Eve	Paris	24 Dec 1259	450 friars etc.	£4.7s.5d. [1049d.] covering the 2 days
Thur	Christmas		25 Dec 1259		
Fri		ib	26 Dec 1259	150 fr.	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		ib	27 Dec 1259	150 fr	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	vigil St Thomas martyr	St. Denis	28 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib.	29 Dec 1259	150 fr	20s.2d [242d.]
Tues		Scm German enloy (St Germain en Laye)	30 Dec 1259	100 fr	12s.11d. [155d.]
Wed		ib	31 Dec 1259	100 fr.	7s.6d.[90d.]
Thur		ib	1 Jan 1260	100 fr.	9s.7d. [115d.]
Fri		Puntes	2 Jan 1260	100 fr	6s.3d [75d.]
Sat			3 Jan 1260		6s. 3d. [75d.]
m. 4	m. 4		m. 4	m. 4	m. 4
Sun	vigil St Edward	Puntes	4 Jan 1260	100 fr	11s.11d. [132d]
Mon	St Edward	ib	5 Jan 1260	1500 fr (no etc)	£7.7s.2d. [1766d.]
Tues	Epiphany	ib	6 Jan 1260	100 fr	11s.3d. [135d.]
Wed		ib	7 Jan 1260	100 fr	9s.7d. [115d.]
Thur		ib	8 Jan 1260	100 fr	11s.11d.[143d.]
Fri		ib	9 Jan 1260	100 fr	9s.7d. [115d.]
Sat		ib	10 Jan 1260	100 fr	9s.7d. [115d.]
Sun	Sunday after Epiphany	St. Denis	11 Jan 1260	100 friars	12s.11d. [155d.]
Mon		Aneres (?)	12 Jan 1260	100 friars	7s.11d. [95d.]
Tues		St Denis	13 Jan 1260	100 friars	12s.11d [155d.]
Wed		ib	14 Jan 1260	100 friars	9s.7d. [115d.]

Thur		ib	15 Jan 1260	100 friars	12d.11d. [155d.]
Fri		ib	16 Jan 1260	100 friars	9s.7d. [115d.]
Sat		ib	17 Jan 1260	100 friars	9s.7d. [115d.]
Sun	Sunday after octave of Epiphany	St Denis	18 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Mon		ib	19 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Tues		ib	20 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Wed		ib	21 Jan 1260	150 friars	14s.9d [177d.]
Thur		ib	22 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Fri		ib	23 Jan 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		ib	24 Jan 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	Conversion of St Paul	Lusarth	25 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Mon		Siluanectu (Senlis)	26 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Tues		ib	27 Jan 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Wed		Compendium (Compiègne)	28 Jan 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
m.5	m.5		m.5	m.5	m.5
Thur		ib.	29 Jan 1260	150 friars etc.	44s.2d. [530d.]
Fri		Nomonn'	30 Jan 1260	150 friars etc.	26s.2d. [314d.]
Sat		Nele'	31 Jan 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	vigil of Purification BVM	Perune	1 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib	2 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s.2d [242d.]
Tues		Banpanin	3 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Wed		Actubatu'	4 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Thur		ib	5 Feb 1260	150 friars	18s.6d. [222d.]
Fri		ib	6 Feb 1260	100 friars	9s.7d. [115d.]
Sat		ib	7 Feb 1260	100 friars	9s.1d. [109d.]
Sun	Sunday after Purification	Actubatu'	8 Feb 1260	100 friars	12s.11d. [155d]
Mon		ib	9 Feb 1260	100 friars	12s.11d. [155d.]
Tues		Lenz	10 Feb 1260	150 friars	17s.8d. [212d.]
Wed		Bectum	11 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Thur		Aerum	12 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Fri		ib	13 Feb 1260	150 friars	10s.7d. [127d.]
Sat		Terrewermam	14 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	day after St. Valentine	Scm Omeru' (St Omer)	15 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s. 2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib.	16 Feb 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib.	17 Feb 1260	150 friars	16s.8d. [200d.]
Wed		ib.	18 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Thur		ib.	19 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Fri		ib.	20 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
m. 6	m. 6		m. 6	m. 6	m. 6

Sat		ib.	21 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sun	St. Peter's chair	Sctm Omer'	22 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Mon		ib	23 Feb 1260	150 friars	14s.3d. [171d.]
Tues		ib	24 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib	25 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib	26 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Fri		ib	27 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib	28 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sun	after St Matthew	Scm Omer'	29 Feb 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Mon		ib	1 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Tues		ib	2 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib	3 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib	4 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Fri		ib.	5 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib.	6 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sun	SS. Perpetua & Felicity	Scm Omer'	7 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Mon		ib.	8 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Tues		ib.	9 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib.	10 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib.	11 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Fri		ib.	12 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib.	13 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
m. 7	m.7		m. 7	m. 7	m. 7
Sun	after Gregory	Sctm Omer'	14 Mar 1260	150 friars etc.	18s.4d. [220d.]
Mon		ib.	15 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Tues		ib.	16 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib.	17 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib.	18 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Fri		ib.	19 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib.	20 Mar 1260	150 friars etc.	18s.9d. [225d.]
Sun	after Cuthbert	Scm Omer'	21 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Mon		ib.	22 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Tues		ib.	23 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib.	24 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib.	25 Mar 1260	150 friars etc.	24s.3d. [291d.]
Fri		ib.	26 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib.	27 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sun	Palm Sunday	Scm Om'rum	28 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Mon		ib	29 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Tues		ib	30 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Wed		ib	31 Mar 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib	1 Apr 1260	321 friars etc.	16s.6d. (sic) [198d]
Fri		ib	2 Apr 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat &	vigil of Easter	Scm Andomar'	3 & 4 Apr 1260	150 friars	29s.7d. [355d.]

Sun	and Easter day				
Mon		ib.	5 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib.	6 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Wed		ib.	7 Apr 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib.	8 Apr 1260	150 friars	18s.2d. [218d.]
Fri		ib.	9 Apr 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sat		ib.	10 Apr 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Sun	octave of Easter	Scm Andomar'	11 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib.	12 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib.	13 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Wed		ib.	14 Apr 1260	150 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		ib.	15 Apr 1260	100 friars	12s.11d. [155d.]
Fri		Nalekyn	16 Apr 1260	100 friars	6s.3d. [75d.]
Sat		Bonnon	17 Apr 1260	100 friars	6s.3d. [75d.]
Sun	vigil of St. Alphegus	Bonon	18 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Mon		ib.	19 Apr 1260	150 friars	20s.2d. [242d.]
Tues		ib.	20 Apr 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Wed		Wytsond	21 Apr 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Thur		ib.	22 Apr 1260	150 friars	18s.8d. [224d.]
Fri		Rono[rum]	23 Apr 1260 back to England acc HBC.	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Sat		ib.	24 Apr 1260	150 friars	8s.4d. [100d.]
m.9	m.9	m.9	m.9	m.9	m.9
Sun	after St George	Rono[rum]	25 Apr 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Mon		Cant' (Canterbury)	26 Apr 1260	150 friars etc.	25s.11d. [311d.]
Tues		Fav[er]sh[a]m	27 Apr 1260	150 friars etc.	17s.1d. [205d.]
Wed		Roffon' (Rochester)	28 Apr 1260	150 friars	11s. ½ d. [132 ½ d.]
Thur		Derteford	29 Apr 1260	150 friars	14s.4d. [172d.]
Fri		London	30 Apr 1260	344 friars etc.	47s. 3 ½ d. [567½d.]
Sat		ib.	1 May 1260	322 friars etc.	25s.4d. [304d.]
Sun	day after apostles Philip & James	London	2 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	3 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Tues		ib.	4 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	5 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Thur		ib.	6 May 1260	150 friars	18s.4d. [220d.]
Fri		ib.	7 May 1260	150 friars	13s.9d. [165d.]
Sat		ib.	8 May 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sun	after St. John before the Latin gate	London	9 May 1260	150 friars	17s.6d. [210d.]
Mon		ib.	10 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Tues		ib.	11 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Wed		ib.	12 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Thur		ib.	13 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]

Fri		ib.	14 May 1260	150 friars	10s.7d. [127d]
Sat		ib.	15 May 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sun	after Ascension	Westm'	16 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	17 May 1260	m.10 150 fr.	m.10 20s.- [240d.]
m.10	m.10	m.10	m.10	m.10	m.10
Tues		ib.	18 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	19 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Thur		ib.	20 May 1260	150 friars	17s.2d. [206d.]
Fri		ib.	21 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Sat & Sun	vigil and feast of Pentecost	Westm'	22 & 23 May 1260	464 friars	50s.5d.
Mon		ib.	24 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Tues		ib.	25 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	26 May 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Thur		ib.	27 May 1260	150 friars	18s.4d. [220d.]
Fri		ib.	28 May 1260	150 friars	13s.9d. [165d.]
Sat		ib.	29 May 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sun	feast of Holy Trinity	Westm.	30 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	31 May 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Tues		ib.	1 June 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	2 June 1260	150 friars	12s.- [144d.]
Thur		ib.	3 June 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Fri		M[er]ton	4 June 1260	250 friars	13s.1d. (sic) [157d.]
Sat		ib.	5 June 1260	100 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
m.11	m.11	m.11	m.11	m.11	m.11
Sun	octave of Trinity	M[er]ton	6 June 1260	100 friars	12s.1d. [145d.]
Mon		ib.	7 June 1260	100 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Tues		ib.	8 June 1260	100 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Wed		ib.	9 June 1260	100 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Thur		ib.	10 June 1260	100 friars	10s. [120d.]
Fri		Westm'	11 June 1260	294 friars	36s.5d. [437d.]
Sat		ib.	12 June 1260	172 friars	20s.11d. [251d.]
Sun	after apostle Barnabus	Westminster	13 June 1260	200 friars etc.	17s.8d. [212d.]
Mon		ib.	14 June 1260	200 friars etc.	17s.8d. [212d.]
Tues		ib.	15 June 1260	200 friars etc.	15s.8d. [188d.]
Wed		ib.	16 June 1260	200 friars etc.	14s.4d. [172d.]
Thur		ib.	17 June 1260 [Lord Edward's 21 st birthday]	200 friars etc.	15s.8d. [188d.]
Fri		ib.	18 June 1260	200 friars etc.	14s.4d. [172d.]
Sat		ib.	19 June 1260	100 friars	10s.2d. [122d.]
Sun	after St Botulph	Westm'	20 June 1260	100 friars	13s.6d. [162d.]
Mon		M[er]ton	21 June 1260	100 friars	13s.6d. [162d.]
Tues		ib.	22 June 1260	200 friars etc.	17s.8d. [212d.]
Wed		ib.	23 June 1260	100 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]

expenditure for this term given: £1599.5s.8d. Wax: 3693 pounds					
Thur	Nativity of John the Baptist	M[er]ton	24 June 1260	200 friars etc.	16s.8d. [200d.]
Fri		ib.	25 June 1260	100 friars	10s.2d. [122d.]
Sat		ib.	26 June 1260	250 friars etc.	15s.5d. [185d.]
Sun	closest after St. John Baptist	M[er]ton	27 June 1260	100 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Mon		Westminster	28 June 1260	294 friars	37s.5d. [449d.]
Tues		ib.	29 June 1260	322 friars	31s.9d. [381d.]
Wed		ib.	30 June 1260	250 friars	16s.5d. [197d.]
Thur		ib.	1 July 1260	100 friars	13s.6d. [162d.]
Fri		ib.	2 July 1260	150 friars	15s.4d. [184d.]
Sat		ib.	3 July 1260	150 friars	15s.4d. [184d.]
Sun	after apostles Peter & Paul	Westm'	4 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Mon		ib.	5 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Tues		ib.	6 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Wed		ib.	7 July 1260	150 friars	25s.11d. [311d.]
Thur		ib.	8 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Fri		ib.	9 July 1260	150 friars	25s.11d. [256d.]
Sat		ib.	10 July 1260	m.12 150 fr	m.12 15s.11d [191d.]
m.12	m.12	m.12	m.12	m.12	m.12
Sun	after the translation of Thomas the Martyr	Westm'	11 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Mon		ib.	12 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Tues		ib.	13 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Wed		ib.	14 July 1260	150 friars	12s.2d. [146d.]
Thur		ib.	15 July 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Fri		ib.	16 July 1260	150 friars	14s.11d. [179d]
Sat		ib.	17 July 1260	150 friars	15s.11d. [191d]
Sun	after translation of St. Swithin	Westm'	18 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Mon		ib.	19 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Tues		ib.	20 July 1260	150 friars	no total given, breakdown Dispns 6s.3d., But' 4s.3d., Coq' de stann'
Wed		ib.	21 July 1260	150 friars	25s.11d. [256d.]
Thur		ib.	22 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Fri		ib.	23 July 1260	150 friars	14s.8d. [176d]
Sat		ib.	24 July 1260	150 friars	12s.7d. [151d.]
Sun	St James	Westm'	25 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Mon		ib.	26 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Tues		ib.	27 July 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]

Wed		ib.	28 July 1260	150 friars	15s.11d. [191d.]
Thur		ib.	29 July 1260	150 friars	20s.6d. [246d.]
Fri		ib.	30 July 1260	150 friars	14s.3d. [171d.]
Sat		ib.	31 July 1260	m.13 150 fr	m.13 15s.3d. [183d]
m.13	m.13	m.13	m.13	m.13	m.13
Sun	Peter in chains	Westm'	1 August 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Mon		ib.	2 August 1260	150 friars	21s.4d. [256d.]
Tues		ib.	3 August 1260	150 friars	18s.10d. [226d]
Wed		Kenytone	4 August 1260	150 friars	15s.11d. [191d.]
Thur		Wyndles' (Windsor)	5 August 1260	200 friars etc.	20s.9d. [249d.]
Fri		ib.	6 August 1260	200 friars etc.	16s.8d. [198d.]
Sat		ib.	7 August 1260	200 friars etc.	16s.7d. [199d.]
Sun	after St. Oswald	Wyndles'	8 August 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	9 August 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Tues		ib.	10 August 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	11 August 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Thur		ib.	12 August 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Fri		ib.	13 August 1260	150 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sat		ib.	14 August 1260	300 friars etc.	19s.2d. [230d.]
Sun	Assumption of St Mary	Wyndles'	15 August 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	16 August 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Tues		Gudeford (Guildford)	17 August 1260	100 friars	12s.8d. [152d.]
Wed		ib.	18 August 1260	100 friars	9s.4d. [112d.]
Thur		Chauton	19 August 1260	100 friars	10s.11d. [131d.]
Fri		Sutton	20 August 1260	100 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sat		Wanth[a]m	21 August 1260	100 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sun	octave of Assumption	Wanth[a]m	22 August 1260	100 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Mon		ib	23 August 1260	100 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Tues		ib.	24 August 1260	150 friars	14s.9d. [177d.]
Wed		Wynton' (Winchester)	25 August 1260	282 friars	25s.- [300d.]
m.14	m.14	m.14	m.14	m.14	m.14
Thur		ib.	26 August 1260	132 friars	17s.11d. [215d.]
Fri		ib.	27 August 1260	142 friars	14s.6d. [174d.]
Sat		ib.	28 August 1260	100 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sun	Decollation of St. John Baptist	Wyndles'	29 August 1260	100 friars	12s.7d. [151d.]
Mon			30 August 1260	100 friars	12s.7d. [151d.]
Tues		Werewett	31 August 1260	100 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Wed		Claryndon	1 Sept. 1260	132 friars	14s.8d. [176d.]
Thur		ib.	2 Sept. 1260	128 friars	15s.6d. [186d.]
Fri		ib.	3 Sept. 1260	100 friars	7s.6d. [90d.]
Sat		ib.	4 Sept. 1260	100 friars	7s.6d. [90d.]
Sun	after St Giles	Clarendon	5 Sept. 1260	100 friars	10s.10d. [130d.]

Mon		ib.	6 Sept. 1260	100 friars	10s.10d. [130d.]
Tues		ib.	7 Sept. 1260	100 friars	4s.2d. [50d.]
Wed		ib.	8 Sept. 1260	250 friars	10s.5d. (sic) [125d.]
Thur		ib.	9 Sept. 1260	100 friars	10s.10d. [125d.]
Fri		Lutegarshal (Ludgershall)	10 Sept. 1260	100 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sat		ib.	11 Sept. 1260	100 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sun	after Nativity of Virgin	Marleberg' (Marlborough)	12 Sept. 1260	150 friars	18s.11d. [227d]
Mon		ib.	13 Sept. 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Tues		ib.	14 Sept. 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Wed		ib.	15 Sept. 1260	150 friars	11s.8d. [140d.]
Thur		ib.	16 Sept. 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Fri		ib.	17 Sept. 1260	150 friars	6s.3d. [75d.]
Sat		ib.	18 Sept. 1260	150 friars	6s.3d. [75d.]
m.15	m.15	m.15	m.15	m.15	m.15
Sun	after Exaltation of the Holy Cross	M[er]leberg	19 Sept. 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Mon		ib.	20 Sept. 1260	150 friars	6s.3d. [75d.]
Tues		ib.	21 Sept. 1260	150 friars	17s.1d. [205d.]
Wed		ib.	22 Sept. 1260	250 friars etc.	10s.5d. [125d]
Thur		Hamsted	23 Sept. 1260	100 etc.	11s.11d. [143d.]
Fri		Rading (Reading)	24 Sept. 1260	124 friars	12s.- [144d.]
Sat		ib.	25 Sept. 1260	100 friars	6s.- [72d.]
Sun	after St Mattheus	Rading	26 Sept. 1260	100 friars	12s.8d. [152d.]
Mon		Wyndles'	27 Sept. 1260	100 friars	12s.8d. [152d.]
Tues		ib.	28 Sept. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	29 Sept. 1260	150 friars	14s.6d. [174d.]
Thur		ib.	30 Sept. 1260	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d]
Fri		ib.	1 October 1260	150 friars	14s.4d. [172d.]
Sat		ib.	2 October 1260	150 friars	14s.6d [174d.]
Sun	after St. Michael	Wyndles'	3 October 1260	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Mon		ib.	4 October 1260	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Tues		ib.	5 October 1260	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Wed		ib.	6 October 1260	150 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Thur		ib.	7 October 1260	150 friars	19s.11d. [239d.]
Fri		ib.	8 October 1260	150 friars	9s.3d. [111d.]
Sat		ib.	9 October 1260	150 friars	14s.6d. [174d]
Sun	day after St. Denis	Kenyton'	10 Oct. 1260	100 friars	12s.8d. [152d.]
Mon		Westm'	11 Oct. 1260	344 friars	52s.3d. [627d.]
Tues & Wed	vigil and feast of St. Edward	ib.	12 & 13 Oct. 1260	5,016 friars	£12.-s.19d. [2899d.]
m.16	m.16	m.16	m.16	m.16	m.16
Thur		ib.	14 Oct. 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]

Fri		ib.	15 Oct. 1260	150 friars	9s.2d. [110d.]
Sat		ib.	16 Oct. 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Sun	after St Edward	Westm'	17 Oct. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	18 Oct. 1260	150 friars	11s.8d. [140d]
Tues		ib.	19 Oct. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	20 Oct. 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Thur		ib.	21 Oct. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Fri		ib.	22 Oct. 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Sat		ib.	23 Oct. 1260	150 friars	14s.7d. [175d.]
Sun	after St Luke	Westm'	24 Oct. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Mon		ib.	25 Oct. 1260	150 friars	13s.4d. [160d]
Tues		ib.	26 Oct. 1260	150 friars	20s.- [240d.]
Wed		ib.	27 Oct. 1260	150 friars	12s.6d. [150d.]
Termly total: £1947.11s.2d. Wax: 6,006 pounds					
Sum total: £7499.9s.5d. Wax: 17,641 pounds. end of roll					

APPENDIX 5: 'MAUNDY' DISTRIBUTIONS TO THE POOR BY HENRY III

Key:

P for number of poor to receive where specified

E for ells of cloth

S for pairs of shoes

k = king

q = queen

Year	Easter	Whitsun	Christmas (where <i>Chronica Majora</i> says king spent Christmas in italics)	References
1229			<i>York with king of Scots</i> 300 poor 300 robes (a tunic and a cloak) 300 shoes	<i>Christmas: CLR 1226-40: 159</i>
1230			<i>Lambeth with Hubert de Burgh</i>	
1231			<i>Winchester</i>	
1232			<i>Worcester</i> 900 ells of cloth to Worc.	<i>Christmas: CLR 1226-40: 191</i>
1233		450 E for robes for poor	<i>Gloucester</i>	<i>Whitsun: CLR 1226-40: 215, 233</i>
1234			<i>Westminster</i>	
1235			<i>Winchester</i>	
1236	payment for unspecified amount of cloth		<i>Winchester</i>	<i>Easter: CLR 1226-40: 259</i>
1237	300 P. 900 E 300 S.	300 S 300 tunics	<i>Westminster</i> 200 S 200 tunics	<i>Easter: CLR 1226-40: 262 Whitsun: Close Rolls 1234- 1237: 435 Christmas: Close Rolls 1237-42: 16</i>

1238	300 P involved in maundy & receiving tunics. 900 E.	360 E 50 S	<i>Winchester</i> 200 poor fed daily from 6 Dec. - 6 Jan. King washed the feet of 300 poor and they were given tunics and shoes.	Easter: almoner's roll, C. 47/3/44, m.1, paragraph 6 'Trecentis paup[er]ibus (big gap – membrane decayed)... ad mandat' suis predicta die Jovis in cena dmi ad tunicas facienda'; <i>CLR 1226-40: 319.</i> Whitsun: <i>CLR 1226-40: 333</i> Christmas: <i>CLR 1226-40: 356</i> Almoner's Roll C.47/3/44 ⁷²⁶
1239	300 pairs of shoes	250 E	<i>Winchester</i> Windsor Christmas Eve: 15 poor fed, given shoes & tunic and 1d. each for baby Lord Edward. Windsor: poor fed in great hall on Christmas day and in smaller hall on 26, 28, 29 Dec and 6 Jan.	Easter: <i>CLR 1226-40: 377</i> Whitsun: <i>CLR 1226-40: 388</i> Christmas: <i>CLR 1226-40: 433, 435.</i>
1240	poor to be fed on Easter day in the great and smaller halls at Windsor.	250 S Friday in Whitsun week poor fed in both halls at Windsor.	<i>Westminster</i>	Easter: <i>CLR 1226-40: 459</i> Whitsun: <i>Close Rolls 1237-42: 189</i>

⁷²⁶ R Stacey, *Politics, Policy and Finance under Henry III, 1216-45* (Oxford, 1987), 240, n.15 gives 300 poor being fed on Maundy Thursday and Christmas Eve 1238. They probably were, but I couldn't see any reference to feeding in the roll itself.

1241	20 P for maundy on Maundy Thurs at Windsor. Poor fed in both halls at Windsor, and at Dublin castle on Good Friday		<i>Westminster</i> Christmas day: poor fed in Westminster Great Hall	<i>Easter: CLR</i> 1240-45: 37, <i>Close Rolls</i> 1237-42: 227 <i>Christmas:</i> <i>Close Rolls:</i> 1237-42: 374
1242			<i>Bordeaux</i>	
1243			<i>Wallingford with Richard of Cornwall</i> 80 London Dominicans to have pair of shoes and tunic each. 80 London Franciscans to have a tunic each.	<i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1240-45: 204
1244			<i>London</i> 315 shoes 960 ells of cloth	<i>Christmas:</i> <i>Close Rolls</i> 1242-47: 276; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1242-47: 279
1245	15 S + 180 E. 332 S	300 S	<i>London</i> 144 pairs of shoes bought to stock Gannoc and left at Chester delivered to Westminster for poor at Xmas. 300 pairs for maundy.	<i>Easter: CLR</i> 1240-45: 296 (15 S + 180 E - date suggests it is for Easter); <i>Close Rolls</i> 1242-47: 296 (sic - both are p.296); <i>CLR</i> 1240-45: 306 <i>Whitsun: Close Rolls</i> 1242-47: 311; <i>CLR</i> 1240-45: 306. <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1245-51: 8; <i>CLR</i> 1245-51: 16

1246	268 S		<p><i>Winchester</i> Order and payment for poor in upper bailey hall at Windsor on Christmas day, 26, 28, Dec & 5 Jan. Poor fed in Great and Lesser Hall at Westminster on Christmas day and four days after. 300 shoes to Winchester</p>	<p><i>Easter: CLR</i> 1245-51: 46 <i>Christmas: Close Rolls</i> 1242-47: 493, <i>CLR</i> 1245-51: 94, 106, 109</p>
1247			<p><i>Winchester</i> £28 of bread for alms Poor fed in Westminster Great Hall 25 Dec - 1 Jan inclusive. 315 shoes to Winchester 15 tunics for 15 poor for Lord Edward's maundy on Christmas eve.</p>	<p><i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1245-51: 174; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1247-51: 18-19; <i>CLR</i> 1245-51: 155; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1247-51: 18</p>
1248	330 S	315 S	<p><i>London</i> 315 S. at Westminster</p>	<p><i>Easter: CLR</i> 1245-51: 173 <i>Whitsun: CLR</i> 1245-51: 184 <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1245-51: 214</p>
1249	330 S	318 S	<p><i>Winchester</i> 315 S. at Winchester</p>	<p><i>Easter: CLR</i> 1245-51: 223-4 <i>Whitsun: CLR</i> 1245-51: 231 <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1245-51: 267</p>
1250	330 S		<p><i>Winchester</i> 165 S. at Winchester</p>	<p><i>Easter: CLR</i> 1245-51: 281 <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1245-51: 322</p>

1251	220 S	165 S 165 tunics	<i>York with king of Scots</i> 1000 ells of cloth at York 500 ells of cloth at York 165 shoes at York, paid for 180 pairs	Easter: CLR 1245-51: 344 Whitsun: CLR 1245-51: 354; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1247-51: 445 Christmas: <i>Close Rolls</i> 1247-51: 519, CLR 1251-60: 10, 14
1252	330 S	165 S	<i>Winchester</i> 165 shoes at Winchester 500 ells of cloth	Easter: CLR 1251-60: 32 Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 45 Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 90, <i>Close Rolls</i> 1251-53: 284
1253	15 + 330 S cloth for distribution to poor 'in the same way as last year'	165 S	<i>Bazas (Gascony)</i> Shoes to Westminster: 60 + extra 20 for queen, 15 pairs for Lord Edward.	Easter: CLR 1251-60: 120; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1251-53: 339 Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 132 Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 155
1254	78 S to queen's almoner and Lord Edward.	100 S. to king	<i>Returning from France</i> 150 pairs of shoes sent to Canterbury against the arrival of the king at Christmas.	Easter: CLR 1251-60: 161 Whitsun: <i>Close Rolls</i> 1253-54: 243 Christmas: <i>Close Rolls</i> 1254-56: 16
1255	330 S	Shoes: 100 (k) + 71 (q) Tunics: 71 (q & kids)	<i>Winchester</i> 50 shoes 150 tunics (k & q) for 'converted poor'	Easter: CLR 1251-60: 201 Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 214; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1254-56: 77, 78 Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 260; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1254-56: 249
1256	150 S	171 S	<i>London</i>	Easter: CLR

	150 tunics	171 tunics (k & q & kids)	150 shoes, Westminster Tunics: 150 (k & q, <i>ad opus pauperum conversorum</i>) + 21 (kids, <i>ad opus pauperum</i>)	<i>1251-60: 278; Close Rolls 1254-56: 292. Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 298; Close Rolls 1254-56: 310 Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 344-5; Close Rolls 1256-59: 13.</i>
1257	171 S 171 tunics for converted poor	164 S (k & q & kids) for 'poor' 164 tunics (k & q & kids) for 'converted poor'	<i>London</i> 150 shoes Tunics: 150 (k & q) + 21 (kids) for converted poor	<i>Easter: CLR 1251-60: 363; Close Rolls 1256-69: 45 Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 371; Close Rolls 1256-69: 51. Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 414; Close Rolls 1256-59: 172-3</i>
1258	171 S of which 150 for king and queen & 21 for their children. 150 + 21 tunics for converted poor	Tunics: 150 (k & q) + 21 (kids) for converted poor	<i>London</i> 150 shoes Tunics: 150 (k & q) + 21 (kids)	<i>Easter: CLR 1251-60: 430; Close Rolls 1256-59: 203-4 Whitsun: Close Rolls 1256-69: 216. Christmas: CLR 1251-60: 443; Close Rolls 1256-9: 352.</i>
1259	171 S of which 150 for king and queen & 21 for their children. 171 tunics	Shoes: 150 (k & q) + 21 (kids) Tunics: 171 (k & q & kids)	<i>Paris</i> 450 friars fed on 25 th , & 26 th Dec. 1259	<i>Easter: CLR 1251-60: 456; Close Rolls 1256-59: 374. Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 461 Christmas E101/349/27 m.3 Household Roll 1259-60</i>
1260	Maundy Thursday,	Shoes: 171 (k, q)	150 shoes	<i>Easter:</i>

	king in France at St. Omer, '321 friars etc.' fed	& kids) Tunics: 100 + 60 + 11 (k, q & kids) Saturday, eve of Pentecost, & Sunday the feast 464 friars fed at Westminster.	Tunics: 150 (k & q) + 21 (kids)	E101/349/27 m.7 Household Roll 1259-60 Whitsun: CLR 1251-60: 502; Close Rolls 1259-61: 41. E101/349/27 m.10 Christmas: Close Rolls 1259-61: 311.
1261	164 S for king and queen 164 tunics + 21 tunics for distribution by royal children.	Shoes: 171 (k, q & kids)	171 shoes (k, q & kids)	Easter: CLR 1260-67: 39; Close Rolls 1259-61: 369. Whitsun: CLR 1260-67: 45. Christmas: CLR 1260-67: 71.
1262	172 S for king, queen and Edmund Crouchback 160 + 12 S for king, queen and Lord Edward. 160 + 12 tunics for king, queen and Lord Edward	Shoes: 157 Tunics: 157 (k, q & kids)	160 + 15 shoes cloth for poor	Easter: CLR 1260-67: 83; Close Rolls 1261-64: 37-38. Whitsun: CLR 1260-67: 85; Close Rolls 1261-64: 49. Christmas: Close Rolls 1261-64: 167
1263	172 tunics			Easter: Close Rolls 1261-64: 220.
1264		115 shoes cloth for poor		Whitsun: CLR 1260-67: 137
1265	150 S - king		150 S.	Easter: CLR 1260-67: 168 Christmas: CLR 1260-67: 190

1266	150 S ordered for maundy of k & q. 165 S paid for. 150 tunics for k & q. 541 E	Shoes: 100 Tunics: 100	Shoes: 100 Cloth for 100 tunics	<i>Easter: CLR</i> 1260-67: 206, 216, 224, 255; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1264-68: 180. <i>Whitsun: CLR</i> 1260-67: 214; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1264-68: 193 <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1260-7: 252; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1264-68: 275
1267	115 S		Shoes: 300	<i>Easter: CLR</i> 1260-67: 268. <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1267-72: 5: writ 41.
1268		150 shoes 150 tunics	Shoes: 150 at Winchester for k & q. 150 tunics	<i>Whitsun: CLR</i> 1267-72: 34, writ 307; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1264-68: 456. <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1267-72: 59; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1268-72: 13; <i>CLR</i> 1267-72: 199: writ 1786.
1269	£31 spent on maundy cloth for 160 tunics 150 tunics		150 pairs of shoes (ordered twice as first lot do not appear)	<i>Easter: CLR</i> 1267-72: 71 no. 644; <i>Close Rolls</i> 1268-72: 28, 43. <i>Christmas: CLR</i> 1267-72: 109, writ 944, p. 112, writ 970; <i>CLR</i> 1267-72: 199: writ 1786.

1270	165 S 165 tunics	150 tunics, k & q.	150 shoes from Hants., 150 from Winchester to Winchester.	<i>Easter: CLR 1267-72: 121, writ 1058; Close Rolls 1268-72: 182. Whitsun: Close Rolls 1268-72: 195. Christmas: CLR 1267-72: 149, writ 1317, p.150, writ 1325.</i>
1271	160 S 'cloth for 160 pairs of shoes' prob. 160 tunics	150 S. k & q.	100 pairs of shoes ordered 150 pairs paid for cloth for 100 tunics to Winchester	<i>Easter: CLR 1267-72: 167, writ 1490; Close Rolls 1268-72: 331-2. Whitsun: CLR 1267-72: 177, writ 1583. Christmas: CLR 1267-72: 198, writ 1778; CLR 1267-72: 199, writ 1786; Close Rolls 1268-72: 447.</i>
1272	150 S	150 S.	-----Henry III died 20 November 1272.	<i>Easter: CLR 1267-72: 210, writ 1888. Whitsun: CLR 1267-72: 218, writ 1966</i>

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